

OPENSATELLITE

A RESIDENCY PROGRAM FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

For Immediate Release

MEIRO KOIZUMI
THE CORNER OF SWEET AND BITTER
CURATED BY YOKO OTT

Exhibition Dates: November 10, 2009-January 9, 2010
Opening Event: Tuesday, November 10, 6-9 pm at Open Satellite

Location: 989 112th Ave NE, Ste 102, Bellevue, WA 98004
Contact: Voice: 425 454 7355 / Email: info@opensatellite.org
Web: www.opensatellite.org
Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 12-6 pm

Artist Lecture: Thursday, November 19, 7 pm at the Henry Art Gallery auditorium

Japanese artist Meiro Koizumi's performance-based video work is a meditation on human psychology, eroticism, exoticism, cultural politics and social mores, and the director – actor construct. He deftly navigates conventions of the moving image with his command of lo-fi aesthetics, aural and visual composition, handling of dialogue, subjects and objects, and pacing—creatively manipulating codes of conduct that result in mind-bending productions. Koizumi's videos—at once compelling, awkward, and visceral—subterfuge political correctness resulting in a strange mix of comedy and darkness.

As an artist Koizumi has worked in Tokyo, London, and Amsterdam—in each location carefully scrutinizing its built environments, political and social climate, residents, and arguably most importantly, evaluating his own self in the context of these temporary residences. The ensuing work critiques perceptions of freedom. Witnessing Koizumi's machinations and directorial command of his protagonists in these situations – by turns himself, pedestrian participants, or professional actors – results in an awkwardness that affords the viewer little ease.

During his residency at Open Satellite Koizumi has used the setting of Bellevue to continue his examination of freedom—a unifying and dominate idea that heavily influences the artist's work. *The Corner of Sweet and Bitter* began with Koizumi's interest in researching the plight of Japanese Americans residing in Bellevue, WA during World War II. Established in part by second generation Japanese farmers (primarily strawberry growers), Bellevue—and in fact the specific location where Open Satellite stands—was home to a thriving agribusiness at the beginning of the 20th Century. This came to an abrupt end during WWII when most regional Japanese Americans were put in internment camps. After the war land values rose in the postwar suburb, and residential and commercial development took priority over the reinstatement of the displaced population. Bellevue incorporated in 1952.

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Fast forward to today. Bellevue's once suburban environment punctuated with orchards has segued to accelerated urbanization focused on high-density living and attracting upscale retail and commercial businesses. Rapid development has meant the influx of a new workforce; they encompass a broad mix of blue- and white-collared workers supporting Bellevue's currently thriving industries. Partnering with this labor force Koizumi will once again call into question the tensions present in the debate about freedom. In a symbolic homage to the history of the land where Open Satellite stands, a real strawberry field will be grown within the gallery space to act as a stage for a new video created by Koizumi for this occasion.

Coinciding with this exhibition is *Meiro Koizumi | My Voice Would Reach You*, a survey the artist's career to date, featuring eleven video works made by Koizumi during the period 2000 – 2009 at the Hedreen Gallery in Seattle University's Lee Center for the Arts.

Meiro Koizumi received his BA in 2002 from Chelsea College of Art and Design, and was the 2001 recipient of the Beck's Futures Student Prize for Film and Video, given by London's Institute of Contemporary Art. He has completed residencies at Arcus Project, Ibaraki, Japan and Rijksakademie in Amsterdam. He currently has a solo exhibition at Mori Art Museum in Tokyo. His recent group exhibitions include "Rehab!" at Stedelijk Museum Bureau in Amsterdam in 2008 and the "Nanjing Triennial" in China also in 2008. He is schedule to be included in "Art Scope" in Berlin, organized by Daimler Foundation in 2010.

About Open Satellite:

Open Satellite is a contemporary art exhibition hall for the Seattle metropolitan area. The residency-based program provides an opportunity for emerging and mid-career artists from outside the region to work for an extended period to create large-scale artwork in any medium. Exhibitions are staged four times annually with every fifth show focused on architecture as a critical position.

Media contact: Yoko Ott, Director, yoko@opensatellite.org



Image credits L to R:

Meiro Koizumi. *Art of Awakening* (still), 2005. Single-channel video. 9' 00" Courtesy of the artist and Dicksmith Gallery.

Meiro Koizumi. *Amazing Grace* (still), 2001. Single-channel video. 3' 30" Courtesy of the artist and Dicksmith Gallery.

Meiro Koizumi. *Jap* (still), 2003. Single-channel video. 10' 00" Courtesy of the artist and Dicksmith Gallery.

Meiro Koizumi. *Human Opera XXX* (still), 2007. Single-channel video. 17' 00" Courtesy of the artist and Dicksmith Gallery.