

## 2000 年國際版畫學術研討會---配合活動專題講座<sup>3</sup>

### 木村秀樹九〇年以後的工作/巡視記號論的現場

#### -----木村秀樹與三脇節康生對談

木村秀樹

三脇：今天要訪問木村先生在九〇年代時期的作品。爲了能夠進行深入的討論，我們將上溯到木村先生開始發表活動的七〇年代，來進行今天的話題。

在一九九五年十二月刊行的《版畫藝術》第 90 號〈版畫的現在位置〉特集（這是以日本關西地方爲中心，所整理歸納西日本版畫的現況）提到的座談會當中，木村先生將版畫的定位回溯至五〇年代初期，他們提出一些重要的問題。1) 日本關西地方初期的版畫製作者並無版畫家的意識，並將版畫與繪畫並行，來製作版畫，版畫只是以媒介的方式存在，這可說是關西地方版畫的特殊性。2) 在七〇年代「版畫概念的擴大」時期，版畫與應成爲版畫物質間的界線漸形模糊，版畫概念與美術概念相互重疊。（六〇年代以普普藝術爲轉捩點，在美術領域中宣告了製作主體—也就是畫家的死亡。）3) 雖然版畫=美術這個記號論的認識已經產生，卻絲毫無法影響—如果沒有繪畫（painting），就沒有美術—這種繪畫至上主義者與侷限在版畫界的民藝派版畫家站在不同立場的現況。針對於這種現況，相對的大版面運動開始展開。以上幾點只是我的簡單整理，我想再聽聽木村先生的意見。

另一個問題也是您在版畫藝術座談會曾經提到的。關西地方後繼世代—也就是 Yes 藝術的動態，請問木村先生是抱持著何種看法？爲 Yes 藝術世代畫家帶來某種肯定感，恐怕是將他們誤解淺田彰書中之意。可是，在這些畫家之間，真正解放的並不是慾望，而是他們保守化已久的主體。而現今關西地方美術界所仰賴的學園祭風潮，其根源就在此。首先是木村先生的世代，您們在他們之前所遇上的記號論場所，或是只有表面有記號的場所，被賦予不斷選擇記號的時候，不會因而啞口無言，不知道爲什麼（對這種偏執自我所使用的鬥爭語言，反而輕鬆地變爲肯定自我的語言，雖然這項工作也

<sup>3</sup> 本演講講題爲《從當代記號學的角度談版畫》，於 89 年 2 月 19 日上午十時三十分在木館中正藝廊視聽室舉行。本文並非演講紀錄，而是講者木村秀樹先生提供大會作爲參考之用。

是在他們周圍的評論家的責任。)他們反而保持自我的優越感。在如此擁有保持物的場所，慾望是絕對不能解放的。泡沫經濟瓦解，使得他們受到注目的程度滑落，也使得他們不得不變得像現今這般自我封閉。他們小心翼翼地、不、應該說是直言不諱地提示解讀自我作品的符碼。彷彿在召喚著：「請這樣來欣賞我的作品。」木村先生對於版畫=美術這個記號論的認識，當成八〇年代的解放感這個觀點上，您認為要如何去拿捏，或拿捏不當會造成什麼樣的結果？

木村：針對第一個問題，我在座談會曾提過，吉原英雄、泉茂等民主派系畫家於關西地區的藝術學校教授版畫，是一項相當大的原因。第二、三個問題與 Yes 藝術，我則做整體性的回答。我們先往前看戰後歐美（包括日本）美術的傾向，可以「他人性」與「普遍性」為主軸來看。例如格林伯格（Clement Greenberg）的形式主義批評，就排除世俗具體性。換句話說，就是排除俗媚這種想法，雖然它是在不問繪畫為什麼的前提下而成立的。但是排除的結果還遺留本質。在如此基本的層面上所進行的溝通，是超越個人異同的超日常的單純，並基於可能的普遍性的希望。特別是低限藝術，基本上是延續前者想法，做最低限度的表現，以追求不需接觸物質的普遍性。再者，發生期之後普普藝術的方法，是全心投入既有物品的機械化生產，將他人性更他人化，在保證與自我保持冷漠距離的前提下，來構思具有普遍相的趣味。

三協：太過於切入他人性，或是太過於沾染他人性，則會容易偏向於普遍性之情況…

木村：是的。我常認為自己覺得好的，別人不一定覺得好。日常當中一些無法填補的裂痕、不安，絕對不能假裝修復完畢，而是必須去克服，這是一個十分切實的問題。對我來說，搜尋出解決的途徑，就是現代美術。有關「版畫概念的擴大」，不論是引進以照相製版為中心的技術，或是領域疆界的位移，亦或是您所提到「作者的死」，只要是無法捕捉到製作主體的變質，我不但興趣缺缺，甚至覺得這是個尚未有了結、必須先確實抓到前提的問題。令人訝異地，七〇年代很容易讓人覺得是個平淡、毫無驚異、寂靜的時期。透過八〇年代來看，才發覺這是個令人重視的問題。低限與觀念若算是近代自我純化的極限、終結的話，那麼想想以七十年前後為界線的話，畫家真的死了嗎？恐怕不是真正的死吧！這讓我想起宮川淳先生曾特別指出藝術消滅的不可能性。當你感到單方面的不斷否定、形式的純化或是觀念的純化，已經到達極限時，

加上全共鬥運動的休止，連當時還是美術學生的我們也都被逼問是否要持續還是要荒廢學業。然後，當我們再度決定從事美術工作時，不得不乘某種形式之便來重新開始。或許這就是您所說的只剩下記號論現場的事吧！一九七〇年到七二年之間，我開始製作照相製版的絹印（Silk Screen），這並不是很廣大，反而是小規模、中型的「版畫」場所，可以讓我坐下來好好思索一番…。

三 脇：可是在您這個現場並無打算走美國普普路線吧！木村先生曾說過自己並不是受到美國而是受到英國普普藝術的影響。您難道沒有熱衷過英國普普藝術嗎？或是，您只關心記號的存在，而覺得最適合學習的是英國？

