



## Roast Turkey!

After giving you the big lead-up last week about the NHK travel program, I suppose it wouldn't be fair to simply move on to a completely different topic this time. During the course of five days of filming in such an interesting environment, surely there must have been *some* episodes worth relating ... no?

Yes, of course there were. More than I possibly have room for. So let's choose one that overlaps (at least a little) with my printmaking work.

One of the hostels featured in the program was a very large and famous hot spring resort located on the seashore. Every room had a wonderful sea view, and the most special feature of the place was their ocean-side baths. These were fed by a hot spring and were located right down at the very edge of the water, so that when you were bathing you almost felt as though you were bathing in the sea itself.

As the sole host of the program it of course fell to me to be the one to sample this bath on camera (there were no young feminine traveling companions, alas). I am no stranger to Japanese *onsen* of course, having sampled them up and down the length of this country, nor am I particularly shy, so when the producer told me to get ready for my big 'bath scene', I had no hesitation. I was disappointed though, to hear what she was planning for the opening of this scene: the bath is separated from the main building, and she didn't want me taking such a long walk in the buff, so she gave me a traditional *yukata* to wear.

Now this is 'standard practice' in any onsen, but honestly speaking, I have never felt comfortable wearing those gowns. It's silly I suppose, but it just feels kind of like women's wear; I would rather just grab a towel and head off, but that wasn't possible this time of course. So they shot a long scene of me traipsing along the path in my gown, and hopefully they will trim this to be as short as possible.

But then came my big moment - off came the gown, off came the towel, and in I went. Woah! This was one hot bath! But I'm no beginner, so in I went, up to my chin ... They then called me into various poses, and the cameraman nipped back and forth around the opposite edge of the bath while I laid back and 'relaxed' (or as well as I could while following instructions ... "Please look over this way. Now turn your head a bit the other way ..." etc. and etc.)

They tell me that this program will be broadcast in high definition, so if you happen to see it, I'm sure at this point you will clearly see rivers of sweat beginning to roll down my face. It wasn't just the heat from the water; this was mid-August and the sun was directly above us in a wide open blue sky. I was boiling from below, and grilling from above!

After a few minutes they gave me the OK to come out, and after hunting around for a minute to find my small towel, which had drifted away somewhere in the opaque rust-coloured water, I came back out.

So there you have it - my 'soon to be famous' bath scene, where you will be able to see for yourself the magnificent set of pecs that naturally develop when one works for more than thirty years printing with a baren.

Don't I wish!

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