

Heterotopias: sites of resistance and negotiation

Yuko Hasegawa, Commissioner

Heterotopia can be found in real society, where they exist as distinct sites of resistance.

Heterotopia: An organ, or a part thereof, in an abnormal location, the tissue structure not being in its normal place.

("Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary")

Heterotopia: Individuals of a species inhabiting different biotopes at different stages and generations of their life cycle. Examples include terrestrial species with water larvae, parasites. (Adapted from Andrey I. Granovitch, "Parasitic Systems and the Structure of Parasite Populations").

Chapter 1 Other Spaces

Heterotopia signifies *hetero topos*, or *other spaces*, and is a word that can be interpreted in a number of different ways. When we refer to a place that is not *here* but *another place*, this could be many things - a place that is out of the ordinary, the fringe or the incorrect place. In contrast to utopia, with its symbolic meaning of an ideal place which exists *nowhere*, heterotopia, signifies an actual place *somewhere*, whether it is ideal or not.

Various theories on *other spaces* are emerging from the growing interest in the fringe and *the other* as a result of a reconsideration of modernism.¹ The preoccupation with the outdated word *topos* represents a resistance to the virtual world and to phenomena with a tenuous relationship with reality that is found in our globalism and media-driven information-oriented society.

For example, Michel Foucault describes utopia and heterotopia as peculiar spaces that at once relates to, and contradicts, other sites, and also, as *other spaces* that deviate from the everyday. Although utopia is an imaginary place that does not exist in reality, heterotopia exists among actual institutions and systems, transporting people away from reality. Prisons, mental hospitals, oriental gardens, fair grounds, libraries, museums, colonies and ships are discussed extensively, following the 6 rules associated with heterotopologie.²

Foucault theorizes that heterotopia, lying on the periphery of modernity, constantly threatens the certainty and closed nature of modernity, bringing it to the brink of destruction. Although Homi Bhabha's concept of *Third Space* is similar, Foucault's theory transcends topographical location-politics.

Unlike *the fringe* or *third space*, the word *heterotopia*, with its familiarity as a medical or ecological term, is also associated with an abnormal state. *Ectopia*, or an organ that isn't its normal place in the body, or the ecological term *heterogony* signify heterotopia as *different* or *incorrect* sites. Consequently, however, they are also predictors of transformation, catalysts which give *normalcy* a jolt.

The utopian projects and debates of the beginning of the last century are once again becoming popular today, at the beginning of the 21st century, at a time when the frameworks of values and concepts are about to undergo a restructuring. However, the accumulation and reconstruction of a life-sized reality, a schizophrenic creation that is the result of unpredictable events and events viewed in terms of location-politics and philosophical *positions* that differ according to the individual, means that in this contemporary world we are ideologically unable to share utopia - an ideal space that is impossible by definition to realize.

Heterotopia takes on utopia's role in the 20th century as a *functioning concept* in the 20th century but in the context of today's reality. In other words, heterotopia is a concept that questions how the existing condition (the present situation) should be approached, stimulated and dissimilated and deconstructed into *something else* through *spaces found in reality*.

Heterotopic and schizophrenic Japan

The *Heterotopias* exhibition is an attempt to reveal two aspects of heterotopia through the spaces created by the work of these two artists. Heterotopia as external spaces working from the fringe to threaten the rigidity of mainstream modernism and heterotopia which, transcending systems, politics and the notion of right or wrong, results in an ecological transformation or mutation.

Japan can be said to be heterotopic in many ways. Not only is it geographically on the fringe, but it is an island that lies in the Far East which voraciously samples a wide range of cultures, ignoring the original contexts and reconstituting them - Japanizing them - by placing them within a radically different and unique context. As a metaphor, this image is represented by Tokyo, where many radically different spaces come together, becoming chaotically intertwined. The very embodiment of rampant heterotopic growth, here we can see the unrestrained manifestations of intensely hybridized subcultures. When seen from the topos of modernism, these are peculiar and external spaces that continue to exist as other-spaces. Here we can see a blend of many different styles and periods. The tiny shrines that are sandwiched between high-rise buildings, the latest computer placed in a tatami room, digital culture with its connections to animism ... these are all chaotic and schizophrenic blends.

