

ACROSS THE BORDERLANDS OF ART

SHOZO SHIMAMOTO

Curated by Yaman Shao & Jérôme Neutres



Shozo Shimamoto, Performance with coups, Un'arma per la Pace, Piazza Dante,
Naples, Italy, 2006. Ph. Fabio Donato © Fondazione Morra

INHALT CONTENTS

8 Foreword 前言

Yaman Shao 邵雅曼

21 Introduction 序

Giuseppe Morra 朱賽佩·莫拉

29 The Samurai of Colours 運用色彩的日本武士

Jérôme Neutres 哲羅姆·努泰

63 Art is Astonishment 藝術是要讓人驚愕的事物

Shozo Shimamoto 嶋本昭三

71 Interview 對話

Lorenzo Mango, Andrea Mardegan 洛倫佐·曼戈、安德里亞·馬德根

123 Biography 生平

149 The Gutai Manifest 具體派宣言

Jiro Yoshihara, Geijutsu Shincho, December 1956

吉原治良 藝術新潮雜誌 1956 年 12 月

163 The 3rd Gutai Art Exhibition 第三屆具體派藝術展

Gutai Magazine, Osaka, July 15th 1957 具體雜誌

大阪 1957 年 7 月 15 日

171 Shozo Shimamoto : For the banishment of the paintbrush 嶋本昭三：以放逐畫筆為目的

Gutai Magazine, No. 6, Osaka, April 1st 1957 具體雜誌第六號

大阪 1957 年 4 月 1 日

178 Shimamoto's poetics : Squares of sky in the colours of the earth 嶋本昭三：詩性的天空

FOREWORD

Yaman Shao

For those of us who grow up in the east, we are unknowingly subjected to a global aesthetic that dominates our appreciation and understanding of beauty. In contrast with this universal mainstream, things familiar with natives are often considered exotic. The time that ticks worldwide establishes a Common Era, with English as the universal language. As the East turns to the West, where would the West go? As western culture confronts a foreseeable future influenced by an emerging eastern generation, how will the East settle its deeply rooted culture? In modern times, as the world is re-mapping and borderlines are being redefined, will this era demand that we confront issues of global culture together for the next generation?



Shozo Shimamoto, *Ana esquisse*, 1962. Hole on paper mixed media, 36,2 x 51,2 cm,
Naples, Casa Morra Archivio d'Arte Contemporanea © Fondazione Morra



Shozo Shimamoto, *Whirlpool*, 1967, 93 x 118 cm, Enamel paint on canvas fixed on board, Private collection

We are honored to co-host this exhibition with Shozo Shimamoto Association and Fondazione Morra from Italy as we look back at the works of Shozo Shimamoto, the core founding member of Gutai, which is considered the most vanguard artistic group in post-war Japan. We examine Shimamoto's stylistic transformation from the 60s to his late years. We focus on a comprehensive review of how Gutai evolved and changed from within, and how its creations expanded into an entirely new realm before the western artists did, and how it established an extraordinary breakthrough before western cinema masters had proposed new ways of processing visual art in movement.

前言

邵雅曼

對於在東方成長的我們，從何時開始，世界美感主宰著我們對於欣賞的理解，東方所有熟悉的事物，在主流趨勢的對應下成為一種異國文化。世界通行的時間觀念，以西元紀年；英語通行全球，成為世界中心的語境。當東方逐漸走向西方，西方往何處去？當西方面臨成為東方新一代的必然，東方將如何處理文化的根源？當今世界版圖正在重洗，疆界被重新定義，是否這個時代，需要我們一起去面對屬於新世代全球文化的議題？



Shozo Shimamoto SPAZIO NEL TEMPO, Fondazione Sant'Ella, Palermo, Italy, 2018. Ph. Amedeo Benestante © Fondazione Morra



Shozo Shimamoto performance with canvas. Un'Arma per la pace. Piazza Dante, Naples. 2006. Photo by Giuseppe Morra

