

# Yuki Harada: Home Port

2024.11.30(Sat) — 2025.2.9(Sun)

**Venue:** Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art, GalleryB-2, B-3  
**Organized by:** Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art  
**Under the auspices of:** Hiroshima Prefecture, Hiroshima Municipal Board of Education, The Chugoku Shimbun, The Asahi Shimbun, The Mainichi Newspapers, THE YOMIURI SHIMBUN, RCC BROADCASTING CO., LTD., TSS-TV CO., LTD., Hiroshima Television Corporation, Hiroshima Home Television Co., Ltd., HIROSHIMA FM BROADCASTING CO., LTD., Onomichi FM Broadcasting Co., Ltd. Funded by Toshiaki Ogasawara Memorial Foundation, The Asahi Shimbun Foundation Supported by Project to Support Emerging Media Arts Creators, 2024  
**Equipment Cooperation:** CG-ARTS

**Curation:** Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art (Takeshi Matsuoka, Kazune Shimizu)  
**Spatial Design:** GROUP  
**Venue Construction:** Mizmakobo  
**Install:** SUPER-FACTORY (Koji Nakao, Miwako Sakuma, Takayuki Mikado, Hiromi Oku, Rei Ogami, Tuyoshi Oki, Shusuke Kataoka)  
**Video Technical:** crenative (Shinji Tanaka)  
**Sound Design:** Kazumichi Komatsu  
**Graphic Design:** Takeo Nakano  
**Photo and Video Archives:** Shintaro Watanabe, Megumi Fujita, Katsura Muramatsu  
**Translation:** Pamela Miki Associates, James Koetting

## 📷 Photography permitted

All artworks are OK to be photographed and posted on SNS platforms. However, please refrain from taking close-up shots of A Mountain of Images and the related materials in the display cases.

## Prologue/Epilogue: Tracing shadows

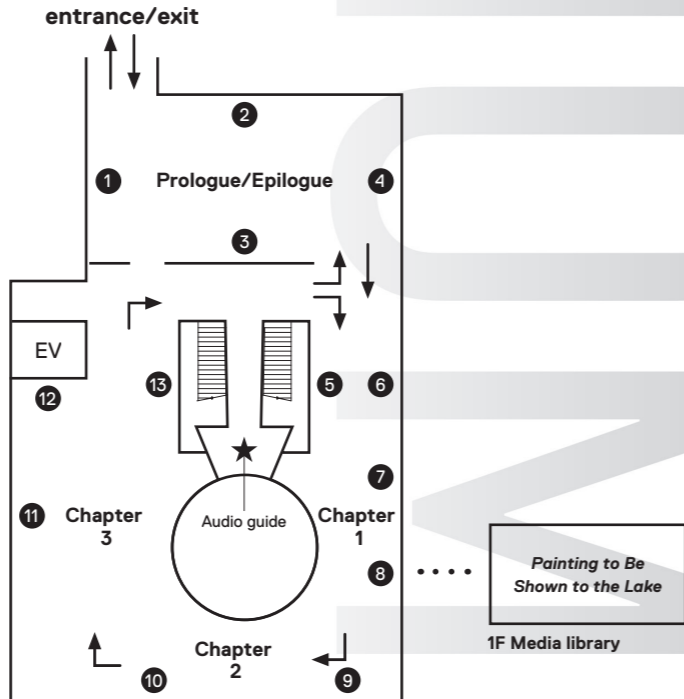
*Wherever I go and whatever I do, I can never escape from myself  
I myself don't go anywhere  
I myself am always there, waiting for me to return, like a shadow*

This exhibition begins and ends with the *Shadowing* (2022–) series of works on video. The above quote refers to *Shadowing*'s recurring theme of “myself.”

In these works, “digital humans” modeled by Harada on Japanese Americans in Hawaii tell stories involving this group of people. Facial motion capture technology links their expressions to Harada, so their images could be described as avatars of the artist.

The videos have subtitles in Japanese and English. Much of the English text is in what is known as Hawaiian Pidgin. The term pidgin refers to a hybrid language born out of contact between two different languages, and the pidgin English here was developed by the immigrants who came to Hawaii in the 19th and 20th centuries, and their descendants. It includes grammar and vocabulary originating in the native languages of people from locations as far afield as Japan, Portugal, the Philippines and so on. The Japanese subtitles include dialect from Hiroshima and Yamaguchi.

