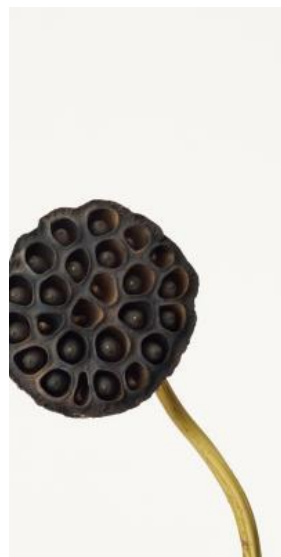




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Pacific Asia Museum Announces New Contemporary Exhibition *Takashi Tomo-oka*

Pasadena, CA— Pacific Asia Museum presents the new exhibition *Takashi Tomo-oka* in the Focus Gallery from April 19 through July 28, 2013. This exhibition is the first in a year-long series of contemporary Asian art exhibitions in this gallery.

Takashi Tomo-oka features six scroll-mounted photographic works that combine the classical and contemporary. As a young artist, Tomo-oka became interested in *nihonga* (neo-traditional Japanese painting) but was drawn to photography, adopting the digital camera as his medium rather than a brush. Tomo-oka eliminates all extraneous visual information other than the subject itself—vegetal forms such as maples and dahlias. The resulting images display a sensibility similar to that of the Rimpa school's nature studies in the 18th century, but replacing their gold leaf with stark white backgrounds. Each work is the result of careful study of the plant forms, including structure and color as well as their ephemerality. These spare compositions are digitally printed on *washi* paper and mounted in scroll format, further blurring the divide between his painterly sensibilities and digital methods.

"Tomo-oka's works demonstrate the dynamic of technology energizing art traditions and carrying them forward in new and innovative ways," said Curator Bridget Bray.

Born in Kyoto prefecture in 1971 to a basket weaver and a dressmaker, Takashi Tomo-oka developed a keen eye for the diversity of the natural world at an early age while accompanying his father on field trips to gather bamboo for baskets. While living in the Kyoto area, which had long been an imperial capital of Japan, Tomo-oka was exposed to highly refined Japanese art forms. He later worked as a landscape gardener and gained access to famous temple complexes such as Byōdō-in and Ryōan-ji. This allowed him to incorporate first-hand experience of classical garden design and the paintings and other objects in the temple collections in his work. These life experiences created a unique perspective, richly grounded in the traditional arts of Japan, which dovetailed with the formal training he received

as a painter at Kyoto Seika University. Tomo-oka lives and works in Tokyo, and had his first solo exhibition in the U.S. in New York in 2012. This will be his first exhibition in an American museum and first appearance on the west coast.

Takashi Tomo-oka is on view concurrently with the exhibitions *The Garden in Asia* and *Focus on the Subject: The Art of the Harari Collection*, allowing the visitor to reference the traditional nature paintings and Japanese art that have influenced Tomo-oka throughout his career. Related programs for *Takashi Tomo-oka* will include an installment of Fusion Fridays and Art and Coffee, as well as a curator's tour.

Top Images:

Takashi Tomo-oka, *Dahlia*, 2010, Digital photograph printed on *washi* and mounted on scroll, Courtesy of Ippodo Gallery. © Takashi Tomo-oka

Takashi Tomo-oka, *Magnolia*, 2011, Digital photograph printed on *washi* and mounted on scroll, Courtesy of Ippodo Gallery. © Takashi Tomo-oka

Takashi Tomo-oka, *Lotus 3*, 2011, Digital photograph printed on *washi* and mounted on scroll, Courtesy of Ippodo Gallery. © Takashi Tomo-oka

About Pacific Asia Museum

Pacific Asia Museum is among the few institutions in the United States dedicated exclusively to the arts and culture of Asia and the Pacific Islands. The museum's mission is to further intercultural understanding through the arts of Asia and the Pacific Islands. Since 1971, Pacific Asia Museum has served a broad audience of students, families, adults, and scholars through its education and outreach programs.

Pacific Asia Museum is located at 46 North Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, California 91101. The museum is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Admission is \$10 general, \$7 students/seniors, and free for museum members and children under 12. Admission is free every 4th Friday of the month.

For more information visit www.pacificasiamuseum.org or call (626) 449-2742.

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