INTRODUCTION

Giuseppe Morra

We worked together with Shozo Shimamoto on the fertile humus of Campania where his poetics absorbed and moulded spaces of beauty, imbuing them with sounds and colours in dialogue with the past. A Samurai of colours, he reconfigured the crystallized symbols of beauty and the sacred, reinterpreting effigies of the Buddha, Psyche, Nike, and Venus through his painting, conveying a message of irenicism. The organic energy of the pictorial matter that erupts from the automatism of his calligraphic gesture is both a perceptive and an existential vitalism. In Piazza Dante, during the 2006 performance *Un'Arma per la pace* ("A Weapon for Peace"), Shimamoto pelted a huge canvas with coloured paints from a height of forty metres to the strains of *Rombo di suono scintillante per Dante, Beatrice e Virgilio* by Charlemagne Palestine.



Shozo Shimamoto, Performance bottle crash, Vento d'Oriente, Punta Campanella, Italy, 2008. ph. Andrea Mardegan © Fondazione Morra

THE SAMURAI OF COLORS

Jérôme Neutres

"More than anything else, I find stimulation in the materialization of an unpredictable expression.

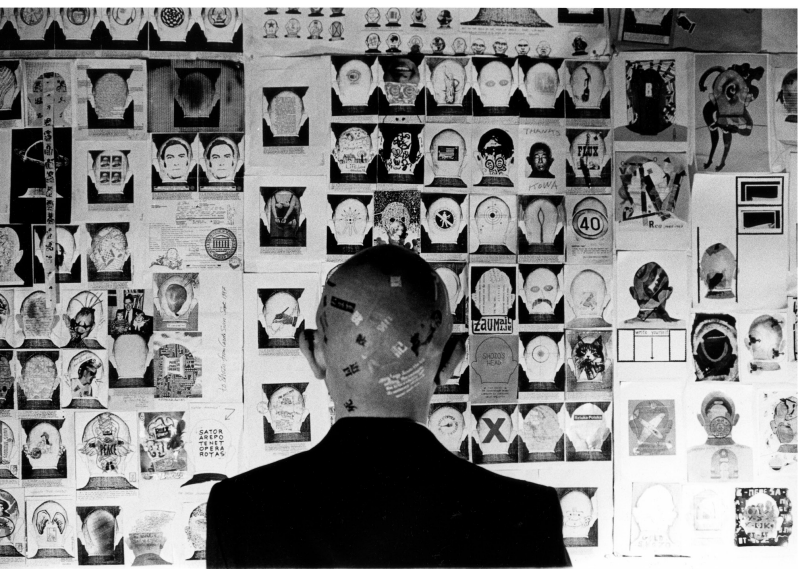
The biggest meaning of this phenomenon might just be Zen."

——— ¹ Shozo Shimamoto

For a long time I have been studying the work of Shozo Shimamoto, initiated first by my longtime friend, collector and art producer Diego Strazzer. I could work in the best conditions thanks to the remarkable archives of the Shozo Shimamoto Association in Naples, Italy, where Teresa and Giuseppe Morra conserve with an aesthetic passion and a scientific rigor so many treasures of works and documents to understand and appreciate at its right level the importance of Shozo Shimamoto's legacy. From Arman to *Cai Guo-Qiang*, and passing through Miro, I have been always fascinated by artists facing the complex and metaphysical problematic of the *destructive creation* — a terminology I proposed in my book *Cai Guo-Qiang and Pompei: inside the Volcano*.² No doubt that *destructive creation* has been a leading process in the development of the visual arts in the second part of XXth Century. In Europe, we immediately think of artists like Alberto Burri who made works by burning wood panels, or Lucio Fontana lacerating his canvases; or Miro burning in part its last paintings of the 1970's.