You may also have noticed that there are two types of “voice” to be heard here. One is that of the Japanese Americans in Hawaii, the other of Harada himself. Harada’s “shadowing” of



★About Audio guide  
An audio guide is playing here in which Harada explains about this exhibition in his own recitation.

the voices of the Japanese Americans reading the stories aloud causes dual overlapping voices to echo through the space.

The stories the figures here tell were compiled by the artist based on personal interviews, and documentary records. They are “our” stories: stories that transcend race, time, culture, language and sexuality. That said, Harada’s own visceral realization suffusing the quote above, suggests that they are also the story of his own “myself.”

## ① Shadowing (Tomigoro)

2023 | Video | 5 minutes and 18 seconds |  
Collection of the Museum of Japanese Emigration to Hawaii  
Script, Edit & Direction: Yuki Harada | Narration: Larry Higa, Yuki Harada |  
Pidgin English: Larry Higa | English Script Editing: James Koetting |  
Cooperation: Marie Otani, Miyo Higa, Mari Tsukamoto |  
Based on *Grandpa Kajita Tomigoro, Umi Yukaba* by Tsuneichi Miyamoto

“Unlike the farmers, the men of the sea had a daredevil spirit and strong heart that believed in possibilities.”  
- From Tsuneichi Miyamoto, “Umi Yukaba” Japanese Seafarers, 1974.

The sources of the narrative in this work are two short essays by the folklorist Tsuneichi Miyamoto (1907-1981): “Umi Yukaba” and “Grandpa Kajita Tomigoro.” The former describes the lives of fishermen beginning in the Meiji era, and the latter tells stories taken from dictations of oral accounts by Kajita, who migrated from Suo-Oshima, Miyamoto’s birthplace, to Tsushima. Harada superimposes these materials on the lifestyle of emigrants who crossed the sea and made the journey to Hawaii.

Unlike the other works in the *Shadowing* series, this one is

occupied mostly by sections in which the script is read by Harada alone, i.e., by the artist’s monologue. “Wherever I go and whatever I do, I can never escape from myself.” Acting the part of a youth, Harada repeatedly makes this statement while interweaving anecdotes and tales about Miyamoto and fishermen.

This work includes translations of symbolic lines spoken by Kajita. The translations were made by a Nisei man over 90 years old. Born in Hawaii, he is a native speaker of pidgin English. He transformed the words of Kajita/Miyamoto into pidgin English as shown below and recited the results. He also was a major inspiration for the production of these works by Harada.

Kajita-Miyamoto: *Yappari yo no naka de ichiban erai no ga ningen no yo de goisu.*

Standard English: When you come down to it, the greatest creatures in this world are human beings.

Pidgin English: Go stay go Pakiki all da time! Eh...no give up 'til you pau!

(Literal translation: Fight on forever! Don't give up until the end!)

## ② Shadowing (Dan)

2023 | Video | 4 minutes and 58 seconds |  
Collection of the Museum of Japanese Emigration to Hawaii  
Script, Edit & Direction: Yuki Harada | Narration: Dwayne Mukai, Yuki Harada |  
Pidgin English: Dwayne Mukai | English Script Editing: James Koetting |  
Yamaguchi Dialect: Jiro Fujii | Cooperation: Rene Michie Kimura |  
Based on *My Grandfather* by Tsuneichi Miyamoto

Borrowing the figure of a man in his prime, Harada tells a story about a dog named Kuro and a little raccoon named Mameda. The story was drawn from “My Grandfather,” an essay published in 1958 by the folklorist Tsuneichi Miyamoto (1907-81). A native of Suo-Oshima, Miyamoto did thoroughgoing fieldwork that took him to all parts of Japan, and focused on the lives of ordinary people that had been neglected by conventional history with a capital “H.” In “My Grandfather,” he reminisces about the character and doings of his own grandfather, Ichigoro. The essay paints a portrait of the “extremely ordinary” Ichigoro, who lived almost all of his life as a peasant on Oshima, with respect and love.

Harada adapted “My Grandfather” from the perspectives of both Miyamoto and his grandfather. The anecdotes told from Ichigoro’s perspective are related in Pidgin English, and those from Miyamoto’s perspective, in standard English. This makes it seem as if Ichigoro had emigrated to Hawaii. Furthermore, Harada’s act of “chasing” (shadowing) the voice of the Japanese-American is linked here with the way that the “I” of the present (Miyamoto) “chases” (recalls) the figure of his grandfather in his memory, thereby adding even more depth to the structure of this work.

