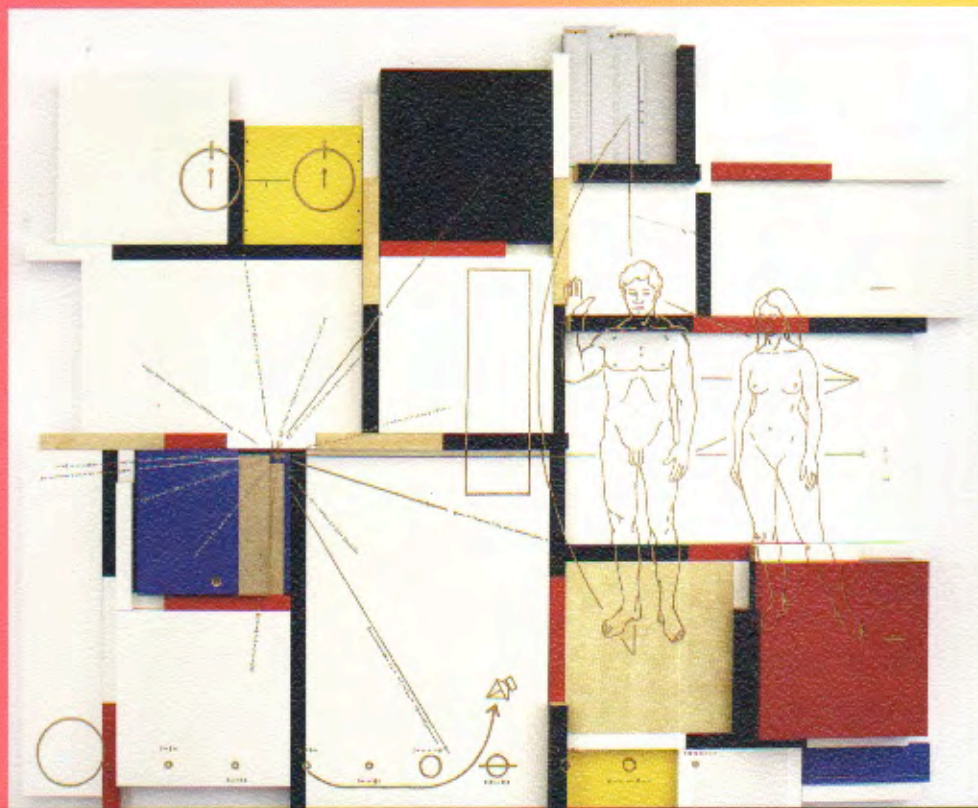


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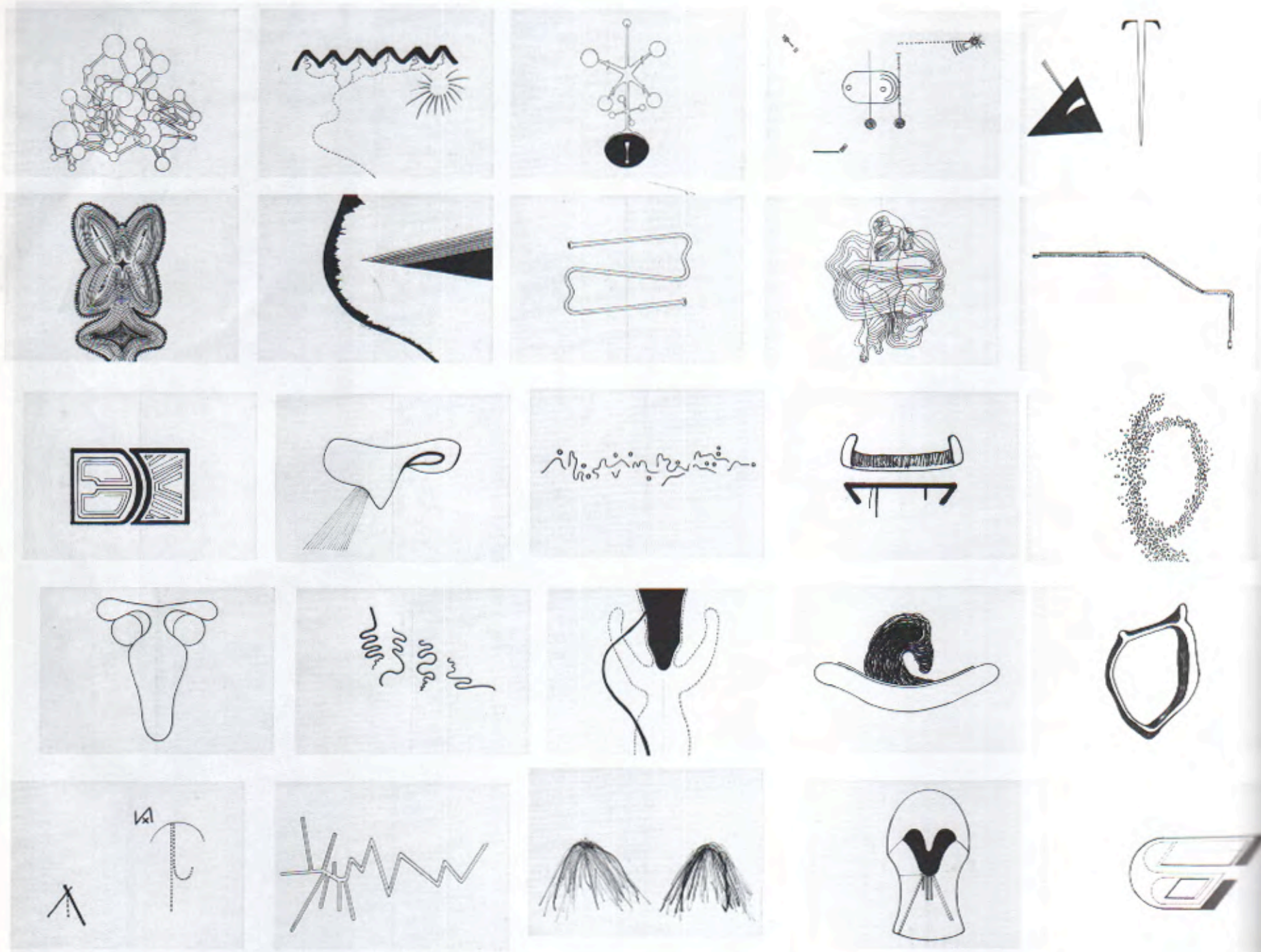


Osang Gwon  
Lars Von Trier  
Claire & Sean  
San Poggio  
Kevin Lyons  
David Lyle  
Hiraku Suzuki  
Jennifer Lawrence  
Shabazz Palaces  
Fucked Up  
Nirvana In Dub  
Locussolus Harvey  
Ray Barbee

