

K U N I É
S U G I U R A

SOMETHING ELSE

ALISON BRADLEY PROJECTS

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Kunié Sugiura

Something Else

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Kunié Sugiura:
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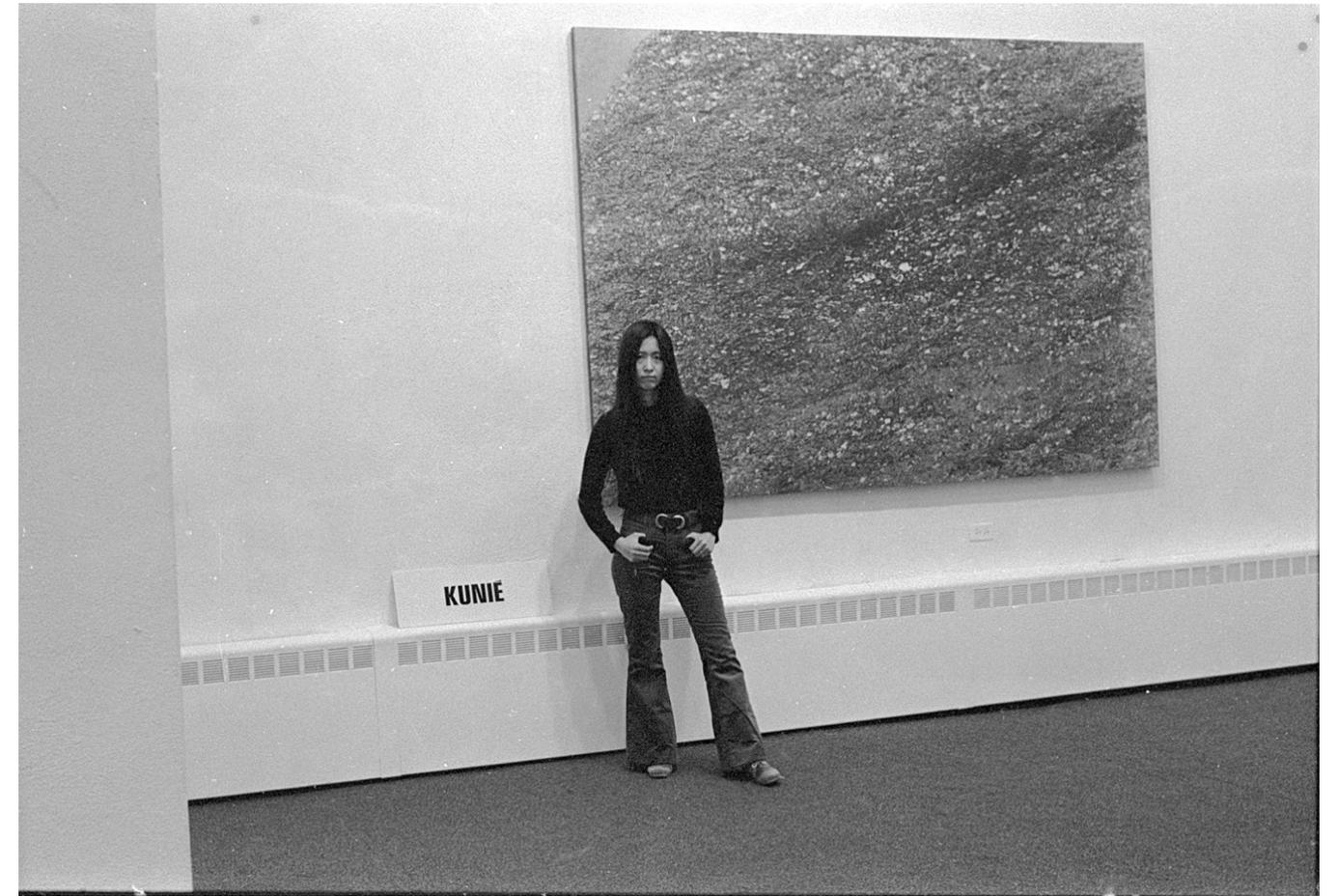
Introduction

Throughout her career, **Kunié Sugiura** (b. Nagoya, Japan, 1942) has always pushed the boundaries of her practice in search of new expressions. Across more than six decades of constant experimentation, from the bold integration of painterly materials and techniques to explorations of photography's earliest form—the photogram, Sugiura's oeuvre has come to embody the richness of photography as an aesthetic medium. *Kunié Sugiura: Something Else* presents representative works from different periods of her long career, several of which have never been on public view.

In the late 1960s, soon after she moved to New York City as a recent graduate from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), Sugiura began printing photographs on canvas. This technique was inspired by the works of contemporary artists including Andy Warhol and Robert Rauschenberg, but Sugiura's *Photocanvas*, as it has come to be known, is unique in its attention to nature such as flowers and rocks found in the city. It is also distinctive for its hand-applied emulsion, sometimes overworked in graphite or acrylic, that adds to the work a depth and tonal quality utterly her own. The artist often photographed subjects in extreme close-up, turning them into quasi-abstractions with an enhanced textural quality.

By the mid-1970s, Sugiura's *Photocanvas* developed into *Photopainting*, where photographs, often showing urban landscapes of New York, are presented side-by-side with monochromatic paintings. As a hybrid object, *Photopainting* simultaneously draws a connection between the two media and highlights their distinctiveness. Together, her *Photocanvas* and *Photopainting* exemplify the duality and ambiguity that characterize much of her oeuvre. At once photography and painting, mimetic and abstract, they defy easy categorization, letting different elements exist without opposition or hierarchy.

The artist radically shifted her practice in the 1980s when she began producing photograms. This is essentially a nod to the works of Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, whose legacy came to Sugiura via Kenneth Josephson, her mentor while at SAIC, who studied under Harry Callahan and Aaron Siskind at the Institute of Design, or the "New Bauhaus," at the Illinois Institute of Technology. The botanical photograms in this exhibition, using flowers purchased at local stores in Manhattan, express the artist's continuing interest in nature. In these works, organic forms of the flowers are combined with geometric lines of crochet threads, bringing



Kunié Sugiura at Warren Benedek Gallery in 1972; pictured in front of her photocanvas *Island_2* (1971).

in both natural and artificial elements. Life and mortality, the artificial and natural, black and white—these dualities characterize this body of work.

From an unassuming rock in Coney Island to flowers from the quotidian market, the subjects of Sugiura's works come from her everyday life in New York City. Through unconventional techniques and a conceptual viewpoint, the artist draws our attention to things that are often overlooked in our urban life, revealing, in her own words, the beauty in the banal.

Installation Views











Black and White and Color: Kunié Sugiura in New York

Essay by Will Heinrich

Kunié Sugiura lives in a Chinatown loft with all the scattered, irregular hallmarks of a life organized around art: The careful line of file cabinets. The random furniture. The ad-hoc kitchen and bathroom. The sense of a resident far too preoccupied with what she was making ever to have worried very much about where she was making it.

The artist herself gives a similar impression. Though very present, she's quiet and self-contained. As we talked about her life and work, I came to see her as a kind of pioneer. She didn't begin with an all-consuming vision, and she wasn't drawn to conflict or defiance. But over and over, without making any great show of it, she has done what she wanted in life. She left Japan as a young, single woman; she learned English while studying art in Chicago; she politely turned down offers to start a family of her own. Most importantly, she made innovative, unconventional work, taking up a brand-new approach whenever the last one lost its appeal.

In conversation with me over several weeks, Sugiura was kind and unfailingly gracious. Still, asking her why she had made some esthetic or life choice in the past felt very much like asking her why she'd gotten up in the morning, or what made her so interested in breathing. She always did her best to come up with an answer, but she and I both knew what the real answer was: What else could she have done?

Born in Nagoya, Japan, on November 23, 1942, Sugiura was the only child of Yuki Sugiura and Seizo Tanaka. Before she turned two, her father was killed by an American bomb and her mother and aunt went to Tokyo to look for work. She spent the next four years with her grandmother in Shizuoka.

When it was time for Kunié to enter school, the four women reunited in Tokyo. In grade school, Sugiura's classmates expected her to become a painter, and her work already exhibited its signature mix of emotion and displacement: "When I was eight years old," she recalled in a 2012 interview with the gallerist Leslie Tonkonow, "my class went to paint the cherry blossoms in the park. I was so overwhelmed by all the flowers that instead I painted a large pine tree."



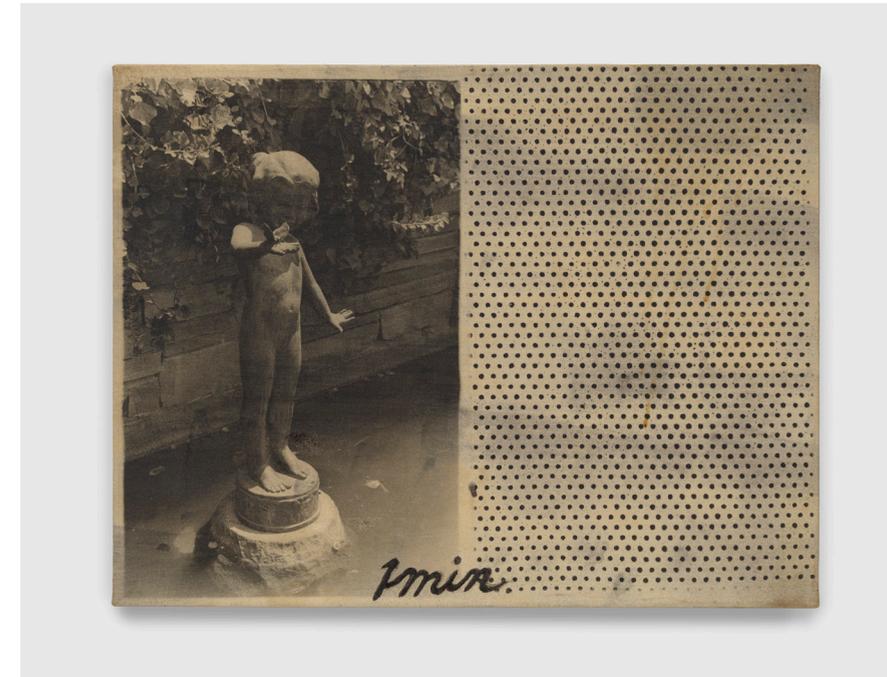
Her family expected her to pursue something professional, even going so far as to arrange a live-in science tutor, and after high school Sugiura entered the physics program at Ochanomizu Women's College. But she wasn't happy there, particularly since a Japanese woman of her generation couldn't hope to do anything with a physics degree but teach high school.

At her own high school reunion, though, she met a classmate who had entered Tokyo University of the Arts and seemed remarkably happy. Then another acquaintance, just returned from studying in the United States, told her about the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Sugiura's mother, who had found a job managing the American military trading post at Tachikawa, where she learned to like her country's former enemies, supported her daughter's interest. So did her grandmother, a woman Sugiura says "would have been a feminist" in another time. So she applied, was accepted, and, in the fall of 1963, left Tokyo alone — taking a leave of absence from Ochanomizu, just in case.

Her first instructor in Chicago, Kenneth Josephson, tried to steer her into documentary work, and for a year she obediently followed Japanese-American families around the midwestern metropolis with her camera. But when Josephson left on a Fulbright, to be replaced by the more indulgent Frank Barsotti, Sugiura started shooting what she really wanted — nudes.

