

Light and Gesture

Jyrki Siukonen in dialogue with **Kenji Nakahashi** and **Iwao Yamawaki**

MIYAKO YOSHINAGA | PARIS PHOTO 2026

Voices Sector | Booth C-61

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Grand Palais, Paris

MIYAKO YOSHINAGA is pleased to present *Light and Gesture*, featuring a new body of photographic sculptures by Finnish artist **Jyrki Siukonen** (b. 1959), in dialogue with selected works by Japanese artists **Kenji Nakahashi** (1947–2017) and **Iwao Yamawaki** (1898–1987), at Paris Photo 2026 in the Voices sector. Centered on Siukonen's new exploration of photographic imagery, the presentation investigates the interplay of light, gesture, and materiality, and the fragile boundaries between presence and absence.

Long recognized as one of Finland's leading sculptors, Siukonen has developed a multidisciplinary practice encompassing sculpture, installation, drawing, and writing. His deliberate integration of photographic imagery marks a significant new direction in his artistic career, opening a dialogue between sculpture, photography, and the material object. Created especially for Paris Photo 2026, his new series, *Hand in Hand*, extends his longstanding interest in the relationship between physical forms, everyday materials, and human perception.

Employing found imagery of hands—humanity's most fundamental tools—Siukonen uses layering, multiple exposures, and combinations with everyday materials to poetically transform these images into an imagined tactile realm in which forms and gestures alternately emerge and recede. Through transparent surfaces, overlapping images, and sculptural interventions, his works challenge distinctions between two-dimensional representation and three-dimensional form. The human hand becomes both a subject and a metaphor for artistic creation, embodying the intimate relationship between touch, gesture, and the making of images.

Among the highlights are two works, *The Needles (a memory)* and *The Needles (a recollection)*, which pay homage to **William Henry Fox Talbot**, one of photography's pioneers. Drawing upon Talbot's 1839 image *The Needles*, these works revisit the experimental spirit of early photography and its exploration of the relationship between light, objects, and photographic representation. Reflecting on the origins of

cameraless imagery and the material processes of photography, Siukonen reimagines these historical investigations through contemporary sculptural constructions. His works suggest that photography is not merely a means of capturing the visible world, but a medium in which memory, materiality, and imagination continually intersect.

Siukonen's work is placed in dialogue with two Japanese artists whose photographic experiments offer distinct historical perspectives. **Kenji Nakahashi**, who moved from Japan to New York in 1973, developed a conceptually driven practice encompassing photography, drawing, painting, and printmaking. In his *A Cut-Out Sky* series, fragments of the New York sky framed by towering buildings become abstract compositions in which voids and silhouettes create a charged interplay between presence and absence. A particular highlight is a group of **ten unique vintage experimental darkroom prints** from the series, revealing Nakahashi's meticulous exploration of color filtration and photographic processes. These working prints offer rare insight into his pursuit of an idealized blue, transforming the observed sky into a conceptual image through repeated experimentation.

Iwao Yamawaki, a pioneering Japanese photographer and architect, studied at the Bauhaus in Dessau, Germany, from 1930 to 1932. Influenced by the school's interdisciplinary approach, he developed an experimental photographic language characterized by geometric composition, unexpected perspectives, and the interplay of light and shadow. His photographs transform familiar subjects into ephemeral structures, emphasizing their sculptural and spatial qualities. Yamawaki's investigation of light and form finds a particular affinity with Siukonen's contemporary exploration of photography as both image and object.

The human hand appears in the selected works of all three artists, providing a subtle visual connection across generations and artistic practices. Yet their differing approaches—Siukonen's layered photographic sculptures, Nakahashi's experimental manipulation of photographic images, and Yamawaki's modernist exploration of light and form—reveal the medium's evolving expressive possibilities. Together, their works propose photography as a threshold, one that captures and holds the visible in time and space, yet remains on the verge of dissolution.

Presented during Paris Photo's celebration of the Bicentennial of Photography, *Light and Gesture* offers a timely reflection on the medium's origins, material history, and continuing reinvention. Siukonen's homage to early photographic experimentation, together with Nakahashi's darkroom investigations and Yamawaki's Bauhaus-influenced photographs, establishes a dialogue between historical processes and contemporary artistic practice.

Miyako Yoshinaga has worked with Siukonen for more than two decades, beginning with his first New York solo exhibition in 2002, followed by presentations in 2004 and 2019. Recognizing the significance of his recent exploration of photographic imagery, Yoshinaga initiated this project to introduce this new development in his practice to an international photography audience. Paris Photo's Voices sector provides an ideal context for this presentation.

About MIYAKO YOSHINAGA

Founded in New York in 1999, MIYAKO YOSHINAGA specializes in contemporary art and photography, with particular expertise in Japanese and Asian artists. Following twenty-five years of gallery exhibitions, the business now operates as a private art dealership and advisory, working internationally with artists, estates, collectors, and institutions. MIYAKO YOSHINAGA has participated regularly in Paris Photo since 2017.

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