

## Takuya Murakawa CV

Director / Filmmaker

Contact: rakawta@gmail.com



Photo by Guoqing Jiang

Employing documentary and fieldwork approaches, Murakawa's practice traverses multiple fields from video/film to theatre and visual art. His work, which is born on the boundary between fiction and reality, not only questions current methods of artistic expression but also inquires in to what 'reality' really is in the real world.

His work *Zeitgeber*, which recreated onstage the relationship between a caregiver and the cared for, has been performed internationally in HAU Hebbel am Ufer "Japan Syndrome Art and Politics after Fukushima" (Germany / 2014), M1 Singapore Fringe Festival 2014 among other countries. For *Everett Ghost Lines*, presented at Kyoto Experiment 2014, Murakawa sent instructions to performers in advance about what to do on stage however had no control on whether they would actually come on performance day or not. When indeed performers did not turn up, the audience was left closely observing an empty stage. In this way, it became a talking point for its careful integration of uncertainty.

Recent works include *Independent Living* (Kyoto Experiment 2017, Theaterformen 2018), *Moonlight* (ROHM Theatre Kyoto "Circulation Kyoto: Participatory Theatre Event Series" 2018, Festival/Tokyo 20), *Pamilya* (Kibiru Fes 2020) and *The Incident* (2021). From 2005 to 2009, he worked as an assistant director at the theatre company Chiten. He is a junior fellow of The Saison Foundation 2014-2019. In 2016, he stayed in Shanghai and Beijing as an East Asian Cultural Exchange Envoy for the Agency for Cultural Affairs. He is also a part-time instructor in the film departments at Kyoto University of the Arts.

---

### ***The Incident***

Direction and Text

2021, Kyoto Art Theater Shunjuza

Presented by Kyoto Performing Arts Center at Kyoto University of the Arts



Photo by Yoshikazu Inoue

First performed as part of Kyoto Art Theater's (Shunjuza) 20th Anniversary Commemorative Performances. *The Incident* is Murakawa's first work in which the text is written by himself. It passed the second screening of the Aichi Arts Foundation Drama Award.

Based on a real incident in which someone was stabbed at a supermarket in Kyoto City, this work reexamines the way we spend our daily lives. With a strong focus on the nature of reality, Murakawa has continued to create work that deals with contemporary issues. For this work he stages this incident he personally experienced as a theatre piece. The work does not aim to simply consume the incident as a narrative story, but is instead an attempt to reveal the present in which the incident itself has just happened and is consumed as a story. While highlighting the continuous routine of both daily life and various incidents, the work explores the supermarket (also a symbol of consumer society) as a subject, and reminds us of the many events that society demands us to immediately forget.

## ***Family***

Direction

2020, Kibiru Fes 2020, Papio Be Room (Fukuoka)



Photo by Akiko Tominaga

## ***Moonlight***

Direction

2020, Festival/Tokyo 20, Theatre East, Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre

Presented by Festival/Tokyo

2018, ROHM Theatre Kyoto "Circulation Kyoto: Participatory Theatre Event Series", Kyoto West Culture Center Westy (Kyoto)  
Presented by ROHM Theatre Kyoto & Kyoto City Culture Centers



Photo by Kai Maetani, courtesy of Kyoto Experiment

## ***Independent Living***

Direction

2018, Theaterformen 2018, LOT-Theater (Brunswick)

2017, Kyoto Experiment 2017, Kyoto Prefectural Citizens' Hall ALTI

Co-produced by Kyoto Experiment



Photo by Kai Maetani, courtesy of Kyoto Experiment

Murakawa explored the relationship between Japan, China, and South Korea. These three nations have continued to influence each other historically and culturally. While today there is much discussion about their contested history, politics and territorial disputes, Murakawa avoids tackling these problems head-on at the level of the nation state. Instead, he spent time in the three countries researching and "collecting" the landscapes that lie behind the controversies, and then developed this into a piece of theater. On stage is a room, filled with the sounds of television and information. Performers from each of the three nations appear and talk matter-of-factly about their everyday lives. Out of this landscape emerges a portrait of Japan, China and South Korea today that we do not know.

## Everett Ghost Lines

Direction

2014, Kyoto Experiment 2014, Auditorium, Kyoto Art Center

Co-produced by Kyoto Experiment

Version B "Face"

2017, Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, KUGURU (Yamagata)

Gwangju Version "Around The Silence"

2015, Asian Art Theatre Opening Program Residence work, Asian Art Theatre (Gwangju)

4 Version

2015, Multi-purpose Hall, Kyoto Art Center

### Description

Murakawa sends letters to his actor candidates a few weeks prior to the performance. The letter includes the instruction for the performance such as time to show up and things they are supposed to do on stage. Thus, all they have to do for the performance is to follow instructions. However, it's entirely up to the candidates if they show up or not and Murakawa is unaware of who will be on the stage until the day of the performance. By questioning the preconditions of theater, the work reveals how indeterminate out reality is. Can we trust what we see? Or can we not even trust our own eyes? A beautifully paradoxical and thrilling work.

I : I posted letters to 29 people per one performance. The people who received my letter are in line as performers of this performance. In the letter, there are some instructions. If receiver is willing to follow those instructions, she or he comes to the theatre on the day of performance to behave as a performer. If not, this person does not come to the theatre at all. It is a theatre piece whose cast to be confirmed.

II : In the subtitles during the performance, the information of the person I sent the letter is shown: name, place where s/he lives, occupation and age as well as the instructions and the time of his or her performance.

III : After performing, each performer goes back to somewhere.

