



MICHAEL KENNA
JAPAN
A LOVE STORY

TOKYO LOS ANGELES LONDON

ASIA HOUSE | 25 SEPTEMBER - 20 OCTOBER 2024

ARTIST BOOK-SIGNING | SATURDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2024, 11.00-13.00

OPENING HOURS | MONDAY - SATURDAY, 10.00 TO 18.00

www.peterfetterman.com/japanalovestory

PRESS PACK

LONDON DATES

25 SEPTEMBER - 20 OCTOBER 2024

PUBLIC BOOK-SIGNING

SATURDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2024, 11.00-13.00

LOCATION

ASIA HOUSE
63 NEW CAVENDISH STREET
LONDON W1G 7LP

FREE ENTRY

MONDAY - SATURDAY, 10:00 - 18:00

PRESS ENQUIRIES

Kate Stevens +44 7766 684300
kate@peterfetterman.com

Michael Kenna is available for interviews
in advance via email, and in person during the
first week of the exhibition

PRESS PREVIEW

Walk-through with Michael Kenna
Tuesday 24 September 2024
14.00 - 16.00 or by appointment



MICHAEL KENNA

JAPAN

A LOVE STORY
TOKYO LOS ANGELES LONDON

マイケル・ケンナ写真展

An exhibition of photographs by Michael Kenna

ORGANISED BY

NIKKEI

FT FINANCIAL
TIMES

PETER
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GALLERY

Cover image: DANCING TREES, KUSSHARO LAKE, HOKKAIDO, JAPAN, 2020
Opposite: SEVEN TREES, MISUMI, KYUSHU, JAPAN, 2002
ALL IMAGES © Michael Kenna / Courtesy Peter Fetterman Gallery

“On my first visit to Japan, I was blown away by the aesthetics, the spiritual and religious aspects, the curiosity of the people, their friendliness and generosity. Later, I went up to Northern Hokkaido in the middle of winter, and it looked to me like a stark sumi-e ink painting, a white canvas with Kanji characters marked on it. I’ve been in love with the place ever since.”

—Michael Kenna

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

‘Japan / A Love Story’ celebrates half a century of work by the renowned British-American photographer Michael Kenna, and his enduring relationship with Japan. His in-depth explorations and imagery of Japan since 1987 stand out as perhaps his most distinguished and well-known works.

An exceptional exhibition comprised of one hundred prints, all personally printed by Michael Kenna includes both his earliest and most recent images taken in Japan. The exhibition arrives in London this September, after its launch in Tokyo, and U.S. debut in Los Angeles in 2024.

Michael Kenna’s mysterious photographs, often made at dawn or in the dark hours of night, concentrate primarily on the interaction between the natural landscape and human-made structures. Kenna is both a diurnal and nocturnal photographer, fascinated by times of day when light is at its most pliant. With long time exposures, which might last throughout the night, his photographs often record details that the human eye is not able to perceive.

Kenna is particularly well-known for the intimate scale of his photography and his meticulous personal printing style. He works in the traditional, non-digital, silver photographic medium. His exquisitely hand crafted black and white prints reflect a sense of refinement, respect for history, and thorough originality.

CAREER

During Kenna’s fifty year career, his photographs have been shown in almost a thousand one-person and group gallery and museum exhibitions throughout the world, and are included in over a hundred permanent institutional collections, including The Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris; The Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo; The National Gallery, Washington, D.C.; The Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai; and The Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



Michael Kenna © Tsuyoshi Kato

PUBLICATIONS

Ninety monographs and exhibition catalogues have been so far published on Kenna’s work, including: Michael Kenna - A Twenty Year Retrospective (Treville, 1994 and Nazraeli Press, 2000); Impossible to Forget (Marval and Nazraeli Press, 2001); Japan (Nazraeli Press and Treville Editions, 2003); Michael Kenna – A Retrospective (BnF, 2009); Immagini del Settimo Giorno (Skira, 2010); China (Posts and Telecom Press, 2014); France (Nazraeli Press, 2014); Forms of Japan (Prestel, 2015); Rafu (Nazraeli Press and Shuppan Kyodosha, 2018); Beyond Architecture - Michael Kenna (Prestel, 2019) and Michael Kenna - Photographs and Stories (Nazraeli Press, 2023). and Michael Kenna - Japan / A Love Story (Nazraeli Press, 2024).

