Feeling Media

Potentiality and the Afterlife of Art

MIRYAM SAS

Feeling Media

Feeling Media

Potentiality and the Afterlife of Art

MIRYAM SAS

Duke University Press
Durham and London
2022

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper ∞
Cover designed by Matt Tauch
Typeset in Degular and Arno Pro by Westchester Publishing Services

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Sas, Miryam, author.
Title: Feeling media : potentiality and the afterlife of art / Miryam Sas.
Description: Durham : Duke University Press, 2022. | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2021054874 (print)
LCCN 2021054875 (ebook)
ISBN 9781478015857 (hardcover)
ISBN 9781478018490 (paperback)
ISBN 9781478023098 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Mass media—Philosophy. | Mass media—Social aspects—Japan—History—20th century. | Mass media—Political aspects—Japan—History—20th century. | Popular culture—Japan—History—20th century. | Affect (Psychology)—Social aspects. | Arts, Japanese—20th century. | BISAC: SOCIAL SCIENCE / Media Studies | HISTORY / Asia / Japan
Classification: LCC P92.J3 S26 2022 (print) | LCC P92.J3 (ebook) | DDC 302.230952—dc23/eng20220504
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021054874
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021054875

Cover art: Kobayashi Fumiko, *1000 Feet and the Fruit of Beginning* (2013; also sometimes translated *1000 Legs, Cultivating Fruits*), installation detail. Photo by the author. Courtesy of the artist's estate.

Contents

Acknowledgments

This book has emerged over many years with the help of too many individuals and collectives to enumerate here. So many friends and colleagues have provided inspiration, prodding, distraction, material comfort, and brilliant conversation. I am deeply grateful to UC Berkeley's Department of Comparative Literature for providing a long-term home for my research, and Film and Media for pushing my thinking in new directions. Berkeley's Center for Japanese Studies, the UC President's Fellowship in the Humanities (2017–18), and Berkeley's Humanities Research Fellowship and Mellon Project Grant have provided generous support for my research and allowed me time to write this book. The CJS and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) funded two conferences, "Cultural Geographies of 1960s Japan" and "Media Histories/Media Theories and East Asia," that helped to seed this project.

An earlier version of chapter 1 was published in *The Oxford Handbook of Japanese Cinema*, edited by Daisuke Miyao. I am grateful to him for the invitation and to Oxford University Press for publishing that essay. Thanks to Doryun Chong and Nancy Lim of the Museum of Modern Art (New York) for supporting my investigation of intermedia in the context of the exhibition and catalog *Tokyo 1955–1970: A New Avant-Garde*, where I also published an early exploration of this material. An earlier version of chapter 3 was published in *Media Theory in Japan*, edited by Alexander Zahlten and Marc Steinberg. I am grateful to Alex, Marc, and Duke University Press for including me in that collaborative work. A prior version of a part of chapter 2 was included in *Mechademia* vol. 7, *Lines of Sight*. I am grateful to the editors for kick-starting my thinking about alternative horizon lines in animation. Thanks to Amanda Maddox at the Getty Museum for engaging me with the work of Ishiuchi Miyako; an earlier version of a part of chapter 4 appeared in *Ishiuchi Miyako: Postwar Shadows*. The curators of *Roppongi Crossing 2013* at the Mori Art Museum invited me to write about contemporary Japanese art and gave me early access and introduction to many contemporary artists' works. Roger and Karen Reynolds kindly opened their archives to me once again for this project. John Solt and Sawako Nakayasu kept me connected

to the poetic and earlier visual avant-gardes. I received much helpful feedback on portions of this research from thoughtful audiences at the Sainsbury Institute for Japanese Studies, SOAS, INALCO, University of Copenhagen, Bombas Gens Centre d'Art, Stanford, Yale, Cambridge, Oxford, Seikei University, Harvard, University of Michigan, McGill, UCLA, University of Chicago, Kinema Club, and SCMS. Thank you so much to all my amazing colleagues at those places.

For their permission to use the images of their work, I thank all of the artists and their families: Nakahira Gen (for his father), Nakamura Hiroshi, Ishiuchi Miyako, Asakai Yōko, Kazama Sachiko, the family of Kobayashi Fumiko, Arai Takashi, Minamigawa Kenji and Masui Hirofumi (WAH Project, now 目[mé] art collective). For catalyzing a performance event and clarifying Ichiyanagi's graphic score, including the caption included here, credit to Yayoi Uno Everett. For helping me connect with those artists and families, my appreciation to Sawada Yōko (Osiris Press) for her tireless work in the field of Japanese photography, Hatta Naoko from the Isozaki Arata office, Mizuya Tomoyo (of 目[mé]), Akaaka Publishing's Editor in Chief Himeno Kimi, Kakiuchi Yukiko of MUJIN-TŌ Productions, and Aya Tomoka from Third Gallery Aya (for Ishiuchi).

Maiko Morimoto Tomita is the most brilliant collaborator anyone could ever wish for. Takako Fukasawa was a key member of our team, and Yui Hayakawa and Matthew MacLellan joined in the end. Dan O'Neill helped me navigate the rapids. Sophie Rabau gave me a place to land in Paris and sushi picnics by the Seine. Kimber Simpkins, Liz Thurber, Michael Allen, and Greg Cason kept me writing in many genres. The magical Barri Malek held space for many metamorphoses. Yariv Rabinovitch remembered it all when I forgot. Coriander Reisbord, Rachel Mercy-Simpson, Racheli Perl and Gilad Buchman and Boaz, Tom Rockwell, Alice, Michiko Tsushima and her family, Miriam Bartha, Kimura Saeko in the *3ème*, Sumi Shin, Mia Fineman, Neil Mayle and Sara Wolfensohn, Josine Shapiro, Melissa Milgram, 57, and many other friends and colleagues kept me laughing and stood by me through everything. Anne Bayard-Sakai and Michael Lucken were so welcoming. The late Takeyoshi Nishiuchi wandered with me through the city. The moms and dads of the boys' pod kept the kids happy. Sherri Wizard taught me a new meaning of sister. Rabbi Chai, Renna, and Elizheva expertly navigated the bar mitzvah with us. My brother Jon showed me that it's not only about words. Dorothy Rubin up the hill radiated light and painted it. The Wednesday women talked it through. Higashi Yoshizumi and Shōta Kanoko lightened the weight of it all.

Deep thanks to Anitra Grisales for careful editing and suggestions about how better to weave the threads together, and to Elizabeth Ault, Benjamin Kossak, and Ihsan Taylor at Duke University Press for welcoming this work into the world and ongoing encouragement and practical help.

In loving memory of my aunt Harriet Smith, whose creativity with everyday objects and poems was a model for the artistic life, and my kindhearted uncle Alex Sussman, forthright when the occasion demanded, whom we were so sad to lose to this pandemic. Thanks to my parents, Drs. Nira and Joel Silverman, my first sister Sharon Shepard, and my whole extended family, present and past, for always having my back.

Biggest thanks to Paul, Beckett, and Yair for being there and teaching me about feeling as well as media, and for infusing the nonwriting times with so many cuddles and so much play.

Japanese names here are given in the Japanese order, surname first, unless I have known the person primarily in a US context.

Introduction

The day I began revising the introduction to this book, Berkeley was experiencing a sudden, intense heat wave. In the thick and sticky air, all the plants in my garden immediately drooped. Inside, the best I could manage was a small electric fan. The kids were about to leave for summer camp, and the night before, drenched in sweat and unable to sleep, I had watched an addictive TV series until too late. My brain could not quite pull together anything that could map the contours of this book. I had to let it go.

Later, on a cooler day, I realized that the very things that had been blocking me were integral to the book's through-lines. The air—the larger atmosphere, including the global warming that led to this heat wave, and the industrial, cultural, imaginative, and technological structures around it—that air, that atmosphere, holds within it a complex history. Air has a history. It sounds strange. Not just the scientific sense of molecules of oxygen, carbon dioxide, and nitrogen in space, but atmosphere in the sense that Virginia Woolf meant when she wrote—when Clarissa Dalloway thought—"It will be a solemn sky . . . it will be a dusky sky, turning away its cheek in beauty." She evoked the sky, the air, not literally but infused with social meaning and intimate feelings. "There it was—ashen pale, raced over quickly by tapering vast clouds."[1] The history of wars, personal memories, and loss infuse Woolf's famous tactile and sonic refrains: "Fear no more the heat of the sun. . . . Leaden circles dissolve in air."[2] In the words of this most precise theorist of the movements of feeling, air becomes a medium for sensory experience and

encompasses the multiple meanings of its fading, like the dissipating sound of Big Ben across the urban landscape.

