



Trinity Square Video and Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival present

Trans — Takashi Ishida

Exhibition: November 4 – December 19, 2008

Opening: Friday, November 14, 2008, 5 – 8pm

Trinity Square Video Gallery
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Suite 376

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www.trinitysquarevideo.com

hours: M – F 10am – 6pm, S 12 – 4pm



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INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

www.reelasian.com
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To say that Takashi Ishida's artworks are about time and space, is a deceptively simple statement. Indeed, Ishida's artworks are beautiful and complex examinations of just these two fundamental concepts that shape our understanding of the world. Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival and Trinity Square Video are proud to invite Ishida to develop a new work entitled *Trans* — at TSV, using the facilities for his site-specific process.

Takashi Ishida hails from Tokyo but for the past year has been living in Toronto after winning the prestigious Goto Commemorative Culture Award in 2007. While Ishida's films and installations might be described as animation, he shares little with the anime and manga styles that have come to define Japanese animation around the world. Instead, one must look further back in Japanese art to find Ishida's strongest influence, that of the Emakimono or hand-rolled scroll, a classical painting style that he contrasts with Western art traditions.

While hand-scrolls came to Japan from China with the introduction of Buddhism, they took on a uniquely Japanese aesthetic and cultural importance starting in the 11th century and continued into the 16th century as both religious and secular artworks. Emakimono (or Emaki for short) are silk or paper rolls meant to be unrolled horizontally by the viewer from right to left. Emaki is characterized by a "multi-focus perspective ... with a flatness of composition,"¹ which often features one character reappearing within the horizontal "time-space continuum to represent successive stages" of the narrative.² Ishida's debt to classical emakimono is most evident in his films *Ema/Emaki 2* (2006), *Ema/Emaki* (2004), *Emaki 2* (1996) and *Emaki* (1995). In each of these films, Ishida uses the classical emaki bird's eye perspective and bold ink brush strokes, to create an abstract riot of expressive lines and leaping gestures that unfurl through time.

Ishida also grapples with the many modes of spatial representation in western art traditions from Renaissance perspective to the abandonment of that tradition by the Abstract Expressionists and minimalists. In the film *Gestalt* (1999), we see a play back and forth from one

1. Bernadette Flynn, "Imaging Gameplay" (Sydney: University of Technology, 2005). 2. Ibid.

mode of western spatial representation through to the emaki style and to modern abstraction. *Gestalt* is also Ishida's first introduction of a specific place into the development of the work, in this case a studio with a large casement window with six panes. Ishida paints directly on the wall beside this window using its shadows and light as part of the compositions. Through many cycles of drawings, he alternatively creates the illusion of depth of the space beside the window or destroys it by flattening the picture-plane with abstract lines and shapes.

In his momentous work *Wall of Sea* (2007), created during a three-month residency at Yokohama Museum of Art, Ishida transformed the white-cube of the museum into both set and canvas for an ever-evolving seascape. The continuous looping installation is mesmerizing and suggestive of the infinite ebb and flow of the sea. With wave upon wave of blue and white paint, the viewer becomes aware of a disjunction between the fast pace of the action and the slow pace of the process Ishida went through to create the video. In all his time-lapse works, Ishida disrupts the notion of time progressing linearly from past to present to future. Instead, he presents time as an infinite cycle, sometimes fast or slow, but always repeating.

As with all of Ishida's works, *Trans* — will organically develop through the run of the exhibition, so audiences will want to make repeat visits to see how it has evolved. With the title, Ishida hints at movement, since in Latin the prefix *trans* means "across", "through" or "beyond". No matter what surprising developments Ishida produces while creating *Trans* — at TSV, we can be sure he will be transporting us through his unique time-space continuum and beyond.

— Aubrey Reeves
TSV Programming Director

Bio: Born in Tokyo in 1972, Takashi Ishida is a renowned Japanese artist/filmmaker. His works have shown extensively in Japan and internationally. In 2007, he received the prestigious "Most Promising Young Talent Prize" from the Fine Art Division of Goto Memorial Cultural Award. Since receiving the prize Ishida has been based in Toronto, where he will remain until the end of February 2009.