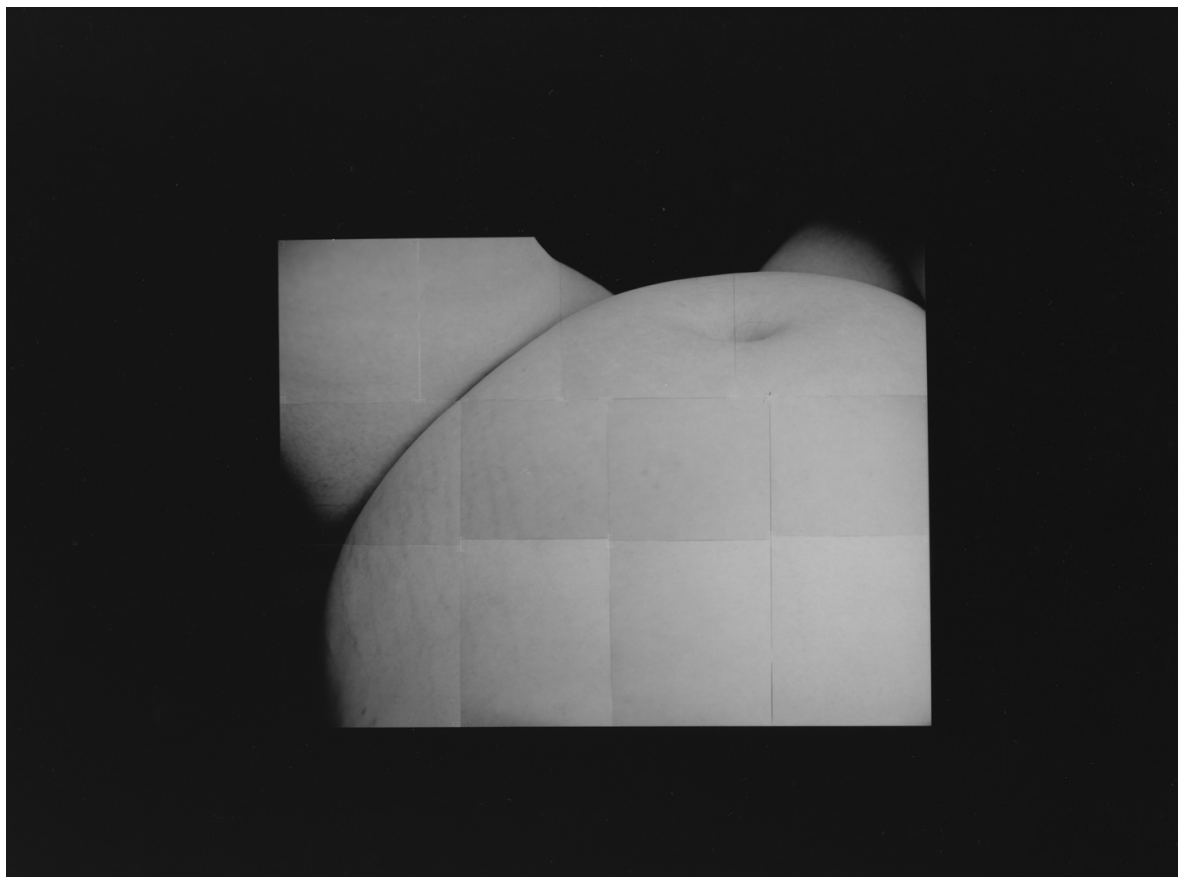




Ryudai Takano

Interrogating Photographs: part 1 “bodies”



©Ryudai Takano, Courtesy of Yumiko Chiba Associates

Tuesday, May 27 — Saturday, July 12, 2025
Tuesday, May 27 – Saturday, July 19, 2025

Venue: Yumiko Chiba Associates

ROPPONGI HILLS Hollywood Beauty Plaza 3rd Floor, 6-4-1 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0032 Japan

Gallery Hours: 12:00-19:00

Closed on Sundays, Mondays, and national holidays

Yumiko Chiba Associates is excited to present “bodies,” an exhibition by Ryudai Takano. Since winning the 31st Kimura Ihei Award in 2006 for his photo collection IN MY ROOM, Takano has gone on to collect rave reviews both at home and internationally not only for photographs dealing with sexuality and gender, but also for a wider, diverse range of expression that interrogates the particular peculiarities of photography as a medium.