木村：誠如您所知道的，二次世界大戰之後，美術的中心便轉移到美國，更確切地說是在紐約。新美術的動向全以紐約為起點，再傳達到全世界。也就是說先進資本主義國家的美術位居領導地位，以大型商機的型態所誕生的紐約藝術，世界級藝術家都必須透過紐約這個藝術舞臺才能登場全球。所以，談論五〇、六〇年代的美術，我的腦中確確實實地存在所謂的紐約時期。的確，提到普普藝術時，下意識地就會想傑斯伯·瓊斯或安迪·沃爾（A. Warhol）。因為如此一來，人們就容易瞭解你說的話。但是事實上這種「容易瞭解」是相當令人懷疑的。這種感覺就彷彿加入美國戰略計畫一般。如果知道批評本身毫無意義，沃爾為什麼到死前都還反覆高唱那種形式？這應該說是他的表現意欲與觀念的強韌性，但也可說只是為了因應商業要求。老實說，日本不會有像美國規模般的商業要求，也不可能走沃爾型的策略。可是在日本，絕對不會有像格林伯格般全盤否定俗媚的現代主義者。也沒有接受沃爾型或格林伯格型的慾望或是去除商業的可能。然而，日本並沒有商業現場。

由這點來看，英國藝術家反而還比較有空間。可能是因為英國沒有像美國那麼容易賣吧！例如，漢米爾頓是普普藝術先驅者之一，但是並沒有製造出所謂的漢米爾頓形式。其實並不是沒有製造，而是他拒絕將自己的形式符號化。這種想法就比較適合我自己，因為我覺得這不僅是意匠，而是讓我學習到記號的存在方式。因此，我會說我想好好琢磨「透過『版』的普普藝術的存在論」。簡單來說這並不是為了成為普普藝術者，而是想要保持自己所擁有的游擊性。

三 脇：關於「普普藝術的存在論」，您也曾在一九七九年《美術手帖》增刊號〈版畫

>當中，寫過<逆·拼貼畫>。我認爲此一句話非常切中要旨。在選擇記號時，絕對不能去除對自我存在的關心。說是游擊，若還小心翼翼地保護操縱記號的自我，將會因此消失在記號論的現場。在這現場中，需要受到肯定的並不是受到保護的自我，而是持續選擇記號的慾望。我們常常可見到製作主體其實應當忍耐選擇記號時的毫無根據，但他們卻爲了保全自我，而四處告知解讀作品的符碼。在記號論現場會作些偶發事件的慾望，以爲肯定自己與記號之間的引力。而這個慾望會人性化，成爲道理的根據，並爲支持自戀主義所用。或是，將符碼更擴大，將其日本化，來藉此媲美國外…

木村：總而言之，八〇年代的肯定主義，僅只是一種情緒化的解放感，甚至和欠缺歷史意識與自我龜裂的隱藏有關。這可說是一種痴呆化。然而，對否定飽和狀態的認識，八〇年代的解放感至少最初應該是基於此種認識而出發的。那個時期特徵的具象傾向，被稱爲「好不好」的一連串形式，一時能顯現出新鮮感，是因爲採用這種策略的關係。這就是策略性的痴呆化吧！可是在那之後，缺乏策略時就僅陷入痴呆狀態，老實說，這就是我的感想。如果您認爲這很可愛，那也沒關係吧！

三脇：不，一點都不好。如果是無策略、只是痴呆狀態的話，就能期待非人類的老化力量，而沒有自戀主義插手的餘地了吧。這才是記號論的現場，也就是「想起」與「忘記」同時發生的場所。我們也必須承認在這場所產生的東西就是慾望。像大文字的策略，只能當作是虛擬主義，只存在於意圖化的流行性。所以，雖然現在大文字的策略已經不太浮出於表面，但是曾幾何時，又出現了小文字的策略。這是得視個人情況或趣味…。如果就將這個稱爲解讀作品的符碼，那麼這件作品也不會有什麼趣味。所以，這種看似可愛的痴呆會讓自戀主義或家族主義擁有一個溫床。這些人就算大故事結束了，也不會逃避到小故事裡。如果無法注意到小故事當中的他人性，那只能說這些人是十分幼稚的。

但我不認爲這完全是畫家的責任。那麼，到底誰該負起監督責任呢？在畫家的記號論現場，這種無根據當中，有哪位評論家願意長久來往呢？從宮川淳先生過世之後，就無人接手這樣的工作了。所有人只對自己有興趣的高聲嚷嚷，做些分析批評的言語，卻毫無批評的勇氣。而八〇年代，讓畫家在長期處於彷彿孤兒狀態，難以忍受的情況下，終於有了碰到長腿叔叔的心情。其實，評論家不應該賦予不必要的幻想，而是應該鼓勵衝破這種孤兒狀態。如果批評家能夠容忍分析構造主義的無根據現場，這些批

評家之間的相互交流，也可能發生在與畫家之間。現在雖然不再需要長腿叔叔了，將小文字策略假扮成大文字策略的理由，依舊是畫家仰賴批評家，而批評家則為畫家撰寫自傳。這種程度的自傳，不論寫得如何，結果就是自傳主角只能將自己定位在哪裡出生長大而已。而畫家因為擔心批評家不認真撰寫，只好自己提示符碼。

木村：先跳過回答第三個問題。在七〇年代常提到「繪畫的復權」這件事，我認為是因為無法容忍記號論現場，而成為口號高喊的對象。六〇年代的「反藝術」的「藝術」如果指的是繪畫與雕刻，那麼這裡所提到繪畫與雕刻的具體作品或畫家，就無法清楚明白了。淺田彰先生指出，日本的現代主義沒有一個強硬核心，但這不是說只要移植美國的形式主義就行了。我前面也提到，好不好完全是個人的興趣。回過頭來思考「繪畫的復權」的「繪畫」指的是什麼？應該說是將日本畫、制度化團體展中展出的油畫、版畫、攝影以及工藝作品都必須納入範圍內，一般所說二度空間的表現，如果發生相對化，就會十分有趣，但是卻沒有發生。之所以會將繪畫至上主義與繪畫以外的領域分解為二，是因為無法容忍記號論現場，想要用繩子圍起一個固定的場所所致。結果，只是變成像大雜燴般、現代主義樣式的喜惡而已。

三 脇：這已經是大家都十分瞭解的事實。後現代其實是要能夠容忍無根據的，但卻被錯認為大雜燴的樣式。以大雜燴樣式為養分，來使批評言語開花結果。其實，這時候才真正應該分析批評語言的形式，而這才是能容忍無根據的態勢。

可是如果說製作曼哈頓繪畫尺寸大的大型版畫，八八年開始的大圖版運動，可說是版畫與繪畫之間的階級鬥爭。這對居於中堅份子的木村先生來說，是個怎麼樣的情況？或是您對記號論現場變得含糊不清，而感到不平，企圖重新設定現場嗎？