The landscape and the body as found in other-spaces

Both Yutaka Sone and Motohiko Odani are artists who create real spaces through their sculptures and installations of moving images. If the theme underlying Sone's work is the meta-landscape that appears as a result of the involvement of people and nature, then the theme underlying Odani's work would be the new sensations and new theories of the body, exploring the nature of the transformation that can be forced, the nature of the dreams that result from our physical involvement with the increasing complexity of the media environment

and information society. The spaces that Sone and Odani create through their work are "'counter-sites' that embody their host culture and at the same time dissent, causing that culture to stumble. These can be defined as being outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality." (Foucault)

Sone, by rendering the elusive form of the jungle in sculpture, is attempting to confirm his relative place. And Odani attempts to sculpt *air* by depicting flowing water and wind. This is also a supremely sensitive and acute way of affirming one's physical space and what it is that affects one's skin and nerves. Both Sone and Odani's work are related to a reconstruction of and search for a relationship between oneself and the world, one's physical and social position and the whereabouts of one's sensory nerves. Moreover, their methodology and viewpoint has been greatly influenced by the outrageous blending, transformation, contextual deconstruction and reconstruction as well as the *deconstruction-in-progress* that continues, without any sign of completion, through the process of change that has been created by the heterotopic place called Japan.

Watching Sone and Odani at work is like watching a sculptor starting to carve out a place in the world without any warning or intention, ending up creating an air pocket-like space. And although this space is closed to a degree, it has a *hole* that enables one to enter and to leave. Sone's journey is very much like the travels of Sun Wukong³ - schizophrenic, intermittent and featuring great flights and leaps. Based on the video footage of scenes from *Night Bus* (1995) that he asked his friends to record, Sone went on to develop the theme of night scenes. He conceived of a film, the theme of which was to be *Hong Kong Island* (1998) at night, producing only a storyboard and completing the project in the form of a marble sculpture. Sone then produced *A Beautiful Day* (2001) by using a sculpture, the intention of which was to depict people skiing and surfing. Then, the Himalayas were represented as a small snowcapped mountain on a snowfield, and using this, he ended up creating a silver maquette of a (20 meters) monument to the form of amusement called the slide. From one material to another, from the scale of a landscape to a miniature scale, from a sculptural space to a temporal landscape. In Sone's work, everything is connected and yet continues to change, to *journey* and a series of different sized topos continues to be created. And, into Sone's space enters the observer. In this space, intermittence and continuity, a blending of everything and the ambiguity of boundaries are all tolerated.

Through the sculpting of his material and through the sensibilities of the observer, Odani sculpts - reconstructs - the observer's awareness and nerve cells. To carve the pleats of a skirt floating on water, into wood. This equates to carving water, and is something that is incompatible with our understanding of materiality. The numerous images etched into the skin of the human figure carved in wood

represent the duality of the primitive human form and the virtual human form created through information. Odani carves, into wood, the speed of water falling in a waterfall. This is a representation of speed as we see it that enables us to analyze the world by pausing time. Our sensibility and perception are reconstructed in the topos created by Odani. And the subcultures that have been gathered and blended through this perception, altered pathologically into a digital-baroque perception, examines the collection of the fragments of tradition, and the equally placed references to them. This can be compared to a giant scrap heap from which a life form with a heterogeneous perception appears. Odani, while breathing in a topos that isn't an ideal place, that is a heterotopia, distorts his sensibility to the highest degree of complexity and attempts to transcend the limitations of pre-modernist and modernist sculpture.

The stumbling and fall of viewpoints, awareness and values. A region where every kind of fall and every kind of protest takes place, where ambiguity and indeterminacy are regarded as having great value. In this heterotopia, the *landscape* and *the body* are revealed for the first time. Through the strength of this topos, Sone and Odani are attempting to sublimate the limits of imagination and creativity.

