

Jörgen Axelvall, Yukimasa Ida

LUNAR ECLIPSE

Artists | Jörgen Axelvall, Yukimasa Ida
Exhibition Title | *LUNAR ECLIPSE*
Dates | December 10 (Sat.), 2022 – February 8 (Wed.), 2023
Location | MAKI Gallery / Tennoz, Tokyo



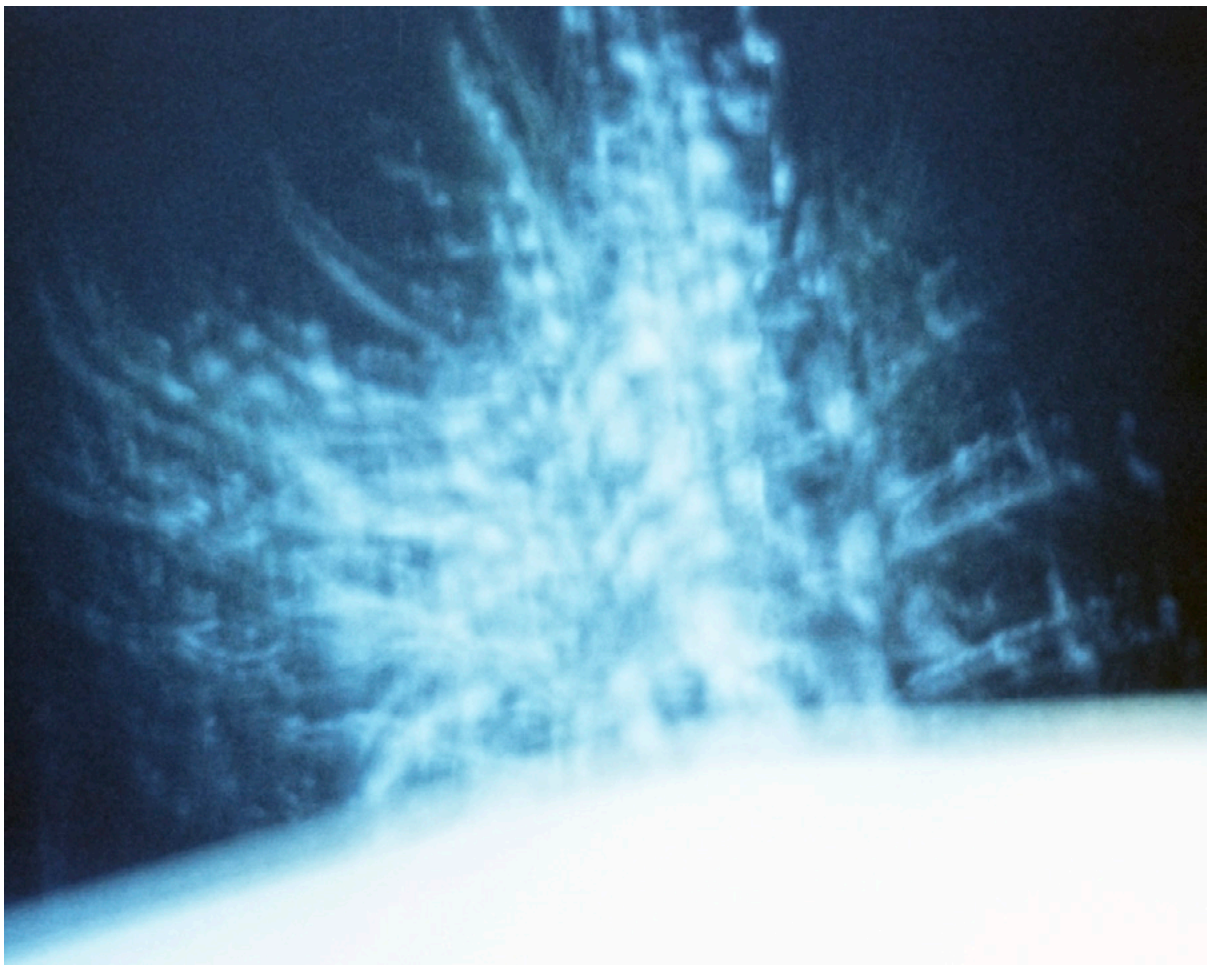
Yukimasa Ida, *Auvers-sur Oise -Road with Vincent van Gogh-*, 2022, oil on canvas, 194.0 x 162.0 cm ©IDA Studio Inc.

MAKI Gallery is pleased to present *LUNAR ECLIPSE*, a two-person exhibition featuring photographer Jörgen Axelvall and contemporary artist Yukimasa Ida, opening Saturday, December 10 at Tennoz, Tokyo. Works by the two artists will be on view across both Tennoz I and II spaces, alongside examples of their first foray into collaboration. The exhibition's title refers to the fact that a lunar eclipse fell on the day

Axelvall and Ida first began discussing their collaborative project. At the same time, it also draws an analogy between a fleeting celestial miracle and the phenomenon of two artists, their artwork, and the viewer coinciding to form new visions and experiences. We welcome you to explore the “here and now” of Axelvall and Ida through this exhibition, where the two artists converge and overlap.

