

HANAYO

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The scenery that leaps out at us just as we emerge from the womb or just as we are about to leave this world may have been something like this. Hanayo's creations evoke such thoughts.

Hanayo's photography, which is the focus of her art, depicts landscapes in which the axis of time is absent, like the memories of a dream that disappear as soon it ends. One moment Hanayo seems to be pressing the shutter at random on a daily basis. But then she will photograph "produced" situations, or won't photograph anything, and in a world in which the abstract and the real, reality and unreality, the ordinary and the produced, the present and the past, the sacred and the vulgar, the beautiful and the ugly are reconciled, the subject, at times, loses its silhouette and is reduced to light. There are many different and attractive phenomena and events that form the elements that make up Hanayo's world. These include excessive or insufficient light, scratched and discolored film or the chance encounters with various people including Tenko, Hanayo's beloved daughter, and this world is naturally a part of the world that everyone else lives in. The phenomena that are Hanayo's "photographs", photographs created by these different elements, are as beautiful as an abstract painting or graffiti.

Hanayo who was involved in a variety of arts including music, photography and dance from an early age, began training in her teens to become a geisha and was also a singer. She attracted attention in 1996 with "Hanayome [bride]", her first collection of photographs, as a photography artist. At the time, the "girly photo" boom was at its peak in Japan and because of her own past, Hanayo often attracted journalistic interest. However, around the time when photographers who were seen as "girly" photographers were beginning to avoid the label that they had been given and were starting to search for other subject matter, Hanayo's work, perhaps because she had already moved to Germany in 1990.

Hanayo has also been creating installations using junk that she finds in Berlin or at the sites of her installations. Hanayo's works, while gently stroking the thin film that lies between the sacred and the vulgar and the beautiful and the profane, reveal a nightmare-like flash of beauty.

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