Notes:

1. A relationship between geography and the space in which a difference arises from movements (such as feminism, post-colonialism and cultural studies) resisting and attempting to dismantle major monophyletic systems has been revealed. The recent trend in geology to theorize on the spatiality of location and identity politics and that of power and resistance is not unrelated to this. Countless terms related to space and geography appear in recent cultural and social research, while the use of words such as *situated* and *located* or words related to *journey* in self-reflection *spatializes*, the representation of the self. Exponents of this theory include James Clifford who proposed the term *journey* as a metaphor in his interest in the mobility of theories and culture, and Homi Bhabha who conceived an alternative spatiality for resistance based on *the fringe* as a metaphor.
2. Refer Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces" (Lecture notes, 1967), in "Diacritics" and "Lotus", 1986 Edward W. Soja, "Heterotopologies - Foucault and the Geohistory of Otherness in Third Space" For example, heterotopia such as a mental hospitals or prisons that represent a deviation from required norms. In the Third Principle, a heterotopia in which mutually heterogeneous *spaces*, *several sites that are themselves incompatible* can be juxtaposed in a single real place is mentioned. The oriental garden, designed since ancient times to represent the oneness of the world, is suggested first, followed by modernized examples, other-spaces that include various locations and spaces such as Disney World, or World Expositions. A feature of Foucault's heterotopia is the connection with the slices of time that he calls heterochronie. Classical archives and libraries are mentioned as examples of heterotopia where time is accumulated, *a place that in itself lies beyond time, a place that is made up of many different times and which remains unaffected by being beyond time*. Meanwhile, festival sites, markets and resort villages are mentioned as contrasting examples of temporary and unstable time-spaces. Also mentioned are colonies, ships and brothels as fantasy heterotopia, in which every *real-space* is revealed as something even more fantastical, and compensatory heterotopia where another space is created from an incomplete space.
3. Sun Wukong - the Monkey King who plays a central role in the Chinese novel "Xi You Ji" ("Journey to the West"). Sun Wukong acquired a series of skills that included 72 transformations and flying on clouds, and he wreaked havoc in the heavens. Also called Monkey or Songoku, he was subdued through Buddha's powers, after which he accompanied the priest Tripitaka and endured the 81 Ordeals, travelling to India and assisting the priest in receiving the 5,048 Buddhist scriptures. (adapted from "Kojien, 5th edition", Iwanami Shoten). The various skills possessed by Sun Wukong included body-outside-body techniques. Sun would pluck his hairs, blow them in the air, and the hairs would transform into numerous small monkeys. Others included the 72 transformations, where Sun would transform himself into various living forms such as a bee or a pine tree, and a technique of flying on clouds that allowed him to travel 108,000 leagues (approximately 54,000 km) in a single leap.

Sone's work contains several elements representing the world. These are the temporal landscapes filled with the impossible and the absurd that are found in the jungle, in amusements, in night scenes and in the involvement of people. Arguably, these can be described as unknown and out-of-the-ordinary landscapes.

Despite the fact that we enjoy an unprecedented freedom of movement and access to information about the world we live in, we remain unable to have an understanding of even the city that we live in. The motive behind Sone's art is to confirm the connections and the discontinuity of this world and, by expressing and representing these through his art, to come to an understanding, for the first time, of the world.¹

For example, when Sone discusses the attraction of the jungle, this, at the same time, is an explanation for the change that takes place from *the latent impossibility* that lies in the unrecognizable, to a vast potential.

"I love the jungle. There it is far from me. There are no places to sit down, no floors, no walls, no physical boundaries, no left, no right. There are no directions so even sounds do not come from any designated place."²

According to psychoanalyst Hisao Nakai, the human race can be divided into those with a schizophrenic temperament and those with a depressive temperament, with the former represented by the descendants of hunter-gatherers while the latter are found predominantly in agriculturalists.³ In other words, when *the schizophrenics* are in the jungle, time isn't something chronological that follows a calendar, but is Chironian in concept, that is, anthropocentric. In the jungle, space isn't up and down or right and left, and one has no idea what will appear, or from where. People hunting in this environment don't move after seeing their prey, but move simultaneously with what they sense in the air. Nakai explains this by using the example of the movements of a soccer player, and Sone's actions and his recognition [of his environment] are very similar. When Sone discusses the *many different time frames*, the *landscape* in his work is very much one in which this human time, that is, time that expands and shrinks dictated by subjectivity, flows.

