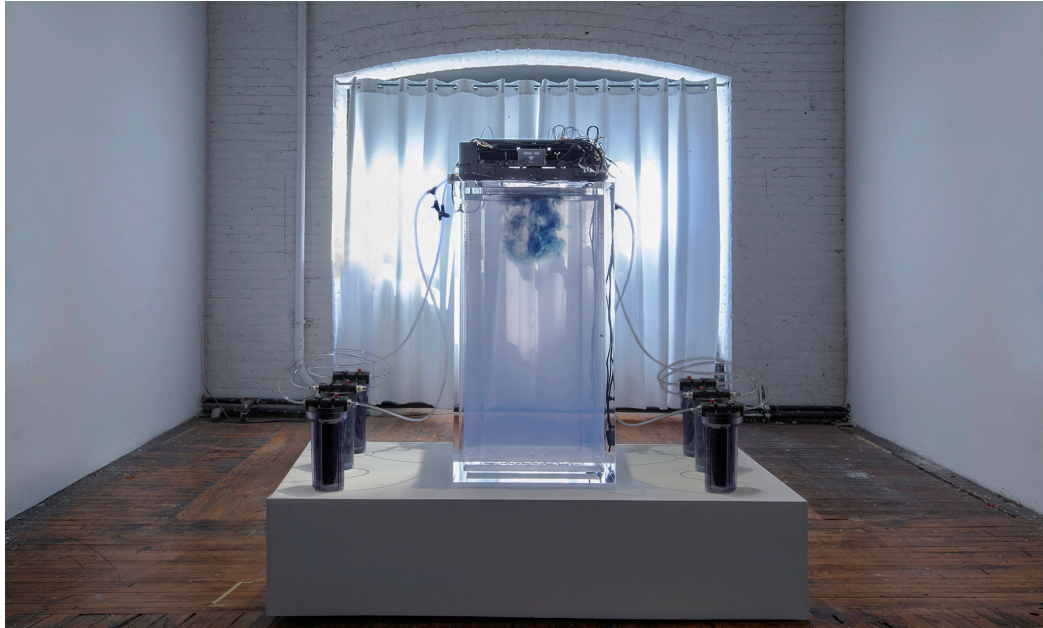


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Zai Nomura

Echoes

March 18—April 17, 2021



Zai Nomura, *Echoes*, 2020.

Water tank, water, inkjet printer, carbon filter, micro PC, and monitor. 19 11/16 x 15 3/4 x 42 1/4 inches / 50 x 40 x 120 cm.
Installation view photographed at ISCP studio, Brooklyn, NY

In 1865, young Lewis Payne tried to assassinate Secretary of State W. H. Seward. Alexander Gardner photographed him in his cell, where he was waiting to be hanged. The photograph is handsome, as is the boy: that is the *studium*. But the *punctum* is: *he is going to die*. I read at the same time: *This will be* and *this has been*; I observe with horror an anterior future of which death is the stake. By giving me the absolute past of the pose (aorist), the photograph tells me death in the future. What *pricks* me is the discovery of this equivalence. In front of the photograph of my mother as a child, I tell myself: she is going to die: I shudder, like Winnicott's psychotic patient, *over a catastrophe which has already occurred*. Whether or not the subject is already dead, every photograph is this catastrophe.

—Roland Barthes, *La Chambre Claire [Camera Lucida]*

Ulterior Gallery is pleased to present Zai Nomura's first solo exhibition, *Echoes*, from March 18 through April 17, 2021. *Echoes*, a time-based multimedia sculpture, will debut at this occasion. The artist will be present at the gallery from 4-8 pm on the opening day.

Echoes, built with a large human-scale water tank and a manufactured inkjet printer, is a machine to print portraits of the dead on the surface of water. The micro-computer installed in *Echoes* sends digital images to the printer that rests atop the water tank, which then prints the portraits on the water's surface. The images dissolve into the water as they are printed, and the water in the tank is then filtered and purified for the next printing, enacting a process of renewal or reincarnation.

This action performed by Nomura's *Echoes* visualizes the death of memory that occurs much later than physical

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death, while also representing the erasure or removal of images themselves. The portrait that disappears into the water equally evokes the portrait subject's presence and absence.

Nomura uses photography as his medium but questions how it functions in physical reality. Imageries are always "attached" to their supporting medium and coexist with its base material. By printing the image on the surface of water, even though it won't be retained, the artist aims to liberate the image from its support. Removed from its existential context, the image is now free, and the artist hopes that it can become more real and tangible—not in spite of but because of its evanescence and immateriality.

During the duration of the exhibition, *Echoes* will print a different portrait every hour, five times a day, beginning at 1 pm.

Echoes will be accompanied by two other photographs printed on thin steel and floated from the wall. They belong to the series *Still Life*, in which Nomura captures flowers from the moment they bloom until they wither. The artist uses a large format 4 x 5 camera and leaves its lens open for more than a month so that the whole span of the flower's life emerges in one image.

For public health reasons, Ulterior will limit attendance at the gallery to three visitors at a time. For smooth entry and the best viewing experience, we encourage visitors to make an appointment online at www.ulteriorgallery.com/contactappointments.

About the Artist:

Zai Nomura was born and grew up in Hyogo, Japan, and has been working between Tokyo and New York since 2020. Nomura received his Ph.D in Fine Arts from Musashino University in Tokyo in 2013, and his MFA from Goldsmiths, University of London in 2009. While living in Hyogo, he experienced the Great Hanshin Earthquake in 1995 and lost family members in the disaster. Following this, Nomura began to question his relationship with art and interrogate what he aims to establish and represent in the imagery and function of art. Recent exhibitions include: *333*, Japan Society Gallery, New York, NY (2020); *Mirror Behind Hole*, gallery αM, Tokyo, Japan (2018); *can't rewind it*, Soh Gallery, Tokyo, Japan (2017, solo); and *Aichi International Triennial 2016: Rainbow Caravan*, Aichi, Japan (2016). From 2019 through 2021, Nomura received a grant from the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs and participated in the artist in residency program at ISCP (International Studio and Curatorial Program), Brooklyn, NY.

About the Gallery:

Ulterior Gallery is an emerging art gallery on the Lower East Side of New York City. Established by Takako Tanabe, a Japanese gallerist originally from Tokyo, Ulterior is committed to the exhibition of works by an intergenerational array of artists of diverse cultures and backgrounds. Ulterior Gallery is located at 172 Attorney St. between Houston and Stanton on the Lower East Side. Gallery Hours are Wednesday through Saturday, noon to 6 pm, and by appointment. For further inquiries, please contact Takako Tanabe: takako@ulteriorgallery.com.