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## Untitled Film Still

RISD Museum

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I'm Will Brown, Curatorial Assistant of Contemporary Art, and I am looking at Kota Ezawa's Untitled Film Still from 2005.

Kota Ezawa works most often with lightboxes, in which he's distilled a photograph through a series of, of digital filters, like in Adobe. And he's sort of taken...pared down most of the visual information, so you just see sort of the bare essentials—an outline of hair, outline of a dress. There's sort of no shading, or the, or the shading that's there is sort of singular plane so that you get a three-dimensional perspective. So, this work is pretty typical for him, the sort of lightbox style cartoon.

I was initially drawn to this piece because I sort of didn't do a lot of research on it. And then realized that what it reminded me of was actually what it was, which was an image of a Cindy Sherman film still which, you know, you sort of get initially but aren't sure exactly, which is something that's interesting about his work is that he pulls these moments from art history, from, from art, from contemporary media, from the past media, from films, from television, and simplifies them visually? And gives you sort of a very direct message, a visual message, that, that comes across very clearly but, but you sort of still aren't perhaps totally sure what you're looking at, what the context is.

Cindy Sherman made this seminal series of photographic works, small prints, usually, small in size. And she's taken different moments from different films and she's become the central character in all of them, so she's posing with all these different women, that plays on the sort of post-World War II depictions of women in the media, which are still sort of happening today, these sort of very marginalizing women's identities and whether or not a woman in film is considered to live outside of a fetish of being sexualized or hyper-sexualized. So she's sort of riffing on all of these things by doing them but with a slight comical note. And here we see Kota Ezawa again sort of reinterpreting her reinterpretation of, of film history.