

Few words with
KAZUMA KOIKE

kazuma koike

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Ceramic sculptures and installation views at Omuro Museum photo credits: Hayato Wakabayashi, Courtesy of Kazuma Koike. Bronze photo credits: Nicolas Despis, Courtesy Kazuma Koike and Bomma. Graphic and editorial design: BottexElsensohn.

Ceramic sculptures

- 01 BC201020, 2020, ceramic, 34 × 33 × 10,5 cm (relief) 02 BC201107, 2020, ceramic, 37,5 × 24 × 7 cm (relief) 03 BC201222, 2020, ceramic, 37 × 28 × 10,5 cm (relief)
04 BC200413, 2020, ceramic, 22 × 31 × 26 cm 05 BC201026, 2020, ceramic, 30 × 22 × 6,5 cm (relief) 06 BC210207, 2021, ceramic, 12,5 × 14 × 10,5 cm 07 BC201205, 2020, ceramic, 15 × 10 × 10 cm 08 BC200523, 2020, ceramic, 41 × 34 × 12 cm 09 BC200801, 2020, ceramic, 17 × 13,5 × 9,5 cm (relief) 10 BC201215, 2020, ceramic, 17 × 14 × 7,5 cm (relief) 11 BC190808, 2019, ceramic, 26 × 16 × 7 cm (relief) 12 BC200513, 2020, ceramic, 57 × 25 × 25 cm 13 BC201210, 2020, ceramic, 17,5 × 16 × 17,5 cm 14 BC201112, 2020, ceramic, 53 × 23 × 20 cm 15 BC201206, 2020, ceramic, 6 × 39,5 × 24 cm 16 BC200730, 2020, ceramic, 19 × 18 × 5 cm (relief)

Untitled, 2020, water color and pencil on paper, 25,1 × 17,8 cm





Untitled, 2021, water color and pencil on paper, 24,4 x 17,2 cm



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Many painters have drawn tigers in the Edo period but there was no tiger in Japan at that time. Amazing tiger paintings of this period were made with reference to chinese paintings, furs brought back and cats. This resulted in the drawing of very special tigers as imaginary creatures. “When I draw animals, I always try to make animals which do not exist. Something in between animals and gods, maybe”.

I read that you spend your childhood in Buenos Aires and Argentina and Japan, has this influenced your practice?

My childhood experience has been influencing a lot of my art works. Especially, being a stranger at a young age created my basic imagination. I feel nostalgic when I read books by García Márquez.

How being a stranger influence your work?

Many art lovers who are interested in what I create have said my works are not alike to other Japanese artists and they consented when I explained I spent almost 10 years in abroad. Probably I am not much opposed to mix things from different cultures because of that childhood. I am also interested in crossbreeding and Shinbutsu-Shugo (mix between Shintoism and Buddhism).

What do you consider as influences-references?

I often try to study forms of nature from plants and forms of random from thickets. Japanese old masters, I like Shohaku (曾我蕭白) and Enku (円空). In my 20s I spent lot of time visiting temples to see the buildings, gardens and sculptures. That also influenced me a lot. I prefer to make installations which have strong frontality.

Where will your work get its roots?

Since I was little, I loved going to museums. I was thrilled by the bones of dinosaurs, old vases and sculptures. It's still the same.

What is your interest in dinosaurs bones, old vases and sculptures? Why do you put them on the same level?

I had an idea that if aliens or intellectual life form finds a huge size museum like the British Museum or the Metropolitan Museum after the destruction of mankind, they will see lots of artifacts which have different roots, from one place. I don't know why I love them but I love thing that have a presence.

It seems that your work is a bridge between two worlds, real and fictional? Can you tell me more about it?

My artworks are created by mixing images from different places/periods and made as “fictional ancient artifacts”. I am interested in forgery or misinterpretation which change the purpose and meaning of things unintentionally.

Would it be like a work whose attribution would be false, for example a work found that would not be signed and that would be a sort of in-between? Is it this intention that interests you?

Yes, kind of. It is difficult to explain but I want make art works that were not made by someone specific or that have existed before I make. I am not trying to create a story. I am interested in the system of birth of a relationship.

*Tell me more about the birth of relationship,
what do you mean*

?

I often put things which I did not made like stones, plants and woods. I use them in my exhibition to make tensions not to create a story. The tensions are made from relationships between things and things. I think if the installation succeeded in having complicated tensions, that can bend the space and time. Probably, what I am trying to do is to make things that do not belong anywhere. Then the works will have float feelings.

*Can you describe your workshop to me?
What is your working routine*

?

Take a time to look at the work in progress before moving my hands.

*How did you work? Can you tell me about the
specific clay you use*

?

Before starting to make new works, I often do sketches or prepare photos. But everytime I try to invite unexpectedness to my work. I leave some space for change in production. I want my works to be like found objects and unexpectedness often affects as erasing intention. I think ceramic is a good material for that idea because I can not control them perfectly. I use black clay and special black glaze which has an effect like old Japanese tea bowls. I like the idea to make all of them in black even though they were made from different motifs.

How is your work evolving

?

I am planning more large-scale installations. But basically I want to keep on doing what I am doing today.

*Your production of work is titled according
to what seems to me to be references
(exemple BC180504), can you explain*

?

BC means Black Ceramic and the numbers are yymmdd the date finished modeling. The idea came from old sculptures which have numbers written on by the finders. The purpose is the

same as the idea to make all of them in black.
It is maybe a forcible harmony.

*Your canvas shows that you make some textured
paintings, as a sculptor working on a 2D
canvas. Do you have a need for volume, work
on the material*

?

