

Yutaka Matsuzawa (b. 1922 Shimo Suwa / d. 2006 Shimo Suwa) was a pioneering conceptual artist whose practice covers much of the second half of the 20th century. His practice was driven by a strong distrust of material civilization, shaped by experiences he witnessed during World War II. He developed an immaterial conceptualism that can be pictured in two stages.

In the first stage, between the years of 1957 and 1964, he devised his Theory of Psi, which was inspired initially by parapsychology and later by non-zen Buddhism and quantum physics. This resulted in a body of surrealistic Psi works that were object-based, but spectacularly so, as he accumulated them in what is known as his *Psi Zashiki Room*.

The second stage, which began in June 1964, in response to a Revelation he experienced, by hearing a voice telling him to “Vanish *objets!*” This *objets* is a Japanese term denoting collages and assemblages, incorporating every day objects, and thereafter he formulated an object-less, text-based practice. He called it the art of *kannen*.

Matsuzawa’s practice based on *kannen*, which commands viewers to see with their mind’s eye, encompasses a number of strategies ranging from institutional critique to the idea of the art object itself and the exhibition and ownership systems that such an object is considered under. These dematerialized explorations helped form an idea of what an alternative civilization would be which he sought to formulate for the future of humankind.

Yutaka Matsuzawa

1922–2006, Shimo Suwa

Education

- 1946 BS in architecture, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan
 1955 Researcher, Wisconsin State College-Superior (now University of Wisconsin-Superior)

Grants

- 1956–1957 Japan Society Fellow
 1955–1956 Fulbright Fellowship

Selected Exhibitions and Performances

- 2020 *Vanishing in the Wilderness*, curated by Reiko Tomii and Alan Longino, Empty Gallery, Hong Kong
Yutaka Matsuzawa: Towards Quantum Art, John Young Museum of Art, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, USA
- 2019 Yutaka Matsuzawa, Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis, USA
Yutaka Matsuzawa, co-curated by Alan Longino and Reiko Tomii, originated by Yale Union, Portland, Oregon, Nonaka-Hill, Los Angeles, USA
Yutaka Matsuzawa, Yale Union, Oregon, USA
- 2017 *From Nirvana to Catastrophe: Matsuzawa Yutaka and his 'Commune in Imaginary Space*, OTA FINE ARTS, Tokyo, Japan
- 2016 Aru Hyogen, Chino City Museum of Art, Nagano, Japan
- 2015 *Under Seabed Mandala*, Brigitte March International Contemporary Art, Stuttgart, Germany
- 2014 Yokohama Triennale, Yokohama Museum of Art, Kanagawa, Japan
Begin with Vanishment, MISA SHIN GALLERY, Tokyo, Japan
- 2013 *Anti-Academy*, John Hansard Gallery, Southampton, UK
Rereading Yutaka Matsuzawa, Museum Haus Kasuya, Yokosuka, Japan
Antigravity, Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Toyota, Japan
Beyond Corrupted Eye Akumulatory 2 Gallery, 1972-1990, Museum of Contemporary Art in Krakow, Krakow, Poland
- 2012 *Capturing time*, Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima, Japan
- 2011 *The Concept Sublime: 35 Years* Brigitte March Gallery, Brigitte March International Contemporary Art, Stuttgart, Germany
Sculpture In So Many Words: Text Pieces 1960-75, ZieherSmith, New

