

*Greenhouse* (2001) and *White Land* (2002), both of which are works from Tomoko Inagaki's early career, use one-way mirrors. These pieces present a situation where the distinction between true/false is ambiguous due to their antinomic structures in which 'a closed box all covered with mirrors' coexists with 'an interior which infinitely extends'. *Forcing House* (2013) is developed from those two works.

According to the artist, *Forcing House* is 'a video installation which is adapted to and recreated in the context of the present' based on *Greenhouse*, using the same setting of 'a greenhouse covered with mirrors'. 'Forcing house', like 'greenhouse', represents a conservatory, and in this piece, a video is projected inside of the space, which shows a woman who has overgrown because of the effect of the 'forcing house' and is moving around uncomfortably in the room now too small for her. The room is a peculiar space where nature and artificiality mix together, furnished with real and fake plants. This greenhouse looks transparent from the outside; however, once the spectators enter the space, they will be enclosed within an infinite garden thanks to the one-way mirror film. The video of the woman suffering from the discomfort of being stuck in a small space is also reflected again and again, multiplied and divided like images in a kaleidoscope.

This self-replicating image of the woman trapped in an infinite virtual space reminds us of a series of work by Miwa Yanagi of *Elevator Girl* (1994-99). Yanagi's photography critically represents that standardised women's bodies are dazzling and tempting but are also given status as a commodity in a spectacular consumer space which is now a void without the texture or reality.

The comparison of the *Elevator Girl* series and *Forcing House* reveals a transformation in Japanese society during the ten or more years that have passed between these two pieces of work. Whilst the former was produced in the late '90s when the heat of the bubble economy still vaguely remained, *Forcing House* suggests that now we are in the midst of helplessness, surrounded by infinitely expanding virtual images without knowing the outside of it or even an exit from it. The visceral presence of the body in the video and a confined space within the room highlight the claustrophobic feeling of being stuck in walls that appear to be approaching to crush us. What Inagaki creates here is not what is described by Jean Baudrillard, a hyperreal world filled with simulacra which has no original or copy. Instead, the artist conjures up a space which is certainly **real** but in which the boundary between the true and the false cannot be decided.

In Inagaki's artwork, we can observe dualisms —interior and exterior, light and darkness, artificiality and nature, real and fake, self and other, to see and to be seen, and enclosed space and unlimited expansion—are dramatically reversed, or their boundaries are destabilised by the process through which the two elements of dualisms are secretly connected with each other. 'Setting up contradictions' that confuse and paralyse our fixed assumptions, her pieces display a critical potential which invites us to reconsider the concepts of everyday life which are deeply ingrained within us. With such works, Inagaki opens up a space in between duality where a thing can be 'A as well as not-A'. Inagaki's robust artwork conjures up an illogical world which transcends reason, although utilising verbally describable logic. It continues proving that it is one of the fundamental powers of art to imagine a horizon where duality dissolves, through casting a poignant critical perspective upon reality.

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