木村：在七〇年代，不論是繪畫或是版畫，雖然已經產生應視為同一平面的觀點，事實上整個趨勢卻不是如此，這讓我感到相當地憤憤不平。複製性版畫的原創與單次性的比較，版畫居然居於下位，我很驚訝這種封建式的看法仍舊存在。但是，我卻沒有將版畫作品定位為必須肩負起現代繪畫。當然另一方面，已經得到大眾認同的版畫正統中，徹底注入個人的專門技術與職業性。不過，這反而是想確保「版畫的積極中間角色」的場所。在嘗試過各種方法後，從中挑出大型化這個方法。實際上，簡單解釋，大型版畫也像是為了確保工作空間，或被逼迫再度檢驗整個製作過程，這如果不好好

認真看待是無法做好的。我想這是爲了對自己固定化的製作狀況打一劑強心針。接下來談到的，說不定會與今天的談話有所衝突，我想談談在（大圖版第一屆展覽畫冊）沃爾，我稱這是回歸沃爾。當然這並不是指回歸沃爾的反復意志。對於既成品的再生產，也就是與不創作這件事息息相關、新達達或普普的版畫意義，在六〇年代後半，透過一般美術大學版畫教育所形成內面化的人們。換句話說，就是給予手工之單次性評價的現代主義繪畫或雕刻的這些製作基礎的人，並不是在事後加進版畫。現況反而是相反狀況，這是我認爲是有必要提出的。

三 脇：原來如此。終結來說就是只有具有版畫意識的畫家，不再創作繪畫。可是，就因爲這樣才沒有必要稱爲繪畫。當然，我知道您不想稱呼版畫的心情。我們應該可以將「有版畫意識」的說法換做「具備了容忍無根據的態勢」會比較好。可是很可惜地，版畫無法接受這種說法。版畫世界有其權利。沃爾曾說他想變成機器。借用這句話，我們是否可說「想成爲可容忍無根據的機器」呢？

木村：在七〇年代，對於該發生而沒有發生的情況，我們可沒打算成爲憤恨之神的奴隸喔！我再說一次，現在只有走形式路線。當然，這會被指爲沒有名字的何者，但是如果沒有徹底改頭換面的心情，也是沒有辦法持續的。可是這些都必須投入美術狀況當中。簡單來說，在無出口的閉塞狀況，雖然有不再玩的自由，至少選擇的形式必須要暫時性的。在七〇年代，美術雖然有重新整編，繪畫就是繪畫，雕刻就是雕刻這樣火辣辣的原則，卻不是真正地與詞義對等地復權。繪畫創作還原單次性、平面性，處於這種狀況下，五〇年代的美國就算不斷高唱形式主義，也只是在作戲。八〇年代後半，正好也重疊到大版面活動的開始初期，在畫版上的工作也日漸趨多。尺寸加大、沒有限定版的一連串工作，我們稱爲絹印繪畫（Silk Screen Painting）。這與繪畫就等於高級藝術（Painting = High art）這種歐美圖式，在稍微偏頗之處有微妙的差異，並且，絹印繪畫爲了在擁有複數生產性的版畫（printing）與單次性的繪畫（painting）之間，傳達混合了上述方法、中間過程的微妙差異。一連串事物的完成，主要是經由製作過程當中兩種不同的攝影映像的反復與累積。一種是稱作「雲」，將彩色鏡片作爲被攝影體，以不對焦方式攝影。另一種是「風」，拍攝素描的樹葉，並反覆修正製成中間底片，然後將這中間底片沿著支持的軟片刷過後，影像看起來會像是在被押在窗戶上的樹葉在平行移動。這些可以說是與寫實主義毫無關係，只能稱爲攝影的寫實，只是

照片的影像罷了。但是更進一步透過絹印版，換印到印墨層時，就會呈現獨特的質感與透明感。而伴隨這層質感與透明感培養、增幅「以層作表現的影像」，就看在事後的塗底色或拍打了。

三 脇：在七四年第九屆東京國際版畫雙年展當中，木村先生獲得京都國立近代美術館獎的鉛筆系列，依著規則地組合，在方格紙（既有製品）這項基材上，重覆手與鉛筆的印象，促成無限展開的可能性，而所有的展開又似相同的作品。這些作品完全是以一個提示存在，即沒有物質本來應當相遇的固定場所，記號的寫實性，是暫時配置存在的狀況。

木村：那場展覽會我展出了三幅作品。但是獲獎的只有其中一幅，而不是整個過程。這時我就會有被誤解成印象版畫的厭惡感。可是，鉛筆系列對我來說，從脫離最初意圖表示追求影像的過程性來看，說是影像的層級性，既不是印象也不是物質，這種持續的緊張感便在此顯現。這讓我發現影像表面的存在感，這成爲我日後工作的基點，也延續到現在的創作上。

三 脇：如果要重新強調近作與鉛筆系列的不同，以記號存在的寫實，飄盪著臨時配置的存在感，也就是在印象中用半身來干預，而不斷表示這種態度的便是木村先生。可是您的近作不單是表示狀況，而是毫無恐懼地進入狀況吧！這讓我突然想到在「後低限」當中製作的英國畫家麗沙·米爾洛，她在京都研討會提問時所說的話。她對決定配置的感覺，稱作正確感（Sense of Rightness）。這種感覺如果人性化的話，就太枯燥了，或是成爲無聊政治物質，也很麻煩。當我們提到普普藝術到攝影繪畫，就會讓我們思考從「爲了資本現實主義的公開表演」起始的格爾巴特·利塔特的經過。利塔特對配置是採取交給攝影機的態度，這其實可以免除人工風格。被攝影的就算是士兵，或是抽象繪畫的一部份，透過攝影，會產生無需故事的非人工配置。然後，再觀看完全依照攝影所繪的作品，世界會將人類的思慮超越日常瑣事，並讓我們見識到這種狀況。此時，會有經由人手製作物質或現象的差異化。但是木村先生並不完全將配置交給攝影機，這或許是比利塔特更困難的嘗試。在配置當中，沒有人工風格、或是正確感是不是木村先生打算創造出來的呢？請您回答。