It was the first of many counterintuitive choices. Though she was inspired by Bill Brandt's dramatic vistas of naked limbs, Sugiura wasn't really interested in the body for its own sake. Instead she was after the timeless, almost abstract quality that a human body takes on when it's shorn of historical context. So she shot her models in extreme fisheye closeup, printed them in seas of eery yellow and purple, and sometimes disintegrated their identities still further by repeating the images in collage-like clusters of multiple exposure. She named the series *CKO prints*, after the homophonous Japanese words for "alienation" and "individual," and took them with her when, two days after graduating in the spring of '67, she flew to New York.

Her first year in the city she spent staying with friends, finding an apartment, working a variety of dark-room jobs. She interviewed with Richard Avedon, though he didn't yet have the money for an assistant, and dated a physicist named Gerry Dorman. But when she and Dorman married, she began making art again, turning her 104th Street apartment into a studio and printing black and white photographs on canvas. Tightly focused studies of peeling tree bark, shadowy ivy leaves, or lovers embracing, the disconcertingly large images were at once a bid to be taken seriously in an art world that still ranked painting over photography and an expression of Sugiura's lifelong impatience with the boundaries of her chosen medium.



Aside from their material innovation, most of these pieces were straightforward enough. But on the left side of one small canvas called *I Min.* (1968), Sugiura printed a photo of a statue, an exuberant naked child on a round pedestal in one of New York's Botanical Gardens. Behind the child was a brick wall and a thicket of trailing vines. To fill the rest of the canvas, Sugiura used photo developer to paint a grid of black dots. The effect was astonishing. The rough, gestural quality of the dots, set so close to the photo, seems to dissolve its crispness from within. But at the same time that very crispness lends the dots a photographic sheen and finish. The dots take on the specificity and vibrance of the statue, while the statue itself is cut loose to float away from the sensory world as a pure visual pattern. The two halves, in other words, meld and change places like lovers, imparting a sense of conceptual uncertainty that is somewhere between flying and falling.

In 1970 Sugiura took slides of some of these pieces downtown to Paula Cooper, who conceded that they were interesting but said she never made studio visits uptown. But she sent Sugiura back up to see Dick Bellamy, who warned her that it might take him two years to get around to visiting her. In fact he showed up in two weeks and promptly told her that everything she was making was terrible. Undaunted, Sugiura made new work and invited him back, and eventually, though he never formally showed her, Bellamy came

to act as a kind of an agent, making introductions and occasionally brokering a sale. (One key figure he connected her to was the curator Marcia Tucker, who included her in the 1972 painting annual at the Whitney Museum.) He also briefly employed her as a secretary.

In 1973, Gerry Dorman got a job in Europe and Sugiura chose to stay in New York. She moved into the loft on Doyers Street. The radical feminist Redstocking group held a few meetings there, though Sugiura herself was never a fully committed member, and for a time weekly dance parties took place downstairs at Randall Arabe's place. From the mid-1980s to the early 1990s, while she was involved with, and briefly married to, the artist John Duff, Sugiura moved into Duff's loft in the same building. But she kept her own place as a studio, and when the relationship had run its course, she moved back downstairs.

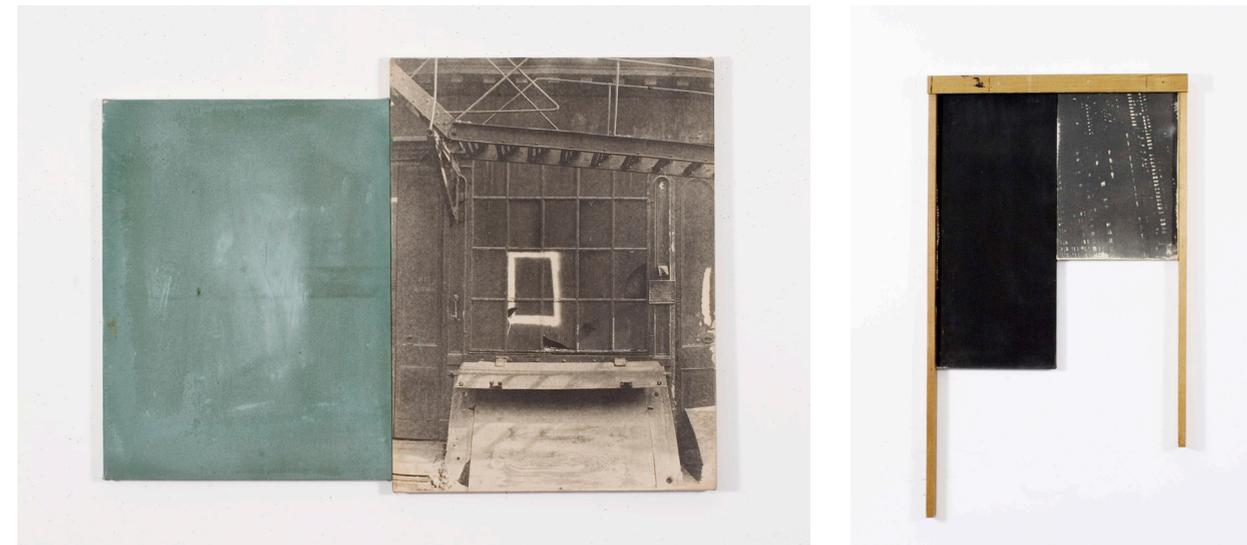
It was on Doyers Street that Sugiura hit on what she called "photopaintings," an extraordinary series of photocanvas works juxtaposed with acrylic paintings. *Christie Street* (1976), is even simpler than *1 Min.* Horizontal gray and white stripes on the left meet columns of black windows on the right, with only the top of a passing pedestrian's head to cue the viewer that she's looking at a real building. The fact that the work occupies two adjacent canvases might even pass without notice. But then color comes in — in *Yellow Floor* (1977), for example, a dense gray image of a scarred wooden floor is placed next to a bright yellow canvas —and sizes change.



Christie Street (1976), acrylic and photo emulsion on canvas, 28 x 40 in.



Yellow Floor (1977), acrylic and photo emulsion on canvas, 36 x 35 in.



left: *Marketfront* (1978), acrylic and photo emulsion on canvas, 24 x 34 in.; right: *High Rise* (1979), acrylic and photo emulsion on canvas, 45 x 25 in.

In *Market Front* (1978), a photo of a metal loading-dock door meets a scratchy, intense teal monochrome, and the smaller size of the painting paradoxically balances the graytone complexity of the photograph. And finally Sugiura began surrounding these diptychs and polyptychs with custom-built, deliberately incomplete wooden frames, as in *High Rise* (1979), whose two dark canvases — a long one painted black, and a shorter one printed with the swift, receding wall of a skyscraper — hang like Japanese curtains inside an uneven-legged post and lintel.

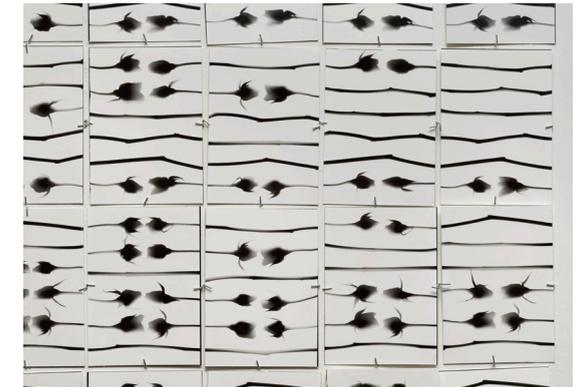
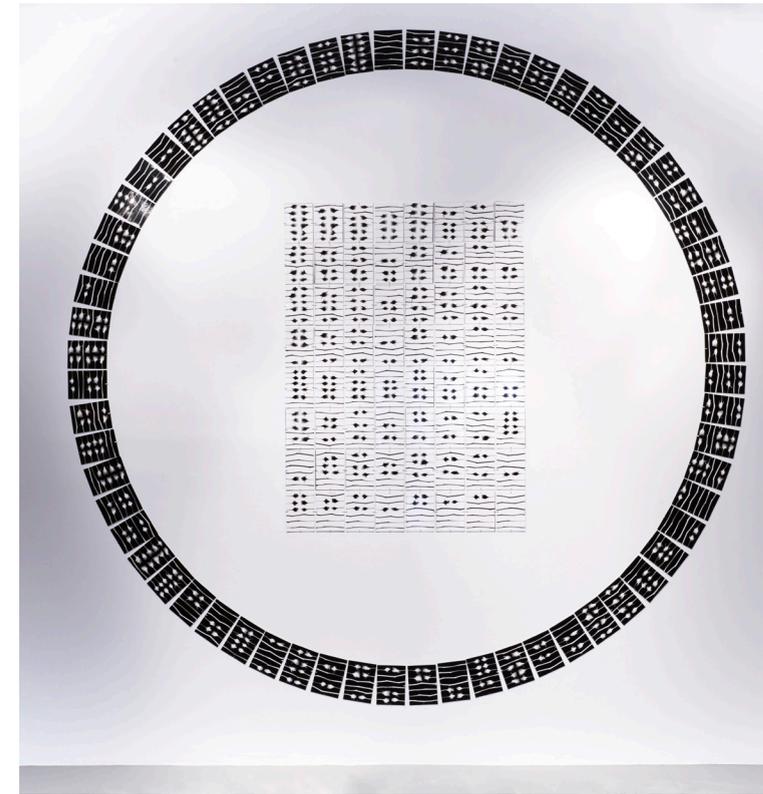
Adding distinctions of color and size significantly amplifies the already buoyant vertigo of *1 Min.* the same melding and switching of opposites takes place with deeper ramifications and at a larger scale. Being placed on a par with acrylic paint makes the photo emulsion look grittier and more substantial, while the emulsion, in turn, makes the paint, however roughly applied, look comparatively slick and clean. Black and white looks richer next to color, and color bolder and more daring next to black and white. Figurative imagery lends complexity to monochrome, encouraging the eye to find its variation and detail, while the monochromes make Sugiura's Lower Manhattan vistas even more haunting. (It's hard not to think of Buddhist images of the world as a house on fire.) Most distinctively, perhaps, Sugiura's use of incomplete wooden frames that extend past the corners of her canvases brings in the traditional Japanese regard for empty space: Even as a given photo and painting oppose and complement each other, Sugiura is balancing them both against the empty gallery wall.

The photopaintings are also among the best surviving documents of 1970s New York and the particular downtown scene they emerged from. They aestheticize and slightly abstract the visions and textures of Sugiura's adopted home, depicting them both as they were and as she experienced them, as half-forsaken relics of industry and as monuments whose glamour draw pilgrims from around the world. Their eye-catching empty space comes out of wabi-sabi, but it also recapitulates the beautiful way that New York's skyline cuts narrow rectangles into its sky.

