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**J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM PRESENTS *ISHIUCHI MIYAKO: POSTWAR SHADOWS***

*Survey exhibition includes Ishiuchi's series ひろしま/hiroshima, presented during the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the bombing of Hiroshima*

**LOS ANGELES** -- The first major exhibition in the United States and the first comprehensive English-language catalogue on celebrated Japanese photographer Ishiuchi Miyako (born Fujikura Yōko in 1947) will showcase the artist's prolific, groundbreaking career and offer new scholarship on her personal background, her process, and her place in the history of Japanese photography.

On view at the J. Paul Getty Museum, Getty Center from October 6, 2015-February 21, 2016, *Ishiuchi Miyako: Postwar Shadows* will feature more than 120 photographs that represent the evolution of the artist's career, from her landmark series *Yokosuka Story* (1976-77) that established her as a photographer to her current project ひろしま/*hiroshima* (2007-present) in which she presents images of garments and objects that survived the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

"About eight years ago, the Getty Museum began a concerted effort to expand our East Asian photography holdings and since that time work by Japanese photographers has become an important part of the collection," explains Timothy Potts, director of the J. Paul Getty Museum. "As part of this effort, the Museum acquired 37 photographs by Ishiuchi, some of them gifts of the artist, which constitute the largest holdings of her work outside Japan." Potts adds, "Particularly poignant during this 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, and shown for the first time in an American institution, is Ishiuchi's ひろしま/*hiroshima*, a delicate and profound series of images depicting objects affected by the atomic blast."



ひろしま/hiroshima#9 (Ritsu Ogawa), 2007.  
Ishiuchi Miyako (Japanese, born 1947).  
Chromogenic print. EX.2015.7.54 © Ishiuchi Miyako. Ishiuchi Miyako

Born in Kiryū in the aftermath of World War II, Ishiuchi Miyako spent her formative years in

Yokosuka, a Japanese city where the United States established an important naval base in 1945. She studied textile design at Tama Art University in Tokyo in the late 1960s before quitting school prior to graduation and ultimately pursuing photography. In 1975 she exhibited her first photographs under her mother's maiden name, Ishiuchi Miyako, which she adopted as her own.

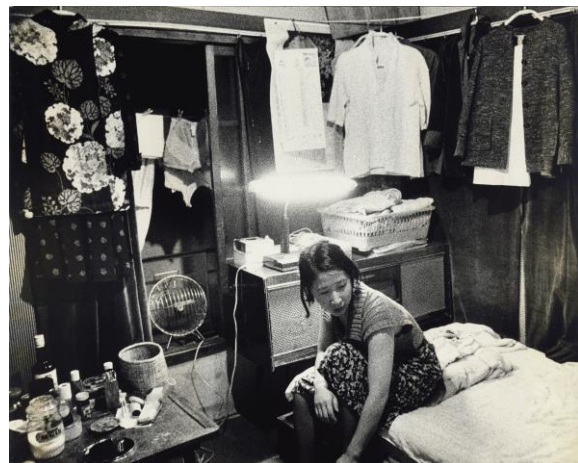
For the past forty years Ishiuchi has consistently interweven the personal with the political in her work. Her longstanding engagement with the subject of postwar Japan, specifically the shadows that American occupation and Americanization cast over her native country following World War II, serves as the organizing principle of the exhibition. Across three interconnected yet distinct phases of her career, Ishiuchi explores the depths of her postwar experience.

### **Early Career: From *Yokosuka Story* to *Yokosuka Again***

Shortly after adopting photography as her means of personal expression, Ishiuchi began to take pictures of Yokosuka, where she and her family lived between 1953 and 1966. The prevalence of American culture there had shocked Ishiuchi as a child. Though it informed her love of pop music and denim jeans, it also caused her to harbor fears of the U.S. naval base and develop a hatred of the city. Armed with a camera and fueled by painful memories, Ishiuchi returned to Yokosuka in the 1970s to address her fears. The act of photographing old haunts, as well as unfamiliar places, proved to be a catharsis. Using money her father had saved for her wedding, Ishiuchi financed the production of prints, as well as the related publication, *Yokosuka Story*, which she named after the title of a Japanese pop song.

