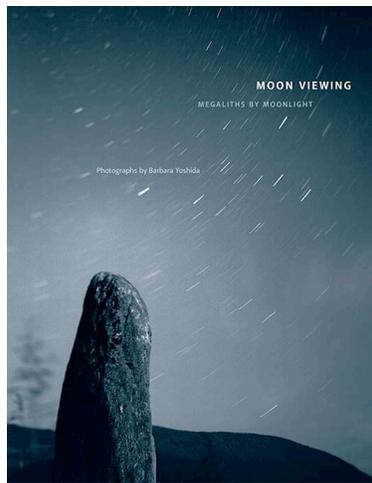


PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT

"Yoshida takes her photography into an unpeopled personal realm where subject and object merge, giving form to the sense of awe that is inescapable when we are confronted by these extraordinary places, but veiling them in the distance that is part of their appeal."-- Lucy Lippard

MOON VIEWING: MEGALITHS BY MOONLIGHT PHOTOGRAPHS BY BARBARA YOSHIDA

WITH A FOREWORD BY LINDA CONNOR,
AN INTRODUCTION BY BARBARA YOSHIDA,
AND AN ESSAY BY LUCY LIPPARD



MARQUAND BOOKS / FALL 2014

"I am drawn to places that are spiritual and have a depth simultaneously of mystery, timelessness and history. The standing, megalithic stones I've been photographing for more than ten years have a timeless quality because they are part of our history, part of the consciousness of every person."-- Barbara Yoshida

The standing, megalithic stones that populate our Earth have attracted people from the Stone Age to the present. While we do not know who constructed the stones or why, many believe they played an integral role in the religious and spiritual life of early humans. Stonehenge is perhaps the world's most famous example of a prehistoric monument. 1,023,000 people visited the site in 2010/11, according to the Stonehenge World Heritage Site. They reported 887,000 visitors in 2008, an increase of more than 12% from 2000, and 15% more people visited in 2000 than in 1990. More people every year are interested in megalithic monuments, but most of them are only aware of Stonehenge. They have no idea how many thousands of ritual stones pre-date it by centuries, how many countries have these stones, and how much the configurations vary from one country to another.

In 2003, fine art photographer Barbara Yoshida pitched a tent next to a circle of tall standing stones called the Ring of Brodgar in the Orkney Islands in Scotland. Using a 4 x 5 film camera, she photographed the stones from evening to dawn, bathed in moonlight. This experience inspired her to embark on a project to photograph lesser known stones that were built before Stonehenge. Over the course of the next ten years she travelled to fifteen countries and three continents to photograph ritual stones, many never documented on film until now. Her exquisite, elegant images of the stones are published for the first time in ***Moon Viewing: Megaliths by Moonlight*** (Marquand Books, Fall 2014), which includes an introduction by Yoshida, a foreword by photographer Linda Connor and an essay by art critic and author of *Overlay: Contemporary Art and the Art of Prehistory*, Lucy Lippard.



L-R: Tel Gezer Stones--Moonlight, Gezer, Israel, 2013; S'Ortali 'e su Monte--Moonlight, Tortoli,

Moon Viewing: Megaliths by Moonlight marks the first book to reveal the scope of the geographical distribution of standing stones from Sweden in the north, to Portugal and Spain in the south, east to Italy, Ukraine and Armenia, then around the Mediterranean to Israel, Morocco, and south to The Gambia in West Africa. Yoshida travelled thousands of miles, often not knowing until she arrived whether the stones she was looking for would still be accessible, or would now have fences around them or would have been destroyed or removed.

Moon Viewing is also the first photo book to use night photography to emphasize the relationship of standing, megalithic stones to stars, planets and the Moon. The "star trails" in Yoshida's images add the element of time and are a visual record of how much the Earth has moved during the exposure. They also show the relationship of the stones to the sky, illustrating what scientific research has shown, that many of these stones were purposely aligned for astronomical observations. By photographing under a full moon, Yoshida reveals a new way to look at standing stones since their mystical appeal is enhanced by moonlight. She writes "The quality and character of moonlight is different than daylight -- intriguing, mysterious, and loaded with historical and artistic significance. From our earliest beginnings, the Moon has exemplified the feminine, particularly female intuition and emotions. Traditionally, the phases of the Moon are associated with the cycles of birth, fullness, aging and death."

Lucy Lippard writes, "Yoshida's esthetic choice of nocturnal views eschews the dramatic cloud forms that have become a staple of conventional landscape photography, making it clear that what she is after is not merely the image as such, but its secrets."



The Gurranes--Moonlight, Castletownshend, Ireland, 2005

Yoshida is attracted to the early stones because in her words they are "undressed - the stones were left rough; ... their textures and shapes give a sense of their individual characters, even if their shapes have changed over time." Her photographs of the stones in the middle of the countryside, isolated moors, and deserts, against the backdrop of brilliantly clear and starry skies, emphasize their sculptural qualities, power, and enduring presence.

In her essay, Yoshida references the Japanese culture's special relationship to the Moon and to stones. In Japan, people travel to pay their respects to certain rocks they believe have especially strong spirits. These stones are not inanimate objects, but living objects with inner, spiritual beings. A reverence for all life persists to this day among Asian cultures that embrace a symbiotic relationship to nature akin to that held by their hunter-gatherer ancestors. Yoshida's monograph reminds us of our humbleness in the universe and our need to live in more harmony with our Earth.

About the Artist

Barbara Yoshida (www.barbarayoshida.com) is an American photographer who captures with her camera natural forms and spiritual locations. Camping with her family in the woods of northern Idaho was an early influence and her interest in the natural world has remained. She started using a camera after more than twenty years as a painter and six years making sculpture. She also spent several years doing printmaking, using photo processes. Photographing the U.S. through a half-dozen artist's residencies for the National Park Service honed her skills in various weather conditions and resulted in a series of color landscapes as well as a series of photogravure prints. It was during this time that she began to focus on the megalithic stones that are published for the first time in ***Moon Viewing: Megaliths by Moonlight***.

Yoshida's other long-term project is a portrait series of women artists. Since 1990 she has documented more than a hundred women in their studios and homes. Feeling the need to create a sense of community, she has created a project that is inclusive -- the artists span several generations and work in a variety of styles, they come from various countries, and there are no distinctions between fine art and craft. An exhibition of the work entitled *100 Portraits: Women Artists* is currently on view at the Salena Art Gallery at LIU Brooklyn through April 25, 2015. Her *100 Portraits* exhibition debuted at the National Museum in Poland in 2010. The show at LIU Brooklyn marks the U.S. premiere.

Yoshida was selected by Joyce Tenneson for "The View Project" at Naples Museum of Art in Florida. Her photogravures were shown at Atelier Lacourière Frélaud in Paris and seven of her ritual stones prints were featured at Southeast Museum of Photography in Florida. Yoshida is represented in various collections including Museet for Fotokunst, Denmark; Southeast Museum of Photography; Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum; The Huntington Gardens Art Collection; Polaroid Corporation; and Light Work. She received her M.A. at Hunter College, and her B.A. at University of Washington. She lives in New York City. For more about Yoshida's work go [here](#).

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