



Soft Rebellion.indd 1

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MINAGAWA Kiyoshi writes on the blank side of a food receipt: What the action was; the feelings connected with the thought of the action; gratitude for the forces that brought the action into being; a wish for others' transformation as a result of the action (soon or at a distant time). With sincerity Minagawa-san focuses his mind on these notes he has written. Next he folds the piece of paper, bows to it, and places it gently in the rubbish bin. Minagawa-san has a swift feeling of relief, and later, tentatively revisiting that neural pathway (the feelings connected with the thought of the action) he notices that the feelings connected with the thought of the action are no longer present.

FUKUOKA Masanobu: Make your way carefully through these fields. Dragonflies and moths fly up in a flurry. Honeybees buzz from blossom to blossom. Part the leaves and you will see insects, spiders, frogs, lizards and many other small animals bustling about in the cool shade. / This is a balanced rice field ecosystem. Insect and plant communities maintain a stable relationship here. It is not uncommon for a plant disease to sweep through this area, leaving the crops in these fields unaffected. / The four principles of natural farming (no cultivation, no chemical fertilizer or prepared compost, no weeding by tillage or herbicides, and no dependence on chemicals) comply with the natural order and lead to the replenishment of nature's richness. All my fumblings have run along this line of thought. It is the heart of my method of growing vegetables, grain and citrus.

Kiyoshi and Daniel are watching the mountains and the valley that holds the compact and detailed town below them. It's dusk. Kiyoshi tells Daniel about the idea of 'fuzei'. That's what it's like watching the mountains and valley and town now. In the opening lines of the 11th-century Japanese manual Sakuteiki (records of garden making) among the basic concepts are to 'create a subtle atmosphere' (fuzei wo megurashite). Fuzei is written with the kanji characters for

'wind' and 'emotion'. It's the spirit of the place, the unique atmosphere. Not only that the pinkish haze softening the mountain ridge and the shyness of the small lights in the town's streets might be 'beautiful', maybe its poignant, melancholy, sad too.

Daniel wants to tell Kiyoshi about the part in the novel where Mitsu and his brother Takashi visit the Buddhist temple after they have returned to the village as adults. Mitsu, narrating, says how he is 'immediately absorbed' by the painting of hell that has hung in the temple since before they were kids: 'Peace in abundance poured from the river of flames into my inner being.' He describes his feelings to his wife Natsumi and to the priest; how the male and female ghosts and the dead tormented by demons seem to be 'participating in some solemn sport.' The priest explains that 'the dead in hell have been suffering for such a terribly long time that they've got used to it by now.' Natsumi agrees, 'the dead seem so used to the demons that they're not scared anymore.'

In Kiyoshi's dream, everything is the green tall grasses and vines that grow untended by the railway tracks, shimmering with the sound of chirruping crickets. Kiyoshi's spirit is a small dense cloud of cool mist, and he floats at the tops of the grasses so that in his vision the green makes a horizon all around: In the middle distance the white shinkansen – long and translucent like dragons.

Sources: The One-Straw Revolution: an introduction to natural farming by FUKUOKA Masanobu first published in 1978. / It's now accepted that TACHIBANA no Toshitsuna first compiled the Sakuteiki around 1070 in Heian-kyo (Heian capital, now Kyoto). / The Silent Cry by OE Kenzaburo first published in 1967.

Dr Christopher Chapman















## Acknowledgements

The SASA Gallery supports a program of exhibitions focusing on innovation, experimentation and performance. With the support of the Division of Education, Art and Social Sciences and the Division Research Performance Fund, the SASA Gallery is being developed as a leading contemporary art space and as an active site of teaching and learning. The SASA Gallery showcases South Australian artists, designers, architects, writers and curators associated with the School of Art, Architecture and Design, University of South Australia in a national and international context.

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Image details:

Front: Stuart Bailey, untitled, 2011 Middle:James Dodd, work in progess, 2011 Back: Stuart Bailey and Carla Cescon, untitled (detail), 2011

Inside: Paul Sloan, Pirate Radio, 2007

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