



A documentary photograph of *Yamanote Line Festival* 1962 Gelatin silver print 27x32.5cm, Photo: Tokuji Murai

Hi-Red Center - through photographs and works

Part I : June 23 (Fri.) -July 13 (Thurs.) 2017

Part II : July 15 (Sat.) – August 5 (Sat.) 2017

*No opening reception will be held.

Venue : Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku

Park Grace Shinjuku Bld., 206, 4-32-6 Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-0023

Opening Hours: 12:00-19:00 Closed on Sundays, Mondays, national holidays, and July 14 (Fri.)

Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku is pleased to present *Hi-Red Center - through photographs and works* from Friday, the 23rd of June, 2017.

For years, Yumiko Chiba Associates has held an annual show of Jiro Takamatsu during the span of weeks including the anniversary of the artist's death, to introduce the artistic activities that he engaged in in his life time. This year, the gallery will trace some of his activities that he has done with an artistic group named Hi- Red Center in the early years of his career, when he was also creating his works individually on his own.

The group name 'Hi-Red Center' had its origin in the surnames of its three members: Takamatsu, Akasegawa, and Nakanishi. The first Chinese character of the three names respectively had the meaning of: high (taka), red (aka), and center (naka.) Hence, the name Hi-Red Center. Although they were officially formed in May of 1963, with the implementation of *The 5th Mixer Plan*, it may well be said that their activities had actually already started in the December of the previous year, around the time of *Yamanote Line Festival*. During the short period from 1963 to 64 that the group existed, it successively realized the performative events such as: *The 6th Mixer Plan*; *Room in Alibi*; *Roplogy*; *Shelter Plan*; *Grand Panorama*; *Dropping Event*; and *Be Clean! Campaign to Promote Cleanliness and Order in the Metropolitan Area*.

While having an air of a secret society about them, they on the other hand have often had their performances in public places and facilities such as streets in Ginza, inside the train, the railway stations and their surroundings. They performed extraordinary actions in ordinary settings such as hotels or building roof tops, and were consequently reported by the newspapers and magazines besides art journalism to gather public attentions. Despite the name Hi-Red Center, the group had other members involved including Tatsu Izumi, and sometimes accepted additional members for new projects. The events and actions that they organized were the ones that questioned their own validity as art from the perspective of its system. Furthermore, they also reconsidered the relationship between artists and audiences.

The show consists of two parts. The part I which starts from June 23 and ends on July 13 presents documentary photographs of Hi-Red Center; the part II which starts from July 15 and ends on August 5 presents works that Takamatsu, Akasegawa, and Nakanishi respectively created during their Hi-Red Center years.



■Artists' Profile

Jiro Takamatsu

February 20, 1936-June 25, 1998

Artist. Graduated from the Department of Painting at Tokyo University of the Arts, majoring in oil painting in 1958. In the same year, began participating in *Yomiuri Independent* from its tenth show. After exhibiting an abstract painting in oil which showed a form resembling a point at *Yomiuri Independent* of 1961, he submitted stringy works to the sculpture section at their 14th show the next year. In 1963, at *The 15th Yomiuri Independent*, he exhibited the works of the same style which were titled as: *About Anti-existence Regarding the Drawer of a Table*, *About Anti-existence Regarding a Trunk*, and *About Anti-existence Regarding a Curtain*. The style established for these works soon developed into series titled *Point* and *String*. His later series include: *Shadow*, *Perspective*, *Wave*, *Slack*, *Oneness*, *Compound*, *Space in Two Dimensions*, and *Form*; his thoughts on substance, reality, language, and space stayed unchanged throughout his life and he kept working as if to prove the validity of his ideas.

Genpei Akasegawa

March 27, 1937 – October 26, 2014

Artist and writer, whose pen name was Katsuhiko Otsuji. Dropped out of Musashino Art School (Current Musashino Art University) in 1957. In 1960, participated in *1st Neo-Dada exhibition*. In 1963, had a solo exhibition *On the Ambiguous Ocean* at Shinjuku Daiichi Gallery for which he printed *Model 1,000 Yen Notes I* the first time and sent them out as invitation cards in registered mail envelope. In the same year, at *The 15th Yomiuri Independent*, exhibited packed paintings titled *Fact or Method 1, 2* and *Morphology of Revenge (Take a Close Look at the Opponent before You Kill Him)*, which was an enlarged copy of the 1000 Yen note that he had printed. From 1965 to 67, the 1000-Yen Note Trial took place. In 1981, he received the 84th Akutagawa Prize, after which time his focus of activity shifted from visual art to literature, and wrote many books. He was involved in the formation of many organizations such as Street Observation Society, Leica Alliance and the Nihon Bijutsu Oendan (The Supporters of Japanese Art), and engaged in their activities.

Natsuyuki Nakanishi

July 14, 1935 – October 23, 2016

Artist. Graduated from the Department of Painting at Tokyo University of the Arts, majoring in oil painting in 1958. From 1959 to 60, executed the series titled *Rhyme Paintings* made of paint mixed with sand. From 1962 onwards, created *Compact Objects* that contained various objects found in his surroundings in acrylic resin molded in the shape of egg. In 1963, at *The 15th Yomiuri Independent*, in addition to *Compact Object* and *Rhyme '63*, he exhibited *Clothespins Assert Churning Action*, which suspended countless clothespins on canvas. Also, from the 1960's, he associated with a dancer/choreographer Tatsumi Hijikata, and produced major stage arts and sets for his Butoh. From the latter half of the 1960's, the artist's focus shifted from the type of work which emphasized the material to paintings. Subsequently, in the 1970's, he exhibited two dimensional oils painted basically in three colors of white, purple and lime green and continued to cultivate his distinctive ideas on the origin of 'picture.'

Hi-Red Center

Hi-Red Center was an avant-garde art group, with the symbol of a red exclamation mark. It was organized by three artists of Jiro Takamatsu (Hi), Genpei Akasegawa (Red), and Natsuyuki Nakanishi (Center) in 1963. However, there were other participants besides them, including the fourth member, Tatsu Izumi. It is also said to have had other anonymous constituents as well.

Selected Activities *venues in the brackets:

1962: *The Banquet to Commemorate Losing the War* (Kunitachi City Community Center)*Yamanote Line Festival*. (The platforms of the stations and the trains on the Inner track of the Yamanote Line and Ueno Park)1963: *The 5th Mixer Plan* (Shinjuku Daiichi Gallery) *This was their first performance after the official formation.*The 6th Mixer Plan* (The former Miyata Medical Clinic)*Room in Alibi* (Naiqua Gallery)*Roplogy* (The rooftop of the office building of BIJUTSU SHUPPAN-SHA CO., LTD.)1964: *Shelter Plan* (The lobby of Imperial Hotel and Room 340 of its old wing.)*Grand Panorama* (Naiqua Gallery)*Dropping Event* (The rooftop and the penthouse of Ikenobo Kaikan)*Be Clean! Campaign to Promote Cleanliness and Order in the Metropolitan Area*. (In front of the office building of The Hokkaido Shimbun Press on Namiki Street in Block 7 of Ginza, Tokyo)

■ Cooperation : gallery21 yo-j, SOH GALLERY

For further information or images, please contact Yumiko Chiba Associates.

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