

December 9, 2022

New Artist Picks: Wall Project Urakawa Taishi

Notice: View of Yokohama Construction Wall through Mobile Phone
November 14 (Mon.), 2022 – May 31 (Wed.), 2023
Construction Wall, Yokohama Museum of Art

Yokohama Museum of Art

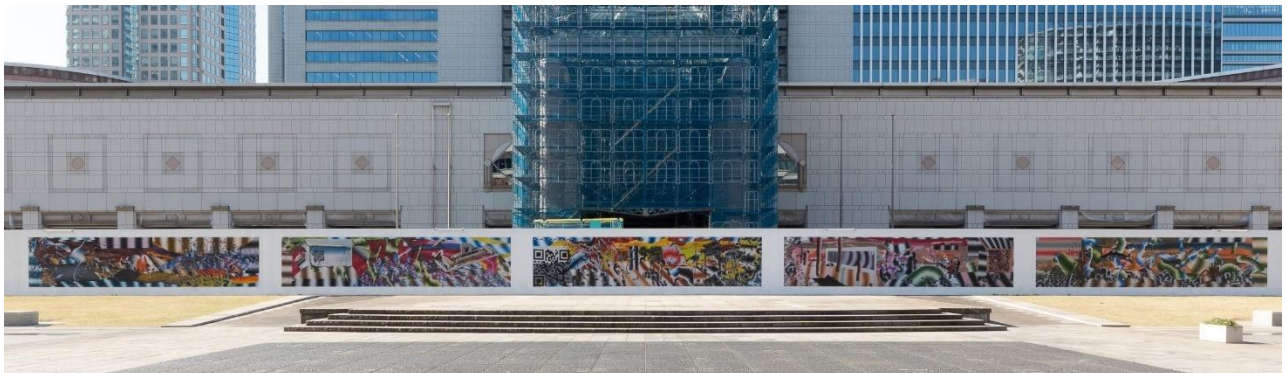


Construction Wall, 2022, acrylic, gesso, cotton on canvas, 75×322cm, Photo: Shintaro Yamanaka

Aimed at introducing the work of promising young artists, “New Artist Picks” has been held at the Yokohama Museum of Art since 2007.

With the museum currently closed for renovations, two special “Wall Projects” are being held on the construction wall facing Grand Mall Park in front of the Yokohama Museum of Art. Following on from the first edition, *Murakami Saki | Stray Child*, we are now pleased to present the work of Urakawa Taishi (born in 1994), which gives expression to the sensibilities of the millennial generation.

Having grown up in the early 2000s, Urakawa is a “digital native.” His art reflects the present-day reality of high-paced information circulation that has been supercharged by the Internet and social media.



Installation view, Photo: Shintaro Yamanaka

The project showcases a series of five new works.

From left to right (facing the wall), they depict Yokohama from above, Yokohama Museum of Art and Chinatown viewed from ground level, and finally, a scene of entering into the sea. Fragmentary motifs related to Yokohama are discernible amongst the images' colored lines and planes, but the connections with Yokohama run deeper than that.



UTAGAWA Hiroshige III
View of Foreign Buildings on Kaigan-dori Street from Yokohama Wharf
1870s, color woodblock print (3 pieces)
Collection of the Yokohama Museum of Art (donated by Ms. SAITO Ryu)

was part of the foreign settlement. The two people standing on the far left of Hiroshige's picture—who are probably pointing at another American ship in the distance—also appear in Urakawa's work.

However, now it is not an external object, like a ship, that this pair points to but the construction wall on which they themselves are depicted. In this way, the appearance in front of us of "two people looking at the construction wall" naturally reminds us of our own gaze as we too view the same wall. And thus their act of "pointing" serves to direct our attention to our common act of "looking."

Viewers reading the exhibition's Japanese title will notice the deliberate use of the Chinese term 智能手机 (zhìnéng shǒujī) for "smartphone" or mobile phone. The works here are constituted by large printouts affixed to the construction wall, and on top of those Urakawa has added a total of seven QR codes. Scan the QR codes with your phone, and once again your attention is directed to the act of "looking."

When we look at these artworks, or indeed the world itself, through a phone camera, we are not just observing a photographic "subject." Needless to say, we point our camera because there is "something" there we want to see, or perhaps nowadays it's more likely that there is "something" there we want to share on social media.

In this way, Urakawa's work evokes the "desire" that is embodied by this act of looking. Here, the work is not something "external to the self," like the visiting foreign ship in Hiroshige's work, but something that we actually enter through the use of the QR codes. Thanks to Urakawa, a construction wall opposite the shop windows of a mall ceases being a silent, flat surface and becomes a medium capturing people's gazes and desires.



A Window and a Wall, 2022, acrylic, gesso, cotton on canvas, 75x322cm, Photo: Shintaro Yamanaka



Chinese Style, 2022, acrylic, gesso, cotton on canvas, 75x322cm, Photo: Shintaro Yamanaka

Biography



URAKAWA Taishi

Born in Fukuoka in 1994. Graduated from the Faculty of Art of Kyushu Sangyo University. Currently works and resides in Fukuoka. Recent exhibitions include *Vision of Contemporary Art (VOCA) Exhibition 2018* (recipient of the Ohara Museum of Art Award) in 2018, *URAKAWA Taishi & Namonaki Sanemasa Two Person Exhibition Owarumade Owaranaiyo* (Contemporary Art Museum, Kumamoto) in 2019, *URAKAWA Taishi & Namonaki Sanemasa Two Person Exhibition* (Contemporary HEIS, Tokyo) in 2021, and *@sanemasa5x #landscape • and • so forth ㄉ_ㄉ* (Mizuma Art Gallery, Tokyo) in 2022.

Outline

New Artist Picks: Wall Project

Urakawa Taishi | Notice: View of Yokohama Construction Wall through Mobile Phone

Dates: November 14 (Mon.), 2022 – May 31 (Wed.), 2023
Venue: Construction Wall, Yokohama Museum of Art (3-4-1 Minatomirai, Nishi-ku, Yokohama)
Admission: Free
Organized by: Yokohama Museum of Art (Yokohama Arts Foundation)

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*Yokohama Museum of Art is closed for renovation. We are scheduled to re-open in December 2023.