“bodies” includes Takano’s “Human Body 1/1,” “Stand up, Kikuo!” and “Reclining Woo-Man” series featuring male nudes. In contrast to the way that a painter actively “reproduces” a subject by depicting it, a photograph “shows” that subject automatically and mechanically, the agency of the photographer receding as it merges with the device of the camera. However Takano notes that in recent years, photographic works increasingly encourage interrogation not in terms of what they show or “have reproduced” but what is actively being reproduced by the photographer, and such questioning, more conscious of the photographing agent, means that people are approaching what is in the frame of a photo much as they would a painting. Thus photography is turning into painting.

“Reclining Woo-Man” in particular is modelled on the reclining nude that is a long-standing staple of Western art, indicating a strong connection to painting. This exhibition reconsiders the status of the subject/agent in photographic bodily expression by drifting between painting and photography, in the narrow space between actively “reproducing,” and “automatic” reproduction.

Don’t miss this exhibition presented as part of the “Interrogating Photographs” series at Yumiko Chiba Associates.



Artist Statement

Interrogating Photographs
part 1 “bodies”

In most cases, to interrogate a photograph is to ask “what is in it (what it reproduces/shows).” The “how” is rarely interrogated, or is lost in the question of the “what.”

Let us compare this state of affairs with another form of two-dimensional expression: painting. In painting, especially since the 19th century, when interrogating a painting the fundamental questions of what is depicted, and how that depiction comes about, arise almost simultaneously. Whence the difference?

This could be considered from a grammatical viewpoint. “What does it reproduce?” or “What does it show?” are interrogative expressions in the active voice. “What is depicted?” on the other hand is an interrogative expression in the passive voice. What this difference means is that while in painting, there is an unspoken assumption that there exists somewhere a subject/agent that “did the depicting,” in photography the photographer who is the subject/agent of the action takes on an abstract quality, the image in turn thus taking on the quality an autonomous entity. At its most extreme, the expression could be said to suggest that the image has appeared automatically as a kind of natural phenomenon.

This also reflects the inherent difference by which while the verb “to depict” requires an agent for the action, to ask “what is in it (what it reproduces/shows)” (nani ga utsutte-iru ka) does not. Fuji Film’s “Utsurundesu” disposable camera makes clever use of this feature of photography in its name.

The reason that in painting, the questions “what is depicted?” and “how is it depicted?” are asked at virtually the same time, is that painting being the product of human agency, we are conscious that there must have been some intent on the part of the maker. The person looking at the canvas will likely soon ask “how the maker depicted it,” and it does not take long for the “depicting agent” to make an appearance in the back of the viewer’s mind.

Flip this around, and the reason the question of “how” what is there, came to be there, does not come to the fore in photography, is that the lack of awareness that a photo is a product of human hands mean this question intimately associated with “intention” does not readily come to mind. Obviously, in photography too, it is possible to include the existence of the photographer by asking what has been reproduced (by them) in the photo, and how. However the more the picture plane relies on the machine that is the camera, the greater the hesitation to ask this question. This is probably the definitive difference between photography and painting. That is to say, the distance between picture plane and agent that produced it is unavoidably different. I personally believe that this quality of photography conceals an opportunity to interrogate modern society (whether that be a new kind of man-machine symbiosis, or the possibility of escaping the modern malaise of trying to be one’s own agent).

Incidentally, a growing number of photographic works in recent years encourage interrogation not in terms of what they have “reproduced” but what is “being reproduced” ie what the photographer has actively “shot.” Questions like this, conscious of the photographing agent, mean that people are looking at the picture plane with the same mindset as looking at a painting. That is to say, photography is turning into painting.

When faced with a particular photographic work, do we ask what it shows, or what is being shown? Linguistically the difference may be subtle, but the realities are very different. Which question will my works on display here summon in the viewer’s mind?

April 2025
Ryudai Takano

**【Talk Event】****Ryudai Takano x Ryo Sawayama** (art critic and associate professor at Musashino Art University)

Date: Saturday, June 14, 16:00-18:00 (doors open at 15:45)

Venue: Roppongi Hills (Hollywood Beauty Plaza 4th Floor)

Admission fee: Free

Sponsored by Hollywood Beauty Group

*Seating capacity: 20

*The talk is given in Japanese.