"With *Yokosuka Story*, and ultimately the other series she produced at the beginning of her career, Ishiuchi attempted to transfer her emotions and dark memories into the prints through physical means," says Amanda Maddox, assistant curator of photographs at the Getty Museum and curator of the exhibition. "By carefully controlling how she processed film, and by intentionally printing the photographs with heavy grain and deep black tones, she injected her feelings into the work. She loved working in the darkroom, in part because the tactile nature of processing film and printing photographs related to her training in textile production."

Interested in blurring the boundary between documentation and fiction, Ishiuchi tested the limits of this approach in her second major series *Apartment*. Isolating derelict, cheaply constructed apartments that resembled the cramped one-room apartment that her family occupied in Yokosuka, Ishiuchi photographed ramshackle facades, rooms, and interiors of buildings in Tokyo



Apartment #19, 1977 – 1978. Ishiuchi Miyako (Japanese, born 1947). Gelatin silver print. EX.2015.7.5. © Ishiuchi Miyako. Ishiuchi Miyako.

and Yokohama. Despite criticism of the series from other photographers, Ishiuchi ultimately earned the prestigious Ihei Kimura Memorial Photography Award for her book *Apartment*.

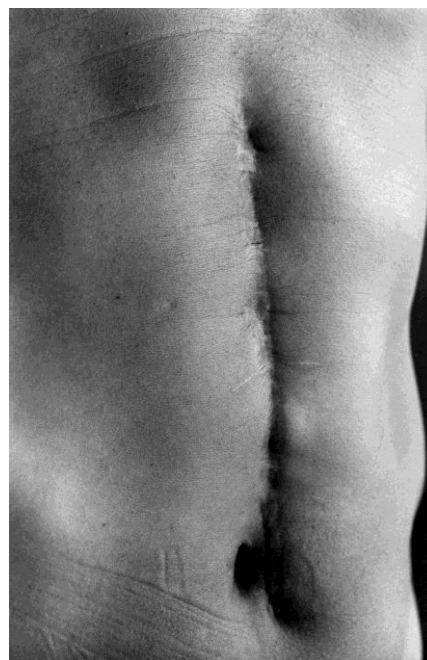
***Endless Night***, a series that developed as a result of her work on *Apartment*, features buildings across Japan that formerly functioned as brothels. In 1958 the Japanese government began to enforce an anti-prostitution law, causing many red-light districts to close. Brothels were either abandoned or transformed into inns, hotels, or private accommodations. With memories of walking past a red-light district in Yokosuka on her way to school, Ishiuchi felt a connection to this subject matter and to the women who once inhabited these places, their traces still palpable.

In 1980 Ishiuchi returned to depict places not represented in *Yokosuka Story*, targeting locations that terrified her. For this new project she focused on Honchō—the central neighborhood where the presence of America felt especially concentrated, with the U.S. naval base and EM (Enlisted Men's) Club located there. For six months Ishiuchi rented an abandoned cabaret on Dobuita Dōri (Gutter Alley). With the help of friends she converted the cabaret into an exhibition space, where she displayed the new work alongside images from *Yokosuka Story*. She continued to photograph in Yokosuka intermittently until 1990, when the dilapidated EM Club was finally razed. Her final Yokosuka projects, ***Yokosuka Again, 1980–1990***, represents a triumph over the conflicting emotions she possessed toward the city.

### Midcareer: On the Body

Following her exhaustive investigation of Yokosuka, Ishiuchi contemplated quitting photography altogether. But as she celebrated her 40<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1987, she recognized that the traces of time and experience left on her body could inspire new work and spark another phase of her career. For ***1·9·4·7***, titled after her birth year, she approached friends also born that year and asked to photograph them—specifically their hands and feet. As news of the project spread, Ishiuchi expanded the series to include women she did not know. In intimate, close-up views, Ishiuchi draws attention to the calluses, hangnails, wrinkles, and other imperfections that develop on the skin during a lifetime of activity.

Inspired by ***1·9·4·7***, Ishiuchi developed many projects that focused on the body as subject. Among the most powerful is ***Scars***, a series she began in 1991 that remains a work in progress. As reminders of past trauma and pain, scars evoke memories that the skin retains on its surface. Ishiuchi regards these marks as battle wounds and symbols of victory. She also likens them to



Scars #27 (Illness 1977), 1999. Ishiuchi Miyako (Japanese, born 1947). Gelatin silver print. EX.2015.7.104. © Ishiuchi Miyako. Collection of the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo.

photographs, which serve simultaneously as visible markers of history and triggers of personal memory. For each large-scale print, Ishiuchi provides only the year that a wound was inflicted as well as its cause—such as accident, illness, attempted suicide, or war.

