

“Coloured Bondage”

Jacolby Satterwhite x Danshoku

1 September - 24 September, 2018

Open hours: Sun. Mon. Hol. 12:00 - 19:00

Curated by Asakusa

Supported by Arts Council Tokyo, The Asahi Shimbun Foundation

I was born and raised by a mentally ill woman who was in a mental institution. I had two gay brothers and a heavy involvement in nightlife since I was 13—all of these are safe spaces, alternative space. The galactic-looking visual 3D film is a metaphor for the safe space that I understand as someone who was constantly externalised.

ASAKUSA is pleased to announce the opening of "Coloured Bondage", a solo exhibition by New York-based artist Jacolby Satterwhite (b. 1986, Columbia, SC), which unleashes the subconscious and the extravagance of digital Surrealism.

Using thousands of drawings and cassette tapes left by his schizophrenic mother, Satterwhite stitches together the virtual and the real: his mother's inventions and his politicised body merge through 3D animation. Within his undulating imagination between the personal and the political, we voyage through vital moments of his queer life. The endless love-seeking in a relationship of obedience becomes a euphemism for nostalgia within utopian pornography, and evokes psychological anxiety for excessive desire.

Central to the exhibition is Satterwhite's new 3D film *Avenue B* (2018) which begins with a mystic ritual: Satterwhite's body is hung naked and splashed with paint to the soundtrack of his mother's enchanting gospel song. As the space turns into a digital arena, his body is freed from the constraints of gravity and becomes a digital avatar—mirrored and cloned. "To put myself in a virtual world is a political gesture," explains Satterwhite. His virtual reality beams towards the Afro-futurist escapism while the virtual camera whips around at impossible angles, exacerbating a political representation of his own body. True to all works by Satterwhite, the film generates an abundance of techno-social signifiers of media, sexuality, race, labour and consumerism, all of which conjure into a web of art-historical references from magical realism, art brut and psychedelic motifs.

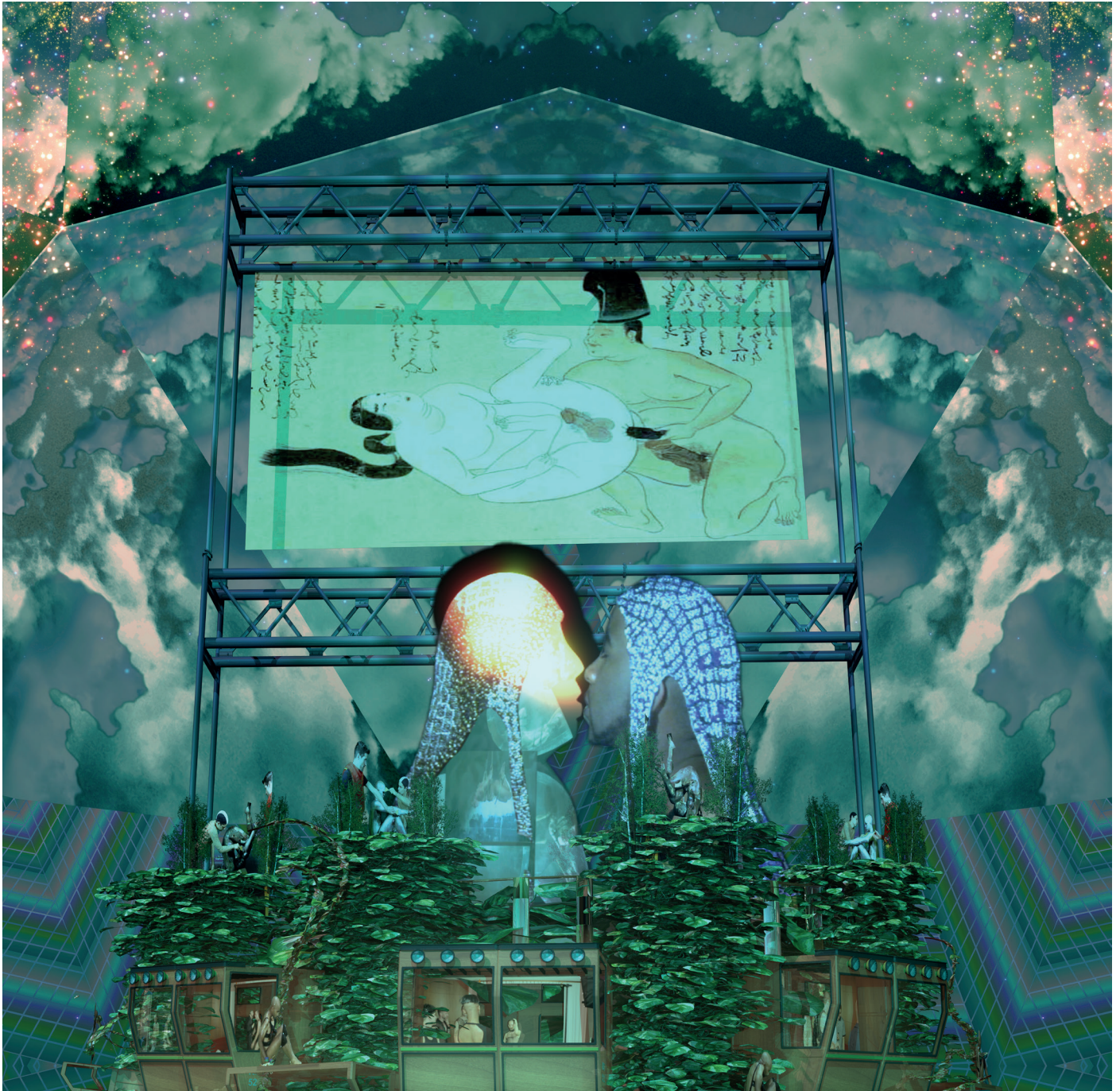
Exhibited alongside is *Chigono Soshi* (1321, Collection of Daigoji Sanshui, Kyoto), a picture scroll of the 14th century Kamakura era, which describes the relationship between chigo (young trainees) and male monks at the Japanese medieval monastery. *Kanjo* is a ritual of the first iteration of sexual intercourse with a master monk, which manifests the boy into the incarnation of a deity—a passive presence subject to the order by the priest. The scroll describes how the juvenile boy physically accommodates these procedures. Over the course of history, these customs spread to the courts, the samurai, and the Kabuki world, until eventually secularized in entertainment sex houses in mid-Edo period (late 17th century). The literal translation of *danshoku* (homosexuality) is "male colour" in Japanese, and the colour intensifies as associative meanings become layered. The exhibition therefore considers the intertextuality of human bondage, which subjugate one to a specific context of living. It sets forth historical dimensions of ideas on the conception of safety, power, and sexuality.

