

**Richard Hawkins**

“To the House of Shibusawa”

14 September – 13 October 2018

opening reception on Friday, 14 September, 7-9 pm

In our second-floor gallery, we present “To the House of Shibusawa”, an exhibition of new and selected works conceived by Richard Hawkins in conversation with Robert Snowden. Here, Richard Hawkins muses on the close friendship between two historical Japanese cultural figures: Tatsumi Hijikata, founder of butoh, and Tatsuhiko Shibusawa, known as an idiosyncratic collector as well as the Japanese translator of the writings of Marquis de Sade, Joris-Karl Huysmans’s “À Rebours”, Jean Genet’s “Querelle”, Georges Bataille’s “Erotism” and essays on Hans Bellmer. It becomes evident that the interests shared by these two friends – sensuality, dismemberment, nihilism, crime, perversity, abjection, French Décadence – helped foster the artform that became Hijikata’s “dance of darkness”.

Richard Hawkins’s speculations on the Shibusawa-Hijikata connection revolve around two artefacts coinciding with the early days of butoh: Yokoo Tadanori’s poster for Hijikata’s “Rose Colored Dance” (1965) and the caricature of the decadent scholar in Yukio Mishima’s “Temple of the Dawn” (1970). In the latter, the increasingly-fascist Mishima portrays a character loosely based on Shibusawa, who represents what he considers the worst of culture descending into decline, a serial fantasizer of rituals called “murder theaters” – a more frenzied version of the perceived affect of butoh performance, but not so far from Hijikata’s own more privately imaginative wanderings. In the Tadanori poster, the designer emphasized less the performance’s title, “Rose Colored” and more its subtitle “A La Maison de Civecawa”, a mixture of Proust-allusion and absurdist French with the intent of making indisputably obvious the fruitful conversations Hijikata and Shibusawa must have had within the scholar’s cabinet-of-decadent-curiosities home and library.