Fascinated by the idea that a Polaroid camera operates as a portable, self-contained darkroom, Ishiuchi often shared Polaroid portraits with sitters immediately after they were produced. Her series *Body and Air* features some of these Polaroids—fragments of the body—grouped together by sitter. One of the people included in *Body and Air* is Ishiuchi's mother; though her mother was camera-shy, she found the playful, interactive nature of this particular project appealing. Her acquiescence to serve as a photographic subject ultimately laid the foundation for Ishiuchi's next major series.

### Recent Projects: Life and Death

Shortly before her mother died in 2000, Ishiuchi began to photograph her skin and face. While select photographs from this period can be found in the series *Scars* and *Body and Air*, Ishiuchi eventually generated a project specifically about her mother. Spurred by her decision to photograph her mother's personal effects rather than simply dispose of them, Ishiuchi created the series *Mother's*, in which she includes images of old shoes, girdles, and used lipstick once owned by her mother as well as photographs of her mother's body made in 2010, soon before her death.

The shared experience of trauma as a photographic subject registers most poignantly in Ishiuchi's current series ひろしま/*hiroshima*. Ishiuchi first visited Hiroshima when commissioned to photograph there in 2007. She chose as her principal subjects the artifacts devastated by the U.S. atomic bombing of the city, now housed at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. Aware that Tōmatsu Shōmei, Tsuchida Hiromi, and others had previously photographed some of the same objects, Ishiuchi nevertheless wanted to photograph this material in order to present it from a different, distinctly feminine perspective. (The title of the series ひろしま/*hiroshima* intentionally includes the word Hiroshima in Hiragana, a Japanese writing system that women used extensively in previous eras).



ひろしま/hiroshima #82 (Uesugi Ayako), 2007. Ishiuchi Miyako (Japanese, born 1947). Chromogenic print. EX.2015.7.63. © Ishiuchi Miyako. Ishiuchi Miyako

*Ishiuchi Miyako: Postwar Shadows* is curated by Amanda Maddox, assistant curator, Department of Photographs, the J. Paul Getty Museum. A fully illustrated scholarly catalogue, with essays by Maddox; Itō Hiromi, poet; and Miryam Sas, professor, University of California, Berkeley, accompanies the exhibition.

Programs related to the exhibition include a conversation between Ishiuchi Miyako and Christopher Phillips, curator at the International Center of Photography in New York, on October 7, 2015 at the Getty Center.

On view concurrently in the Center for Photographs is ***The Younger Generation: Contemporary Japanese Photography***, which features work by five contemporary women whose photographs register the influence of Ishiuchi and explore related themes.

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**The J. Paul Getty Trust** is an international cultural and philanthropic institution devoted to the visual arts that includes the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Research Institute, the Getty Conservation Institute, and the Getty Foundation. The J. Paul Getty Trust and Getty programs serve a varied audience from two locations: the Getty Center in Los Angeles and the Getty Villa in Pacific Palisades.

**The J. Paul Getty Museum** collects Greek and Roman antiquities, European paintings, drawings, manuscripts, sculpture and decorative arts to 1900, as well as photographs from around the world to the present day. The Museum's mission is to display and interpret its collections, and present important loan exhibitions and publications for the enjoyment and education of visitors locally and internationally. This is supported by an active program of research, conservation, and public programs that seek to deepen our knowledge of and connection to works of art.

#### **Visiting the Getty Center**

The Getty Center is open Tuesday through Friday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., with special extended Friday hours until 9:00 p.m. May 30-August 29. It is closed Monday and most major holidays, open on July 4. Admission to the Getty Center is always free. Parking is \$15 per car, but reduced to \$10 after 5 p.m. on Saturdays and for evening events throughout the week. No reservation is required for parking or general admission. Reservations are required for event seating and groups of 15 or more. Please call (310) 440-7300 (English or Spanish) for reservations and information. The TTY line for callers who are deaf or hearing impaired is (310) 440-7305. The Getty Center is at 1200 Getty Center Drive, Los Angeles, California.

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