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ARTnews

SHE
DREAMS
OF FLYING



**Rika
Noguchi's
photographs
capture the
qualities of
color, light,
and air**

PHOTOGRAPHER Rika Noguchi first garnered international notice by winning three highly coveted awards in Japan: the One Tsubo Grand Prize in 1995, top honors at Canon's New Cosmos of Photography exhibition in 1996, and the

Shashin-no-kai Prize in 2000. This spring, at 32 years of age, she also became one of the youngest artists ever to be awarded a solo show at Tokyo's prestigious Hara Museum of Contemporary Art.

The exhibition, "I Dreamt of Flying," featured works dating from 1995 to the present, in sepia tones and in brilliant color, from postcard size to more than two yards tall. Their subjects ranged from the undersea (divers and rock formations), to the fanciful (toy-rocket vapor trails), to the imposing (nighttime views of a rocket-manufacturing facility).

Atsuo Yasuda, curator of the show, says that it was the artist's keen observation—"untainted, pure, and strong"—that first caught his attention. "Noguchi's photography can be categorized as straight photography, for she does not manipulate photos," explains Yasuda. "In her work, light, air, and color are sensitively portrayed. She captures a world

that looks very real—it is real, in fact—but at the same time, it has this otherworldly atmosphere."

Noguchi is represented in Japan by Gallery Koyanagi and in the United States by the D'Amelio Terras gallery. C-type prints from "About the World Below Zero," her latest series, in editions of five, sell for \$10,000.

Born in Saitama Prefecture, a residential community just north of Tokyo, Noguchi currently lives in Berlin, where



Without manipulating photographs such as *About the World Below Zero #5*, 2004, Noguchi brings out an otherworldliness.

she is working on her photographs and learning German. She has also begun studying yoga, a discipline that Noguchi says will inform her work in the future. "I feel," she adds, "I am becoming more and more free as I get older."

—Monty DiPietro