In the early 1980s, Sugiura began making photograms, luscious, deathly images of cut flowers arranged in still lifes, repeated in series, or toned into otherworldly color. Later she would use larger sheets of paper to make deceptively simple and spontaneous-looking photograms of artists she knew, or approached, and then of subjects further afield. (She called the series *Artists and Scientists*.) Carolee Schneemann appeared in devil horns and Dr. James Watson holding large models of DNA helices; a stand-in for the artist Atsuko Tanaka held a string of lights in homage to her famous electric dress.



top left: *Carolee Schneemann C* (2003), photogram, gelatin silver print, 29 1/2 x 39 1/4 in.; bottom left: *Carolee Schneemann Cp* (2003), photogram, gelatin silver print, 29 1/4 x 38 3/4 in.; right: *After Electric Dress Ap 3*, (2002), photogram, toned yellow gelatin silver print, 68 1/2 x 44 1/2 in.



left: *Premonition by Roses* (1997), photogram, 128 gelatin silver prints, 120 x 120 in. installed; right: *Premonition by Roses* detail views.

The problem was always to make the process new, to avoid mindless repetition. She added photograms of a couple making love to her photogram series, and spread photo paper on the floor to capture images of kittens at night. She arranged rosebuds in the hexagrams of the *I Ching*, used the resulting photograms to make positives, and arranged the 128 pieces thus produced in an enormous circle on the wall. She printed found X-rays on canvas and alternated them with small monochromes. Recently she's begun another series that she wouldn't show me. By the time she's ready to share that work, she'll be on to something else.

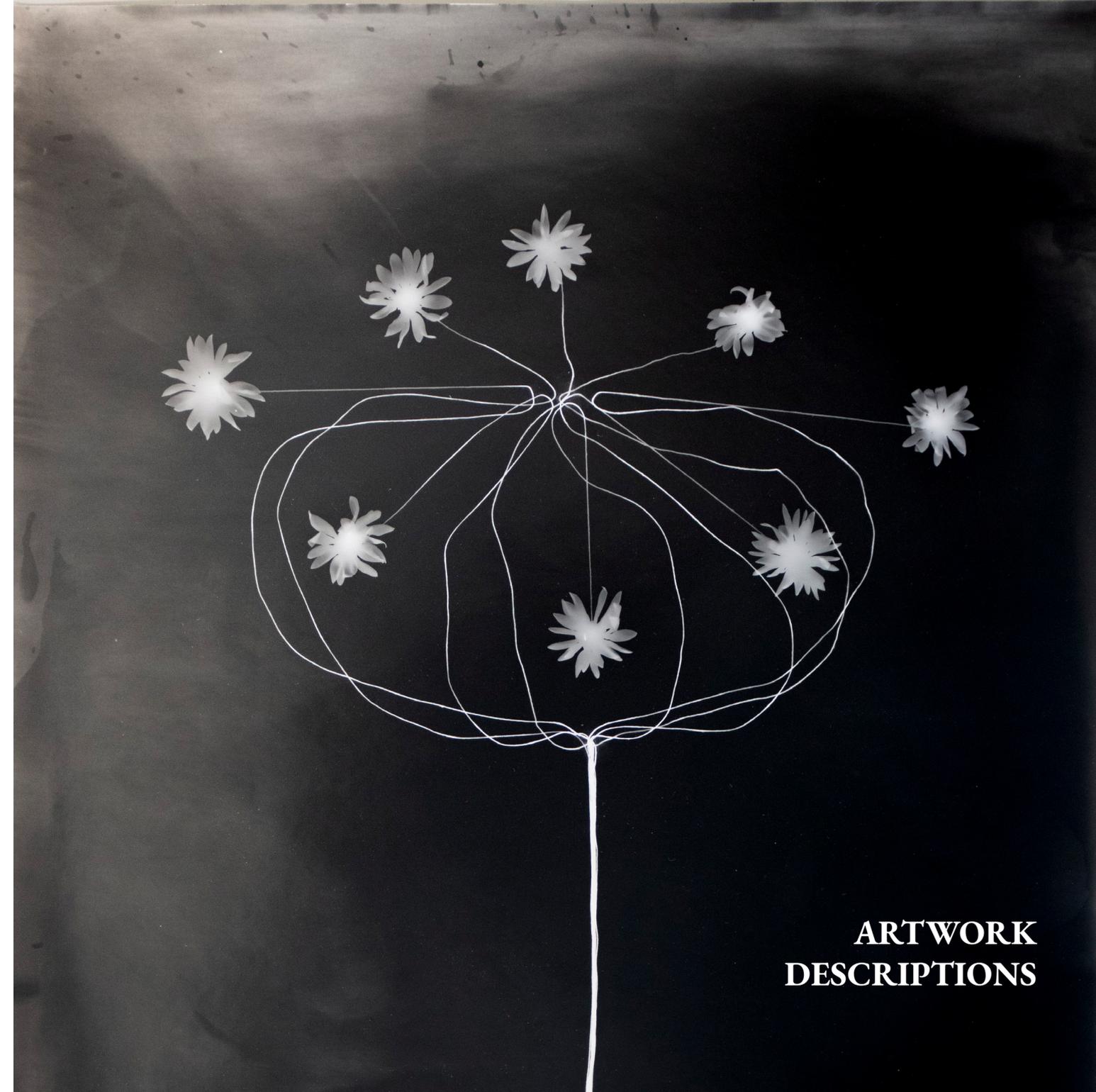
Back in the 1970s, Dick Bellamy also took Sugiura out to hear Lamonte Young and introduced her to the conceptual artist Walter de Maria, with whom she was involved, off and on, for years. When she was

chosen for MoMA's New Photography show in 1997, along with Rineke Dijkstra, Vik Muniz, and An-My Lê, it was De Maria who encouraged her to hang around the show watching people look at her work. (One can only speculate about what he meant by telling her, "This will never happen again.") She went four or five times. She was also an avid visitor of other people's shows, and for two decades she reviewed them for the prestigious Japanese art magazine *Bijutsu Techo*. And that wasn't the only Japanese connection she maintained; in fact, even while making a life in New York, she enjoyed a successful career in Tokyo, showing regularly with *Zeit-FOTO* and Taka Ishii Gallery.

After the MoMA show, Sugiura's work began selling and she could finally, in her 50s, give up day jobs. (In 1996, she began a decades-long relationship with Leslie Tonkonow; currently she shows with Alison Bradley Projects.) But the Doyers Street studio, a long, sparsely furnished space up three unusually long flights of steps, remains largely the same. The floors are scratched; there's an unfurnished futon near the front windows for naps. When a writer comes to visit, she clears off a scarred and stained table, offers him tea, and talks for an hour or two; then she goes back to work.



Kunié Sugiura in her Chinatown studio. Photograph by Robert Palumbo.



**ARTWORK
DESCRIPTIONS**

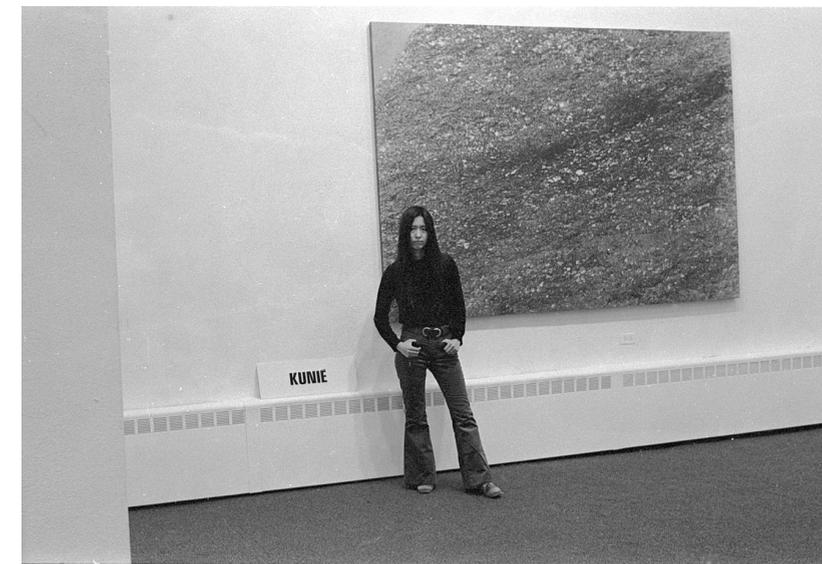


Island_2, 1971
Photo emulsion and acrylic on canvas
70 7/8 x 101 1/4 in. (180 x 257.2 cm)

Island_2

One year after moving to New York City, Sugiura, deprived of access to a color darkroom, began making her signature Photocanvas series, projecting black and white negatives onto canvases of hand-applied photo emulsion. Often using photographs taken on her daily excursions to places like Central Park and Coney Island, these iconic works play with close-up perspectives of her newly discovered subjects of urban nature, such as the breakwater in Coney Island. *Island_2* is a rare example of her *Photocanvases*. The work also incorporates acrylic which the artist meticulously applied to infuse contrast and depth and add a materiality to this work – a nod to her fusion of painting and photography that began as she started her artistic practise in New York.

Made in 1971, this work exemplifies the artist's shifting practice. In pursuit of the image only achievable through photography, Sugiura started applying extreme close-up and enlargement to her photographs. This resulted in the near-abstract quality of the images that make them distinct from earlier *Photocanvases* where the subjects remain discernible. These newer works impressed dealer Dick Bellamy and led him to introduce Sugiura to curator Marcia Tucker. Soon after this, Sugiura participated in the Whitney Annual curated by Tucker, and had her first solo show at Warren Benedek Gallery in 1972.

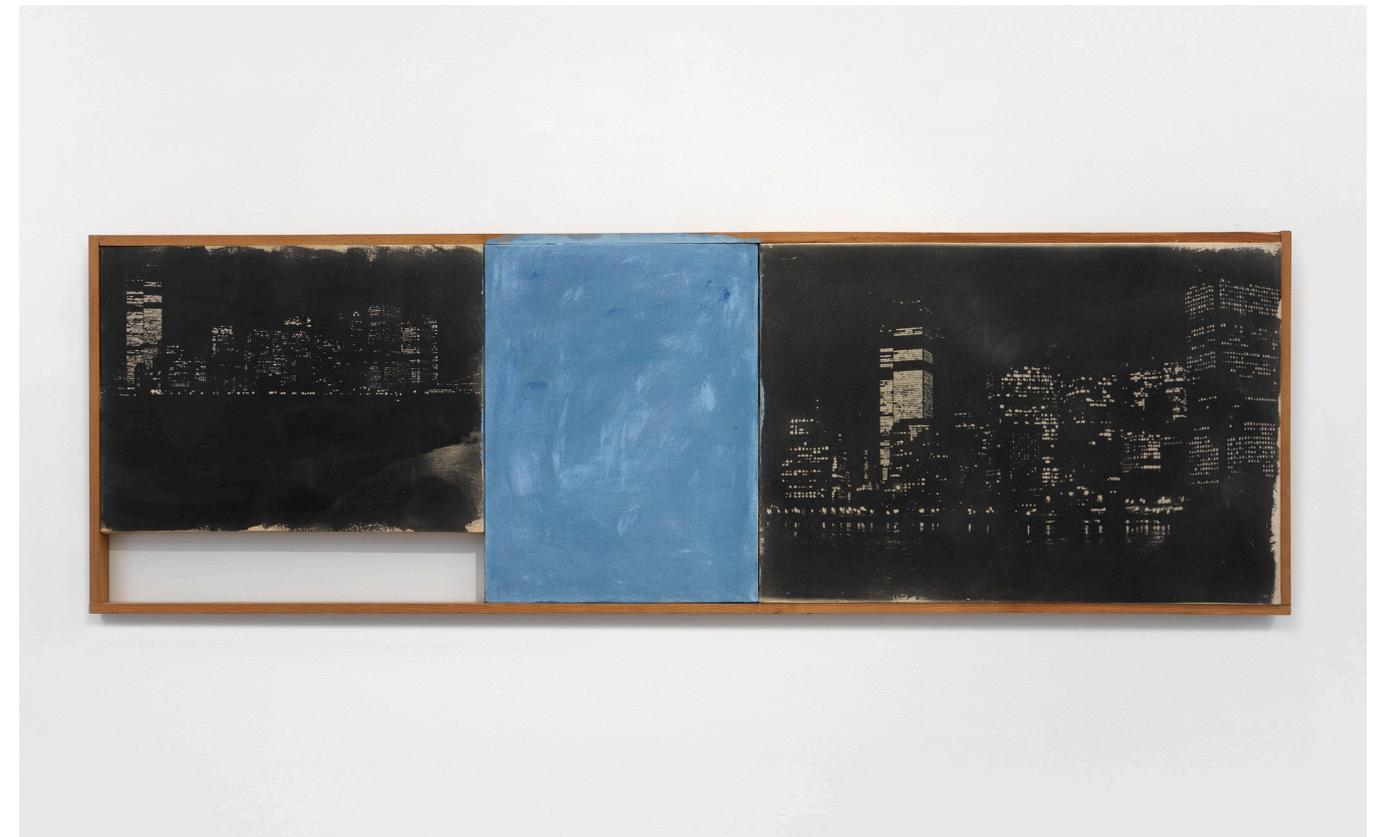


Kunié Sugiura at Warren Benedek Gallery in 1972; pictured in front of *Island_2* (1971).