- York, USA
- 2010 Tracks of Art, Chino City Museum of Art, Chino, Japan
Der erste Impuls – Skizzen – Zeichnungen – 1958 – 2010, Brigitte March International Contemporary Art, Stuttgart, Germany
- 2009 Silent, Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima, Japan
Hommage à Yutaka Matsuzawa – Installation / Joseph Kosuth – Installation, Brigitte March International Contemporary Art, Stuttgart, Germany
- 2008 PERFORMING THE CITY – Kunst Aktionismus im Stadt Raum 60er und 70er Jahre – Lothringer13, Städtische Kunsthalle München, Munich, Germany
Into the Atomic Sunshine – Post War Art under Japanese Peace, The Puffin Room, New York, USA
- 2004 IN BED, Images from a Vital Stage, Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Toyota, Japan
Vanishment and Future: Works of Yutaka Matsuzawa and other works selected by him, Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima, Japan
- 2003 Yu Mist Ho, Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Toyota, Japan
- 2002 Slanting House/Statements by artists in Japan since 9.11, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan
Eighty Years Problem - Genmei Kouan, Museum haus Kasuya, Yokosuka, Japan
- 2001 Century City, Tate Modern, London, England
- 1999 Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s-1980s, Queens Museum of Art, New York, USA
- 1998 Yutaka Matsuzawa, Komagane Kogen Art Museum, Komagane, Japan
- 1997 To spiritualism Yutaka Matsuzawa 1954-1997, Saito Memorial Kawaguchi Museum of Contemporary Art, Kawaguchi, Japan
- 1995 Quantum Art Manifesto, Museum Haus Kasuya, Yokosuka, Japan
- 1994 Yutaka Matsuzawa memento mori, Yamaguchi Prefectural Art Museum, Yamaguchi, Japan
- 1993 Yutaka Matsuzawa: Under Seabed Mandala in BRIGHT LIGHT, Temporary Contemporary-Zeitgenössische Kunst an einem Ort auf Zeit, Schloss Presteneck, Stein am Kocher, Stadt Neuenstadt, opening Manfred Schneckenburger (director of documenta 6 and 8 Kassel, curated and realized by Brigitte March Gallery, Stuttgart, Germany)
- 1992 Yutaka Matsuzawa: Eshiki-Ron Kasaya in FORCE SIGHT, Temporary Contemporary-Zeitgenössische Kunst an einem Ort auf Zeit, Schloss Presteneck, Stein am Kocher, Stadt Neuenstadt, opening Jean-Baptiste Joly, Akademie Schloss Solitude, curated and realized by Brigitte March Gallery, Stuttgart, Germany
- 1991 Yutaka Matsuzawa: Nothing Streamer, (Psi Pilgrim II), No Places

- 1990 Yutaka Matsuzawa: New Pieces, in Art Meets Science and Spirituality in a Changing Economy (A.M.S.S.), Fodor-Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands
Yutaka Matsuzawa: Vanishing Streamer, Nine Places, (Psi Pilgrim II), San Fransisco, U.S.A.
- 1989 Concept Art curated and organized by Brigitte March Gallery (Eshiki-Ron Kasaya), Stuttgart, Germany, in cooperation with Stalke Gallery
Yutaka Matsuzawa: Vanishing Streamer, (Psi Pilgrim), Nine Places, Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart
Yutaka Matsuzawa: Vanishing Streamer, (Psi Pilgrim II), Old Student House, Helsinki, Finland
Yutaka Matsuzawa: Vanishing Streamer, (Psi Pilgrim II), Konsthogskolan, Stockholm, Sweden
Yutaka Matsuzawa : Vanishing Streamer, (Psi Pilgrim II), Nine Places, San Fansisco, U.S.A.
- 1988 Yutaka Matsuzawa: Eshiki-Ron On Kasaya IIIX, in Gabelung with Kazuo Katase, Kunstverein Wolfsburg, Wolfsburg, Germany
Yutaka Matsuzawa: Under Water ; Under Fire and After Man, (Psi Pilgrim II), Nine Places, Berlin, Germany
Yutaka Matsuzawa: Quantum Art Manifesto, Berlin-Tokyo-Exchange, Wewerka Gallery, Berlin
Yutaka Matsuzawa: Vanishing Streamer, (Psi Pilgrim II), Nine Places, Copenhagen, Denmark in Concept Art curated and organized by Brigitt March Gallery, Stuttgart (catalogue)
- 1987 Solitude Echos-Realisierte Projekte von Schloss Solitude-Pläne und Projekt von 1986 (Solitude Echos-Realized Projects of Solitude Castle 1986) curated and organized by Brigitte March Gallery, Stuttgart in the Space of Kunstverein Ludwigsburg e.v., Germany
Yutaka Matsuzawa: After Man, (Psi Pilgrim I), San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Fransisco, U.S.A.
Yutaka Matsuzawa: Under Water and Under Fire, (Psi Pilgrim II), Museo Arte Contemporaneo, Madrid, Spain
- 1986 Yutaka Matsuzawa: Water & Fire, in Apocalypse in Contemporary Art - From The Death of Soul, Yokohama Civic Art Gallery, Yokohama, Japan
Yutaka Matsuzawa: After Man, in Apocalypse in Contemporary Art, 22nd Artists Today, exhibition, Yokohama Shimin Gallery, Yokohama Schloss Solitude-Pläne und Projekte (Castle of Solitude-Plans and Projects), Brigitte March Gallery, Stuttgart, Germany, (catalog) Solo exhibition Brigitte March Gallery, Stuttgart, Under Seabed Mandala (Performance) Civic Art Gallery, Yokohama, Japan
Yutaka Matsuzawa : Vanishing Streamer, (Psi Pilgrim I), in Japon des Avant- Gardes, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France
Yutaka Matsuzawa : Under Water, (Psi Pilgrim I), Art Com, San Francisco, U.S.A.

