

## What Would Hiroshi Sugimoto Do? What Would Museums Do?

Deified Artist and Museum—

Hiroshi Sugimoto's "History of History" (Summary)

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SUGIMOTO Hiroshi (1948–), who has received international praise for his photographs, has produced his "History of History" since 2003. Sugimoto constructs this with his photographs and collection of objects including artworks and 'materials' from around the world. Designated "exchange values" by the artist, "History of History" reveals the inalienable relationships between artists and museums in today's capitalistic and phallogocentric system, by delineating the structure whereby artists and museums enhance their social statuses by deifying one another. By centering upon a "History of History", the relationships and borders delineating artist, artwork, and museum can be explored. 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa opened in 2004 with its aim to create new values. The "History of History" exhibition at the museum professed Sugimoto's expression as an action of relativizing history, and that the relativization of all things including himself is the essence of his expression. However, by investigating the "History of History", the characteristics of "mystified history" and "deified artist" emerge. Also regarded as his "self history", Sugimoto's perspective of history and art loosely overlaps those of the hosting museums, yet the differences and borders of their perspectives remained obscured. In the frameworks of "Japanese art", "Asian art", "Photography", and "Contemporary art", Sugimoto was always deified as the great artist, while hosting institutions secured themselves as deified museums of beauty and knowledge. Our ultimate question is: what would artists and museums do without this ideology?