FOTO: REINHARD BOCK (2009)

REINHARD BOCK
FO(U)R ARTS TOKYO
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

While some of the eight artists were personally known to the author of before, others were selected by contact via MySpace and Facebook and asked for an opportunity to videograph and to take an interview.
The artists were visited in their working or living environment, and all artists were interviewed by the means of identical standard questions.

There are three musicians (Shunsuke Hayakawa, Yuki Haruna OTA and ITO), three painters (Fumio Tachibana, Kenichi WATANABE and Tetsuro Ryuzaki), a photographer (Takashi Katou) and an actress (Hotaka Hagiwara).

Shunsuke HAYAKAWA plays drums while standing. He started to do that after he broke a leg and couldn't work with the bass drum pedal. Until now, he held on to that style, and somehow it is kind of perfect for him as he is a bundle of energy, a restless driven person with diverse musical activities.
For TAKASHINAKAKU, a post-punk band that Shunsuke plays with in the video portrait, he is guiding spirit, composer and arranger. Besides being drummer and vocalist here, he is having that musical part also with the cult duo KIRIHITO, MELT BANANA, GAKIDEKA, THE BUTALIN and his alter ego COB.CHARACTER.
While being interviewed, Shunsuke speaks abruptly, like being on the fly, mot willing t lose any time: Now quickly finishing the interview, then having a snack and a drink in a SHUHAI bar, then off to the next live performance. Then back to the club, which he manages with friends. And tomorrow maybe back to the studio for new recordings. What would be his best work, he is asked. "The next" is his prompt reply.

OTA Yuki developed his own form of music, the BROKEN PIANO MUSIC. That essentially is a speed controlled flow of brilliantly varied piano and voice samples. By this method a sequence of piano will mutate into a virtual hi-hat by playing it incredible fast..
The compositions revolve around the relationship between human / computer, they sometimes weave in quotations of historical personalities and this mixture altogether leads to an exciting and complex world of sound experience.

Haruna ITO is committed in her music to noise, "hubbub", a "poetic chaos," as she puts it in the portrait. At the same time she reflects being raised in the United States which she feels has darkened her family roots.
In a traditional Japanese house, especially rented by her for that video shooting, she spreads out all her "toys" on the tatami with which she produces a disturbing noise, torn by howling feedback loops, reinforced by superimposed layers of loops, electronic memories, often painfully long maintained, will decay very slowly. The melancholy voice follows or contrasts the three tone of a children's lyre - the seriousness of her sounds seems to be contradiction to her joyance in the interview - there are just the two sides of same coin.

The painter / collagist / typo-ideograph Fumio Tachibana studied the printing trade and the letters and characters already as a child watching his father and he clanged to until today. When he starts to work with print products like photo books, scientific books, manga, tear-outs and collected scraps of paper stuffed into his studios, he only needs the grab down to the ground or into a pile of books, in order to create new works of art in which the letters itself in its proposed function are meaningless, being rearranged in a fresh package of new characters, letters, or KANA KANJI.
Furthermore, Tachibana is going out for photo excursions, shooting images with a huge plate camera. He reprocesses these photos in a series of cultural journals of a kind: Herein the pictures speak directly to us, they work mostly without text because they do not stage, but picture the scene - not without leaving us behind with the desire for a deeper immersion into this world.

Kenichi Watanabe, former assistant and student of Tachibana, works as an illustrator. He as a creative has directly walked the path of the original imagery, which turns a child intuitively and without any "backing" into an authentic artist: A dash is a dash, and arranged as "dot, dot, comma, dash", it's at a face. Stencil lines, templates forms are assembled into "manikin". In the second step - by working on the computer - WATANABE arranges the characters in scenes, he douses them with full-color, he lets them emit simple sounds minanga-style.
WATANABE seeks and finds relaxation and inspiration during his visits of shinto shrines - in the heart of a mega-city like Tokyo, this may but must not surprise.

Tetsuro Ryuzaki says the global artist is always based on the local artists. And so he roams the ambience of his hometown in search of the motives that appeared to him in his imagination and that are reflected in the present reality. Then he paints after his photographically captured subjects - scenes often reaching in the past. The result is photographed again, scanned into the computer to make it look more "realistic" through the software, and the results will be printed and framed as a photography.
As an installation artist, he designed the rooms suitable for the imaginative characters. This let us visualize a present and past fate simultaneously.

Takashi Katou refuses to be an artist. His photos, he sees not as art but as "records" - which translates best as "notes". He keeps hold of a state without influencing, without arranging or changing it. He works in the background. And when a man at an intersection walks around the corner with a half of a bathtub, Katou presses the release of his Mamiya or Hasselblad. And when the viewer looks at this "scanned" scene on a print, he has the choice to review at it as a special or banal everyday event or as a happy moment.

The dancer Hotaka Hagiwara was tired of performing in front of an anonymous crowd, blinded by the stage lights, without immediately noticeable response of the audience. Therefore, she founded the theatre group MARIMARI that plays in public places, hospitals, schools and children's and old people's facilities. This troop abandons almost entirely all set designs and costumes: Dressed in simple black MARIMARI will resurvive those some centuries old legends and fairy tales by sounds, words, gestures and mime, they will get through to the audience's hearts and minds.

In fact, all eight portraits have in common the search for the present: for some artists, it is found only in the past, by approaching what generally can be described as "roots", for others it is the one moment of a sound or picture was recorded, but which is now put into question by the moment that follows - letting them continue the quest.

The portrait artist clips are assembled to "takes". Each on is arranged in up to four windows to form a complete picture. The author has given each artist's take an individual format, due to the encounter with the artist.

To some takes music of boKens is added.

KEN BOS, September 2010

http://www.bokens.de/mobile/videos/bock_2009_4x4-tokyo.htm

FO(U)R ARTS TOKYO
digital, color, 74 Minutes

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