

# LUHRING AUGUSTINE

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## Yasumasa Morimura

*Las Meninas Renacen de Noche (Las Meninas Reborn in the Night)*  
December 13, 2014 – January 24, 2015  
Opening Reception: Friday, December 12, 6 - 8pm

Luhring Augustine is pleased to present *Las Meninas Renacen de Noche (Las Meninas Reborn in the Night)*, a recent body of photographs by Yasumasa Morimura. In these self-portraits, the artist reimagines Diego Velázquez's 1656 *Las Meninas* by assuming the role of each character in the renowned work. Morimura photographed Velázquez's painting in situ at the Museo Nacional del Prado in Madrid, using the museum as a stage for his study.

In his exploration of *Las Meninas*, Morimura creates new narratives by altering the positioning of the subjects both in the original composition and in the visual space of the museum. The artist first used imagery from Velázquez in 1990, when he impersonated Princess Margarita, or "The Infanta," a portrait that appears in one photograph from this new series. In addition to the eleven personalities he assumes from *Las Meninas*, for the first time Morimura portrays himself, undisguised, as the artist. In his reconsideration of this iconic painting, Morimura further investigates the questions that Velázquez posed in regard to perspective, authorship, and identity.

Morimura has been working as a conceptual photographer and filmmaker for more than three decades. Through extensive use of props, costumes, makeup, and digital manipulation, the artist masterfully transforms himself into recognizable subjects, often from the Western cultural canon. Morimura has based works on seminal paintings by Édouard Manet, Frida Kahlo, Vincent Van Gogh, and he also uses images culled from historical materials, mass media, and popular culture in his practice. His reinvention of iconic photographs and art historical masterpieces challenges the viewer's common associations with the subjects while also commenting on Japan's complex relationship with and absorption of Western culture.

Yasumasa Morimura was born in 1951 in Osaka, Japan, where he currently lives and works. Solo exhibitions of Morimura's work were presented in 2013 at The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, the Hara Museum, Tokyo, and the Shiseido Gallery in Tokyo, where *Las Meninas Renacen de Noche* debuted. The artist also recently served as the Artistic Director of the critically acclaimed 2014 Yokohama Triennale. Morimura's work is included in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh.

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