*Booking-related details will be announced on the Yumiko Chiba Associates website/social media.

Speakers' Profile**Ryudai Takano**

Photographer. Born 1963 in Fukui.

Has been engaged in his artistic practice on the theme of sexuality since 1994, in 2005 winning the Kimura Ihei Award for In My Room, a collection of photographs that attempt to give visual expression to the ambiguities that lie in the space between the dichotomies of man or woman, homosexual or heterosexual. Since then he has produced a number of works viewing the "down there" matter of sexual desire in the context of its relationship to the likes of identity and social norms, including How to contact a man, which explores the theme of sexuality in pornographic format; and With me, whose unguarded expressions of sexuality led to trouble with the police.

In addition, Takano has produced series that question the notion of a hierarchy of value in visual representation, including the Reclining Woo-Man series of "unmarketable" body images; and Kasubaba, which captures very familiar yet neglected parts of the distinctively Japanese urban landscape.

Since the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami of 2011, Takano has been engaged in various projects on the theme of shadows. In 2021, Takano had his first museum solo exhibition TAKANO RYUDAI: DAILY PHOTOGRAPHS 1999-2021, at the National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan. Awarded The 72nd Minister of Education Award for Fine Arts, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan in 2021, and 38th Higashikawa Awards' Domestic Photographer Award in 2022.

Ryo Sawayama (art critic and associate professor at Musashino Art University)

Ryo Sawayama, born in Okayama in 1982, is an art critic and associate professor at Musashino Art University. Sawayama completed his Master's degree at Musashino Art University, Tokyo. He received the first prize at the 14th Art Critic Awards sponsored by Bijutsu-Techō magazine (Tokyo) in 2009 for the essay "Labor-work: Carl Andre and His Concept of Art Making." In 2020, his first book, Dynamics of Painting, was published by Shoshi Kankanbo (Fukuoka) as a collection of essays on postwar American and Japanese art. His publications include Ten Lectures on Contemporary Art (edited by Masayuki Tanaka, Musashino Art University Press, 2017) and Thinking About Painting Now (edited by The National Art Center, Tokyo, Suiseisha, 2023). He also supervises a series of books, Critical Archive, organized by Yumiko Chiba Associates.

■Related Information**【Solo Exhibition】****“TOP 30th Anniversary Takano Ryudai: kasubaba Living through the ordinary”**

Thursday, February 27- Sunday, June 8, 2025

Venue: 2F Exhibition Gallery, Tokyo Photographic Art Museum

Gallery Hours: 10:00–18:00 (Thu. / Fri. 10:00–20:00). *Final admission 30 minutes before closing.

Closed: Mondays (except when May 5), May 7.

【Publication】**Exhibition Catalogue****“TOP 30th Anniversary Takano Ryudai: kasubaba Living through the ordinary”**

Release Date: 2025

Price: ¥3,960(tax included)

Publisher : Tokyo Photographic Art Museum

Essay: Ryo Sawayama, Asa Ito, Megumu Takashima, Miyuki Endo (Curator, Tokyo Photographic Art Museum)

Ryudai Takano 『KASUBABA 2011-2020』

Release Date: 2025

Price: ¥5,280(tax included)

Author : Ryudai Takano

Publisher : Bookend Publishing Co., Ltd.

『CVD19』

Release Date: 2025

Price: ¥3,100(tax included)

Author : Ryudai Takano

Publisher : Goliga Books; Limited Edition *edition of 95

■Artist Profile

**Ryudai Takano (1963-)**

- 1963 Born in Fukui, Japan
2006 The 31th Kimura Ihei Commemorative Photography Award
2021 The 72nd Minister of Education Award for Fine Arts, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan
2022 38th Higashikawa Awards' Domestic Photographer Award

