

MIYAKO YOSHINAGA

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For Immediate Release

Mikiko Hara *Kyrie*

September 12 – October 26, 2019

August 5, 2019, New York —To kick off the 2019 fall art season, **MIYAKO YOSHINAGA** is pleased to present its second solo exhibition by **Mikiko Hara**, an award-winning Japanese artist known for her square-format snapshot photography. Accompanied by the artist's new publication *PHOTOPAPER 44/45*, the exhibition will run from September 12 to October 26, 2019. An opening reception will be held on Thursday, September 12 from 6pm to 8pm.

In Hara's latest series *Kyrie* — the title of which is inspired by its mystic sound rather than its origin in Christianity — the artist's intuitive eye for mundane scenes taps into hidden narratives behind them as she navigates her daily life in the suburbs of Tokyo. Hara routinely carries her classic film-camera to approach her subjects in a close range. As in her previous series, *Kyrie* comprises of unrelated recent events (2015–2017). She explains about her work: "There is no set theme; I'm not trying to communicate a particular message. Instead I gamble on serendipity. I hope that each snapshot will stir some fragment of memory within every viewer, arousing complex feelings and emotions that can't be easily put into words."

While making photographs by impulse rather than intention, Hara achieves uniquely instantaneous characterizations of her surroundings. In other words, her subjects deserve scrutiny. In this new series, the statue of a single person remains as Hara's strength; a young girl rolling a small ball on a concrete floor, a train conductor looking away as passengers move, and a child lying on his stomach on the ground. They appear utterly lonely in their square spaces as if they were the only people on this planet. Sometimes Hara portrays the confined space such as her own family room and what seems to be the waiting room in the station to simply present ordinary activities — eating, dressing, reading, etc. Non-human subjects are also at play to add various moods, ranging from pale-pink lily and orange flowers to monochromatic abstract landscapes.

Hara's quietly provocative and sarcastic portrayal of urban inhabitants and landscapes is not a mere social commentary, but instead a deeper philosophical examination of human life as novelist and filmmakers often observe. She attempts the same through hundreds of color photographs made over three decades of her career. She avoids a view-finder that contributes to a premediated vision and applies a slow shutter-speed to her fast-moving subjects, by which the moment seen through her own eyes is already a hair behind by the time the shutter has closed, creating a unique split-second lag that brings the unexpected effect to her work.

Born 1967 in Toyama Prefecture in Japan, **Mikiko Hara** graduated from Keio University where she studied art theory and art history. Through her involvement in experimental theatre, she discovered photography and enrolled at Tokyo College of Photography in 1992. During her first two years of study, she learned and practiced the basics of "street snapshots" under the photographer Kiyoshi Suzuki and other faculty staff. She took the advanced courses of the same school for two more years to develop her personal color-snapshot style. Hara has held a number of solo exhibitions in Tokyo, Osaka, and New York, and has participated in important museum group exhibitions in Japan, France, The Netherlands, Germany, China, Denmark, and the United States. Her work is in the collections of the J. Paul Getty Museum and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art among others. Hara is the 2017 winner of the 42nd Kimura Ihei Photography Award. The presentation of **MIYAKO YOSHINAGA** at **UNSEEN PHOTO FAIR** in Amsterdam from Sept. 17-20 will feature the highlights of Mikiko Hara's *Kyrie* series.

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