



Exhibition Title	Peter Fischli David Weiss
Period	Saturday, September 18 – Saturday, December 25, 2010 10:00 - 18:00 (until 20:00 on Fridays and Saturdays) Note: Tickets available until 30 minutes before closing Closed: Mondays (open on September 20, October 11, November 22) September 21, October 12, November 24
Venue	21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (7 galleries / approx. 1000m ²)
Admission	General: ¥1,000 (¥800*) / College students: ¥800 (¥600*) / Elem/JH/HS: ¥400 (¥300*) / 65 and older: ¥800 (*Prices in brackets for groups of 20 or more, and pre-exhibition sales)
Number of Exhibited Works	70–80 (approx. 200 objects)
Organized by	21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (Kanazawa Art Promotion and Development Foundation)
Co-organized by	The Yomiuri Shimbun Hokuriku Branch, The Japan Association of Art Museums
Sponsored by	Embassy of Switzerland in Japan
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In cooperation with	Lufthansa Cargo AG; Katolec Corporation; NEC Display Solutions, Ltd.; Ufer! Art Documentary

Media Contact 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

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About the Exhibition

Traveling through an endless tunnel of changing light and color. A rat and bear go out on the town and through art and philosophy offer insights into the absurdities of the human condition. Everyday items teeter, precariously balanced. Energy passes by a whisker from one piece of junk to another, in a series of seemingly impromptu chain reactions. Airport scenes from across the globe float alongside a panoramic selection of this world's doings, big and small, rendered in ninety or so pieces of clay. Questions about life and the world that might occur to anyone appear and disappear, drifting ceaselessly through the air. In tiny black and white photos fairytale-like scenes have soft black contours. The tranquil, mundane everyday is suffused with wonder and chaos, tragedy and comedy, melancholy and nothingness.

Wielding a formidable armory of media from photography to sculpture to video and more with extraordinary flexibility, Peter Fischli and David Weiss focus intensely on familiar scenes and things, presenting divergent meanings and diversity of interpretation via a combination of meticulous planning and coincidence, throwing into relief the essence of the human condition in works shot through with irony and humor. We hope viewers will enjoy the strange wonder of Fischli/Weiss art, and their encyclopedic worlds suffused with an original, unconventional aesthetic.

Exhibition Features**1. First solo show in Asia by the leading contemporary artists**

The works of Peter Fischli and David Weiss have never been shown on this scale in Japan, or in fact anywhere in Asia. This Kanazawa exhibition is their first major solo exhibition in Japan, and the first show of its type in Asia.

2. A multilayered, interwoven, expanding encyclopedic realm

Employing their versatile command of photography, video, sculpture, installation, drawing, books and more, Fischli and Weiss focus on familiar situations and objects, expressing the beauty in the everyday from original perspectives, and adding fresh value to our surroundings. Their attempts to embrace everything from snapshots of individual lives and the most trivial of things to the history of humanity and the planet, from thoughts that occur from day to day to profound psychological insights into the human condition, and things that are polar opposites, are also an accumulation of the vast amounts of time spent by the artists producing their works, and their adaptable approaches. A subjective, encyclopedic view of the world created by the interweaving of order and chaos, their work is thus always open to the viewer.

3. New versions of internationally renowned works plus totally new works

In 2006 Fischli and Weiss produced a new version of *Suddenly this Overview*, the piece that propelled them to international fame when it was unveiled in 1981 at their first solo show. This will be on display in Kanazawa. *Untitled (Questions)*, which won a Golden Lion at the Venice Biennale, will be presented in the form of new text to coincide with this show, and a new *Questions* installation using Japanese text. Thus Kanazawa will play host to Fischli/Weiss's very latest offerings.

Related Events**Peter Fischli David Weiss
"Ask the artists" – Q&A session**

Date/time: Saturday 18 September, 15:00 – 16:00

Venue: Lecture Hall, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

Admission: No charge (with same-day ticket to the exhibition*)

Capacity: 70

Note: Numbered tickets will be distributed from 10:00 am that day before the Lecture Hall.