Currently lives and works in Tokyo

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 1994 "The Specimen of a Woman", Hiranagachobashi Gallery, Tokyo
"Nippon", Konica Minolta Plaza, Tokyo
1995 "Pornography", Hiranagachobashi Gallery, Tokyo
1996 "Gathering Bodies", il tempo, Tokyo
1999 "Human Body 1/1", ZEIT-FOTO SALON, Tokyo
2000 "Reclining Woo-Man", ZEIT-FOTO SALON, Tokyo
"ca.ra.ma.ru", Gallery mai, Tokyo
2001 "Naked, for example", il tempo, Tokyo
2002 "Twelve Messengers", ZEIT-FOTO SALON, Tokyo
2005 "Common Sense", ZEIT-FOTO SALON, Tokyo
2006 "In My Room", NADiff Gallery, Tokyo
"The 31th Kimura Ihei Commemorative Photography Award Exhibition, In My Room", KONICA MINOLTA PLAZA, GALLERY C, Tokyo
"How to contact a man", ZEIT-FOTO SALON, Tokyo
"In My Room", GALLERY M, Aichi
2007 "Daily Photos", GALLERY at lammfromm, Tokyo
2008 "Daily Photos", Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room Ginza, Tokyo
"Para-Para", ZEIT-FOTO SALON, Tokyo
"Para-Para 2002/2008", Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room GINZA, Tokyo
"Yuragi", CALM & PUNK GALLERY, Tokyo
2009 "EARLY MONOCHROME", TAKASHIMAYA Nihonbashi Store, 6F Art Gallery X, Tokyo
"with me", NADiff Gallery, Tokyo
"Open Studio Program 46 - Document, Memory, and Something", Fuchu Art Museum, Tokyo
"*Hana-machi-bito*", GALLERY M, Aichi
"How to contact a man", GALLERY at lammfromm, Tokyo
"*Hanabana-shi*", Takashimaya Shinjuku store 10F Art Gallery, Tokyo
2010 "Ikigaa", gallery rougheryet, Okinawa
"Viva World Cup!", totodo, Tokyo
"An Ignition Point", ZEIT-FOTO SALON, Tokyo
2011 "Takano Ryudai Exhibition", E&C GALLERY, Fukui
2012 "Photo-Graph", Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku, Tokyo
"Stand up, Kikuo!", ZEIT-FOTO SALON, Tokyo
"NADiff Window Gallery vol.18 Daily Snap shots", NADiff Window Gallery, Tokyo
2013 "Visual Arts Gallery Exhibitions Photo Show vol.139 Taking photographs before thinking", Visual arts gallery, Osaka
"Hongkong - Shenzhen 1988", ZEIT-FOTO SALON, Tokyo
2014 "In the order corresponding to shooting from January 2014 to recent date", Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku, Tokyo
"String and Coke: Jiro Takamatsu at Dazaifu", Capsule, Tokyo
2015 "*Zan-er*", Morioka Shoten, Tokyo
2016 "When the absence of light touches the ground Distance is lost and distance created", Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku, Tokyo
"Time and Distance", NADiff Gallery, Tokyo
2017 "Y Shiki", Operation Table, Fukuoka
2018 "Desire Room", AYUMI GALLERY CAVE, Tokyo
"Find Your Fantasy", FANZA×#FR2 @#FR2 GALLERY 2, Tokyo
2020 "With me", IBASHO Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium
2021 "TAKANO RYUDAI: DAILY PHOTOGRAPHS 1999-2021", The National Museum of Art, Osaka, Osaka
2022 "Tokyo Tower on one day", Capsule, Tokyo
2024 "Ryudai Takano *Shashin*", ZEIT-FOTO kunitachi, Tokyo
2025 "top 30th anniversary takano ryudai: kasubaba, living through the ordinary", Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, Tokyo.
(February 27, 2025 – June 8, 2025)