## ③ Shadowing (Maiko)

2023 | Video | 7 minutes and 56 seconds |  
Collection of the Museum of Japanese Emigration to Hawaii  
Script, Edit & Direction: Yuki Harada | Narration: Rene Michie Kimura, Yuki Harada |  
Pidgin English: Rene Michie Kimura | English Script Editing: James Koetting |  
Cooperation: Kali Alexander, Rina Long

This video takes up chicken hekka, a local Hawaiian dish.

As related in the work, chicken hekka has Japanese roots. Other foods originally brought over by Japanese immigrants can still be found on dinner tables and supermarkets in Hawaii, such as *musubi* (rice ball) and *manju* (steamed bun with filling). Immigrants from around the world brought elements of their respective dietary cultures to Hawaii. While some dishes are faithful to the

original recipes, others were localized and underwent distinctive changes in respect of appearance and taste.

At the same time, regardless of the origins, the taste of that particular favorite made that special person never disappears from anyone’s memory. As a matter of fact, part of this work is based on the memories of the Japanese American woman who reads the script in both standard and pidgin English.

## ④ Shadowing (Kenji)

2022 | Video | 16 Minutes 24 Seconds |  
Collection of the Museum of Japanese Emigration to Hawaii  
Script, Edit & Direction: Yuki Harada | Narration: Kali Alexander, Yuki Harada |  
Pidgin English: Kali Alexander | English Script Editing: Andreas Christian Stuhlmann |  
Cooperation: Rina Long, Hyesu Cho, Mai Harada, Akane Tanaka |  
Based on *Obake: Ghost Stories in Hawai'i* by Glen Grant

This work, the first in the *Shadowing* series, introduces the anecdote by the Roman scholar Pliny the Elder to the effect that painting originated with tracing of the human shadow, and takes “shadowing” per se as its subject.

At the same time, the majority of the narrative consists of ghost stories (about obake, i.e., traditional Japanese spirits and goblins) that Glen Grant (1947-2003), an author who was active in Hawaii, heard from Japanese Americans. More specifically, the work takes up the commotion created by the alleged sighting of a *kappa* (river imp) on the island of Hawaii and a *nopperabo* (goblin without a face) on the island of Oahu.

Many Japanese emigrated to Hawaii, and thereafter people began to see obake, as if the latter had shadowed the Japanese immigrants to Hawaii. Along with the line “I stay me and only can be me,” this work superimposes the gut feelings that these immigrants presumably had on the existence of obake freely flitting across national boundaries.

## Chapter 1:

## Power of Seeing

There are things familiar to us, that from time to time have a profound impact on our lives, yet whose inherent value as art remains unrecognized. Harada has a long-held interest in one such category of items: photographs taken not by artists but ordinary members of the public.

These are photos that have been taken and kept by private individuals, yet for various reasons are no longer in the hands of their owners and now of unknown provenance, making it difficult to assign any meaning or value to them. Harada has been collecting photos like this since 2017.

Who is that? Where was it taken? Who took it? We have no idea how to look at these photographs stripped of information. Yet they must have once meant the world to a specific someone.

So as if to reward them for their existence, Harada has diligently studied every single one. In *A Mountain of Images* these photos are displayed in a form that allows them to actually be touched. *One Million Seeings*, meanwhile, shows the artist looking at photographs for 24 hours without rest, as if in mourning for them.

## ⑤ *A Mountain of Images*

2017- | Photographs, albums, etc. | Collection of the artist

Most of the photographs collected here are “photos that should have been thrown away.” Harada began collecting these after learning that photos were being collected and discarded every day by scrap dealers and industrial waste disposal companies, and now has over 200,000 of them.

Talking to these businesses he found that they were sorting the photos into two categories: those that were saleable and those that were not, with the former being sold on the market and the latter, disposed of. These are the photos that with permission from these waste-processing contractors, he began to keep.

The circumstances surrounding the collection of these photos suggest that they contain images of many deceased people. The artist says that, as he relived the lives of these people through the photos, their images became so vivid in his mind that he even started to see them in his dreams.

In contrast, the artist considers art works grouped under the name “found photos” to be the opposite of these photographs. The technique of found photos is to “discover” anonymous photographs from an artistic perspective, and change the way they are seen by substituting a different context.

