



Masako Yasuki 安喜万佐子

'Living and working in a world of post-progressive history'



I have always painted landscapes, and my work is always of places I have actually visited. Notions of 'society', 'environment' and 'nature' are combined in my concept of 'landscape'.

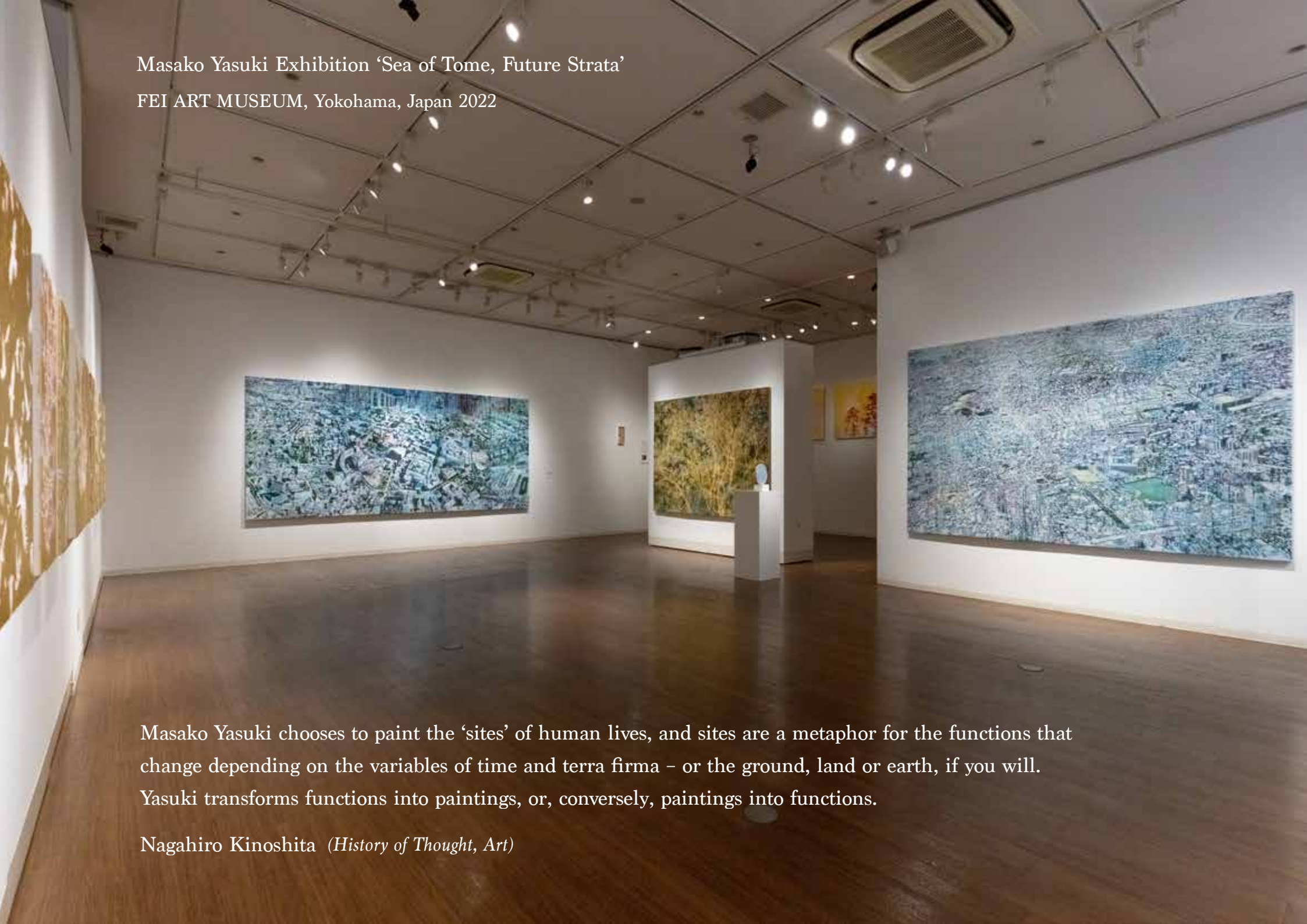
What I have been trying to do is cast doubt upon and dissolve the historic perspective that abets modern attempts to frame, tame and control landscape, for perhaps by doing so we might discover clues to an improved relationship with our environment.