- 1985 Yutaka Matsuzawa: Under Water, (Psi Pilgrim I), performance, Königsplatz, show in Prozess und Konstruktion 1985 in München, Künstlerwerkstätten, Lothringenstraße 13 (Process and Construction 1985 in Munich, Artist Workshop, Lothringerstraße 13), Munich, International Workshop Project organized by ,Archives of Contemporary Thought Lodz and Brigitte March Gallery, Stuttgart, in cooperation with Landeshauptstadt München Kulturreferat, Germany - Opening Manfred Schneckenburger (Former Director of Documenta Kassel 6 and 8 ; All Artworks were donated by the Artists to the City of Munich care of Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich, (dokumentation Dr. Barbara Wörwag, Stuttgart) Art for Peace, Hamburg
Japan Ushimado International Art Festival
The Japanese Avant-Garde 1945-1965, Oxford
Yutaka Matsuzawa, Nine Mandalas, Brigitte March Gallery, Stuttgart, Germany
- 1984** **Performances at NSW Art Museum in Sidney, on the ice at Lake Suwa, Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy**
Christian Snow ABCD Gallery, Paris
Yutaka Matsuzawa, FURK ' ART 84: Under Water and Vanishing Streamer, (Psi Pilgrim I), curated by Marc Hostettler, Neuchâtel, Switzerland
Directions in Contemporary Art - The 1970's and After at Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Art, Tokyo
Japan International Art Festival at Ushimado in Ushimado, Okayama Prefecture
Yutaka Matsuzawa: Under Water and Vanishing Streamer, (Psi Pilgrim I), Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
Yutaka Matsuzawa, Swan Song Mandala, (Psi Pilgrim I), Artestudio, Ponte Nosa (B.G.)
Yutaka Matsuzawa: Eshiki-Ron On „Kasaya” I, Paris-Tokyo-Exchange, ABCD Gallery
- 1983 Yutaka Matsuzawa's Psi Box, limited Edition, nine different media from Zokeisha – in Directions in Contemporary Art - The 1960's at the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan
- 1982 Yutaka Matsuzawa, Vanishing Mandala, (Psi Pilgrim I), peace art action and performance, Lake Ikeda in Kyushu, Lake Suwa in Nagano, and the Atomic Bomb Dome in Hiroshima
Solo exhibition at Okazaki Tamako Gallery, repeated annually in 1983, 1984, 1985, and 1986
- 1981 Yutaka Matsuzawa, Vanishing Mandala, (Psi Pilgrim I), Katia Pissalo, Gallery, Paris, France
- 1979** Permanent member of Academia Tiberina in Rome in recognition of pioneering role in conceptual art Inscription of vanishing message on

