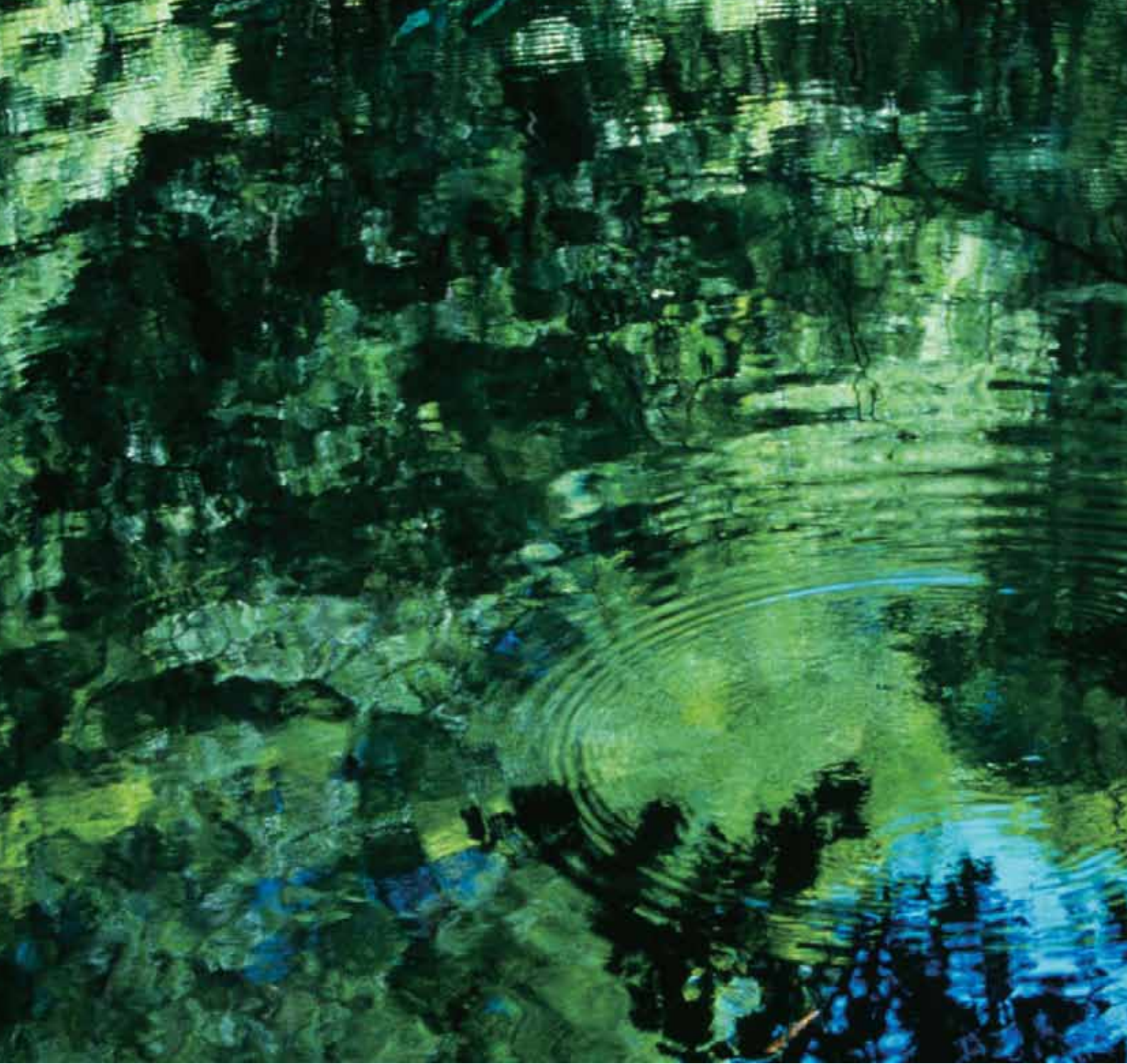


Rolling Hills *of* Hokkaido

The Furano region is a hilly area located between the Tokachi mountain range and Mt. Ashibetsu, roughly in the middle of Hokkaido. The expanse of scenery, with its patchwork of gently sloping hills and forests, resembles a Piet Mondrian painting. Its geometric aesthetic is the product of the hard work of settlers who planted crops after taming the wilderness here more than 100 years ago. Lavender, sunflowers and potato flowers—the diverse scenery created by the changes in the seasons is breathtakingly beautiful.



LEFT: The hills around Furano display a diverse range of scenery through the four seasons of the year. • ABOVE: Morning in the depths of winter in Furano. The serene silence of the silvery white slopes.





