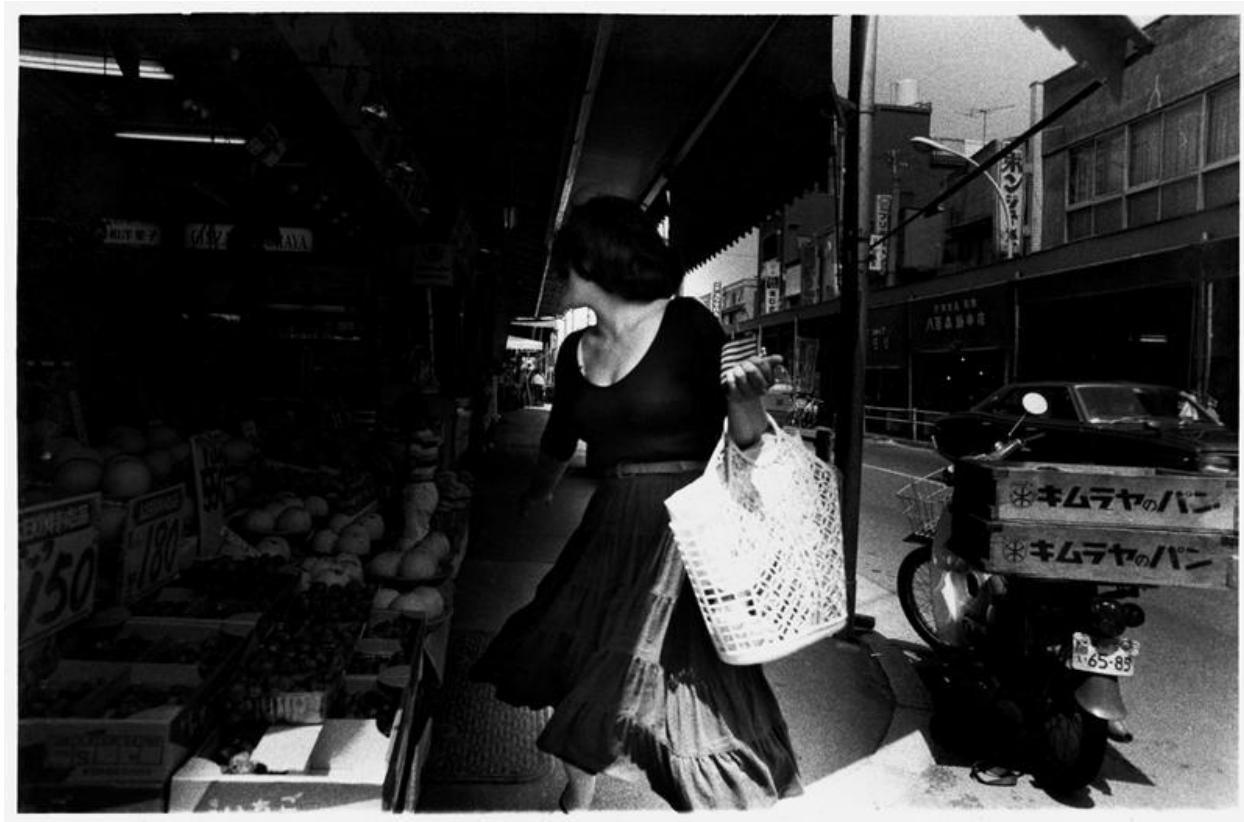


Press Release



TAMIKO NISHIMURA

My Journey – Tokyo (#13), 1979

Vintage gelatin silver print, printed by the artist in 1979

Signed and dated on verso

8 x 10 in (20.3 x 25.4 cm)

© Tamiko Nishimura

Alison Bradley Projects is honored to announce *Tamiko Nishimura: Journeys*, the artist's debut solo exhibition in the United States, curated by **Pauline Vermare** and accompanied by a publication with **Dashwood Books**. On view from April 25th, the exhibition runs until June 8th, with an artist reception on April 25th from 6:00 - 8:00pm.

Tamiko Nishimura (西村多美子, Nishimura Tamiko, born in Tokyo, 1948) graduated from Tokyo College of Photography (now Tokyo Visual Arts) in 1969. She emerged as part of the vibrant Japanese avant-garde scene in the early 1970s, after one of her college classmates, who was an actor in an avant-garde theater company called Jōkyō Gekijō ("Situation Theater"), invited her to photograph a performance. Nishimura realized then that she was deeply attracted to "what is expressed through the body." Over the years, her work—largely based on her own journeys and experiences in Japan and abroad—conveys both a personal and beautifully theatrical perspective on the world.

Soon after graduating, Nishimura met Daidō Moriyama, Kōji Taki, and Takuma Nakahira, the influential members of *Provoke* magazine. Between 1969 and 1970, she briefly worked part time at Taki's office and regularly assisted Moriyama and Nakahira in the darkroom that they shared, while pursuing her own projects during her travels. When Moriyama saw Nishimura's landscape photographs, he chose to include some of her images in his book *Mayfly* (1972). Nishimura started experimenting in the darkroom, developing her images at hotter temperatures and with long exposures to heighten image contrast, bringing a profound emotional dimension to her work.