¹ Interview with Lorenzo Mango-Andrea Mardegan

² Jérôme Neutres, *Cai Guo Qiang and Pompei: Inside the Volcano*, Silvana Editoriale, 2019



Shozo Shimamoto, Mail Art © Associazione Shozo Shimamoto

The group thus enters into relation with the western avant-gardes, and in many cases turns to be a precursor of many experiences carried out by European and American artists years later. The case of Shozo Shimamoto is emblematic from this point of view, because he is among the first, in the fifties, to “betray” the painting in the name of something else, in the name of a pictorial event. Far before the trend of the “performing visual arts”, becoming important in the 1960’s–70’s, with for instance the Fluxus movement, Shozo Shimamoto invents in a sense a new form of making art, and a new vision of what could be an artwork. As he said:

*“The act of painting is to suggest free expression.
This is the true work of an artist”.*

If art historians are recognizing more and more the importance of Shimamoto’s contribution to the art of XXth Century, he still need to be diffused and studied as a leader who has generated a huge and capital legacy until today. Many artists are following today the modernist aesthetics of the destructive creation as well as the “performing paintings” initiated by Shimamoto. The major figure is obviously *Cai Guo-Qiang*, whose last exhibition in Italy at the MANN I curated. Through his gunpowder signature painting, *Cai Guo-Qiang* throws fire on the canons of a conceptual contemporary art that has become traditional and academic, and renews in this sense with the experimentation as the greatest challenge of art. A process that involves working on the creation of forms, starting with their destruction.



Shozo Shimamoto, *Performance with Coups*, Palazzo dello Spagnolo

The present presentation of a survey of paintings by Shozo Shimamoto at ALIEN Art Centre, Kaoshiung, is carried out with the cooperation of the Shozo Shimamoto Association & the Morra Foundation, Naples, Italy, which features in its collection the largest collection of the works by the Japanese artist worldwide.

This exhibition represents the first survey of Shimamoto ever presented in Taiwan, a country very marked by intense and historical cultural inter-exchanges with Japan. Our show consists in different types of paintings, to give to see the process of Shimamoto art, mostly coming from his most spectacular performances in Italy organized by the Morra Foundation, one of the very first pioneer art center dedicated to the performing visual arts. Shimamoto's works carry the intention to go beyond the form, to treat the surface as a physical fact and to think of the pictorial act as an event.

Shimamoto shows us the importance of the action beyond the material piece, the size of an event, which to some extent is absolutized, in the sense that it is detached from a final outcome, other than the event itself. The core of the project reflects this crucial passage and involves the will to overcome a logistic necessity of cutting the very large canvases — used by Shimamoto in many of his *Bottle Crash* performances — into smaller pieces, more manageable and easier to stretch on canvas in subsequent moments. This is an attempt, for this special presentation, to bring back the oeuvre as it was initially thought; to get back together the multiple scattered pieces of an enormous black and white canvas, and give to the spectator a suggestion of resemblance to the original magnitude and scale of Shozo Shimamoto's endeavour.