To artificially create an unknown landscape is directly related to the absurdity and impossibility of the act. Sone also describes the relationship between his ever-changing materials including marble, charcoal drawing, video making and knitting, the medium and the size of the work as a *journey*. *Abstract Architecture by Sixteen Tools* is a work submitted as his graduation piece by Sone while a student. In this work, he lists the training and tools necessary for becoming an architect, and was to become the prototype for several of Sone's later works.

Abstract Architecture by Sixteen Tools devises a set of rules before starting out as an architect, before doing a first simulation. In the sense that this work was an attempt to establish one's own rules, rather than those used in existing art forms or buildings, to represent the world, there is a similarity between Sone and Duchamp.

These elements will be examined in the following works by Sone.

The Impossible

Sone initially described himself as "a man digging a bottomless swamp". By establishing a code for the impossible, the impotent energy that is endlessly directed into it is, at a certain point, suddenly inverted to offer unknown potential. And, to prevent that very act from becoming a cliché, Sone has continued to shift the established frame in every work that he has undertaken by skillfully interweaving space, time, fiction and reality.

As this impossibility neither stems from anarchism nor nihilism but is an impossibility in which the illusion of potential or possibility has been minimized, the powers of our imagination are infinitely stimulated as we wait for that potential to be realized. The title for the exhibition *One hand clapping* which this writer curated in 1993 by bringing together works based only on Sone's concept, is derived from the Zen koan, "what is the sound of one hand clapping". How can one clap with one hand and what would it sound like? The depth of speculation resulting from this impossible question posed by this Zen koan overlaps with the methodology behind Sone's conceptualization.

As an example, let us examine *Her 19th Foot* (1993). In this work, 19 monocycles are joined together and ridden simultaneously by 19 people. When considered objectively, this is an almost impossible project, and these monocycles would only be able to travel one meter at the most. However, the imagination of the people who participated in this project was stimulated by the potential that lay in that single push of the pedal. Rather than experiencing the wonderful sense of achievement that results from cooperation, it is when the riders realize that they have achieved a distance of one meter - the result of discommunication - and allow that feeling to continue, that they become part of Sone's *temporal landscape* enabling a glimpse into a discontinuous world. The impossible is also depicted in *Eyeglasses for Invisible Section* (a mask which was apparently made by marking the section of Sone's face that he couldn't see) and *A Camera at Shutter Speed of One Year* (1993).

Journey to a place that can't be seen

Journey to a place that can't be seen *Artificial Lawn Performance* (1994) is a fictional work, the format of which is a *making of ...* story and documentary video of laying artificial lawn on the moon's surface. Sone, with NASA's cooperation, flies to the moon in a space shuttle and lays artificial lawn on the other side of the moon, that is, the side that can't be seen from Earth. It is an ironical reference to the practice

amongst Americans of laying lawn as soon as they build a house. This journey towards what can't be seen is developed in his later works in a different form.

In *Night Bus* (1995), there is a double meaning behind the journey to a place that can't be seen. Sone gets six friends to travel through Asia and other locations and to record, on video, the scenes that they see from the night bus. Two aspects of invisibility are incorporated into this work - the scenes from a night bus that normally can't be seen because the passengers are asleep, and the fact that these are the experiences of people other than the artist. The resulting footage was edited into a single video and depicts a series of locations with different topologies. However, what can be seen on the video is limited as they are night scenes, and as the viewpoint is moving as the scenes were filmed from a moving bus, the landscape ends up becoming a continuous landscape. And, as a result of the personal relationship - it was Sone's friends that witnessed this landscape - the footage has been edited by Sone in a sweep of continuous emotion.