*please view exhibition in advance

Gallery talks with the curator

Date/time: Friday 22 October, 18:30 – 19:30

Saturday 27 November, 16:00 – 17:00

Thursday 23 December, 14:00 – 15:00

Meet at Lecture Hall, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

Admission: No charge (with same-day ticket to the exhibition*)

Language: Japanese

Artist Profile

Peter FISCHLI (1952-)**David WEISS (1946-)**

Fischli and Weiss got to know each other in the late 1970s through the artist Urs Luthi, and the Kontiki bar then the nexus of Zurich's art scene. In 1979 they produced "Sausage Photographs", a series using sausage, ham and sundry other small goods to reproduce everyday scenarios, presenting the photos at the exhibition "Saus und Braus" in 1980. In 1981 they produced the video *The Least Resistance* and booklet *Order and Cleanliness*, for which they dressed as a rat and a bear to expose the contradictions of the social system, and attempt to construct their own world order. Since then the artists have demonstrated an extraordinarily flexible command of various media in works focusing on the 'ordinary'. Their work, in which vast amounts of time are spent on each series or motif, mix the massive and the minute, the ordinary and extraordinary, reason and irrationality, order and disorder to offer new visions of the world. Homing in on the true nature of society and humanity, yet doing so with a healthy dose of humor, their art is highly regarded internationally and has taken them to numerous international exhibitions, including Documenta 8 in 1987, where they unveiled *The Way Things Go*, and the 1995 Venice Biennale, where they presented *Untitled*, a total of 90 hours of video played over twelve screens. *Untitled (Questions)* presented at Venice in 2003 also earned them a Golden Lion. Recent outings have been the 2006 retrospective "Flowers & Questions" in collaboration with the Kunsthaus Zürich and Tate Modern, and in 2009 the solo show "Are Animals People?" staged at the El Museo Centro Nacional de Arte in Madrid. In 2008 meanwhile they produced the work *Sun, Moon and Stars* comprising 800 pages of advertising copy, developed out of a commission for the annual report of Swiss media conglomerate Ringier AG. Fischli and Weiss have been and continue to be an outstanding influence for countless artists across the generations.



photograph © Walter Pfeiffer

Peter FISCHLI

1952 Born in Zurich
 1975-6 Studies at Academia di Belle Arti, Urbino
 1976-7 Studies at Academia di Belle Arti, Bologna
 1978 Group exhibition at Academia, Bologna
 1979 Begins collaboration with David Weiss ("Sausage Photographs" [Wurstserie])
 1981 Group exhibition "Bilder", Kunstmuseum Winterthur
 Currently based in Zurich

David WEISS

1946 Born in Zurich
 1963-4 Foundation Course, Kunstgewerbeschule, Zurich
 1964-5 Sculpture Course, Kunstgewerbeschule, Basel
 1970 "Sketches" (with Urs Luthi), Edition Toni Gerber, Bern
 1974 "Drei Geschichten", Edition Stähli, Zurich
 1975 "Up and Down Town", Edition Stähli, Zurich
 "The Desert is Across the Street" (with Urs Luthi and Elke Kilga), Galerie Stähli, Zurich
 1976 Solo show, Galerie Stähli, Zurich
 1979 Solo show, Galerie Gugu Ernesto, Cologne
 1979 Begins collaboration with Peter Fischli ("Sausage Photographs" [Wurstserie])
 1981 Group exhibition "Bilder", Kunstmuseum Winterthur
 Currently based in Zurich

**Works / Series
to be Displayed**

Works marked with an asterisk (*) are available for media use by request: press@kanazawa21.jp
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Refrain from cropping or laying type over the photos.

Please send a proof (paper, URL, CD or DVD) to the museum for approval.

Entrance area

How to Work Better



A ten-point manifesto aimed at improving attitudes to work, posted at an anonymous company. Liberated from their limited place and purpose, laid out on paper and pasted up, words such as 'Learn to listen' and 'Smile' take on a more universal feel and resonate with all who see them.

1*
How to Work Better, 1992
poster
H149.8 x W103 cm

Galleries 7 and 8

*Kanalvideo
at Palazzo Litta*



An endless tunnel seems to lead the viewer into the realm of the unconsciousness. A mysterious world with occasional flashes of red and yellow, and bathed in white light, this is in fact part of Zurich's sewer system.

2,3,4*
[Reference photo]
Kanalvideo, 1992
video, 60 min. 10 sec.
video still

Galleries 7 and 8

Büsi

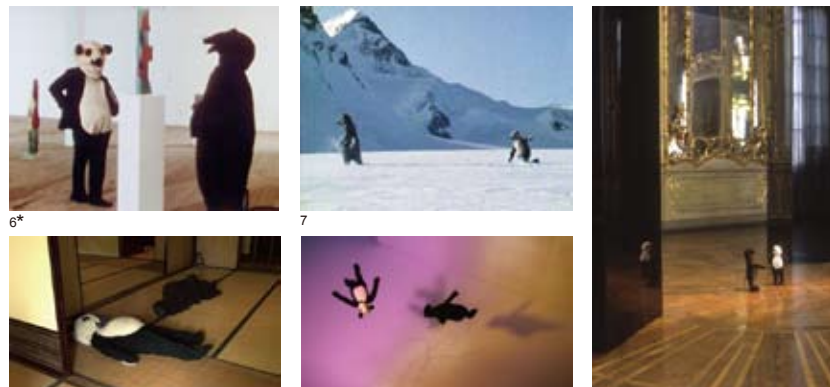


A kitten eagerly laps milk from a saucer. Suddenly it lifts its head and stares straight ahead, but after a while returns to the saucer, and is absorbed once again in the act of drinking the milk. An everyday scene is thus isolated and reproduced on a TV monitor placed on a stand.