Between performance photography, portraiture, and street photography, Nishimura's work transcends styles. Early on, she worked in a very personal vein that had yet to come to the forefront of Japanese photography: a genre called *shi-shashin* ("I-photography") which became known through Nobuyoshi Araki and Masahisa Fukase's personal work in the early 1970s. Her series *Neko ga ... (Kittenish ...)*, first published in *Camera Mainichi* magazine in August 1970, later published as a book in 2015, includes a series of intimate portraits recounting a night with a childhood friend who had stayed over during a storm, and whom Nishimura felt the urge to photograph, on a whim. Stylistically as well as spiritually, these photographs have the intensity of Francesca Woodman's self-portraits. Indeed, these sensuous portraits delicately blur the line between the self and the other.

Nishimura photographs in an instinctive and spontaneous way. Her visual language is poetic, spiritual, and deeply personal. While her stylistic approach to image-making, in contrasted black and white, often blurred, or grainy, is close to some of the artists associated with *Provoke*, her work is imbued with an introspective and haunting quality that evokes a unique and profound emotional dimension. Throughout her long and ongoing career, Nishimura has photographed women with a distinct attentiveness. The closeup of a woman's face, her hair brushed by the wind; a woman energetically walking down the street with her grocery basket, her head turned away from the camera; the back of two women walking down a street; a girl reading on a sofa with a magazine resting on her knees; or the intimate portraits of her childhood friend... These photographs depicting women in their everyday lives are filled with a knowing and empathetic quality that stands out in the history of Japanese photography.

In 1973, Nishimura published her debut photobook, *Shikishima*, a masterpiece including photographs taken from 1969 to 1972 on her journeys across various regions of Japan including Hokkaidō, Tōhoku, Hokuriku, Kantō, Kansai, and Chūgoku. As photobook historian Russet Lederman notes, this book—which was republished by Zen Foto Gallery in 2014—is considered today one of the major Japanese photobooks in history. From the 1980s on, Nishimura expanded her travels beyond Japan, to Southeast Asia and Europe, printing and publishing along the way. She describes her career as “a sequence of journeys,” taking immense pleasure in photographing her free, nomadic existence. It is an honor and a joy to present her exquisite work in the United States for the first time.

The exhibition is accompanied by a limited edition exhibition publication, edition of 500 copies, published and distributed by Dashwood Books and in collaboration with Alison Bradley Projects.

This publication features full reproductions of all prints in the exhibition, and is designed by Alex Lin of Lin Design. The gallery is taking pre-orders on this publication.

Artist Biography

Tamiko Nishimura (西村多美子, Nishimura Tamiko, born in Tokyo, 1948) graduated from Tokyo College of Photography (now Tokyo Visual Arts) in 1969. Her graduation work was a photography series of *Jōkyō Gekijo* (Situation Theatre), forefront of the underground theater movement led by Jūrō Kara. After her graduation, she met Daido Moriyama, Kōji Taki and Takuma Nakahira, three highly influential members of the Provoke movement. She assisted them in the darkroom from time to time between 1969 and 1970, while she continued her personal shooting on her travels. In 1973, Nishimura made her debut through the first publication *Shikishima*, published by Tokyo Photography College, showcasing her photographs taken from 1969 to 1972 on her journeys around Japan including Hokkaidō, Tōhoku, Hokuriku, Kantō, Kansai and Chūgoku regions. From the 1980s the artist began to travel to Southeast Asia and Europe, expanding her subject matter.

Major publications include *Shikishima* (Tokyo Photography College, 1973. Reprinted by Zen Foto Gallery in 2014), *vent calmoso* (Sokyu-sha, 2005), *Existence 1968-69* (graficamag, 2011), *Eternal Chase* (graficamag, 2012), *Kittenish...* (Zen Foto Gallery, 2015), *My Journey* (Zen Foto Gallery, 2018) and *Voyage* (Zen Foto Gallery, 2019), *My Journey II. 1968-1989* (Zen Foto Gallery, 2019), and *My Journey III. 1993-2022* (Zen Foto Gallery, 2022). Her works are included in the collection of M+ museum (Hong Kong).

Her work will be featured in the upcoming publication, *I'm So Happy You Are Here: Japanese Women Photographers from the 1950s to Now*, published with Aperture, and with an accompanying exhibition premiering in this year's Les Rencontres de la Photographie, Arles, France, opening July 1, 2024.

Curator Biography

Pauline Vermare is an independent photography curator and historian. She was previously working at the International Center of Photography (ICP), the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), Magnum Photos, and the Henri Cartier-Bresson Foundation, in Paris. She is the author of numerous interviews and essays on photography, and the editor of the forthcoming book *I'm So Happy You Are Here: Japanese Women Photographers from the 1950s to Now*, which will be published in June with Aperture on the occasion of the eponymous show in Arles, France.

For further information and appointments please contact claire@alisonbradleyprojects.com