

Viewing Anze's works had always meant to confront the primal question of "What Photography Is."

In his *Framing* series (fig. 1, 2), Anze created photographs of beautiful colour-gradations obtained by the light and shadow inside paper-cuboid boxes, all crafted and lit up by himself. When speaking of "photographs of real-size paper crafts," we easily recall the name Thomas Demand, however, what described in *Framing* is comprehensively different from unsheathing the subtle gaps between truth and fiction like in Demand's ¹, thus should be spoken in a different context. Henri Cartier-Bresson, the originator of the "decisive moment" and master of street photography, actually is known also for tactfully applying afterward trimming to his works, proving photography being a medium solely consisted of framing (not only in its visual aspects, but also within time and context). As in the statement on the artist's website (fig. 3), Anze's *Framing* series condense the vision of "framing this world into rectangles," purely exemplifying what exactly a photograph defines itself of.

Next in his *Stripe (50Hz)* series, Anze leaps to showing the condition of "Photography of Today." Vertical stripe patterns created by the flicker phenomenon caused by capturing fluorescent light with his iPhone camera everyday (when under electricity area of 50Hz), become daily uploaded on his Twitter account. Frankly speaking, those days where film and/or gelatin silver prints represented photography do not exist as is anymore, and the most generic photographs which the mass people encounter everyday would be those taken by smart-phone devices and shared on SNS. Anze's images, taken with the most common camera and straightforwardly representing the word "photography (=to draw with light)" by capturing light created by Tepco, interestingly are exhibited together with A4 size print-outs of EXIF, GPS and timeline data per image (fig. 4, sheets applied on the floor), where Anze cites such data actually could perhaps all be as same value with its visual, implicating photography stepping into a new era.

* * *

Now, featured in this book is his latest *RED 2014 365* series. Red gradations subtly varying their tones are "self portraits" of the artist, capturing light collected by the method of pressing the shutter button while covering the iPhone camera lens with the artist's own finger, which images again become repeatedly uploaded on his Twitter account.

Noted first are the abstractness of images. Portraits in photography usually are the most figurative objects with abundant information such as facial expression, clothes, age, gender, social status and ethnicity automatically representing the object and speaking to its viewers. However in Hideo Anze's *RED*, although what there undoubtedly is a partial of the artist's body — in other words "itself," viewing those images for whatever-prolonged-time would never lead its viewer to obtaining accurate information of any of the listed above. On the contrary, if one's eyes would be casted on the image's accompanying data instead of its visual, detailed information such as the shooting date, time, lens and exact GPS location data all together will bring viewers to accurately comprehend Anze's personal life to

gradually arise with a vague then crisp outline. “Photography” used to be nothing but what appearing on its surface. In *RED*, however, a drastic changeover of the subordinate-superior relationship between the visuality and its data is occurring, clearly exemplifying photography no longer could be fully comprehended by spoken only of its visuality.

When speaking of “New Portraiture” in the field of contemporary art photography, what rises is Thomas Ruff’s *Portraits* series first exhibited in Germany in the late 80s. Photographs of close friends and acquaintances, sitting up and looking straightforward with dry expressions, became freed from social meanings they’d always been captivated of by being printed/framed/exhibited into a hugely blown-up scale, subliming its viewing experience into that of art. Anze’s *RED* series, making the exponentially newly arisen genre Selfie’s role of forcedly sharing evidences of “I / was / there” still functioning with abstract images, could not then be also appraised its achievement of elevating the fresh genre into a new dimension.

What also found in *RED* is Donald Judd’s philosophy. Donald Judd, with his representative so-called *Stack* series, depended not only on the materiality of the three-dimensional objects, but also as equivalent value the spatial “emptinesses” created in between, and such Judd’s attitude of valuing the “invisible” also is left in his own written words: *“Material, space, and color are the main aspects of visual art. Everyone knows that there is material that can be picked up and sold, but no one sees space and color. Two of the main aspects of art are invisible; the basic nature of art is invisible. The integrity of visual art is not seen. The unseen nature and integrity of art, the development of its aspects, the irreducibility of thought, can be replaced by falsifications, and by verbiage about the material, itself in reality unseen. The discussion of science is scientific; the discussion of art is superstitious. There is no history.”*²

With Anze’s *RED* series speaking purely of nothing but “colour” cited by Judd as one of the “main aspects of visual art,” as well as making invisible substantial data playing crucial roles than visuality of the images, do they not bring us to comprehend such works approaching closer to what Judd described in his words as “the integrity of visual art.” Furthermore, daily uploaded self-portraits appearing on the Internet with a steadily interval of time, actually represent themselves as “stacks of information,” accumulating their existences in the real world of the Internet.