I started the textured painting series in 2009. I stopped making them for a few years but recently started again. The idea came from Sand mandala, old tapestries and mosaic floors. I thought an image made by a gathering of small color parts could have some kind of vibration. It really takes time to finish this painting. Need to serve a small grain of paint one by one. This process is like the growth of a plant.

What do you think about working with bronze

?

Since I started making sculptures, I have touched many different materials but bronze was always a special material to me. Because my hero artists such as Barry Flanagan, Kiki Smith and Pablo Picasso used that material. So I am very happy to have this opportunity and hope to make bigger ones in near future. Bronze is an attractive material because of it's texture but also it is a material of the history of sculpture.

Movie references

?

The Days of Eclipse. Tie Xi Qu: West of Tracks. Apocalypse Now. Naked Lunch.

Music references

?

Ornette Coleman. Chet Baker. Thelonious Monk. Gustav Mahler. Eric Dolphy. Herbie Nichols. Samson François. Marc Ribot. Elvin Jones.

Art references

?

Tokyo National Museum. Matthew Barney's The Cremaster Cycle. Dia:Beacon. Barry Flanagan. Anthony Caro. Bourdelle Museum. Pierre Huyghe at Museum Ludwig. Shohaku (曾我蕭白). Enku (円空). Haniwa. Dogu.

KAZUMA KOIKE
BZ210827

13,5 × 10 × 11 cm
2021



Patinated and handbrushed bronze
Edition of 20 + 4 AP signed and numbered

Certificate of authenticity
Screenprinted wooden box





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Untitled, 2021, water color and pencil on paper, 24,4 × 17,2 cm





Untitled, 2020, water color and pencil on paper, 18 x 18 cm

Born in 1980, Kanagawa, Japan. Lives and works in Osaka, Japan. (1986–1992) Lived in Buenos Aires, Argentina. (1995–1998) Lived in Barcelona, Spain. Graduated from Department of Sculpture, College of Art at Nihon University (2003).

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2021 Omuro Museum, Mie
- 2020 Tezukayama Gallery, Osaka
- 2019 Aishonanzuka, Hong Kong
- 2017 “Buddha Blues,” Tezukayama Gallery, Osaka
- 2016 “In a Thicket,” A&D Gallery, Nihon University College of Art, Tokyo
- 2016 “Volta 12,” Markthalle Basel, Tezukayama Gallery, Basel
- 2016 “Volta NY,” PIER 90, Tezukayama Gallery, New York
- 2016 “Eclipse,” Aishonanzuka, Hong Kong
- 2014 “Neutral Palm Square,” Tezukayama Gallery, Osaka
- 2013 “Hermit and Bottled Water,” Aishonanzuka, Hong Kong
- 2013 “Float,” Aisho Miura Arts, Tokyo
- 2012 “Hallucinations,” Aisho Miura Arts, Tokyo
- 2011 “Repetitions and Variations” Aisho Miura Arts, Tokyo
- 2010 “The quest,” Aisho Miura Arts, Tokyo
- 2010 “Blinks,” hpgrp Gallery Tokyo, Tokyo
- 2009 “Trance,” Aisho Miura Arts, Tokyo

Selected Group and Two Person Exhibitions

- 2021 “DELTA 2021,” CASO, Tezukayama Gallery, Osaka
- 2021 “Cama,” Mitsukoshi Contemporary Gallery, Tokyo
- 2021 “Art Collaboration Kyoto,” Kyoto International Conference Center, Tezukayama Gallery, Kyoto
- 2021 “Multiple Art Days,” Fiminco Foundation, Bomma, Romainville
- 2021 “Kuroobianaconda 03 Sanmaioroshi,” Tezukayama Gallery, Osaka
- 2021 “Art Osaka 2021,” Osaka City Central Public Hall, Tezukayama Gallery, Osaka
- 2021 “Mikado2,” Zuiun-an, Kyoto

- 2021 “Hello Konnichiwa,” Aishonanzuka, Hong Kong
- 2021 “Re: Focus vol.5,” Tezukayama Gallery, Osaka
- 2020 “Art021 Shanghai Contemporary Art Fair,” Shanghai Exhibition Center, Aishonanzuka, Shanghai
- 2020 “ArtTNZ,” Terrada Art Complex II, Tezukayama Gallery, Tokyo
- 2020 “Delta Experiment,” Tezukayama Gallery, Osaka
- 2020 “Kuroobianakonda 02 Wagiri,” The 5th Floor, Tokyo
- 2019 “Cama,” Vou, Kyoto
- 2018 “Re: Focus Vol. 3,” Tezukayama Gallery, Osaka
- 2017 “Enokojima Art Days 2017: Other Ways,” enoco, Osaka
- 2015 “Waxing and Waning,” hpgrp Gallery Tokyo, Tokyo Art15,
- 2013 “Gallery Show,” Aishonanzuka, Hong Kong
- 2012 “Hell / Summer / Landscape,” Aisho Miura Arts, Tokyo
- 2011 “Group Show 2,” Aisho Miura Arts, Tokyo
- 2010 Group Show 1,” Aisho Miura Arts, Tokyo
- 2010 “A silent moment at Veronica island,” hpgrp Gallery Tokyo, Tokyo
- 2010 “The 5th Daikokuya Contemporary Art Award Exhibition,” Daikokuya, Tochigi
- 2010 “No Man's Land,” French embassy, Tokyo
- 2009 “Showcase,” Aisho Miura Arts, Tokyo
- 2008 “Japan Now,” Inter Alia Art Company, Seoul
- 2007 “Casino Royale” SCAI THE BATHHOUSE, Tokyo



TP210527, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 130,3 × 97 cm