Sometimes spoken of as atmosphere or environment, or in terms of ecology, talk of something like air in recent theoretical writings has brought with it a shift in scales of focus in the humanities from talking mainly about works and their contexts to larger distributive systems and aspects of the life of tone and feeling that are harder to name or narrate. The sense of connection to a larger picture opened again in a new way in the current pandemic, where we wear our masks to protect ourselves and others from airborne viral contagions, where political movements and their fore- and backlashes ripple the sociopolitical climate, and where, as one journalist put it, from well before this moment we have been subject to "the buffeting emotional weather of everyday life . . . our Twitter-fed swings of anger and mirth."[3] Such tonalities often turn up under the names of affect or emotion; they designate feeling tones not located in or limited to a single individual, and they allow for mappings and analyses that do not require reifying boundaries (like the bounds of nation, relevant for a book like this that takes up works done in and around the Japanese language).

These approaches allow us to analyze the fact that it is not only my heat wave, my spacy mind, my internet, or my TV series. Affect has allowed us to see the ways that my personal world is toned—or by turns atonal or out of tune—with local and broader national and global shifts. While structuralist and post-structuralist theories allow us to understand the symbolic formation of our subjectivities in and through language and its limits, with important attention to the workings of power across social systems, affect theory brought in some new questions and new approaches, taking place around and between larger structures (language, capitalism) and the smaller, seemingly individual but also highly structured and overdetermined worlds ("my" self, my body, sounds and words resonating inside my mind—like the little name labels I pressed onto the summer-camp clothes, the sadness and joy of beginnings and departures).

This book argues that by perceiving the world on the level of air or atmosphere, through studies that engage with the idea of affect and look among and between the larger systems, we can locate a realm of potentiality that relies neither on outmoded or utopian models of individual agency nor on pessimistic or paranoid frameworks of critical late-capitalist overwhelm. The larger systems that this book takes up in a series of related forms are sometimes perceptible under the frameworks we could call infrastructure—meaning not just technological apparatus or physical built environments but

also the movements, flows, and social conventions that condition them and make them work. The thinkers and artists I take up in this book, whose work centers in the 1960s–70s and in the earlier years of the twenty-first century, sometimes name those larger systems "totality" to designate precisely what is beyond the power of the individual to grasp. Yet certain rhetorical and artistic practices can begin to give a handhold, reinterpret, or reframe those totalities in a way that helps them become newly perceptible and thinkable. These practices shape an altered form of attention and analysis that highlights the space between individual as well as collective acts and those larger structures.

This book teases out the places where artists and critics grappled directly with a problem that we continue to feel strongly now: how to maneuver or put together a life, to create or simply survive within bigger structures that may overwhelm and that clearly take place at a level or scale beyond the individual, and also beyond local community. Some of what we feel as overwhelming today—aspects of the world changing too quickly and in ways too large to understand or perceive fully—happen in the realms of the internet and electronic media, via the little phones and thin computers that have almost come to feel like parts of our bodies. Some artists and critics lament the loss of an analog emotional terrain, or wonder if something very important is being lost; others reframe "lossiness" itself as a matter of digital depixelation, a structural side effect of reproduction and compression within new media.[4] Yet those feelings of something new and overpowering happening in the world are not in themselves new. They have echoes in the writings of the critics of early modernity, and again in early twentieth-century urban life and avant-gardes; and then again, in something like what Hal Foster termed "retroaction," around the time of the postwar burgeoning of electronic media that the first part of this book focuses on.[5] Doubts about the powers of art and imagination are a recurrent refrain; the sense of larger uncertainties today thus doubles and echoes representations of past losses and experiences of technological overwhelm.

In this book, through six chapters on intermedia art, experimental animation, postwar media theory, photography, and contemporary visual art, I evoke both the potentialities and the limits of working at what I call the scale of affect—that ambivalent scale or space that both traces and blurs the boundaries between individuals, collectives, and systemic structures. It is an honest space: it pretends neither to be able to change the world nor to claim that such a change is impossible. Instead, and with a sustained interest in media as a realm for working out these potentialities, it aims to draw out

the reframing and shifts in both perception and action that become possible when grappling and perceiving at that affective scale.

In 1960s–70s Tokyo, an era of massive rebuilding and technological transformation, as well as more recently in the aftermath of the 2011 triple disaster of Tōhoku and Fukushima (tsunami, earthquake, nuclear meltdown), we find a particularly strong need, in both imaginative and concrete forms, to grapple with the sense of being caught up in and vulnerable to a larger set of structures and systems. By the end of the 1960s, Japan was internationally known for its massive export of high-quality, inexpensive technology and electronics—radios, televisions, music players, and more—and thus had a key role in transforming the media landscape globally. The governing bodies had made an immense commitment to economic growth, and the vision of the salaryman on his long commute and the housewife in the apartment block (*danchi*) or company dormitory played a decisive role in cultural representations of the time.

For example, in the 1963 film *The Elegant Life of Mr. Everyman* (*Eburiman-shi no yūgana seikatsu*), by Okamoto Kihachi, it is precisely the boring cookie-cutter life of the salaryman as a cog in the machine that gets turned humorously on its head (figure 1.1). The life of Everyman represents the Showa era up to that point, through the war years and into the postwar economic boom.[6] The affective boredom of his life (*omoshiroku-nai*, boring) transforms into shame (*hazukashī*) as the film mediates, through multiple cinematic genres, the reflections on history and larger systems—wartime business, the gender-family system, the corporate salaryman culture—that condition his and the

FIGURE 1.1 *The Elegant Life of Mr. Everyman* (dir. Okamoto Kihachi, 1963), film still.

audience's present life. In one of the closing images of the film, after watching his coworkers boogie on the rooftop, we see Everyman himself at the vanishing point of the larger infrastructure of the company in the line of sight, as the larger film frames for us through multiple vantage points the intersection of (premediated, genre-bound) subjective and objective perspectives on that Showa-era life. This image can thus provide one possible figure to evoke that larger range of complex relations—positioning of the subject/artist within larger total structures—that part I of this book focuses on through examples drawn from intermedia art, experimental animation, and theories of the culture industry from the late 1950s to the 1970s.

In the post–triple disaster era (referred to as 3–11 because the triple disaster occurred on March 11, 2011), artists have often mediated their approaches through older technologies and media forms. Arai Takashi, for example, took daguerreotypes of survivors in the Minami-Sōma area (near Fukushima), with their animals, and displayed them in dark museum rooms alongside images of the *Daigo fukuryū-maru*, the *Lucky Dragon* boat that was damaged in the nuclear testing outside Bikini Atoll, and juxtaposed these with images of the Nevada test site as well as from Hiroshima. The layers of mediation of histories of disaster become a crucial element of the negotiation of scales of approach in the aftermath of 3–11, and by allowing the skin of the film to show its damage along with evoking the vulnerability to nuclear threat, he creates a layering of media and historical times. Other photographers and visual artists take this layering and emphasis on skin even further in attempting to grapple with the affective and mediatic resonances of both the losses and the ongoing infrastructural (and sometimes invisible) presences that condition Japan and the world today. The efforts of these more recent artists, which I draw into relation with the earlier intermedia arts to develop a language for theorizing them, emerge as the central subject of part II of this book.

The Affective Scale

The scale of affect is a way of describing something all the artists and theorists in this book navigate at a practical level, in which certain feeling tones emerge, or happen, in large and small ways at once, pulling on what Lauren Berlant perhaps tries to evoke with the term "economo-affective"[7]—that is, seeing big systems in small ways, but also allowing the larger picture to come into view through the pulling of small strings in a line of text, a turn of a ring modulator (chapter 1), a wrinkle of toes in a photograph (chapter 4). When social theorists map big epistemological regimes across centuries, while telling

us that the century marks do not necessarily delimit the ending of a particular discursive logic but its recession from dominance, or when literary critics mark a historiographic overlap between modernist and postmodernist logics, they are limning sensibilities marked within micro-instances but read for larger waves, tendencies, or fields. Mapping the affective scale might involve a new little key at the corner of the map that brings to bear both size in space (larger structures, small instances) and temporal flexibility—reading those feeling tones as they transform across a broader historical horizon from the 1950s to the early twenty-first century.

