

YASUKO TAKEZAWA

“Post-WWII and Post-9/11: Major/Minor Transnationalism in Yoko Inoue's Works”

Abstract:

There was a massive outflow of Japanese art objects under the postwar GHQ occupation, as many of the finest works were bought up and transported overseas. At the same time, however, the great quantities of pottery “made in occupied Japan” and exported to the US contributed to the revival of the Japanese ceramics industry. Inspired by the Cleveland Museum of Art’s Japanese collection, the New York-based artist Yōko Inoue produced a show re-interrogating the postwar power relationship between Japan and the United States.

Inoue also created a long-term project entitled “Transmigration of the SOLD” based on her encounters with undocumented immigrants selling American flag sweaters on the streets of New York City amid the heightened anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant sentiment after 9/11. Inoue tackled the gaping disparity between anti-immigrant sentiment and globalization by travelling to the Andes where the wool was produced, having the sweaters reknit into flowers, and reimporting these for sale in New York.

In this presentation I will consider the major and minor transnationalisms interrogated by Inoue’s art.

Representative works:

*Breaking the Silence: Redress and Japanese American Ethnicity* (Cornell University Press, 1995)

“Negotiating Categories and Transforming (Mixed-) Race Identities: The Art and Narratives of Roger Shimomura, Laura Kina, and Shizu Saldamando,” in Yasuko Takezawa and Gary Okihiro eds., *Trans-Pacific Japanese American Studies: Conversations on Race and Racializations* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2016), pp.60-90.

“New Arts, New Resistance: Asian American Artists in the ‘Post-race’ Era” in Takezawa ed. *Racial Representations in Asia* (Kyoto University Press/Trans Pacific Press, 2011), pp.93-123.