So, even today, Anze steadily continues capturing conceptual abstract selfies to be uploaded on his Twitter account. In this book, 365 of such images captured since January 1st to December 31st, 2014, with their beautifully subtle coloured flares between red to orange together with the overwhelming volumes of accompanying data at times reversing their relationships, are presented all as one. Not yet one knows at this point where such artistic attempt would lead us to, while predecessors’ achievements keep our expectations high.

https://twitter.com/Hideo_Anze

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¹ Michael Kimmelman, “Painterly Photographs of a Slyly Handmade Reality”, *The New York Times*, March 4, 2005

² Donald Judd, "Some Aspects of Color in General and Red and Black in Particular",
Artforum, Summer 1994, pp.70-72.

Excerpt from the introduction of Donald Judd's last essay

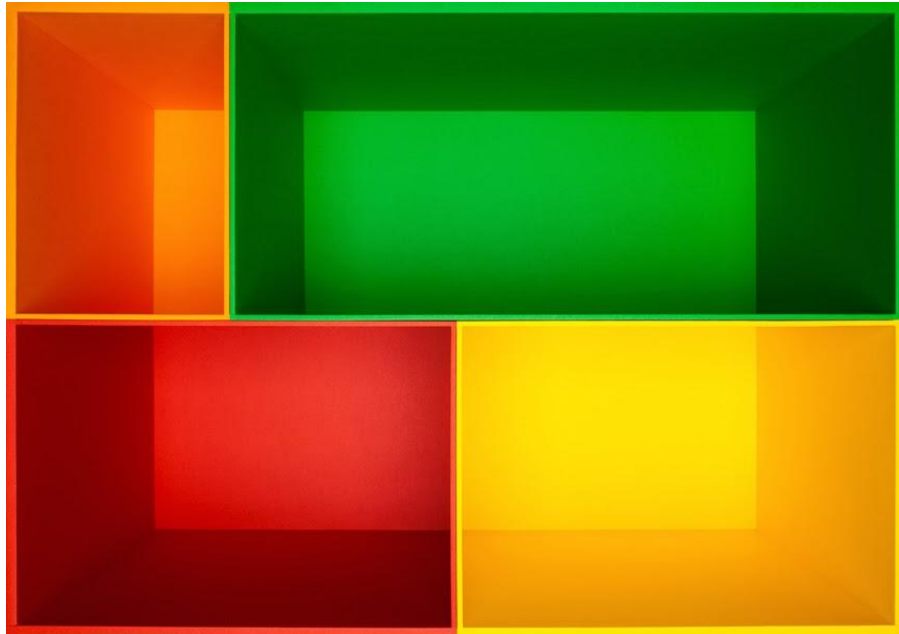


fig.1) *Framing* — 35m,f11,0.8,ISO100,2013109,1:03:11
2013 © Hideo Anze, courtesy KANA KAWANISHI GALLERY

