

# UNDER THE INFLUENCE



# PRIVATE



**'INTO THE  
NIGHT'**

**THE WORK  
OF**

**TOKYO  
RUMANDO**



**HIDEKA  
TONOMURA**

**SAKIKO  
NOMURA**

**SELECTED  
AND INTRODUCED BY  
SIMON BAKER**



Sakiko Nomura's 2012 book *Kuroyami* is one of the darkest, most mysterious photobooks of recent years. Literally 'Black Darkness', *Kuroyami* takes photography to the limits of visibility, with almost completely lightless interiors, absolute shadows, rendered in sooty ink on soft, almost light-absorbing paper. This is a book experienced as a kind of voyeuristic intrusion, a series of glimpses into a world that seems to turn its back on the light that feeds eyes and cameras alike. Somewhere in there is a single point of white across a double page that only eventually resolves itself as a tiger's eye. But mostly what we only ever *nearly* see, hidden on *Kuroyami's* pages, are silently intense rooms, hotel rooms it would seem, containing the barely outlined forms of naked and semi-naked figures, primarily men, posing or in repose: the subjects of a long, slow, lingering gaze in the confident, comfortable but still charged aftermath of some earlier off-camera seduction.

The radical intimacy at the heart of Japanese photography originated in its first great avant-garde moment in the late 1960s and early 70s: men like Nobuyoshi Araki and Masahisa Fukase made work of heartbreaking simplicity and emotional intensity that seemed to fold life and art into an impossibly precarious unity without flinching away from the realities of sex, love and even death. Araki's *Sentimental Journey/Winter Journey* (1971-1992) remains perhaps the most moving photographic work of all time: two sequenced series of intensely explicit photographs following and detailing first his absolute passion for his wife from their honeymoon and early married life together, and then on to the unbearable point where she falls ill and passes away before his (and our) eyes. Arguably however, both the emotional intensity of this early work and the explicit intimacy of Araki's subsequent libidinally charged practice crossed lines in a very specific direction in relation to gender politics (both in Japan and beyond).

That Nomura has been Araki's assistant for many years is less surprising than the fact that she is just one of a new wave of women artists in Japan whose work both embraces and bypasses that of their better-known male peers. In a series of beautifully controlled and composed books (which include *Kuroyami* and *Nude/A Room/Flowers*) Nomura has reached into the private lives of those around her, and into a sophisticated practice that both records and stages



intimacy, to produce photographs with a uniquely balanced look and feel: neither explicit nor prudish but always at the limit of convention.

Hideka Tonomura has published several photobooks (including *They Call Me Yukari*) beginning with the controversial *Mama Love*, each of which concerns the borderlines of sexuality in contemporary Tokyo from the perspective of the young women either engaged (or only apparently engaged) in the world of hostess clubs and escorts. Revealing the operative double standard of a Japanese culture in which it seems that anything goes at night but nobody speaks about it the next day, Tonomura's work is as strong and highly charged as the boundaries that it crosses.

Tokyo Rumando, by contrast, works entirely outside the frame of documentary or fly-on-the-sex-club-wall photography. Instead her deeply personal but nonetheless intimate and explicit work concerns the staging of the artist's own fantasies in the closed world of the love-hotels whose invitations to 'Rest' or 'Stay' for different rates gives the series its name. Another Rumando project 'Orphée' sees the artist acting out her own alternative reflections before a mirror. But in 'Rest/Stay' the environments in which Rumando finds herself seem to take her over completely, resulting in a series of finely calibrated and carefully posed fantasies that speak of a strangely forced freedom within a stifling and constraining social space.