Born in Widnes, Lancashire, England in 1953, Kenna currently lives with his family in Seattle, Washington, USA, and continues to photograph throughout the world.

“Japan has a long and rich tradition of reciprocal gift giving. I have been the grateful recipient of so much over so many years in Japan, and I know that I will never be able to give back in equal measure. I hope this work can be seen as a small token of my desire to do so. I also hope this work can be viewed as a homage to Japan and that it will serve to symbolize my immense ongoing appreciation and deep gratitude for this beautiful and mysterious country”

—Michael Kenna



RED CROWN CRANE FEEDING, TSURUI, HOKKAIDO, JAPAN, 2005
© Michael Kenna / Courtesy Peter Fetterman Gallery

“I try not to make conscious decisions about what I am looking for. I don't make elaborate preparation before I go to a location. Essentially I walk, explore, discover and photograph.”

—Michael Kenna



NINE BIRDS, IZUMO TAISHA, HONSHU, JAPAN 2001
© Michael Kenna / Courtesy Peter Fetterman Gallery

“I gravitate towards places where humans have been and are no more, to the edge of man’s influence, where the elements are taking over or covering man’s traces.”

—Michael Kenna



SANUKI FUJI, KAGAWA, SHIKOKU, JAPAN, 2022
© Michael Kenna / Courtesy Peter Fetterman Gallery

“Driving alone in Hokkaido, some twenty years ago, I was startled to see an attractive fence, climbing up a snow-covered hillside. I stopped the car by the side of the road and photographed it. Later, I would need a truck driver to tow me out of the field of snow where I had inadvertently parked, but that’s another story. Almost every year since, I have returned to Hokkaido and have continued to photograph this fence and the hillside. The minimalism and sheer simplicity of the scene transforms three dimensions into two. One might think that little could change, year in year out in such a scene. Yet, each time I revisit, I find that it is different. Perhaps a new pattern and configuration has appeared, an arrangement of forms changes, distance seems to contract or lengthen to become ambiguous; perspectives may shift, snow levels always vary, and the light is never the same. I am so appreciative of this location. It is a gift which keeps giving.”

—Michael Kenna



HILLSIDE FENCE, STUDY 7, TESHIKAGA, HOKKAIDO, JAPAN, 2016
© Michael Kenna / Courtesy Peter Fetterman Gallery

“I generally prefer suggestion over description,
black and white over colour and Winter over
Summer.”

—Michael Kenna



WHITE COPSE, STUDY 4, WAKKANAI, HOKKAIDO, JAPAN, 2020
© Michael Kenna / Courtesy Peter Fetterman Gallery

“Nothing is ever the same twice because everything is always gone forever, and yet each moment has infinite possibilities.”

—Michael Kenna



PILGRIM PATH, YOKOMINEJI, SHIKOKU, JAPAN., 2003
© Michael Kenna / Courtesy Peter Fetterman Gallery

I consider myself very lucky, and, when it comes down to it, surely, good fortune is one of the most valuable pieces of equipment a photographer can possibly be blessed with.”

—Michael Kenna



CIKISANI KAMUY, STUDY 1, SORACHI, HOKKAIDO, JAPAN, 2023
© Michael Kenna / Courtesy Peter Fetterman Gallery

“Torii gates in Japan symbolize the Shinto belief that deities reside not just in shrines, temples churches, mosques, synagogues and other institutionalized religious structures, but in nature, in the earth, sky and water. These gates serve as reminders to respect and honor the land, the earth and our universe. Personally, I regard them almost as road signs directing me to slow down and smell the roses. Every individual will have their own interpretations, but when I see a Torii gate, I immediately want to free myself from unwanted distractions, focus on what is important, escape from the noise of the world, unclutter my “stuff” and prioritize life. This particular Torii gate stands outside a small shrine on a sparsely populated island in Shikoku. I have photographed it three times so far, always cognisant that the experience of concentrated waiting and watching could be considered a form of meditation, appropriate to the location.”