Masako Yasuki



Exhibition Photographs

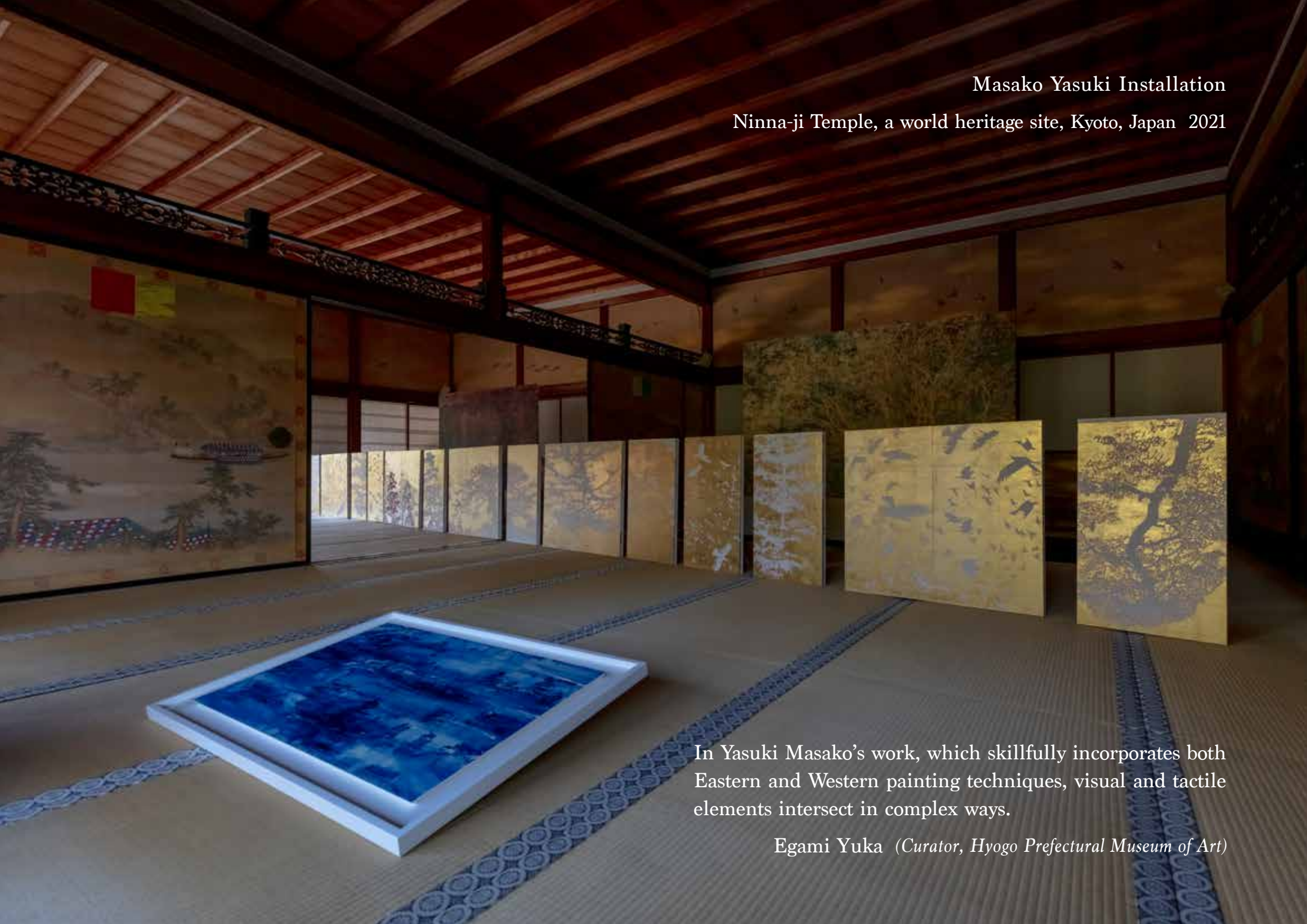
Masako Yasuki Exhibition 'Sea of Tome, Future Strata'
FEI ART MUSEUM, Yokohama, Japan 2022



Masako Yasuki chooses to paint the 'sites' of human lives, and sites are a metaphor for the functions that change depending on the variables of time and terra firma - or the ground, land or earth, if you will. Yasuki transforms functions into paintings, or, conversely, paintings into functions.

Nagahiro Kinoshita (*History of Thought, Art*)

Masako Yasuki Installation
Ninna-ji Temple, a world heritage site, Kyoto, Japan 2021



In Yasuki Masako's work, which skillfully incorporates both Eastern and Western painting techniques, visual and tactile elements intersect in complex ways.

