

Art: Takako Azami Exhibition

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Ingeniously Recreated Nature

The increase in artworks connected with plants and their ecologies is one of the phenomena that characterized art since the latter half of the 20th century. These works, which may have derived from a reconsideration of Modernism, not only utilize plants and their ecological characteristics as materials, but also largely serve to act as the indicators of nature as opposed to human ideas. Nevertheless, not all of these works have been created as homage-like depictions toward nature.

It is possible to specify that in Azami's work, the repeatedly depicted oval shapes of various sizes are leaves, and the slanted vertical and horizontal lines are twigs. At the same time, her trees/depictions of nature can also be seen as being expressions only to the extent so that viewers might be able to "specify" that they are leaves and twigs. Rather, what takes away the viewer's sight and sense of consciousness are the transformations of various shades that she creates by using monochromes: *sumi* ink (black) and *gofun* pigment (white). This is also achieved via the rhythmical movements that she generates through the repetition of oval shapes, resembling musical scores, as well as the structure of her work that looks simple at first glance, but which is in fact quite intricate.

It is not only the oval shapes and lines but also the ink and pigment that serve to overlap one another as layers and undulations are woven onto the surface. The rhythmical repetition manifested on the image seduces the viewers' sight to stretch horizontally; the overlapping, layered structure continues to awaken their advancing and retreating sensations that seem to ceaselessly interchange before their eyes. The viewers can perceive a dynamic sense of advancing and retreating, as if dazzling white light is constantly pouring out from the crevices between the ink depictions. Azami's expression can be described as a sense of time-space that can no longer be restricted by the laws of nature.

Takako Azami Exhibition: ART FRONT GALLERY (03-3476-4868), held until June 24, 2007, 29 Sarugaku-cho, Shibuya, Tokyo

(Abridged Translation, Translated by Taeko Nanpei)