



なにゆえに なにゆえに わたしは めぐるのですか

For what reason For what reason / Am I going around like?



泥のなかに 潜るのよ!



シズ! 伏せて!



シズ! ひえ



骨もないってよ

千代



一九四五年 七月七日 午前零時

愛宕山に おちた

Midnight, 7th July 1945 Mt Atago was bombed



だれかあ 水! 防空壕は いっぱいだ

I don't know where my Ko chan is

Where will we go? This air-raid shelter is full

Somebody get some water!

川はだめだ!

The river is no good

川へいこう

Kao san, let's go to the river



あああ...

Aaaaaa



みて スエちゃん

Look, Su-e chan



こっちくる

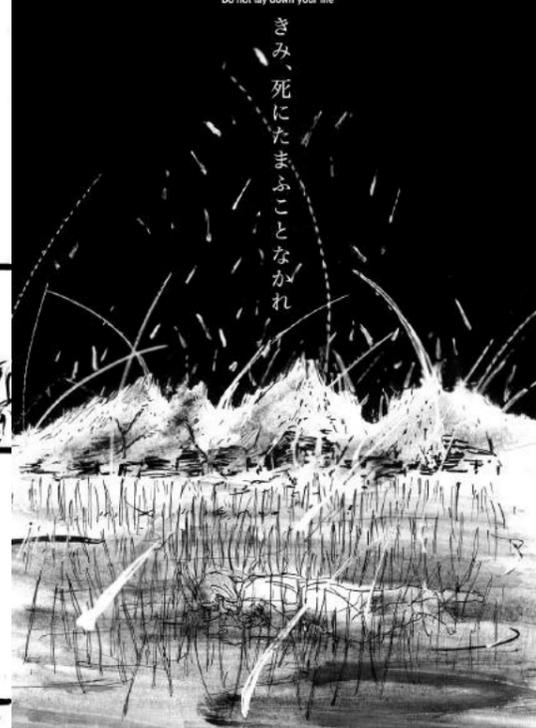
Come here

シズちゃん あれ、拾つちよ いけんやつよ

Shizu chan, over there, you can pick it up



ひや! Ah!



きみ、死にたまふことなかれ

Do not lay down your life



シズ



だれ

Who is?

シズちゃん

Shizu chan



わたしをさがすのは

My catchphrase

雨のむこうで

The rain over there



わたしはめぐるので

My return

燃えた石って

Burnt stone, over there

あれは

For what reason, For what reason

なにゆえに なにゆえに

For what reason, For what reason



起きて!

Shizu! Wake up!



早く!

Carry only water. Quickly!



泥のなかへ

Through the mud



あああ...

Aaaaaa



あああ...

Aaaaaa



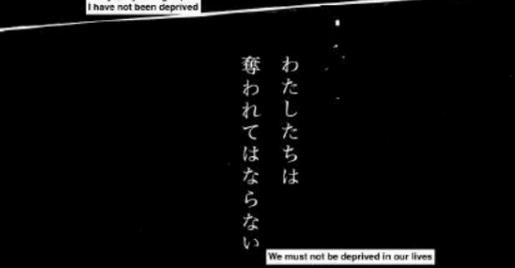
千代

Chiyo, don't grieve for me



わが岬

Chiyo, my loving cape I have not been deprived



わたしは

Chiyo, my loving cape I have not been deprived



燃えた石って

About the burnt stone



あなたは...

Did you...



みたのですか

What did you see?



石

A stone



赤い

Granny, what is this? It's red



七夕の日

A long time ago I dropped a burnt stone. Around here. At the time of Tanabata festival.

これは

It's a burn

やけど

It's a burn



燃えてる

It's burning

焼夷弾の 油が流れて

The firebomb's oil is spilling out



シズ!

Shizu!



うちの田んぼに 行こう

Let's get to our rice field



あああ...

