

Museum
für Gestaltung
Zürich
Freundeskreis

Edition 2021



Haru Ono

Three members of the Yakuza secure a crossroads, Tokyo, Japan, 1988

Alberto Venzago

Baryte print, 2021

Edition of 20

24 × 36 cm

Black ash frame, museum glass

Signed on print and mount

CHF 1000 / CHF 800 (members)

Available in the museum shop / the eShop

For one of his first major reportages, Alberto Venzago (b. 1950) delved into the world of the Japanese Yakuza, a mafia-like organization with rival gangs operating worldwide. After gaining their trust, the photographer documented the “family life” of a syndicate over a period of five years. “My goal was to move like a shadow and thus make myself invisible,” says Venzago. Organized according to a strict hierarchy, the Yakuza traffic in humans, amphetamines, weapons, and real estate, as well as running protection rackets. Traditional rituals serve to promote cohesion in the community, whose members signal their devotion to the gang leader by allowing their finger joints to be severed in case of misconduct. In everyday life, the Yakuza wear classic black suits, which conceal full-body tattoos. In this masterfully composed image of three body guards, the tension is palpable—as if in a movie scene.