

KOTA EZAWA

The History of Photography Remix

5 January – 11 February, 2006

Opening Reception with the Artist: Thursday, 5 January, 2006: 5.30 — 7.30 pm

San Francisco — Haines Gallery announces our second exhibition with celebrated multimedia artist Kota Ezawa. Following a tremendous success at Art Basel Miami this month the exhibition at Haines will feature Ezawa's first West Coast viewing of the slide show installation entitled *The History of Photography Remix* (2005). This work is an expansion of the artist's 2004 slide installation titled *On Photography*. Originally conceived as a selection of twenty slides representing iconic photographs from the history of art, the work has evolved into a series of forty pictures drawn from a greater array of media sources including magazines and newspapers.

Including both seminal works by important figures in the development of the photographic medium and potent photojournalistic moments, Ezawa recreates images by photographers such as Ansel Adams, Gary Winogrand, Diane Arbus, Robert Mapplethorpe and Cindy Sherman into recognizable yet reconstructed versions of the original photograph. These images juxtaposed with unforgettable moments captured journalistically such as, the last sitting by Marilyn Monroe, JonBenet Ramsey, Patty Hearst's bank robbery and the nuclear testing that occurred at Bikini Atoll. Each image is based on Ezawa's own memory of historical events and art historical imagery; the original photograph is scanned and then altered using a graphics program. The result encourages the viewer to see these images anew, provoking a visceral response as if seen for the first time. In addition to the installation Ezawa has produced many of the images from the slide show as digital stills encapsulated by sleek silver lightboxes that reference the original slide source.

Mining this material further is a new series of unique paper cutout collages that draw on imagery from *The History of Photography Remix*. These small-scale works on paper are the handmade equivalent of the digital process Ezawa uses to develop his videos but instead of a digital medium he has translated the work using layers of smooth colored paper to create the composition.

On view in the back gallery will be Ezawa's most recent film work entitled *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (2005) that depicts the assassinations of presidents Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy quoted from D.W. Griffith's film, *The Birth of a Nation*, and Abraham Zapruder's amateur 8mm movie of the Kennedy shooting. Both sources have been modified in an abstracted and similar in nature to the artist's remarkable video work *The Simpson Verdict* (2002) in an attempt to enunciate the powerful moments of these historical events.

Ezawa was born in Germany and began his undergraduate studies at the Kunstakademie in Dusseldorf. He received his BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute and his MFA from Stanford University. *The History of Photography Remix* and the *Unbearable Lightness of Being*

are currently on view at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford Connecticut through February of 2006. Ezawa has also recently exhibited at the Orange County Museum of Art, Santa Monica Museum of Art, the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, The Andy Warhol Museum and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Images available upon request.

Gallery hours are Tuesday through Friday 10.30 – 5.30 pm, Saturday 10.30 - 5.00 pm, and until 7.30 pm on the first Thursday of each month.