

1: Why did you decide to launch this theme at Hakata Hankyu now?

In 2015, after founding AFAP, the first art fair in Fukuoka, I became deeply aware of the significant gap between what the world refers to as “ART” and what has long been understood in Japan as “art.”

In Japan, much of what has been described as “art” has traditionally been consumed as decoration — something that enriches everyday life aesthetically. Of course, that in itself is a beautiful and valuable culture. However, it differs from what is recognized globally as “ART.”

“ART” carries the artist’s philosophy, historical context, criticality, and relationship to society. Its value is continuously examined, shared, and cultivated within the market, eventually becoming a form of cultural capital.

When I witnessed that reality firsthand, I began asking myself fundamental questions:

Who determines the value of a work?

Why is ART recognized internationally as a social value?

But this is not simply about knowledge or investment.

What fascinated me more deeply was understanding why people around the world devote their lives to ART, become passionately involved in it, and continue believing in its value. I believe that is the true entrance into the essence of ART.

Japan still cannot be said to possess a fully mature and healthy ART market. That is precisely why I wanted to create an opportunity — from a public space like Hakata Hankyu — to reconsider what ART truly is, to provoke discussion, and to update our collective sense of value.

I believe this exhibition is the first step toward that transformation.