

# Aperto14 HARADA Yuki: Waiting for

2021.6.15 (Tue.) — 10.10 (Sun.)

Long-Term Project Room / 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

Organized by : 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (Kanazawa Art Promotion and Development Foundation)

In Cooperation with : Slacktide Co., Ltd.

## Waiting for

2021

Single channel color video with sound

33 hrs. 19 min. 26 sec.

Collection of the artist

Narration, Edit & Direction: Yuki Harada

CGI Design & Animation: Sun Junjie

Reserch & Sound Edit: Akane Tanaka

Corporation: Katsura Muramatsu, Kanta Nishio



This is an entirely manmade landscape, constructed using the CGI employed in production of open world games. An imaginary camera wanders aimlessly about, presenting fragmented visions of a lifeless world a million years in the past, and a million years in the future.

Audible throughout is a voice reciting the names of all the creatures existing on the planet today. This reading aloud of over 20,000 animal species takes in excess of 33 hours, and was performed by Harada himself almost without breaks.

Harada views the common names of fauna, which frequently include a feature of the animal from a human perspective, or a place name, as themselves a kind of “Noah’s Ark” conveying the relationship between humans and nature into the future. This voiceover listing the names of every animal amid a world resembling the distant future/past is sure to evoke images of “landscapes” we are destined never to see.

## One Million Seeings

2019

Single channel color video with sound

24 hrs. 5 min. 21 sec.

Collection of the artist

Adviser: Shintaro Wada

Assistant: Ken-ichi Nakahashi, Katsura Muramatsu

Technical Support: Honkbooks

Location: KEN NAKAHASHI



In 2017, Harada began collecting photos picked up by junk removal firms, for which there were no subsequent takers. He dubbed these pics with nowhere to go *shinrei-shashin* or “ghost photos.”

This work documents a 24-hour performance in which the artist engaged with these photographs under the condition that he “looked at them until I could identify some relationship between myself and the photo.” Harada studies each picture earnestly, as if tracing the fact that the photo in his hand and the scene within it were “once seen by someone.” What would seem a rather matter-of-fact task is accompanied by the physical realities of intense concentration, boredom, and fatigue, and the difficulty of identifying and understanding values and systems in these randomly appearing fragments is obvious.

*\*One Million Seeings* includes photographs of unknown ownership and/or subject; please note that efforts to find this information are ongoing.

## Artist's comment

I'd been wondering for some time what exactly constitutes a contemporary "landscape." Traditional landscape paintings more often than not depict an elevated overview. These days though, merely fixing the viewpoint in a high place is unlikely to give an overview of the time frame we know as "contemporary."

So where should we set our viewpoint? My attempt to answer this was 2021's *Waiting for*, with its recitation of all members of the animal kingdom (including *homo sapiens*) currently found on earth, and visualizations of scenes without various of these, a million years in the past, and future.

Scraping together material from a number of sources, and seeking advice from academic societies and research institutions, I compiled a huge list of common animal names in Japanese and English. Having managed to complete this list, I realized that it would take at least thirty hours to read aloud the more than 20,000 names on it.

Initially I imagined that in order to create a single "viewpoint" covering all of these names, I would have to read them non-stop without pausing. But when I actually started trying to recite them, I failed several times, due to fatigue, drowsiness, and misreading, so in the end decided to divide the reading into two sound recordings of twenty and ten hours each to make the work.

My decision was prompted by having been powerfully reminded of the limits of the human body. In this recitation, like water spilling over from a full glass, a surfeit of information and the physical strain of the exercise combined to make it constantly unmanageable in some way or another, for both performer and spectator. It was in this spilled-over state that I felt something arise we mere humans can only guess at, something worthy of the name, "landscape."

In a similar sense, *One Million Seeings* (2019) is also characterized by something constantly spilling over.

The performance carried out in this work, which involved looking at a continuous stream of photos for twenty-four hours, exceeded the limits of human endurance both physically, and cognitively. The task of looking at one unknown photo after another, is not about drawing images over to the human side and interpreting them at human convenience, but drawing the human body over to the side of the images and attempting to build a new kind of relationship.

Adopting not a human (ie physical) viewpoint but a non-human (image) viewpoint is the ethos shared by these two works, and I believe the approach required to bring about the appearance of contemporary landscapes.

The exhibition/work title "Waiting for" reflects my desire in the face of spatial and temporal expansiveness beyond human imagination, that rather than taking the reins, the creator instead waits, with all the rights and wrongs, good and evil that may involve, and sees the situation right through to its end.

Yuki Harada