



MIYAKO ISHIUCHI – 2014 HASSELBLAD AWARD WINNER

The Hasselblad Foundation is pleased to announce that Japanese photographer Miyako Ishiuchi is the recipient of the 2014 Hasselblad Foundation International Award in Photography for the sum of SEK 1,000,000 (approx. EUR 110,000). The award ceremony takes place in Tokyo on 6th March, 2014. An exhibition of her work, *Miyako Ishiuchi – 2014 Hasselblad Award Winner*, will open on 7th November, 2014, at the Hasselblad Center in the Gothenburg Museum of Art, Sweden. The same day, the Hasselblad Foundation will host a symposium with the award winner, and a book on the work of Miyako Ishiuchi will be released.

The Foundation's citation regarding the 2014 Award Winner Miyako Ishiuchi:

During a period of 35 years Miyako Ishiuchi has established an international career, which is both impressive and highly significant. Her strength of character and uncompromising vision has resulted in some of the most powerful as well as personal representations of postwar Japan. Ishiuchi's work is extremely coherent and developing in a determined and distinctive way; using the camera and all of its aesthetic potential to investigate the intersection of the political and the personal aspects of memory. Ishiuchi has been both a pioneer and a role model for younger artists, not least as a woman working in the male-dominated field of Japanese photography. She has continued to innovate, explore and agitate throughout her career, both in terms of ideas and of her style and approach.

This year's award committee, which submitted its proposal to the Foundation's board of directors, consisted of:

MARCEL FEIL *chair*

Deputy-Director, Artistic Affairs, FOAM, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

SIMON BAKER

Curator of Photography and International Art at Tate Modern, London, UK

SUNHEE CHOI

Freelance Art Adviser, Journalist and Director of Choi&Lager Gallery, Paris, France

HENK SLAGER

Dean of the Graduate School at the Faculty of Visual Art and Design, at MaHKU, the Netherlands

JIYOON LEE

Director and Independent Curator, SUUM, London, UK, and Seoul, South Korea

MIYAKO ISHIUCHI was born in Gunma, Japan, in 1947, but grew up in Yokosuka, one of the principal mainland American military bases in postwar Japan. She is part of the generation of Japanese photographers which was inspired by the VIVO and Provoke groups in 1960s Tokyo, and by an approach to photography, which balanced the need to document pressing social situations and conditions with a subjective, almost poetic inflexion.



Her early work *Yokosuka Story* (1976–1977) deals directly with the impact of the American occupation of her hometown, but expressed poetically through a series of oblique and beautiful images of the town and its environment. References to the occupation are restrained and inflected only indirectly, and seem instead to deal with the artist's memories of the place. In retrospect *Yokosuka Story* can be seen as a part of a trilogy of works with *Apartment* (1977–1978) and *Endless Night* (1978–1980), which established Ishiuchi as one of the most respected and compelling photographers of her generation, as well, importantly, as being a female photographer in a context and moment dominated by her male peers.

This level of respect and esteem in Japan included being awarded the Ihei Kimura Memorial Photography Award for her work as early as 1979. Ishiuchi, however, has never rested on her early achievements and has continued to produce, exhibit and publish new work throughout her career.

A second important moment in her work began with *1·9·4·7* (1988–89), *1906 to the skin* (1991–1993), *Scars* (1991–2003) and *Innocence* (1994–2007). It is important to note that for this work Ishiuchi completely re-invented her aesthetic, turning away from the grainy, suggestive style of the late 1970s, to a more minimalist, clear-cut registering.

Ishiuchi was chosen to represent Japan at the 2005 Venice Biennale with the work *Mother's* (2000–2005). It is based on the documentation of her mother's possessions, particularly those that had been in direct contact with the body. The object-based and yet highly personal representation of Ishiuchi's mother offers a unique perspective on a woman's destiny in postwar Japan.

This work was followed by a lengthy study of the memorialization of the atomic bombings and their effect on Japanese society, *ひろしま/hiroshima* (2007–), in which Ishiuchi photographed material remains (clothes, personal effects, and objects), left in the aftermath of the bombings and preserved until present day. In one of her most recent series, *Silken Dreams* (2009–2012), she addresses the history of the Japanese silk industry, including the meaning of the kimono and the site of her birthplace, which was once important in the textile production.

The meaning and treatment of surface is highly significant in Ishiuchi's work. A surface, whether the human skin or personal clothes, not only has the ability to both hide and reveal what is underneath, it also acts as an intermediate between two spheres: the interior and the exterior, the private and the public, and the past and the present. A surface often bears witness of past events and therefore of the passing of time. For this reason Ishiuchi pays close attention to printmaking and the quality of the surface of the photographic print.

Her decision to head-on tackle the politics of remembrance, and particularly the vexed issues surrounding the atomic bombing of Japan by the United States, places her in the tradition of politically motivated practice that includes the great names of Shomei Tomatsu and Kikuji



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Kawada. Not only, however, has Ishiuchi had a considerable career in Japan, where she has been publishing and showing works continuously for 35 years, but she is also known and respected internationally. She has exhibited numerous in Europe and the United States, and her work is included in major collections worldwide. Miyako Ishiuchi is one of the most dedicated photographers of her generation. She has continued to innovate, explore and agitate throughout her career, both in terms of ideas and in terms of her style and approach.

THE HASSELBLAD FOUNDATION was established in 1979 under the terms of the last will and testament of Dr. Victor Hasselblad and his wife Erna. The purpose of the Foundation is to promote scientific education and research in the natural sciences and photography. One of the Foundation's awards, the annual international award for outstanding achievement in photography, awarded in 2014 to Miyako Ishiuchi, is considered the most important photography prize worldwide.

In the exhibition hall of the Hasselblad Foundation, the Hasselblad Center, situated in the Gothenburg Museum of Art, four to five exhibitions are presented annually, one of which displays works by the current year's Hasselblad Award winner. One of the other annual exhibitions, New Nordic Photography, promotes younger photographers. Some of the exhibitions tour in Sweden and abroad. The Foundation also has a photo collection focusing on the Hasselblad Award Winners and Nordic photographers.

The exhibition of Miyako Ishiuchi's works will open at the Hasselblad Center on 7th November, 2014, and will be curated by Dragana Vujanovic and Louise Wolthers.

Gothenburg, 6th Mars, 2014

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