

# The Museum of Modern Art

## MoMA BRINGS THE 1960S TO LIFE WITH A NEWLY RESTORED, IMMERSIVE MOVING-IMAGE WORK BY SHUZO AZUCHI GULLIVER

### Shuzo Azuchi Gulliver's *Cinematic Illumination* Is the First Presentation of a Historical Moving-Image Installation in the Marie-Josée and Henry Kravis Studio

**NEW YORK, March 2, 2020**—The Museum of Modern Art presents **Shuzo Azuchi Gulliver's *Cinematic Illumination*** in the Marie-Josée and Henry Kravis Studio, March 28–April 26, 2020. One of the most spectacular multiple-projection works of the 1960s, *Cinematic Illumination* is the masterwork of multidisciplinary artist Shuzo Azuchi Gulliver (Japanese, b. 1947), a pivotal figure of the Japanese avant-garde and counterculture, now the subject of his first museum exhibition in the United States. This presentation premieres the recent restoration and acquisition of the work by MoMA's Department of Media and Performance, building on the groundbreaking reconstruction at the Tokyo Photographic Art Museum in 2017. Shuzo Azuchi Gulliver's *Cinematic Illumination* is organized by Sophie Cavoulacos, Assistant Curator, Department of Film.

The initial presentation of a historical moving-image installation in the Kravis Studio brings live, hybrid artistic experiments of the 1960s to life on an unprecedented scale at MoMA. *Cinematic Illumination* was originally conceived as a performance event, beaming 18 slide projections across the Tokyo discotheque Killer Joe's on the occasion the Intermedia Arts Festival, organized in 1969 by Japanese artists associated with the Fluxus movement. Comprised of close to 1,500 slides containing found imagery, shots of everyday actions, and popular culture references, the work breaks down frame-by-frame film projection and transforms it into a 360-degree environment, originally intended to meld with the sound, lights, and moving bodies in the underground venue. *Cinematic Illumination* interweaves the international history of avant-garde art, experimental approaches to film, the meeting of art and technology, and the flourishing of alternative cultural practices in nightlife spaces. The exhibition builds on a history of embracing Japanese video, expanded media, and avant-garde cinema at MoMA, and highlights an international perspective within the Museum's singular engagement with Fluxus.

Gulliver had been staging performances since he was a teenager in the Kansai region, before hitchhiking to Tokyo in 1967 to pursue filmmaking. There, Gulliver joined a scene in which art was staged outside of gallery spaces, and cinema was expanded to multiple projections or moved off-screen entirely. This dynamic interdisciplinary mix unfolded against the backdrop of a booming postwar youth culture that tapped into global psychedelia and ignited critical debates about technology, politics, and Japanese-US relations. While Gulliver's radical experiments with film are concentrated in the 1960s, he continues to be active as an artist, working in the fields of sculpture, performance, and new media.

**MoMA**

In conjunction with *Cinematic Illumination*, a pair of MoMA film programs on April 6 will include highlights of late-1960s approaches to avant-garde cinema in Japan followed by rarely seen short films by Gulliver. These programs are co-organized by scholar and curator Go Hirasawa.

### **THE MARIE-JOSÉE AND HENRY KRAVIS STUDIO**

The Marie-Josée and Henry Kravis Studio was unveiled in October 2019 as a space for live events dedicated to performance, music, sound, spoken word, and expanded approaches to the moving image. The space is a fundamental element in MoMA's efforts to frame its collection as a living history for both collection-responsive programming and new commissions by established and emerging artists. With state-of-the-art facilities and acoustics and a capacity to accommodate multiple configurations, the Studio is activated throughout the year by a range of performances, programs, and installations.

### **SPONSORSHIP**



**The exhibition is presented as part of The Hyundai Card Performance Series.**

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**Press Contact:** Maureen Masters [Maureen\\_masters@moma.org](mailto:Maureen_masters@moma.org)  
Press Office, [pressoffice@moma.org](mailto:pressoffice@moma.org)

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### **PUBLIC INFORMATION:**

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019, (212) 708-9400, [moma.org](http://moma.org). Hours: Daily, 10:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Open until 9:00 p.m. Fridays and the first Thursday of each month. Museum admission: \$25 adults; \$18 seniors 65 years and over with ID and visitors with disabilities; \$14 full-time students with current ID. Free admission for Members and children 16 and under. Admission to MoMA is free for all visitors every Friday evening, 5:30–9:00 p.m., during UNIQLO Free Friday Nights. Tickets include admission to special exhibitions, films, and MoMA PS1.