

Toshie Takeuchi

Planet of Rabbits



Galleri Image
1. - 30. september 2007

Were you ever a rabbit?

By Anne Mette Laursen

"I believe that our reality is always unsettled, that it might only exist in our dreams."

These are the words of the Japanese artist Toshie Takeuchi, who belongs to the international trained young generation of Japanese artists, that explore social and existential issues within a contemporary visual language.

The relationship between children and parents such as the confusing borders between reality and fantasy, as they are mentally experienced and questioned by children, are central themes of the digital montage series *Planet of Rabbits*, that marks the artist's first solo show and artistic debut in Denmark.

In panoramic sceneries the everyday surroundings of a child such as the local public park and the iconic classroom are transformed into enigmatic spheres belonging to a remote planet exclusively inhabited by rabbit disguised children.

Planet of Rabbits embodies a universe experienced from a child's point of view where fiction and reality are joined in the creation of surreal scapes.

The rabbits appear everywhere and nowhere as they, in dialectic interplays between fantasy and reality, visualize complex psychological tensions and express feelings and memories that cannot be verbalized but are poetically visualized through Takeuchi's artistic vocabulary.

Takeuchi uses references from many different sources in her artistic practise, as the images conceptually portray complex scenes inspired by contemporary Japanese novels, newspaper clippings, personal childhood memories and fairytales.

In the classical fairytale *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupery, the world is wisely questioned from a child's perspective as the little prince travels to different planets just as Takeuchi makes use of children to point out existential issues.

The children are disguised as rabbits and a reference to the Japanese term "Kawaii" seems relevant. Kawaii means "cute" in Japanese and it represents a visual urge to recreate the innocence of childhood by engaging into cute things from the childlike innocent look of a manga heroine to dressing up in cute customs as part of contemporary pop culture.

"Kawaii" represents a powerful escapism, but the children in *Planet of Rabbits* are not cute props in idyllic settings. They metaphorically represent a deconstruction of the glossy cute world of childhood and express frustrations and despairs as they are caught in the web between reality and fantasy and the psychological voids and misunderstandings that occur daily between children and parents.

In the series *Planet of Rabbits* the Japanese born but English trained artist engages in critical reflections upon issues that questions what it means to be a human being and for a moment escape from the given traditions of mass society.





I don't want see this anymore



an endless pumpkin machine



at coram's field I



at coram's field II

Toshie Takeuchi
"Planet of Rabbits"

1. - 30. September 2007

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I have a headache...

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