

*Malices Garden*  
*The Miho's Hagino work at the Garash*

Itala Schmelz

*Closet piece III*  
*Kill all the men you have slept with.*  
*Put the bones in a box and send it out into*  
*The sea with flowers*  
*Yoko Ono Grapefruit 1964*

As many people of our own generation, Miho Hagino (1970) considers that everything has been said and made; therefore, any current artistic proposal lacks originality. In fact, our own personal experiences, so important for us, are nothing special because so thousands of people already experienced them. Being so, the only way is to search an own place to take action, a redimension of life as well as of art, where individuality gains, for its own right, its humble magnificence. Anyway, the big miracle is being alive and makes self conscious grow in order to be aware of it.

Within the work of this Japanese artist, who has been living between Mexico and the USA, allusions of her life get multiplied that no one as an audience should know, and references to other artists, specially Marcel Duchamp are made. Her work is an assimilation, an appropriation of the Duchamp attitude, it is not an imitation, she literally paraphrases the French veteran, the work of Hagino is: *already made*. As mentioned in her new exposition at the Garash<sup>1</sup> gallery.

In general, reflexions from contemporary creation would not get all pieces together without mentioning Duchamp's references. This artist filled -conceptually and symbolically- the most unexpected objects and make them part of the art speech; his famous *Ready mades*. From a plastic point of view, Duchamp always made different things, he was always changing supports, his objective was to create a nonmaterial narrative out from daily objects. This search, as literal and plastic, this many sided way of achieving tools and expression materials, this undefined state, is without a doubt, standard of most of the artists that make today conceptual art.

In its entirety, the Duchamp's work composes a complex narrative that even though it appears to talk about mechanical issues, it really speaks about personal matters, emotive and sensual. *Etant donné* is the culmination of *Grand verre* and was held underground during many years; this work was motivated by the growing desire for an "impossible" woman. Being such a personal motive, the representation results clearly communicative, it is subliminally registered in "all the audiences". You are looking through the sneak peak in an old wooden door and you can see a (¿dead?) woman laying on the grass, you can look at her sex because of her slightly open legs as a metaphor of the abyss desire.

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<sup>1</sup> Besides this exposition, other three simples have this title, one in Los Angeles (year?) and the other en the OPA at Guadalajara (year?)

It is true, Duchamp allowed the artistic object to turn into a common object, ¿where will Hagino's interpretation find a consequence of its work? ¿why the artist insists in select her work with the Duchamp's work? It is hard to find out the logic in Hagino's reflexion; her plastic, however, is very apprehensive.

As part of a program that has been working for several years, Hagino was invited to ceramic courses in Tlaquepaque, Jalisco, to create, with this traditional material of Mexican craftsmanship, a contemporary and conceptual work. That's the way she created 1111 pieces, which she named as "*flores de la alegría*" ("flowers of happiness")<sup>2</sup>. These odd figures resemble the famous Harold Edgerton's photography, which suspend and grows the exact moment in which a milk drop smashes with a table. At the same time, these flowers are like trays full of candies and drug, table centers, wedding flowerpots (by the way, they were of her own wedding). None of these pieces are exactly the same to each other, they are similar, but different to each other; the artist arranges them in groups over the floor, and as they seem as iris resting over a muddy surface of dauntless water, they could be pathogenic fungus colonies expanding, a metastasis, a cancer. After looking for a while the beauty, you start discovering that some of its phases are scary.

Her purpose at the Garash gallery looked find because she really dialogues with the space. Other elements that complete the work were, among others: bike wheels, videos and three canoes with a human femur sinked in the deep center. On one of the videos, Hagino appears making cookies, her ingredients include bone tissue pieces that got stocked over the nai, which was used to rebuild her broken leg in a car crash. After baking the cookies, she eats them. Since the opening, as that acrylic moss that grows on the columns of the gallery, the exposition kept expanding, unfolded in silence, mutating on her own. Hagino kept changing the place of the 1111 pieces of enameling clay, the reason why the exposition was never steady, as never is living matter.

Entering Hagino's work, is like entering through a microscope to a fantastic mediatic residual's landscape. Morphologies that talk about an enormous sophistication of shapes that imitate nature looking or in favor of an own esthetic of the artifice, the elevation of the simulation and the appearance, as more desirables than real. When you believe you are walking in a childish fantasy tiny world, in a Japanese fiction field of cartoons, you find yourself with those broken bones inside wire canoes, the landscape turns like a dream and those magnificent flowers, become into threatening fungus colonies that kill everything at their way. In this "Wonderland", Alice becomes Malice, the background has a scary *ground*, an original sin, a hidden outself whit, the mitosis turns the way of reproduction instead of dual sexual. ¿Hagino eating her own bones? ¿The art thinking, copying, imitating itself? A wheel's bike that is not the one of Duchamp, but a copy done by the artist Jason Rhoades so, the artist Miho Hagino, can have it in her exposition.

Translation by Larissa Rojas

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<sup>2</sup>The title is only Flowers, but the artist's referes to them as Flowers of Happiness.