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“This former The Kyushu school painter has been painting in solid black for the last 10 years. He applies stucco or spreads the fine sand of the shore over plywood panels to make the groundwork and oil paints in layers. Here, the unique matte color results from the paint being absorbed into the stucco and sand, while the grayish streaks are traces of the paint scraped away with a metal spatula.

While all in black, the painting contains not only clear traces of the brush drawn more or less horizontally but varying delicate nuances of the color in places.

If, fooled by the seeming affinity it appears to have with minimalism, you see the outward nuances and expressions that remain unerased on the picture plane as a sign of its incompleteness, the clue to understanding the work will be lost on you. For this artist’s black is completely different in its origin from its modernist reductionist counterpart.

It was back in 1970 that he presented a piece of soil from the garden at his home simply placed on a table and entitled the “Chikugo Plain” at an art museum. Thus, all ensuing works that looked like abstract works could be essentially described as realistic representations of landscape in all forms ever attempted by the artist.

To speak of abstract realism seems to be a contradiction in terms but the only way to make a tremendous attempt to reproduce the world in a single painting without deadening the reality of its objects in all their concreteness would involve an illogical logic, such as ‘one is many’ characteristic of the Buddhist worldview, whose approach to abstracting the world in itself is quite different from that in modern abstractionism.

This is probably how you feel like you are being challenged with Zen riddles in front of the black picture plane. Indeed, it can probably be best described as a fertile black that envelops and brings to life the whole world, including its plants, insects and fish.”