Egami Yuka (*Curator, Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art*)



Masako Yasuki Exhibition 'traces of the shadow'
ART SPACE RASHINBAN, Tokyo, Japan 2016



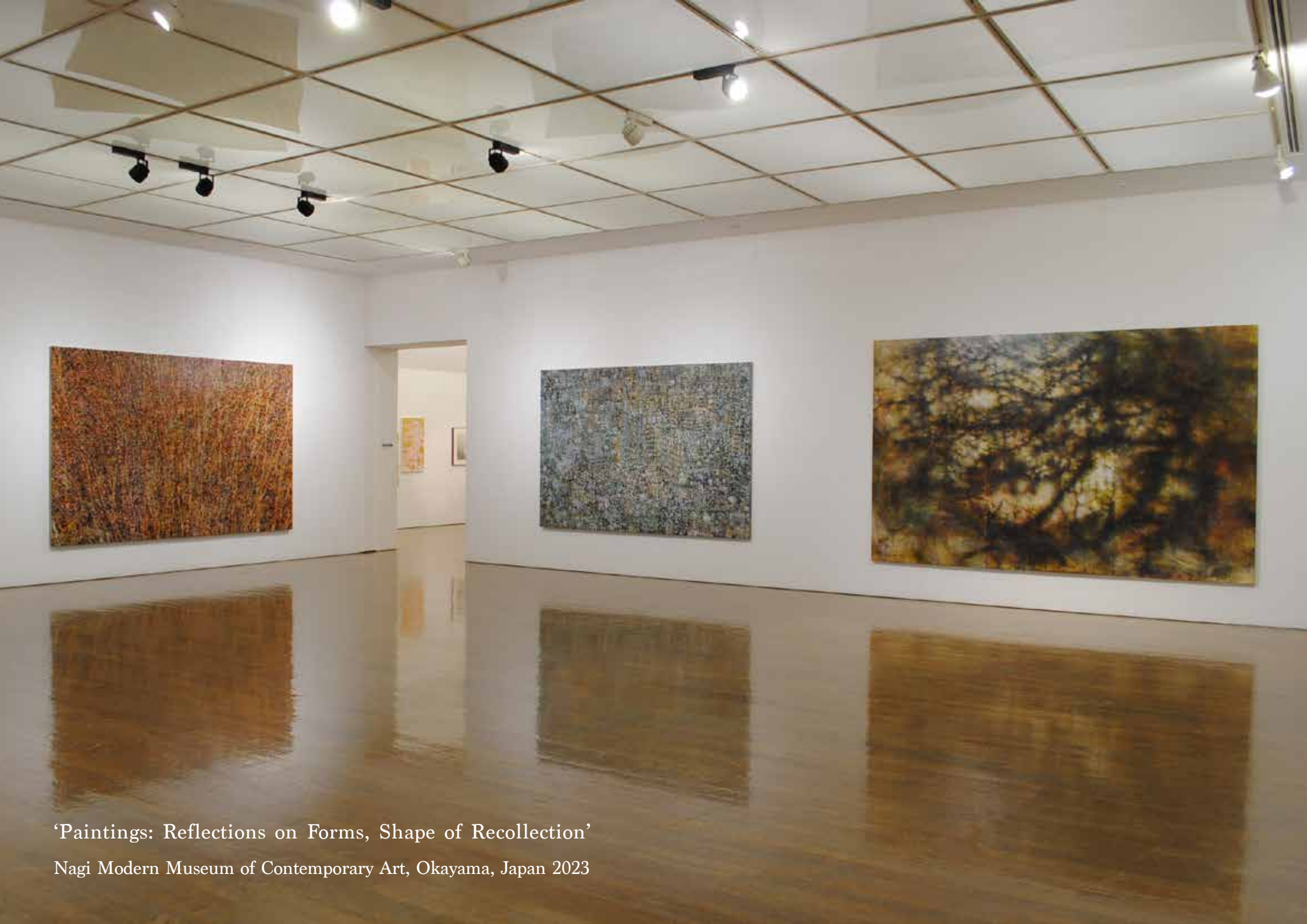
Photos of Masako Yasuki exhibits & interview.

KIMIKO YOSHIDA & MASAKO YASUKI EXHIBITION

‘Contemporary Art in Japan’

– an exhibition in celebration for the Official Year of Cultural Exchange between Japan and Russia.

RuArts Gallery 2018



‘Paintings: Reflections on Forms, Shape of Recollection’

Nagi Modern Museum of Contemporary Art, Okayama, Japan 2023

Masako Yasuki Exhibition '*Fu-kei* -LANDSCAPE SUICIDE'

Artcomplex Center of Tokyo (B1 Hall) 2014



Obliterated Ground

A series of cityscapes

The paintings in this series are composed using tempera that Yasuki has prepared from locally-sourced materials she has gathered herself, and charcoal rubbing she has taken of the ground in the locations painted. In this way she seeks to excavate buried memories, and connect with the layers of time embedded in the ground.