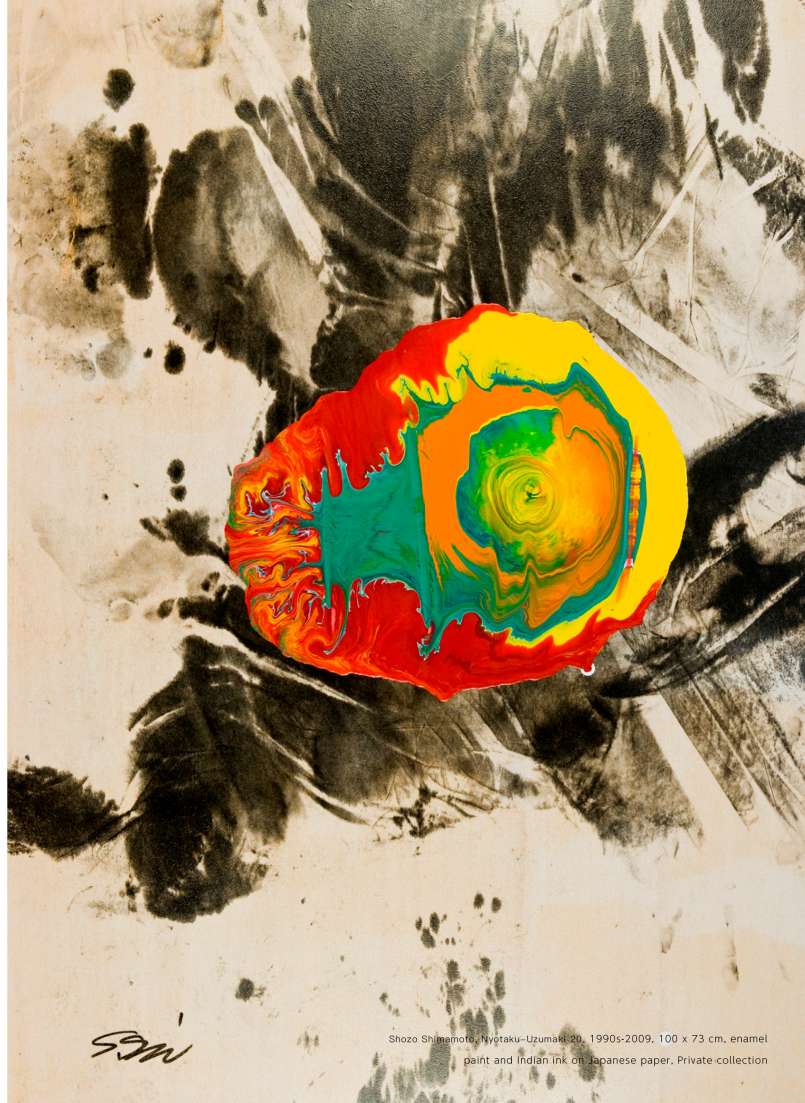
A rare selection of paintings are presented here, starting by the beautiful and fairly less known Nyotaku series, and followed by the most famous series of monochroms and bottle crash paintings, coming from the legendary public performances of the *Gutai* leader.

Finally will be presented a work on film which is an extraordinary experience of anticipation of the American avant-gardes. This seven minutes experiments sees Shimamoto, already during the Fifties, acting manually on the film, adding color to the photograms and even manipulating them until partial breakage. These features make this a very special piece as it is a powerful precursor of western experimental film masters who started manual film modifications several years later. We also present the screening of a live performance by Shozo Shimamoto made in Italy, where one can see the making off of the legendary "Bottle crashed paintings" series.

His 2008 performance at the Ducale Palace of Genova is entitled: "Samurai acrobata dello sguardo", meaning the "Samurai acrobat of the gaze" ... The samurai of the colors is indeed in full action. To give us to see and to think of the essence of the artistic gesture: a celebration of freedom. In a famous text entitled *You Have to Paint badly*, Shimamoto asserts:

"Setting the condition that people paint badly is essential if they are to feel at ease, and this is the most important thing in painting, because it brings us back to its point of origin, which is the joy of painting, and not a test of technique."

In this purposely provocative manifesto ("Art is something that shocks people", the artist used to say), Shimamoto wants to demonstrate that a new form of art can't come out of the restrictive and limited rules of virtuosity and academism.



Shozo Shimamoto, *Nyotaku-Uzumaki*, 20, 1990s-2009, 100 x 73 cm, enamel paint and Indian ink on Japanese paper, Private collection



Shozo Shimamoto, Il Gutai Exhibition Hurling colors, 1956 © Associazione Shozo Shimamoto

藝術是要讓人驚愕的事物

嶋本昭三

每當我說出藝術是要讓人驚愕的事物，大家都會覺得吃驚。我們都傾向將藝術想成某種符合美學意義的美麗事物、是精心製作的成果，但我認為這樣的成果只是手工藝的體現。另一方面，藝術或藝術手法則是要令公眾感覺震驚。當然，「震驚」指的並不是利用突如其來與輕率的動作讓人感覺驚訝。

據說我們將會生活在一個資訊時代。大量資訊被頻繁交換，大眾也自欺欺人地認為只要多取得一個資訊，就能在事業上帶給自己更多成就。話雖如此，當我們把注意力都放在眼前的資訊時，顯然就無法看見隱藏於其背後的意義。就像是拍照，若把焦距對在前景的物體，背景就會失焦而模糊。



Shozo Shimamoto, *Crane Performance Napoli*, 2006, 104 X 140 cm.
Performance with Loco cups, acrylic on light canvas © Fondazione Morra

In Conversation

Lorenzo Mango, Andrea Mardegan
Shozo Shimamoto

Shozo Shimamoto

– Your artistic activity seems characterized by two very strong elements, present ever since the 1950s: the production of “works” and the creation of events. What relation is there between your work and your events?

