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Fondazione Mudima

MONO-HA

Curated by Achille Bonito Oliva and Masahiro Aoki



Opening:

Thursday, May 21, 2015

6:30 p.m.

MONO-HA

**KOJI ENOKURA
NORIYUKI HARAGUCHI
SUSUMU KOSHIMIZU
LEE UFAN
KATSUHIKO NARITA
KISHIO SUGA
NOBUO SEKINE
NOBORU TAKAYAMA
JIRO TAKAMATSU
KATSURO YOSHIDA**

May 22 – September 19, 2015

Catalogue Fondazione Mudima
with texts by:

Gino Di Maggio, Achille Bonito Oliva,
Masahiro Aoki, Kyoshi Okada,
Yasuyuki Nakai

Under the aegis of:

EXPOMILANO2015,

The Japanese Embassy in Italy,

The Japan Foundation

Fondazione Mudima

Via Tadino 26, Milan

Opening hours: Monday to Saturday,
from 11:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Entry is free of charge

After its presentation of the *Asiana* exhibition in Venice, at Palazzo Vendramin Calergi, in 1995, Fondazione Mudima now exhibits a series of **Mono-ha** installations on the part of the group of ten artists who came together under that name in Japan in 1968, and who then continued to exhibit together until 1974. “Mono-ha” is best translated as “The School of Things,” and the term refers to the artists’ use of simple materials, both natural and industrial, presented almost “nakedly,” with their essence remaining in no way altered by the artists’ interventions. Cloth, rocks, wood, paper, rope, and glass are the principal materials employed in these installations, and function on terms of a re-examination of the relationship between art and the human being, and as well of our typically human interactions with space and physical materials, and also with the patterns of shifting social realities. The Mono-ha group of artists (presented here in its entirety) consists of Koji Enokura, Noriyuki Haraguchi, Susumu Koshimizu, Lee Ufan, Katsuhiko Narita, Nobuo Sekine, Kishio Suga, Jiro Takamatsu, Noboru Takayama and Katsuro Yoshida.

The Mono-Ha artists aimed to establish a more immediate rapport with things, and to draw them into relationship with one another, allowing their juxtapositions to produce new meaning and to introduce the public to novel ways of seeing and understanding the world of reality that surrounds us. The artist is less concerned with “creativity” than with a repositioning of material objects in the light of a new and powerful dynamism of phenomenological forces, dimensions, textures, and physical qualities in which the relationships and resultant tensions between objects and space take on cardinal importance. Mono-ha is now increasingly recognized as one of the major expressions of the contemporary Japanese art of the second half of the twentieth century, and its interest lay in searching out and revealing the realities beyond appearance. Lee Ufan, who in addition to promoting the founding of the group was also its theoretician, has written, “In truth, the work of the artist has nothing to do with offering peace and serenity to people’s minds, and instead is entirely directed toward exploring the degree to which the gaze of the individual can be released and turned away from the things which have always and collectively been believed to constitute reality.”

The rediscovery and critical re-evaluation Mono-ha is one of today’s most pressing arguments in the world of contemporary art, as attested by the recent shows at Punta della Dogana in Venice and the Dallas Museum of Contemporary Art, as well as by the presence of Mono-ha works in the collections of London’s Tate Modern, New York’s MOMA and numerous other museums of international standing. With its particular attention to the world of industry, on the one hand, and, on the other, to the dynamics of nature, Mono-ha is an undeniable example of the present-day evolution of contemporary art towards themes connected to ecological sustainability and the problems that center on our planet’s natural environment.

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