5*
Büsi, 2001
video, 6 mins.
video still

Galleries 7 and 8

Rat and Bear



The 'rat' and 'bear' have been a feature of Fischli and Weiss's practice since the early days. In the first video, *The Least Resistance* (1980-81) they plot to make a profit out of art but become enmeshed in a murder case. Through various trials and tribulations, they begin to develop their own take on how society really works. In the followup, *The Right Way* (1982-83), armed with intellect and ambition the pair explore ways to survive in the natural world. The large rat and bear featured in these two works are now displayed in glass cases. A small rat and bear meanwhile tour the likes of Baroque palaces and Japanese gardens. A rat and bear hanging from the ceiling, floating in mid-air, vanish into the depths of smoke and technicolor lights. In the videos of the early 1980s Fischli dressed as the rat, Weiss as the bear (or rather, panda). This rat and bear, also the artists' alter egos, appear in the booklet, and as sculptures. A mini rat and bear appearing in recent works seem to have come from another dimension to explore this world. The characters of Rat and Bear gain added complexity with each work.

6*
The Least Resistance, 1980-81
16mm film, 30 mins.
film still
camera: Jürg V. Walther

7
The Right Way, 1982-83
55 mins.
film still
camera: Pio Corradi

8*
In the Garden, 2008-10
video
video still

9*
Untitled (Mobile Video), 2009
HDV, 30 mins.
video still
camera/montage: Jason Klimatsas

10
Part of a Film with a Rat and a Bear,
2008/10
3 channel video projections. HDV,
9 min. 20 sec. 13 min. 33 sec.
30 min. 11 sec
video still

Corridor

“Grey Sculptures”

11
Tube, 1986
 polyurethane, cloth, paint
 H40 x L180 x D70 cm

12*
Animal, 1986
 polyurethane, cloth, paint
 H50 x W87 x D55 cm



11



12*

“Grey Sculptures” are sculptures made out of polyurethane. *Furnished Apartment*, *Tube* and *Equilibrium Organ* are all conceived with inner spaces in mind. Animal is a creature of indeterminate species, an abstract concept of an animal. The holes in the body, for the eyes, ears etc., are windows on its inner space.

Corridor

“Equilibres”

13*
Melancholy, Longing, Strategy
 (from “Equilibres”), 1984/85
 photograph

14*
The Secret of the Pyramids
 (from “Equilibres”), 1984/85
 photograph

15*
Outlaws (from “Equilibres”), 1984/85
 photograph



13*



14*



15*

Tires, chairs, shoes, brushes, forks, kitchenware etc teeter precariously in a variety of poses. Capturing in photographs forms incapable of remaining stationary, this series gives them a permanence as “momentary sculpture.” The sight of these arrangements held together unsteadily by gravity and balance plays unexpectedly on the viewer’s emotions. A rich narrative vein runs through the works, each of which has a title such as *The Secret of the Pyramids* or *Outlaws*.

Galleries 9 and 10

The Way Things Go
Making Things Go

16*,17
The Way Things Go, 1986-87
 16 mm film, 30 mins.
 film still

18*
Making Things Go, 1985/2006
 DVD
 video still
 camera: Patrick Frey



16*



17



18*

A video work inspired by the making of the “Equilibres” series. Rubbish bags, tires, ladders, plastic bottles and other empty containers, balloons, chairs, a mop, simple wheeled contraptions: foam, smoke, fire etc. triggered by gravity, centrifugal force, hydraulic force and chemical reactions pass energy from one item to the next in falling-domino fashion. Any hint of human involvement has been excised from this narrative woven solely by phenomena, in a film where individual pieces of junk seem to actively head in one direction to pass on energy. *Making Things Go* is a documentary capturing the meticulous and time-consuming process by which Fischli and Weiss created each of the energy connections required for *The Way Things Go*.

Galleries 9 and 10

Son et Lumière
 – le rayon vert

19*
Son et Lumière – le rayon vert, 1990
 flashlight, turntable, plastic cup,
 adhesive tape
 H16 x W25 x D40 cm



19*

A mechanical sculpture made by combining found objects: a turntable, a disposable plastic cup, and a flashlight. Light shines on the cup on the turntable, the rotation of which engenders moving light images that change in unpredictable ways.

