

## WindowWorks

May 14 – September 20, 2009

### **Mimi Kato** (San Antonio, TX)

#### *One Afternoon*, 2009

Japanese-born artist Mimi Kato creates computer-generated self-portraits and animations informed by folk tales she heard as a child. In *Parade* (2006), a self portrait-based photographic collage, the artist donned animal masks and costumes, acting as Japanese mythological creatures. Through costume, Kato assumes the personalities of these characters, thus establishing a method of self-expression that merges fantasy with reality.

Kato's WindowWorks exhibition, *One Afternoon*, is a Mylar photographic collage combining illustrative landscape with photographs of the artist. The cartoon-esque setting is typical of urban areas in Japan, and resembles Kato's home town, while the poses and costumes of the characters reflect a stereotypical concept of Japanese businesswomen, shop owners, and grandmothers. By combining the comic strip landscape with photorealistic images, Kato establishes a hybrid environment in which an exaggerated narrative points out the underlying absurdity of our everyday routine.

With this exhibition, the artist has further developed her theatre-based practice, this time incorporating posturing influenced by traditional Japanese *Kyogen* performers and a contemporary form of Japanese dance called *Butoh*. Kato's reference to theater is expressed not only through the performative aspect of the work, but also in her development of original choreography and narration, as well as handmade costumes and props. The format of *One Afternoon* refers to 16<sup>th</sup> century Japanese cityscape painting, which depicts the cityscape from an aerial perspective—the influence of Eitoku Karino's *Rakuchu rakugai zu* (*Scenes in and around the Capital*) is of particular importance to this piece.

Kato received her MFA from the University of Texas at San Antonio in 2006. She has had solo exhibitions at Roswell Museum of Art, Roswell, NM (2008); Ballina Arts Center, Ballina, Ireland (2007); and Joan Grona Gallery, San Antonio, TX (2006). Kato's recent group exhibitions include *What isn't it*, Texas State University, San Marcos, TX (2009); *Dry Heat*, Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, NM (2008); Art Now Miami, International Art Fair, Miami, FL (2007); and Foto Noviembre, International Photo Festival, Canary Island, Spain (2007). Kato was the recipient of an Artpace travel grant in 2007.

#### **About the Program**

Organized in Artpace San Antonio's Main Avenue windows, WindowWorks projects activate the art viewing experience from the sidewalk level, extending the dialogue about contemporary art beyond traditional gallery spaces.