After producing this video, Sone began producing marble sculptures. *Hong Kong Island / Chinese* (1998) is a work incorporating both the element of invisibility and the element of the impossibility of an action. It is a sculpture of the island of Hong Kong at night, based on Sone's aerial view of the Island during a night flight to research this work. This is not a physical representation of Hong Kong Island, but a sculpture of a night scene, that is, the glistening city lights and the forms created by the lights. Although there are many paintings depicting night scenes, a sculpture that is literally a sculpted night scene is no doubt unprecedented. The white mass which represents the island and the substructure of the island below the water's surface, also the pedestal for the sculpture, takes the form of the snow leopard, rarely seen in China, amplifying the dream that is evoked by the invisible.

The Temporal

A diverse sense of time has been visualized in Sone's works, such as the perfect moment in which time seems to stand still as evoked by *Amusement* (1998) and *Highway Junction* (2002), *A Camera at Shutter Speed of One Year* (1993), *A Beautiful Day* (2001) in which skiing in mountain, surfing in the sea or beach, and roller skating are experienced in a single day in Los Angeles and *Hello Bat* (1999) which depicts a colony of bats flying into the evening sky (with directions by Sone that the work is only to be shown at a designated time in the evening). And these time frames are not so much diverse as Sone's subjective time frames that have been crystallized into something visible. For example, *Amusement* (1998) is a sculpture of a roller coaster. Sone has carved the people on the roller coaster and depicted that moment in time when the roller coaster car has ascended to the highest point and is just about to descend, that is, the moment in which the mixed emotions of anticipation, exhilaration and fear reach a peak.

Therefore, it is also a sculpture of a complete moment in the experience of *amusement*. In the sense of permanently capturing the ultimate moment, arguably, no work in the past has depicted this Chironian concept of time to this extent. To take this even further, Sone has mapped out an amusement park in which only the situations in which this ultimate moment in time takes place - that moment when excitement and joy reach their peak - are brought together. Here, Sone has brought together a series of amusements, all at their peak - a giant swing in which the rider has reached the peak of the swing's arc, a roller coaster car just about to descend, and giant coffee cups filled with people and all spinning.

It is the statistical theory of probability that is part of people's time, yet transcends people's sense of time. Arguably, the reason behind Sone's attempt to represent this probability is also related to *unknown temporal landscapes*.

Sone's early work, *World Janken [paper rock scissors] Championship* is based on a premise that, out of a population of 5.2 billion, the one who wins 33 times in a row at stone, paper, scissors will become the world champion. It is also an example of Sone's methodology in which he attempts to find out the population of the world through the extension of his personal experience. Although the rules in *World Championship for knitting-The most beautiful city name in the World* (1995) (in which place names are played against each other, tournament style, with the winners, and ultimately, the champion, decided by Sone) are completely different, it is also an example of the process in which Sone tries to recognize the world through place names.

The video work, *Double Six* (2000), in which 2-meter high silver dice are transported by a helicopter and dropped onto the desert while a cowboy on a horse rides off into the landscape, is one of Sone's most beautiful works depicting the intersection of completely different topologies of time.

Blend of heterotopia

The concept of the journey is forever related to the construction of the landscape. Both the process of gaining the wisdom to recognize the world in one's very own way, as well as the freedom of moving from material to material, from scale to different scale, from a completed work to creating a work, are, for Sone, also *journeys*.

Sone is showing *Double River Island* (2001-2003) in the Japanese Pavilion exhibition. This work depicts an island, approximately 4 meters in diameter, that features the various landscapes found in this world such as beaches, glaciers, snow mountains, highlands, deserts, jungles, rivers and caves. This work represents the process of wandering through the world's different landscapes, and this sculpture can be described as the journey itself. Foucault mentions, as an example of heterotopia, a space where multiple and different spaces, mutually heterogeneous and several spaces, several sites

that are themselves incompatible, can be juxtaposed in a single real place. *Double River Island* (2001-2003) is a model of this *blend of heterotopia*. There are two waterfalls in the middle of the island, which, although crossing each other, never actually merge. The two waterfalls, avoiding any involvement with each other and maintaining their independence and yet continuing to flow, represent people's relationships with each other and the relationship between people and the natural environment, while at the same time blending dreams and conflict.

