

annet gelink gallery

PRESS RELEASE

ERASED LANDSCAPE

MEIRO KOIZUMI

21 April – 28 May 2022

In the Bakery, Annet Gelink Gallery is proud to present Meiro Koizumi's *Erased Landscape*, following numerous (solo) exhibitions in the gallery. In early 2021, when corona-related restrictions were at its peak and visitors were not allowed to enter the gallery, Koizumi showed a selection of his *Fog* drawings, only visible through the windows. In the Bakery we show a new series of drawings.



Meiro Koizumi, *Fog #15*, 2022

In the ongoing series of *Fog* drawings, Meiro Koizumi works with stills from various movies by renowned Japanese director Yasujiro Ozu (1903 - 1963).

In 1937, Ozu was conscripted into the Japanese Army and sent to fight in the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945). Passages in Ozu's diary at the beginning of the war, reveal he was making plans to make war films upon his return to his homeland. His diary is filled with ideas for scenes that depict the daily lives of soldiers in a foreign country. However, at some point during the war, he stopped making such notes. As a soldier, he was the leader of a unit tasked with spreading chemical gas against the Chinese army. He thus saw and experienced the worst of the war. After his return to Japan, Ozu never shot his war film, nor did he shoot a single scene involving war battles. In his films, all the scars of the war are erased and repressed under the surface of the beautiful daily lives of the people on screen.

The cinematography of Ozu is known for his painstaking method that involved carefully arranging props and actors to create tableau-like scenes, using his actors almost as puppets. As such, Ozu's films play within the context of traditional Japanese theatre, with actors not acting freely or naturalistically. The actors' faces thus are mere masks, the actors mere forms, devoid of emotion or interiority.

Koizumi observes how important it is, in Ozu's film, that the camera almost never moves, and the filmmaker tries to construct the perfect image by looking through the lens within the frame. The space outside the frame doesn't exist. Everything is on the surface and within the frames.

By the gesture of erasing through a heavy mist that pervades the drawings, Koizumi discovers and creates a new dimension, beyond the existing frame and underneath the surface. Pursuing his investigation into Japan's ritualistic culture and its past events, the fog becomes an element for revealing, rather than concealing. Koizumi uncovers the painful reality hidden behind the serene facades, searching for new ways of resolving the past in a way that speaks to our current reality.

Meiro Koizumi attended the International Christian University, Tokyo, Chelsea College of Art and Design, London as well as the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam. His works are included in major public and private collections such as the Museum of Modern Art, New York, TATE Modern, London, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Centraal Museum, Utrecht, Kadist Art Foundation, Paris The Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, The Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, South Brisbane, and M+, Museum for Visual Culture, Hong Kong.