By doing this, the photos taken by someone else may be given the status of “art,” but will they lose the kind of presence that lingers in this world by being etched into someone’s heart? - The fact that these photos are on display without any kind of meaning attached, available for anyone to pick up, reveals the artist’s intention not to detract from their original “aura.”

## ⑥ *One Million Seeings*

2024 | Video | 24 hours | Collection of the artist  
Performance: Yuki Harada | Cinematography: Shintaro Watanabe, Megumi Fujita | Location: CUBE

## ⑦ *One Million Seeings*

2023 | Video | 24 hours | Collection of the artist  
Performance: Yuki Harada | Cinematography: Shintaro Watanabe | Location: Yurakucho Building | Supported by YAU STUDIO | Commissioned by TOKYO PHOTOGRAPHIC RESEARCH PROJECT

## ⑧ *One Million Seeings*

2021 | Video | 24 hours | Collection of the artist  
Performance: Yuki Harada | Cinematography: Shintaro Watanabe | Location: Hotel Gracery Shinjuku

## ⑨ *One Million Seeings*

2019 | Video | 24 hours 5 minutes 21 seconds | Collection of Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art  
Adviser: Shintaro Wada | Assistant: Ken-ichi Nakahashi, Katsura Muramatsu | Technical Support: Honkbooks | Location: KEN NAKAHASHI

*One Million Seeings* documents,ed over a 24-hour period, the artist looking at photographs he has collected. The video records a performance carried out as an attempt to create a “home” for these photographs that were disposed of with nowhere to go.

In the work, Harada tries to find some connection between himself and each photograph, based on a rule of looking at it until a relationship is formed. At the same time, the work also aim to

have the performer/audience confirm the last gaze directed at the photograph. By having the once-discarded snaps exposed to the public once again, the sphere of intimacy surrounding them resonates from the owner down through the performer, to the audience.

For viewers, the work can also be seen as a slideshow of various randomly projected scenes that do not reject emotional involvement from random strangers.

In the background can be heard the voices of people passing by below the filming location, police sirens, and live music, the rich tapestry of human activity enveloping the viewer.

### Chapter 2:

## A sense of waiting for something

In this chapter we present *Waiting for*, a CGI animation / narration performance 33 hours and 19 minutes in duration.

Employing software used in game production, *Waiting for* features three spaces generated from visions of our planet a million years ago, and a million years hence. These virtual spaces extend infinitely as in an open world game.

Reverberating across these vistas we hear the common names of all the creatures currently found on Earth, read by the artist non-stop for over 33 hours. Names consisting of an external characteristic of the animal from a human point of view, such as the buffy hummingbird, a small bird named for its buff-colored underparts, include the perspective of the human who gave this thing of nature its name.

Yet the video itself shows melancholy landscapes utterly devoid of both people and fauna. Seeing this, are we looking at a scene from which something has already gone? Or one anticipating the arrival of something?

## ⑩ *Waiting for*

2021 | Video | 33 hours 19 minutes 26 seconds | Collection of the artist  
Narration, Edit & Direction: Yuki Harada | CGI Design & Animation: SUNJUNJIE | Reserch & Sound Edit: Akane Tanaka | Cooperation: Katsura Muramatsu, Kanta Nishio

### Chapter 3:

## Dreamscapes

In around 2020, a form of CGI expression known as “dreamscape” started to trend. Dreamscape features include scenery that is clearly fictitious, a calm easefulness suggesting the absence of war or natural disaster, and the lack of any kind of living thing.

In the real world meanwhile, people across the globe continue to face crisis after crisis, from pandemic, to disaster and war. Dreamscape visuals can thus be seen as reflecting the atmosphere of our times—in terms of being an antidote to it.

Though influenced by this trend, this series is also a projection of a personal memory of the artist’s: a “dreamscape” seen with his own eyes.

According to this memory, in a town where Harada once

lived, was a garden-like space attached to an end-of-life care ward. This space created to ease even slightly the suffering of people as they approached their final moments, looked so quiet, Harada says, as to be unreal. It was attempting to depict this scene that launched Harada on his creative journey.

A dream-like space over which the contrast between life and death cast a heavy shadow; superimposed on Harada’s dreamscapes, are visions of spaces such as these.

## ⑪ *Home Port*

2023/2024 | Inkjet print | Collection of the artist  
CGI：SUNJUNJIE | \*4 works

About *Home Port*

“People think of the ocean when they think of Hawaii, but to me it is an island of winds. That is why you should turn off the air conditioner when driving here. It feels great when you open the window.”

