



poison/fly, Eiko Asano 2016 ©Eiko Asano



Koya Hisashi Yamamoto 2016 ©Hisashi Yamamoto, Courtesy of Yumiko Chiba Associates

Eiko Asano / Hisashi Yamamoto - Exhibition of Two Artists

poison and small huts

January 12 (Thur) - 25 (Wed), 2017

Venue : Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku

*Closed on Sundays, Mondays, National Holidays

Reception Party: January 14 (Sat), 2017 18:00 - 20:00

Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku is pleased to present from January 12, 2017, an exhibition of two artists *poison and small huts* by Eiko Asano and Hisashi Yamamoto.

This exhibition is the first installment of a project series, “*Modern Art: World of Calligraphy*” by the eight calligraphers, which is curated by Hisashi Yamamoto and held in three places. These calligraphers are aiming at appealing their calligraphy works to the contemporary art scene at home and abroad.

Eiko Asano writes calligraphy as if painting a picture, using acrylic paint and watercolor calligraphy pen. She writes the negative letters in kanji, “doku [poison]” and “utsu [depression]” as a lovely character, keeping their forms. Such unique expression of hers are shown to us, reflecting the complex modern society which is never easy to deal with.

Hisashi Yamamoto does not only write letters, but diagrammatizes (symbolizes) their concepts based on his own standard, and expresses them on support with letters. While the representation has something to make us smile, we are moved with various questions; whether his works could be three-dimensional (spatial) or two-dimensional (plane), letters or pictures, beauty or ugliness.

At all events, these two artists have something in common; their attitude is “to shift” the conventional concept of calligraphy although being aware of the boundary of calligraphy’s identity. They paradoxically take advantage of restrictions imposed on calligraphy which basically requires writing letters, moreover, they consciously try to go beyond the restrictions, which will certainly lead the viewers to an unknown area of calligraphy art.



Artist Comments

In my childhood, I liked drawing pictures more than writing calligraphy. My mind was full of freedom to create anything. So, I had various sorts of objects willfully shown up and drew them.

When I was an elementary school student, my brother bought a stuff toy of a walrus. It did not hit me as cute at all, so I drew a picture of the stuff toy, changing it as a sweet original character. This probably caused my calligraphy style personifying subjects. When I wrote a work, *poison · fly*, I put eyes in it and it became a living thing, "poison-chan". The poison-chan brought its friends and there came "harm-chan". Since then, I have been writing "friends" as introduced. My works hardly include the ones written in ink. I think that writing calligraphy could be possible whatever the way it is done. Neither, it should necessarily be done by a black ink.

Now I am probably doing calligraphy about people in the present age. They all try to be seen better and suffer from overreaching themselves. They are exhausted from stress and are not satisfied with their lives every day. Negative ideas arise in their minds and they become ill after all. Yet, I find very humanity in their feeling sad and still trying to keep up appearances. And I write those people by expressing as "letters" which are living characters.

My theme: how I could show the negativeness of modern people as positiveness.

Maybe I want "you", who look at my works, to seek a living creature similar to you.

Eiko Asano, November 2016

Upon representation in the new year, there were a few things came to my mind through having thought till now. Among them I realized that my calligraphy may be writing my old memories.

For example, one of the works to exhibit this time, "Koya [Hut]" traces my memory back to when I was about five years old. I made with a few of my kindergarten friends what you call, "a secret base" made of a cardboard.

We made the hut in some dry riverbed. When we went there after a few days, the hut had already gone. We were very disappointed but could not make the same "hut" again.

That first secret base was the best work for us. So, I had worked on remembering the image of the cardboard hut time after time since then.

As a matter of fact, the works in the exhibition are originated from the cardboard hut. However, I cannot remember the detail of the hut at all; what was the angle of the cardboard like or which point each cardboard was mutually supporting at. I also do not know any more why I am trying to trace my memory.

But, that is the only my memory I played with friends of my kindergarten days. I wrote the memory in my work.

It is the memory which is not important for anyone but means a lot to myself.

Hisashi Yamamoto, November 2016

■ Reception Party

January 14 (Sat), 2017, 18:00-20:00

Venue: Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku

*Eiko Asano and Hisashi Yamamoto will be present.

**■ Related Information - Project Series “Modern Art: World of Calligraphy”**

*The following two exhibition will be held, curated by Hisashi Yamamoto.

Exhibition of the Future of Calligraphy

January 17 (Tues) - 25 (Wed), 2017, 11:00 - 19:00

Venue: ITOCHU AOYAMA ART SQUARE

CI Plaza B1, 2-3-1, Kita-Aoyama, Minato-ku, Tokyo

TEL & FAX: 03-5772-2913 <http://www.itochu-artsquare.jp/>

Participating artists: Eiko Asano, Sumiko Sawamura, Rintaro Hashiguchi, Kimihiko Hino, Gen Miyamura, Junko Morimoto, Hisashi Yamamoto, Hisao Yugami (special exhibition: Yuichi Inoue)

*Open every day

*Admission free

Modern Art: World of Calligraphy

February 15 (Wed) - 27 (Mon), 2017

10:00 - 20:00 (Weekday/Sunday), 10:00 - 20:30 (Friday/Saturday), till 16:00 on February 27

Venue: Takashimaya Shinjuku Art Gallery, 10th Floor, Takashimaya Dept. Store

5-24-2, Sendagaya, Syibuya-ku, Tokyo <http://www.takashimaya.co.jp/shinjuku/event3/#os10801>

Participating artists: Sumiko Sawamura, Gen Miyamura, Hisao Yugami, Hisashi Yamamoto

(Special exhibition by Yuichi Inoue *undecided)

*Open every day

*Admission free

Project Statement

Could calligraphy be contemporary art?

