

What can be done? We must risk mortality and decay.

—Yuji Agemats

Miguel Abreu Gallery is pleased to announce the opening on Friday, March 3rd, of *Self-Portrait*, Yuji Agematsu's first solo exhibition at the gallery. The show will be held across our two locations, at 88 Eldridge Street and 36 Orchard Street.

One of the distinguishing features of Agematsu's singular art he has been producing in New York for more than 30 years is that in it the distance separating the activity of collecting things abandoned in the urban landscape from that of making art has collapsed once and for all. What brings the two together, what makes one equal to the other, if you will, is the primacy of focused and sustained observation.

“What, then, are we to make of an archive which goes in reverse, or of an exhibition which accelerates its demise? What are we to think of an art work in conflict with self-importance, including the self-importance endemic to art and preservation? How are we to understand an artist whose work consists almost exclusively of small acts of neglect; someone who almost always makes the same thing and yet never repeats himself, to whom his own work, honed on the tiniest details, becomes pleasantly incomprehensible and has the tendency to dissolve upon seeing it, so that only a few hours after encountering it, one can barely remember the ephemeral matter of which it was made?

[...]

“Odd how matter so factual can amount to such an extraterrestrial mood. It is eerie, isn't it, when what at first seems incidental returns with significance. Of course, in art we expect matter, however mundane, to return changed, and yet, specific moments of transformation, when they do appear, can still take us by surprise. I'll never get used to the feeling of a dead thing becoming warm and capable.”

—Robert Snowden, *Yuji Agematsu*, Yale Union, exh. pamphlet, 2014

Yuji Agematsu was born in 1956 in Kanagawa, Japan. He lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. Agematsu studied with Tokio Hasegawa, a member of the band Taj Mahal Travellers, and the jazz drummer and choreographer Milford Graves. He has had solo exhibitions at TZ Art & Co. (1994) and Anthology Film Archives, New York (2004), as well as at Real Fine Arts, Brooklyn (2012 & 2014). In 2014, he also had a solo show at Artspeak, Vancouver, Canada and a large scale exhibition at Yale Union, Portland, OR, which was accompanied by the monograph *ZIP: 01-01-14...12-31-*

14, published by Artspeak, Thea Westreich Wagner/Ethan Wagner Publications, and Yale Union. He was the focus in 2015 of *Walk on A, B, C*, organized by Jay Sanders at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Further, Agematsu was included in the 2016 New Museum, New York exhibition *The Keeper*, curated by Massimiliano Gioni, as well as in *Looking Back / The 7th White Columns Annual*, selected by Richard Birkett (2013). Currently, Agematsu's work can be seen in the exhibitions *Speak Lokal*, Kunsthalle Zurich, Switzerland, and in *Serialities*, organized by Olivier Renaud-Clément, Hauser & Wirth, New York.

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