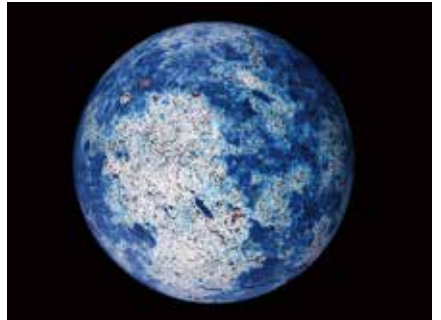


Zenji

Experimental Photographer



Japan

What is an experimental photographer?

I'm an experimental photographer, meaning that I take photos while conducting various experiments.

The purpose of these experiments is to take photographs that have never been seen before, and to convey how interesting photography can be.

There are three aspects of photography that are essential to my process of creating images...accident, discovery, and analog.

"Accident" encompasses the accidentality of photographs.

"Discovery" means to discover small things that have always been close to us.

And "Analog" refers to the analog expression which can't be expressed digitally.

I have invented the "shaking amplification device" to correspond to the accidentality of the photograph. I shoot



while shaking the camera with this device.

I used to just shake my hand to take blurry photos, but I invented this device to make it impossible to control the movement.

I use this device to take photos of famous sightseeing spots in Tokyo.

For example, I took this photo at the Shibuya intersection. It's the most crowded intersection in Japan.



Normally, people take photos that fit with their image of what the sightseeing spot should look like.

However, this device breaks down such preconceived images and show us another aspect of the familiar sight. The purpose of this project isn't just to take abstract photos, but to add the element of the accidental to my intent as a photographer.

I also want to make the viewer's imagination work in order to appreciate the blurred subject.

Next, I will show you a photograph with the theme of discovery. What do you think this photo looks like?



This is actually a molehill.

It gets its shape from erosion by rain. I shot this from the bottom so that this small pile looks large, like a mountain range.

I want to discover the universe close to me. And I want to convey the pleasures of having a "sense of wonder."

My last point is shooting with analog representation.

This is a device called the Soratama that I invented. You can take photos like these with it.



Soratama means aerial ball. I commercialized the Soratama, and there are many Soratama enthusiasts around



the world.

This is a handmade kaleidoscope. When you shoot with this kaleidoscope, you can take photos like this.



You can achieve similar effects to the Soratama and the kaleidoscope by using Photoshop.

But analog nuances can't be created digitally.

I hope to convey how to enjoy basic photographs with such analog techniques.

Shaking Amplification Device



This is a series of shoots across famous sightseeing spots in Tokyo using the "Shaking amplification device." Normally, people take photos that fit with their image of what a sightseeing spot should look like. However, this device breaks down those preconceived images and shows us another aspect of these familiar sights. The purpose of this project isn't just to take abstract photos, but to add the element of the accidental to my intent as a photographer. I also want to make the viewer's imagination work in order to appreciate the blurred subject.



Shaking Amplification Device



Shibuya intersection, Shibuya



Metropolitan Government, Shinjuku



Mannequin, Asakusa

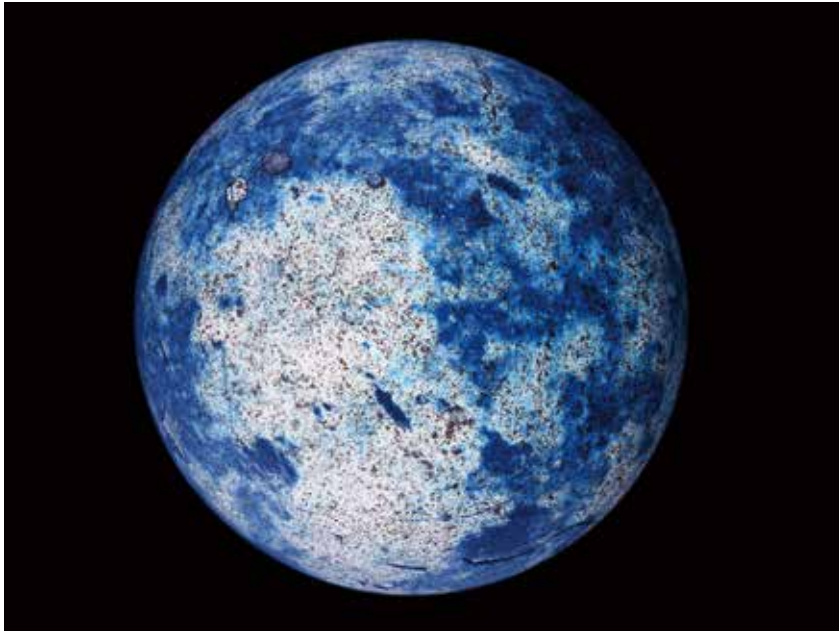


Courtyard, Aoyama



Tokyo Skytree, Sumida

ZEN'S PLANET



This is a series that shoots other worlds or universes close to us. The important thing in this series is "discovery." I carefully explore nearby places and discover things that I have not noticed before. The point of this series is to find something in a familiar place, rather than going out in search of a superb view. And it's the goal of this series not just to show my photographs but to convey the fun of discovery.