Swedish-born artist Jörgen Axelvall has been based in Japan since 2011 after leaving New York, where he lived for 15 years. He continues to work on a global scale, actively showing in solo and group exhibitions as well as earning awards in photography and art from around the world. Focused on the human figure as its primary motif, Axelvall’s work offers keen insight into the nature of humanity and the environment that surrounds us. The subjects are set against obscure backgrounds, their contours gently wavering as if symbolizing the fragility and uncertainty of all things—including human beings.

In this exhibition, Axelvall reflects on the current social climate and probes deeper into the forms of identity that exist in the contemporary world. His portraits examine the subjects’ identities through shrouding recognizable details. By approaching these anonymous characters with a sense of familiarity, Axelvall subtly questions the age we live in, where one’s individuality and value can be so easily lost. In addition, a series of photographs, which includes the artist’s largest works to date, portrays trees using moonlight as the sole light source. It depicts processes of transformation and deconstruction by repeatedly capturing the ephemeral realities of its subject matter, alluding to the rapidly changing nature of contemporary society.



Jörgen Axelvall, *unlit / salvo I*, 2022, pigment print, aluminum mount, wood panel and frame, 151.0 x 188.7 cm

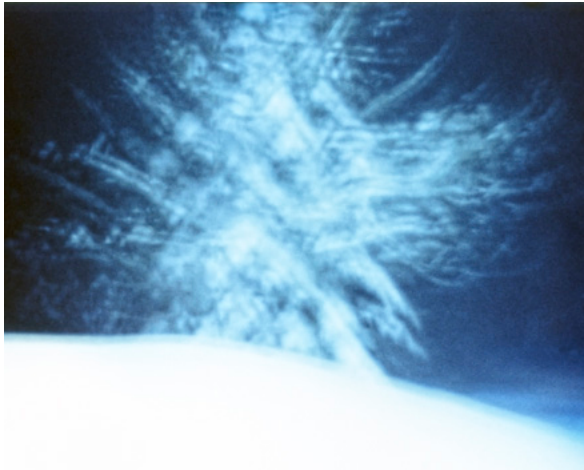
Yukimasa Ida is another globally acclaimed artist who continues to make a positive impact on both the Japanese and international art scenes. In April of this year, he held a successful solo exhibition at the Museo Casa Natal Picasso (Picasso Birthplace Museum) in Spain, becoming the first Asian artist to do so. Through his wide-ranging creative practice, which extends beyond painting to include sculpture and printmaking, Ida expands upon his ongoing theme of *ichi-go ichi-e*—treasuring each encounter as if it is the last. The once-in-a-lifetime moments captured by his works simultaneously illustrate the mutable and eternal facets of life.

Out of the various works by Ida on view, the wooden A-Un sculptures*¹ most strongly reflect the exhibition's cosmic perspective. "A" represents the sun and the beginning of all things, while "Un" represents the moon and the end of all things—together, they embody a sweeping worldview that encompasses everything in between. The sculptures present a broad understanding of time, yet they also possess a striking presence that internalizes the energy emitted by the momentary encounters and relationships that occur within our volatile, ever-changing lives.

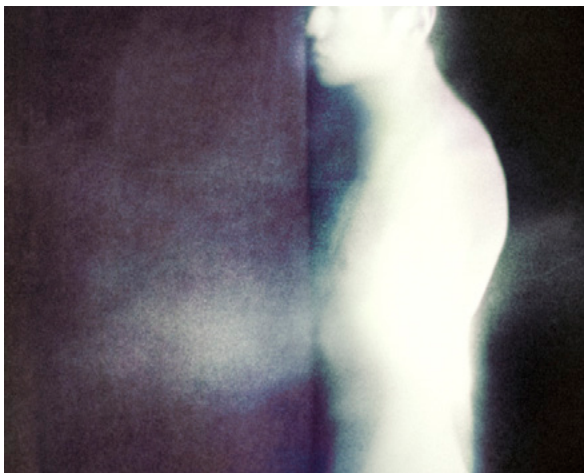
* 1 A-Un sculptures come in pairs and often guard the entrances of Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines. "A" and "Un" are, respectively, the first and last letters of the Japanese alphabet, hence symbolizing the beginning and end of all things.



In the collaborative works, Ida layers his distinctly textured brushstrokes atop Axelvall's serene portraits. The depicted figures' identities are multilayered and elusive, as if to emphasize the inherent uncertainty of the universe. Through encountering this new body of work, which represents a fusion of the two artists, the viewer undergoes a transformation of their own, challenged to confront the finitude of life and the powerful currents of time that sweep us toward a single direction. The convergence of Jörgen Axelvall and Yukimasa Ida that is *LUNAR ECLIPSE* encapsulates the two artists' present practice while simultaneously illuminating the realities in which we individually live.



Jörgen Axelvall
unlit / salvo II
2022
Pigment print, aluminum
mount, wood panel and frame
151.0 x 188.7 cm



Jörgen Axelvall
unsoldier / ellipsis IV
2022
Pigment print, aluminum
mount, wood panel and frame
80.0 x 100.0 cm

MAKI Gallery / Tennoz, Tokyo

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