

# Hara Museum of Contemporary Art

Press Release 2013/04/12

## *Sophie Calle, For the Last and First Time*

March 20 (Wednesday) – June 30 (Sunday), 2013

The Hara Museum is proud to present a solo exhibition by the French artist Sophie Calle. This exhibition by one of France's leading contemporary artists consists of two parts. *The Last Image* (2010) is an installation that weaves together text and photographs taken by the artist about people who have lost the power of sight. *Voir la mer* (See the sea) (2011) captures on film the expression of persons seeing the ocean for the first time. To the sound of waves, Calle's installations quietly contemplate questions that she has been exploring since her work *The Blind* in 1986: What is beauty? What does it mean to see? One possible answer provided by a blind man was the spark that propelled the artist to ponder these questions: "The most beautiful thing I've ever seen is the sea."



*Voir la mer* (See the sea) (detail), 2011, color photograph  
©ADAGP, Paris 2013 Courtesy Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong & Paris – Gallery Koyanagi, Tokyo

Calle is largely known for her highly narrative artwork incorporating both photographs and text. She has held solo exhibitions at the Whitechapel Gallery, Centre Pompidou and other major museums throughout the world, and has represented her country at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Venice Biennale (2007) and other international art events.

In work revolving around intimate relations with others, Calle weaves together fact and fiction in ways that are fantastic and constantly surprising. And yet the themes which she addresses - identity, communication, memory, perception - are all universal in nature. Fourteen years ago at the Hara Museum, many viewers were moved by *Exquisite Pain* (1999), an exhibition that incorporated beautiful photographs and embroidered text in a tale about emotional healing through the exchange of heartbreaking experiences with others.

The current exhibition presents Calle's most recent works on vision and perception, subjects that she has explored for many years. Consisting of two parts, *The Last Image* and *Voir la mer*, it is a show that caused a stir when exhibited for the first time in Istanbul at the Sabanci Museum (2011). Both are being presented in Japan for the first time. Also included is a special collaborative piece featuring an image from the artist Hiroshi Sugimoto's *Seascapes* series.

A related exhibition of selected works from the Hara Museum Collection will be on view at Hara Museum ARC (the Hara Museum's annex in Shibukawa, Gunma) and a film screening and talk by the artist at the Institut Français du Japon-Tokyo will also be held.

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## Exhibition Details

**Title:** *Sophie Calle, For the Last and First Time*

**Dates:** March 20 (Wednesday) - June 30 (Sunday), 2013

**Place:** Hara Museum of Contemporary Art 4-7-25 Kitashinagawa, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo 140-0001

Tel: 03-3445-0651 E-mail: [info@haramuseum.or.jp](mailto:info@haramuseum.or.jp) Website: <http://www.haramuseum.or.jp> Mobile site: <http://mobile.haramuseum.or.jp>

Blog: <http://www.art-it.asia/u/HaraMuseum> Twitter: <http://twitter.com/haramuseum> (in Japanese only / account name: @haramuseum)

**Organized by:** Hara Museum of Contemporary Art

**Under the auspices of:** Embassy of France in Japan/Institut Français du Japon

**Supported by:** Institut Français du Japon

**Cooperation provided by:** Samsung Electronics Japan, Gallery Koyanagi

**Hours:** 11:00 am - 5:00 pm, Wednesdays until 8:00 pm (except March 20) (last entry 30 minutes before closing)

**Closed:** Mondays (open on April 29, May 6), April 30, May 7

**Admission:** General 1,000 yen; Students 700 yen (high school and university) or 500 yen (elementary and junior high); Free for Hara Museum members, students through high school every Saturday during the school term; 100 yen discount per person for groups of 20 or more; a 100 yen discount with the Hara Museum ARC ticket.

**Directions:** 5 minutes by taxi or 15 minutes on foot from JR Shinagawa Station (Takanawa exit); or from the same station take the Tan No.96 bus, get off at the first stop (Gotenyama), and walk 3 minutes.



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## Related Exhibition and Events:

### *Spinning the Word: Sophie Calle and Miranda July from the Hara Museum Collection*

March 16 (Saturday) - June 26 (Wednesday), 2013

Hara Museum ARC Galleries A, B and C (Contemporary Art)

\**Exquisite Pain* by Sophie Calle will be on view.

### **Bus Tours to Hara Museum ARC**

Bus tours from Tokyo to Hara Museum ARC will be conducted during the exhibition *Spinning the Word: Sophie Calle and Miranda July from the Hara Museum Collection*.