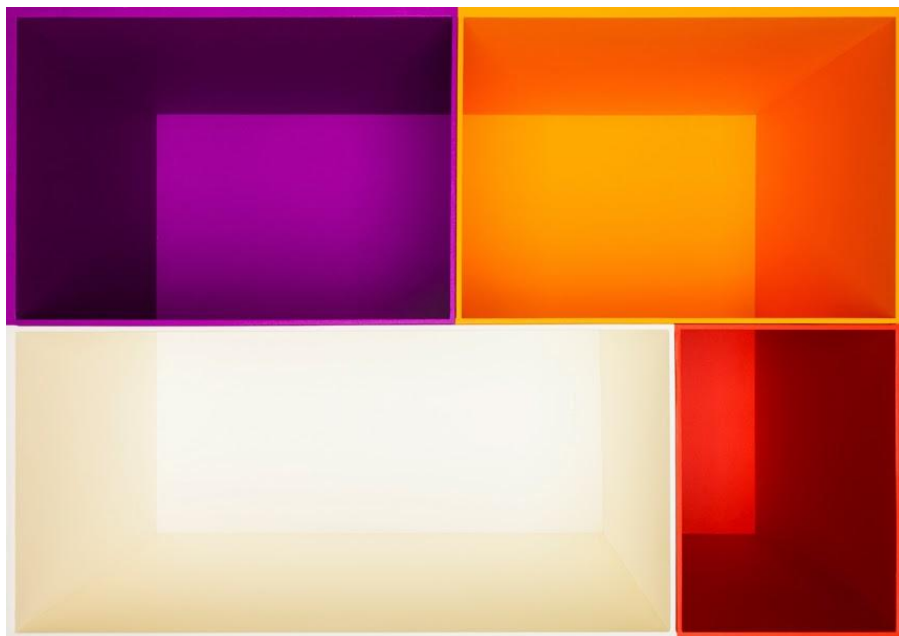


fig.2) *Framing* — 35m,f11,0.8,ISO100,2013109,1:33:28
2013 © Hideo Anze, courtesy KANA KAWANISHI GALLERY

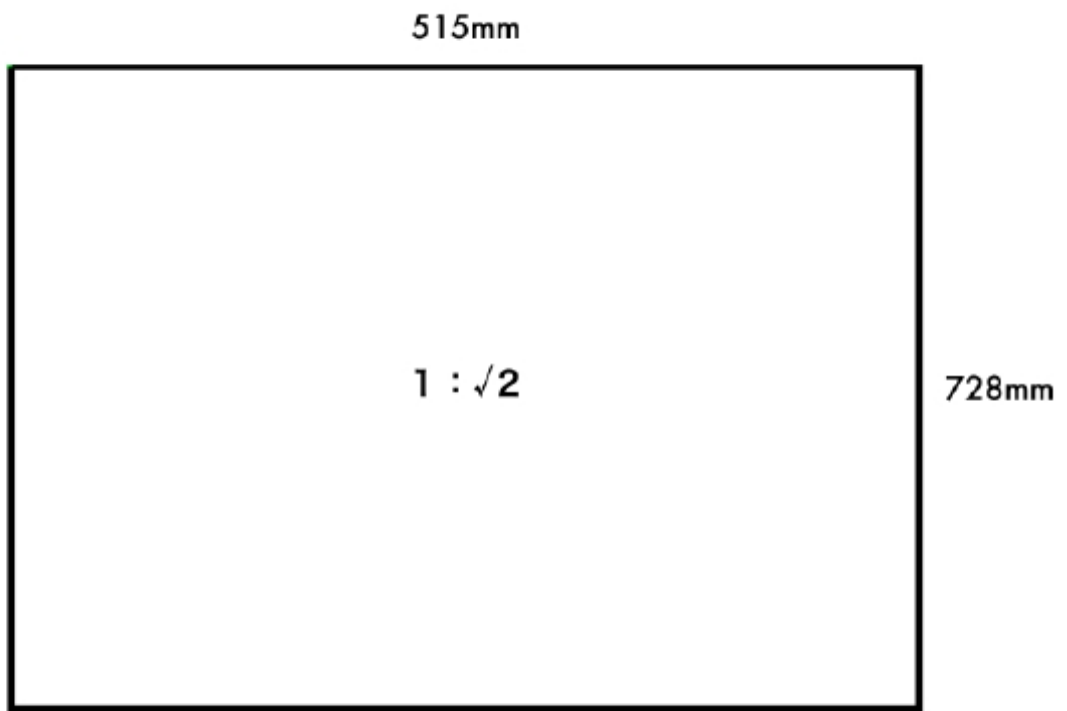


fig. 3a)