Aaaaaa



みて スエちゃん

Look, Su-e chan

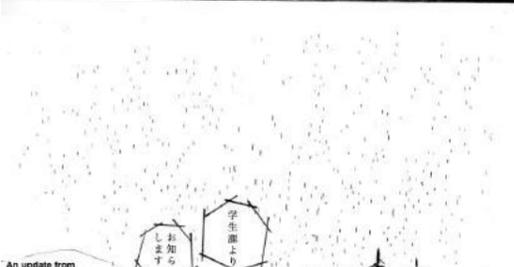


弟のつぎは だんなだなんて

She lost her younger brother, and then her husband too

原田さんとこ

It's awful. The second funeral for Harada san this month



きみ、死にたまふことなかれ

Do not lay down your life



雨天により 中止といたします

because of the rain

まじった雨かよ

So much rain



七夕

Tanabata



流れよ

Shizu, you're drifting away



夜が、明ける。

The day is breaking



燃えた石って

Burnt stone, over there

あれは

For what reason, For what reason

なにゆえに なにゆえに

For what reason, For what reason

### All We Can Do Is Pray

Meiro Koizumi, Junko Harada, Natsumi Seo

Curated by Emily Wakeling

8 – 16 March 2019

Frank Moran Memorial Hall

'All We Can Do is Pray' features the work of three Japanese artists—Meiro Koizumi, Junko Harada and Natsumi Seo—focusing on the perspectives of women and children in times of great loss including the end of World War II and the 2011 tsunami. The works are characterised by the subjects' sense of powerlessness over their destinies, together carrying on from past traumas into the present day.

Great loss has a history at this exhibition's site: as Professor Helen Klæbe writes in *Sharing Stories: A Social History of Kelvin Grove Urban Village*, Barrambin (Kelvin Grove and lower Victoria Park) had approximately 5,000 Indigenous residents when Europeans arrived in 1823. By the 1850s the local Turrbal people were all but forced out. Many people lost their culture, freedom and lives under the impact of European settlement. From 1911 until the end of last century, this site was a military training ground for many who went off and died in conflict. This exhibition's street address, Gona Parade, was re-named to commemorate a 1942 battle in Gona, Papua New Guinea in which many Australian and Japanese troops died. Moreover, during World War II, this site oversaw emergency drills that anticipated the wide spread fear of Japanese invasion. Then-classified information reveals that Japanese prisoners of war passed through here as well.

The artists of *All We Can Do is Pray* have all revisited histories of World War II in their practices, but from the perspectives of subjects that offer further complexity to the male aggressor image of wartime Japan most familiar to Australians, including those who suffered under Imperial attack. This exhibition on a former Australian/US military training site revisits the war as it was experienced by Japanese families and children in a period of great loss, and parallels these narratives with those of survivors of the March 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami.

Living overseas prompted Meiro Koizumi (b. 1976 Gunma, Japan) to question what it meant to be "Japanese," and what it would take to sacrifice one's life for his country, so he began interviewing a "failed" kamikaze pilot, a widow, and the sole survivor of a bombing raid. In a 2018 talk at Pérez Art Museum Miami, he described his subjects as holding onto a repressed history within contemporary Japanese memory. In Koizumi's two-channel work, *When Her Prayer is Heard (Double Projection #2)* (2014), 86-year-old Kazuko Nagura imagines a conversation with her long-lost fiancé, Ken. Lit against a black background, and looking off-camera, she tells him, "I didn't want you to go." She laments their parting and her powerlessness to stop it.

Natsumi Seo's (b. 1988 Tokyo, Japan) art works on display also centralise survivors' narratives, with her landscape painting project based on the accounts of former residents of Rikuzentakata, an Iwate Prefecture coastal town decimated in the 2011 tsunami. On the opposing wall, *Under the Wave, On the Ground* (2014) is a documentary film that follows three residents and their efforts—through summer festivals, flower gardens and Buddhist ancestor rituals—to retain connections with home.

Seo moved to the region from Tokyo in 2012 to devote herself fully to volunteering in the recovery efforts. She has gained the trust and friendship of hundreds of affected locals from Rikuzentakata, whom she speaks for via her art practice, filmmaking and Twitter feed (which this year was published as a book). In a climate in which Iwate's displaced people's voices are often ignored by the central government's massive reconstruction plans, Seo's multi-platform practice is devoted to empathising with marginalised points-of-view.