Date: April 20 (Saturday), May 18 (Saturday) and June 15 (Saturday)

### **Sophie Calle Talk and Film Screening**

Date: March 16 (Saturday), 2013 16:00 ~

Place: Espace Images, Institut Français du Japon-Tokyo

### **Sophie Calle Documentary to be Screening**

The documentary *Sophie Calle: Untitled* will be screened every Wednesday evening from 17:00 until 20:00 at the Hall. The documentary will be screened three times in a loop.

*Sophie Calle: Untitled* (Collection Empreintes)(2012) / Director: Victoria Clay Mendoza / Producer: FOLAMOUR

/Duration: 52 minutes

### **Lecture by Yukio Kondo** (Art critic and Associate Professor in the Faculty of Science and Technology, Keio University)

Date: May 12 (Sunday) 15:00 - 16:30

### **Lecture by Momoko Matsuzaki** (Radio Scriptwriter)

Date: May 29 (Wednesday) 18:00 - 19:30

### **Lecture by Aomi Okabe** (Art critic / Curator)

*Sophie Calle's Art and the Rules of the Game: Together with the Novels of Paul Auster, Maha Harada and Others*

Date: June 30 (Sunday) 15:00 - 16:30

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## ***Exquisite Pain* (to be exhibited at Hara Museum ARC)**

Viewers in Japan may remember *Exquisite Pain*, Sophie Calle's solo exhibition held at the Hara Museum fourteen years ago. In part one of that show (*Countdown*), letters to her most beloved person and photographs were used to relate the story of the worse day of her life. Part two (*Countup*) was the story of her gradual recovery, which she achieved by sharing her story of hurt with other people and then listening in turn to their stories about the worse experience of their lives. These many stories - of lost love, of lost eyesight, of the birth of a crippled child - were embroidered with black thread onto white sheets that were hung on the gallery walls. The unfolding of this part of her life and her encounter with the lives of others undoubtedly touched the hearts of many viewers. The fuzzy distinction, however, between fact and fiction that runs through her work underscores the danger of unquestioning belief.

## **Who Is Sophie Calle?**

Sophie Calle is a French contemporary artist who has won fame largely for her highly narrative and often controversial work composed of photographs and language. For the project *The Sleepers* (1979), Calle photographed and interviewed 24 strangers whom she had invited to come to her home and sleep in her bed. For *The Hotel* (1981), Calle worked as a chambermaid at a hotel in Venice where she photographed the rooms of the hotel guests. *The Address Book* (1983) refers to an address book found by the artist. Calling the people listed in the book, Calle conducted interviews about the owner and then published them in the French daily newspaper *Libération*. These projects, including those made during the 1990s such as *True Stories* and *Suite Venitienne*, were intriguing mixtures of fact and fiction. During this time, she also began working on a series about persons without sight, beginning with *The Blind*. It was a profound examination into the nature of sight and perception, which lie at the very foundation of art.

Calle's doings as a filmmaker and other aspects of her lifestyle inspired the author Paul Auster to use her as the model for a fictional character named Maria Turner in his novel *Leviathan*. Calle in turn assumed the personae of Maria Turner in a work she created called *Double Game* (1998). These works, which push the boundaries of contemporary art, remain a focus of much attention today.

Calle was born in Paris in 1953. In her late-teens, she left home to wander for seven years, returning to Paris at the age of 26. From that time, she began creating, and from 1980, she began to exhibit. She has held solo exhibitions at major museums such as the Tate Gallery (1998) and the Centre Pompidou (2003).

In Japan, she has held several solo exhibitions, including *Exquisite Pain* at the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo and an exhibition at the Toyota Municipal Museum of Art (2003). Her work has also appeared in such group exhibitions as *Beyond the photographic frame / 11 recent works* (1990, Art Tower Mito, Ibaraki) and *Images in Transition: Photographic Representations in the Eighties* (1990, National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo). She currently lives in Malakoff on the outskirts of Paris.



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## Images for Publication



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\*Please include the following credit along with the captions below. Please do not trim or alter the images. Putting text over the images is prohibited.

[1][2][3] *The Last Image* (detail), 2010, color photograph ©ADAGP, Paris 2013 Courtesy Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong & Paris – Gallery Koyanagi, Tokyo

\*[1] and [2] form a pair. When shown together, please align the respective horizons as shown above. Use of single images is allowed.

[4][5][6] *Voir la mer* (See the sea) (detail), 2011, video installation ©ADAGP, Paris 2013 Courtesy Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong & Paris – Gallery Koyanagi, Tokyo

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