

Rinko Kawauchi

Synergising natural colour tones and lighting, Rinko Kawauchi's (b. 1972, Japan) milky-hued images have always revealed the optical similarities amongst overlooked everyday occurrences. Her new series and photobook, *Halo*, is a visual poem of sequenced images taken sporadically in China, Japan and the UK.

Q Book-making plays a significant role in your creative process. How do you approach sequencing images in a publication as opposed to an exhibition, and what compels you to continue making photobooks of your work?

A An exhibition allows a person to enter a location and experience the space, while books connect us to the present – we can decide to flip them open whenever we feel like it. Because of this, I feel like books allow their readers to build a close-knit connection to my images, more so than they might be able to do at a show. I often begin contemplating how I will sequence my images in a book right after I've finished processing the photographs. Making books of my projects is a form of expression that falls in line with the themes in my work, which is one of the reasons I've continued to make them throughout my practice.

Q Tell us about your new project – *Halo*, which you will be presenting at Unseen Amsterdam 2017.

A The way I made *Halo* was quite similar to how I created a previous work, *Ametsuchi*. *Halo* was composed by focusing on a combination of four main motifs, and the series places more emphasis on themes of darkness and shadows in comparison to my previous work. However, one can still see parallels with my past projects, such as light, prayers invisible to the eye, hope and chaos.

Q Flecks of light and natural formations like flocks of birds all come together to form the cohesive series of images in *Halo*. When did you first start noticing the natural consistencies that are at the heart of this project?

A I took photographs featuring flocks of birds when I was working at the Brighton Photo

Biennale in 2010. From that point onwards, I continued taking photographs with birds as the subject matter, and I thought that combining similar elements and motifs from different subjects could come together as one series for *Halo*. I also took a number of the photographs in China and during sacred rites at Izumo-taisha, a Shinto shrine in Japan.

Q *Halo*, in its photobook form, was published this year by Aperture. What messages do you want your readers to come away with?

A While making the book, I followed the same production style I've used in the past – I mix different motifs together to construct the final composition. In doing so, subjects of differing natures are lined up and connected with one another. I think that within this structure, new revelations can be found. At first glance, many things have no apparent relationship with one another, but they all exist on this Earth on that same axis of time. Miraculously, they have come into being through an exquisite balance in nature while coexisting with one another. I hope that my work serves as a way for me to share my gratitude towards nature with those who take time to pay attention to the photographs.

Q The book includes a poem that you wrote, referencing the beauty and ephemerality in everyday moments that are often overlooked. How do text and image work together in the publication?

A I always keep poeticism in mind during my image-making process. For *Halo*, I felt it was necessary to include text to slightly augment the photographic content. I wanted to avoid making a long introductory text, so I ended up inserting a poem and short text

on the final page of the book, helping my audience to reflect on the subject matter.

Untitled, from the series Halo, 2017
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