Sone's representation is neither a portrayal of the world nor a metaphor for it, but can be described as a tool designed for intervening in the world, for determining how to use and utilize the world. A sensibility that designs an ideal world through the manipulation of truly internal codes, like tracing an accurate drawing. Behind the at-first-glance humorous and nonsensical exterior lies the convictions of a level-headed realist and technician.

Notes:

1. In 1987, whilst a university student, Sone went on a one and a half year journey across the Eurasian continent. The overland journey which took in Hong Kong, Tibet, Nepal, India, Afghanistan, Iran, Egypt and Turkey and finally Italy was fraught with danger, with Sone finding himself caught in the middle of the Lhasa Uprising and the Iran-Iraq War. However, according to Sone, as a result of this journey, he was able to both clarify the ambiguous information about the way the world is connected, and to discover how discontinuous it is.
2. Interview with Yutaka Sone by Hans Ulrich-Obrist, *La Ville, Le Jardin, La Memoire*, Academie de France a Rome, Villa Medici, exhibition catalogue, p28
3. Refer Hisao Nakai, *"Schizophrenia and the Human Race"*, University of Tokyo Press, 1982

Motohiko Odani

Motohiko Odani came into contact with many sculptures growing up in Kyoto, eventually receiving formal training in wood carving at art school. Meanwhile, Odani, who was born in 1972, is an artist who belongs to the visual generation - a generation which shares a sense of material loss, or loss of substance, that displays a schizophrenic tendency and which has difficulties in achieving self-determination. Their *bodies* continue to devolve as they confront the material, while their senses, such as their peripheral nerves and skin, become increasingly heightened. This ambivalence exists in Odani, who, through the act of *carving* by utilizing a range of media and approaches, attempts to explore new possibilities in *restrictive sculpture*.

Sculpture is essentially 3-dimensional, is material in form, placed on the ground and is affected by gravity. Sculpture is stationary and has no mobility. Odani has continued to seek out the possibilities of sculpture that is an enantiosis of the restrictions that lie in the classical concept of sculpture. The motive of a *sculptor* is often very simple. The sculptor creates a work so that he/she can *touch whatever it is they want to touch*. Odani describes the themes that lie in his work as follows:

"To allow the invisible to emerge, to retain what will disappear, to sculpt what is weightless and isn't tactile (that doesn't allow tactile sensation). By incorporating these elements into my work as sculptural themes, and by facilitating the process of 'allowing the non-existent to exist' by implementing the primitive act of wood carving, I want to create an opposite reality."

To some extent, Odani's vision of sculpting amorphous and fluid matter such as air and water is related to baroque art, which was an attempt to express dynamism and movement.

However, to people living in the 21st century who have experienced both an accelerated speed and an environment of diverse and complex information, the speed of movement in baroque art is significantly different.

Disappearance

Phantom-Limb (1997) reflects the sensibility of Odani's generation. A young girl in a hypnotic state appears to be floating against a pure white background, her arms outstretched. The girl's palms are stained red with the raspberries clenched in her hands, but her hands could also have been amputated. The phantom limb phenomenon is where the person continues to feel sensation from a limb that no longer physically exists. In the same way, pain and image are perceived as a form of neuro-stimulation, regardless of whether that pain or image is real or not. This work conveys the ambiguity of sensation and at the same time, hints at the relationship that lies between representation and sensation.

It is also a symbolic statement of Odani's desire to enable the observer to *feel* and *experience the tactile sensation* of the invisible.