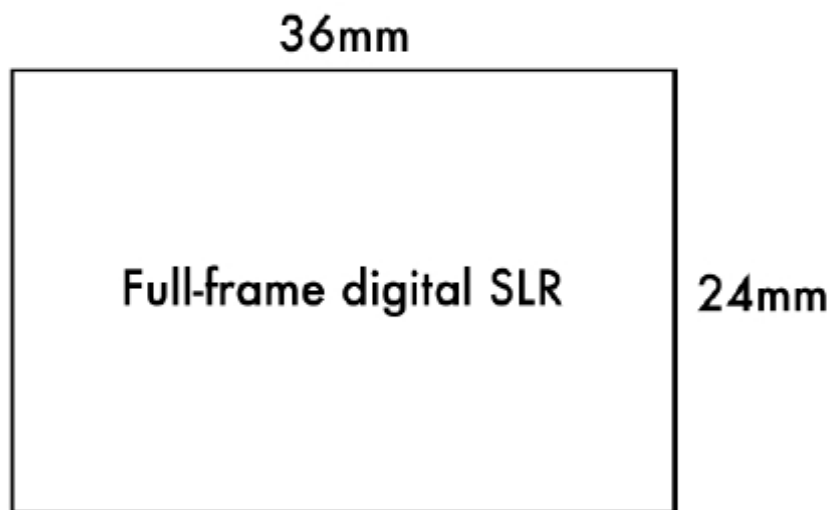


fig. 3b)

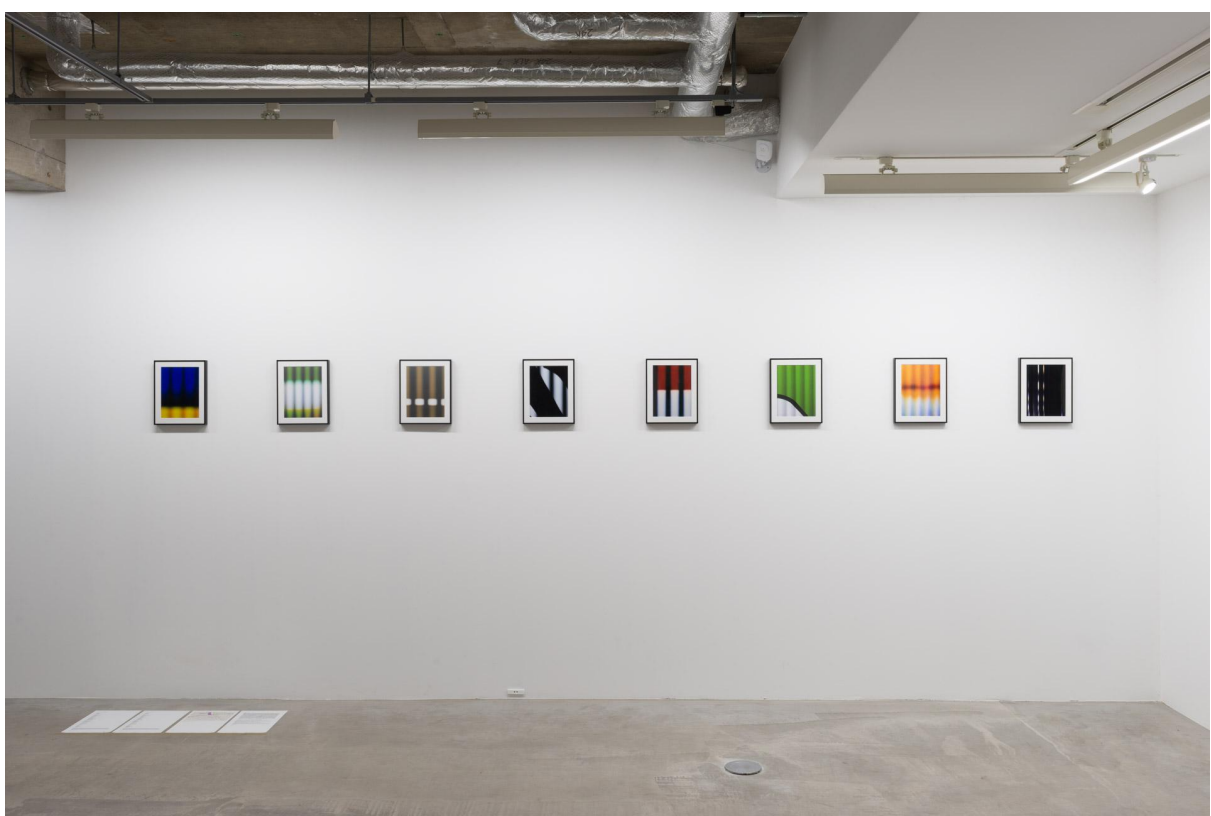


fig. 4)
Stripe series, 2014-2015 (installation view), photo by Ken Kato
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