

I'm going to take a step

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**I'm going to take a step
beyond the days
to see
your erstwhile face**

Preface

This book accompanies the exhibition “Je vais faire un pas” (I'm going to take a step), a series of works on paper and photographs. Rather than around a theme, this exhibition has been conceived on the basis of the atmosphere in which I have been working for some years now. Looking at my visual works, I have selected the photographs that fitted into that atmosphere, although they often date from former years. Taken with second-hand analogue cameras or low-quality digital cameras, they exude a natural character, embracing flaws and signs of impermanence. For this book, I have chosen not to incorporate any images of works on paper. I also wanted to avoid overlaps with my book *From a different angle*. The selection of photographs shown here therefore varies from the one displayed during the exhibition.

Introduction

In Japanese there is the concept of “wabi sabi”:

“To get a clearer view of the wabi sabi concept, let us take a look at its etymology. Firstly, this word consists of two notions: wabi and sabi.

Wabi expresses simplicity, nature, and evokes beauty in its most modest form. Imperfections are part of the harmony. It is the enchantment one experiences when looking at a graceful flower lacking a petal, for example.

Sabi expresses the natural deterioration by the passage of time, as well as the appeal of objects which have lived. We therefore appreciate a weathered piece of furniture, small signs of ageing, etc.

The wabi sabi concept celebrates the beauty of imperfection and of impermanence – the very reflection of the cycle of life. It is a principle according to which harmony resides in what is natural and spontaneous, and not in the absence of flaws. Thus, asymmetry, impermanence, imbalances, incomplete shapes and cracks beautify things. Wabi-sabi is the completeness one senses while

contemplating a natural landscape, an earthenware bowl with an irregular shape, or when savouring a wine that has improved with age.”¹

The idea that each experience of perfect beauty is transient can make us melancholy, but it may just as well be a source of joy if we can become conscious of our own eternal and inviolable essence.

To enhance the connectedness with that essence, I seek to feel guided in whatever I do. When I am working, there is always at the same time a human being – with a past, limitations and emotions – engaging in something, and a timeless being. I therefore think that these two layers of reality are present in everything I create.

In my opinion however, too many words to analyse works of art may restrain the experience of the viewer. Each time a work is being contemplated, it is re-created. By being simply present, passing some time with a work, we can open up to the artist's world, but equally to plenty of unexpected experiences or ideas.

¹Source: <https://universdujapon.com/blogs/japon/wabi-sabi>