The aim here is to use the term *affective scale* to account for a functioning system of relays between larger infrastructures (social and technological) and the subjects who constitute and are constituted by them. These modes of relay happen sometimes explicitly in the works' own moment, and at other times as part of a media field that later works and times make perceptible in a transhistorical and transcultural perspective. Small and big, micro- and macrotemporal, these relays get articulated when we attend to the movements of atmospheres, what some others might call ecologies (including media ecologies), letting our focus shift from close to far without losing sight of the close.[8] Scales may be forms of genre—in the sense of framing existing forms for understanding or grasping the world—and reading affect across scales may be a form of genre-flailing.[9] But I would like to think that as the affective scale, which has intimately to do with media and mediation, traverses this book, it picks up meanings and clarities and also may become useful for the work of others.

I have leaned toward defining infrastructure as a mode of attending to the larger systems of technology, capital, and governance while keeping at front of mind the social and embodied frameworks and modes of movement that condition them and that they condition. My definition of the infrastructural thus inclines toward the social and affective. When Lisa Parks outlines a mode of considering affect together with infrastructure, she writes, "A phenomenology of infrastructure and affect might begin by excavating the various dispositions, feelings, moods, or sensations people experience during encounters with infrastructural objects, sites, and processes." In her articulation there, considering the theme of affect in relation to problems of infrastructure would primarily mean bringing to bear a frame/phenomenology of the personal, embodied, psychological ("dispositions, feelings, moods, or sensations people experience").[10] Yet that is not the main meaning of the work on the scale of affect as I mobilize it in this book. Instead, in the lineage of Sianne Ngai and other feminist critics following Eve Sedgwick (to some degree Sara Ahmed

as well), I don't lean hard on the differentiation between affect and emotion, but place affect on a continuum—and here was the original inspiration for the term *affective scale*—between subjective/personal and larger structures, attempting to account for tones and modalities that give access to places of relay and intermediate spaces in perfect continuity with neither imagined pole, that work to destabilize fixed polarities and open to a different kind of vista. As studies of scale have pointed out, moving from smaller/closer (i.e., individual, subjective) to larger/farther (social/infrastructural) does not just yield something like higher- and lower-resolution views of the same terrain, but in fact opens the purview of a different terrain altogether and a different vantage point. The affective scale aims to trace moments when such an alternative terrain comes to be perceptible, as well as to map moments when its imperceptibilities can begin to be grasped.

Focusing on artists from the 1950s to the present, mostly from Japan, this book also takes on a specific methodological task. While many excellent colleagues have shown the relevance of theoretical writings in Japanese, there remains a marked tendency to reduce, if ever so slightly, those writings to something comparable, something already recognizable or known, rather than taking the time to grant them, like all good theoretical writing, their full complexity and open-ended nuance. Within discussions of Japanese media, cultural, and film theory, mere mention of prominent Euro-American (usually white male) theorists has a tendency to overwrite, and thus reduce, the impact of any Japanese theorist's formulations. Writing about theory is an act of translation and imagination: I have attempted as much as I can (though somewhat imperfectly, especially in chapter 3) to avoid superimposing or citing those famous names in order, in the best case, to open these specific theorists' thoughts to more of their provocative possibility. I want them to function in an open-ended manner as working thought—that is, as their own form of praxis, along the lines articulated by the writers themselves.

Yet I would also want to avoid imagining Japan as a hermetic space. Indeed a fault of the long tradition of orientalist readings of Japan for what it can offer "us" as a counter to "our" entrenched tendencies mirrors another tendency in recent media theory: to read the digital datascape as a new apparition of the inapprehensible (and often feminine-gendered and racialized) unknown. Japanese theorists and artists, especially in the periods I discuss in this book, are part of a global landscape traversed by blockbuster Disney animations, Hollywood films, and the French nouvelle vague, as well as by the translated theories of Benjamin, Adorno, Barthes, Senghor, and Marx, among so many others. The artists participate in global contemporary art

circulations—though their textual interventions often remain untranslated and unheard. It poses a challenge for both area studies disciplines and area-based art exhibitions to define the limits and parameters of their objects without flattening them, to account for their varying resonances at the global and local levels.[11] Perhaps one approach to this problem becomes listening to theory as a decentered and decentering practice, as I try to do in this book (so that theory slowly ceases to mean Euro-America).

While I thus avoid depending too heavily on the abundant wave of Euro-American theories on affect, allowing the Japanese artists to articulate their own speculative interventions, I have been inspired by some specific American writings in ways worth mentioning here. For affect, I do not press in the direction of those theoretical interventions that set themselves against structuralist/post-structuralist thinking to emphasize and reify the body, sensibility, or materialities. My version of affect integrates textual structures (with and as material forms) with aspects dealing with the difficult-to-grasp spaces of material objects, embodied labors, and metainstitutional systems. Affect and emotion, terms often opposed to one another, exist on a continuum in this book. Prior theorists identify *emotion* with the subjective or narratable, related to the first person; *affect* evoked the more objective or third person (as in the role of the analyst's feelings in psychoanalysis), or what was less organized, structured, or narratable. Affect was not constrained by the bounds of an individual subject. An influential articulation, such as that of Sianne Ngai, takes the difference between emotion and affect instead as "a modal difference . . . rather than a formal difference of quality or kind."[12] Ngai argues that this changed emphasis allows "an analysis of the transitions from one pole to the other," and she highlights productive moments when "we are most uncertain if the 'field' of [feelings'] emergence is subjective or objective."[13] My own version of affect here is inspired by these blurrings of the distinction between the localized and ambient, between first and third person, or individual and larger fields for the play of feeling; such spaces of transition are key markers that characterize the "affective scale" in art, critique, and analysis. Thus, I work in opposition to those versions of affect theory that have been accused of abandoning close reading or larger structural problems for the sake of a focus on the personal, embodied spectator. Instead, my interest focuses on and aims at the place where attention to infrastructures and transpersonal feeling comes into contact with specific subjective investments, and more narratable or formed, familiar emotions.[14]

Yet for thinkers like filmmaker Matsumoto Toshio, as we shall see in this book, the problems of intrapsychic and extrapsychic structures refracting

one another already formed a fundamental part of his theoretical frame. Writing about avant-garde work, he brings the experimental, antinarrative, or antilogical visions one would associate with experimental filmmaking—sometimes said to reflect the workings of the interior of the psyche, the unconscious, and so on—together with the documentary impulse, as the necessity to see and refract the real or larger world. Both terrains are crucial for the filmmaker's search, and they have a necessary relation to one another. His theories of the avant-garde documentary interest me here because of how they presuppose an integral relation between the intrapsychic and the document of the world. In this sense, they theorize the space of that blurred line between the extra- and intrapsychic as a necessary field for artistic and mediatic practice. His mid- to late-1950s experiments draw on earlier intermedial sculptural works that recognize the interlocking gazes of multiple spectators beyond the grasp of any one individual. Aiming to totalize the relations between that subject-exceeding set of gazes, Matsumoto is a creative theorist of that space and scale of artistic/mediatic potentiality located above the individual and below the larger system (whether the latter is conceived, as it might be today, as infrastructure or platform). Or if the metaphor of a horizon line with an above and a below fails, perhaps we may imagine this intermediate scale as an interlocking in-between. Whatever metaphor we land on, and the artists of this book have been prolific in visualizing and theorizing this terrain, we find that language, film, and visual arts hold a privileged place in articulating, reframing, and grappling with the realm that opens—that we find ourselves in—between and among larger systems that work beyond our grasp.

In reading these approaches, the grapplings, the inventiveness of the artists and critics both of the 1960s–70s and of more recent contemporary art in Japan, especially those engaging with the larger systems and structures of media and social institutions, I have found helpful Eve Sedgwick's influential articulations of what she (following Melanie Klein) terms the "paranoid" and the "reparative" (or "depressive") positions.[15] Something along the lines of these positions offers seemingly contradictory yet simultaneously plausible interpretations of these works and ideas. As with emotion and affect, it can be more useful to attend to slippages and shadings, and to the transitions where one yields to another and back again, so the seemingly contradictory frames of interpretation do not land in a fixed binary or mark correct or inaccurate views, but instead open to a range of interpretative possibilities that can be more or less convincing or generative at different moments.

