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**TEPPEI KANEUJI**, *Tower (Movie)*, 2009, Blu-ray disk with wild track CD: 30 min. Courtesy ShugoArts, Tokyo.

## MOVING LIGHT, ROVING SIGHT

[WEB REVIEW](#) BY MARYBETH STOCK

IKKAN ART GALLERY

SINGAPORE

**Ikkann Art Gallery** is one of the few venues in Singapore to serve up a consistently fascinating brew of video and new-media art. Ikkann's most recent exhibition, "Moving Light, Roving Sight," features a canny mix of contemporary Japanese artists and collectives, whose works are juxtaposed with older pieces by Western media artists. The latter includes Jenny Holzer's iconic *TRUISMS (selections from 1977–79)* (2013), a digitally animated collection of over 200 clichés and aphorisms taken from advertising and media. Holzer's exploitation of language and its intent is as fascinating as it is mind-numbing, making it a worthy accompaniment to Teppei Kaneuji's 2009 animated piece *Tower (Movie)*. In the video, Kaneuji's stolid, unmoving structure excretes repetitious, banal imagery and sound, including a bouncing ball, tedious taps and rustles, and oozing gels and fumes. Like Holzer's discourse, Kaneuji's babel is insidious—integral to his tower's essence, yet continuously undermining it.

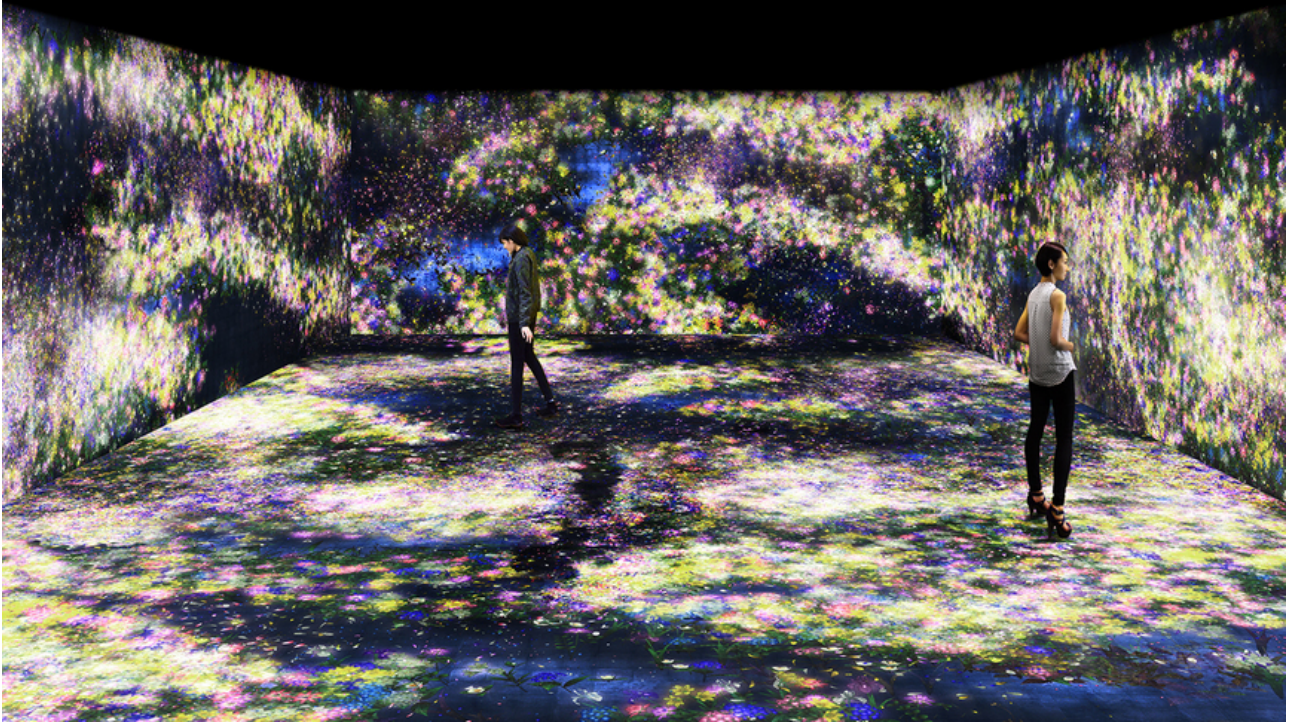
In "Moving Light," older works like Holzer's are compelling foils to the more recent pieces. The venerable technique of stop-motion photography, for example, inspires contemporary film artist Takashi Ishida. He bypasses digital shortcuts to create elegant stop-motion choreography on 16mm film, then digitizes the imagery, which adds depth and modulation to his compositions. In *Burning Chair* (2013), Ishida has "painted" organic patterns with chalk and water on the walls of a narrow concrete room. His claustrophobic concrete palette swims with intricate strokes of chalk and rivulets of water that unfurl, recede and fade. At Ikkann, Ishida's fluent compositions seem otherworldly in contrast to *Video Sketches 1–4* (1999) by Oliver Herring. Herring also uses stop motion, but with a studied lack of finesse. His goofy mélange of pantomime and absurd tableaux is sheer impudence in the face of Ishida's polished mannerism. Nearby, a projected still from Douglas Gordon's 1994 performance piece, *Kissing with Scopolamine*, in which the artist is seen kissing his reflection on a mirror, faces Naoko Tosa's abstract video work *Organic Geometry 2* (2015). Tosa's infinite, kaleidoscopic undulations and glittering Rorschach symmetries are solemnly mimicked by Gordon's mirrored self-reflection.



