

## My Komiyama Tokyo Bookstore Pickups

*A Deep Dive into One of the Most Important Photobook Hauls of My Life*

Walking into **Komiyama Bookstore** in Jimbocho felt like stepping into a living archive.

A place vibrating with history, rebellion, and the raw electricity of Japanese photography.

They saw immediately that I wasn't just browsing.

They took me to the **vintage floor** — the hidden tier where they keep the serious material.

You only get invited up if they know you're committed.

That alone set the tone for the entire experience.

This is everything I walked out with.

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## Provoke 1–2–3: The Holy Trinity

**Provoke** (1968–69) is not just a set of magazines.

It is one of the most influential photographic statements ever printed.

The movement was founded by:

- Takuma Nakahira
- Yutaka Takanashi
- Koji Taki
- Daido Moriyama (joined with issue 2)

Its mission was to challenge photographic “language” itself.

Provoke images were intentionally:

- grainy
- blurry
- out of focus
- instinctual
- anti-establishment

Their motto:

***“Images are fragments of a world that cannot be explained.”***

### **Provoke 1**

The beginning. The spark. A visual rejection of order and clarity.

### **Provoke 2 – Eros Issue**

The iconic yellow obi strip sets the tone.

A mix of body, instinct, and the uncontrollable physicality of life.

### **Provoke 3**

The final statement before the movement dissolved.

Short-lived, but seismic.

Owning all three is like holding the blueprint of a revolution.

They represent the moment Japanese photography broke free from traditional form.

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**「まずたしかにらしさの世界をすてる」**

***("Let's First Abandon the World of Certainty")***

This volume is a philosophical extension of the Provoke mindset – primarily associated with **Takuma Nakahira**, one of the purest thinkers to ever pick up a camera.

Where the Provoke books are raw expression,  
this book is the conceptual foundation behind that expression.

The central themes:

- destroy photographic “grammar”
- abandon preconception
- reject the idea that images must explain
- return to perception in its rawest state
- see without labels
- photograph without ideology

It’s one of the most important texts ever produced around Provoke-era thinking.  
Rare, dense, and foundational.

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## 東松照明 — 「朱もどろの華」

*(Shomei Tomatsu: Aka Modoro no Hana / Okinawa Diary)*

Shomei Tomatsu stands at the emotional center of postwar Japanese photography.

This book — focused on Okinawa — blends:

- political history
- cultural tension
- Japanese identity
- American occupation
- deep, poetic visual observation

Tomatsu was never Provoke,  
but his influence shaped the entire Japanese photographic landscape that made Provoke possible.

His style is emotional, atmospheric, and deeply human.  
This volume captures his ability to blend beauty, darkness, and memory in a single frame.

The cover alone — the blue ocean fading into shadow — is a metaphor for the unseen emotional currents beneath Japan in the 1960s and 70s.

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## 主権者の怒り

### ***(“The Anger of the Sovereign People”) – The Anpo Protest Book***

This is a historical document tied directly to the political climate that shaped late-1960s Japan.

The **Anpo Protests** were massive demonstrations against the U.S.–Japan Security Treaty.

The tension, the crowds, the collective resistance — all of this forms the backdrop to the Provoke movement.

This book contains:

- historical photographs
- scenes of mass protest
- the atmosphere of unrest
- the emotional energy of a country in transition

It’s not just a photobook — it’s a time capsule.

Understanding the Anpo Protests helps you understand why Provoke looked the way it did.

The rebellion wasn’t just aesthetic — it was cultural.

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## Why This Haul Matters

Each book represents a different piece of the puzzle:

### **Provoke 1-3**

The artistic rebellion — the birth of a new photographic language.

### **Nakahira's theoretical text**

The philosophical backbone of the movement.

### **Tomatsu's Okinawa diary**

The emotional and historical soil of postwar Japan.

### **The Anpo Protest book**

The political environment that fueled the entire era.

Together, these books form a complete ecosystem of Japanese photography's most explosive period.

This haul isn't just collecting.

It's studying the lineage, understanding the energy, and holding in my hands the raw history of an era that changed photography forever.

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## Final Thoughts

Komiyama didn't just sell me books.

They curated an experience.

They recognized my seriousness and opened the upper floor — the one most people never see.

Walking out with these volumes felt like walking out of a museum with original artifacts.

This was one of the most meaningful photobook pickups of my life.  
A moment of connection to the history that shaped so much of what I admire.

Tokyo gave me these treasures.  
And now I carry them forward with me.

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