The paranoid position in recent theory (say of the last forty years) is, for Sedgwick, the gesture of (Marxist) unmasking, in which the theorist or

interpreter reveals the workings of power (gender, hierarchy, class, race, heteronormativity) in a text where it was otherwise hidden or invisible: it is the gesture she calls the "topos of depth or hiddenness, typically followed by a drama of exposure."[16] She offers as an alternative the Kleinian depressive/reparative position as one that is attuned to the "heartbeat of contingency" (147), and that entails a "middle range of agency," neither simply accepting or refusing what is (13). Rather than being attached unwaveringly to specific individuals, Sedgwick's queer-affiliated version of the reparative involves "mutable positions [or] practices," which are "additive and accretive," a practice of "assembling" that has deeply to do with loss and survival (149–50). What one stands to gain from attending to the reparative practices are "the many ways selves and communities succeed in extracting sustenance from the objects of a culture" (150–51).

This accretive art, and the attempt to grapple with and survive the overwhelm (or downturn), is an evocative description that aligns well with what the artists and critics of this book continually take up. The inspiration that the shift between paranoid and reparative has given me here, like the shift between Ngai's emotion and affect, is that they have regranted me a freedom—already conferred in advance by Matsumoto's theories and those of many other artists in this book—to engage with an intermediate realm of interlocking gazes and relationships with agency, to see how the potentialities evoked in these artworks and theories manage somehow both to engage critically and to be part of larger and sometimes damaging systems and structures (global capital, media systems, art markets). They open an intermediate range of agency where the imbrication of personal subjectivity in these larger structures becomes visible, and where, as Matsumoto put it, one can grapple with and potentially countervail the "feeling of Being in the contemporary age."[17] That is, on the one hand, one can engage alternately in a paranoid/critical/exposing view of the larger social structures and infrastructures and one's own part within them, exposing the complicities of artists and critical frames even beyond their own view.[18] On the other hand, one can also switch into a mode of seeing where the grappling with and survival among the structures and frameworks provide a space or scale, if not precisely of sustenance, then a praxis/practice of acting at that middle range of agency—one that does not invalidate the critical/paranoid frame but rejiggers it in some special and unexpected way. The middle range of agency aligns with the affective scale of practice, a practical navigation that has to do with ways of seeing as well as making, interventions within larger sociocultural genres and infrastructures.

This kind of action, this rejiggering, in its many kinds and methods, is the focus of all the chapters of this book.

Protest and Artistic Practice

The early to late 1960s in Japan is often also known as the era of protests—against the renewal of the Japan-US Security Treaty and the hegemonic Cold War control over the East Asian security sphere in 1960, and against the Vietnam War and the presence of US military bases in Japan, such as the one in Yokosuka that forms a key site of postwar Japanese photography that I discuss in chapter 4 of this book. While May 1968 is the date for the best-known Berkeley-Paris-Tokyo-Berlin protests and the center of gravity for international memory of the 1960s—as revealed in the spate of commemorations of the fiftieth anniversary of that date in 2018—a key date for Japan is actually 1960, when one of the most prominent rounds of worker and student protests took place. Other moments also figure prominently in historical memory, like 1952, 1968–70, the continued protests against the renewal of the Japan-US Security Treaty taking a recursive structure thematized by filmmakers like Ōshima Nagisa (in chapter 2).

Though women photographers had a significant role in the emergence of photography movements in Japan, they have been largely ignored in the wave of recent international attention to postwar Japanese photography in the era of the protests. "At times carrying the camera and at times wooden staves," as the afterword of one protest book proclaimed, photographers like Shinkai (possible pseudonym of Sasaki Michiko), for example, may have taken images like figure 1.2 for the photo book of the Nihon University Struggle (*Nichidai tōsō*, one major site of the late 1960s Japanese student protest movements), a book aiming to inspire and provoke solidarity with other potential participants among the local public and abroad.[19] In this shot, the space of the protesters' tiny white shirts and black hair recedes like (in my analogy) an abstract Kusama Yayoi dot painting among the dominating diagonal lines of the university building, symbol of the larger institutional infrastructures against which the students mounted their resistance. The image shows the intricate attention and emergent media practices through which Shinkai and her comrades took up the challenge of grasping and visualizing the place of individuals within the larger system—though this photo does manage to frame an overview of it. Yet Sasaki herself, who was certainly present with her camera at these events, is now owner of a bar in the famous Tokyo nightlife

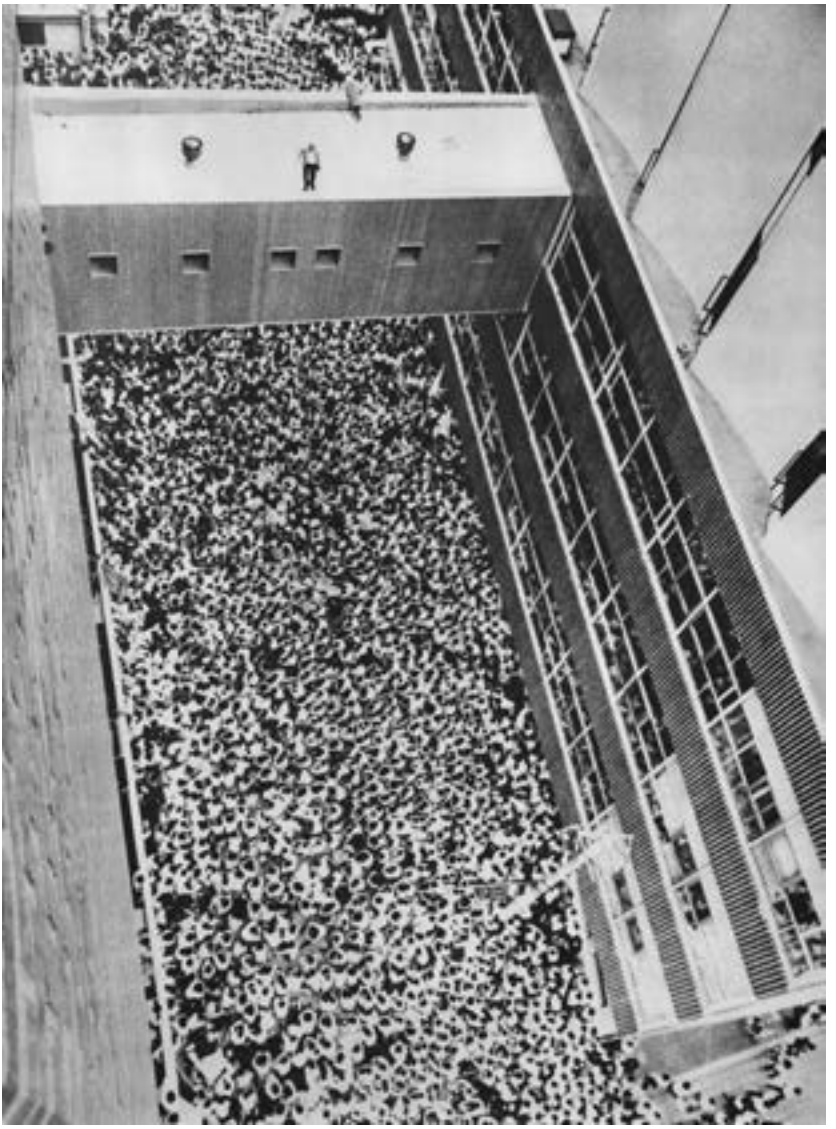

FIGURE 1.2 *Nichidai tōsō* photo book (1969), image of student protest at Nihon University.

district of Golden-gai (Golden Street) in Shinjuku 2-chōme, and attends also to the importance of individual acts, activist lives, and personal connections in her reminiscences on this era, as in her recent book *Shinjuku gōruden-gai no hitobito* (The people of Shinjuku Golden-gai).[20] The stated reason for the 1969 protest book's "revelation of the imperfection and incompletion" of the student protests, the provisional positions revealed through these photographs, is to solicit the participation and support of others. The book pictures the infrastructural work of protest, the practicalities of how it's done, from within the politics of direct action and resistance characterizing that early period.

