



**T O M O K O**  
R O S E G A L L E R Y

**S A W A D A**  
20 FEBRUARY - 9 APRIL 2016

ROSEGALLERY is pleased to present *Facial Signature* by renowned Japanese artist, Tomoko Sawada. This exhibition will be on view from 20 February 2016 through 9 April 2016. The reception for the artist is Saturday, 20 February 2016 from six to eight pm.

As one of the leading contemporary artists in conceptual photography, Tomoko Sawada's work explores cultural identification and gendered societal norms through self-created portraiture.

While sponsored as an artist in residence by the state of New York from 2010 to 2013, Sawada began considering the "intuitive process by which people achieve cognition of true or false archetypes". Living in one of the world's most ethnically diverse urban environments, Sawada was often told she looked Korean, Chinese, Taiwanese or a number of other East Asian ethnicities. Inspired by this experience in New York City, *Facial Signature* addresses issues of identity, culture and universality.

*Facial Signature* confronts ethnic archetypes, by reimagining Sawada as 300 varying interpretations of East Asian women. This repetition of ethnic identity stresses that human beings "share 99.99999% of the same genes, and that all of us—despite having different types of so called "added cultural values"—such as nationality, race, religion, and language—are by nature and essence equal to one another". Through the use of costume detail, hair and makeup, framing and posture, Sawada intricately constructs her photographic imagery, thus throwing into question the identities of whom she is representing.

Since her breakthrough series, *ID400*, Sawada has exhibited a number of other photographic series, including, *Bride*, *Mirrors* and *Omaia*, all focusing on "the tension between a public image and what we believe is our individual or core inner self".

As one of Japan's most provocative, contemporary female photographers, Sawada's self-portraits have garnered international attention, and was most recently exhibited at the Getty Center as a part of the selected group series, *The Younger Generation: Contemporary Japanese Photography*.

Born in 1977, in Kobe, Japan, Tomoko Sawada studied at the Seian University of Art and Design. Sawada has been the recipient of the Grand Prize at the Canon New Cosmos of Photography, the ICP Infinity Hyogo Arts Award and the Kimura Ihei Memorial Photography Award. Her work is held by internationally renowned collections at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the International Center of Photography, New York, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, MOCA Los Angeles, the Essl Collection, Klosterneuberg, Austria, the Fogg Museum of Art, Harvard University, Cambridge, the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles and the Brooklyn Museum.

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