

# SHOJI UEDA OFFICE

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## A FINE LINE SHOJI UEDA 1913—2000

Touring Exhibition in Europe

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### INTRODUCTION

Shoji Ueda (Sakaiminato, 1913-2000) is regarded as one of the most outstanding Japanese photographers of his time. His interest in photography emerged at an early age, and from that point on the discipline became the focus around which his life revolved. In 1933 he set up a photographic studio in his home town, and he continued to oversee its running throughout the rest of his life. However, what really absorbed him was his personal creative work. At the same time he took part in competitions, published his images in specialist magazines, and became involved in numerous associations of amateur photographers.

Although he only left his native Tottori region on a few occasions, Ueda discovered the photographic innovations of the Western avant-garde through specialist publications that he received from time to time, and he felt drawn toward technical and aesthetic experimentation. Following a barren period during the Second World War, Ueda returned to his work and produced some of his most representative works, in which the dunes of Tottori became a stage on which he arranged human figures in his own particular way. The charm and ingenuity of these curious images has no parallel in the history of photography.

His conception of this art form was closely linked to his sense of humour, to a highly special aesthetic approach, and to his enormous curiosity about the small things of everyday life.

The photographs on display in this exhibition, all of which are originals, come from the Shoji Ueda Museum of Photography in Houki-cho, a museum located in the region where he was born and dedicated to celebrating the work of this unique artist.

### ABOUT SHOJI UEDA

Shoji Ueda was born in 1913, in Sakai-machi, Saihaku-gun (now known as Sakaiminato-City) in Tottori Prefecture.

In 1925, he entered the Yonago prefectural junior high school, where, during his third year, he immersed himself in photography. After graduating in 1931, he joined the Yonago Photography Circle. In 1932, he moved to Tokyo to attend the Oriental School of Photography. After graduating, he returned, at the age of 19, to his birthplace and opened a photo studio. In the same year he joined the Japan Photography Association (Nihon Kouga Kyoukai). Starting from around this time, he began to make a name for himself as his photographs were repeatedly selected for publication in photography magazines and display in exhibitions. In 1937, he was one of the founders of the Chugoku Photographers Group (Chugoku Shashinka Shuudan) and frequently exhibited his work in the group's exhibitions in Tokyo. Such photographs of groups as "Four Girls Poses" attracted wide attention.

In 1947, Ueda became a member of Ginryusha, a group of professional and amateur photographers established in postwar Tokyo. In 1949, Series *My Family* appeared in the magazine, the first of widely acclaimed works featuring Tottori's beaches and sand dunes. In 1954, he was recipient of the Nika Prize, and in 1958 his works were selected by Edward Steichen for exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. 1971 saw the publication of *Children the Year Around*, and in 1974, Series *A piece of life* appeared serially in "Camera Mainichi" magazine during 12-years. In 1978 and 1987, Ueda was invited to participate in the Arles Photo Festival in France. 1980 saw the opening of his *Vision of Landscape* exhibition in Tokyo, and in 1982 his work was selected for display at Germany's Photokina Exhibition. From 1975 to 1994, Ueda taught at Kyushu Industrial University. 1993 saw a major solo exhibition in Tokyo and other exhibitions both inside and outside Japan.

In 1995, Shoji Ueda Museum of Photography was founded in Kishimoto-cho (now Houki-cho). In 1996, he was created a Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres by the government of France. In 1998, he received the first Tottori Prefecture Prefectural Citizen Achievement Award.

Shoji Ueda died on July 4, 2000.

# S H O J I U E D A O F F I C E

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### SCHEDULE

#### SPAIN

2 June—24 July 2005

Sala de exposiciones de la Fundacion "la Caixa" en Madrid

C. Serrano 60, 28001 Madrid Tel: (34) 902 223 040

[www.fundacio.lacaixa.es](http://www.fundacio.lacaixa.es) mail: [info@lacaixa.es](mailto:info@lacaixa.es)

Opening hours : Working days from 11am to 20pm / Sundays and bank holidays from 11am to 14.30pm / Closed Tuesday

Free entrance

9 August—9 October Centro Cultural de la Fundacion "la Caixa" en las Illes Balears

Placa de Weyler 3, 07001 Palma de Mallorca Tel: (34) 902 223 040

[www.fundacio.lacaixa.es](http://www.fundacio.lacaixa.es) mail: [info@lacaixa.es](mailto:info@lacaixa.es)

Opening hours : From Tuesday to Saturday from 10am to 21pm / Sundays and bank holidays from 10am to 2 pm / Closed Monday

Free Entrance

End of October—End December Exhibition space to be confirmed

January—March 2006 Sala de exposiciones Alameda

Alameda Principal 19, 29001 Malaga Tel: (34) 902 223 040

[www.fundacio.lacaixa.es](http://www.fundacio.lacaixa.es) mail: [info.fundacio@lacaixa.es](mailto:info.fundacio@lacaixa.es)

Opening hours : From Tuesday to Sunday from 11am to 14pm and from 17pm to 21pm / Closed Monday

Free Entrance

[www.fundacio.lacaixa.es](http://www.fundacio.lacaixa.es)

#### SWITZERLAND

Spring 2006 Musée de l'Elysée, Lausanne

Avenue de l'Elysee 18, CH-1014 Lausanne Tel: (41) 21 316 99 11

[www.elysee.ch](http://www.elysee.ch)

#### NETHERLANDS

Beginning of 2007 Nederlands Fotomuseum, Rotterdam

Witte de Withstraat 63, NL-3012 BN Rotterdam Tel: (31) 10 213 20 11

[www.nederlandsfotomuseum.nl](http://www.nederlandsfotomuseum.nl)

#### FRANCE

December 2007—March 2008 Maison Europeenne de la Photographie, Paris

5-7 rue de Foucy, F-75004 Paris Tel: (33) 1 44 78 75 00

[www.mep-fr.org](http://www.mep-fr.org)

\*the schedule is subject to change