Bridging these various waves of protest, around the period of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, when the massive cleanup of Tokyo for that purpose was deeply underway, the sense of being engulfed in enormous logics and institutional configurations and the necessity of contending with these processes through art and criticism were central cultural preoccupations. Here, it was a matter not only of technological changes or physical infrastructures but also how social systems and regulations/surveillance worked within them. One paradigmatic event that highlights these elements is the Hi Red Center Shelter Plan, documented in Jōnouchi Motoharu's film of the same name. In this event the artist group Hi Red Center rented a room at Tokyo's Imperial Hotel (a famous building by Frank Lloyd Wright that was demolished a few years later). They invited guests to undergo convoluted body measurements and offered them the opportunity to buy personally fitted bomb shelters. Because artist Akasegawa Genpei was already under surveillance for what would evolve into the 1000-Yen Note incident, throughout the event a policeman was stationed in the lobby (in a sense, becoming part of the happening); artist Nakanishi Natsuyuki describes the event as an "infiltration" of the hotel that was "part art and part crime."[21]

Importantly, *Shelter Plan* focused attention on what Akasegawa called the "*sōchi*" (device or apparatus) of social space. Arguably, the term *sōchi*, as artists used it in this period, traverses the terrain covered in concurrent and later Euro-American debates around apparatus theory, with the term French term *dispositif* (translated into English as *apparatus* or left untranslated) now spanning the structural/technological/built environments as well as the social structures and lived uses and regulatory regimes of those spaces.[22] Japanese theorists sometimes invoke *dispositif* (now the term *technics* in US media studies sometimes fills that oppositional space alongside *dispositif* in relation to the more technologically determinist, older readings of the term *apparatus*). Yet *sōchi* as space, in the perception of Akasegawa and others deeply embedded in critical performative practices like *Shelter Plan*, fully encompassed

both the social and architectural/architectonic. The artists' use of the term and concept of *sōchi* contains a trenchant and humorous critique of imperial/nuclear discourse planted within a historically overdetermined space. Device/apparatus/*sōchi* thus became an approach to that intermediate scale of analysis where the individual, the collective/group, and the larger systems interface. Artistic worlds found there an ironic yet solemn "*moderato cantabile*," as Nam Jun Paik called it: Yōko Ono lies on the hotel bed to be measured from above and below for her personal shelter.[23] This 1964 event and other associated works and artists around the Sōgetsu Art Center in Tokyo presaged and participated in the broader frame of the movement that came to be called intermedia in the late 1960s.

A central concern of this book revolves around this intermedia art, introduced in chapter 1, a form or movement intimately related to (and sometimes referred to interchangeably with) happenings, performance art, and the emergence of 1960s electronic music. Key to the lead-in or context of intermedia are the practices of expanded cinema (cinema shown on more than one screen or on alternative spaces/forms of projection) and Matsumoto Toshio's theories mentioned above, which led him in that direction. The terms *intermedia* and *environmental art* are also often used in close relation to one another. Emergent artists and designers were becoming exposed to trends in pop art, op art, minimalism, intermedia, and happenings both in Tokyo and internationally, particularly through the journal *Bijutsu techō* (Art notebook) and other media venues as well as traveling programs generated from Sōgetsu Art Center and Shinjuku Bunka Theater. Avant-garde ideas were reaching those outside traditional disciplinary educational systems and were being implemented in actions and performances that never entered the mainstream of the avant-garde canon. Higashi Yoshizumi, for example, an important artist and illustrator still active today in Chigasaki (though still mostly undiscovered in the art world), left behind the world of formal artistic training and moved to Tokyo to start out as a sign painter, and later to join the ad agency Young and Rubicon before going freelance. Higashi kicked off his journey to Tokyo by staging an event in 1969 on the Asagiri plateau, at the base of Mount Fuji: he flew a single giant paper airplane across the open landscape and photographed it during its flight.[24] Such a conception of the artist outside of Japan's traditional training and media boundaries, inspired by a discursive critical/conceptual network that framed a critique of artistic infrastructure, was made possible in and around the framework of art linked to these intermedia experiments.

A key introductory event for proto-intermedia artworks arrives with the event *From Space to Environment* (*Kūkan kara kankyō e*) presented by the Kankyō no kai (Environment society) at Tokyo's Matsuya department store in 1966, which included a night of happenings at the Sōgetsu Art Center. "The many genres of art," wrote the organizers of the exhibition, "must destroy themselves in order to be reorganized under new systems," while viewers, "in the face of unavoidable self-dissolution, are either boldly or passively whirled into, or swallowed by, and cannot but participate in the 'place' created by the work of art."[25] For the show, intermedia sound engineer Okuyama Jūnosuke pioneered light and sound contraptions that, as critic Tōno Yoshiaki put it, were realizations of "structures and systems" conceived by given artists but realized by "other hands" (often Okuyama's), and highlighted the place of apparatus and infrastructure in framing the human body in relation to the urban environment.[26]

Expanded cinema practices were especially prominent in the events leading up to the 1970s Osaka International Exposition (Expo '70) as well as in the expo itself. A rapid montage of three projections—two side by side and a third on top—Matsumoto's film *For My Crushed Right Eye* (*Tsuburekakatta migime no tame ni*) was shown at *Expose '68*, at the Sōgetsu Art Center. In an environment saturated with technologically reproduced images, works of expanded cinema such as *For My Crushed Right Eye* proposed a version of film that was performative and contingent, and thus corresponded with a reality that appeared at the time to consist of fragments and images violently colliding with one another. The film incorporates images taken from popular television shows, scenes of student protests and clashes of Japan's radical New Left group at Haneda and Sasebo, go-go dancers, graphic arts, the pop music scene, and images from Shinjuku's gay-boy culture. Matsumoto described the reality that consisted of these fragmented and colliding images—in parallel with what has been characterized as the "cinema mosaic" of his films—as "a mosaic in a complex state of flux, apparently lacking in logical connection . . . a disordered and chaotic *totality* [whose] overcrowded and congested experience is only multiplied by the infinite influx of news and information items."[27] For Matsumoto, multiprojection in an intermedia context was a way to create an art that could contend with the disordered totality of the contemporary mediatized world.

A reevaluation of the works and practices of the late 1950s to early 1970s in Japan gives us a more historicized, and perhaps less parochial, perspective on contemporary works of environment-based and site-specific art, works

that critique systems and infrastructures, and new media art more broadly. Central issues of mediation and digitization that today's artists confront have roots and parallels in the media practices of postwar artists in Japan and elsewhere. Though these issues are not unique to Japanese art, their manifestations and the critical discourses of intermedia in Japan continue to resonate forcefully as we consider the role of medium in art practice today, and as we come to grips with parallel dilemmas of navigating technological transformations in an increasingly globalized and mediatized environment.

Shelter Plan worked through infrastructural questions (imperiality, the nuclear threat) that also impinge on personal, embodied vulnerability (the shelter) and consumer capital (the ironic sale of shelters and postnuclear canned food). Intermedia art, with its technological obsessions, also engaged deeply with the vulnerability of the human sensorium in relation to larger-scale structures, and hence with the possibility (and inevitability) of loss. Concurrently with *Shelter Plan*, many of the same artists who participated in intermedia art also became involved with animation experiments at the Sōgetsu Art Center. Through the stretch and plasticity of animation's lines, its perspectival shifts, they aimed for a *dépaysement* (disorientation, dislocation), an unsettling of the overarching rhythms of the everyday. They mobilized what they saw as animation's unique potentialities in relation to the media system, including television's regulated temporalities. Working both from within and parallel to commercial media, these animation practitioners at times evoke a lassitude that flies in the face, or just steps to the side, of the regulated temporalities of Olympic preparedness. Their odd interest in things like recursively bouncing balls, teardrops, and ink on skin opens an alternative space in which those larger structures and systems may shift their meaning. Yet the artists are not outside the systems of commercial culture. From within experiments in the medium, they model a space of permeable boundaries of cultural fields, an intermediate scale of vacillating folds within larger systems. Here, this exploration takes the form of an intimate yet technologically mediated relation with objects in their materiality, and the interlocking relations of subjects and objects in their gazes. While paranoid readings of overwhelming structures have a tendency to place critical hope either in acts of unveiling or in the discovery of cracks and fissures in an otherwise unbending rigidity of frame, animation offers a sometimes ambivalent emphasis on the arts of the stretch, extension, the plastic and plasmatic for a practice of potentiality as metamorphosis.