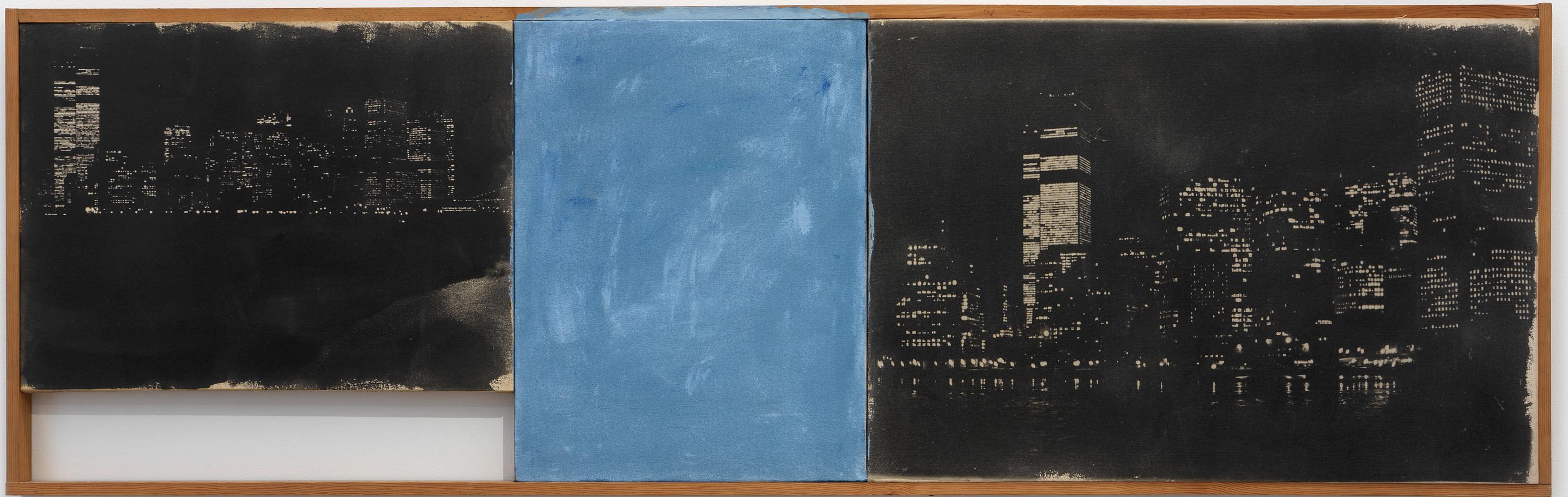


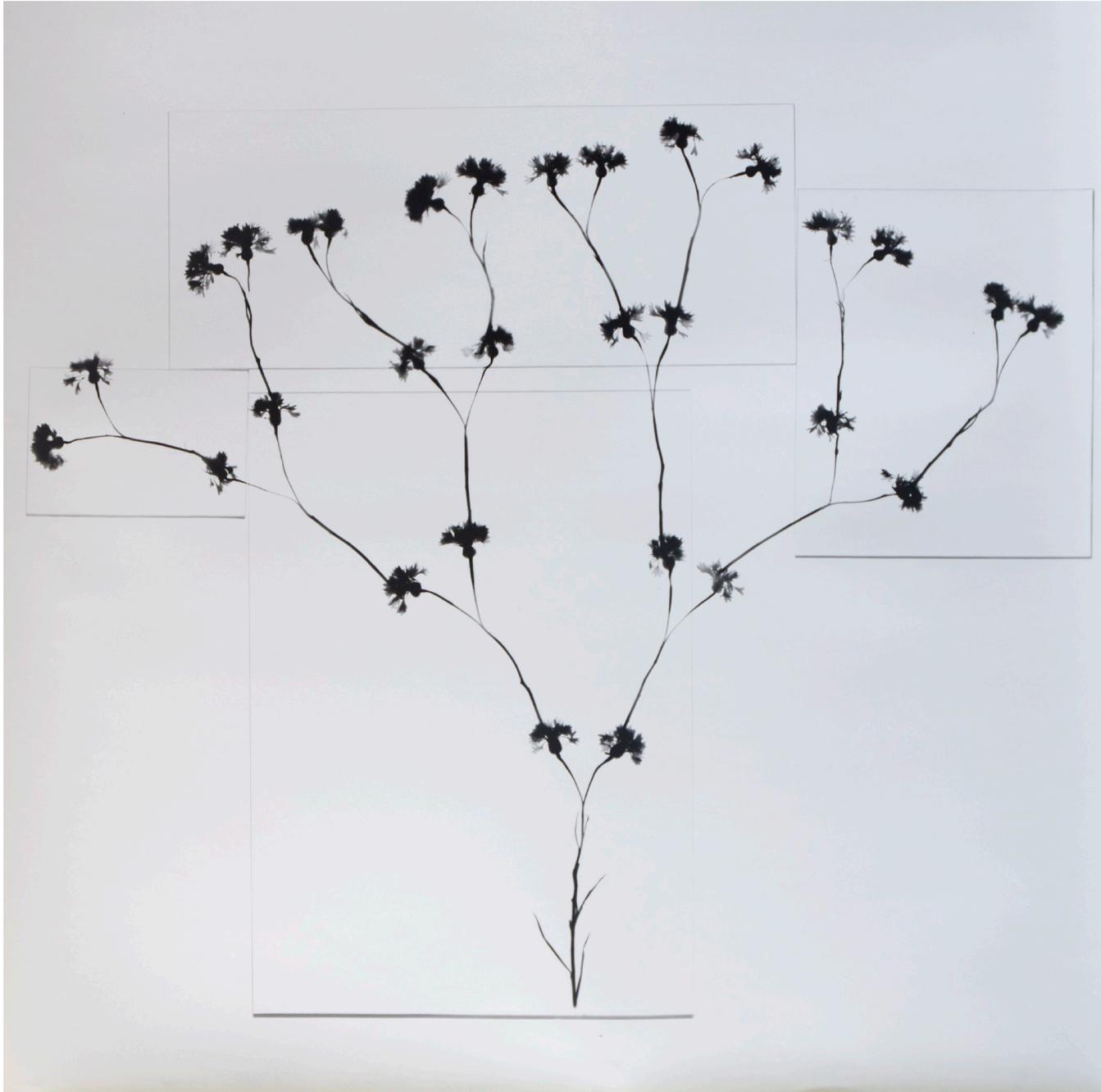
Tip

Following the period with exclusive focus on painting between 1973 and 1975, Sugiura started a new practice of combining painting and photography, calling it Photopainting. *Tip* was made in the period when the artist produced photopaintings most prolifically. The work uses photographs she took from a ferry ride at night. It shows buildings at the “tip” of Manhattan including the World Trade Center. The blue canvas at the center complements the two photographs by providing the color of water to the black-and-white nocturnal cityscapes.



Tip, 1978
Acrylic, photo emulsion on canvas, wood
27 x 84 in. (68.6 x 213.4 cm)

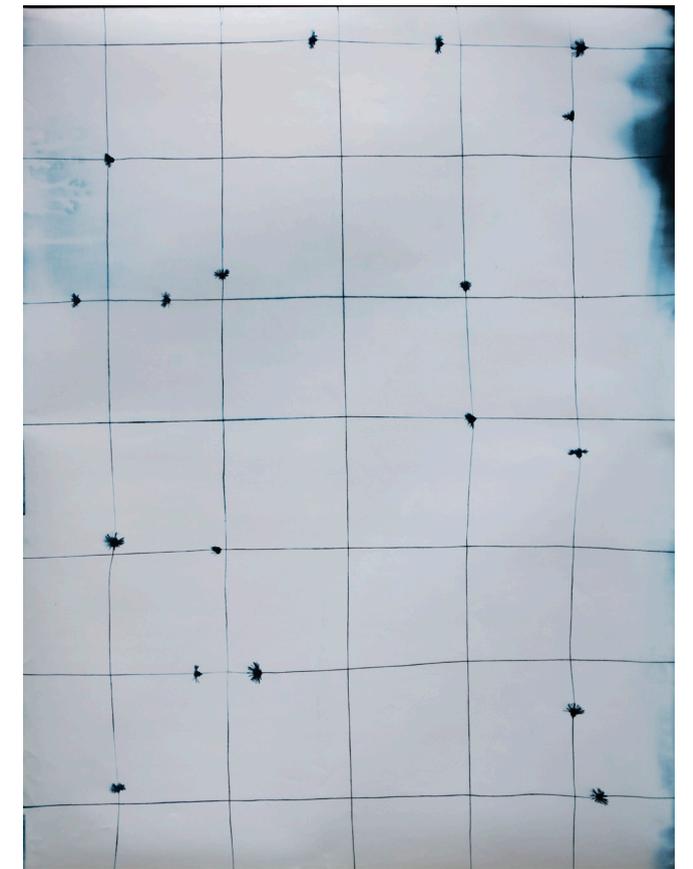




Split & Pressed Cornflowers, 1989
Photogram, gelatin silver print
29 3/4 x 29 1/2 in. (101 x 74.9 cm)



Mum Curtain, 1997
Photogram, gelatin silver print
39 3/4 x 29 1/2 in (101 x 74.9 cm)



