

AIR REPORT

Michiko Itatani
July 17-August 14

"Baroque" in art, architecture and music has been my obsession for a long time. I wanted to witness the impact of that time in present Austria. I was particularly interested in vernacular "spaces" where communal activities take place: park, market, theater, church, palace, plaza, residence, cemetery, library, etc.

During the residency, I visited numerous Baroque locations in Vienna, Prague, Salzburg and in several other smaller towns around Krems. Some of the sites impressed me the most are: Nationalbibliothek, Karlskirche and Belvedere in Vienna, Klementinum and Wallenstein Palace in Prague and Göttweig Stift among others. I took numerous photos and made some sketches. Then, I made small study drawings further developing concept (please see attached images). Those studies will develop into conceptual paintings on large scale canvases later.

Although the appearance of my work has been changing considerably over the past 30 years, my basic concerns have been quite consistent, always **personal and humanistic**. These concerns will be carried on to the new project originated during AIR residency.

Using a fictional and symbolic space, in which I condense experienced and imagined multi-layered events, I am examining the issues of territory: the human body and the cosmos, flesh and technology, the individual and the Nation State civilization, desire and choice, taboo and obsession. I also consider the paradoxical distinction between reality and fiction, presentation and representation, individual and culture, past and present. Through this inquiry into historical, cultural and sociopolitical conditions, I am trying to come to terms with the complex reality of the 21st Century.