In the later 1960s, these artistic experiments in animation, which I discuss in chapter 2, came into direct relation with the political problems of violence

and revolution, figuring a sort of anonymous (*quelconque*) figure of revolt and attempting to theorize what kind of violence might bring about a truly effective and meaningful shift in the political, social, and class hierarchies.[28] Working within a celebrity culture, the experimental animation of Ōshima Nagisa becomes one notable example where the layering of time, the recursive, repetitive structure both of repressive hierarchy and rebellious protest, come into focus through the specific formal strategies of a *gekiga* (long-form dramatic popular manga) reframed and remediated into a work of what I am calling experimental animation. The workings of the affective scale, the scale where the individual is both present and multiplied, where the perspective fragments into a view of insurgence, creates a framework for thinking about the potentiality of animation and violence in relation to revolution.

Using the term *potentiality* in a Marxist sense might bring to mind the series of Euro-American debates on the terms *dunamis* (potentiality) and *energeia* (act) in the Italian Marxist–lineage of interpretation of Aristotle.[29] Views of the specific potentiality for revolution of the workers, the relations between potentiality (*potenza*) and realization in acts (*l'atto*), accompany a substrate of (disagreement) about *impotenza* (*adunaton*, im-potentiality)—that is, the question of what happens, in the passage from potentiality to realization, with the capacity not-to-do, to the withholding? In other words, is it not the case that what distinguishes potentiality from realization is potentiality's capacity also to fail to be realized, to not-be or not-to-be? While the debates around these subjects have occupied Marxist critical theorists extensively, an important strand of artists and critics in Japan directly engaged in Marxist thought were also divided around the questions of doing or not-doing, or speech (*parole*) and silence, the capacity or incapacity of larger media systems and the masses—the latter in many ways formed by or in relation to those systems—to act, self-organize, and mobilize. The depth of the theories of culture industries on these questions is striking, and specific formulations of the Japanese theorists open out nuances not available in other languages, which I explore in chapter 3.

These theoretical questions took center stage against a backdrop of dramatic shifts in the media cultural landscape. In summer 1966 it was the Beatles; in September 1966 it was Sartre and Beauvoir. Throughout the 1960s a parade of European celebrity cultural figures passed through and created memorable media events in Japan.[30] (The year 1970 is often limned as the end of the era of meaningful political revolt, with the securitization of urban space and the palpable atmosphere of defeat of the student movements, followed by the rise of Red Army radicalism and televised hostage crises.) In

1973, the optimistic cultural/media theorist Hans Magnus Enzensberger visited Japan, and his visit became a fulcrum for the critical and art worlds to gather and articulate their own readings and understandings of the potentialities and limits of media and the culture industries. It was a moment when cybernetics and information studies had begun to circulate in Japan, when computer art and video art came into being. Critics understood deeply that the infrastructures and social uses of media and information also included the movements of labor and labor unions, architectural spaces, and many other aspects that could be conceived within the imaginative frame of feedback loops, or in relation to the workings of the *dispositif* understood in terms of social/cultural movement. While many Japanese theorists had a hard time connecting or relating to their German colleague's perceived optimism, this case and moment provide a revealing opportunity to understand where contemporary theorists thought media's potentialities (and its silences) could lead, as I explore in chapter 3. The early 1970s culture industry debates give us a snapshot of Japanese media theory at a moment when the strategies of direct protest and the idealization of certain kinds of direct violence began to give way to a war of tactics to be fought on the level of representations and cultural structures; rather than fighting with staves, activists now focused more on reevaluating the semiotics of race, gender, and class. A stark division arose between those who thought that working for change within the system was most productive, and those who believed in complete refusal of the system. The former attempted to access an intermediate scale of agency by maneuvering within current structures and media systems in self-reflexive ways; the latter felt only full refusal—negation of these overarching structures and frameworks via language and artistic projects—could lead to an activation of change, a facing up to possibility as well as loss in the affective realm.

These refusals often took shape in an ambivalent practice of photography, the most famous of which today is the *Provoke* photography movement. Nakahira Takuma (1938–2015) and Taki Kōji, as key theorists of that moment, write of the paradoxical quest to reach or at least theorize the totality that is beyond what is possible to grasp, and how to live within that impossibility as a mode of existential praxis. Taki writes, "In the process of trying to theorize what we 'cannot see,' we try to decide 'toward what' we want to exist."[31] The idea of reaching toward a negation via a photographic and fragmented collective experiment took shape in the short-lived *Provoke* journal and other media venues that extended from it into the early 1970s, which work within yet also aim to negate the existing media cultural sphere. "The sphere that we are aiming to provoke goes beyond politics, toward a deeper realm of negation.

Or we even think that our provocation can happen in such a way that we ourselves become something utterly negative," wrote Taki in his "Memorandum" in the first issue of *Provoke*.[32]

The related landscape theory (*fūkeiron*) of the late 1960s and early '70s aimed to reveal the invisible workings of power within seemingly empty landscapes, often through film or photography.[33] In the wake of *fūkeiron* and the *Provoke* movement, many artists experimented with photography, emptiness, and negation that could nonetheless make the infrastructure of the social perceptible. Mobilizing textures, surfaces, ruptures, and seams, photographer Ishiuchi Miyako began her career by photographing the spaces of Yokosuka where she grew up, around the US military bases. Her approach departed obliquely from the ways those spaces had previously been photographed. Earlier versions of Yokosuka had framed it first as part of a documentary project for the occupying military. Later, it provided for a countervailing realist postoccupation critique that emphasized the abjection of the war orphans and prostitutes (*pan-pan*) who congregated around the bases and became symbolic snapshot representatives and allegories of the geopolitical incline. That is, those earlier forms of snapshot realism are often interpreted as directly visualizing US power over Japan, the perceived (gender-inflected) disempowerment of Japan.[34] Unlike those versions of Yokosuka, Ishiuchi's late 1970s photographs present the haunting surfaces of the abandoned brothels and bars whose crumbling paint and cracked tile evoke a present absence of female bodies, a more uncertain relationship with their suffering and their agency within those larger spaces. In her 1970s views of those same spaces, Ishiuchi weaves in another dimension that resonates with what the landscape theorists had asserted as well—by showing the empty yet fissured landscapes and walls of Yokosuka and mostly absent human subjects, and also by entering the forbidden spaces (to her, as a child), she braves facing a transpersonal history whose traces and scars still require her working through. Ishiuchi's photographs thus take on that intermediate scale between affect and emotion, between larger structures and the personal, between stories and histories that can and have been narrated and those that have not.

From Postwar to Contemporary Art

Because Yokosuka is nothing if not a paradigmatically infrastructural space, reflecting on the military, governmentality, and international power relations—"Hello, Sacramento!" shout the now-abandoned signs in English from the base-serving town—Ishiuchi's works also resonate with the on-

going debates and violences of the 1970s around the reversion of Okinawa to Japan, a space and event with which all the important photographers of the 1960s–70s had to grapple. Yet for Ishiuchi it is not only the military base town as an infrastructure of national/class/gender inequities, nor the more historically laden *dispositif*/apparatus of sexual exploitation, but also that level of eventually interchangeable yet anonymous subject positions—at an intermediate scale—that are at issue in her photographic series of Yokosuka, especially when read in relation to her following series of photographs of the textured surfaces of the bodies of women of her generation, discussed in chapter 4. Later she moves on to capture her mother's billowing, luminous clothing hanging in the window, as well as the clothing left behind in the *ひろしま*/*hiroshima* archive, to frame and refract a new meditation on potentiality and affect in direct relation to loss. Thus, her work both transcends and vacillates among other competing sets of binaries (particular/concrete, historical/timeless, philosophical/phenomenological versus nonlocalizable), locating among them an engaging but nonfinal take on gender as social apparatus. From emotion to affect, between personal and infrastructural, Ishiuchi works in transitional and liminal spaces, creating an oeuvre that rewrites itself with each subsequent contribution, so that the Yokosuka works can only be fully understood or realized in relation to her 2005 *mother's* series and revived/reinstituted again after *ひろしま*/*hiroshima*. Here I argue that the infrastructures of gender come into focus beside or within the historical layering, so that her practice frames a nonverbal space where that intermediate potentiality of grappling and rejiggering the materiality of the social has been mobilized in a provocative way. Her work, imagining a plural I/me in her photographs, aligns Ishiuchi across a paradoxical spectrum of critical exposures and reparative solidarities.

