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Japanese Video Art

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N E W S

LOS ANGELES

Japanese Video Art



From April to May the Getty Museum and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles co-hosted an insightful series of weekly screenings of old and new Japanese video art that offered a much needed antidote to media idiocy. Glenn Phillips curated "Radical Communication, Japanese Video Art, 1968-1988" at the Getty, which featured many videos never-before seen in the Northern Hemisphere. It should be no surprise that from Sony's birthplace came some of the most innovative experimentation with video, despite the tendency to believe that Nam June Paik did it all. Fujiko

Nakaya and Hakudo Kobayashi's documentary *Friends of Minamata Victims-Video Diary* (1972) chronicles ritualized behaviors during the 81st day of a 300-day protest against the Chisso chemical company. *Rec Zone* (1986) by Visual Brains plays with visual effects as a young man feeds items from his apartment into a TV screen. Other videos experiment with drawing on the screen, masking out the image with tape, or blowing up a television on live TV. In Gabriel Ritter's program at MoCA, "Out of the Ordinary: New Video From Japan," the videos range from collaborative animations to manipulation of found footage to performance art documentation. Takehito Koganezawa's symphony of ready-made sounds, *Dancing in Your Head* (MoCALA remix) (2007) is a mesmerizing, multi-channel orchestration of sounds made from objects in Koganezawa's daily environment. With visionary programs like these, there seems to be hope for video art.

—Micol Hebron

Fujiko Nakaya (with Hakudo Kobayashi), *Friends of Minamata Victims-Video Diary*, 1972. Video Still.