

L. PARKER STEPHENSON
PHOTOGRAPHS



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MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON ACQUIRES KIKUJI KAWADA'S *CHIZU* / *THE MAP* ARCHIVE



L. Parker Stephenson Photographs (New York) and PGI (Tokyo) are delighted and honored to announce the acquisition by the **Museum of Fine Arts, Boston** of the archive of Japanese photographer **Kikuji Kawada's** landmark series *Chizu / The Map* (hereafter referred to as *Chizu*).

On August 6, 1965, twenty years to the day from the American bombing of Hiroshima, Kikuji Kawada (b. 1933) published his groundbreaking photobook, *Chizu*. Within it, Kawada displays his powerful mastery of metaphor, presenting not only the physical echoes of post-World War II Japan but the psychological preoccupations of its people. This exceptional archive of his renowned early series consists of a set of 87 photographs along with their negatives, binders of the original contact sheets with personal notes, and a rare 1965 first edition of the photobook itself.

In connection with the decision to house the archive at the MFA, Kawada explains; "My very early work, *Chizu / The Map*, had traveled down a winding path for nearly a half-century, when, in 2011, the Great Eastern Earthquake struck. A tsunami of an unprecedented magnitude marked a complex twist to a long catastrophe. In an ensuing exhibition at the MFA, entitled *In the Wake*, an incisive and intellectually luminous analysis of the incident was offered by curators Anne E. Havinga and Anne Nishimura Morse. In it, I detected a subtle voice that shepherded my *Chizu / The Map* into a new direction. I have ever since envisioned the MFA as the place where the images and history of *Chizu/The Map* may be retained and regenerated today and in the future." *

The MFA has been a steadfast champion of Kawada's oeuvre. As he notes above, a group of color prints from Kawada's 2011 – *phenomena* series was presented in the MFA's 2015 exhibition *In the Wake: Japanese Photographers Respond to 3/11*. These photographs hung overlooking a vitrine that displayed an original copy of *Chizu* with an opened double-gatefold spread; a nod to Kawada as the single artist to bookend Japan's nuclear disasters, more than 50 years apart. Among other acquisitions by the MFA was a notable purchase, in 2017, of one of two existing pairs of double-sided folding screens consisting of 6 oversized platinum prints from the *Chizu* series.

Both galleries and the artist are grateful for the MFA's dedication to preserving this unparalleled archive and appreciation of its relevance to contemporary social issues. The collaboration of the MFA's departments of Photographs and Japanese Art, with their world-renowned collections, in making this possible, further attests to the institution's strength as an ideal platform for engaging international audiences and furthering research on Kawada and his work.



* Translation by Miyuki Hinton

For more details we refer you to the MFA's Press Release: <https://www.mfa.org/press-release/mfa-boston-acquires-groundbreaking-chizu-the-map-photographs-by-kawada-kikuji>