**Selected Group Exhibitions**

- 2000 "The Vision of Contemporary Art (VOCA) 2000", The Ueno Royal Museum, Tokyo
- 2001 "Kiss in the Dark : Contemporary Japanese Photography", Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, Tokyo and etc.
- 2002 "Japanese Contemporary Art Exhibition", Turkish Japanese Foundation Cultural Center, Ankara
"Kiss in the Dark : Contemporary Japanese Photography", Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art, Kagawa
- 2003 "Mask of Japan : Japanese Contemporary Photography", aura gallery, Shanghai, China
- 2004 "Les métamorphoses du quotidien", The Museum of Modern Art, Gunma
"out of ordinary / extraordinary : Japanese Contemporary Photography", Japanisches Kulturinstitut, Cologne, Germany and etc.
- 2005 "85/05: The photography beyond 20 years from Tsukuba Museum of Photography 1985", sendai mediatheque, Miyagi
"Post Gender", Tikotin Museum of Japanese Art, Haifa, Israel
- 2007 "Japan contemporary Art Festival", Heyri, Korea
"Japan Caught by Camera - Works from the photographic Art in Japan", Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China
- 2007 – 2008 "A Private History", Fotografisk Center, Copenhagen, Denmark/ VB-VALOKUVAKESKUS, Kuopio, Finland
- 2008 "Makiko Tanaka Ryudai Takano", Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room GINZA, Tokyo
"Still / Motion", Mie Prefectural Art Museum, Mie/ The National Museum of Art, Osaka/ Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, Tokyo
"Rudai Takano×Koji onaka / Shanghai two men show", Gallery Kaido, Tokyo
"The history of art and city -Paris, New York, Tokyo and Shanghai-", sendai mediatheque, Miyagi
"Backlight 08 Tickle Attack 8th International Photographic Triennial", Art Hall TR1, Tampere, Finland and etc.
"Daegu Photo Biennale 2008", EXCO, Daegu, Korea
- 2009 "Dazaifu Tenmangu Art Program Vol.5 : Jiro Takamatsu | Ryudai Takano PHOTOGRAPH and Photograph", Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine Museum, Fukuoka
"Japan meets China – Our Future reflected in Contemporary Art", Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts, Tochigi
- 2009 – 2010 "When I Love You and When I Hate You", Okinawa Prefectural Museum & Art Museum Collection Gallery 2, Okinawa
- 2010 "Dazzling, Garandô (Dazzling, Hollowness)", The University Art Museum, Tokyo University of the Arts, Tokyo
"Look at me! Portrait photographs of nude", Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, Tokyo
"The 35th Anniversary Exhibition of the KIMURA IHEI Photography Award", KAWASAKI City Museum, Kanagawa
"The Beyond The Border", Tangram Art Center, Shanghai, China
"Snapshot Cast Their Spell Radiant Moments", Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, Tokyo
"Photo-Secession Tokyo", NADiff GALLERY, Tokyo
- 2011 "MODERNITY STRIPPED BARE", University of Maryland Art Gallery, Maryland, U.S.A.
"HAKKA TEN", Ryugu Bijutsu Ryokan, Yokohama
"AKARI", Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku, Tokyo
"JAPANESE PHOTO BOOKS NOW", Paris, France
"ANTI!FOTO 2011", Kunstraum Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf, Germany
"Ryudai TAKANO × Masanori HATA—Exhibition + Talk Part 1[Picture?]", blanClass, Yokohama
- 2012 "PORTRAITS", Art Gallery X, Takashimaya, Tokyo
"MiO PHOTO OSAKA 2012", MIO TENNOJI, Osaka
"Ryudai TAKANO × Masanori HATA—Exhibition + Talk Part 2[Picture?]", blanClass, Yokohama
"Ryudai TAKANO × Masanori HATA—Exhibition + Talk Part 3[Photography]", blanClass, Yokohama
"Photo-Secession Tokyo: Photography +", Chukyo University Art Gallery C · SQUARE, Aichi
"Missing You", Shibuya Hikarie 8/ CUBE1,2,3, Tokyo
"Black Closer to White", Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku, Tokyo
- 2013 "CABINET LIBRARY Vol.5", Port Gallery T, Osaka
"Works by Edition Works: Yuichi Higashionna, Ryudai Takano", Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku, Tokyo
"Ryudai TAKANO × Masanori HATA—Exhibition + [Picture?]", BankART Studio NYK 1F, BankART Mini, Yokohama
"Face Value: Portraits from The Kinsey Institute", The Kinsey Institute Gallery, Indiana, U.S.A.
"railroad siding 2013", Former Tokorozawa School Lunch Center Number Two, Saitama
- 2014 "Complex Media by Edition works", The Artcomplex Center of Tokyo, Tokyo
"Photo-Secession Tokyo: Nihon", Kyoto University of Arts (former Kyoto University of Art and Design) Galerie Aube, Kyoto
"Photography Will Be", Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art, Nagoya
"Unknown Nature Series No.5", AYUMI GALLERY, Tokyo
"Photographs by Five", ZEIT-FOTO SALON, Tokyo
"Tokyo Photo Special Exhibition, What is Japanese Photography? Exhibition Part 1", Tokyo Building TOKIA, Tokyo
"quadruple track", GENDAI HEIGHTS Gallery Den, Tokyo
"Architecture since 3.11", 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Ishikawa
"VENT NOUVEAU x 15 Photographers", TAKEO Co., Ltd. MIHONCHO HONTEN, Tokyo
"Group Exhibition vol.2 HAKKA", BankART Studio NYK, Kanagawa
- 2015 "Come Close: Japanese Artists within their Communities", BUS Projects, Collingwood, Victoria, Australia
"Edition Works Prints & Originals", GALLERY SPEAK FOR, Tokyo
"Everyone Will Love Someone for Sure", Gallery Soap, Fukuoka
- 2015 - 2016 "Our Beloved World", Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art, Kagawa