Fair Complexion (1997) is a 3 dimensional minimalist sculpture. Inside a box comprising three white acrylic screens, approximately 240 centimeters high and surrounded by three walls, a series of bubbles created from a liquid mixed with Odani's own blood automatically floats up into the space created by this box. As the bubbles of blood burst hit the inner wall, they burst and stain the inside of the box, leaving traces of red on the walls. The cold light emitted from the fluorescent tubes fills the inside of the box, and as most of the bubbles that are emitted from the nozzle burst before they can escape, the result is a series of long, red drips that resemble a drawing.

This work has been created to allow observers to touch it, and yet we hesitate to do so. It is as though we are maintaining a distance from something sacred that has been created in Odani's virtual world.

Odani's *Phantom-Limb* (1997) contains two metaphors. One is the strong sense of loss for something that we had always had in the past, and the other is the expectation of experiencing a new sensation to replace what we have lost. Odani, by choosing to remain within *reality*, that is, by straddling the boundary represented by *the fact that he has transgressed despite his attempt to come to terms with the world*, manages to evade reality and maintain a sense of tension. The very basic sense of touch plays an important role when a young child first comes into contact with the world. Through the different stages of grasping and crushing something of value because of a lack of understanding of one's strength, the child learns the process of coming to terms with the world and recognizing objects. Odani holds dear the poignant and open relationship with the world, the sense of embracing the world that was part of us before we learnt about *form*. The sense of loss that we feel when we inadvertently let go of a balloon and watch it being sucked up into the sky, and to continue to maintain this same sense of uncertainty as something very real... *To put myself in a situation of eternal uncertainty* - this is not something inevitable, but is a clear choice that Odani makes.

Although there is a similarity in spirit between Odani and the surrealists, the difference lies here. Odani is not concerned with unconsciousness, with a dream world nor with another world that competes with the real world. This is Odani's reality. What is real transcends any illusion or fantasy. Matthew Barney is another artist who, while belonging to a generation that rushes with ease through a glittering reality that is infinitely informatized and where the hyper-real and simulation have reached new heights, has indicated the new possibilities that lie there.

A never-ending transformation

Transformation is the main theme in Odani's work. Arguably, it begins with the transformation in sensation that takes place by enabling the

observer to *touch-sense* what is invisible. *When I go to see my doctor* (1994), a work that Odani produced while a student, is a grotesque wood sculpture that brings to mind the process of transformation taking place in an unknown creature. The scabs on the creature's skin are enlarged and sharp protrusions appear, one after the other, from inside the countless warts. *Drape* (1998) is a sculpture in which the pleats of a circular skirt, spread out and floating above water, appear to have been etched. The elaborate workmanship involved in carving the hard willow, the manner in which the work has been installed so that it appears to be floating midair. Odani has said that his work is influenced by Rebecca Horn's *wearable sculpture* with its aspect of performance, and certainly it can be seen within this context. However, this work seems more to convey the process of mutation in which a part of the body undergoes change, as in the way the woman's hair appears to be connected to the pleats of her skirt. *Fingerspanner* (1998) is a hybrid sculpture in which a corrective device used by pianists to force open their fingers has been fused with a violin-shaped form. How to avoid the boredom of having your work recognized as a single form once the transformation, the fusion is complete. In other words, one must continue to remain in the process of transformation into an unknown form.

Senses such as the nerves and skin somehow seem related to fetishism and embody an even deeper psychological aspect. Odani's emphasis on surfaces appears to originate in the synergistic effect between the sensitivity of the skin and the act of carving. One example is *Air 'gust'* (1999), a wooden statue of a woman who is holding out her arms. The woman's eyes are closed and her hair swaying as though she is standing in a light breeze. The entire surface of the woman's body has been etched, like tattoos, with a series of patterns, iconography and cherry blossom petals that are reminiscent of Japanese Buddhist art. From both her palms flows a stream of water that forms an elegant curve much like the *mizugei* [tricks using water], a traditional performing art of Japan. The markings don't so much resemble a tattoo but are more like images that have been projected onto the woman's body. This sculpture, both kitsch and yet strangely elegant, embodies the overlapping of the virtual, informatized body that lies within us and our actual physical body.

