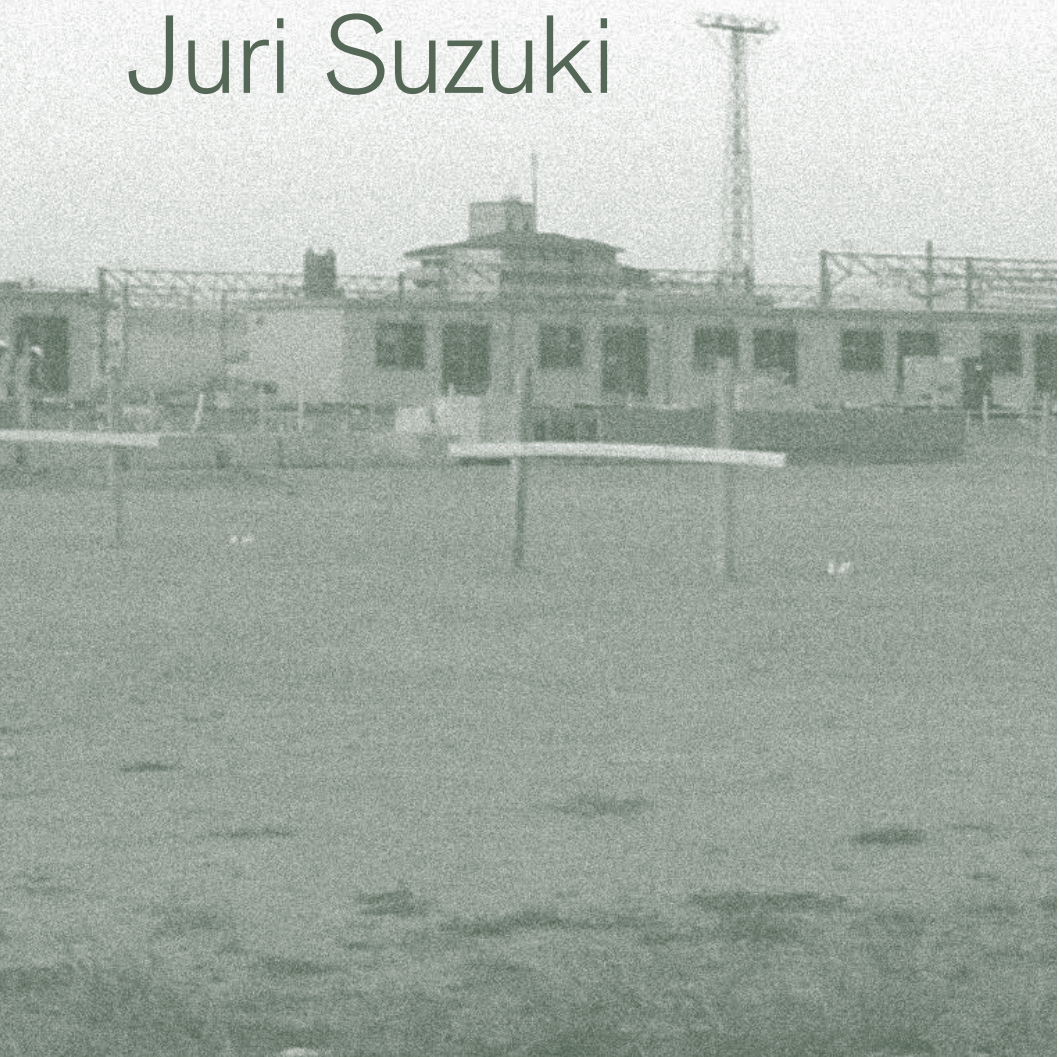


Being Double:
Fukushima
Catastrophe
and Me
Juri Suzuki





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The Relationship
Between Me
and Fukushima

I had always felt that Tokyo looked like it was wrapped by beautiful cheap wrapping paper. Yet on the inside the cities details were never so appealing. This had been a general impression of the city's inhabitants for a long time.

I didn't predict that I would have been involved in the catastrophe of Fukushima when I experienced the big earthquake in Tokyo on 11th March 2011.

Although I was born and raised in Fukushima, I felt uncomfortable in Japanese society. I came to the Netherlands in 2008. While I studied in Amsterdam, even though I was initially happy to be out of Japan, I really missed the scenery of the city. I drew cityscapes of Tokyo when I was in the Fine Arts Department in the Academy. I wanted to re-experience being in Tokyo and walking around in the city.

I returned to Tokyo for a year from Summer 2010 till September 2011, where I worked in a restaurant in the city. Whilst there, I walked around the city centre and took many photographs.

After a few months, I came back to Tokyo. This was when the big earthquake and tsunami occurred, and when the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Plant exploded.

I wrote stories about my personal experience before, during and after the catastrophe. Throughout my experience of the disaster, I figure out when my own personal catastrophe occurred. This was also when my own perspective of the world had changed. My life was now apart of the spectacle which I before only viewed on the screen.

Even though it was quite obvious that I was in an unstable situation, my experience of how the media dealt with the subject made me question: were the inhabitants who lived in the 'normal everyday life' of developed countries stable in the first place? Perhaps there is no such thing as a stable country...

My position in the situation had shifted from the spectator to the provider of the news, as I was a primary source throughout the catastrophe. I was sharing my research primarily on online sources.

Through having several different perspectives, such as spectator, journalist, a citizen of Fukushima who lived abroad, my way of thinking began to shift. What was the real catastrophe? How did it affect me? How did my hometown change? Was it just another news story amongst the other current problems in the world?