

MASAO YAMAMOTO — Tomosu - 9th September -28th October 2023

'Tomosu: Yamamoto Masao' on 8th September 2023 on museemagazine.com

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#6011, Tomosu, n.d. ©Yamamoto Masao | Courtesy Gallery FIFTY ONE

**Gallery FIFTY ONE TOO | Tomosu: Yamamoto
Masao, September 9 - October 28 2023**

"Gallery FIFTY ONE is pleased to present the fourth solo exhibition of Japanese photographer Yamamoto Masao (1957). In 'Tomosu' the artist shows new work, including a selection of photographs created using the nineteenth century Ambrotype process. The title of the exhibition is Japanese for 'to illuminate, to turn on a small light in the darkness'.

"Yamamoto's oeuvre has undeniably evolved over the past decade. He became known for his small prints - delicate objects that fit in the palm of one's hand or wallet so they could be carried around like a talisman - but in recent years his photographs have undergone an increase in scale. Whereas in earlier exhibitions his prints were mounted directly on the wall in meandering constellations in which each image was part of a larger story, the works are now more self-contained and the physical relation between the viewer and the photographic object has somewhat shifted to the background. However, the basic thought of Yamamoto's artistic vision - the connection with nature and the attention to the subtle things that surround us and tell us more about elements of the universe that are invisible to us - have remained the same.

“Yamamoto lives in the Province of Yamanashi, west of Tokyo, in a house surrounded by forests and mountains. For him, beauty and happiness derive from living in harmony with nature. In his photographs the artist invites the viewer to direct the gaze to the small things that can be found in wild nature, from which humanity is largely estranged. Human beings who, moreover, make up only a minimal part of the universe, insignificant in the face of the constant ebb and flow of time. Yamamoto translates this philosophy into his work by giving his prints an aura of timelessness. Through experiments in the dark room, but also by bathing his prints in tea and tearing, creasing and scratching their edges, he deliberately gives his photographs an old, faded look, as if they were memories from times long past. These manual interventions - as well as colouring the edges and the subtle application of paint splashes with which Yamamoto, trained as a painter, explores the boundaries between photography and painting - make each print unique.”

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