木村：並不是使用攝影機就可以解決構成的問題，這真的很不容易。因為有非常人工化的攝影，但是也有是手繪卻不人工化的畫作。如果說有像人一般的機器，就有像機械一般的人。到目前為止，我一直使用於解決配置的主要方法，就是將拍攝建築物的快拍攝影，或是自己拍攝的作品，或擷取雜誌上的作品，只取建築物部分，然後分成幾個面，再嵌入「風」與「雲」的方法，這是我最初使用的方法。可是這只是最初階段，我還會漸漸轉移到第二段、第三段構成。例如，拍攝紐約近代美術館館內的作品，以 MOMA 的題名，嘗試做幾項作品。然後再從這些作品中擷取部分，放大或反覆來成為新的作品。讓作品成為只呈現建築物部分中的部分。目的就是以「雲」與「風」所做的某種建築物，或是以「雲」與「風」來製版，化作一種反覆的單位，在發想的過程當中，以優先單位的集合，來聯想現代建築。建築物的型態是在地形、風土、用途、預算、技術能力、政治性、法規等各項條件上，綜合地賦予風味再決定平衡點。這可以適用在自我創作過程或完成以前的浮遊狀態。一連串的絹印繪畫簡單來說，或許就是「將繪畫攝影單位化後，再創造出繪畫」。可是這個單位化後的「繪畫」，與創造後的繪畫，又各指為何？在這種情況下，如果沒有加以確認，很容易愈趨自閉。可是條件之一所擁有的單位，出自「雲」與「風」與無焦點的性質，本來就有拒絕完成的性質。換句話說，雖然目標是朝向完成，但是因為事先切斷後路，便只有朝向所剩方向前進，或是只有自閉或不算是自閉的場所，能夠好好存活的話…這便是我的想法。



## The Speech in the Y2K International Symposium of Prints<sup>4</sup>

### HIDEKIKIMURA/Post-1990 Works

#### "On the Topic of Symbols"

##### A Discussion Between Hideki Kimura and Yasuo Miwaki

Hideki Kimura

**Yasuo Miwaki:** Today, we will be hearing from Mr. Kimura about works that he has created during this decade. Mr. Kimura first began releasing works during the 1970s, and I would like to keep the time that has elapsed since that period in perspective in order to provide for a full-scale discussion on the following topics.

A special report featured in Vo1. #90 of *Hanga Geijutsu*(1) that covers the current state of affairs in the world of printmaking was issued in December, 1995. This report focuses on conditions in the printmaking community of western Japan, and on the Kansai area in particular. At one symposium featured in the report, Mr. Kimura addresses some very key issues in relation to what direction he feels the art should take, while reflecting on trends that have occurred in printmaking since its history began in the 1950s:

1. Many of the early Kansai "printmakers" did not identify themselves as such, and instead conformed to the same trends that were adhered to by painters; printmaking existed merely as form of media.
2. During the "movement to expand the concept of printmaking" that occurred in the 1970s, the definition of "printmaking" became more ambiguous, and the concept of printmaking came to overlap with that of fine art.(2)
3. Although a growing recognition existed, which regarded the symbols observed in printmaking works as being synonymous with those found in fine art, the art community nevertheless threatened to branch off into two separate groups-one group comprised of those who believe in the doctrine of "kaiga"(3)=for the sake of "kaiga" (i.e., any form of "kaiga" besides paintings should not be considered "fine art"), and

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<sup>4</sup> The speech, named "On the Topic of Symbols", was held in Chung-chen Gallery, National Taiwan Arts Education Institute on February 19, 2000. This article was not the minute but information about the speech by speaker Hideki Kimura.

the other consisting of printmakers from the folk-art school who remain secluded within the printmakers community. This situation gave subsequent rise to the *maxi graphica* movement, which was an antithesis to the current conditions that existed.

Now, that I have summarized these three issues from my own point of view, I would like to ask Mr. Kimura once again for his opinions. In addition, I would also like to ask Mr. Kimura for his thoughts regarding the Kansai area's next-generation "Yes Art" movement—another issue that was brought up during the Hanga Geijutsu symposium. It can be said that artists of this generation have felt a sense of affirmation; I believe that one probable source of this sentiment comes from their collective misunderstanding of Akira Asada's book.<sup>(4)</sup> It is also said that their artistic desires had been released. What was released, in my opinion, was not anything like desire, but rather the core of these artists who, over time, had become rather conservative. This is where the origin of the Kansai art world's coquettish "campus festival" mood lies. To begin with, take for example the world of symbols that Mr. Kimura and his colleagues have already experienced far in advance of this new generation, a world in which symbols merely float on the surface. However, when members of the new generation were put to the task of continuously choosing from these symbols without missing a beat, somewhere along the line they, for some reason, began to maintain dominant attitudes regarding "self" (some of the responsibility for this phenomenon rests also on the shoulders of critics—close to these newcomers, who have succeeded in changing words of conflict against their paranoid selves to comfortable words of self-affirmation). Such attitudes only serve to impede the release of desire, rather than facilitate it. The "bubble" economy has since collapsed, interest in the arts has begun to ebb, and the new generation has no choice but to continue the "self-closure" it currently exercises. They must restrict themselves to providing the "codes" to understanding their works, whether it be in a timid—or in most cases, blunt (laughs)—manner. Nothing more. All they need to say is, "Please view my work from this perspective..." Mr. Kimura, in your opinion, in what ways did this sense of release that prevailed during the 1980s succeed, or fail, to grasp the symbolic understanding of printmaking as fine art?

**Hideki Kimura:** In regard to your first question, as I mentioned at the symposium, Hideo Yoshiwara, Shigeru Izumi, and other artists of the democratic persuasion taught printmaking at art schools in the Kansai area, and this serves as an important factor. Regarding the second and third questions, and the Yes Art generation, I would like to try and give a blanket answer to all three topics.

Going back in history to the post-World War II era, I think that it is possible to focus on "universality" and non-personal styles as primary trends in Western (including Japan) art. For example, the elimination of secular "concreteness" achieved by

Clement Greenberg's criticism of formalism. In short, although the concept of the elimination of kitsch is built on the premise of "a painting is a painting", a certain amount of substance remains after the elimination is complete. Communication that is formed on this essential level may be predicated on the quest for universality, accompanied by an ultra-ordinary "purity" that defies distinction based on a sense of you or me. Moreover, while furthering this concept of substance and by limiting expression to a minimum, minimal art strove to gain an untouchable universality formed by substance.

It may also be true that, following the appearance of pop art, the movement became reliant on the mass-production of art works. I believe that, since artists had therefore found a way of maintaining a cool distance from their works, a certain "taste" or "sense" was conceived as a form of universality.

**MIWAKI:** And you believe that, even if an artist's persona is either revealed or concealed to an extreme extent, the result will be a move toward a calm universality?