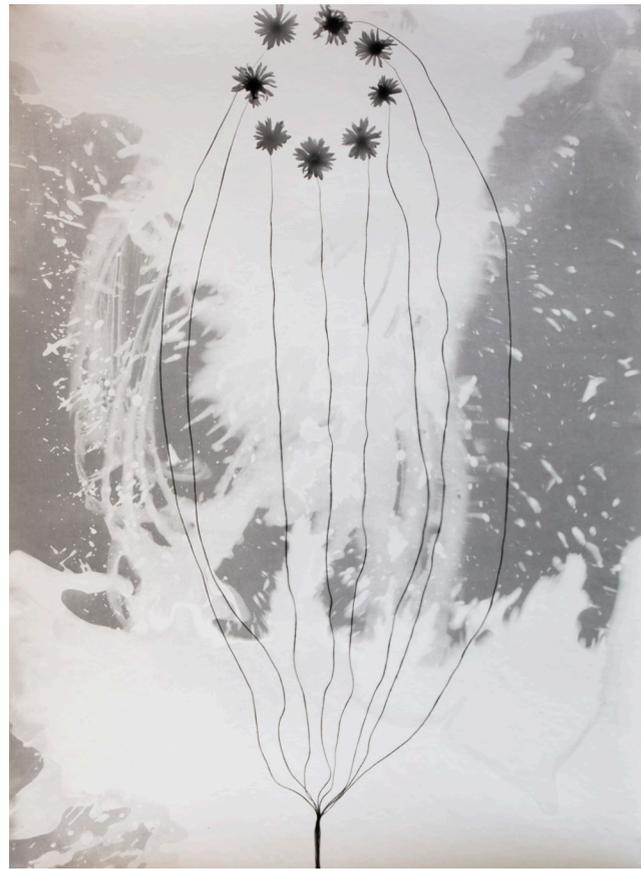
Meshes #1 Positive, 1997
Photogram, toned gelatin silver print
39 1/2 x 30 in (100.3 x 76.2 cm)

Cut flower photograms

Flowers are among the major subjects of Sugiura's photograms. In these works, the artist used flowers purchased at local stores in New York City, removing their stems and leaves and combining them with crochet threads. The juxtaposition of geometric lines with organic forms of the flowers accentuate the natural beauty of the latter. Flowers are a recurrent theme for the artist —she handles them as both symbols and material for her work, both exposing their fragility and insisting on their potency. The works show the artist's admiration for small things that are often overlooked in our daily lives.



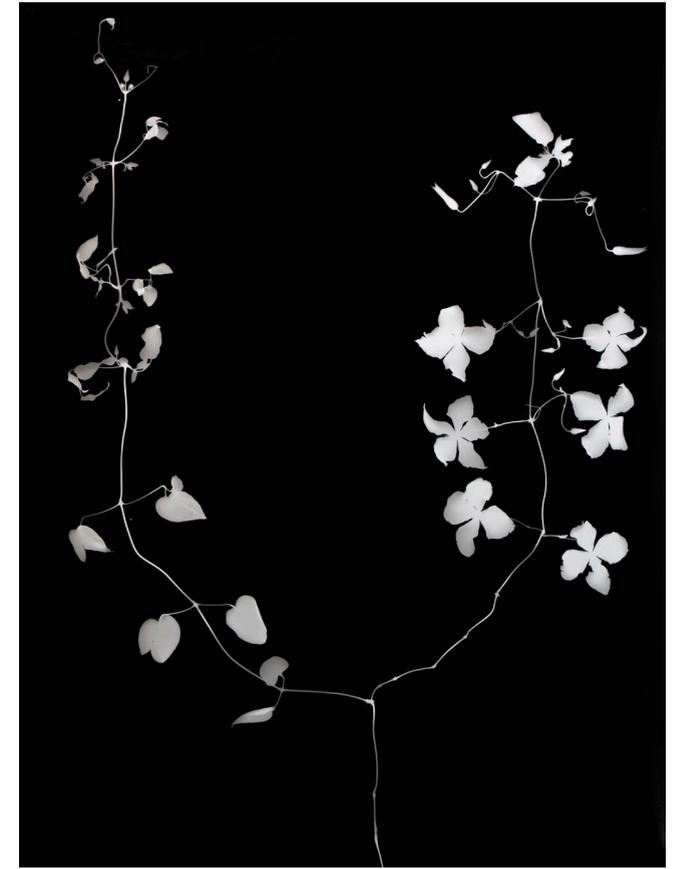
Filaments D, 1999
Photogram, gelatin silver print
39 1/2 x 29 1/4 in. (100.3 x 74.3 cm)



Filaments Ap 1, 1999
Photogram, gelatin silver print
39 1/4 x 29 in (99.7 x 73.7 cm)



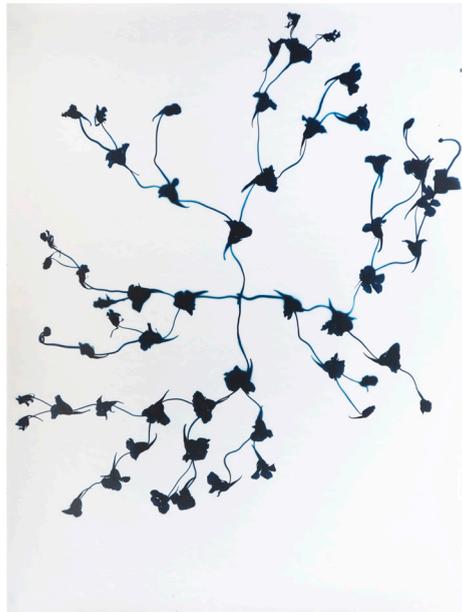
Trochoids P2, 2000
Photogram, toned gelatin silver print
39 3/8 x 29 1/4 in. (100 x 74.3 cm)



Clematis A, 2000
Photogram, toned gelatin silver print
39 1/2 x 29 1/2 in. (100.3 x 74.9 cm)



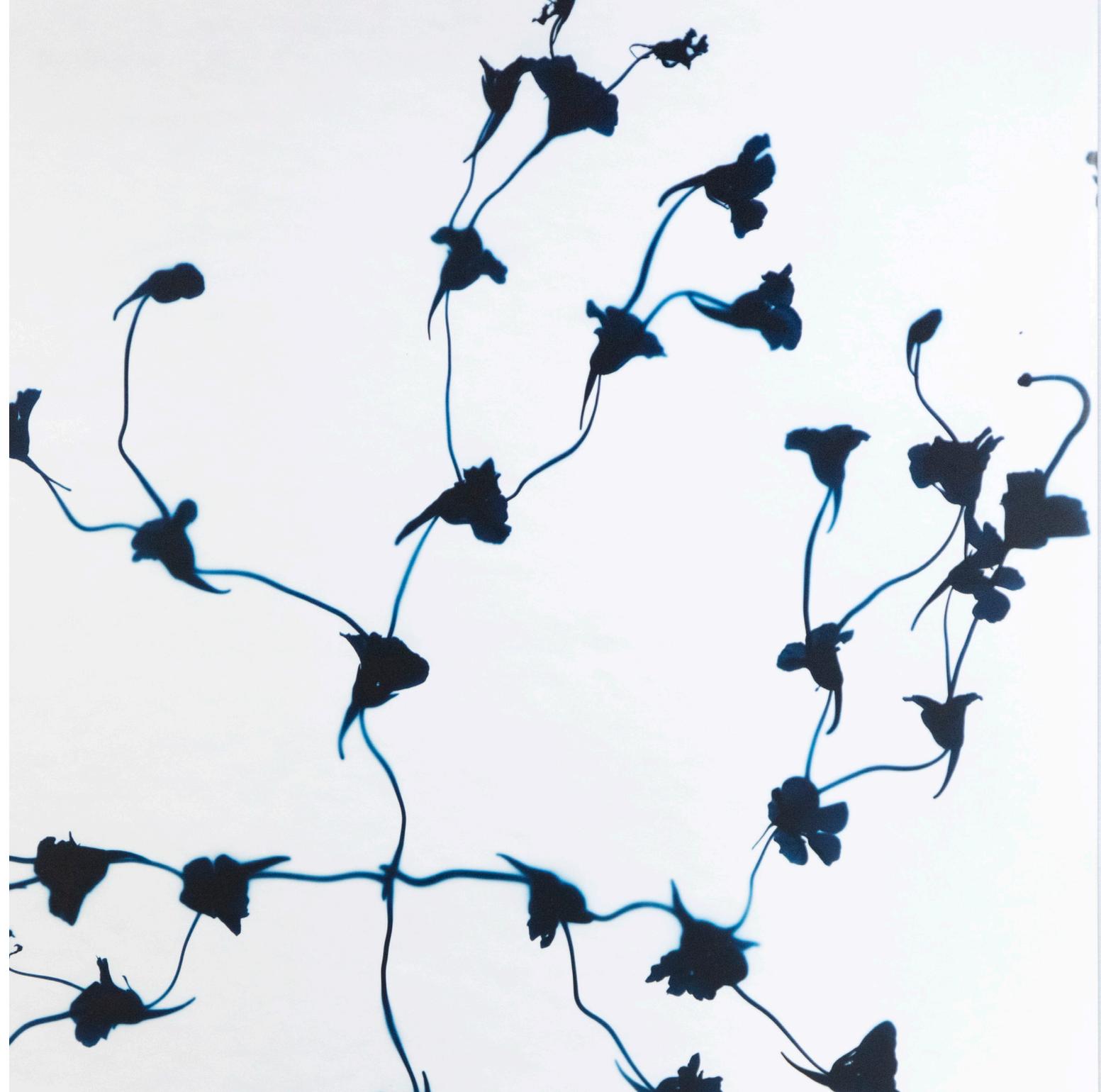
4xSPLIT Ap, 2000
Photogram, gelatin silver print
39 x 29 1/2 in. (99.1 x 74.9 cm)

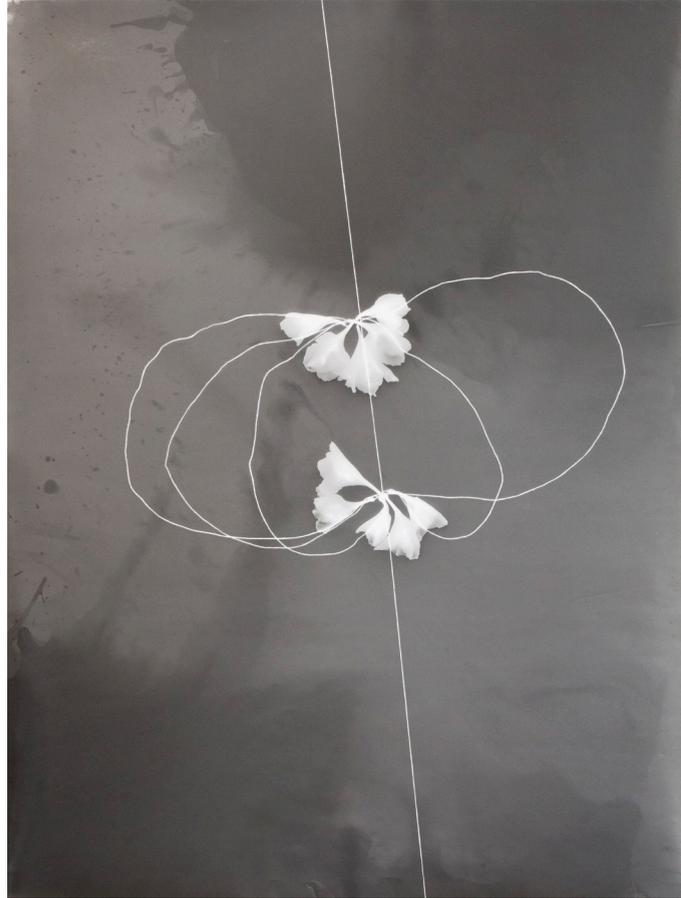


4xSPLIT Ap 2, 2000
Photogram, toned gelatin silver print
39 x 29 in. (99.1 x 73.7 cm)

