

Ningyo (人形) and the Doll: Kami sama (神様) and the Alter Ego

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Abstract

While conducting research for a dissertation on the early self-portraits of MORIMURA Yasumasa (1951–), the researcher found a variety of themes related to the different cultural perceptions of the crafted human form emerging strongly, generating further cross-cultural, phenomenological inquiry which revealed a sharp culture-based division of perception and projection toward such objects. The question arose as to whether three dimensional representations in the shape of a person are believed to host resident souls, or not, and for what reason. The differing character of the triangulation between the maker, the image and the observer is also observed, suggesting that this dynamic might be a mirror of self identity prevailing in the character of I–Thou relationships modeled by the host culture.