**KIMURA:** Yes, I do. Speaking from personal experience, I used to dwell on whether things that were acceptable to me were considered acceptable by others as well; an ordinary worry, yet it created a gap that I could not fill. It was an urgent problem, one that I refused to ignore and instead tried to surmount. The act of searching for the key that could solve this dilemma is, to me, modern art.

And, in reference to the "movement to expand the concept of printmaking", it makes no difference whether we are talking about the introduction of photographic plate techniques, or of a shift in the position of genre borders; if we cannot accept what you defined as the "death of the artist" instead as a transformation that occurred within the creative core of art, then the movement would be of no interest to me. It would be like saying that the issue has yet to be settled. It is a dilemma that we must always be readily prepared to deal with.

Curiously, the 1970s are often overlooked as being quiet years, a period devoid of change. But once the 1980s had passed, many pressing issues naturally came to light. Suppose that minimal and conceptual art were both the zenith and the conclusion of modern self-purification (and simplification)—in other words, think of the late-1960s to early-70s as a borderline. Now, with that in mind, if you consider whether or not artists were "dead" at this time, I think you'll see that such a situation would have been impossible.<sup>(5)</sup> It reminds me of a significant indication that Jun Miyakawa once made, that art is eternal.

The national student movement of the late 1960s was already winding down when I

began to realize that there were limits to formal and conceptual purification when used as a means to reiterate one-way denial. Even I, who was still an art student at the time, was asked whether I would decide to give up my future career or to press on. So, when I finally made up my mind to pursue a career in the art world, I did find that I had to go through a certain kind of formality when resuming my activities. Perhaps this was because the "world of symbols" of which you spoke earlier was all that remained. From 1970 to 1972, I began to use photographic plates in the creation of my silkscreen works. Although non-extravagant and minor, I found the field of printmaking to be agreeable. Contrary to mainstream art, it was something that I could really pour all of my thoughts into.

**MIWAKI:** But at that time, you felt no inclination to join the American pop art movement. On the contrary, you yourself claim to have been influenced by British pop art culture, instead. Did you become a follower of that movement? Or was it that you were only concerned with concepts regarding symbols, and the British movement just happened to be more suited to your purposes?

**KIMURA:** As you are aware, during the post-World War II years, the art world was considered to revolve around the United States—New York, specifically. New artistic trends originated in New York, and from there they were propagated throughout the world. The United States led all other advanced capitalist nations in the field of art, and New York art was born as a substantial moneymaker. Any artist achieving international acclaim did so only after making his or her debut in the New York art scene first. As a result, whenever I speak of the art of the 1950s and 60s, I am always inclined to refer to that period as "the New York Era". And pop art—somehow talking about it always seems to trigger images of Jasper Jones or Andy Warhol. Mentioning their works makes it easier for the listener to grasp the meaning of the conversation, which is actually kind of suspicious in a way. Maybe it's a sense of having given in to an American perspective.

With the understanding that criticism per se makes no sense, it can still be said that the reason Warhol continued to repeat the same style until his death lies behind the artist's zest for expression and his conceptual tenacity. On the other hand, one could also say that Warhol was merely answering the demand for a certain style of art. Frankly speaking, the level of art-related business demand seen in the U.S. is virtually non-existent in this country, and it would be useless to try and imitate Warhol's strategy. The existence of a Japanese modernist similar to Greenberg—an artist who denies all forms of kitsch—is unthinkable as well. Desires of the Warhol or Greenberg schools were not desires that I felt could be pursued strictly in the sense of art, ignoring the business factor. There was, however, no forum for art-related business in Japan at the time.

When you visit England, you'll see that the artists there enjoy a slightly more comfortable existence; although, compared to American artists, you might hear a few more complaints about business being sluggish.(laughs) Take the case of Hamilton, for example. Hamilton was a pioneer in the world of pop art, yet he never went so far as to create a so-called "Hamilton style". Not, I believe, because he was unable to but because he refused to see his own particular style transformed into a stereotype. Discovering this, I knew that I had found something I could feel comfortable with; not only had I learned a lesson in design, but in the concept of the symbol as well. Next, I remember that, among other things, I wanted to further the existence of pop art in the form of printmaking. In other words, the problem for me was not in becoming a pop artist, but in maintaining a guerrilla-like stance as an artist.

**MIWAKI:** Regarding the "existence of pop art" that you just mentioned, you wrote an article on the topic of "reverse collages" in the 1979 special "Hanga" issue of *Bijutsu Techo*.(7) I could not have expressed the same sentiments more eloquently. However, in the process of selecting a symbol, one must forego any concerns relating to one's own existence. Even a guerrilla seeking to control symbols must calmly refuse to relinquish his sense of self, lest the symbolic forum disappear. What must really be affirmed here is not a preserved sense of self, but rather the desire to continue to select symbols.

I often see artists blatantly revealing the codes to decipher their works in order to preserve their sense of selves, when in fact, the artist community is a body that needs to stand impervious to questions regarding the rationale behind its selection of certain symbols (now that we have entered the era of post-modernism). Furthermore, the desire that must be affirmed as a gravitational force which exists between self and symbol— the force that is activated within the symbolic forum— seems to have been brought down to a rather human level; it has become something that warrants justification; it has become nothing more than a basis for narcissism and the platform upon which a humble market has been established. Perhaps these "codes" should be exaggerated to a larger scale; you know, place more emphasis on the unique Japanese style in order to appeal to the international community...

**KIMURA:** In short, I believe that the practice of self-affirmation in the 1980s amounted merely to sense of emotional release, and was linked to a lack of historical awareness and the concealment of the common gap which lies between one's self and others. A kind of decline toward imbecility. But nevertheless, there was a realization that denial could not be carried any further. In the very least, I think that the sense of release experienced during the 1980s originally generated from this realization. The movement toward the representational style characteristic of this period, a serial style referred to as "hetauma"(8), was for a short while considered "fresh" because it

was conceived as being a new strategy. So you see, this imbecility did have its purpose. In my honest opinion, though, at some point thereafter the strategic factor was removed and only imbecility remained. The style is sort of cute, I guess, but...(laughs)

**MIWAKI:** I beg to differ. (laughs) If we were talking about mere imbecility without a purpose, then we should be able to notice a skill/style that appears to be void of human inspiration, a skill nurtured over time. Such a skill would not allow for any margin of narcissism. Here is where the existence of the symbolic forum, a place where things are simultaneously remembered and forgotten, becomes evident. And we must recognize that it is desire which moves within.

