

MICHIKO OKANO

“Transnational Perspectives of Nippo-Brazilian artists: Kenzi Shiokava and Sachiko Koshikoku”

Abstract:

Michiko Okano will present the work of two Nippo-Brazilian artists: Kenzi Shiokava (São Paulo, Brazil, 1938) and Sachiko Koshikoku (Fukui, Japan, 1937). The former moved from São Paulo to Los Angeles in 1964 and the latter immigrated from Fukui to São Paulo one year later; both were in their twenties.

Shiokava left Brazil to the USA in a free of charge military flight aiming to try an artistic career after having failed the entrance examination to Medical School. Koshikoku made her trans-Pacific way in order to search for a better place to work, free of the strict rules and prejudices women used to suffer in Japanese society at the time.

Shiokava's totemic wood sculptures references show his Brazilian background as well as his profession as a gardener, not to mention his “Japanese spirit” and his close relationship with the African-American community in Los Angeles.

Koshikoku's paintings inspired by Latin America ancient civilizations (asteca, maia, inca) result from her travel to Mexico and Peru (1971). There, she found something that she was looking for a long time: a strong image that was simultaneously painting, design and writing.

The present paper will focus on these two artists circulations between countries, which has brought new Transnational perspectives in their artwork, which is to say, an encounter of minorities.

Representative works:

- Ma - Entre-espaço da arte e comunicação no Japão. (Ma - In between spaces of art and communication in Japan). São Paulo: Annablume, 2012.

- Between Brazil and Japan: the Artists known as Nipo-Brazilians. In: Transpacific Borderlands: the Art of Japanese Diaspora in Lima, Los Angeles, Mexico City and São Paulo. Los Angeles: Japanese American National Museum, 2017. Catalogue of the exhibition.

- 日系ブラジル人アーティストの多様性. In: Global Art and Diasporic Art in Japan and Asia 日本及びアジア地域におけるグローバル・アートとディアスポラ・アート. Documentation of the Symposium co-organized by Mori Art Museum, New York University Asia 2015 Global