



The Play

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Groupe formé en 1967 dans la région de Kansai au Japon. Toujours actif.

Situant « sans raison particulière » la plupart de leurs actions dans la nature en admettant simplement « aimer le temps et l'espace infinis du plein air », The Play est un groupe à géométrie variable, composé d'artistes et d'individus aux personnalités et aux compétences diverses. Au-delà de la critique des institutions sociales et artistiques caractéristique du contexte japonais des années 1960, le groupe n'a cessé d'inventer ses propres modalités d'actions collectives ainsi que leurs transmissions en créant à plusieurs la possibilité qu'un événement advienne sans se soucier de son résultat. Rejetant la notion d'œuvre d'art comme finalité, il a ainsi toujours mis l'accent sur sa propre dynamique, fondée sur l'échange et le « faire ensemble » dans sa dimension physique autant que spirituelle, à travers la construction de situations éphémères.

Sans faire de distinction entre l'art et la vie, The Play réside dans cet entre-deux soustrait aux systèmes établis de l'art, de sa production à sa consommation. Depuis plus de cinquante ans, il souligne par son engagement une attitude, un esprit dont le jeu, la sincérité et l'humour restent essentiels. Sa persistance dans la durée, qui s'explique en partie par le modèle collectif de son fonctionnement, et l'extraordinaire engagement de ses membres lors de chacun des projets en fait un groupe à part dans l'histoire de l'art japonais, ni complètement

intégré, ni complètement à la marge. Cette persistance dans l'action éphémère signée collectivement cristallise aujourd'hui comme hier un refus de céder aux codes du monde de l'art, mais également une relation au travail et à l'art à l'exact opposé d'une recherche d'efficacité, de performance et de réussite.

Art collective formed in 1967 in the Japanese Kansai region. Still active.

Staging most of their actions, "without particular reason," in "natural outdoor spaces," and admitting they "only like[d] the infinite time and space of open air," The Play is a fluctuating art collective that is still active today, gathering individuals with various personalities and skills. It was formed in 1967 in the Japanese Kansai region. Beyond its critique of social and artistic institutions—a typical stance in the 1960s Japanese art scene—the group has constantly devised its own methods for collective actions and the ways for transmitting them, its members coming together to create the possibility of an event without any concern for its result. Rejecting the notion of the artwork as an end, The Play has always stressed its own particular dynamics, based on sharing and on "making-together," in a physical as well as a spiritual sense, through the staging of ephemeral situations.

Refusing to distinguish art from life, The Play dwells in an in-between space, removed from the established structures of art, from its production to its consumption. For these reasons long ignored even in its own country, The Play is now raising a certain critical interest in Japan and abroad. Through its involvement, the group underlines, for more than 50 years an attitude and an outlook focused on playing, sincerity and humor, notions that remain crucial today. Its persistence and longevity, which may be partly explained by the collective organisational model, as well as the outstanding motivation of its members for each project, have set The Play apart from other groups in Japanese art history, never completely integrated, yet never completely at the margins. Their persistence in collective and ephemeral actions still crystallizes a refusal to abide by the codes of the (art) world, situated at the exact opposite of a search for efficiency, performance or success.

actions / exhibitions / books (selection)

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2022 / Aller contre le vent (cur. Sylvie Zavatta), France FRAC Franche-Comté, Besançon . **2021** / Between Collectivism and individualism _ Japanese Avant-Garde of the 50s and 60s (cur. Maria Brewińska), Zacheta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw-a, Poland / L'usage des richesses, Salle Principale, Paris, France . **2020** / Kalejdoskop (cur. Elodie Royer & Yoann Gourmel), Salle Principale, Paris, France (solo) . **2019** / MADO The Window: A Journey of Art and Architecture through Windows, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan . **2018** / HÖHENRAUSCH, OK Center for Contemporary Art, Linz, Austria / EMERALD CITY, K11 Art Foundation, Hong Kong, China / 1968: Art in the Turbulent Age, Chiba City Museum of Art / Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art, Shizuoka Prefectural Museum of Art, Japan / Awakenings: Art in Society in Asia 1960s -1990s, The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan / National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea / National Gallery Singapore . **2017** / Arsenale Zig Zag, 57th International Art Exhibition La Biennale di Venezia, Venice / Japanorama: New Vision on Art since 1970, Centre Pompidou-Metz, France . **2016** / Radical Seafaring, Parrish Art Museum, Water Mill, USA / THE PLAY since 1967 : beyond unknown currents, The National Museum of Art, Osaka . **2015** / IE Picnic: THE PLAY HAVE A HOUSE, 4th Dojima River Biennale, Osaka . **2014** / Politicization of Friendship, Moderna Galerija in Ljubljana, Slovenia . **2012** / Le Mont Fuji n'existe pas (cur. Elodie Royer & Yoann Gourmel), Le Plateau, Frac Ile de France, Paris / Current of Contemporary Art, La Seine, Paris . **2011** / Kaza Ana Air Hole: Another Form of Conceptualism from Asia, National Museum of Art, Osaka / Current of Contemporary

