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**Yukari Chikura**

***Zaido – Steidl Book Award Asia***

### **Main description**

This book is Yukari Chikura's preservation of the 1300-year-old Japanese ritual festivity "Zaido." Following a series of tragedies including her father's sudden death, her own critical accident and the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, Chikura recalls how her father came to her in a dream with the words: "Go to the village hidden deep in the snow where I lived a long time ago." And so with camera in hand she set off on a restorative pilgrimage to northeast Japan (the first of numerous journeys), which resulted in this book.

Chikura arrived at the village, surreally silver in the snow and mist, and there discovered Zaido, where inhabitants from different villages gather on the second day of each new year and conduct a ritual dance to induce good fortune. The performers dedicate their sacred dance to the gods and undergo severe purifications. Combining photos of snowscapes that border on abstraction with images of the intricate masks and costumes of Zaido, Chikura depicts the cultural diversity of the participants as well as their common bond in creating collective memory and ensuring the survival of this ritual.

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### **Biography**

Born in Tokyo, Yukari Chikura studied music and initially worked as a composer and programmer, before moving to photography. Her work has been published in the *New York Times* and is held in collections including the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris and the Griffin Museum of Photography in Winchester, Massachusetts. Chikura has been honored at the LensCulture Emerging Talent Awards, the International Photography Awards, Critical Mass and the Sony World Photography Awards, among others. In 2015 she was artist in residence at the Mt. Rokko International Photo Festival.

### **Bibliography**

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English

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