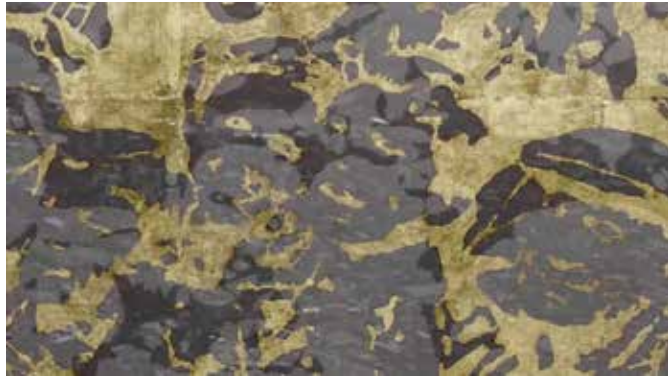




obliterated ground (snow in Hiroshima)

pigment, shell powder, tempera, oil / wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna

180cm×270cm 2004~2018



Collection and Recollection of Exposed Time and Invisible Forms (Coventry, England) 2023



Sea of Time, Future Strata

pigment, soil, tempera, oil / wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna
170cmx450cm 2021-2022

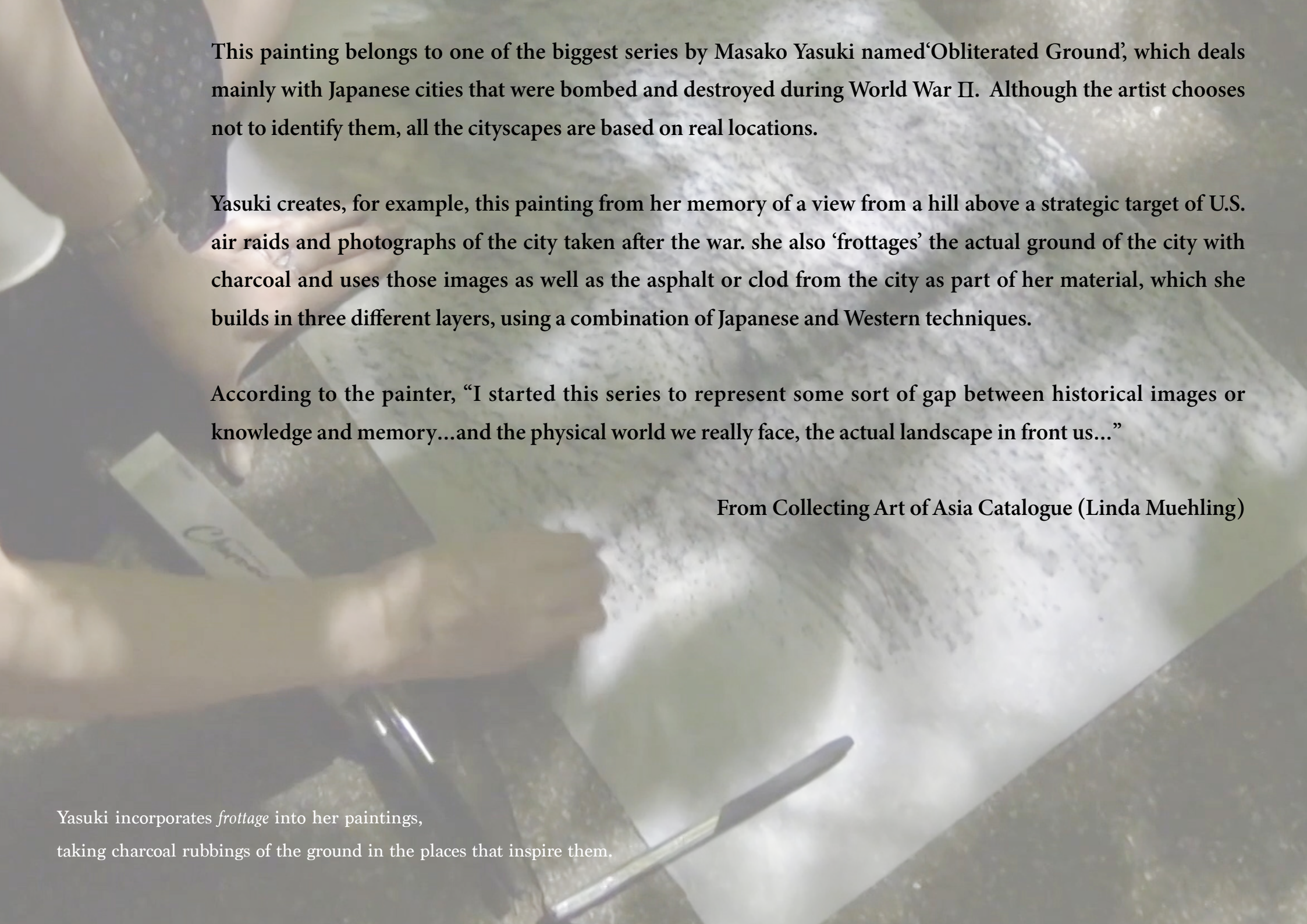


obliterated ground

pigment, tempera, oil / wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna

200cm×300cm 2001

Smith College Museum of Art Collection in America



This painting belongs to one of the biggest series by Masako Yasuki named 'Obliterated Ground', which deals mainly with Japanese cities that were bombed and destroyed during World War II. Although the artist chooses not to identify them, all the cityscapes are based on real locations.

Yasuki creates, for example, this painting from her memory of a view from a hill above a strategic target of U.S. air raids and photographs of the city taken after the war. she also 'frottages' the actual ground of the city with charcoal and uses those images as well as the asphalt or clod from the city as part of her material, which she builds in three different layers, using a combination of Japanese and Western techniques.