- World Foundation Stone for Art in Mittelburg, the Netherlands the following year 1980
- 1977 Yutaka Matsuzawa: *The Chamber of Nine Meditations*, Sao Paulo Biennale, award winner, prize in *Catastrophe Art*, Sao Paulo, Brazil
- 1976 Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy
Seven Italian Artists and Seven Japanese Artists, Italy Culture Center, Tokyo
- 1974 *Catastrophe Art*, Centro de Arte y Comunicación, CAYA, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Concept of Art Insurrection to the world
- 1972 Nagano Prefecture Shinano Art Museum, Nagano, Japan
Documenta 5, Kassel
- 1971 Sonsbeek '71, Arnhem, NL (with Carl André, Joseph Beuys, Daniel Buren, Christo and Jeanne Claude, Walter de Maria, Dan Graham, Donald Judd, On Kawara,, Sol LeWitt etc.) *Travel to England*, the Netherlands
Announced concept of *World Revolt to the world*
Built tree house *Meditation Platform*
- 1970 Exhibition of *My Death* by invitation of Mainichi, Japan International Art Exhibition Concept
Art Exhibit, Im Tachispiet Gallery, Innsbruck
1970 Summer Exhibition, Art and Project Gallery, Amsterdam
Contemporary Japanese Artists, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York City, NY
Participation in international exhibitions expands greatly from this year on 10th Tokyo
Biennale, *Between Man and Matter*, Tokyo, Japan
Nirvana For The Final Art, Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art, Kyoto, Japan
- 1966 Yutaka Matsuzawa, *Vanishing of Matter 1966*, at Modern Art Center of Japan Naito Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
Contemporary Art Festival Saikai, Osaka, Japan
- 1965 Gifu Indépendant Art Festival, Gifu, Japan
- 1964 In June 4, revelation to get rid of objects ! - start of conceptual art
- 1963 Yutaka Matsuzawa, Solo Exhibition with Psi, Aoki Gallery, Tokyo
- 1960 Participation in *Development of Surreal Painting* exhibition and, in 1961, the *Experiments in Modern Art* exhibition at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
- 1958 Exhibition of Psi series at Yomiuri Independent Exhibition, Tokyo
- 1953 5th Yomiuri Independent Exhibition, Tokyo, Japan
13th Bijyutsu Bunka Art Association Exhibition, Japan
- 1952 4th Yomiuri Independent Exhibition, Tokyo, Japan
12th Bijyutsu Bunka Art Association Exhibition, Japan

Selected Bibliography

Jennifer S. Li, "Yutaka Matsuzawa", *ArtAsiaPacific*, Nov/Dec 2019

Raechel Herron Root, "Shining a Light on Portland's Art Scene: 10 Exciting Venues in the Rose City", *Hyperallergic*, October 22, 2019

Lucy Cotter, "Yutaka Matsuzawa", *Flash Art*, Sep/Oct 2019

Jason Farago, "Three Radical 1960s Visions, Far From the Tumult of Tokyo", *The New York Times*, April 11 2019

Edward M. Gómez, "Japan's Radical Conceptual Art of the 1960s", *Hyperallergic*, April 6 2019

Mimi Wong, "Radicalism In The Wilderness: Japanese Artists In The Global 1960s", *ArtAsiaPacific*, April 2019

Jonathon Keats, "See How A Provincial Japanese Artist Bested Neil Armstrong At This Thrilling Japan Society Exhibit", *Forbes*, March 15 2019

Reiko Tomii, *Radicalism in the Wilderness*, The MIT Press, 2018

Charlotte Jansen, "Lessons in Being Radical: Free Communes, Art and Imaginary Space", *Elephant*, March 31 2017