Ishiuchi, as an artist whose work bridges the two central periods under discussion in this book—and whose earlier work came to broad recognition during the later period—makes us want to reflect on the dynamics and methodological consequences of examining works from the 1950s–70s in relation to the early decades of the twenty-first century. Both at the level of the exhibition and the individual artists' works, this book opens possibilities for reflecting on perceived similarities and differences in these periods, and for thinking critically about how that discursive and affective relationship gets constructed and used (by artists, curators, collectors, viewers). One can think through this problem via the modes of insertion/assertion of the work within international arts scenes, where they are frequently juxtaposed or linked; or one can consider the two periods of Olympic urban renewal (post-1964 and,

more recently, toward intended 2020 then 2021 Olympics); or one can highlight the sense of being in some kind of postdisaster/crisis moment, either in more recent memory (for post 3–11) or at some remove (for the '60s) that involves a crucial trope of reconstruction/renewal, along with ongoing issues of contamination and decontamination (traffic wars, Minamata disease, nuclear energy politics).

Even with the great differences also apparent between these times (neoliberal deregulation, the rise of freeters and the precariat, among many other differences), both eras considered themselves as eras of the rise and establishment of varying new media, meaning that rapid media transformations arose and eventually settled into a new normalcy within an expanded image-media ecology, entailing unprecedented early or late stages of transnational circulation and globalization. All of these factors work to allow some sense of a pattern of recurrence, a kind of circularity or feedback loop to be constructed, or become visible, across these moments. This feedback loop can then evoke an imagination or reflection on the very systematicity and process-oriented functioning of cultural work (meta- and local/global) as well as arts and media in "these (strange) times." The system of high growth consumption and metaphors of Olympic cleanup and renewal are again deployed—in a relay of historical moments between 1960s–70s frames of the *gendai* (contemporary) and the newer *kontenporarī*, where we see the return of a media-saturated attempt of art to grapple with the impossible situation of being spoken through and infused by larger systems.

The aftermath of 3–11 has become a central thematic for Japanese studies, and the works either produced or newly reinterpreted in this aftermath illuminate media studies and leftist critical theory in unanticipated ways. While some works continue to speak garrulously (and accurately) about the continuities between prewar fascisms and contemporary populisms/nationalisms, the works' relationships with 1960s–70s media theories give a more layered view of the power of recent visual arts. In the legacy of the reportage painters of the 1950s, Kazama Sachiko questions visual media's potential to frame and refract political events.[35] Bringing to mind also the animetic line's stretch and the remediated manga as political shifting of the horizon that I discuss in chapter 2, my discussion of Kazama in chapter 5 shows how she brings back the slow, analog frames of the woodblock carving to create large-scale works that reflect on new social media, government surveillance and censorship, and the information overload in which her own online presence and hypertextual process notes also participate. The affective scale for Kazama is both historical (having to do with the layering of repressions across

histories and across visual representational forms) and mediatic—the interstice between the textural specificity and material one-timeness of black ink on paper and the infinite reproducible pixels of online informational supplementation. Thus, a new and contemporary version of that intermediate scale of potentiality emerges here through a citational yet innovative practice of assemblage.

Other artists practicing in the wake of 3–11 move toward the pole of *impotenza*/silences in their mediatic reflections on materialities, infrastructures, and personal loss. The massive scale of the installation work by artist Kobayashi Fumiko at Roppongi Crossing in 2013 rose before the exhibition viewers as if her career were only just beginning, and her powers of collection/assemblage/accretion were unstoppable—though that was to become one of her last works. The vacillation between the emphatically reparative and the paranoid positions allows us to better understand her assemblage works, including the six-meter wall of abandoned chairs and clothing she constructed temporarily in the Mori Art Museum at the very top of Tokyo. Her gathering of stray objects, clothing, and the cast-off shells of urban life as a performative act presses against the infrastructural and institutional regulations of the Mori's solid walls and building safety rules, as she constructs a supplementary wall directly in the museum space. The silences of her work allow many viewers' perspectives to emerge, while they also create imaginings of the absent lives of those who lived with those objects.

In the context of the global contemporary art world, in which the Roppongi Crossing exhibition self-consciously intervenes (chapter 5), the transnational operations of Japanese art markets make it less useful to delineate who is and is not a Japanese artist. Younger artists like Asakai Yōko move between Rhode Island School of Design, Europe, and Tokyo, among the landscapes and infrastructures of air, weather, wind, and their electronic mediations, providing us with an updated and yet more enigmatic evocation of what cannot be seen, whether nuclear fallout, the movement of tides, or the layering of time that materializes affect in the form of a photograph. In Asakai's photograph series *sight* (2006–11), ambivalent communities and families hover over their small screens watching Hollywood blockbusters, refracting an oddly beautiful global intimacy, as in an example from the series, *Bambi, Berlin* (figure 1.3). In the spaces of silence between these untalkative photographic works, tentative and strange spaces of commonality may be imagined. The potentiality here may have yet to be fully palpable; yet by theorizing these photographs and installations in relation to the transitions at the affective scale, via the work of intermedia artists and cultural theorists, we can begin

FIGURE 1.3 Asakai Yōko, *Bambi, Berlin* (2006), type-c print, 453 × 560 mm, from the series *sight*, © Asakai Yōko. Courtesy of the artist.

to gain a meaningful sense of the grappling these recent photos demand of us in disaster's aftermath, and in the ecological spaces of today's disaster-infused, foreboding infrastructural everydayness.

While in some parts of recent photography, collectivities are dispersed into lonely solitudes or empty landscapes across distant rural roads, in other parts of the contemporary arts scene, especially before the pandemic, the ideas of community and collaboration have taken an unprecedented centrality—whether because of the emphasis on social interventions and participation or precisely because of the sense of existing in an aftermath of disaster, as in the Japanese case, or on the cusp of ecological disaster in the global case. Many artists focus on the idea of community participation, where the boundaries have become blurred between art happening, religious/spiritual/new wave ritual, and social-environmental movement (organic farming event, etc.). This

emphasis on participation can lead to a utopian-romantic presupposition about the reinforcement of community through art as a form of reparative practice. Yet in some cases this set of assumptions loses sight of the critical potential of engagement with infrastructures, those modes of grappling with the larger frameworks with which intermedia arts and earlier media theories so articulately struggled. Where has that struggle gone?

Chapter 6 works toward reinfusing the current discourse on community with the theoretical complexity of these earlier thinkers. Could one find a way, at the middle range of agency, to grapple with the actual and potential assemblages of relations that exist between institutions, individuals, objects, and social structures, including structures of feeling, movement, and directions of energy? In the 1950s, Marxist theorists articulated theories of media and mass-energy within a complex imagining of materialist dialectics. Infused with such theoretical insights, we can look at intermedia musical compositions, 1970s media theory, and contemporary visual art for important models and correctives to these simpler, more idealistic notions of community formation, and thus find new perspectives on the relations between artistic interventions and larger infrastructural forms. Artists make important conceptual leaps via infrastructural material, as individuals and systems interact along a series of complex vectors at the affective scale. Grappling with breakages in the potentialities of interactive conceptual art, photographers move beyond the intervention of the individual artist as they practice instead an art of circulation and slight delay, such that waves and ripples of just-printed photographs might rise up to challenge any preconceived understandings of what constitutes the real. More recently, the sculptural walls of contemporary installations, silent but imbricated in a complex semiotics, reframe the idea of community into a resonant infrastructure as citation of what remains behind. The works of photographers and sculptors from both periods thus yield a transformed relation to community, counterposing collectivity and assemblage as modes of pressing against and into the overwhelm of Being in the contemporary age. They model ways of opening a paradoxical model of futurity that has already been, or that engages dialectically with a multitude of material pasts.

From intermedia experiments to animation's plasmatic stretch, from trenchantly embedded media theories to multilayered textural practices of photography, artists in the 1950s–70s and the contemporary visual artists who "retroact" and revive their critiques operate at the affective scale to reveal unexpected possibilities for media practice. Beginning in the 1950s, the relationship between media in a moment of profound technological and cultural

change allowed artistic works to focus on apparatus and environment and to operate at an alternate scale of perception and technologically self-reflexive construction. With the high-growth economy of the 1960s, such an exploration became even more deeply necessary to reactivate artistic practice against and within the regulated temporalities of the booming corporate world. In chapter 1, beginning with the 1950s experiments of Jikken Kōbo (Experimental Workshop) and the media theories of Matsumoto Toshio, we trace the emergence of new potentialities of media theory and praxis (vacillating between paranoid and reparative positions) in paradigmatic works of the intermedia movement.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

Japanese names are given in the Japanese order, surname first, unless the writer publishes primarily in English. Japanese terms are given in modified Hepburn romanization.

