

WRIGHTWOOD  
**659**

# ISHIDA

Self-Portrait of Other

MUSEO NACIONAL  
CENTRO DE ARTE  
**REINA SOFIA**

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Robust roster of public programming announced for  
First and only U.S. retrospective of contemporary, 'cult' Japanese artist

## ***TETSUYA ISHIDA: SELF-PORTRAIT OF OTHER***

Presented at Wrightwood 659, October 3 - December 14, 2019

Organized by the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid,  
in collaboration with the Halsted A&A Foundation

Plus, ***ANDO: MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES*** exhibition mounted at Wrightwood 659  
in connection with Chicago Architecture Biennial

(CHICAGO, IL - September 10, 2019) A robust roster of public programming has been announced in support of ***Tetsuya Ishida: Self-Portrait of Other***, the first and only retrospective exhibition of Japanese contemporary artist Ishida (1973–2005) in the United States. *Tetsuya Ishida* will be on view at Wrightwood 659, the Tadao Ando-designed exhibition space at 659 W. Wrightwood Avenue, Chicago, October 3 - December 14, 2019. This expansive exhibition of 70+ paintings and works on paper reveals the sense of disorientation and alienation that permeated Japan's consumer society during and after the recession in the 1990s. The exhibition is organized by the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain, where it was on display this summer, and is curated by its Head of Exhibitions, Teresa Velázquez Cortes.

"At first glance, much of the work of Tetsuya Ishida can be seen as a commentary on modern consumer culture. Images of workers 're-fueling,' figures on treadmills, 'conveyor belt people' and shiny snack foods on a market shelf seem to share the concerns of Western artists who have addressed similar issues in their work. From Pop-Art's passive-aggressive embrace of commercial packaging to the more overtly political declaration *I Shop Therefore I Am* of Barbara Kruger. However, upon closer inspection and understanding, Ishida's work has a quality that is unique to his own time and culture," said Velázquez Cortes.

Concurrent with the presentation of *Tetsuya Ishida: Self-Portrait of Other*, and in connection with the 2019 Chicago Architecture Biennial, Wrightwood 659 will also present ***Ando: Museums and Galleries***, an exhibition of models, drawings and photographs documenting some of the Pritzker Prize-winning master architect Tadao Ando's most famous public museums and galleries. Made possible in support by Alphawood Exhibitions, *Tadao Ando: Museums and Galleries* incorporates key elements of *Ando and Le Corbusier: Masters of Architecture* which officially opened the Wrightwood 659 space in October 2018. These include an installation of a remarkable model of Naoshima Island in Japan's Inland Sea, the site of several Ando masterpiece structures, in addition to university student-made models of three of Ando's most important public commissions in the United States: the Clark Art Institute, the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth and the Pulitzer Arts Foundation.

### **Fall Public Programming**

In keeping with Wrightwood 659's commitment to social engagement, related public programming developed by the curatorial team will be presented through the run of the two exhibitions. All programs take place at Wrightwood 659, unless noted, and are included with admission and open to the public. For all tickets, visit <https://tickets.wrightwood659.org/events>.

**Weekly exhibition tours:** Starting Friday, October 4, trained visitor service associates will lead guided 45-minute tours of both exhibitions on Thursdays and Fridays at 12:30pm and 3:30pm, and on Saturdays at 10:30am, 12:30pm and 3:30pm and include insight into the lives and works of both Ishida and Ando.

### **Tadao Ando: Houses for Art & People, Thursday, October 10, 6:30pm**

Dr. Michelangelo Sabatino, Professor + Director of the PhD Program in Architecture at the Illinois Institute of Technology, will lead a lecture discussing Tadao Ando's architecture, including one of his most recent projects, Wrightwood 659. This presentation will highlight Wrightwood 659's unique architectural elements, showing how it fits into Ando's larger body of work.

### **Open House Chicago, Saturday, October 19, 10:00am – 5:00pm, and Sunday, October 20, 12:00pm – 5:00pm**

For the first time, Wrightwood 659 will participate in the Chicago Architecture Center's popular Open House Chicago, one of the largest architecture festivals in the world.

Visitors to Wrightwood 659 are invited to tour this unique art space at their leisure, while taking in the *Tadao Ando: Museums and Galleries* exhibition for additional context. Reservations are required and can be made by visiting <https://openhousechicago.org/>

**A Surreal Ball, Saturday, October 26** - Save the date for one sensational, Surreal evening as Chicago's never before seen!

