

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

"VOID" by Shu Ikeda

4 July - 29 August 2015

**Opening Reception: Saturday, 4 July 2015, 4 - 6pm
(Guided tour by artist starts at 4:30pm)**

Venue: Blindspot Gallery (15/F, Po Chai Industrial Building, 28 Wong Chuk Hang Road, Wong Chuk Hang, Hong Kong)

Opening hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 6pm (Sunday and Monday by appointment only); closed on public holidays



Blindspot Gallery is pleased to present "VOID", the solo exhibition of Japanese artist Shu Ikeda showcasing Ikeda's most recent works combining photography and paper-cutting, a unique method he developed and regards as "painting with photography". The works are based on photographs taken in Japan and in Hong Kong during the artist's recent visit to the city.

"VOID" reflects the evolution of focus from natural landscape as the primary backdrop to the inclusion of urban landscape which Ikeda has been exploring in his works from 2012 onwards. The disastrous earthquakes and tsunamis in Japan in 2011 shocked Ikeda as it did many others, and led him to contemplate the relationship between human, nature and the city: how the exploitation of nature leads to the destruction of the city, and how humans struggle to reconstruct both. In an emotive rendition, *Light of the Remained* and *As If Nothing Matters* reference the period when most cities in Japan carried out planned power-cut to reserve electricity. The theme of re-constructing the city also runs through Ikeda's works about Hong Kong, which are drawn from his fascination with Hong Kong's dynamic and scenic facets like the Victoria Harbour (*Mirror of Time*, 2015), as well as the large-scale construction sites he saw around town (*Constructive Destruction*, 2015). The "destruction" of buildings and the old finds its metaphor in the artist's act of photo-cutting, while the reality of "construction" comes to life in his reconstructing an image.

Ikeda's most recent works also demonstrate the development of his technique in the making of his art and the philosophical reflection it embodies. The artist expands his usual approach of cutting out patterns on a photo to create blank space and an imagined space (*Coexistence*, 2015) and reassembling the cut-outs from multiple photos to create a collage (*Random Encounter*, 2015) to cutting up an entire photo and reconstructing the cut-ups from scratch to create an entirely new image (*Mirror of Time*, 2015). In the artist's signature blend of exquisite craftsmanship and a Zen-infused approach, these new works reflect a deepening of the literal and philosophical meaning of voidness in his art. To Ikeda, a work reaches completion when he sees harmony between existence and the void; the void in a photo opens up a new dimension of space or state of mind, where one neither adds anything to nor takes away from what is already present.



In Ikeda's art where the real and the imaginary intersect, and existence and the void overlaps, the viewers recognise a deep, visceral response to the external world in the consciousness. Each work by Ikeda is a unique piece of art, and "VOID" unveils a new state of elevation his artistic creation.

The artist Shu Ikeda will be present at the opening reception. Interviews are welcome and can be arranged.

About Shu Ikeda

Born in Hiroshima, Japan in 1979, Shu Ikeda studied painting in Tokyo Zokei University and graduated in 2004. Ikeda received the Honorable Mention at Canon's New Cosmos of Photography in 2009 and the Mayor of Judge Prize at Tokyo Wonder Wall 2009. Ikeda's works have been exhibited in different museums in Japan. He currently lives and works in Tokyo, Japan.

About Blindspot Gallery

Blindspot Gallery was set up in 2010 to bring contemporary photography, an art form that was in the blind spot of the Hong Kong art scene, to a higher degree of visibility. We feature contemporary photography and image based works of established and emerging artists, mainly from the region but also beyond.

For enquiries and media interviews, please contact Ms. Lesley Kwok at 2517 6238 or by email info@blindspotgallery.com

Image captions:

Shu Ikeda, *As If Nothing Matters*, 2014, Photographic collage, mounted on acrylic, 60 x 90 cm

Shu Ikeda, *Constructive Destruction*, 2015, Cut-out photograph, mounted on paper, 56 x 86 cm

(Images courtesy of artist and Blindspot Gallery)