Art, Nakanoshima, Dojima- river, Osaka / The Feeling of Things (cur. Elodie Royer & Yoann Gourmel), Le Plateau, Frac Ile de France, Paris . **2008** / PLATFORM SEOUL 2008, Old Seoul station building, Seoul . **2000** / YAKUSIMA ISLAND, Cutting of the sea surfaces, Yakushima Island, Kagoshima, Japan / PLAY is PLAY . **1999** / KUCHINOERABU, Kuchinoerabujima Island, Kagoshima, Japan . **1994** / Art in KANSAI 1950's - 1970's, Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Modern Art, Kobe, Japan . **1991** / Japanese Anti-Art: Now and Then, National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan / Issue of the second book PLAY, 1981 - 1990 . **1990** / CLOCK: A Shaft of Light of 70 million years, Takarayama, Mt. Ishizuchi, Ehime, Japan / THE PLAY: Record and Site . **1988** / YELLOW PIPE, Koumori mine, Mt. Oe, Kyoto, Japan . **1986** / JAPON DES AVANT GARDES 1910~1970, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France . **1985** / THE PLAY: Record and Site . **1983** / KAREJDOSKOP, Namba Media Studio, Osaka, Japan . **1982** / MAP 1/1: 2-22 Kasuga, Suita city, LIVE Art THEATER, Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Modern Art, Kobe, Japan . **1981** / Working Room = Model of Meaning, Art Now '81, Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Modern Art, Kobe, Japan / Issue of the first book PLAY, 1967 - 1980 . **1980** / MADO or reply=Love the things out of pale, Art Now '80, Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Modern Art, Kobe, Japan . **1977** / ~1986 THUNDER 1-10, Mt. Jubu, Mt. Omine, Kyoto, Japan / PAN-CONCEPTUALS'77, Maki Gallery, Tokyo, Japan / From the East THE PLAY, Galeria Akumulatory, Poznan, Poland . **1976** / WIND: Wandering in the wind, Sarobetsu Wilderness, Hokkaido, Japan . **1975** / CANOE, Mt. Ibuki, Siga - Lake Biwa, Siga, Japan . **1974** / TOROKKO, Minamidaitojima Island, Okinawa, Japan . **1973** / THE BRIDGE, 2nd Kyoto Biennale, Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art, Kizu- river, Japan . **1972** / FLAG: April fool Happenings, Mt. Ondo, Kyoto, Japan / IE: THE PLAY HAVE A HOUSE, Kyoto – Osaka, Japan . **1971** / BENCH, 10th Contemporary Art Exhibition of Japan, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Art, Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art, Japan . **1970** / WHITE CROSS MANIFESTO, Mt. Rokko, Kobe, Japan / SHEEP, Kyoto - Osaka, Japan . **1969** / HOSPITAL April fool Happenings, Ruins of a hospital, Osaka, Japan / CURRENT OF CONTEMPORARY ART, Kyoto – Osaka, Japan / CROSS-MEETIN', Mt. Aso, Kyushu, Japan / 7 DIMENSIONS, National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Japan / Publication of the organ paper THE PLAY/Vol.1-3 . **1968** / VOYAGE: Happening in an Egg, Kushimoto, Wakayama, Japan / REACTION IN SUMMER / TIME ZONE . **1967** / First PLAY Exhibition, East Amusement Park, Kobe, Japan

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