**Ishida in his Time, Thursday, November 7, 6:30pm**

An expert panel will discuss Ishida, inserting him into both the art historical canon and Japanese history. Participants to date include Janice Katz, Roger L. Weston Associate Curator of Japanese Art at the Art Institute of Chicago, Laura Allen, Chief Curator and Curator of Japanese Art at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, and E. Taylor Atkins, Distinguished Teaching Professor and Assistant Chair in Northern Illinois University's Department of History.

**About Tetsuya Ishida: *Self-Portrait of Other***

*Tetsuya Ishida: Self-Portrait of Other* provides insight into the artist's short, but prolific, career. The artist came of age during Japan's nationwide recession of the 1990s, a period that has become known as "the lost decade." Naturally, this moment in history strongly influenced his artwork, which takes the form of bitter social satire and resists the idealization of the postwar growth and rapid technological developments that eventually led to the country's financial crisis.

The miraculous post World War II growth of the Japanese economy and the abrupt collapse that occurred in the 1990's is a history unlike any other. Western artists have had a long tradition of distrust and opposition to consumer culture, from Thoreau to the 60's counterculture. This Western critique of an out of control market-driven society can even be seen in Mad Magazine's satirical depictions of advertising or Lucille Ball struggling to capture and package chocolates on a production line. In a sense this critique could be utilized as an outlet. Laughing at our predicament served as a means to relieve the pressure to conform and most of all...to consume. Japanese society had no similar mechanism to help them deal with the psychic effect of an extremely harsh economic recession in the 1990's. There was a turning inward. The *hikikomori* were young people who chose to live in a state of near-total social isolation. Others turned to fantasy or manga comics as a refuge. Young people could not afford to live apart from their parents and some stayed in their rooms with the door closed. Perhaps it could be said that Ishida took refuge in his art. The intense detail and attention to craft suggest that he was reluctant to turn away from the canvas.

Early works presented date back to 1996, the year Ishida graduated from Musashino Art University, Tokyo, with a degree in Visual Communication Design, while the most recent were completed in 2004, shortly before his untimely death. Though relatively unknown in the Western art world, Ishida has become a cult artist in his own country, where his imaginary world has become a reference for younger generations. His sharply critical work was presented in Europe at the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015.

This presentation of *Tetsuya Ishida: Self-Portrait of Other* is organized by the Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid, in collaboration with the Halsted Art & Architecture Foundation at Wrightwood 659. Works on display have been generously loaned by the Shizuoka Prefectural Museum of Art, the Hiratsuka Museum of Art and The National Museum of Modern Art (Japan), the artist's estate, and private collections in Singapore, the United States, Hong Kong, and Korea.

**Wrightwood 659**, a private, non-collecting institution devoted to socially engaged art and architecture located at 659 W. Wrightwood Avenue, presents three public exhibitions annually. Located in Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood, Wrightwood 659 was designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect, Tadao Ando, who transformed a 1920s building with his signature concrete forms and poetic treatment of natural light. Future exhibitions at Wrightwood 659 include *The Allure of Matter: Material Art from China*, a major exhibition of contemporary experimental art in China, to be presented in February 2020 in partnership with the Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago.

### **Exhibition Ticketing**

All visits to Wrightwood 659 require a reservation. Tickets for *Tetsuya Ishida: Self-Portrait of Other* and *Tadao Ando: Museums and Galleries* are available, online only, at <https://tickets.wrightwood659.org/events>. During the exhibition, free general admission tickets will be released each Monday for the current week. Unless otherwise noted, Wrightwood 659 will be open to the public during *Tetsuya Ishida: Self-Portrait of Other* on Thursdays 12:00pm - 8:00pm, Fridays 12:00pm - 8:00pm, and Saturdays 10:00am - 7:00pm through December 14, 2019. For additional information: <https://wrightwood659.org>

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Photo credit: L to R

*Untitled*, 1997 © Tetsuya Ishida, 2019; Photograph Takemi Art Photos, courtesy Kyuryudo Art Publishing Co., Ltd.

*Return Journey*, 2003 © Tetsuya Ishida, 2019; Photograph Takemi Art Photos, courtesy Kyuryudo Art Publishing Co., Ltd.

*Contact*, 1998 © Tetsuya Ishida, 2019; Photograph Takemi Art Photos, courtesy Kyuryudo Art Publishing Co., Ltd.

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