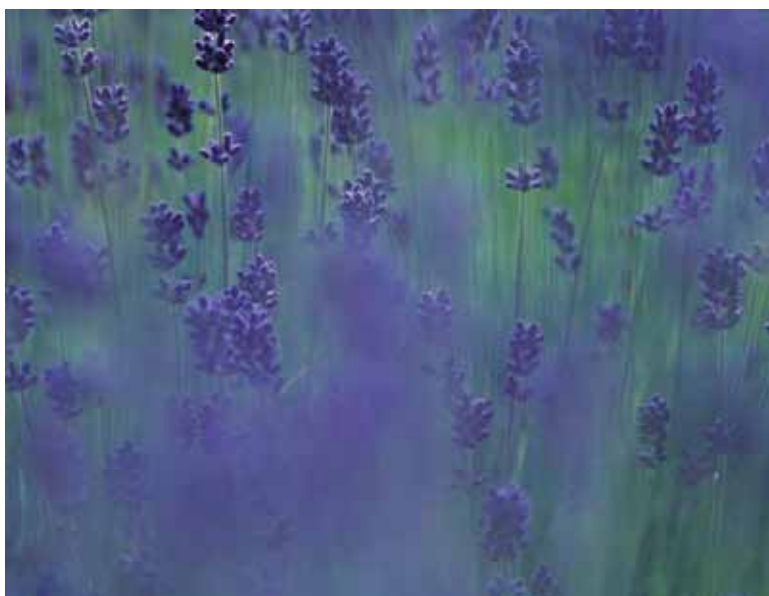
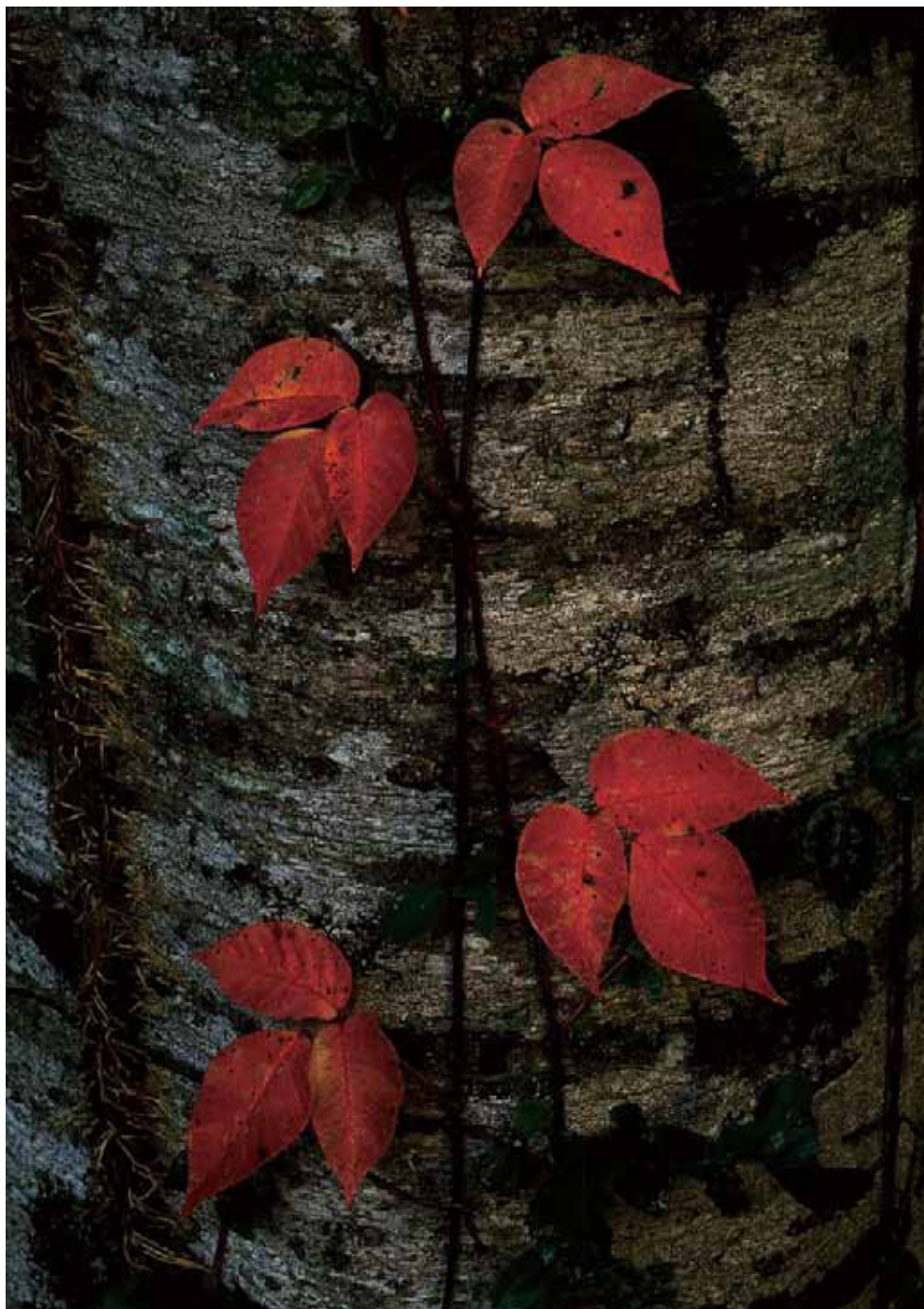
TOP LEFT: Ripples spread across the surface of a pond, the surface of which reflects the season's budding growth. In June in Hokkaido, the brilliantly fresh verdure is a sight to behold.

FAR LEFT: The poplars accentuate the scenery of the hills – a well-known filming spot for movies.

LEFT: Snow on a *fukujuso* (pheasant's eye) bud. As winter comes to an end, spring begins.

TOP RIGHT: A shade of magenta is cast over the scene as ivy assumes its autumn colors.

RIGHT: In July, the lavender fields come into their own in Furano.



PHOTOS: MASUMI TAKAHASHI