



RINKO KAWAUCHI

M/E

FONDAZIONE SOZZANI

22 rue Marx Dormoy — 75018 Paris, France

Opening

Friday November 7th, from 6:00 pm

On view

from Saturday 8th to Thursday 28th November

from Tuesday to Sunday, 11.00 am — 7.00 pm

free entry

After the first exhibition in 2006 in Milan, **Rinko Kawauchi** returns at **Fondazione Sozzani** with a site-specific exhibition curated by **Emmanuelle de l'Écotais** on the occasion of **Photo Days 2023** in **Paris**.

Rinko Kawauchi (1972) is renowned for her kindness and the brightness of her color photographs that reveal since her early works the mystery, the genius, the fragility, and the strength of life in all its forms. Her gaze also rests on the immediate environment's delicate beings – be it the flora, wildlife, or its family members, forces of nature consisting of volcanoes and glaciers formed over long periods of time. The unique sensitivity of his photography reveals the links between these subjects, which all shine with the same vital splendor.

The exhibition imagined by Rinko Kawauchi consists of a monumental installation, occupying the entire space of the former industrial building, a video, and a series of photographs selected from his latest series, *M/E*, *An interlinking*, and *Illuminance*. Addressing an existential question — “Why am I alive, here and now?” —, her photography invites the viewer to reconsider several questions about human life and our relationship with nature.

An interlinking is a new work comprising images shot in the 6 x 6 square format that Kawauchi is known for, seen in *Utatane* and *Illuminance*. The images in *An interlinking* were assembled from Kawauchi's photographic archive, reaching back two decades or more; some have never been seen by the public before. By contrast with the macro perspective often adopted in *M/E*, the latter half and main series of this exhibition, *An interlinking* chiefly depicts the everyday tiny lives shot from a faithfully life-sized perspective. Additionally, while *M/E* was shot entirely digitally, the works in *An interlinking* were all shot with a Rolleiflex 6 x 6 film camera. The print size is intentionally enlarged in order to place the viewer in a 1:1 relationship with each image.

M/E is Kawauchi's latest series begun in 2019. The two halves of the title are the initial letters of "Mother" and "Earth," combining to form "Mother Earth" or simply "Me." The series began with photographs of glaciers, waterfalls, and volcanoes taken in Iceland in 2019, where Kawauchi experienced a deep connection to the planet when inside a dormant volcano. After this came the COVID-19 pandemic, and Kawauchi continued the series with photographs of everyday family scenes and the living things around her house, images of floating ice and snowy landscapes from the Hokkaido winter, and photographs with cosmic elements such as lunar eclipse and moon rocks. The subjects Kawauchi photographs range back and forth from distant locations to places very near Kawauchi herself, but all are events on the planet we call home, evoking in the viewer a sense of continuity and connection.

Rinko Kawauchi (1972, Japan) became interested in photography while studying at Seian College of Art and Design in Shiga. Her work is characterized by a serene, poetic style, depicting the ordinary moments in life. She first worked in advertising for several years before embarking on a career as a fine art photographer. In 2001 she realized three photographic books with Little More Publishing: *Utatane*, *Hanabi e Hanako*. They obtained a great success in the field of international photography. In 2002 she received the prestigious Rimura Ihei Award for her two books *Utatane* and *Hanabi*. She also worked with the Japan director Hirokazu Kore-eda as photographer in the film *Nobody Knows* that was awarded at Cannes Festival in 2004 with the best actor. A year later she edited *Blu* with Petit Grand Publishing. In 2004 *AILA* was published. In the same year Martin Parr invited Rinko Kawauchi at Les Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie d'Arles in France. Her other publications are *The Eyes*, *The Ears*, and *Cui Cui, Semear* in 2007, *Murmuration* in 2010 and *Illuminance* in 2011. She is the recipient of numerous honors and awards, including the 27th Ihei Kimura Photography Award, the International Center of Photography Infinity Award, and an Honorary Fellowship of the Royal Photographic Society. She was recently the Outstanding Contribution to Photography recipient of the Sony World Photography Awards 2023. She currently lives and works in Tokyo.

Fondazione Sozzani was established in 2016 by Carla Sozzani and is dedicated to the promotion of culture through photography, fashion, the fine arts, and applied arts. The Foundation has assumed the patronage of Galleria Carla Sozzani and continues all relevant public functions that the Gallery has supported since 1990. In 2019 Fondazione Sozzani has expanded its energies in a new atmosphere; a 10,000 square foot industrial 19th century building in a vibrant neighborhood close to the "Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord", at 22 Rue Marx Dormoy, Paris.