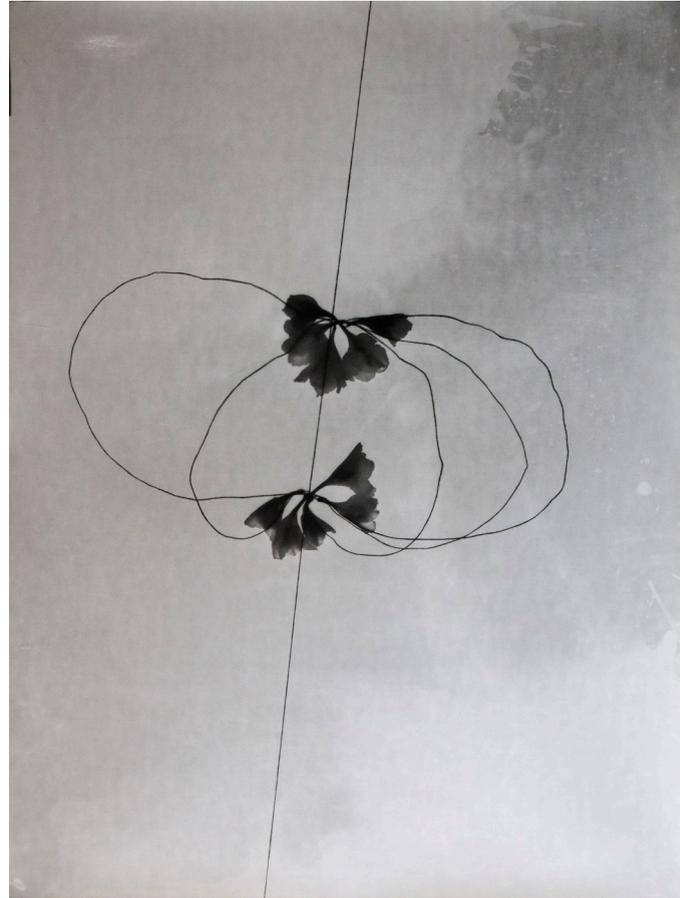


4xSPLIT Ap 3, 2000
Photogram, gelatin silver print
37 5/8 x 29 1/4 in. (95.4 x 74.3 cm)

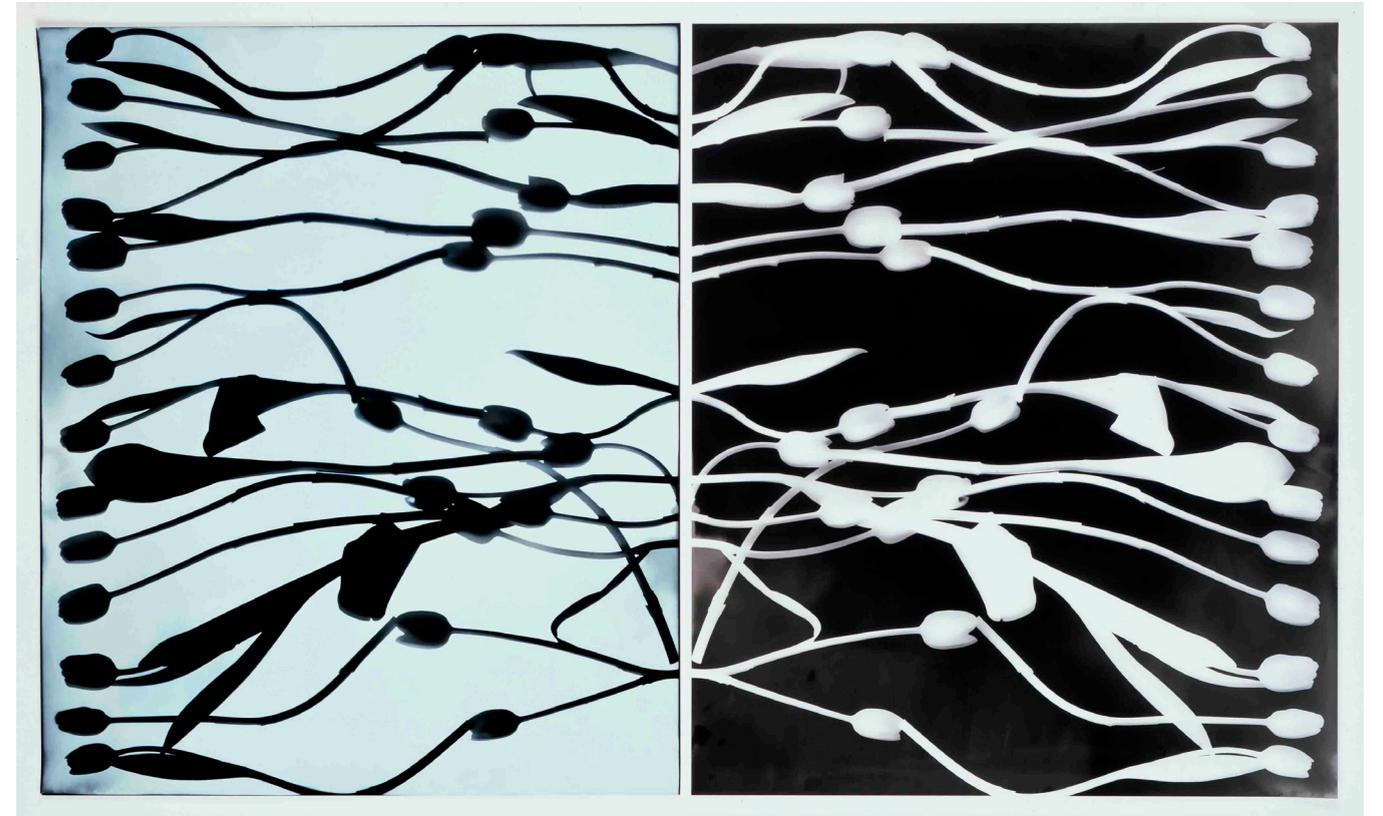




Filaments E, 1999
Photogram, gelatin silver print
39 1/4 x 29 3/4 in. (99.7 x 75.6 cm)



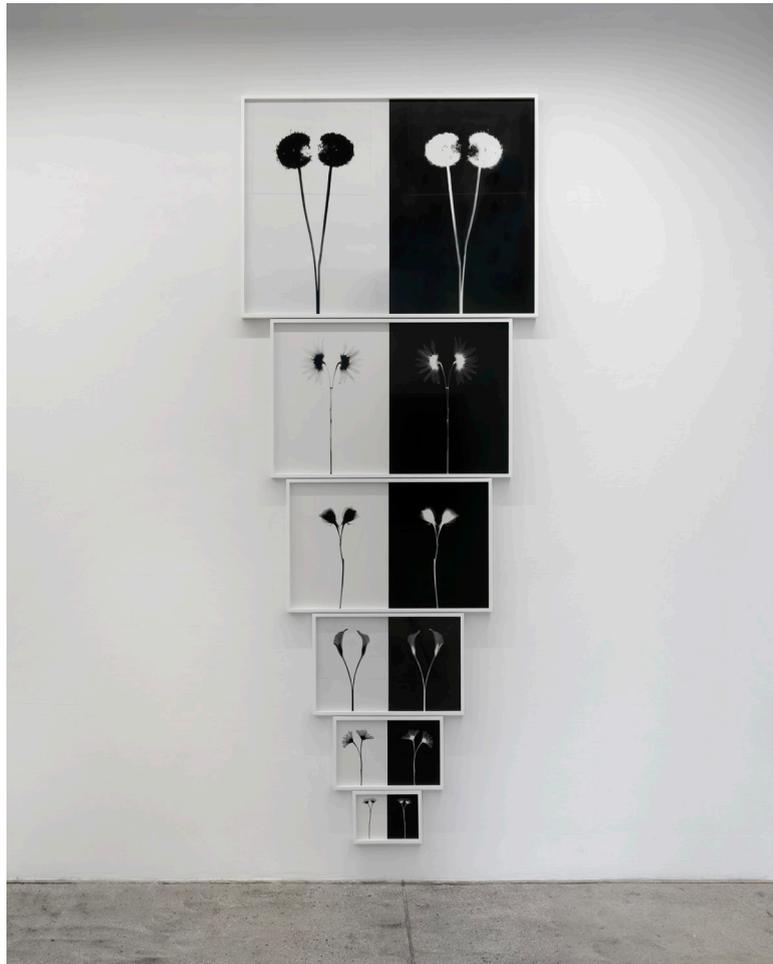
Filaments Ep, 1999
Photogram, gelatin silver print
39 1/8 x 29 1/2 in. (99.4 x 74.9 cm)



Stacks Tulips C1p & C1, 1996
2 photograms, toned gelatin silver prints
24 x 20 in. (61 x 50.8 cm) each