### Statement

In 2011, November, I went to the areas that were affected by the earthquake to shoot for a documentary, but I couldn't bring myself to shoot anything. Originally, I went to take interviews with the people in that area, but hearing what they had to say, or shooting the disastrous views, did not appeal to me at all.

There was just one thing that I felt I could do though, that was to shoot everything automatically. That was the first thing that came to my mind. I strongly felt, that earthquakes and tsunamis were things that are way beyond the control of human hand.

I wanted to film, in a way, like an earthquake, uncontrolled by human hand. What I came up with was 15 minutes of footage that the camera recorded automatically, wherever it was facing. Come to think of it, maybe I felt that the people and landscapes that were affected were only very small matters. I was more absorbed by the sheer violence and power of the earthquake, the natural disaster, that it appealed to me much more as a subject.

The film *AKA, Serial Killer* by Masao Adachi, is a documentary film about the serial killer Norio Nagayama.

Nagayama does not come up in this film. What is shown, are landscapes that Nagayama may have seen during his childhood. All we see, are trains, crop fields, local markets, views of Tokyo, ports, things that we normally see in our lives, but we can somewhat feel Nagayama's presence lingering in these ordinary views. The solitude, hatred, the unconscious moments when maybe Nagayama pulled the trigger of his gun, are captured. We also feel the unconscious malice of the town. People that are passively moved by the world. The signs and decorations of the town, all created at good will, are garish and violent as if they were made to torture the people.

*Everett Ghost Lines* is like the system itself, that moves people robotically. The people who obey the letters' instructions, are maybe showing us the image of ourselves, unconsciously following the system of the world. And those that disobey the letters' instructions, are maybe like an escapee from this system, by using the freedom of absence. Either way, those who come, and those who don't, both are still forced to live in the same world, and here we have no choice.

A friend of mine said, "It's like the hardships and the hope, of just bearing the fact that we are human". I feel that this exactly describes the people that appear on this stage.

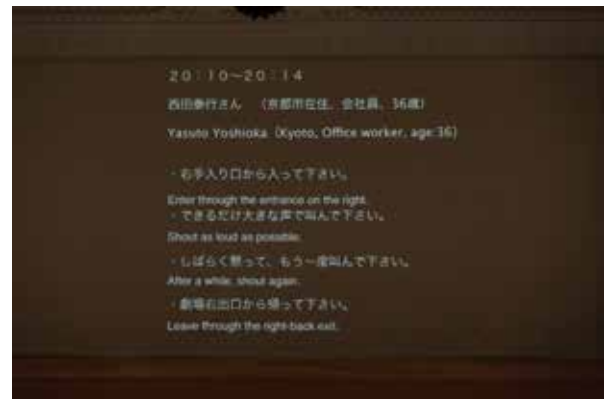


Photo by Takashi Horikawa, courtesy of Kyoto Experiment

## **Zeitgeber**

Direction

2014, HAU Hebbel am Ufer "Japan Syndrome Art and Politics after Fukushima", HAU3 (Berlin, 2014)

2014, M1 Singapore Fringe Festival 2014, National Museum of Singapore

2013, Bird Theatre Festival 6 (Tottori)

2013, TPAM Direction, Kanagawa Arts Theatre

2012, 14 EVENINGS, The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

2012, Geisou Selection program, Geijyutsu Souzou Kan, (Osaka)

2011, Festival/Tokyo 11 Open call Program, Theater Green (Tokyo)



2011, Photo by Ryohei Tomita

### **Description**

*Zeitgeber* is a performance which focuses on the home care service of severely disabled. In this performance, the detailed daily routines between a care-giver and a care-receiver is performed unemotionally. The care-giver is acted by an actor, and the care-receiver is performed by one of the audience. Actions in actual nursing services are played out on stage one after another, such as excreting, changing costumes, meals, washing and chatting.

At the beginning of the performance, the director comes on stage in order to explain that this performance covers nursing care for people with disabilities and that the actor is actually involved with nursing care as his job. Mr. Fujii who is interviewee of this performance communicates only through eye's movements since he is hardly able to move his body from his will. The director announces that there is a performer missing and in order to start the show he would like to have a female volunteer from the audience.

The volunteer performs the role of Mr. Fujii on stage. Simultaneously she is living as Mr. Fujii and exposing her disabled body in front of the audience. The actor communicates with her as usual as he normally would do in his daily work. Along with this communication they keep producing miss-understandings without ever understanding each other. Through describing the field of nursing care service, the duality of impossibility/ possibility of communication is clearly shown and the discussion between notions of fiction/ non-fiction in theatre is provoked by pointing the relation between actor/ audience.

### **Statement**

I have created this performance under the theme of communication between a care-giver and a care-receiver in the actual care field. Nowadays, the ways of communication between people are becoming more and more diverse. I found an essential or new way of communication in the care field for people with disabilities. If you see carefully the relation between a care-giver and a care-receiver, you will notice a very unique relationship is emerging between them. They are not family (relatives), friends or colleagues, however they are not complete strangers. On the surface, although it seems to be an automatic relationship under the contract of a work, you will see that there are complex emotional conflicts and closed physical contact. In general occasions the realm of emotional exchange can be decided by individuals; they can be as emotional as they want towards the others. However in this case, as the work is the main premise, both of them are forced to restrain their emotions. Because of that, their thoughts are not accomplished between each other, despite building a certain atmosphere in the air. This condition does not correspond with the closed physical contact that they have to maintain. It makes both of them aware of each other's body figure and forces them to accept their own differences. Thus the force to "restrain emotion" and to "accept physical contacts" is the heart of this performance. I can't help thinking that through displaying those two opposite forces we can find the reality in communication between people and discover a new figure of others.