"Coloured Bondage: Jacolby Satterwhite x Danshoku" is held as part of "Asakusa Entertainments", a public address and film screening event curated by Asakusa as an adaptation of the lecture "What is Critique" (1978) by Michel Foucault. The exhibition is supported by Arts Council Tokyo, and the Asahi Shimbun Foundation.

Some of Satterwhite's work can be viewed and listened to here::

Vimeo | <https://vimeo.com/user2947668>

SoundCloud | <https://soundcloud.com/patsatterwhite/sets/pat-blessed-avenue> (*Blessed Avenue* by PAT, Patricia Satterwhite, Jacolby Jacolby Satterwhite, Nick Weiss, 2016)



Jacolby Satterwhite: *Avenue B (Danshoku)*, 2018. Digital collage. Courtesy the artist.

Artists:

Jacolby Satterwhite (b.1986, Columbia, USA) uses 3D animation and digital space as a utopian realm to explore memory and personal history. Combining a virtual, dreamlike space with live action, Satterwhite's digital avatar, freed from the constraints of gravity, performs movements drawn from voguing, martial arts, and choreographer William Forsythe's (b.1949) dance techniques. Satterwhite's video constructs a magical arena in which to imagine a new spatial awareness, one that responds to the shifting relationships between the life of the mind, the world of images, and the physical realm of bodies and objects. Satterwhite has received an MFA from the University of Pennsylvania (2009). He lives and works in New York.

Satterwhite was a featured artist in the 2014 Whitney Biennial and his work has recently been included in the following exhibitions: "I Was Raised on the Internet" curated by Omar Kholeif, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (2018); "Electronic Superhighway," Whitechapel Gallery London, (2016); "Mirror Stage," Dallas Art Museum (2015); "Disguise: Masks and Global African Art," Brooklyn Museum (2016); Sundance Film Festival (2014); "How Lovely is Me Being As I Am," OHWOW Gallery, Los Angeles (2014); "Step and Repeat," MOCA, Los Angeles (2014); "Radical Presence," Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2014) and multiple exhibitions at The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York.

Curators:

Asakusa is a 40-square-meter exhibition venue for contemporary art programmes committed to advancing curatorial collaborations and practices.

Engaging with both art-historical research and curatorial activities, Asakusa makes possible various approaches to work with university researchers, curators and individual supporters. Small symposiums are organised along side its exhibition programme, inviting people from diverse academic disciplines including social science and philosophy.

Since its inauguration in October 2015, Asakusa has worked with international artists including Yoshua Okón, Thomas Hirschhorn, Santiago Sierra, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Yoko Ono, Hito Steyerl, Anton Vidokle, while constantly negotiating with local contexts. The archival exhibition "1923" traced the footsteps of early Japanese avant-garde in the 1920s, with a particular focus on the influence of Dada in Tokyo. "Kino-Pravda: A Tribute to Prokino" combined screenings of newsreels by Prokino (Japan Proletariat Film Union: 1929-34) and today's documentaries that explore

the notion of political "truth".

"Asakusa Entertainments", initiated in 2018, is a film screening event inviting artists to the Asakusa district for a research trip and production of new works, and to premiere the work to overseas tourists neighbours. It intends to establish a context through which to critically considering the environment in which we are located with the viewpoint of others.

The exhibition with Jacolby Satterwhite marks its 15th exhibition to date.

Project Members:

Director: Koichiro Osaka
Project Manager: Mariko Mikami

Supported by:

Arts Council Tokyo
The Asahi Shimbun Foundation

Exhibition Facts:

Title: "Coloured Bondage: Jacolby Satterwhite x Danshoku"

Artists: Jacolby Satterwhite

Curated by: Asakusa

Supported by Arts Council Tokyo,
The Asahi Shimbun Foundation

Dates: 1 - 24 September, 2018

Venue: Asakusa

Location: 1-6-16 Nishi-Asakusa, Taito, Tokyo

Opening hours:

Sat. Sun. Mon. Hol. 12:00 - 19:00

URL: www.asakusa-o.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/asakusa.o/>

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