Even large-scale art trends/strategies seem to have taken a back seat in recent years; the intentional "pop" styles seen in simulationism were the last. On the contrary, however, small-scale movements continue to appear on the scene — individual preferences and styles. Trends of this caliber are mundane to the extent that they practically give away the meanings of the works. That is why the imbecility of hick you speak, although perhaps cute, in fact preserves narcissism and produces circles of followers. It is not a matter of "switching over to a small story" even though the big story has already come to a close. You've got to admit that it would be a little childish not to notice the absence of self that exists within the small story.

I don't however, believe that this responsibility lies entirely on the shoulders of the artists. Who will be the artists' witness? Which critics made an attempt to understand the rationale of the artists' choice of symbols? After Jun Miyakawa passed on, no one came forward to succeed him in this field of work. Everyone just loudly emphasized his or her own style, analyzing the language of the critics while at the same time lacking the courage to conduct their own criticisms.

And then in the 1980s, no longer able to endure being orphaned (by the critics), artists felt that they had been blessed with a guardian angel. (9) The critics were supposed to have motivated the artists to conquer their sense of being orphaned, without giving them any unnecessary illusions. If a critic was capable of enduring an absence of literary rationale, then surely it would have been possible for the two, artist and critic, to share a common understanding, given that both parties were able to endure an absence of rationale.

Even now, when the guardian angel no longer exists, artists still look to the critics for words of justification that would make their small-scale trends seem as large-scale movements, and the critics are writing their own books in response to this demand.

Books of this rank, regardless of their literary prowess, are insignificant in every sense — except for maybe who the author is. The resulting sentiment toward critics as being unreliable has thus caused the artists to take it upon themselves to reveal the codes to their works.

**KIMURA:** To answer the third question that you posed in your opening statement, I believe that the situation in the 1970s often referred to as "the restoration of *kaiga*", too, came as one result of loud styles born from an inability to endure the world of symbols. Even if you try to think of the 1960-era terms "art" and "anti-art" as representing painting and sculpture, it is difficult to think of any specific examples of works or their artists. This is most likely because, as Akira Asada and his colleagues have pointed out, there was a lack of hardcore modernism in Japan at the time. Even if the American brand of formalism had been adopted in Japan, it still would not have solved the situation, I think, because we have to respect each artist's own individual style.

The term "*kaiga*", as used in "the restoration of *kaiga*", more correctly refers to Japanese-style *kaiga* and oil paintings, prints, photographs, and crafts displayed at group exhibitions under the existing system; it would have been intriguing had the entire range of two-dimensional forms been included, but it unfortunately never occurred. The reason why two classifications exist — one group that believes in *kaiga* for the sake of *kaiga*, and another group that is comprised of *non-kaiga* communities — is because neither could endure the symbolic forum, and sought to establish its own exclusive, territory-like communities. Ultimately, it was a question of being able to accept a hodgepodge of postmodern styles.

**MIWAKI:** Just to reiterate what we already know, although post-modernism is a trend that is able to withstand an absence of rationale, it has in the past been misunderstood as a hodgepodge style. "Hodgepodge" as a nutrient made it possible for the withering language of criticism to make a comeback. At this point, an analysis of this language should have been pursued — such an act, in itself, represents the ability to endure an absence of rationale.

Incidentally, the maxi "graphica" movement which was begun in 1988 with the purpose of creating large-scale, Manhattan-size painting, can be taken to represent a challenge to the notion that the art of printmaking is inferior to that of "*kaiga*". Mr. Kimura, you were one of the central players at the time — what did you understand this movement to be? Or did you consider a reevaluation of the symbolic forum and its vital issues because of the frustration you felt toward the fact that the forum lacked resolution?

**KIMURA:** In the 1970s, there was some sentiment that paintings and prints should be viewed as existing on the same level, but it never developed into a consensus. So, yes, there certainly was a sense of frustration at having totally missed out on opportunities in that area. I was surprised to find that there still existed a rather "feudalistic" point of view which regarded the print as subordinate to the painting because the print is actually a "duplicate" version of the original plate, whereas the painting exists in its "original" form. I still, however, did not feel that print works should have to assume a supportive role in relation to modernistic painting. Of course, on one hand, I think that it is possible to continue progress in the field of printmaking, which has for decades been socially accepted as an orthodox form of art, while allowing for a thorough immersion of the art in craftsmanship. I was more concerned, though with ensuring that my prints were created as a form of "aggressive intermediacy". And the large-scale works happened to come about as one result of various styles that were experimented with.

The creation of large-scale prints was not such a easy undertaking. Studios have to be secured, and you're always pressured to respect every aspect of the process; you've really got to just take a deep breath. And I think that there was also a sense of determination—kind of like giving myself an revitalizing shot in the arm—to stick with the direction that my style had taken. It might be getting a little off topic, but it was then that I began to give special attention to Warhol (*1st Maxi Graphica Exhibition Catalog*); in effect, I'm saying, let's return to the style of Warhol.

This did not, of course, mean that I was calling for a revival of "repetition". I am speaking of the fact that many artists who now study printmaking at art colleges, which underwent a process of generalization during the late 1960s, are being instilled with the significance of "neo-dadaism" and "pop-style" printmaking—styles which concentrated on the reproduction of art as opposed to its creation. Nor am I trying to indicate printmaking in the sense of its having been adopted by artists who had already established a foundation of style with modernistic paintings and sculpture, which were valued for the fact that they existed in their "original" forms. Rather, I thought that it was necessary to illustrate how "modern" the reverse of these conditions happens to be.

**MIWAKI:** I see. One could go so far as to say that only those artists who possess an awareness of printmaking are capable of creating paintings. Actually, I don't even think that we have to refer to such works as "paintings". Of course, I also understand one's hesitation to refer to them as "prints" as well. It might be best to replace the phrase "an awareness of printmaking with "a preparedness to endure an absence of rationale".



Unfortunately, printmaking, however, would not allow for such a definition, and that is because the surrounding conditions cannot allow it. The printmakers community possesses certain rights. I believe that Warhol once said, "I would like to become a machine." How would you feel about the use of the phrase, "I would like to become a machine that can endure an absence of rationale?"

**KIMURA:** Well, I don't want to seem like a resentful "prisoner" because what should have occurred in the 1970s didn't. (*laughs*) And I'm repeating myself, but the only option left at this point is to go through the formalities. You just have to believe in the possibility that certain changes, or shifts, could occur, and that some unnameable artist will spark a following. But there is currently no escape from the confines of the art world. In a sense, you still have the freedom to turn around and go back after having reached the end of a "dead-end road", but the formality that you may choose is merely temporary.