According to the painter, "I started this series to represent some sort of gap between historical images or knowledge and memory...and the physical world we really face, the actual landscape in front us..."

From Collecting Art of Asia Catalogue (Linda Muehling)

Yasuki incorporates *frottage* into her paintings, taking charcoal rubbings of the ground in the places that inspire them.



Momentia

pigment, shell powder, tempera, oil / wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna
170cm× 300cm 2013~2014
private collection in Russia



heat under the ground

pigment, shell powder, tempera, oil / wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna
120cm×360cm 2015



March Light / White Shadow – the photographic record is made by the ‘winners’

tempera, oil, wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna

100cm×160cm 2015

private collection in America



March light, white shadow
pigment, silk, embroidery frame (diameter 25cm) 2018



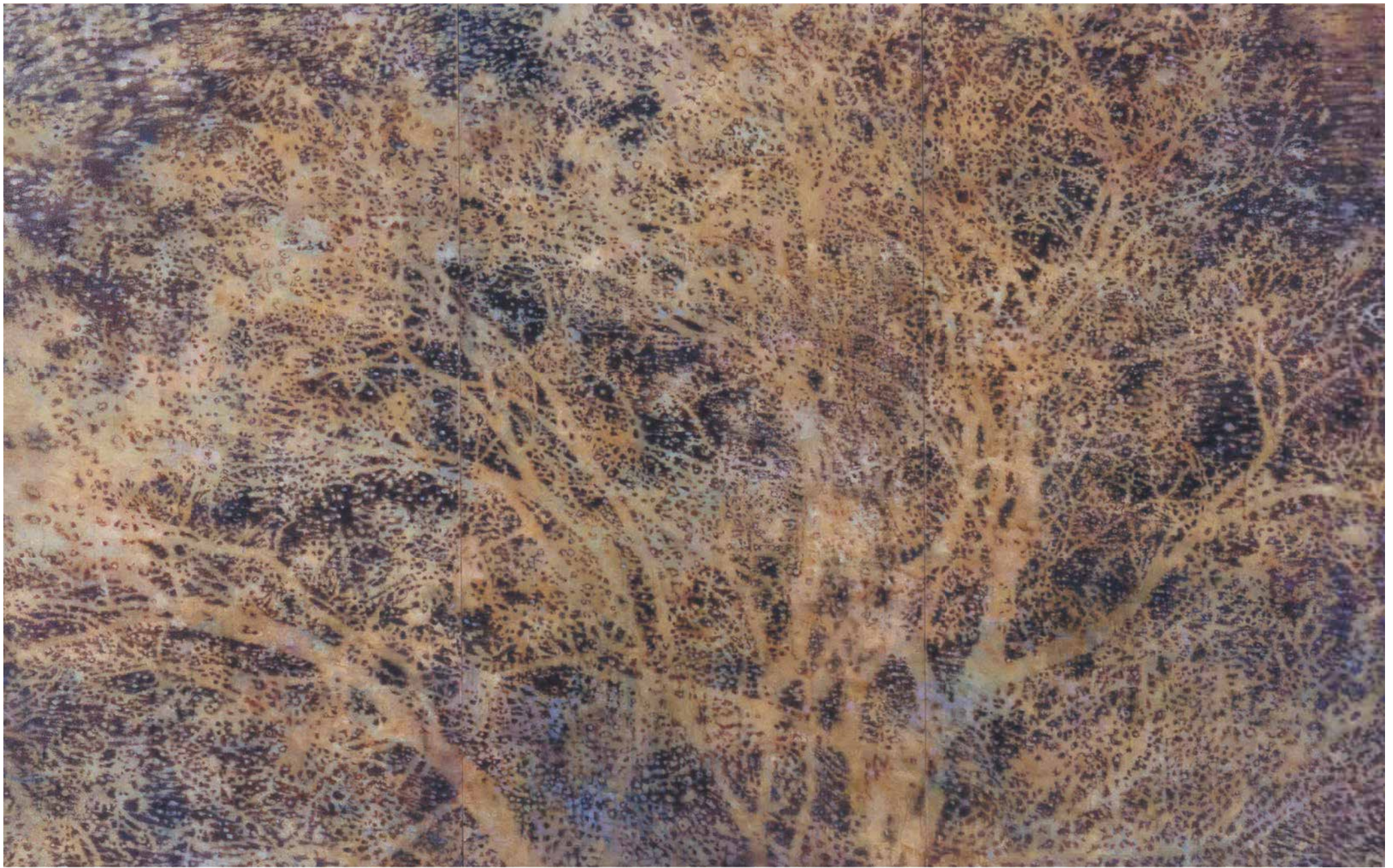
March light, white shadow
pigment, silk, embroidery frame (diameter 23cm) 2018