Shozo Shimamoto :

I used to produce works that were the expression of a violent throw of bottles. Both television and newspapers came to see me often, but not to publish the finalized work, but to describe the scenario of their creation. Initially I was angry when I realized that the final work was almost never shown, but then I started to think differently, both by proposing ideas to change the setting, and by taking on a certain behavior for those occasions. So I can say that the relation between my work and my events have been taught to me by journalists.



Shozo Shimamoto, Punta Campanella 21 (Canvas 14), 2008, 128 x122 cm, performance with Loco cups and bottles.
acrylic on light canvas, Casa Morra Archivio d'Arte Contemporanea Naples © Fondazione Morra

對話 - 嶋本昭三

洛倫佐·曼戈、安德里亞·馬德根

嶋本昭三

— 自 1950 年代以來，您的藝術活動似乎是以兩個非常強烈的元素為特色：製造「作品」以及創造活動。在您的作品與活動之間有什麼樣的關係？

嶋本昭三：我過去製造的作品是屬於猛烈丟擲瓶子的表現。電視與報紙媒體經常會來找我，但卻不是為了發表最後的作品，而是描述其創作的場景。一開始，當我發現最終的作品幾乎都沒有出現時，我非常生氣，但後來透過提議改變設定以及為這些場合呈現特定行為，我開始以不同的方式思考。因此可以說，是記者們讓我領悟到我自己作品與活動之間的關係。

— 丟擲裝滿顏料瓶子的技巧是您作品的主要特徵，是什麼樣的動機讓您產生了這個作法？

嶋：圍繞在吉原治良周圍的年輕具體派藝術家希望能夠為書法大師（特別是中原南天樺）完成的作品給予一個新方向，在中原南天樺寫出的漢字中，我們發現了「濃淡」、「明暗」、「飛濺」、「墨滴」以及其他在當時無法利用油畫表現出來的效果。利用掛在天花板上的繩子把自己吊起來，白髮一雄開始用他的雙腳作畫，村上三郎則透過跳躍與衝破固定在撐架上的大型紙張來開洞。我的體能都比他們差，所以才想出要丟擲裝滿顏料的瓶子或利用大砲讓瓶子爆開。到現在，我在很長時間裡一直是透過丟擲瓶子來製造作品，無論是奮力或輕輕丟擲，使用或大或小的畫布，都是不一樣的變化。我也試著滿足策展人提出的要求，並且因應場景調整表演的內容。我認為將丟擲瓶子視為一種繪畫方法，在現在依然是一種研究未知的形式。我能在具體實現意想不到的表現當中，找到最多激勵，而這個現象的最大意義或許就是所謂的「禪」。不過即使是現在我依然還在摸索的道路上，而且絕不要認為我已獲得開悟。



Shozo Shimamoto, Punta Campanella 40 (Canvas 33), 2008, 209 x 268 cm, performance with Loco cups and bottles, acrylic on light canvas, Casa Morra Archivio d'Arte Contemporanea © Fondazione Morra



Shozo Shimamoto, Punta Campanella 31 (Canvas 24), 2008, 158 x 203 cm,
performance with Loco cups and bottles, acrylic on light canvas, Casa
Morra Archivio d'Arte Contemporanea © Fondazione Morra



Gutai Exhibition 1960s © Associazione Shozo Shimamoto

The 3rd Gutai Art Exhibition

'Gutai' Magazine

Osaka, July 15th 1957

The 3rd Gutai Art Exhibition has opened in Kyoto.

It offers many interesting ideas.

