Speculation - On Yoh Kawakubo

Christian Berger

Speculation

Speculation is a condition in which one speculates or 'an absolute view'. However, a close 'cut off', 'interrupt', or 'suppress' — an activity that again recalls the metaphor of 'speculation' as a visual character or 'an absolute view'. Nonetheless, a close-up on the work of Yoh Kawakubo reveals the ‘Speculation’ as a common thread in Kawakubo's practice, some of its definitions from the Oxford English Dictionary, and its usage in various contexts, including the performance of the tea ceremony by a Japanese master.

In his solo exhibition 'Light Work', Kawakubo examines the identity and anatomy of artworks, their role in facilitating the perception of other objects in the environment, and the ways in which they can be understood and appreciated. The exhibition brings together a variety of artworks, including paintings, photographs, and installation works, all of which serve to illuminate the nature of the artworks and their relationship to the surrounding environment.

Kawakubo's exhibition is intended to be experienced as a whole, with the viewer encouraged to move around the gallery and observe the artworks from different perspectives. The exhibition is divided into three sections: 'The Body', 'The Mind', and 'The World', each of which explores different aspects of the artist's practice.

The exhibition begins with a large-scale installation of photographs and paintings, which are arranged to create a sense of movement and rhythm. The photographs depict scenes from the artist's life, including his childhood and early career, and are accompanied by written text that provides insights into his thought process. The paintings are arranged in a grid-like pattern, with each piece complementing the others in terms of color, composition, and style.

The second section of the exhibition focuses on Kawakubo's relationship with nature and the environment, with a particular emphasis on the role of water in his practice. The section includes a series of photographs and paintings that depict water in various forms, from flowing streams to still lakes. The exhibition is complemented by a series of written pieces that explore the artist's relationship with water and the ways in which it has influenced his work.

The final section of the exhibition explores Kawakubo's relationship with the material world, with a focus on the role of textiles in his practice. The section includes a series of photographs and paintings that depict textiles in various forms, from traditional fabrics to modern textiles. The exhibition is complemented by a series of written pieces that explore the artist's relationship with textiles and the ways in which it has influenced his work.

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