Natural Landscapes and Forests Deep

A series of natural subjects
and inhospitable landscapes

The works in this series were painted over long periods of time, with Yasuki repeatedly returning to the forests and mountains where the subjects are located. While there she took *frottage* and gathered rocks and soil, which she variously combined with Japanese and Western pigments to make tempera.





thousand years

pigment, shell powder, tempera, oil / wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna

160cm×255cm 2017~2018



shadow scape — forest west, lightning east

pigment, shell powder, tempera, oil / wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna

160cm×255cm 2017~2018

galerie 16 collection in Japan



Chaos from Order, Order from Chaos-North Forest 2020

pigment, soil, tempera, oil / wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna
200cm×300cm 2019-2020



Mists of Time (Ibuki)

tempera, oil / wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna
170cmx160cm 2022-2023

Mists of Time (Karasaki Pine)

gold leaf, silver leaf, sulfur, pigment / six panel folding screen
182cm×377cm 2022-2023



absence of light — a lake north latitude 51.18, east longitude 115.6

pigment, shell powder, tempera, oil / wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna
140cm×210cm 2011

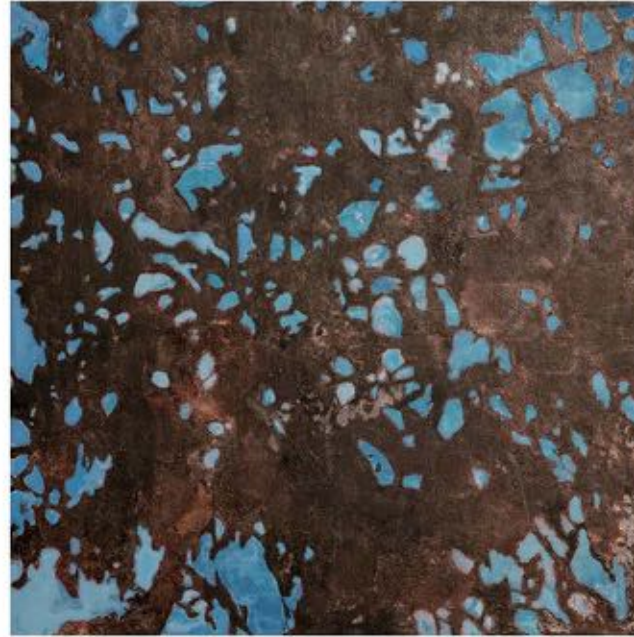
full moon



40cm×40cm 2018

pigment, shell powder, silver leaf, sulfur /
wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna
Private collection in Japan