A monk that I know said that. He is from Hiroshima and lives in Lahaina. Since then, I keep the windows down while driving in Hawaii.

This work is about Lahaina on Maui, Hawaii.

The name of this historic town reminds people of the drastic change after the deadly wildfire in August 2023, claiming more than 100 lives. The extreme winds blew at over 35 meters per second further ravaging the town.

The coast of Lahaina used to be known as the breeding area of humpback whales. The town prospered as the capital of the Hawaiian Kingdom in the 19th century, when whaling was a significant industry. Many of the American whaling ships made port at Lahaina to rest their crews during the long journey of whale hunting.

Lahaina thrived on tourism with its rich history after World War II when tourism became the major industry of Hawaii. Lahaina also became known as a center for marine art with the emergence of Robert Lyn Nelson and Christian Lassen.

The Japanese Americans in Hawaii have deep historical roots in Lahaina. Many Japanese migrated to the town during the plantation era and built several Buddhist temples. The Lahaina Shingon Mission was one of them. It was established by a monk from Yuu village near Nada, Iwakuni city, where I once lived. Unfortunately, many of the century-old temples were lost to the wildfires.

Lahaina has a layered history, and it will continue to be there no matter what. Lahaina, the *home port* for the whales, Hawaiians and Japanese Americans.

With a wish that they can return home whenever they want, I made this work, citing the composition of *Home Port*, a painting of Lahaina by Lassen, who was born there, while picturing the distant future of Lahaina.

—————Yuki Harada

## ⑫ *Light Court*

2024 | Inkjet print | Collection of the artist  
CGI：SUNJUNJIE

About *Light Court*

The model for this space was the light court in the Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art.

For me as a native of Hiroshima, the Hiroshima MoCA was a special place and was born in 1989, the same year as I. Designed by Kisho Kurokawa, it was like a temple and also futuristic. When I went there,

I was able to escape from the drab realities of my childhood, if only temporarily.

Now I am an adult, and am going to have a solo exhibition at this museum. I had in mind displaying a work in the light court, which I found particularly impressive. Nevertheless, I was unable to settle on an exhibition proposal no matter how hard I tried. The more I thought about it, the more I came to think that this space was conceived as a void that would not be suitable for any exhibit.

Instead of displaying a work in the light court, I therefore decided to use the light court itself as a subject. The result was the birth of this work.

In the middle of the work is the iconic Valencia chair created by the Spanish design studio Yono. And in the room, I rendered incident light from a pale setting sun that the quintessentially American artist Edward Hopper was fond of painting.

A single chair placed in a patch of sunlight in silent space. When you sit on it, what sort of scene will meet your eyes?

—————Yuki Harada

## ⑬ *Afterglow*

2024 | Inkjet print | Collection of the artist  
CGI：SUNJUNJIE | \*2 works

About *Afterglow*

*Afterglow* is a CG landscape work that portrays the mountains in Nada, Iwakuni city, Yamaguchi Prefecture. In the middle ground is Mt.Yoneyama beyond which lies the town where I spent my childhood. I wanted to depict the *dreamscape* that was once there. This was the beginning of my creative activity when I was 14.

There are two paintings that inspired *Afterglow: Afterglow (1947)* by Kaii Higashiyma, and *The Riesengebirge (1830-35)* by Caspar David Friedrich. Both have similar structures where mountains are placed at a certain rhythm from the foreground to the back.

Higashiyama was the first to introduce Friedrich to Japan. He created *Afterglow* at the nadir of his life. He had lost his mother due to illness in the aftermath of World War II; his painting was created with a will against being defeated, but was declined by *Nitten*, the Japan Fine Arts Exhibition. Coming home from the museum after he learned about the rejection of his work, he received notice that his brother was in critical condition. *Afterglow* was completed after his brother’s demise; he was deprived of his intended audience.

The painting features the Kujukutani Valley, Chiba. In the distance, Higashiyama incorporated the accumulation of landscapes he perceived during his trips to destinations like the Yatsugatake Mountains in Nagano. Higashiyama suffered a collective life of loss and defeat. The view of the mountains extending toward the back represents a landscape that layers the passage of time, interposing the artist’s experience, upon the spatial distance.

I wanted to trace the rhythm of the mountains like chasing a shadow. Since I started my creative endeavors, I gained much while also losing much.

Pondering those views, I added the mountains of Friedrich, which I have not seen, in the background to complete this landscape.

—————Yuki Harada