- 2016 "WATCHQUEEN", Spiral, Tokyo
"Summer, the End and the Beginning", Art Gallery X, Takashimaya, Tokyo
"Internationale Photoszene Köln", Bruch & Dallas, Cologne, Germany
"20 Year Anniversary TOP Collection: Tokyo Tokyo and TOKYO", Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, Tokyo
"Le Bal' A Memorial Service for Etsuro Ishihara, Where Artist Friends Will Gather", ZEIT-FOTO SALON, Tokyo
- 2016 - 2017 "moment", Alternative Space LOOP, Seoul, Korea
- 2017 "Photo-Secession Tokyo: The Illogicality of Photography-Distance and Vision", NADiff Gallery, Tokyo
"Group Exhibition Vol.3 'HAKKA'", MITSUBA kousakusyo, Tokyo
"20 Year Anniversary TOP Collection: Scrolling Through Heisei Part 3 Synchronicity", Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, Tokyo
- 2017 - 2018 "10th Anniversary Exhibition A Reunion with the Sea: Realism as Modern Asian Thought", Okinawa Prefectural Museum & Art Museum, Okinawa
- 2018 "Photo MIYOTA Asama International Photo Festival", Miyotamachi, Nagano
- 2019 "International Dance Film Festival 2019", Spiral Hall, Tokyo
"Emancipation of Humanity: Focusing on Works by Female Artists", The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
"the amana collection Exhibit 04 – Ryudai Takano, Nao Tsuda", IMA gallery, Tokyo
"JAPAN UNLIMITED, frei_raum Q21 exhibition space / Museums Quartier", Vienna, Austria
- 2020 "Collection Exhibition 2020 - II Special Feature Portraits of Self and Others", Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, Hiroshima
- 2020 – 2021 "MADE IN FUCHU: Twenty Years of Open Studio Programs", Fuchu Art Museum, Tokyo
- 2021 "CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE PHOTOGRAPHY 1985-2015", Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, Tokyo
"DECADE", Operation Table, Fukuoka
"Photograph of Photograph and Photographs", Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku, Tokyo
"TOKYO: ART & PHOTOGRAPHY", Ashmolean Museum Oxford, Oxford, UK
- 2022 "The 39th Higashikawa Award Winners' Photo Exhibition", Higashikawa Bunka Gallery, Hokkaido
"Subversive Bodies Art, Gender & Media", The 5th Floor, Tokyo
"a two-person show by Ryudai Takano and Chikako Yamashiro 'Resonance of Distance'", Yumiko Chiba Associates, Tokyo
- 2023 "MOMAT Collection", The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
- 2024 "Collection 2 Body—Body", The National Museum of Art, Osaka
"Does the Future Sleep Here?—Revisiting the museum's response to contemporary art after 65 years", The National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo
"BankART Life7 / Urban Nesting: Reinhabiting The City", BankART Station, Minatomirai 21, Kannai, and Yokohama Portside, Kanagawa

Public Collection

The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
The National Museum of Art, Osaka
Tokyo Photographic Art Museum
Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art
KAWASAKI CITY MUSEUM
Fuchu Art Museum
Shanghai Art Museum
Dazaifu Tenmangu Collection
The Japan Foundation
The Kinsey Institute
JPMorgan Chase Art Collection
the amana collection