Although there was a readjustment of the art world during the 1970s, we see that it was impossible to make a successful return to the earlier notions that "a painting is a painting, and sculpture is sculpture". Even if you had tried to repeat the formalism typical of American art in the 1950s—the return of *kaiga* to a non-duplicated, one-dimensional form—the result would have been too phony.

During the latter half of the 1980s, just when the maxi graphica movement began to gain steam, I began to use the canvas more and more in my works. One form of serial art, which I refer to as the silkscreen painting, was characterized by its increased size and the absence of "editions". I used this form to suggest a parting from the Western "painting-equals-supreme-art" notion of the "diagram", as well as an intermediate mixture of the reproducibility of a print and the non-duplicated existence of a painting.

The serial work is primarily formed by the accumulation and restoration of two photographic images that have each undergone different methods of processing. The first of these images, which I refer to as "clouds", is a blurred photograph taken of a color field. The second image, "wind", was made using an "internegative"<sup>(10)</sup>, which was created by repeatedly shooting and retouching a drawing that featured tree leaves and other various items. The "internegative" is then oscillated parallel to the supporting film, giving the impression of a leaf that has been pressed up against a window, moving in a parallel direction.

You cannot classify these photographic images as being so-called "realistic" works, yet the sense of reality generated by the photographs cannot be ignored. However, when these images are replicated in the layers of ink on a silkscreen print, there is an

added sense of unique "matiere", or texture, and transparency. And if you extract a culture of this "layered image", which combines both "matiere" and transparency, and amplify it you'll see that the addition of foundation (primer) and brush strokes must come after the initial process is completed.(10)

**MIWAKI:** The *Pencil Series*, for which Mr. Kimura was granted the Kyoto National Museum of Modern Art Award at the 1974 International Biennial Exhibition of Prints in Tokyo, made use of a methodical combination of media, incorporating existing graph paper overlaid with images of hands and pencils; it was a series that, I believe, suggested unlimited possibilities — that the potential for the development of various other styles exists as well. Ultimately, a work of art exists as a form of "presentation". With no characteristic forum for interaction with concrete objects, reality in the form of a *symbol* continues to exist as an interim state of disposition. And I think that the *Pencil Series* effectively communicates this atmosphere.

**KIMURA:** Three prints out of the series were displayed at that Exhibition, but only one print out of the three was selected for the award, as opposed to the overall process. I rather suspect that the prints were mistaken for so-called "image prints". From my perspective, however, the *Pencil Series* was a kind of "shiri-tori"(11) match that made use of images instead of words to indicate the process of this style — a deviation from my original intentions. The layers which comprise the images; the maintenance of a certain tension generated by the ambiguity of the works, which were neither images nor objects. The series helps us to discover a sense of presence in the form of the image's "membrane"(12), which is born from out of this sustained tension, and this presence serves as a point of reference for all the works which have followed, up until the present.

**MIWAKI:** Actually, if you underscore the gap that lies between the *Pencil Series* and your recent works, it becomes evident to me that you have continued to indicate a "drifting" sense of presence characterized by reality in the form of a symbol (which acts as an interim state of disposition) through the assumption of an oblique posture in relation to the image. In reference to your more recent works, however, I feel that you're not merely trying to indicate this sense of presence, but are boldly trying to penetrate it instead. You avoid giving the implicit impression "expect the same thing to follow" — even though it does-but you're declaring, "Look! Pay attention to how I've arranged the placement here. "It reminds me of something the British post-minimalist artist Lisa Milroy once said. I asked her at a lecture she was giving in Kyoto how she went about determining placement. She answered that she relies on a "sense of rightness". If this sense had been "human" in origin, or had it been of a worthless political nature, then it would have lead to a different impression.

Thinking of the evolution from pop art to such forms of art as "shashin kaiga" (13) reminds me of the case of Gerhard Richter, which began with a "demonstration of capitalistic realism". To me, it seems that Richter leaves the question of placement up to the photograph, thus avoiding contaminating his works with the "odor" of his humanity. Whether you're talking about a soldier or a section of an abstract painting, capturing the object in a photograph gives birth to an "inhuman" arrangement of position that defies words. Furthermore, in observing a direct drawing of the photograph, we are confronted with a vision of the world which surpasses human intention in every single facet, right down to ordinary everyday occurrences. Here is where objects and phenomena that were supposed to have been tamed by humanity undergo a process of variation. But in your case, Mr. Kimura, since you do not leave the question of placement up to the camera, yours must be an experiment even more demanding than Richter's. Could you please tell us what kind of a "sense of rightness" — free of the "odor" of humanity — you plan to develop in the future?

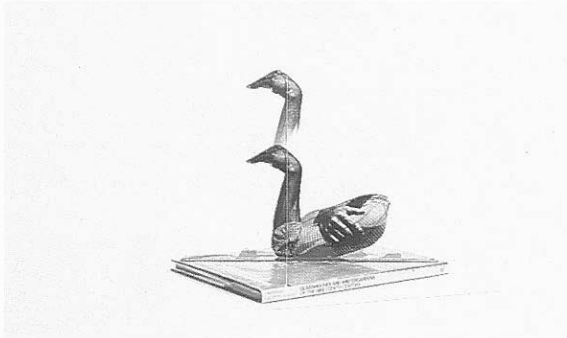
**KIMURA:** Well, you can't simply expect to solve the problem of structure with the mere use of a camera; it's more difficult than that. Some photographs reek of humanity, while some paintings do not — regardless of the fact that they were created by human hands. Human-like machines exist, as do machine-like humans. Until now, the primary tools I have used to determine placement have been photographs that I have taken or clippings from magazines, all which feature buildings I then begin by removing the "building" from the photo, and doctoring it from several different angles; then I inlay the "clouds" and the "wind". But this is only the beginning of the process. The work actually goes through a series of complex, form-altering changes.

For example, I experimented with several works entitled "MOMA" using snapshots of the interior of New York's Museum of Modern Art, and proved that, by extracting only a portion of one of the works, then enlarging or restoring it, an altogether separate, new work could be created. A *diversification* of the original details. At any rate, my intention was to aim for a kind of structure comprised of "clouds" and "wind", the "clouds" and the "wind" are made into plates and the entire structure is transformed into a kind of unit that is capable of being repeatedly copied. This method of expression was inspired by a vision of assembling a kit of prefab units into a modern-style structure. The shape that the "building" will ultimately assume is determined by a myriad of conditions that are combined to insure that balance is attained: terrain, climate, intended use, budget, technical skill, politics, law, and so on and so forth. And all of these conditions must be met before the *building* is completed, otherwise it's going to rock on its foundation. My works always experience this same sensation of "suspension" before reaching completion.

