



The World of Takami Sakurai's Paintings 4 by Osamu Fukano

Sakurai's far-reaching box shape serves as a pilot that leads the two-dimensional depiction from three to four dimensions. The theme is a circuit leading to the sky, a representation of a young man's thirst for the future. This must be remembered as an important keyword in understanding Sakurai's paintings. While Dali's surrealist perspective is trailing off toward the horizon of human nihilism, Sakurai's box-shaped circuit has a vector that leads to a pantheistic liberation of the basis of human existence. It cannot be said that Sakurai was certain of the direction of his thought at this time. Perhaps the germ that had been unconsciously nurtured inside the psyche had begun to echo faintly behind the subject of desolation.

In 1964, Sakurai left for San Francisco. It seems to me that he was at the peak of his fatigue at that time. Nine years earlier (1955), at the age of 27, he had formed the Kyushu-ha, a movement that had surged through a whirlwind of unformalism, only to find its energy waning and cracks forming. It was apparent from the side that there was a long history of friendship and a lot of unexplainable rancor swirling around it. What this fissure was may have important implications for Sakurai's personal history as well as for the history of the Kyushu-Ha movement, but for now, I will only mention the depth of the fatigue I felt for Sakurai.

Sakurai set out on a journey, as if seeking recovery from the general setback of the avant-garde art movement. He encountered the beatnik ideas of San Francisco. He interacted with poets such as Allen Ginsberg and others, and more than anything else, he sensed the depth of the human depths experienced at the bottom of America, a racial crucible, and the intensity of faith in the roots of life.

Sakurai's paintings gradually began to transform. A sharp knife cuts through the thickly and colorfully painted canvas, and an image of a woman with large eyes and deep slits on her cheeks emerges.