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**ASIA SOCIETY PRESENTS TWO EXHIBITIONS FOCUSING ON VIDEO ART
FROM THE MUSEUM'S NEWLY ESTABLISHED COLLECTION**

MARIKO MORI: KUMANO

June 8 through August 1, 2010

GO FIGURE: FIVE CONTEMPORARY VIDEOS

July 13 through August 15, 2010

This summer, Asia Society presents two exhibitions focusing on video art showcasing works by six artists from China, Japan, and the United States. ***Mariko Mori: Kumano*** introduces a recently acquired video work, *Kumano*, by Mariko Mori (born 1967, Japan), in a uniquely contextualized exhibition environment. ***Go Figure: Five Contemporary Videos*** presents varied approaches to single channel video explored by five leading Asian and Asian American artists.



Mariko Mori. *Kumano*, 1997 – 1998
Single-channel video, sound. 8 minutes, 50 seconds

Mariko Mori: Kumano features an early video work, *Kumano* (1997–98), by Japanese artist Mariko Mori, which is a recent addition to Asia Society Museum's Contemporary Art Collection. This video is one of Mori's first works exploring the iconography of Shintoism, Japan's indigenous religion, and Buddhism, its adopted religion. It was created after the artist's own inspirational visit to Kumano, a sacred religious site in western Japan visited by pilgrims for centuries. In *Kumano*, the artist appears as three different characters: a mysterious forest fairy, a

shaman, and a floating angel. They signify the past, the present, and the future respectively. Mori's use of video, as exemplified in *Kumano*, reflects her desire to merge art and technology.

Kumano will be shown with a selection of Buddhist icons from Asia Society's Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd Collection of traditional Asian art chosen by Asia Society Associate Curator Miwako Tezuka in collaboration with Adriana Proser, John H. Foster Curator of Traditional Asian Art at Asia Society. The visitors will have opportunities to see exemplary works of Buddhist art that illuminate the influence of historic images and traditions on contemporary art.



White Tara, Tibet or Mongolia; 17th Century



Motohiko Odani (born 1972, Japan)
Rompers, 2003
Single-channel video, sound
2 minutes, 52 seconds

Go Figure: Five Contemporary Videos features video works that relate more closely to contemporary subjects ranging from consumerism to narcissism to urban development. All of the works are single-channel video, focusing on human figures. The simplicity of the format forces a heightened awareness of the unique approach of each artist to the contemporary issues embodied and enacted by the focused figures. The works in the exhibition, described below, are promised gifts of Harold and Ruth Newman to Asia Society's Contemporary Art Collection.

Makoto Aida (born 1965, Japan)
The Video from a Man Calling Himself Bin Laden Staying in Japan, 2005

Single channel video, sound, 8 minutes, 14 seconds

The subject in Makoto Aida's video is Osama Bin Laden, impersonated by the artist, in a hypothetical situation: hiding in Japan. He becomes a lazy, sake-drinking old man who, in a drunken stupor, videotapes a message that he has quit being a terrorist and to stop looking for him.

Cao Fei (born 1978, China)
Rabid Dogs, 2002

Single channel video, sound, 8 minutes

Cao Fei aims her video camera at growing consumerism in today's China with a work depicting people dressed in Burberry's tartan plaid roaming around on all fours in a modern office setting. Their faces are painted like dogs, in a style evoking Chinese Opera face painting.

Patty Chang (born 1972, United States)
Melons (At a Loss), 1998

Single channel video, sound, 3 minutes, 44 seconds

Facing the camera, Chang narrates a story of her deceased aunt, but the story becomes less of a commemorative act as she simultaneously performs the bizarre, narcissistic and self-cannibalistic act of eating her own breast, made out of a cantaloupe. The work is a cynical take on feminism and the theory of video as a narcissistic medium espoused by art critic Rosalind Krauss in the 1970s.

Motohiko Odani (born 1972, Japan)
Rompers, 2003

Single channel video, sound, 2 minutes, 52 seconds

A computer-graphic-enhanced mutant girl sings, idyllically, while spooky insects crawl around her. She is indifferent, seeming to accept that she is becoming something other than herself. The work comments on the mutation of nature and humanity in an age of technology.

Lin Yilin (born 1964, China)

Safely Maneuvering Across Lin He Road, 1995

Single channel video, sound, 36 minutes, 45 seconds

A camera records Lin's performance art that was composed of the futile, and quite dangerous, act of moving a concrete-brick wall across a highly trafficked road in Guangzhou, China. Lin moves one brick at a time, proceeding at a snail's pace and in contrast to the fast demolitions and building activities going on around him.

Asia Society Museum and Contemporary Asian Art

Asia Society Museum identifies and fosters the latest contemporary Asian and Asian American artists and engages new audiences with their work. In the early 1990s, the Museum was one of the first American museums to establish an ongoing program of exhibitions devoted to contemporary Asian art and artists. In 2007, the Museum initiated its Contemporary Art Collection, focusing on video, photography, and new media art.

Founded in 1956 by John D. Rockefeller 3rd, Asia Society is a nonprofit educational institution with offices in Hong Kong, Houston, Los Angeles, Manila, Melbourne, Mumbai, New York, San Francisco, Seoul, Shanghai and Washington, D.C. Through its exhibitions and related public programming, Asia Society provides a forum for the issues and viewpoints reflected in both traditional and contemporary Asian art.

Asia Society Museum is located at 725 Park Avenue (at 70th Street), New York City. The Museum is open Tuesday through Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Closed on Mondays and major holidays. General admission is \$10, seniors \$7, students \$5 and free for members and persons under 16. Free admission Friday evenings, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. The Museum is closed Fridays after 6:00 p.m. from Independence Day to Labor Day. www.AsiaSociety.org/museum

Image captions and credits:

Mariko Mori (born 1967, Japan)

Kumano, 1997 – 1998

Single-channel video, sound

8 minutes, 50 seconds

Asia Society, New York: Purchase with funds donated by Carol and David Appel

White Tara

Tibet or Mongolia; 17th Century

Silver with gold and inlays of semiprecious stones

H. 6 3/4 in. (17.1cm)

Asia Society, New York: Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd Collection, 1979.052

Motohiko Odani (born 1972, Japan)

Rompers, 2003

Single-channel video, sound

2 minutes, 52 seconds

Promised gift of Harold and Ruth Newman

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