Sculpting air

Odani's proposition is to *sculpt air* - to sculpt the immaterial. At first glance, water, in the form of waves or a waterfall, appears to be the subject matter in both his video work *Engulf* (1999) and the 3.4m high wooden sculpture *Air 'fall'* (1999). In *Engulf* (1999), waves are split down the center of the screen so that they are symmetrical on either side, while the horizontal line of the beach is vertical. The crashing waves, accompanied by sound effects that create a deafening roar, has a visual violence and ferocity that resembles a sharp chainsaw carving up the air. This work represents a challenge to the limitations of digital imagery - a hazardous interaction between the moving image and

sculpture. Meanwhile, the wooden sculpture has been carved to depict grotesque and baroque *folds* of water. This is not a stylized representation of *falling water*, but a representation of falling water that has been frozen in time, or as it would appear if the video camera's freeze button was pressed, and it is this moment that Odani has depicted. The act of sculpting, filming and seeing - these have all become fused inside the artist. And "air that possesses a monstrous quality" as described by Odani, is also a concept for resisting the information society, the immaterial world created by electronics that surrounds us.

9th Room (2001) is a video installation comprising a series of surround speakers set into four screens and the floor. The title is inspired by *Dante's Inferno*. Through the use of the mirrors on the ceiling and floor, images of crashing waterfalls and spraying blood are repeated endlessly both above and below where we stand, and as we watch these images, we find ourselves losing any sense of gravity. The vibrating air, sound and images are etched into our physical senses. Finding ourselves in a *cube in flux* created by the speakers that surround us, we eventually become aware of the existence of a different version of our body. This is a device that sculpts the very structure of the observer and his/her sensibility.

Today, artists working in film are no longer satisfied by digital images, and there is a growing tendency to enjoy the gap or discrepancy that results from combining digital and analog footage. Odani's attitude, in which he pursues the sensations that lie beyond physical sensation by giving physical sensation a jolt from within, corresponds to that of Chris Cunningham. According to Cunningham, a film-maker belonging to the same generation as Odani, "it's as though something my body was covered in something that suddenly came off, so that I was totally exposed" and he wants to "evoke a visceral sensation". In other words, their work is not about simply amplifying stimulation through the use of big sounds and low frequencies or film with lots of frames, but is more about a recall of another sensibility. This is related to the process of enabling the observer to physically sense the air being sculpted, that is, the vibration of the air.

Heterotopia, where transformation is accelerated

In the Japanese pavilion exhibition, Odani's installation, by instigating a transformation amongst the people walking through the installation so that they enter *a different state*, is, in a sense, heterotopia as *the wrong place*. The walls of the long, narrow passage that continues straight ahead from the entrance are covered with the sort of protrusions found inside the petals of the lily, while a sculpture resembling a frozen waterfall, or a stamen, hangs from the ceiling in the middle of this space. In this space, filled with a sound-pressure so loud that it seems to be traveling through the body of the observer, this hanging form could be a remnant from a limestone cave formed by the force of

speed. After passing through the lily like an insect, we then come upon a spherical machine, around 2 meters in diameter. It is a nuclear receptacle with 32 triggering devices, and from this sphere sprouts numerous cables that resemble the roots of a plant. This sphere is imbued with negative energy from Japan's memory of being the only nation that has experienced a nuclear attack on its cities, that is, a nation that was *the incorrect place*. A series of images is projected. Young insect-eating girls living in the treetops, strange animals in the middle of the mutation process - these are grotesque and yet humorous fairytales of the future.

Transformed into insects and passing through the sweet reproductive organ of the lily, will we see the forest that is proliferating as a result of the negative body of energy directed towards the future? So that we can be eaten by the young girls? Odani's stories contain many different meanings. The skeleton (the icicle hanging in the passageway) could be a metaphor for the body and sensibility chipped away by light. We then encounter the sphere that is *the source of the flash of light*. This is *hetero topos - the other space*. Neither a fantasy nor an allegory, it is this *other space*, found right here, that undeniably transforms the structure of our sensibility.