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Press Release

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Aperture Releases *At the Limits of the Gaze*

The First English-Language Collection of Takuma Nakahira's Influential Writings on Photography

New York, November 18, 2025—Aperture announces the publication of *At the Limits of the Gaze*, the first English-language collection of the writings of photographer, theorist, and critic Takuma Nakahira (1938–2015; born in Tokyo).

A crucial figure within the history of Japanese photography, Nakahira is best known outside of Japan as a founding member of *Provoke*, the experimental magazine of photographs, essays, and poetry, first published in 1968 and revered for its interrogative philosophy toward photographic representation, and for his work from that time, assembled in his important photobook *For a Language to Come* (1970).

Throughout a decades-long career, Nakahira raised incisive questions about visual culture and politics in both his photography and his writing. As part of a dynamic moment of artistic and political experimentation in Tokyo, and among a circle of colleagues including Daido Moriyama, Kōji Taki, and Yutaka Takanashi, he wrote on a range of topics hardly limited to photography: art, film, journalism, literature, politics, television, and more.

The eleven essays published in this collection, all written between 1970 and 1976, brim with the urgency of the historical era, as the Cold War altered geopolitics and transformed Japan. Nakahira's work relentlessly interrogates photography's relationship to power, the connection between language and images, and the gaze. As he writes in his germinal essay, "Why an Illustrated Botanical Guide": "The world itself is the magnetic field in which my gaze, and the gaze of things thrown back at it, struggle against one another. To look is also to expose the self to the gaze of the other."

As the book's editors and translators Daniel Abbe and Franz Prichard write in the foreword, Nakahira's essays "both suggest doubt about, and possibilities for, a photographically mediated reckoning with the world."

This publication is the newest volume of *Aperture Ideas: Artists and Writers on Photography*, a series of essay collections devoted to essential critical and creative minds exploring key concepts in photography, including best-selling titles by Rebecca Bengel, Geoff Dyer, Philip Gafter, Vicki Goldberg, Sunil Gupta, Fred Ritchin, and David Levi Strauss.

The translation of the essays by Takuma Nakahira was made possible with the support of the Toshiaki Ogasawara Memorial Foundation. *At the Limits of the Gaze* is published by Aperture and available at aperture.org/books.

Takuma Nakahira (1938–2015; born in Tokyo) was a photographer and writer. He graduated from the Department of Spanish at Tokyo University

of Foreign Studies in 1963. In 1968, he cofounded the magazine *Provoke* with Kōji Taki, Yutaka Takanashi, and Takahiko Okada. His photobooks include *For a Language to Come* (1970), *A New Gaze* (1983), *Adieu à X* (1989), and *Documentary* (2011). He was also the author of many critical essays and books on photography, media, art, and politics, including *Why an Illustrated Botanical Guide? Collected Writings on Images by Takuma Nakahira* (1973) and *Duel on Photography* (1977). His work has been the subject of large-scale retrospective exhibitions at the Yokohama Museum of Art (2003) and the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (2024), and is included in the collections of other museums around the world.

Daniel Abbe holds a PhD from the Department of Art History at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and is a lecturer at Osaka University of Arts.

Franz Prichard is an associate professor at Florida State University, author of *Residual Futures: The Urban Ecologies of Literary and Visual Media of 1960s and 1970s Japan* (2019), and has taught at UCLA, Harvard University, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and Princeton University.

About Aperture

Aperture is a nonprofit publisher that leads conversations around photography worldwide. From its base in New York, Aperture connects global audiences and supports artists through its acclaimed quarterly magazine, books, exhibitions, digital platforms, public programs, limited-edition prints, and awards. Established in 1952 to advance “creative thinking, significantly expressed in words and photographs,” Aperture champions photography’s vital role in nurturing curiosity and encouraging a more just, tolerant society.

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