Artist and activist Junko Harada (b. 1974 Yamanashi, Japan) has overlapping involvement in various anti-nuclear and anti-war activities. Her semi-biographical manga *Mizu no Misaki* (2016) has two parallel narratives; one is a contemporary story of a young woman, Shinozaki, who works in Tokyo, while the other is based on Harada's grandmother,

through the character of Shizu, and her accounts of living through the end of World War II in Kofu, Yamanashi Prefecture. The narratives frequently move back and forth in time, finding moments of poetic comparisons. In one scene, Shinozaki discusses the scientific possibility of memories leaving tangible traces. In another, a mention of white clover triggers a 70-year-old memory of Shizu using the flowers to decorate the hair of her long-lost childhood friend. The narrative style brings past and present together, suggesting that memories can indeed leave a trace through generations.

What characterises the included works are emotions surrounding the sense of powerlessness over one's destiny. By bringing these works together, connections can be made between the experiences of children during the end of World War II, at a time when impoverished Japanese towns were subjected to air-raids by Allied forces, to the more recent devastation and displacement caused by the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and ongoing nuclear crisis in Japan's Tohoku region. Just as the children of World War II are reaching their 80s and 90s, Japan has inherited yet another generation of victims, many of which are women and children, without control over what happened or what will happen in the aftermath. What can the new generation learn from the older generation about coping with great loss?

This exhibition is an opportunity to ask more about the role of underrepresented and powerless groups, including women, children and the elderly, in times of conflict and disaster. If their voices were heard more loudly and more often, would policy change? Would nuclear power plants still be pushed to re-open? Would changes ever be made to the interpretation of Article 9, Japan's constitutional clause outlawing war as a means of settling international disputes?

Holding this exhibition and its associated public programs outside of Japan allows for a platform in which Brisbane-based audiences are given insight into the effect of past and present traumas on marginalised subjects long-forgotten in news coverage, while the artists' works and their sometimes politically sensitive themes can be communicated without hesitation. On a historically significant site, the exhibition shed new light on a painful past from lesser-heard subjects to connect past grief to the present, and perhaps prompt dialogue around how best to go on into the future.

Emily Wakeling, 2019

*I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which this exhibition is held and extend my respect to elders past, present and emerging.*

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With thanks

Junko Harada  
Natsumi Seo  
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Hilary Thurlow  
Nicholas Aloisio-Shearer  
Jess Carmody  
Daniel McKewen  
Mungo van Krimpen-Hall  
Marta Karpinska



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QUT creative industries



## LIST OF WORKS

Junko Harada  
(b. 1974 Yamanashi, Japan)  
*Mizu no Misaki*  
2016  
Ink drawings

Junko Harada  
(b. 1974 Yamanashi, Japan)  
*Mizu no Misaki*  
2016  
Digital manga on touchscreen

Junko Harada  
(b. 1974 Yamanashi, Japan)  
*Mizu no Misaki: Japanese Anemone*  
2016  
Dried flower

Junko Harada  
(b. 1974 Yamanashi, Japan)  
*Mizu no Misaki: Chiyo*  
2014  
Mixed media

Junko Harada  
(b. 1974 Yamanashi, Japan)  
*Mizu no Misaki: For What Reason*  
2018  
Printed paper

Junko Harada  
(b. 1974 Yamanashi, Japan)  
*Mizu no Misaki: Kofu City*  
2018  
Watercolour

Meiro Koizumi  
(b. 1976 Gunma, Japan)  
*When Her Prayer is Heard (Double  
Projection #2)*  
2014  
2 channel HD video, 26min 37sec

Natsumi Seo  
(b. 1988 Tokyo, Japan)  
*A Town beside the Sea* from the series  
'Voices from the Landscape'  
Acrylic on canvas, colour pencil and pencil  
on paper, text  
2011-18

Natsumi Seo  
(b. 1988 Tokyo, Japan)  
*Double layered town* from the series  
'Voices from the Landscape'  
Colour pencil and pencil on paper, text  
2015

Natsumi Seo  
(b. 1988 Tokyo, Japan)  
*A bird's eye* from the series 'Voices from  
the Landscape'  
Acrylic on canvas, colour pencil and pencil  
on paper, text  
2018

Haruka Komori CAMERA + EDITOR  
(b. 1989 Shizuoka, Japan)  
Natsumi Seo WRITER  
(b. 1988 Tokyo, Japan)  
*Under the Wave, On the Ground*  
2014  
1hr 7min 34sec