



Araki: Tokyo Lucky Hole

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Pleasure parlors: Araki's tour of an erotic underworld

It started in 1978 with an ordinary coffee shop near Kyoto. Word spread that the waitresses wore **no panties under their miniskirts**. Similar establishments popped up across the country. Men waited in line outside to pay three times the usual coffee price just to be served by a panty-free young woman.

Within a few years, a new craze took hold: the **no-panties “massage” parlor**. Increasingly bizarre services followed, from **fondling clients through holes in coffins** to **commuter-train fetishists**. One particularly popular destination was a Tokyo club called “Lucky Hole” where clients stood on one side of a plywood partition, a hostess on the other. In between them was a hole big enough for a certain part of the male anatomy.

Taking the *Lucky Hole* as his title, **Nobuyoshi Araki** captures **Japan's sex industry in full flower**, documenting in **more than 800 photos** the pleasure-seekers and providers of Tokyo's Shinjuku neighborhood before the February 1985 New Amusement Business Control and Improvement Act put a stop to many of the country's sex locales. Through **mirrored walls, bed sheets, the bondage and the orgies**, this is the last word on an age of bacchanalia, infused with moments of **humor, precise poetry, and questioning interjections**.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Nobuyoshi Araki was born in Tokyo in 1940. Given a camera by his father at the ripe age of twelve, Araki has been taking pictures ever since. He studied photography and film at Chiba University and went into commercial photography soon after graduating. In 1970 he created his famous Xeroxed Photo Albums, which he produced in limited editions and sent to friends, art critics, and people selected randomly from the telephone book. Over the years, his bold, unabashed photographs of his private life have been the object of a great deal of controversy and censorship (especially in his native Japan), a fact that has not fazed the artist nor diminished his influence. To date, Araki has published over 400 books of his work.

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