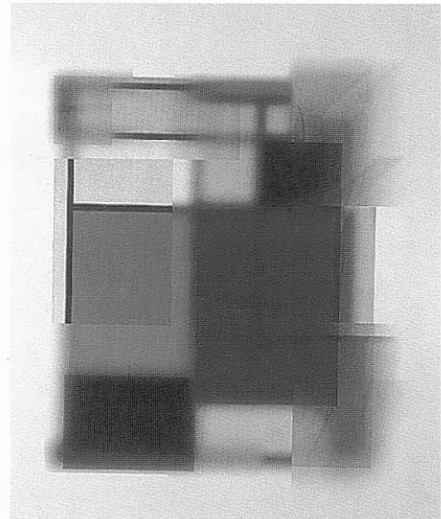
If I were to summarize the process of creating a serial "silkscreen painting", I might define it as a process of transforming a photograph of a painting into a unit, and then using that unit to create a painting. And what does the painting that is transformed into a unit, and the painting which is created from that unit, each indicate? The answers to these questions exist as conditions that must be fulfilled by the artist, lest the artist risk closing himself off.<sup>(14)</sup> However, the properties — focus blurs and other certain conditions determined in advance — of the "clouds" and "wind", combined into a single unit, in a way deny the completion of the work from the very beginning. In other words, you aim for completion, but the path that leads to it has been cut off in advance; at this point, you might think that your only remaining options are to go back in the opposite direction, or to close yourself off, but that's not really so. You've got to find some way to survive. That's how I feel about it, anyway.

## Notes

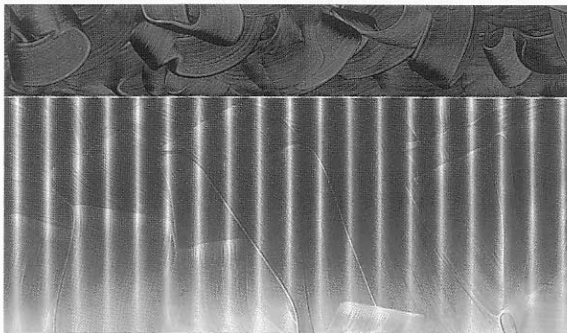
1. *"The Art of Printmaking"*
2. This is considered to have come about as a means of adapting to the pop art trends of the 1960s. At the time, the "death of the artist" — the primary creative source within the art world — was pronounced, and expression was being defined symbolically as an "interweaving of quotations".
3. The Japanese term *kaiga* indicates "painting", but can also be used to suggest "drawing" or "picture" as well.
4. *Kozo to Chikara: Kigo-ron wo Koete* ("Structure and Strength: Beyond Symbols") Asada, Akira; Keiso Shobo, Tokyo, 1983 & 1995.
5. At this time, the concept of *art* had not yet been fully developed, and therefore neither had the artist community. Artists nevertheless continued to produce works, thus effectively proving that the "death of the artist" could not have occurred.
6. Art Magazine, *"Art Notebook"*
7. A style of painting which at first appears primitive, lending a sense of strength and impact to the work.
8. Criticism that should have dealt with pressing issues during this period was replaced with a superficial form of criticism, creating a sense of confidence.
9. Among artists, a feeling that they were being advocated or protected by the critics.
10. As opposed to the conventional Western style which necessitates that the foundation and paint be applied beforehand.
11. A term used to refer to negatives created with a special kind of film; a negative which remains in an *intermediate* stage of development, never quite reaching completion.  
A Japanese word game in which one player has to say a word starting with the last syllable of the word given by the previous player; a word chain game.
12. A slight, undefinable barrier that separates deception from truth.
13. *"photograph paintings"*
14. If the artist fails in advance to answer these questions, he runs the risk of having his works misunderstood as being representative of his own personal taste — of revealing the "code" to his works.



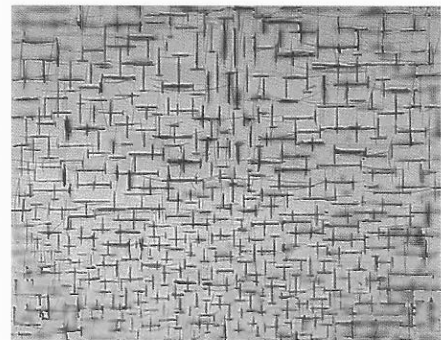
(1) Darty Blue 56×76cm  
screen print on BPK Rives  
Hideki Kimura 1984



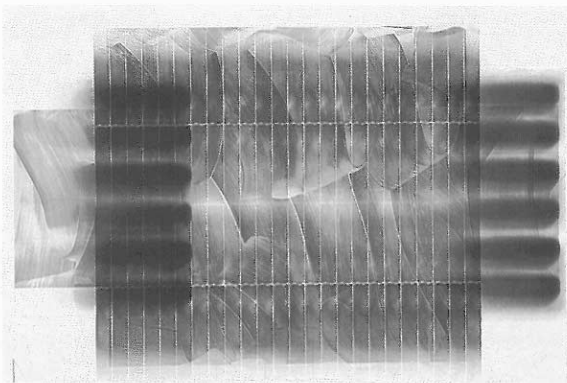
(4) Misty Dutch 8 ed 3066×50cm  
Screenprint on BPK Rives  
Hideki Kimura 1995



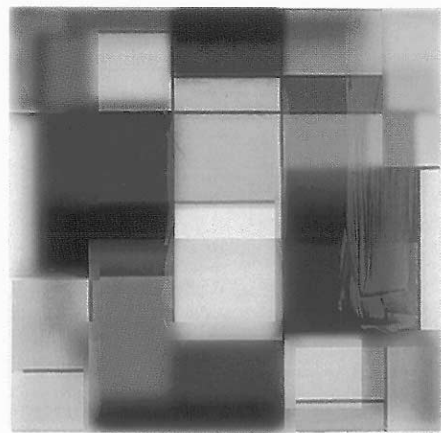
(2) Apuarium 155×95×2.5cm  
Acrylic & Screenprint on Canvas  
Hideki Kimura 1995



(5) Misty Dutch 13 ed 4056×76cm  
Screenprint on Arche 88  
Hideki Kimura 1998



(3) Misty Garden 2180×125×5cm  
Acrylic & Screenprint on Canvas  
Hideki Kimura 1995



(6) Misty Dutch 21 ed 7100×100cm  
Screenprint on Color Photo  
Hideki Kimura 1998