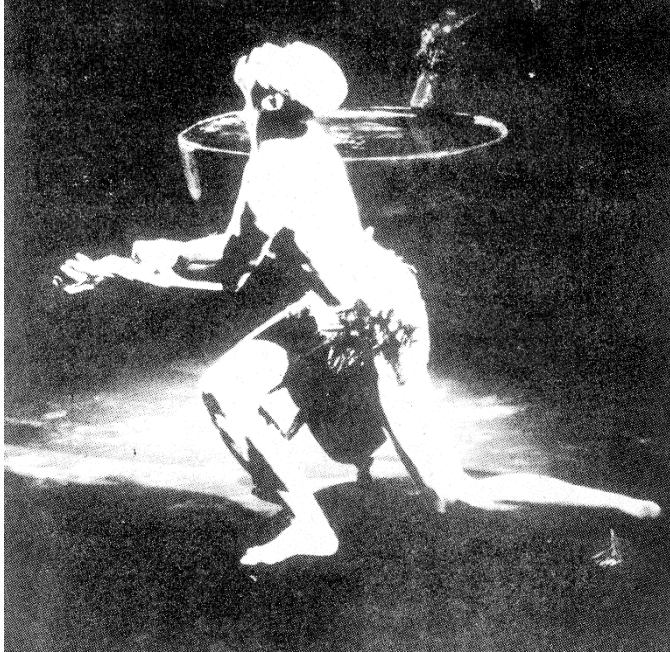


# LA JOLLA LIGHT

BIO

Thursday, May 22, 1986

## Mandeville Gallery looks at post-war Japanese art



**Goro Namerikawa performs highly stylized and symbolie dance.**

The current exhibit at the UC San Diego Mandeville Gallery draws from the art of contemporary Japan.

In particular, the exhibit seeks to illustrate the regeneration of a culture that was thrown to the ground and unraveled in World War II. It attempts to show that Japan is now finding a new and diverse identity of artistic expression derived from traditional, Occidental and totally unique schools of thought.

An essay on the exhibit by curator Brent Riggs and artist Margaret Honda discusses the artists in the context of post-World War II struggle characterized by a game of catch-up with Western technology and style. The mix of culture is apparent in this show that will be at the gallery through June 22.

Riggs and Honda state in their essay, "Coming to terms with the highly industrialized, complex mix of cultures of home, as well as international conceptions of contemporary art, has been a formidable challenge to post-war Japanese artists."

Working with the concept of "self-obliteration," Yayoi Kusama takes distinctly feminine shoes, enhances them with balloon-like protrusions and covers the combined product with various colors of metallic glitter. The garish result is a confusion of identity. Is it a phallic symbol or piece of food? And where do the male and female figures begin and end?

A stylized representation of contemporary fad and consumption, Ryoichi Majima's "Vitamin Crazy" depicts the mechanical nature in which the modern female follows suit. A pair of plump red-glazed lips are controlled by an 'obnoxiously loud motor that draws them open and shut. The frontal lobe of this mixed media relief is occupied by a bottle of vitamins 'A' through 'U.'

Katsuro Yoshida's collages work with the concept of altering visual perception by obscuring torn portions of magazine photos. The eye is caught by momentary recognitions of form, texture and color that dissolve on close observation.

Kazuo Shiraga draws from the Jodo sect of Buddhism, selecting legendary Chinese heroes to inspire his works. Shiraga paints with his feet, supporting himself by a rope attached to a beam in his studio. Works in the exhibit exemplify broad, contemplative strokes, oddly similar to traditional Eastern script.

The work of Kazuo Kadonaga exemplifies a traditional use of wood that is simplistic and peaceful. Sections of creamcolored tree trunks remain, for the most part, in a natural state, disrupted only by certain "industrial" intrusions. One of the logs suffers a clean split down its near 10-foot length. Another has been split into checkerboard sections, all carefully reassembled.

To all of this is added the dance/performance of Goro Namerikawa. A video at the exhibit shows Namerikawa in his highly symbolic combination of traditional Japanese theater and avant-garde notions of movement. Namerikawa, a member of Sankai Juku, one of the foremost Buto dance groups, will perform for the exhibition in late June. Most of his works deal with the concepts of life and death and mastery over the physical world.

- Ernest E. Pund HI