

Michiko Kon



Zebra and Japanese Socks. 2010 Silver Print 81,2 x 101,6 cms

MICHEL SOSKINE INC. is pleased to present from June 21 until July 29, 2017, the second exhibition in Madrid of Japanese Photographer Michiko Kon (1955), during Photo España. The exhibition will show 34 of her recent black and white photographs.

Michiko Kon creates assemblages with a minimalist background, and where biological elements such as sea creatures, plants and insects are in tension between an animate and inanimate reality. Her work is a parade of living creatures turned into inanimate objects, and inanimate objects turned into living creatures. Kon creates surreal still life scenographies, with seductively mundane objects, such as raw sea elements, vegetables and textile in order to get images of impossible pieces.

Kon uses photography as her means of expression because it fixes this process of transformation. In many of her photographs there are numerous elements which were once "alive". These things are not in fact actually alive, but they are not complete corpses (inanimate matter), either they hang in mid-air in the ambiguous region between life and death. While in the process of dying, they still had the fresh warmth of life: is there truly a differentiation between life and death?. Perhaps our feeling that we must divide these two regions is nothing but a way of making it easier to live in our society. After all it's not convenient to have the dead come back to life on their own or to have the living die all of a sudden.

Michiko Kon said about her image of death: "As I lie in bed and read, gradually my eyelids begin to close. My head still follows the story, but my arms yield to the weight of the book and fall on the sheet, yet my brain keeps following the story. At last, my fingers can no longer hold the book and let it go. The book falls to the floor. As I hear the sound of the falling book, I fall asleep while conscious that I

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have lost control of my body. I feel comfortable."She floats to the edge of sleep easily, and then falls into the world of death.

This image is scattered throughout Michiko Kon`s works. In each work Kon creates a tension between the real and the imagined, subtly manipulating the perceptions of her viewers.

In her world "objects" and "living creatures" are mixed in a perpetual process of "things", transforming into "living creatures" and transforming into "things". No one can stop this movement and the discharge of energy that accompanies it. The vegetal nature gets varnished in strange animal textures in a visual game where the hardness and the lightness come together, and also humor, cruelty, iconic history and contemporary pop culture. She uses an extremely complex technique almost forgotten in XXI century photography.

Michiko Kon was born in Kanagawa, Japan, in 1955. She studied at the *Sokei Art School* and at the *Tokyo Photographic College* in 1978. Kon started making photographs in the late 1970', which were published in many manga magazines. Her first solo exhibition, '*Still Life*' in 1985 in Tokyo, at the *Shinjuku Nikon Salon*, made her soon recognized as one of the most innovative photographers working in Japan; she was the recipient of the prestigious *Kimura Ihee Prize* in 1991. Her first exhibition in the United States was held at the *List Visual Arts Center at MIT* in 1992. Her work was also included in the *History of Japanese Photography* exhibition organized by *Anne Tucker* at the *Museum of Fine Arts*, Houston, in 2003. Kon's artworks has been exhibited widely and is present in many museums around the world, including, the *Art Institute of Chicago*, the *National Gallery of Australia*, the *National Gallery of Canada*, the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo, Japan Itabashi Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, Rochester, NY Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ The Art Museum, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ Museum of Vincent Van Gogh, France Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, MA The Art Gallery of New South Wales Australia, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan, Australia Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio.

MICHIKO KON

From June 22 to July 29, 2017.

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Saturday: 10:30am – 2:30pm.

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