**TAKASHI ISHIDA**, *Burning Chair*, 2013, still from single-channel video: 5 min 8 sec. Courtesy the artist.

An interactive work by the digital art collective teamLab, led by Toshiyuki Inoko, was the visual focus at Ikkann. The members of teamLab define themselves as an "ultra-technologists group," whose multifaceted practice includes animation, performance and design. Their installation at Ikkann is a trippy, ambient experience: visitors enter *Flowers and People, Cannot Be*

*Controlled But Live Together – Dark* (2015) through an unlit passageway, to be suddenly thrust into a virtual Garden of Eden. Digital blossoms glimmer and float across the floor and walls. Grazed by a shadow or the weight of a foot, these flowers take on urgency and bloom, sending out languid tendrils and petals that evolve into pure white light and scatters like pollen. In an interview with Inoko, he attempted to explain his motives behind combining the potency and ambiguities of art with innovative technologies, remarking that, “The idea of an exciting future makes life more fun.” *Flowers and People* is a literal critique of human interaction with the environment, disguised as a lyrical, tangible parable of birth and death—and its gorgeous, addictive technology is, indeed, fun.

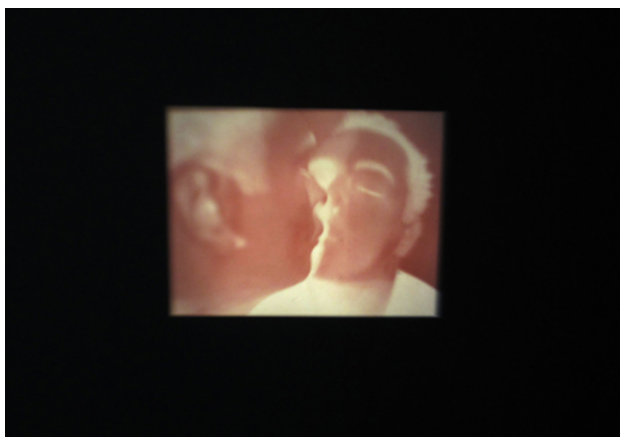


TEAMLAB, *Flowers and People, Cannot Be Controlled But Live Together – Dark*, 2015, interactive digital installation. Courtesy the artists.

Visitors to “Moving Light” encounter a small sculptural piece by South Korean artist Haegue Yang unexpectedly tucked just inside the gallery entrance. *Jewel-Wish Table Light* (2010) is a fairytale-like contraption that is perfectly static: no video here. Its glowing lights and gold metal tassels hesitate in arrested orbit around an old wire framework, like a diminutive galaxy. Directly beyond this dainty confection is its mutant sibling, the imposing *Time Cord (Carnivorous Robot Eats Sounds and Notes)* (2015), a nearly indescribable production by Invisible Designs Lab. Founded in 2001 by Kenjiro Matsuo, this collective has, until now, based their entire practice in commercial advertising and design; their appearance at Ikkan marks the group’s first independent artistic project. And it’s about time. In their commercial work, Invisible Designs Lab uses convoluted methodologies simply in order to enchant the viewer. With *Time Cord*, the collective aspires to “condense the long history and activity of the universe, earth and mankind into a single track.” And while the piece is a metal behemoth that spews audacious spurts of light and sound, we aren’t fooled: *Time Cord* is pure irreverence. Visitors are confronted with a huge shining orb that might be an electronic flower, or perhaps Oz himself; its central white screen is encircled by some three dozen tone chimes that play odd, harmonic patterns. A fantastic hot-pink vinyl LP on an old turntable runs the entire contraption: it sends silent signals to a computer that programs the installation’s petal-like chimes to flutter and ring. Hyperactive beams of light pirouette on the central maw of canvas, and tiny green lasers buzz past startled visitors—all punctuated by an occasional belch of fog. The hefty physicality of *Time Cord* only adds irony to its delicate, goofy language. Invisible Designs

Lab goes to extraordinary lengths to undermine our expectations of technology, and so arouses a baffled sense of delight.

*"Moving Light, Roving Sight" is on view at Ikkan Art Gallery, Singapore, until February 18, 2015.*



**DOUGLAS GORDON**, *Kissing With Scopolamine*, 1994, 35 mm slide projection, installation size variable. Courtesy the artist.

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ArtAsiaPacific

GPO Box 10084

Hong Kong

[info@aapmag.com](mailto:info@aapmag.com)