

6: What is the difference between the “art” long familiar in Japan and the “ART” discussed globally?

I believe the greatest difference is that, for many years, the Japanese art market has been shaped primarily around what is easy to appreciate and easy to sell.

Of course, this has also allowed Japan to cultivate a uniquely rich visual culture. Whether in illustration, design, or character culture, Japan possesses extraordinary expressive power that is admired around the world.

However, within the global ART market, people place far greater importance on questions such as:

What kind of question does this work pose to society?

What philosophy or worldview does the artist hold?

In other words, works are evaluated not simply for being beautiful or popular, but for how they connect to society, history, and the spirit of their time.

As a result, some works that are highly praised in Japan receive almost no recognition internationally. Conversely, works considered difficult or inaccessible in Japan may be highly valued abroad.

I do not believe this difference is simply a matter of taste.

Rather, it reflects a deeper structural difference in how art itself has been positioned within society.

Until now, galleries and department stores in Japan have largely sustained the market by focusing on what sells. Naturally, this has made it difficult to fundamentally update existing systems of value and past definitions of success.

Yet I am convinced that, in the near future, exhibitions that directly question the meaning of “ART” will become increasingly common in Japan.

Because internationally, ART is already understood not merely as decoration, but as something capable of transforming human values and even society itself.

I believe Japan is now entering a transition:

moving away from an era centered on displaying works that simply sell,

toward an era that asks:

Why does this work exist?

Why is this value collectively shared?

And I believe this exhibition represents the entrance to that transformation.