



Cultivating the Waves - Sea of Japan

2024

Single channel video, sound
12min 17sec
Ed.2/5

IH-24-001-V

In his latest video work, "Cultivating the Waves - Sea of Japan," the artist, Ishu Han is seen brandishing a hoe and digging up the waves. Waves have no form and cannot be excavated like soil, so the artist intervenes with his own body in the raging waves, continuing this endless labor. Just as the waves that repeatedly attack him erode and shape stones and rocks, perhaps they are also shaping (cultivating) the artist himself. The act of cultivating the land is also a metaphor for settling down. It is about directly intervening in the land and cultivating it. This is true not only for visible things, but also for invisible things such as culture and identity.

HAN Ishu (b.1987)

Ishu Han is an incredibly promising young artist. Through his own perspective, he addresses questions regarding the complex relationship between individuals and society and the confusion caused by such relations. With sincerity, and sometimes with humor, Han speaks to viewers through a range of media – installation, photography, paintings, and video – in which he uses his own body or everyday items.

He has participated in numerous exhibitions, including “Asia Anarchy Alliance”, + Museum of Fine Arts (Taipei, 2014); “Whose game is it?”, Royal College of Art Gallery (London, 2015); “In the Wake – Japanese Photographers Respond to 3/11”, Museum of Fine Arts Boston / Japan Society (Boston, 2015 / New York, 2016); “Sights and Sounds: Highlights”, Jewish Museum (New York, 2016); solo exhibition “The Drifting Thinker”, MoCA Pavilion (Shanghai, 2017); “Publicness of the Art Center”, Contemporary Art Center, Art Tower Mito (Ibaraki, 2019); “Thank You Memory”, Hirosaki Museum of Contemporary Art (Aomori, 2020); “Apple Cycle / Cosmic Seed”, Hirosaki Museum of Contemporary Art (Aomori, 2021); “MOT Annual 2021 A sea, a living room and a skull”, Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo (Tokyo, 2021); “Memories Penetrate the Ground and Permeate the Wind Contemporary Japanese Photography vol.18”, (Tokyo Photographic Art Museum (Tokyo, 2021-2022); “Countermeasures Against Awkward Discourses: From the Perspective of Third Wave Feminism”, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (Ishikawa, 2021-2022); “Roppongi Crossing 2022: Coming & Going”, Mori Art Museum (Tokyo, 2022); “Home Sweet Home”, The National Museum of Art, Osaka / Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art (Osaka, 2023 / Kagawa, 2024); “The 11th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art”, Queensland Art Gallery & Gallery of Modern Art (Brisbane, 2024) and solo exhibition “Art must be beautiful” Aomori Museum of Art (Aomori, 2025).

He won the Grand Prix at the Nissan Art Award 2020.



(Reference)
"MOT Annual 2021 A sea, a living room, and a skull" Installation view, Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan, 2021
photo by Kenji Morita Courtesy of Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo ©Ishu Han



(Reference)
Sewing the words
2022
8 books (7 dictionaries and 1 book), speakers,
cable, 3 channel sound
Dimensions variable
Sound: 1: 6min 5sec
Sound 2 & 3: 4min 8sec

"Everywhere Gather Yourself Stand" Installation
view, SCAI PIRAMIDE, Tokyo, Japan, 2022
photo by Nobutaka Omote ©Ishu Han



(Reference)
The Weight Between You and Me - Kyoto
2022
Kitchen scales, chopsticks, bowls, dishes, etc.
Dimensions variable

"Border Crossings: New Perspectives through
Works from the Collection and Guest Artists"
Installation view, Kyoto Seika University Gallery
Terra-S, Kyoto, Japan, 2022
photo by Nobutaka Omote
courtesy of Kyoto Seika University Gallery
Terra-S ©Ishu Han



(Reference)
The Day Spinach Dreamed in Japanese
2020
Sound installation, cardboard box Dimensions
variable

ART LEAP 2019 "YOUR KINDNESS"
Installation view, Kobe Art Village Center,
Hyogo, Japan
photo by Nobutaka Omote Courtesy of
Shinkaichi Community Center for Arts and
Interaction (former name: Kobe Art Village
Center) ©Ishu Han