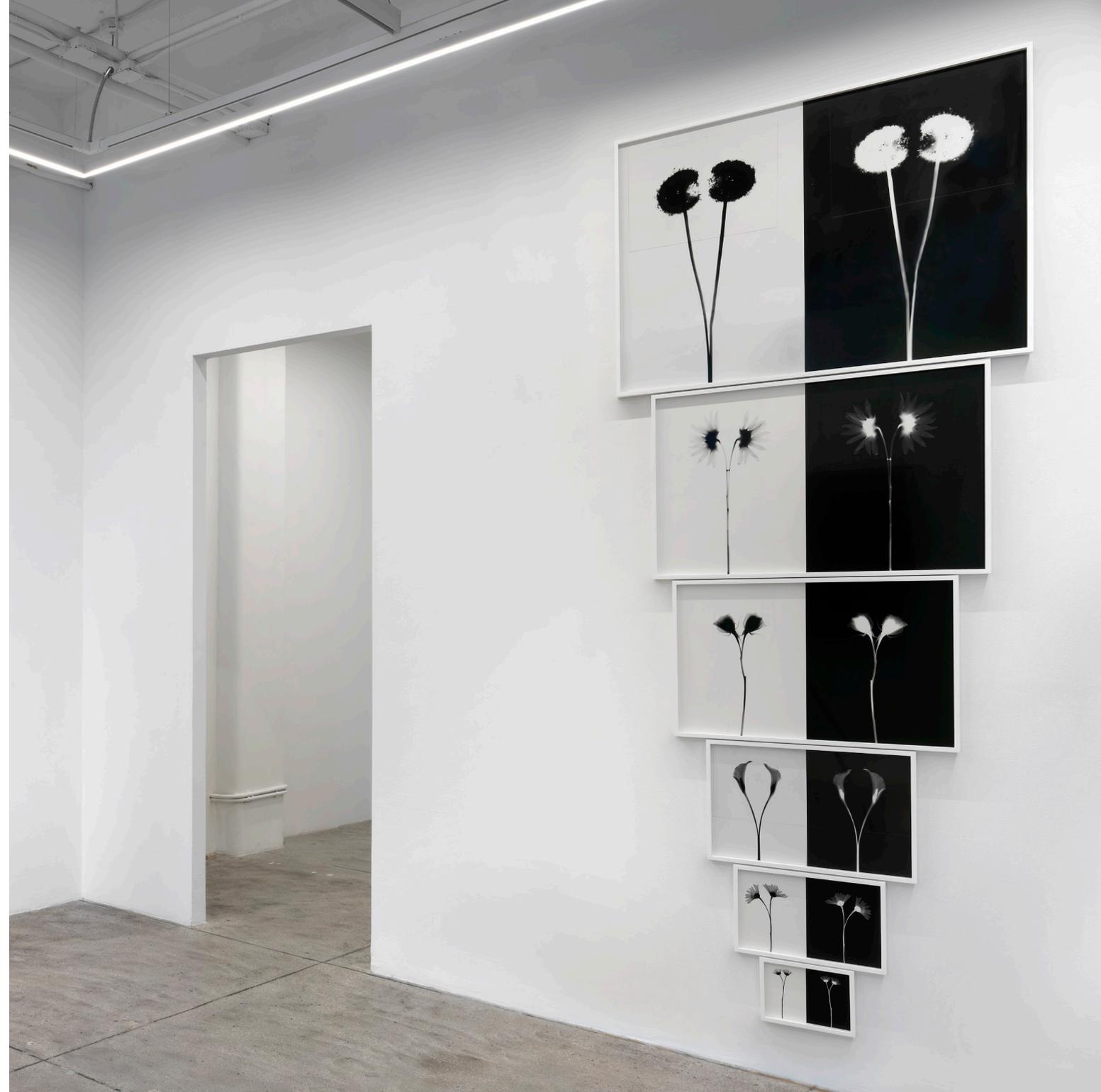
Upside Down Pyramid

Consisting of twelve botanical photograms, this work expresses Sugiura's continuing fascination with flowers. Here, the artist cut six flowers into half, used them to create positive and negative photograms of different sizes, and symmetrically arranged them in the form of an inverted pyramid. The combination of different types of flowers invites the viewer to compare the forms and appreciate the uniqueness of each. The work's unconventional display of floral forms is intended to encourage the viewer to reflect on their beauty in a way that is different from more traditional presentations like *ikebana*.



Upside Down Pyramid, 1995
12 photograms, gelatin silver prints
(6 diptychs, positive/negative)

Dimensions per print, descending order:
31 x 21 1/2 in. (78.74 x 54.61 cm)
22 x 17 1/2 in. (55.88 x 44.45 cm)
18 1/4 x 15 in. (46.36 x 38.10 cm)
14 x 11 in. (35.56 x 27.94 cm)
10 x 8 in. (25.40 x 20.32 cm)
7 x 5 in. (17.78 x 12.70 cm)



Press Release

Coinciding with the artist's career retrospective at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), Alison Bradley Projects is honored to present *Kunié Sugiura: Something Else*, an exhibition of iconic works from different periods of her long career in New York, several of which have never been on public view. *Something Else* opens on Thursday, May 8th, 2025, with an artist's reception from 6:00–8:00 p.m., remaining on view through June 28th.

Through six decades of constant experimentation, Kunié Sugiura (b. 1942, Nagoya, Japan) has always pushed the boundaries of her practice in search of new expressions. From explorations of photography's earliest form—the photogram—to the bold integration of painterly materials and techniques, Sugiura's oeuvre embodies the richness of photography as an aesthetic medium while redefining its apparent limits.

Soon after graduating from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) in 1967 and moving to New York City, Sugiura began printing photographs on canvas. Though initially inspired by the likes of Andy Warhol and Robert Rauschenberg, Sugiura's *Photocanvas* series (1968–72) showcases her singular perspective and sensitivity to the natural world. The artist often photographed botanical and geological subjects in extreme close-up, transforming them into quasi-abstraction with an enhanced textural quality.

SFMOMA's Curator and Head of Photography Erin O'Toole writes of the series: "At first glance, one might not recognize these works as photographs... Printed on a rough canvas surface, they have a dreamlike quality and often dissolve at the edges, evoking a faded memory... They are impressionistic, offering more feeling than detail" (from "Kunié Sugiura Liquid Light" in *Aperture*, No. 258: Painting & Photography).

A highlight of *Something Else* is Sugiura's monumental 1971 work *Island_2*, an exceptional *Photocanvas* portraying the surface of a Coney Island breakwater, which the artist has kept in her Chinatown studio since her inaugural solo exhibition at Warren Benedek Gallery in 1972.

By the mid-1970s, the *Photocanvas* series evolved into *Photopainting* (1975–81). Sugiura continued her signature printing technique of applying photo emulsion onto raw canvas, now presenting her photographs of the urban landscape side-by-side with monochromatic acrylic paintings. *Tip* (1978), on public view for the first time, features two photographs taken from a moving ferry, showing the Twin Towers glowing against the backdrop of a nocturnal New York skyline. Sugiura interrupts her shadowy nightscapes with an expanse of sky blue acrylic paint, infusing the darkness with a shock of unexpected daylight.

Writer Will Heinrich asserts Sugiura's *Photopaintings* are "among the best surviving documents of 1970s New York and the particular downtown scene they emerged from. They aestheticize and slightly abstract the visions

and textures of Sugiura's adopted home, depicting them both as they were and as she experienced them, as half-forsaken relics of industry and as monuments whose glamour draw pilgrims from around the world. Their eye-catching empty space comes out of wabi-sabi, but it also recapitulates the beautiful way that New York's skyline cuts narrow rectangles into its sky."

Together, her *Photocanvas* and *Photopainting* series exemplify the duality and ambiguity that characterize much of Sugiura's practice. At once photography and painting, mimetic and abstract, they defy easy categorization, letting different elements exist without opposition or hierarchy.

In the 1980s, Sugiura radically shifted her practice once again and began producing photograms. This is essentially a nod to the works of Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, whose legacy has been passed on to her through the lineage of Chicago photographers/educators Harry Callahan and Aaron Siskind to Sugiura's mentor at SAIC, Kenneth Josephson. The botanical photograms in this exhibition, using flowers purchased at local stores around Manhattan, express the artist's continuing interest in nature despite her metropolitan surroundings. In these works, flowers are combined with geometric lines of crochet threads, further underscoring the dualism of natural and artificial elements.

From an unassuming rock to flowers from the quotidian market, the subjects of Sugiura's works come from her everyday life in New York City. Through unconventional techniques, the artist draws our attention to things that are often overlooked in our urban life, revealing, in her own words, the beauty in the banal.

Kunié Sugiura: Something Else features special programming including a screening of Robert Palumbo's short filmographic profile on the artist, followed by a conversation between Sugiura and her long-time collaborator Pauline Vermare, Phillip and Edith Leonian Curator of Photography at the Brooklyn Museum. The event will take place on May 14th with limited participation, registration required.

Accompanying Sugiura's retrospective *Photopainting*, opening at SFMOMA on April 26, 2025, an eponymous monograph edited by Erin O'Toole has been published by MACK Books (London).

CV

Institutional Solo Exhibitions

- 2025 *Kunié Sugiura: Photopainting*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA
Kunié Sugiura (title TBD), Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
- 2018 *Kunié SUGIURA: Aspiring Experiments, New York in 50 years*, Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan

Selected Institutional Group Exhibitions

- 2024 *Shifting Landscapes*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY
Legacies: Asian American Art Movements in New York City (1969 – 2001), 80WSE Gallery at New York University, New York, NY
I'm So Happy You are Here: Japanese Women Photographers from the 1950s to Now, featured section for Les Rencontres de la Photographie, Arles, France
- 2023 *Soft Focus*, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX
- 1997 *New Photography 13*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY
- 1972 *Annual Exhibition of Painting*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

Additional Solo Exhibitions

- 2023 *Kunié Sugiura*, Alison Bradley Projects, New York, NY
- 2022 *Kunié Sugiura*, PURPLE, Kyoto, Japan
Women Labor, Mitsukoshi Contemporary Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
Painting + Photo are like Salt + Pepper, ZEIT-FOTO Kunitachi, Tokyo, Japan
100 Cuts: Eternal Moment, MEDIA SHOP Gallery 2, Kyoto, Japan
- 2020 *Sugiura Kunié*, ART OFFICE OZASA, Kyoto, Japan
- 2017 *Kunié Sugiura: Cko 1966-67*, Taka Ishii Gallery NY, New York, NY
- 2016 *Little Families; Fixity of Nature*, 1992-2001, Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- 2015 *Chance & Fate – Photographic Sculptures and Installation*, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York, NY
Botanic after Anna Atkins, Kamakura Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- 2014 *You are always on my mind / you are always in my heart; Photo-painting and photocollage, 1976-1981*, Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- 2013 *PhotoCollages 1977-1981*, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York, NY
- 2012 *Photographic Works from the 1970s and Now*, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York, NY
- 2008 *Time Emit*, Visual Arts Center of New Jersey (curated by Charles Steinback), Summit, NY
Ephemera and Shadow: 1989-2006, Gallery M, Nagoya, Japan
- 2007 *Sex & Nature: Works from 1969 to 1971 and The Artist Papers*, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York, NY

- Color Works*, Kamakura Gallery, Kamakura, Japan
- 2005 *The Artists Papers*, Judy Ann Goldman Fine Art, Boston, MA
- 2004 ZEIT-FOTO, Tokyo, Japan
- 2003 *Artists and Scientists*, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York, NY
- 2002 *The Artist Paper*, ZEIT-FOTO,, Tokyo, Japan
The Artist Papers and other works, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York, NY
- 2001 Kamakura Gallery, Kamakura, Japan
Dark Matters / Light Affairs, Richard L. Nelson Gallery, University of California, Davis, CA; University of Maine Museum of Art, Bangor, ME; Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY; Sandra and David Baker Gallery, Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, MA
- 2000 Nina Freudenheim Gallery, New York, NY
Raffaella Cortese Gallery, Milan, Italy
Boxing Papers, Gallery Gan, Tokyo, Japan
Judy Ann Goldman Fine Art, Boston, MA
- 1999 Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York, NY
Galleria Civica, Modena, Italy
- 1998 ZEIT-FOTO, Tokyo, Japan
Judy Ann Goldman Fine Art, Boston, MA
Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art, Nagoya, Japan
- 1997 Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York, NY
Kamakura Gallery, Tokyo
- 1996 Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York, NY
- 1995 Kamakura Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
ZEIT-FOTO, Tokyo, Japan
- 1994 *Num Installation*, Akira Ikeda Gallery, New York, NY
Photographic Installation, Muranushi Lederman Productions, New York, NY
- 1993 Ezra and Cecile Zilkha Gallery, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT
KSP Gallery, Kawasaki Shi, Japan
ZEIT-FOTO, Tokyo, Japan
Il Tempo, Tokyo, Japan
Kamakura Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- 1991 Muranushi Lederman Productions, New York, NY
- 1989 White Columns, New York, NY
ZEIT-FOTO, Tokyo, Japan
- 1987 Art City, New York, NY
- 1986 Art City, New York, NY
ZEIT-FOTO, Tokyo, Japan
- 1979 ZEIT-FOTO, Tokyo, Japan
- 1978 Ginza Kaiga Kan, Tokyo, Japan
- 1972 Warren Benedek Gallery, New York, NY