—Michael Kenna



TORII GATE, STUDY 3, SHOSANBETSU, HOKKAIDO, 2014
© Michael Kenna / Courtesy Peter Fetterman Gallery

“If still images had embedded sound tracks, while observing this image we might hear hooper swans, plaintively calling out for their breakfast, embracing the chilly early morning stillness of Kussharo Lake, and preparing for the day ahead. The dawn mist has just cleared, distant mountains have become visible, snow still clings to the tree branches, and I am doing what I love to do, walking, observing, exploring, photographing, and welcoming another delicious Hokkaido experience.”

—Michael Kenna



KUSSHARO LAKE, STUDY 6, HOKKAIDO, JAPAN 2004
© Michael Kenna / Courtesy Peter Fetterman Gallery

“During long exposures, the world changes. Rivers flow, planes fly by, clouds pass and the Earth’s position relative to the stars is different. This accumulation of light, time and movement, impossible for the human eye to take in, can be recorded on film. Real becomes surreal, which is wonderful.”

—Michael Kenna



PHILOSOPHER'S TREE, STUDY 3, BIEI, HOKKAIDO, JAPAN, 2009
© Michael Kenna / Courtesy Peter Fetterman Gallery

FROM OUR SPONSORS

It is with great pride and pleasure that Nikkei and the Financial Times present this beautiful exhibition of Michael Kenna photographs, which will visit major cities around the world during 2024.

Nikkei and the FT, who forged a global partnership in 2015, are best known for business journalism. But we also share a long-standing commitment to culture and the arts, understanding their importance to vibrant societies and recognising that our readers have passions well beyond their professions.

In an age of artificial intelligence, algorithms and accelerating technological change, this appreciation of timeless craft and culture is especially valuable. And while Nikkei and the FT have both embraced digital delivery our attachment to print and traditional formats runs deep.

These values are expressed perfectly in the works of Michael Kenna, one of the world's leading landscape photographers. His deep connection with the unique scenery of Japan built over decades of discovery is clear from the images, while their depth and lustre are the qualities of the darkroom where he continues to hand-craft his own prints.

We hope you enjoy the breadth, depth and beauty of this exhibition.

Naotoshi Okada
Chairman and Group CEO
Nikkei Inc

John Ridding
CEO
Financial Times Group

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Sponsored and presented by Nikkei and the Financial Times
Organised and produced by the Peter Fetterman Gallery
Curated by Peter Fetterman

www.peterfetterman.com/japanalovestory



HYOMON, STUDY 1, HOKKAIDO, JAPAN, 2020
© Michael Kenna / Courtesy Peter Fetterman Gallery

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Kate Stevens +44 7766 684300
kate@peterfetterman.com

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“Photography, for me, has deep meaning and passion. It has educated me. I’ve learned so many things through images that otherwise I may not have encountered. Go on your own journey of self-discovery. Open your eyes and say yes to other people, other cultures. We are all connected.”

— Peter Fetterman

Born in London, Peter Fetterman has been deeply involved in the medium of photography for over 40 years. Initially a film-maker and collector, he set up his first gallery over 30 years ago in 1988. He was one of the pioneer tenants of Bergamot Station, the Santa Monica Center of the Arts when it first opened in 1994.

The gallery has one of the largest inventories of classic 20th Century photography in the country particularly in humanist photography. Diverse holdings include work by Henri Cartier-Bresson, Ansel Adams, Lillian Bassman, Manuel Alvarez Bravo , Jeffrey Conley, Paul Caponigro, André Kertesz, Michael Kenna, Steve McCurry, Sarah Moon, Willy Ronis, Pentti Sammallahti, and Sebastião Salgado.

Peter and his colleagues are committed to promoting the awareness and appreciation of fine art photography, the most powerful of the mediums, in an intimate, user-friendly salon environment.

Our UK and Europe representative
based in London is Kate Stevens

T +44 7766 684300
kate@peterfetterman.com

Reach us at the gallery in Santa Monica
T +1 310-453-6463
peter@peterfetterman.com

www.peterfetterman.com