

3: What challenges do you see within Japanese collector culture?

I believe that collecting art is fundamentally different from simple material ownership.

Recently, I had the opportunity to speak with the chairman of a major regional corporation in Japan. He owned a foundation and even operated a museum — someone widely regarded as a highly successful collector.

However, during our conversation, I discovered that he knew very little about Art Basel, the world's largest art fair, or Gutai, the Japanese movement that profoundly influenced postwar global art history.

At that moment, I strongly felt a fundamental issue that has long existed within the Japanese art scene.

Japan has certainly developed a culture of collecting things one personally likes. But within the global ART market, collecting is not merely about possessing artworks.

It also means understanding where a work exists within the context of world art history, what historical narratives it connects to, and how it contributes to reshaping cultural values.

True collecting is participation in that larger discourse.

In other words, collectors themselves must be connected to global cultural history.

No matter how much money is spent, if a collection lacks connection to international movements, criticism, and historical awareness, it ultimately remains confined within a closed regional context.

I believe Japan certainly has collectors, but it still lacks enough true “players” within the global market.

By “players,” I do not mean people who simply purchase expensive works.

I mean individuals who actively participate in the formation of value while remaining connected to global art history, markets, criticism, and institutional frameworks.

Japan possesses ownership.

But it still lacks connection.

And I believe that gap has been one of the central issues within the Japanese art market for many years.