Additional Group Exhibitions

- 2024 *Life with Photography: 75 Years of the Eastman Museum*, George Eastman Museum, Rochester, NY
MOMAT Collection, The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan
Top Collection: The Resonance of Seeing, Tokyo Photographic Museum, Tokyo, Japan
- 2023 *MEMORIES 03*, selected by Hozu Yamamoto, CADAN YURAKUCHO, Tokyo, Japan
Women and Abstraction, The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan
One With Eternity: Yayoi Kusama In The Hirshhorn Collection, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.
The Searchers, The Philadelphia Art Alliance at University of the Arts, Philadelphia, PA
Yebisu International Festival for Art & Alternative Visions 2023 “Technology?”, Tokyo Photographic Museum, Tokyo, Japan
- 2021 *From Ai Weiwei to Marcel Duchamp: Art For Art’s Sake*, Shin Gallery, New York
Photographic Distance, Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts, Utsunomiya, Japan
Winter 2021, Kamakura Gallery, Kamakura, Japan
- 2020 Hirshhorn Museum has 100 artists diaries on its site, Hirshhorn Museum Youtube Channel
Aesthetic of the political; Japanese Women, Whitebox. New York
- 2019 *Shape of Light: Defining Photographs from the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center*, The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Poughkeepsie, NY
dot, point, period, Castelli Gallery, New York, NY
Taka Ishii Gallery 25th Anniversary Group Exhibition: Survived!, Tokyo, Japan
- 2018 *Anna Atkins Refracted: Contemporary Works*, New York Public Library, New York, NY
Soft Focus, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX
- 2017 *Deadeye Dick: Richard Bellamy and His Circle*, Peter Freeman, Inc., New York
The (Partial) Autobiography of an Art Gallery, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York, NY
- 2016 *A Matter of Memory: Photography as Object in the Digital Age*, George Eastman Museum, Rochester, NY
A Change of Heart, Curated by Chris Sharp, Hannah Hoffman Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
In Focus: Electric!, The Getty Center, Los Angeles, CA
Collection 4, Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts, Tochigi, Japan
- 2015 *For a New World To Come: Experiments in Art and Photography, Japan, 1968 – 1979*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; Grey Art Gallery, New York, NY
A History of Photography: Selections from the Museum’s Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX
- 2014 *Aggregate Exposure*, George Lawson Gallery, San Francisco, CA
Art to Zoo: Exploring Animal Natures, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA
Human image – Picasso, Matisse, Warhol, Nagoya/Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Nagoya, Japan
Shadows on the Wall: Cameraless Photography from 1851 to Today, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX
Imprints, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York, NY
- 2013 *Tamamono: From the Collection of The Museum of Modern Art*, Saitama, The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama, Japan
- 2012 *Extensions of the Eye: Three Women Photographers*, Tang Museum, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY
- Loughelton Revisited*, Winkleman Gallery, New York, NY
SIGHT (UN)SCENE: Contemporary Landscape, Benrimon Contemporary, New York, NY
- 2011 *Laguna Gloria: Art and Nature*, Austin Museum of Art, Austin, TX
Osez!, Sometimes, New York, NY
Morphology of Emptiness, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan
Pictorial Theory of Evolution, Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts, Utsunomiya, Japan
- 2010 *PQ:100*, The Center for Photography, Woodstock, NY
- 2009 *Pictures: Tracey Baran, Nikki S. Lee, Laurel Nakadate, & Kunié Sugiura*, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York
Women Forward, Williamsburg Art & Historical Center, Brooklyn, NY
Infinite Patience: James Drake, Kunié Sugiura, Stanley Whitney, Haunch of Venison, New York, NY
Japan meets China, Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts, Tochigi, Japan
- 2008 *Propagating Eden: Uses and Techniques of Nature Printing in Botany and Art*, International Print Center, New York, NY
The History of Arts and Cities–Paris, New York, Tokyo and Shanghai, Sendai Mediatheque, Miyagi, Japan
- 2007 *Contemporary Outlook: Japan*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA
Out of the Ordinary/Extraordinary: Japanese Contemporary Photography, University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor, MI
Japan Caught by Camera, Shanghai Art Museum
Resounding Spirit: Japanese Contemporary Art of the 1960s, Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS
Making a Home: Japanese Contemporary Artists in New York, Japan Society Gallery, New York
The Photograph; What You See & What You Don’t, Museum at Tokyo University of Fine Art, Ueno, Tokyo, Japan
- 2006 *Light and Shadow – First There Was Light: First Encounters with Light in Photographic Art*, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo
Ephemeral – flash for eternity, Aomori Contemporary Art Center, Aomori, Japan
Math Counts, Contemporary Art Galleries, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT
- 2005 *Pairs, Groups, and Grids*, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York
Out of the Ordinary/Extraordinary: Japanese Contemporary Photography, Sala de arte y cultura de Caja Canaria de la Laguna, Canaria, Spain; Istituto Giapponese di Cultura, Rome, Italy; Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, Berlin, Germany
85/05, Sendai Mediatheque, Sendai, Japan
Focus On: New Photography, Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, FL
The Shadow, Vestsjællands Kunstmuseum, Sorø, Denmark
- 2004 *Out of the Ordinary/Extraordinary: Japanese Contemporary Photography*, Japanisches Kunstinstitut, Cologne, Germany; Casa Asia, Barcelona; arts depot, London
Mask of Japan, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China
Lodz Biennial, Łódź, Poland

- 2003 *Subway Series: The New York Mets and Our National Pastime*, Queens Museum of Art, NY
How Human: Life in the Post Genome Era, International Center of Photography, New York
Prima Facie, Nina Freudenheim Gallery, Buffalo, NY
Genomic Issue(s): Art and Science, City University of New York Graduate Center, New York
Mask of Japan, Aura Gallery, Shanghai, China
- 2002 *Works on Paper*, The Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC
PhotoGenesis: Opus 2, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, California
Retrospectacle: 25 Years of Collecting Modern and Contemporary Art, Photography, Part II, Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO
True Blue, Jane Jackson Fine Art, Atlanta GA
Shadow Play, Roger Smith Gallery, New York, NY
- 2001 *Wet!*, Luise Ross Gallery, New York, NY
This is Not a Photograph, University Art Gallery, University of California, San Diego, CA;
Bayly Art Museum, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA; DePaul University, Chicago;
Lafayette College, Easton, PA
- 2000 *Significant Other: The Hand of Man in Animal Imagery*, Photographic Resource Center, Boston, MA
Gardens of Pleasure, John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI
Animal Magnetism, Bucknell Art Gallery, Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA
Process/Reprocess: Japan and the West, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York, NY
- 1999 The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX
Contemporary Photo Art from Japan, Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin, Germany
Pencils of Nature: A Dialogue, Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York, NY
Wildflowers, The Katonah Art Museum, Katonah, NY
Skin Deep: A Survey of Interior Imaging from X-ray to MRI, Julie Saul Gallery, New York, NY
Modena per la Fotografia 1999; Uno sguardo sul Giappone, 4 places in Modena, Italy
- 1998 *Blooming*, Karen McCready Fine Art, New York, NY
Paraphotography, The Maier Museum of Art, Lynchberg, VA
Elusive Traces, Fine Arts Center Galleries, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI
- 1997 *Eye of the Beholder, Photographs from the Avon Collection*, International Center of Photography, New York, NY
Fossilization: Imprinted Light, The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama, Japan
With a Different Camera, The Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, CO
Wall Works, Art in General, New York, NY
- 1996 *Japanese Photography: Contemporary Landscape 1980-1995*, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo, Japan
The Nature of Light, Joyce Golden Gallery, New York, NY
Pushing Image Paradigms, Portland Institute of Contemporary Art, Portland, Oregon
Dissimilar & Unrelated Sculpture, Baron/Boisante, New York, NY
The Box, Foutouhi Cramer Gallery, New York
- 1995 *Aspects of Contemporary Photography: Another Reality*, Kawasaki City Museum, Japan
Vulnerability, Dahn Gallery, New York
Transformations, Trans Hudson Gallery, Jersey City, NJ
Blooms, ChristineRose Gallery, New York
In and Out of Character; Japanese Women Artists, The Roger Smith Gallery, New York, NY
- 1994 *Visualization At the End of the 20th Century*, The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama, Japan
Camera Obscura/Obscura Camera, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
Negative Energy, Real Art Ways, Hartford, CT
When the Body Becomes Art (The Organs and Body as Object), Itabashi Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan
Experimental Vision, Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO
- 1993 *Foreign Ferns*, Julie Saul Gallery, New York, NY
Photography, Baron/Boisante, New York, NY
Jungjin Lee, Kunié Sugiura, Holly Wright, Zabriskie Gallery, New York, NY
- 1992 *Shapeshifters*, Amy Lipton Gallery, New York, NY
Rubber Soul, Ledis Flam, New York
Culture Bites, Cummings Art Center, Connecticut College, New London, CT;
Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, CA
- 1991 *House of Value*, 252 Lafayette Street, New York, NY
July Fourth, Muranushi Lederman Productions, New York
- 1990 *Photography*, Zabriskie Gallery, New York, NY
Veils, Art in General, New York, NY
- 1989 *Update*, White Columns, New York, NY
Selections 44, The Drawing Center, New York, NY
- 1987 *Paint-Photography*, Bess Cutler Gallery, New York, NY
Large as Life, Henry Street Settlement and Jamaica Art Center, New York, NY
- 1986 *Contemporary Japanese Photographers*, The Barcelona Museum, Barcelona, Spain
Fathers, Asian Arts Institute, New York, NY
- 1985 *Chill Out New York*, Kenkeleba House, New York, NY
Invitational, Friedas/Ordovery Gallery, New York, NY
Paris, New York, Tokyo, Tsukuba Museum of Photography, Tsukuba, Japan
- 1983 *Hong Kong-Tokyo-New York*, Kenkeleba House, New York, NY
- 1982 *Invitational*, Tony Shafrazi Gallery, New York, NY
Looking Back-Looking Forward, Aldrich Museum of Art, Ridgefield, CT
- 1981 Foto-Kina, Cologne, Germany
- 1980 Race Gallery, Philadelphia, PA
- 1979 O.K. Harris Gallery, New York, NY
- 1978 Willard Gallery, New York
Personal Vision: Places/Spaces, Bronx Museum of Art, New York, NY
- 1972 *Painting and Sculpture Today*, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN

Selections From the Collection, Aldrich Museum of Art, Ridgefield, CT

Warren Benedek Gallery, New York, NY

1969 *Vision and Expression*, George Eastman House, Rochester, NY

Public Collections

Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art, Nagoya, Japan

Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY

Austin Museum of Art, Austin, TX

Avon Products, Inc., New York, NY

Best Products, Inc., Richmond, VA

Bayly Art Museum, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA

The Capital Group, Los Angeles, CA

Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX

Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO

Fidelity Investments, Boston, MA

Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY

Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver, Jacobson, New York, NY

George Eastman House, Rochester, NY

Goldman Sachs, New York, NY

Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, MA

Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Japan Foundation, Japan

Kitakyushu Museum of Art, Fukuoka, Japan

Merrill Lynch, New York

Microsoft Corporation, Redmond, WA

Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, FL

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX

Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY

Museum of Modern Art, Saitama, Japan

National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Kyoto Japan

National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan

Princeton University Art Museum, Princeton, NJ

Progressive Corporation, Mayfield Village, OH

Tokyo Photographic Art Museum (TOP), Tokyo, Japan

The Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA

Ryerson Institute of Toronto, Toronto, Canada

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA

Tate Modern, London, England

Virginia Museum of Art, Richmond, VA

Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts, Japan

Vivendi Universal, Paris, France

Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC

Weil, Gotshall & Manges, New York, NY

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT



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