

ブタデスの娘 Daughter of Butades

岩崎 宏俊
Hirotoshi Iwasaki

April 23 (Tue) – May 26 (Sun), 2024
Weekdays 11:00 – 19:00
Sundays and holidays 11:00 – 18:00
Closed Mondays (including national holidays falling on Monday)
Organized by Shiseido Company, Limited

In this exhibition, Hirotoshi Iwasaki explores the artistic potential of rotoscoping, an animation technique based on tracing over live-action film footage.

The title of this exhibition, *Daughter of Butades*, is derived from a myth contained in *Natural History* (Volume 35), a book by the ancient Roman writer Pliny the Elder (23-79AD). In the ancient Greek city of Corinth, Kora, the young daughter of a potter named Butades, attempted to stop her lover from being sent off to war by tracing the contours of his shadow (*skia*), cast on the wall by a lamp. This drawing is said to be the origin of painting. Moreover, Butades subsequently molded and fired the image in clay. This clay figure is said to be the origin of sculpture.

For this exhibition, Iwasaki created an animated work by tracing footage of people and landscapes that he was unable to see due to the pandemic. Iwasaki's use of this process as a form of reminiscence is akin to Kora's drawing. While focusing on the origin (*arche*) of marking and retaining absence through the act of depiction and creation, the work examines the nature of memory.

There are landscapes that we can no longer see and people that we can no longer meet.

What do we remember when faced with such an absence?

Each time we call up a landscape from our memory, it undergoes a slight change.

It might even be that we are creating new memories whenever we remember something.

In effect, we are creating rather than reproducing.

Searching for things of this kind, which only appear when they start to move,

I began tracing several years' worth of motion picture footage that I had on hand.

I traced the shadows of images and made drawings of reminiscences rooted in memory.

When I detect a sign of imminent movement at this way stop in the here and now,

I am reminded of Nishiwaki Junzaburo's poem "Eternatus."

Hirotoshi Iwasaki

Hirotoshi Iwasaki

1981 Born in Ibaraki

2019 Ph.D., Tokyo University of the Arts, Department of Intermedia Art

Lives in Aichi

Career highlights to date

2021 "Motion Studies: Five Contemporary Animators", Schick Art Gallery at Skidmore College, USA

2015 "Poetic Iconography / Hirotoshi Iwasaki", MOTOAZABU GALLERY, Kofu, Japan

Artist HP: <https://hirotoshiiwasaki.com/>

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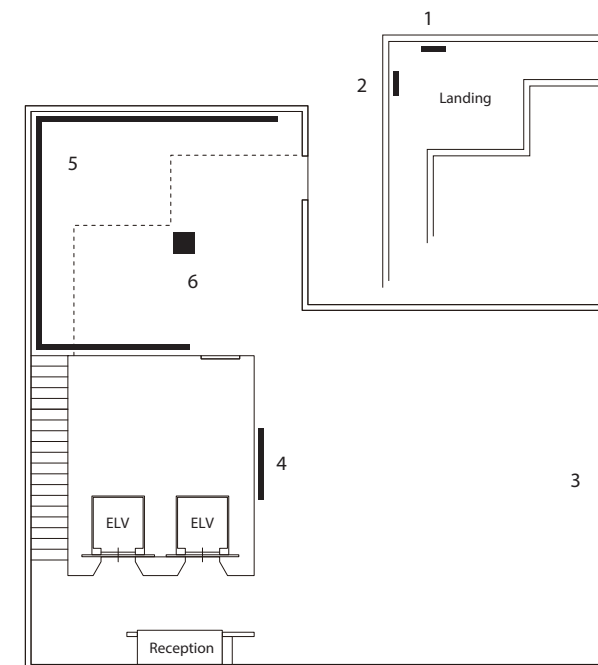


Instagram



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Floormap



1 Picture #1 for *Daughter of Butades*

Charcoal on paper

Using the rotoscope technique, Iwasaki began by drawing and shooting a scene on a sheet of paper before erasing the image and repeating the same process over and over again. As a result, erasure marks from the series of images remained in the original picture. Drawing and erasing are acts of continuously remembering and forgetting, and the erasure marks, which appear as traces, form a trajectory of memory.

2 Picture #2 for *Daughter of Butades*

Charcoal on paper

As rotoscoping normally involves repeatedly drawing and erasing in accordance with the timeline of a moving picture, the earlier scenes (i.e., the past) remain as traces. However, it is also possible to animate these scenes by tracing the timeline in reverse and playing them backwards. Thus, the future remains as a trace as the drawings emerge.

3 *Daughter of Butades*

Animation, 8min. 27sec.



Video should be within 30 sec.

Made in cooperation with Junichi Nishiwaki and Midori Moriyama

This rotoscope animation was made by tracing moving images of people and landscapes that Iwasaki was unable to see due to the pandemic.

"He" ruminates on his memories as he traces the outline of a motif, recalling things like everyday landscapes, his late grandmother, and an earthquake. By tracing the images, his memories move back and forth from the past to the present and on into the future.

The movement of the original live-action images and the mishmash of pictorial images that arises from tracing them exist somewhere between reality and fantasy, and presence and absence.

Notes

- Information on the works consists of the title followed by the material.
- All of the works were produced in 2024.

4 *Skia*

Acrylic print, LED light

This work was made by shining a light on an image that was traced from a moving picture and projecting its shadow on the wall. While Butades' daughter depicted an image using the shadow as a medium, in this work, Iwasaki mediates the image he made again and express it as a shadow.

Shadows have an ambiguous meaning, suggesting spirits, ghosts, illusions, and portraits. The Greek words *skia* and *eidolone* have similar connotations, and the Japanese word *iei* not only refers to a portrait of a dead person, but also the deceased's spirit or ghost. It is also important to remember that shadows are related to the psychological and anthropological concept of the *doppelgänger*.

5 *Translucent Memories*

Acrylic print

In this work, traces of motifs and erasure marks were printed on acrylic panels, overlapping to create a scene from *Daughter of Butades*. Viewed individually the images and marks appear to be fragmented and unrelated, but when they are layered and connected, they assume the appearance of a continuous scene. The work is neither transparent nor opaque, it is translucent and occupies a place between the visible and invisible. In that sense, it is akin to our memories, which are created when a number of scattered fragments are accumulated, layered, linked, and connected.

6 *Zoetrope for Daughter of Butades*

Paper, iron

In this work, Iwasaki used a zoetrope to create a scene from *Daughter of Butades*. The word "zoetrope" is made up of the Greek words for life (*zoe*) and turning (*trope*), and the device might be seen as a prototype for animation. When the viewer peers through the slits of the spinning wheel at a sequence of still images, they are transformed into a moving picture due to the effects of residual imagery. Iwasaki explains that "Movement appears only when it is intervened (turned), which is like tracing one's own memory."