

# Sweet and Bitter



**Hiromi Nakamura**

**Friday, March 14, 2008**

**1 pm to 3 pm**

**Hammer Museum Lecture Hall**

Visions of contemporary art from Japan in the US have been dominated by the influence of Takashi Murakami and Yoshitomo Nara's "neo-pop" art, an anime and manga inspired world of fantasy characters and cartoonish sexuality. Their "superflat" vision reflects well the obsessions and anxieties of a post-war,

predominantly male, "otaku" generation, but often misrepresents the rather different mainstream urban girls' culture of contemporary Japan. Hiromi Nakamura, curator at the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, discusses the distinctive vision of a new wave of younger female artists, most brilliantly seen



**Mika Ninagawa**, Acid Bloom series, 2003

in the immediacy of Tokyo fashion and street photography. This is an art of, by and for young women, that mixes high art aspirations with the sensibility of glossy fashion magazines and instant mobile phone snapshots. Focusing particularly on the work of two very different rising star photographers—the glamorous, hyper-colored portraits of Tokyo fashionista Mika Ninagawa and the poignant, reflective images of everyday Tokyo by suburban mother Mikiko Hara—Nakamura sets their evolving art in the

context of social, cultural and technological change in Japan, underlining the distinctive role and trajectory photographic art has enjoyed in this society. She will introduce new works and books by the artists, which will be exhibited later in the day at a reception at the Anderson School of Management, UCLA.

The talk will be followed by a panel discussion with anthropologist Laura Miller, writer and artist Sharon Kinsella, LACMA's curator of photography Charlotte Cotton, and Yoshitake Mouri,

professor at GEIDAI, Tokyo's top art university. The event will be introduced and moderated by UCLA sociologist Adrian Favell. It is sponsored by the UCLA Terasaki Center for Japanese Studies and the UCLA Center for the Study of Women and is part of a three-day program of events at UCLA on the transnational influence of Japanese contemporary culture: "J-Wave USA: Southern California as the Gateway to Contemporary Japanese Creative Industries in the West." This conference is organized by the UCLA Inter-

national Institute to discuss work related to the ongoing UCLA project entitled "Made in Translation: LA-Tokyo Mobility Networks and the Emergence of Offshore Japanese Creative Industries in Art, Music, Fashion and Food."

Further information is available from the Hammer Museum (<http://www.hammer.ucla.edu/programs/10/>) and the UCLA International Institute (<http://www.international.ucla.edu/showevent.asp?eventid=6354>). Or contact [afavell@soc.ucla.edu](mailto:afavell@soc.ucla.edu).