- On the occasion of the exhibition “*Modern Art: World of Calligraphy*”

A quarter of a century has already passed since I started tackling with the proposition shown in the title. During that time, there was hardly a movement in the calligraphy world appealing to a contemporary art with such a quest as mine.

In the activities of the worlds of so-called “abstract calligraphy” and “contemporary calligraphy”, no serious approach from the Japanese art world has been recorded and vice versa all these years. The reason I know about this is because I have not been approached at all by them for these 25 years, either. Yet, I have been working on my own, being different from them.

In other words, time has just passed while our calligraphy world could not give a big influence in the Japanese art scene. I think that way at least.

Yuichi Inoue, one of the important post-war calligraphy artists, presented his great work Gutetsu [Utter Stupidity] in the fourth São Paulo Art Biennial in 1957, which drew a great attention from the world. Although 60 years have passed since then, we have not done anything (in the calligraphy world).

And this year, in 2017, the 60th year from Inoue’s presentation in the São Paulo Art Biennial, the three events for the contemporary calligraphy art will take place in cooperation with Yumiko Chiba Associates, one of the acclaimed Japanese contemporary art galleries, Itochu Aoyama Art Square which aims at raising young artists, and Takashimaya Department Store which has ever been taking interest in the Japanese art scene.

It is no exaggeration to say that the Japanese contemporary art has extended a helping hand to our calligraphy which was completely ignored in the past.

I repeatedly say that as far as I remember, no calligrapher has ever been taken such a big notice by the contemporary art world here.

Therefore, I would hereby like to announce that “the contemporary calligraphy art” has been born now and to advocate that this project is the latest in our Japanese calligraphy history and the biggest challenge in recent years.

Hisashi Yamamoto, Calligrapher,
Curator for Contemporary Calligraphy Art



■ Publication Information



Fune

Designed by Koichi Hara, TROUT

Published by Tatsumi Sato

Publisher: K.K. Daiwa Press

Distributed by YKG publishing

B5, 112 pages

The first edition was published on December 17, 2016

Available at a bookstore or online <http://ycassociates.thebase.in/>

Collection of Works Miraishodou

Written by Eiko Asano, Junko Morimoto, Kimihiko Hino, Rintaro Hashiguchi, Hisao Yugami, Gen Miyamura, Sumiko Sawamura & Hisashi Yamamoto

Photographed by Kohei Oda

Designed by Koichi Hara, TROUT

Published by Tatsumi Sato

Publisher: K.K. Daiwa Press

Distributed by YKG publishing

The first edition will be published on January 20, 2017

*Sales information will be available later.



■ Artist Profile

Eiko Asano

1983 Born in Sakai, Osaka,
Started learning calligraphy from five years old.
Graduated from Nara College of Arts.

- 2015 TRANSNATIONAL ART 2015
- 2015-16 Started posting her works on Facebook on a daily basis
- 2013 Started a calligraphy class of her dreams
- 2010 Gained a teacher's license after admitted as Mukansa (exemption from examination) at Nihon Shogeiin Calligraphy School
- 2003 Kept presenting works at exhibitions and received prizes repeatedly, while working in a private firm
- 2000 Started exhibiting at Nihon Shogeiin, Yomiuri Calligraphy Exhibition, and Sakai City's Exhibition

Asano learned painting and calligraphy from early childhood and wanted to make something different in the future, combining them. Her eagerness became stronger because she opened a calligraphy class and wrote letters with a brush every day. Then, she decided to create her works.

With an idea that art should be always close to oneself, she presented her works every day in Facebook from 2015-2016. It is important for her to express words in drawings and she keeps her style to write letters like drawing and to draw like writing letters.

Hisashi Yamamoto

- 1969 Born in Hiroshima

- 2016 Solo Exhibition *flying saucer*, Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku, Tokyo
- 2015 Solo Exhibition *Machine*, La Galerie Métanoïa, Paris, UNAC SALON, Tokyo
- 2014 Solo Exhibition *Tower*, Shimokita Art Space, Tokyo, Art Forum JARFO, Kyoto
- 2013 Group Exhibition Japan/China Modern Elite Calligraphers Exhibition, *Sho to Hisho no Kiwa* [Edge of Calligraphy and Non Calligraphy], The Museum of Kyoto
- 2011 - Participating in a calligraphers' blog, Daily Shodo
- 2010 Group Exhibition *Art of Power Born of Pleasure*, Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art
- 2009 - Group Exhibition *Mojiku*, Tokyo Metropolitan Theater, etc.
- 2008 Group Exhibition SEOUL CALLIGRAPHY BIENNALE, Seoul
- 2006 Group Exhibition World Calligraphy Festival, Seoul
- 2004 - Group Exhibition *HOMAGE to YU-ICHI* by the TEN-SAKU-KAI
- 1991 Engaged in reorganizing Yuichi Inoue's works for his catalogue raisonne at UNAC TOKYO

■■ For further information or images, please contact Yumiko Chiba Associates.

E-mail: info@ycassociates.co.jp Tel. +81-3-6276-6731

Yumiko Chiba Associates viewing room shinjuku URL:<http://www.ycassociates.co.jp>

Park Grace Shinjuku Bldg. 316, 4-32-6, Nishi-Shinjuku Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-0023 Japan.

Opening Hours: 12:00 - 19:00 (Closed on Sundays, Mondays, National Holidays)