

dv  
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Thursday January 19, 2023 at 7 pm

5455, de Gaspé avenue, suite 109



**Japanese  
filmmakers and  
Feminism —  
1970s to present**

Through their own eyes, in their own times

For the 2023 season of the *dv\_vd* series, Vidéographe and Dazibao have invited the talented artist and curator Yuka Sato to present a program of works offering us a rare perspective on Japanese feminism going back to 1970.

# program

**Mako Idemitsu** *Another Day of a Housewife* **10 min.** 1977  
**Utako Koguchi** *A Dandelion [Rosaceae]/Bara-ka tanpopo*  
**9 min.** 1990  
**Kayo Takefuji** *Bone and Flesh Cogitation* **26 min.** 1997  
**Yuka Sato** *In the Room* **7 min.** 2014  
**Kaori Oda** *Karaoke Cafe BOSA* **13 min.** 2022

“This program focuses on Japanese feminist approaches from the 1970s to the present through a selection of film works by Mako Idemitsu, Utako Koguchi, Kayo Takefuji, Yuka Sato, and Kaori Oda. Coming from different generations and backgrounds, these artists present their unique perspectives and feelings on topics such as physicality, sexuality, and family, conveying them to the audience in the form of moving images.

These films, which can be considered feminist practices, can challenge patriarchy and authority, while also raising questions about gender norms. They also recall the slogan of second-wave feminism, “The personal is political.”

What message does each artist’s vision convey to those living in these challenging times?

With that in mind, I hope you enjoy these films.”

– Yuka Sato, curator

## Mako Idemitsu

**“This video was made in those days when I was really fed up with being a housewife. In the endless repetition of routine house chores I noticed another ‘me’ was watching the housewife ‘me.’ Who am I? What is it to live? I wanted to share these questions with others.”**

Born in Tokyo in 1940, Mako Idemitsu grew up in a very old-fashioned, male-dominant, typical patriarchal family. This later became the basis of her works, whose main theme is the issues of family oppression against women.

She married Sam Francis, a painter of abstract expressionist. While they lived in California, she became a mother of two children. Idemitsu began to take the film from the conflict of identity as a mother.

In 1972 she filmed *Womanhouse* by Judy Chicago and others, in order to create imagery based on this work. The next year she returned to Japan and started to make video works as well as films.

After the 1980's, Idemitsu's videos were highly received overseas.

Her videos depict such explicit feminist issues. She developed a unique technique of her own called “Mako style,” where a person's inner world is projected on a small monitor installed on a larger screen.

Her latest work in the year 2004 is an installation titled *Past Ahead*.

## Utako Koguchi

Lulu and Lala are twin sisters, but live apart from one another.

**When Lala is watching a video of beautiful boys at midnight, by chance she finds her father appearing in it. She is very shocked at seeing his naked hips. It makes her lose control over her body and suddenly transforms into a boy. She goes to Lulu's house to show off her penis. There Lala finds that Lulu has also changed into a boy already. They fight a fierce and vulgar battle, transforming their “things” one after another and competing for their size. After all, Lulu submits herself to Lala and returns to a girl. She presents her penis cut off and decorated artistically to her sister. But it is infected with AIDS virus and undermines the two girls making love. While fucking, they remember their old happy days, when they were still innocent and on good terms with each other. They are thrown into ecstasies with consciousness dying away.**

Born in Tokyo, Utako Koguchi has engaged in various activities, such as dance instruction, film, TV, commercials, music video, promotion videos, website design, publicity of foreign films, film festivals, and writing.

As a filmmaker, she has

actively exhibited her works at film festivals and featured programs both in Japan and abroad with live performances. She has also engaged in activities to support young filmmakers through workshops, film festivals, and educational institutions. She currently teaches at Musashino Art University, where she has engaged in producing filmmakers who won prizes at various competitions. In 2014, she founded “The Poetry of Finless Porpoises/sunameri no uta” project, with young filmmakers, students, and local citizens in Ōmura City in Nagasaki, where she produced nine short films that were screened at various film festivals. She was a director of the Omura Amami International Student Film Festival in 2018, and a vice executive committee at the 14th Asia International Youth Film Festival in 2021.

## **Kayo Takefuji**

**This film is about the filmmaker’s own pregnancy and birthing experience. “We celebrate the ability to give birth, but if this is so, shouldn’t we regard all life as blessed? Am I blessed?”**

**The filmmaker twists the question of expression by taking the point of view of the camera and objectifying herself through ultrasonic images of the baby right before birth, and talking with her family.**

**Shooting these images day by day is the process by which the filmmaker grapples**

**with the question of her own existence. It is, in fact, an attempt to witness her own birth.**

Kayo Take is a director and producer born in Tokyo. She graduated from Tokyo Metropolitan University and Image Forum Institute of Moving Image. After working for an advertising company, she started teaching at a film school and worked as a film crew for Koji Wakamatsu and Naomi Kawase. She is currently an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Media Studies, Josai International University.

## **Yuka Sato**

**The room can be interpreted as the social structure which the protagonist doesn’t know how to escape from. Her relationships are torn into pieces and sewn back together.**

**But in the end, the oppressed are still left broken.**

Yuka Sato is a filmmaker and artist. Her filmography has to date encompassed the themes of isolation in society, dialogues with others, and women’s lives. She has presented her films both in Japan and overseas.

In recent years, she has been experimenting and researching mainly through photography, with a focus on things that are often treated as seemingly unnecessary or potentially ambiguous.

She also works as an independent curator and was

the director of events such as the Place M Film Festival 2019 and 2021.

## **Kaori Oda**

**Karaoke Cafe BOSA is located in the suburbs of Osaka, Japan. It's a place where elderly neighbors gather to chat and sing. Cafe BOSA leaves traces in these days of unrest as a time capsule of the Anthropocene.**

Born in Osaka, Japan in 1987, Kaori Oda is a filmmaker and artist. Through images and sounds, her works explore the memories of human beings.

She lived in Sarajevo for three years from 2013 and completed the Doctor of Liberal Arts in filmmaking under the supervision of Bela Tarr in 2016. Her first feature, *ARAGANE* (2015) shot in a Bosnian coal mine, had its world premiere at Yamagata International Film Festival and received a Special Mention. The film has been screened at festivals such as Doclisboa, Mar del Plata International Film Festival, Sarajevo Film Festival, Taiwan International Documentary Festival, and more.

She is a recipient of Grants for Overseas Study by Young Artists of Pola Art Foundation.

Her second feature, *Toward A Common Tenderness* (2017), a poetic film research, had its world premiere at DOK Leipzig and her latest film, *TS'ONOT/Cenote* (2019) shot in underwater caves in Yucatan,

Mexico, was premiered in *Bright Future* section at International Film Festival Rotterdam 2020.

She received the Inaugural Nagisa Oshima Prize in 2020 and the new face award of Minister of Education Award for Fine Arts in 2021.

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