1 Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, 207.

2 Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, 207.

3 Hua Hsu, "Affect Theory and the New Age of Anxiety," *New Yorker*, March 25, 2019. This was published in a roundup of affect theory well before the pandemic hit, but it encapsulates the vacillation between focusing on what might seem to be personal experiences of affective moods (at the level of "everyday life") and large social media and mass media platforms that both condition and are conditioned by those widely shared moods/tones.

4 *Lossiness* is a term for the prefiltering or alteration of an image or data source for more efficient compression.

5 Hal Foster reads the 1950s–60s as a repetition or "retroaction" of earlier twentieth century avant-gardes (*The Return of the Real*, xiii); also cited in van Hensbergen, "Moving with Words," 13.

6 I'm indebted to Hannah Airriess for introducing me to this film, which she analyzes in depth in chapter 3 of her PhD dissertation ("Staging the Bright Life").

7 Berlant, "Nearly Utopian," 293.

8 See Lamarre's preference for thinking media ecology for its account of the complex assemblage of media instances and their relationships in Lamarre, *The Anime Ecology*, 115, 288; see also Zahtlen, *The End of Japanese Cinema*, 2. For a fuller account of the vicissitudes of this term, see Goddard and Parikka, "Unnatural Ecologies."

9 Berlant, "Genre-Flailing."

10 For the citations above from Parks, see "Media Infrastructures and Affect," also reprinted in Parks, "Introduction," 15. Parks also there makes a convincing argument for the use of differing scales to think infrastructure.

11 For trenchant critiques of area studies and its place in the struggles of the humanities and social sciences within "the quickening conversion of learning into intellectual property and of the university into the global corporation," see Miyoshi and Harootunian, *Learning Places*, 19 (for quote) and passim.

12 Ngai, *Ugly Feelings*, 27.

13 Ngai, *Ugly Feelings*, 28.

14 The North American field of affect theory is a broad one, around which scholars have recently built more durable institutional structures and homes. For an overview of some that inform my approach, see Gregg and Seigworth, *The Affect Theory Reader*. A rougher version of the taxonomy of two key strains of affect theory would sense a divide be-

tween the feminist-affiliated and mostly American-centered work on affect (Sedgwick, Berlant, Ngai, Ahmed) and the more techno-oriented and Deleuze-inspired work of scholars (Massumi is a central figure here) who focus on the virtual and certain strains of Marxist critique. My own work is closer in spirit to the former constellation, while sharing with the latter an explicit interest in media forms and in Marxist-influenced ideas of potentiality. In the context of Japan, affect theory, like most of the rest of the fields important in North American academia (performance studies, queer theory), is generally a subcategory of the discipline/departments of English and American literary studies (*ei-bei-bungaku*), thus rather dramatically putting it in its place.

15 I emphasize "reparative" here because, although she uses the terms almost interchangeably, "depressive" can be confusing to those less familiar.

16 Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 8. Page numbers hereafter given in the text.

17 Matsumoto, "Ekusupandiddo shinema no tenbō," 172.

18 Debarati Sanyal's articulation of necessary complicities and folds becomes useful here; see Sanyal, *Memory and Complicity*, 1–18.

19 Nihon daigaku zengaku kyōtō kaigi shokikyoku, *Nichidai tōsō*. Individual photographs in the book are not credited to individuals, but the afterword credits Shinkai for contributing many photographs while the majority in the book are by the collective.

20 Sasaki studied at Tokyo College of Photography and worked in editing at Nikkatsu and as a photographer; she made the experimental film *To Die Sometime* (30 min., 1974); from 1979 to 1993 she lived in Brazil. See the recent recognition for her work in the exhibition *Japanese Expanded Cinema Revisited*, Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, 2017. In her retrospective photo book of the events, published in 2009, Sasaki claims her camera was a "cheer" for the students, but she often hesitated to press the shutter. (Sasaki, *Nichidai*, 224.)

21 Nakanishi Natsuyuki's courtroom testimony, republished in *Bijutsu techō* (November 1971): 207. Hi Red Center was in contact with Fluxus, and afterward George Macunias made a map of Tokyo that recorded/notated the group's performance events. See the exhibition and catalog: Merewether and Hiro, *Art, Anti-art, Non-art*. Re the 1000-Yen Note Incident, Akasegawa had used monochrome one-sided copies of the 1,000-yen note as invitations and in performances; the police initiated a criminal investigation that led to a long, drawn-out trial, in which many prominent members of the art community testified about art, mimesis, and representation, before his ultimate indictment, three months' incarceration, and one year of probation.

22 See works such as Simondon, *Sur la technique*, more recently translated to English using the word *technics*, and Stiegler, *Technics and Time 1*.

23 Beyond the standard musical direction (meaning moderate/restrained yet singingly/freely, very apt for this piece's play within a highly regulated space), Paik may have been referring to Duras's novel and film of that title, released in Japan in 1961. See Akasegawa, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, 135.

24 After a number of cross-media endeavors, Higashi Yoshizumi (b. 1949, Kagoshima) undertook a prolific art practice spanning photography, painting, poetry, film, illustration, music, sculpture, book design, and ceramics. Recent objects and archived writings may be viewed at Higject on the Table: Object and Monologue, accessed October 25, 2020, http://zkkw9223.jugem.jp/.

25 Enbairamento no kai, "Kūkan kara kankyō e' ten shushi," 118. See also Yoshimoto, "*From Space to Environment*."

26 Isozaki and Tōno, "'Kankyō ni tsuite,'" 92.

27 Matsumoto, "Ore tachi wa minna kichigai piero da," 38; Matsumoto Toshio, "Purojekushon āto no kadai" (On the challenge of projection art), *Asahi shinbun*, May 28, 1968, repr. in *Eiga no henkaku*, 160.

28 Michael Lucey writes an interesting aside about how the idea of the "anonymity" of discourse in certain strains of French thought (Duras, Blanchot) navigates the question of (desire for) political relevance in *Someone*, 147.

29 For the development of this thought, see works such as Agamben, *The Man without Content*, *Homo Sacer*, and *The Coming Community*; and Negri, "Il Mostro Politico." For a lucid and concise discussion of these debates, see Attell, "Potentiality, Actuality, Constituent Power."

30 For Beauvoir's visit as media event and her influence on Japanese feminism, see Bullock, "Fantasy as Methodology."

31 Taki, "Oboegaki 1," 65.

32 Taki, "Oboegaki 1," 64.

33 Regarding the specific terms *landscape* (*fūkei*) and *environment* (*kankyō*) in these cultural debates: although some critics have posited an opposition between *fūkei* and *kankyō* based on taking the idea of landscape in its more traditional sense (aligned with European landscape painting), as a relatively taken-for-granted "nature," many critics were using both terms in relatively aligned or similar ways to describe the highly mediated and technologically infused, structured, often urban world of social, architectural, and politically valenced infrastructures.

34 For a further outline of changing versions of realism in Japanese photography, see Sas, "Conceptualizing Japanese Postwar Photography."

35 *Reportage painting* refers to a left-wing Japanese postwar art movement of the 1950s associated with the work of Nakamura Hiroshi, Ikeda Tatsuo, Yamashita Kikuji, and Ishii Shigeo, with explicit political aims in opposing the American military presence and actions in Japan. For a concise introduction to the movement, see Hoaglund, "Protest Art in 1950s Japan."

CHAPTER 1. THE FEELING OF BEING IN THE CONTEMPORARY AGE

Earlier versions of this chapter were published as "By Other Hands: Environment and Apparatus in 1960s Intermedia," in *The Oxford Handbook of Japanese Cinema*, ed. Daisuke Miyao (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 383–415; and *Tokyo 1955–1970: A New Avant-Garde*, ed. Doryun Chong and Nancy Lim (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2012). Exhibition and catalog.

1 Isozaki Arata coined the phrase "future city as ruins" as part of his architectural theory related to postwar Tokyo. Isozaki and Tōno, "'Kankyō ni tsuite,'" 95.

2 Isozaki and Tōno, "'Kankyō ni tsuite,'" 95.

3 See Yūki, *Kamitsu kasō*, 9, 13, 18, cited in Oguma, *1968*, 36. See also Franz Prichard's *Residual Futures*, especially the provocative first chapter, "Prelude to the Traffic War: Infrastructural Aesthetics of the Cold War," on traffic and Tsuchimoto Noriaki's 1964 film *On the Road: A Document*.