

andriesse

Leliegracht 47
1016 GT Amsterdam
www.andriesse-eyck.com

T +31 (0)20 623 6237
info@andriesse-eyck.com



eyck

Charlotte Dumas, *Shio*, 2018, HD video with sound. 19:48 min.

Shio, the Japanese word for 'tide' is very important for people living on the islands in South Western Japan. It refers not only to high and low tides but also to the currents running between the islands that decide the favorability of sea travel between them. If the *shio* is not right it will be difficult to manoeuvre across the seas. In this film the horses of Yonaguni island, the most South Western island of Japan, are seen ambling freely as they live independently on this small volcanic island where some 120 of them still remain. The island has had a turbulent past and is a political pawn since the placing of a radar tower and military base in 2016. As the human population keeps declining, the horses, unable to leave the island, seem to defiantly roam their habitat along the steep rugged coastlines. Using the elements of nature, a young girl and her horse might find a way to conquer the *shio*.

The islands of Japan are home to eight breeds of small native horses, none of which stand more than four feet tall at the shoulders. It isn't clear when or how they came across the sea from mainland Asia, but the oldest of the breeds, the Kiso pony, is recorded as early as the sixth century. Because the animals were reliable workers, short-legged and sturdy, people employed them in various ways- for carrying cargo through the mountains of Ehime, for processing sugarcane in the Tokara Islands, for hauling timber around Tsushima. Some ran feral. At the turn of the twentieth century, a long period of difficulty began for the horses. In 1906, in the wake of the Russo-Japanese War, Emperor Meiji established the Equine Management Bureau, to help build a better cavalry. The breeding of small horses was banned; all Kiso stallions were ordered castrated. After World War II, urbanization and mechanization further diminished the horses' place in Japanese life. Today, all but one of the eight breeds are critically endangered. Charlotte Dumas traveled to all Islands as part of her project to document, photograph and film the eight breeds.

Charlotte Dumas' (born 1977, Lives in Amsterdam) work focuses on series of animals in relation to humans. Among her subjects; Horses working in forests, pulling logs and the funerary horses of Arlington National Cemetery that accompany fallen soldiers to their final resting place. Rescue dogs who, in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, searched day and night for survivors at the Pentagon and World Trade Center. Horses living in the wild, on the fringes of Nevada towns, or on small islands in Japan. The notion that the state of humanity can be read and studied by the way we relate to animals is a vital thread in Charlotte Dumas' work. Her choice of subject relates directly to the way we use, co-exist and define specific animals, assigning various symbolisms as well as our own personal reflections to them.

Charlotte Dumas has held numerous solo exhibitions at venues throughout the world, including Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia (2018), Kunstverein Heilbronn (2018), SieboldHuis, Leiden (2018), Beelden aan Zee, Den Haag (2018), Museum De Pont, Tilburg (2015) The Photographers' Gallery in London (2015), Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC (2012), FO.KU.S., Innsbruck (2010), Foam Fotografiemuseum Amsterdam (2009) among others.

galerie