Courtyard

Untitled
 (Concrete Landscape)

20*
 [Reference photo]
 concrete landscape, work in progress

21
 [Reference photo]
 concrete landscape in the studio



20*



21

One of the artists' explorations of 'how to represent landscapes.' By receiving rain and light this 'landscape' molded from concrete and modified by hand becomes in itself a landscape directly reflecting natural phenomena.

Gallery 11

Airports

22*, 23
Airports, 1987-
 c-print
 H160 x W225 cm each



22*



23

Photos of airports taken on Fischli and Weiss's travels around the world since 1987, *Airports* is an ongoing project reflecting the uniformity of airports thanks to their common function even in different cultures, tantalizing glimpses of national identity gained from onboard aircraft, light at night, raindrops, and the splendid spectacle of the airport through the window.

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Gallery 11

Suddenly this Overview

24
[Reference photo]
Mick Jagger and Brian Jones going home satisfied after composing I can't get no satisfaction (from *Suddenly this Overview*), 1981 unfired clay
Collection Emmanuel Hoffman Foundation



24

25
[Reference photo]
Popular opposites: inside and outside (from *Suddenly this Overview*), 1981 unfired clay
Collection Emmanuel Hoffman Foundation



25

26
[Reference photo]
Bread (from *Suddenly this Overview*), 1981 unfired clay
Collection Emmanuel Hoffman Foundation



26

Fairytales, technology, modernization, sport, movies, The Bible, nature, entertainment, scenes from the artists' private lives – *Suddenly this Overview* is a collection of clay sculptures recreating various events in human history, and the history of the planet. The around ninety figures range from those rendered in meticulous detail, to coarse, sketch-like pieces. As is implied by "The World We Live In" – the title originally envisaged for the work – this panorama of interwoven happenings in the world arising out of the artists' subjective viewpoint, with its assembly of events both large and small, questions what it means to be alive. First unveiled in 1981 as an installation consisting of around 200 objects, a new version comprising about 90 was presented in 2006. This new version will be on show in Kanazawa.

Gallery 12

Polyurethane Objects

27
[Reference photo]



27

Fiscli and Weiss have been making objects from polyurethane since the early 1980s, fabricating and coloring by hand precise copies of the sort of items found in workshops and artists' studios to recreate the original. The resulting installations composed of objects such as tools, tires and household goods evoke the presence of those who live in that place, or use those items. And while physically they do project a powerful presence, their material qualities and untidy state also speak of fragility and ephemerality.

Corridor

"Sausage Photographs"

28*
At the Carpet Shop (from "Sausage Photographs"), 1979 color photograph, 24 x 36 cm

29
In the Mountains (from "Sausage Photographs"), 1979 color photograph, 24 x 36 cm

30*
Fashion Show (from "Sausage Photographs"), 1979 color photograph, 24 x 36 cm



28*



29



30*

Fiscli and Weiss's first collaborative effort. Using sausages and slices of various deli meats, cigarette butts etc. in settings such as inside a refrigerator, a washbasin, a bed and bathtub, they constructed various scenes: a fire, a mountain vista, a car accident, and historical events. The juxtaposition of the narrative quality of this recreated world and the utilitarian nature of the materials employed says much about the artists' eagerness to explore different modes of expression.

Corridor

Fotografias

31*, 32*
Fotografias, 2004/05 black and white photograph 10 x 15 cm each



31*



32*

Postcard size images depict flowers, waves, locomotives, clowns, women, food, landscapes, cities, villages, space, pirates of the South Seas, animals. By zooming in, changing to black and white, or altering the exposure, these images that at first glance appear to be paintings are found to be photographs reflecting a

different world to that of conventional images. Herein one can identify the artists' attempt to encompass everything in the world via the technique of focusing on a single object, and to project, from visible phenomena, hidden depths or the social psyche.

Gallery 14

Questions

33*
[Reference photo]
Untitled (Questions), 2003 Installation view at the 50th Venice Biennale (2003)



33*

'Who runs the city?' 'Where is the galaxy heading?' 'Must we live with our own opinions?' These and other questions from the trivial and familiar to the philosophical drift ceaselessly in the air. This interrogative torrent, generated by a phalanx of slide projectors vanishes and is replaced simultaneously by new questions before the viewer/reader has time to offer an answer. These 'questions' on subjects such as the world and the human psyche appear in *Order and Cleanliness* (1981), a work actually presented as a booklet setting out the new world order drawn up in diagram form by Rat and Bear in the final scene of the 1981 film *The Least Resistance*. In the later *Question Pot (Big)* (1986), a large container molded from polyurethane, questions were written all over the inside of the pot in spiral formation. In 2002 this was in turn became the book *Will Happiness Find Me?* And still the questions come, more and more and more...

All descriptions by: Chieko Kitade
Translation from Japanese: Pamela Miki

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