

# Keiko Inoh

## Shadow

January 2 thru January 30, 2010. Reception: Saturday, January 2, 6-9 pm



**L2kontemporary** is pleased to present the first installation at the gallery from Keiko Inoh, a visual artist based in Los Angeles and Tokyo and working in the field of installation art and sculpture. She was awarded a grant from the 2005-2006 Japanese Government Overseas Study Program for Artists to study in America, where she chose to work at The Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

The theme of Keiko Inoh's completed constructions, the fictitious city (like a travel diary recording a search for comfort), is based on ambiguous memories generated from the city itself. Hints from the town's past; a picture postcard, a story, a recollection. Everyone thinks that the notion of a place that comforts the soul is central to life, and to that end we are motivated to search for places, people or work that calms the spirit and brings pleasure.

An object and its shadow coexist as a pair. And as an entity within the pair the, shadow itself is ephemeral. As noted by Plato, that a shadow exists at all is proof of the original. But the shadow can itself become an independent object; the snapshot for which a camera is not used. Moreover, the so-called "shadow world" (the world of spirits) is illustrated by distorted means, such as negative images and warped shadows.

The means she uses for expressing these ideas is the projection of shadows from cut paper constructions. This cut paper construction exists as the photographic negative, and the shadow projected on the wall becomes the "picture". The audience becomes witness to a temporary camera-less "photograph".

For one of Inoh's recent cut paper constructions, the projected shadow image was inspired by the novelist Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities*. In his story, Kublai Khan has sensed the end of his empire coming soon. Marco Polo diverts the emperor with tales of the cities he has seen in his travels around the empire: cities and memory, cities and designs, cities and the dead, trading cities, hidden cities. In another of her works, the image of the Eiffel Tower is created, and used, as an example of a transmitter of electricity and radio waves, an issue which Inoh considers to be fundamental for people in the modern world. For the people of today, a life is realized only in places where electric wires and electricity reach.

In some way each of Inoh's fantastic shadow places reflects today's social conditions with the shadow standing as marker for vague information, social memory and lost place.