Simon Baker, Senior Curator, International Art  
(Photography), Tate

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Tokyo Rumando's work 'Orphée' is included in the exhibition 'Performing for the Camera', at Tate Modern until June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016



## Tokyo Rumando, Rest/Stay





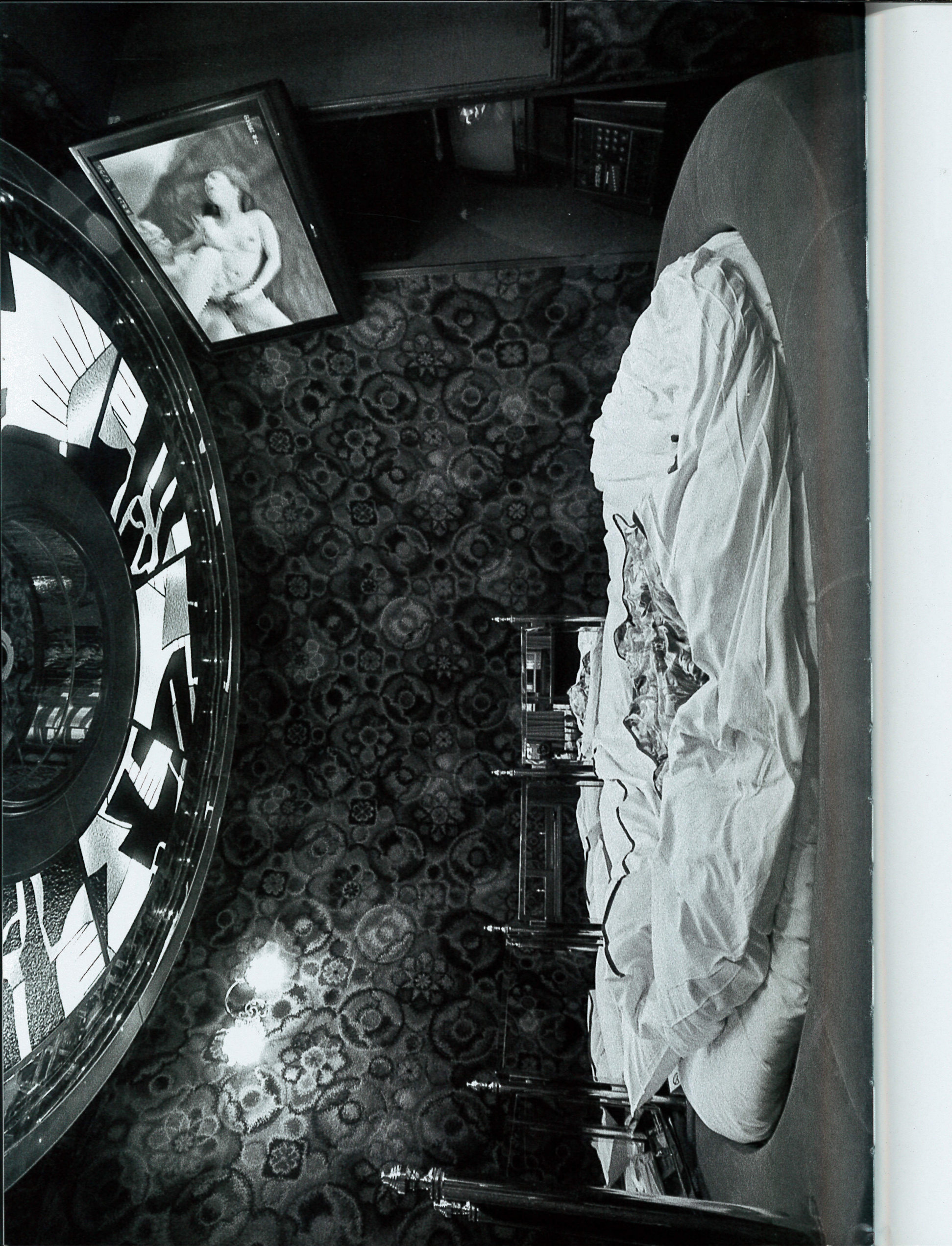












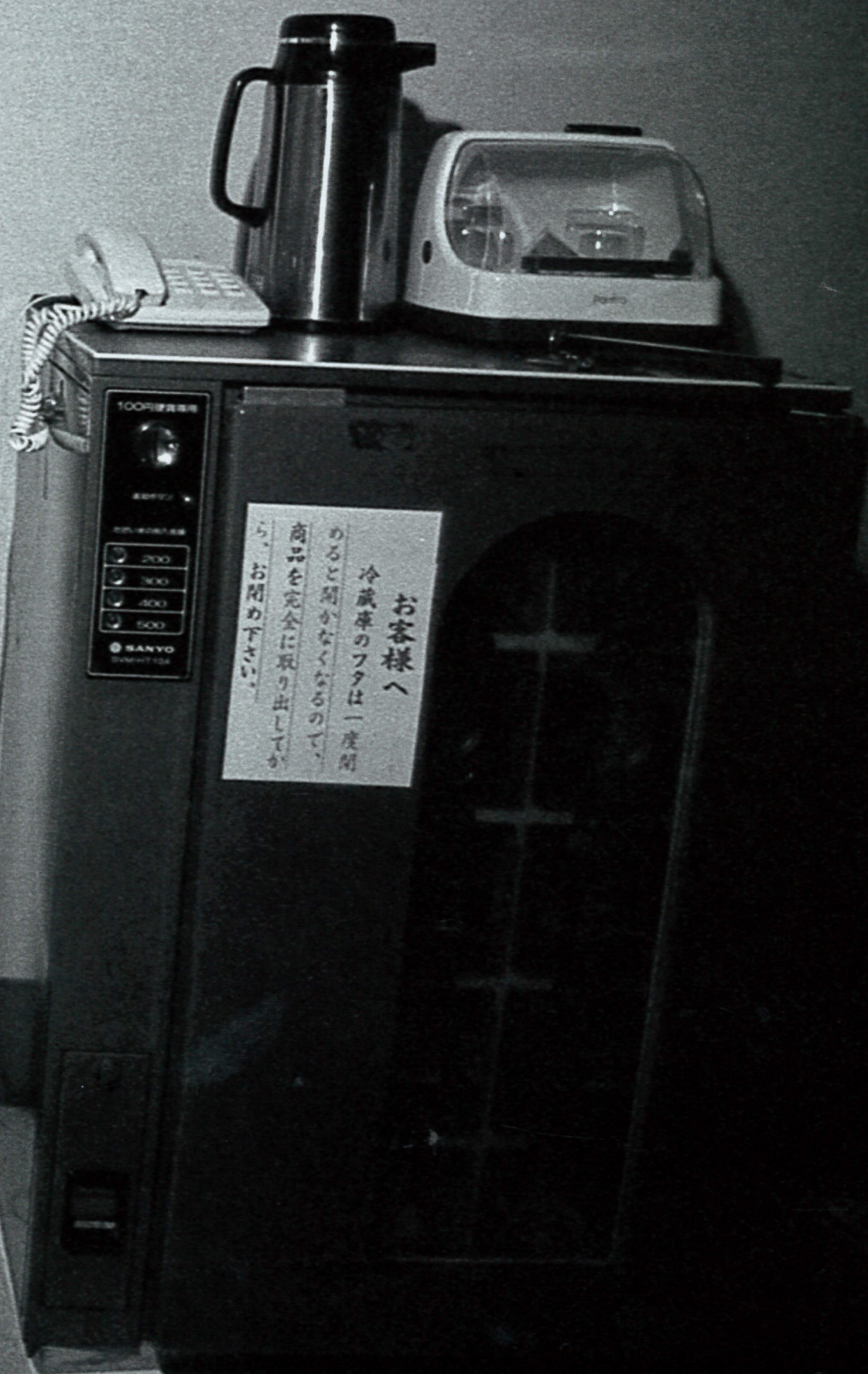


















## — INFORMATION —

110

2部月～金 AM3:00-PM2:00 | t.t.HH  
AM10:00-PM7:00 | AM10:00-PM5:00

50000

脱込み

税込み

**24時間休憩あり**

既込み

90分 ¥3,800





# Hideka Tonomura, They Call Me Yukari





























