

For Immediate Release

Hitoshi Fugo: *KAMI*

MIYAKO YOSHINAGA is pleased to present our final exhibition, *KAMI* by Hitoshi Fugo, before the gallery closes its door to the public on its 25th anniversary. The exhibition will be on view from **April 19 to May 25, 2024**. MIYAKO YOSHINAGA will continue representing our artists and further announcements will be made after June.

Japanese photographer **Hitoshi Fugo** (b. 1947)'s still-life studies explore a single subject's nuanced multi-faceted expressions until the subject becomes detached from its category, meaning, or identity. He commits to an ongoing experimentation in dismantling these boundaries.

This exhibition features one of his most ambitious yet long-silenced project. In 2001, Fugo began photographing the large burnt paper roll that had been sitting in the corner of his studio for six or seven years. One day around 1993, he walked past a printing factory destroyed by fire and saw cleaning workers leaving half-burnt rolls of paper on the ground. Fugo asked them not to throw them away and later brought them to his studio. The salvaged objects, destroyed by violence (fire) and too chaotic for human control, inspired the artist particularly after witnessing and photographing the aftermath of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in 1995.

Fugo decided to document each stage and progress of destruction, sometimes adding new physical forces such as cutting through a thick wall of paper with a chainsaw, investigating the violence lurking within himself. The result is an unsettling yet fascinating visual rhapsody consisting of 31 black-and-white images that delves into the essence of paper, with its cut and burnt surfaces powerfully exposed. In 2023, he attempted to document the end of that life cycle by burning the paper roll again on the shore, imagining its particles flying into the air like feathers peeling away. But this was not possible due to the weather. This series, in which he tries to capture the paper's transformation by an irresistible external force, was shown only once in Japan in 2001 and has never been shown overseas until now. Paper in Japanese is *kami*, a homonym of god. The artist gave the title, *KAMI*, to this body of work, implying the absence of god in today's destructive world. The exhibition includes 11 images from the series, two of which were photographed in 2023 of the same paper roll.

Born in 1947 in Kanagawa, Japan, **Hitoshi Fugo** studied photography at Nihon University in Tokyo. During the 1970s and 1980s, he traveled extensively in Japan, India, and the United States, creating a psychologically charged series *BLACKOUT*, which he first exhibited in Tokyo in 1982, and in New York at MIYAKO YOSHINAGA in 2017. His other work includes *Flying Frying Pan* (1974-1994), a series exploring the micro and macro cosmos of what is otherwise an ordinary household object, *Game Over* (1980-1991), a series inspired by the West Edmonton Mall in Canada, and *On the Circle* (2003-2011). Fugo's work has had international exposure in exhibitions such as Japanese Photography Today (Spain, 1986) and Japanese Contemporary Photography (Germany, 2000). In 2010 Fugo was awarded the Ina Nobuo Photography Award.

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