full moon



25cm×25cm 2018

Private collection in Japan

traces of heart



pigment, shell powder, silver leaf /
wooden panel, Gesso Bologna
15cm×15cm 2016



positive image - north latitude:52, east longitude:118 #2

50cm× 80cm 2014
private collection in Japan



positive image – midnight summer

30cm× 30cm 2014
private collection in Japan



positive image - north latitude:52, east longitude:118 #2

50cm× 80cm 2011

Saga Prefectural Museum collection in Japan

Works in Gold Leaf

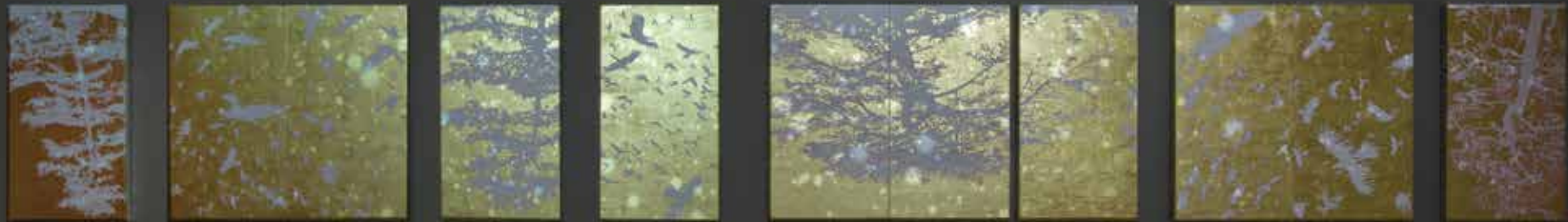
The birds, trees and other images in these works are actually negative spaces formed by the exfoliation of gold leaf. To create this effect, Yasuki first applies glue to all parts of a canvas, except where the images will be, and covers the entire surface with gold leaf. Canvases are then left to stand and dry for several weeks, during which time any leaf that is not stuck firmly with glue gradually starts to peel away by itself. In this way, the passage of time helps complete the works.



I am inspired to call Yasuki's major collections (including her landscapes with gold leaf) 'fleeting majesty.' To take it one step further, her landscape paintings compel and entice me to say that they 'make time majestic,' and that 'time becomes majestic' through them.

Motoaki Shinohara (*Director of Takamatsu Art Museum*)





silent reflections, birds at dawn

gold leaf, shell powder, pigment / wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna
90 cm×650 cm (90 cm×50 cm each) 2020-2022
+ birds, waves, snow (video: Shijiro Maeda)



Procession of Light

gold leaf, pigment / wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna
UHD-digital 2'10" (loop) 2023 (Video produced by Shinjiro Maeda)



pine trees

gold leaf, pigment, shell powder/ wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna

90cm×600cm 2011

private collection in Russia



pine trees

Gold leaf, pigment, shell powder/ wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna
2018-2019

Installation at Sennyu-ji Temple Butsuden (Buddha Hall) in collaboration
with Unkei's 13th century Buddha statues, and Kano Tanyu's 17th century
ceiling painting of s dragon.
Kyoto Japan





exposed scape - childhood tree

gold leaf, pigment, shell powder/ wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna

63cm×75cm 2010

private collection in Japan

At times Yasuki mixes traditional Japanese pigments which she then combines with Western ones in her paintings. She uses gold and silver leaf and also incorporates some of the distinctive characteristics of Japanese formats into her works.



pine trees – tea screen

gold leaf, pigment, shell powder/ wooden panel, paper, Gesso Bologna

36.4cm×187.6cm 2012

private collection in America



pine trees (horizontal) #1 #2

gold leaf, pigment, shell powder/ wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna
20cm×85cm×2 panels 2018
private collection in Germany



pine trees (square) #1

gold leaf, pigment, shell powder/ wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna
30cm×30cm 2018
private collection in Japan



pine trees (square) #2

gold leaf, pigment, shell powder/ wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna
30cm×30cm 2019



Yasuki uses three methods to paint such landscapes.

The first is to look downward from an elevated vantage point.

This is not a bird's eye view, but akin to 'shin-en', an ancient East Asian method of painting that looks deep, but not with depth perspective, from a high point of view.

The second is frottage, a means in which she rubs the surface of the earth, and which is reminiscent of 'ko-en' – looking up high while crawling on the earth's surface.

This is also a method of old East Asian art used for landscapes.

The third is 'hei-en', another ancient East Asian method which entails looking at landscape from the horizon, and which Yasuki realises in her Pine-Trees Landscape works.

Nagahiro Kinoshita (*History of Thought, Art*)

Scroll Paintings



This scroll was created from *frottage* taken on a trek deep into the mountains, and represents the landscape encountered en route.