Akira Kanayama presented a series of unusual works, crossed by a tangle of infinite filaments. Kanayama sought to use automatic movement to express a certain range of internal tensions and passions. His creations give off an impression of extreme coldness. And this must have been what he aimed to achieve, considering that he had all the painting done by machines. Do you know those toy cars that suddenly change direction by turning round and round? Kanayama saw them in a department store, bought a few, and tried attaching a bottle of quick-drying ink to them. The automatic changes of direction cause unexpected variations. Among his many experiments, Kanayama also built larger mechanisms and had them move, leaving trails of paint.

Some of the resulting works are enormous.



Shozo Shimamoto, Performance with Coups, Palazzo dello Spagnuolo Naples.

2008. Ph. Andrea Mardegan © Fondazione Morra

第三屆具體派藝術展

具體雜誌 大阪 1957 年 7 月 15 日

第三屆具體派藝術展在京都開幕。

提供許多有趣的想法。

金山明呈獻了一系列非比尋常的作品，並以無數纏繞的細線交錯在一起。金山明追求運用自動性技法的動作，表達特定範圍的內在張力與熱情。他的創作展現出一種極為冰冷的印象，而基於他是利用機器完成所有畫作，這勢必就是他想達成的結果。你們知道有一種會一直轉圈而突然改變方向的玩具車嗎？金山明在一間百貨公司看見那種玩具車，就買了幾輛，然後把一瓶快乾墨水固定在玩具車上，自動改變的方向造就了這些無法預測的變化。在他的眾多實驗中，金山明也打造出較大型的機械裝置，然後讓它們移動留下顏料的蹤跡。

其中一些完成的作品非常巨大。

For 致予 Giuseppe Morra 朱賽佩·莫拉
Teresa Carnevale 泰瑞莎·卡內維爾
Diego Strazzer 迪亞哥·斯特拉澤
Shao Yung-Tien 邵永添

Editor 主編 Yaman Shao, Taiwan 邵雅曼 台灣

Essays 執筆 Yaman Shao, Taiwan 邵雅曼 台灣

Giuseppe Morra, Italy 朱賽佩·莫拉 義大利

Jérôme Neutres, France 哲羅姆·努泰 法國

Shozo Shimamoto, Japan 嶋本昭三 日本

Jiro Yoshihara, Japan 吉原治良 日本

Lorenzo Mango, Italy 洛倫佐·曼戈 義大利

Andrea Mardegan, Italy 安德里亞·馬德根 義大利

Concept and graphic design 概念及平面設計 ALIEN Art 永添藝術

Photo Credits 攝影 Fondazione Morra 那不勒斯莫拉基金會

Exhibited by 策展 ALIEN Art 永添藝術

In collaboration with 合作方 Shozo Shimamoto Association 嶋本昭三藝術協會
Fondazione Morra 那不勒斯莫拉基金會

Exhibition video 展覽錄像 Giuseppe Morra 朱賽佩·莫拉

Shozo Shimamoto Association 嶋本昭三藝術協會

國家圖書館出版品預行編目資料

嶋本昭三：跨越藝術邊界 / 邵雅曼等執筆。
-- 高雄市：永添藝術，2019.12

204 面：17.2 x 23.5 公分

ISBN 978-986-98584-0-3 (平裝)

1. 東洋畫 2. 現代藝術 3. 畫冊 4. 畫論

946.1707

108021676

Acknowledgements



The documentation and conversation is made possible by
Shozo Shimamoto Association and
Fondazione Morra



Construction Realisation is
made possible by YUIMOM Group



Exhibition catalogue is supported
by UKAI Group



Shipping logistics is supported by
TVL-Logistics Solutions

Published by ALIEN Art | 出版單位 永添藝術股份有限公司
15F-1, No.111 Jianguo 3rd Rd., Samin Dist., Kaohsiung City807, Taiwan
台灣高雄市三民區建國一路111號15樓之1
T. +886 7 286 5858 F.+886 7 286 5568
www.alien.com.tw
Copyright © 2019.12 / All rights reserved
ALIEN Art Centre
Fondazione Morra





Shozo Shimamoto, Performance with coups, Un'arma per la Pace, Piazza Dante, Naples, Italy, 2006. Ph. Fabio Donato © Fondazione Morra