Quail egg, Before



Quail egg, After



Death Star, Manhole cover



Toxic jungle, Moss



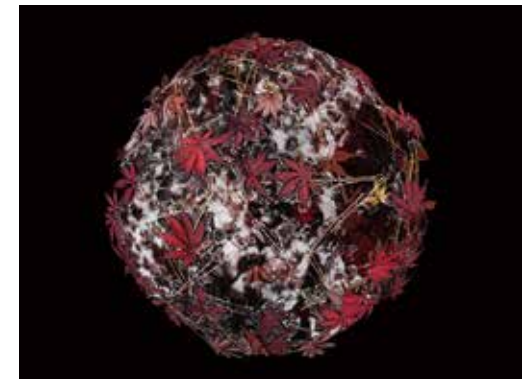
Ice Planet, Icefall



Great Cliff, Stairway



the Mole Mountains, Mole hill



Fall Planet, Fallen leaves

Soratama



Soratama is a filter that I invented in 2009, meaning "aerial ball". By using a filter attached with a transparent sphere, you can take photos of the transparent sphere floating in the air. The point is to be able to simultaneously capture the inside and outside scenes of the ball in one frame. The inside of the ball is upside down. I designed this filter to get analog effects, not digital effects. I am also confining my beloved things in this ball.



Handmade Soratama



Soratama 72, ZENJIX



Flamingo, Tobu zoo park



Sky and clouds, Hokkaido



Lovers, Cat island



Goldfish, Tokyo



Kamo-gawa River, Kyoto

Kaleidograph



I devised this system to take photos with a kaleidoscope. First, I enlarged the eyepiece to make it easier to shoot. Then it became possible to use it outdoors by attaching a kaleidoscope directly to the lens. Kaleidoscopes can create accidental patterns that you would not imagine. Also, by using a real mirror, it is possible to obtain analog effects such as pattern shifts and changes in brightness.



Handmade Kaleidoscope

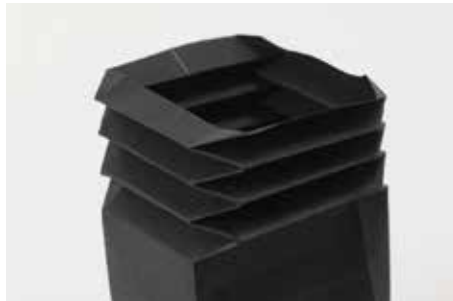
Handmade lens



I used to shoot with a film camera, but after moving to a digital camera, I began to use the digital camera for analog representation. I also started using handmade lenses to realize it. With the lens of toy binoculars, you can take photos of analog depictions that cannot be done in Photoshop. This lens gives a strange nuance to familiar sights.



Handmade lens



Fold black paper



Exhibition



epSITE, Tokyo, 2008



Sony Imaging Gallery, Tokyo, 2015



Isetan, Tokyo, 2015

Zenji Uehara

Biography

- 1961 Born in Saitama, Japan
- 1983 Studied under Genpei Akasegawa at the Bigakko Modernologio Laboratory.
- 1986 Took part in FOTO SESSION '86 photography unit. Studied under Daido Moriyama for 2 years.
- 1987 Resigned from position at publishing company and began career as photographer.
- 2006 Began experimental photo shoots using various techniques and equipment such as "Camera Shake Amplifier", "Drill Driver Camera" and kalaeidoscope photographs.
- 2009 Proposed Soratama photography device

Solo exhibitions

- 1996 Nude, Place M, Tokyo
- 2008 FANTASTIC REALISM, epSITE, Tokyo
- 2010 Camera Shake Amplifier, GALLERY Kaido Ribbon, Tokyo
- 2015 My Neighbor Cosmos, Sony Imaging Gallery, Tokyo

Books

- 2008 Quai's planet, Raichosha, ISBN-10: 4844135104
- 2012 Creative Techniques in Photography, Impress Corporation, ISBN-10: 4844332732
- 2014 Circular Cosmos, Publissing O-ka, ISBN-10: 4434189174



Workshop, Nara, 2018



Photographers Summit, Tokyo, 2010



Circular Cosmos, 2014



Creative Techniques in Photography, 2012



The artist in history



ZEN LABO
<https://zenji.info/>



Soratama
<https://soratama.org/>