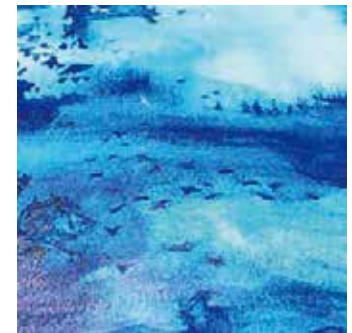
Mt. Nagi Scroll (details)
charcoal, paper 18cmx273cm 2023



quick drawings while walking along a coastline



coastline scroll drawing
(details)



watercolor, paper 70cm×200cm 2018

Commissions

Cartier



gold leaf, platinum leaf, oxidized silver leaf, pigment / paper, metal panel 150 x 437cm 2021



Festival Kyoto Screen

pigment, shell powder, tempera, gold leaf platinum leaf /
wooden panel, hemp cloth, Gesso Bologna
120cmx400cm 2017



Academic Qualifications & Research Précis

- 1994 Master of Arts (Fine Arts) Kyoto Seika University
- 2001 Guest artist, Edinburgh College of Arts (UK) through ART-EX, Osaka Prefectural Government
- 2004 Guest artist, Amherst University (USA)
- 2015 Guest researcher, Smith College (USA) through Agency for Cultural Affairs
- 2020 Guest artist, University of Arts, London (UK)

Exhibition History

■ Solo Exhibitions (abridged)

- 1998 'to see in the world of brightness' galerie16 (Kyoto)
- 1999 'Not Message but Presence' galerie16 (Kyoto)
- 2000 'real / time' GALERIE ANDO (Tokyo)
- 2001 'the presence between things' Gallery TE (Tokyo)
Sculpture Court Gallery [Edinburgh College of Art] (Edinburgh / UK)
- 2002 'Edinburgh Project' Osaka Contemporary Art Center
- 2003 BASE GALLERY (Tokyo)
- 2005 'a ground' galerie16 (Kyoto)
- 2006 'a thousand years' Gallery TE (Tokyo)
- 2009 'evaporating time, exposed scapes' galerie16 (Kyoto)
- 2011 'Absence of Light' galerie16 (Kyoto)
- 2014 'FU-KEI - LANDSCAPE SUICIDE -'
The Art Complex Center of Tokyo Hall (Tokyo)
- 2015 'March Light / White Shadow' Gallery Yusai (Nara)
- 2016 'traces of shadows' Art Space Rashinban (Tokyo)
'sea of time, contours of light' The Museum Yamato Bunkakan, Bunka Hall (Nara)
- 2018 'rock at dawn, water mirror in silence' The Artcomplex Center of Tokyo Hall (Tokyo)
- 2020 'Chaos from Order - fullness of time' Kyoto-ba (Kyoto)
'Order from Chaos - future strata' galerie16 (Kyoto)
- 2022 'Sea of Time, Future Strata' FEI ART MUSEUM, YOKOHAMA (Kanagawa)
- 2023 'Mists of Time - Views of Omi' 2kw gallery (Shiga)
'Procession of Light - Exposed Time, Invisible Forms' galerie16 (Kyoto)

■ Group Exhibitions (abridged)

- 1999 'The Vision of Contemporary Art Japan' The Ueno Royal Museum (Tokyo)
- 2000 '2000 Selected Exhibition' Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art
'INCUBATION 00' Kyoto Art Center
- 2001 'Selected Exhibition' The Museum of Kyoto
- 2002 'The Vision of Contemporary Art Japan' The Ueno Royal Museum (Tokyo)
- 2004 'Confronting Tradition' Smith College Museum of Art (MA / USA)
- 2005 'City_net Asia 2005' Seoul Museum of Art (Korea)
- 2008 'Out of Sight, Still in Mind' Gallery Hangil (Korea)
- 2010 'GOLD EXPERIENCE - Contemporary Painting with Gold Leaf from Japan and Korea' Hyun Gallery (Seoul / Korea)
- 2013 'Collecting Art of Asia' Smith College Museum of Art (MA / USA)
'IPP - Inverse Perspective Project in Russia, Moscow Biennale Special Project' State Museum of Contemporary History of Russia (Moscow / Russia)
- 2016 'Beyond Sugar and Spice Vol. 2' CAS (Osaka)
- 2018 'KIMIKO YOSHIDA & MASAKO YASUKI' RuArts Gallery (Moscow / Russia)
- 2019 'MIKEI Art Exhibition' Sennyu-ji Temple (Kyoto)
- 2021 'Art Festival with National Treasure' World Heritage Ninna-ji Temple (Kyoto)
- 2022 'Mad for Trees' galerie16, Kyoto
- 2023 'Paintings: Reflections on Forms, Shape of Recollection'
Nagi Museum of Modern Art (Okayama)

■ Major Collections & Installations

- Smith College Museum of Art (MA, USA)
- Oita Prefectural Art Museum
- Ninna-ji Temple, a world heritage site, Kyoto, Japan
- The Ritz-Carlton (Tokyo Midtown)
- Sheraton Miyako Hotel (Tokyo)
- Hotel Intergate Kyoto
- Cartier Japan