# PODOWN MAGAZINE

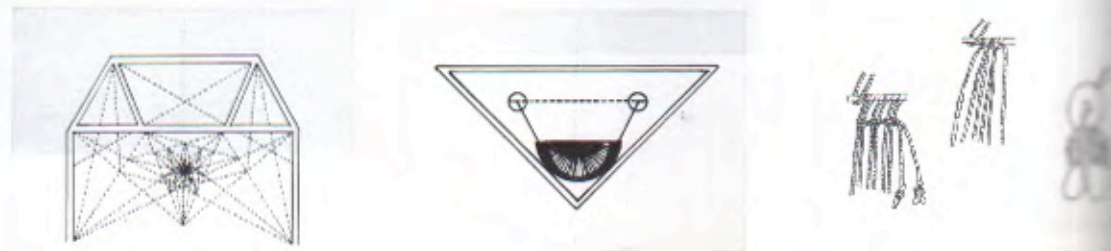


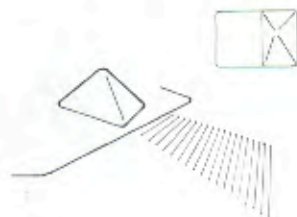
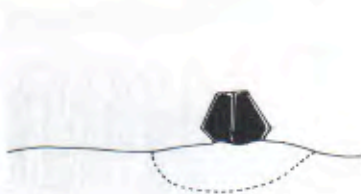
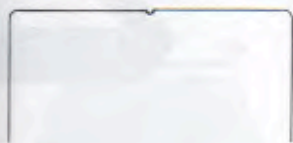
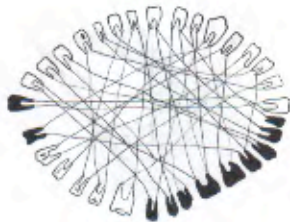
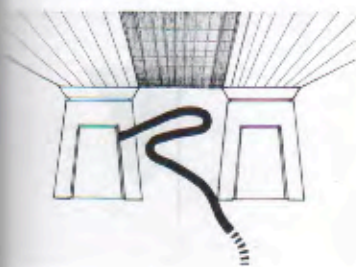
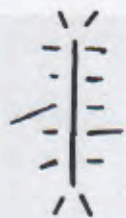
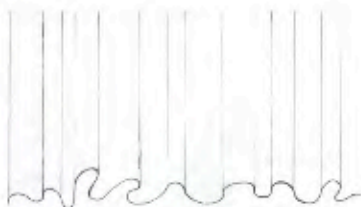
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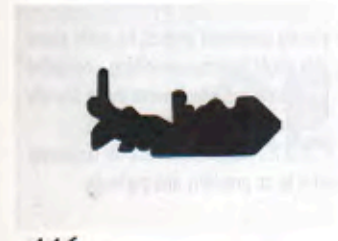
# GENGA

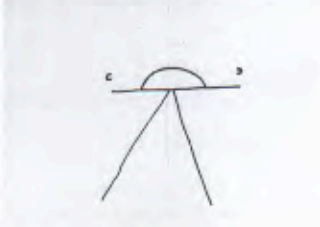
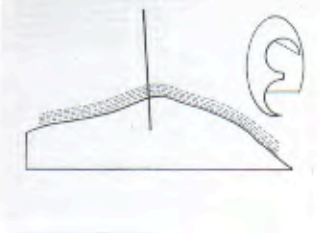
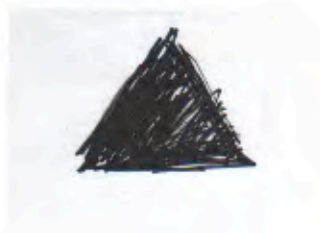
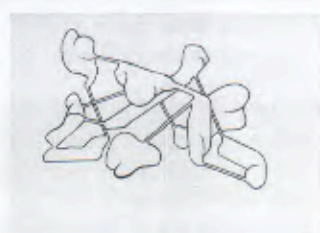
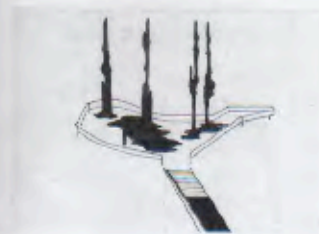
HIRAKU SUZUKI





GENGA is an overwhelming collection of the drawings from Japanese artist Hiraku Suzuki. For this naturally developed project, he spent about 6 years to reach the 1000th drawing which was not intended initially. He realized at some point, that this might become something - compiled under a certain form; so a book called GENGA was released in 2010. It consists of 1000 monochrome drawings which were made literally everywhere where he took his pen and paper. The book is probably one of the thickest publication in the Japanese paper back history. The concept of GENGA is the most fascinating part about it, as it is the result that came out in the book : It is his Gengo (Japanese for language) and Ginga (galaxy) = GENGA (primal drawing). There is no other explanation but that represents what it is, so precisely and perfectly. We are very happy to present the extract of GENGA and a small talk with the artist. ...





Hiraku, please tell us about your brief history so far.

I've been drawing since I was 3 or something. There used to be a lot of blueprints at my home because my father was an architect. I used to draw something like a moai at the back side of the blueprints. I also spent a good chunk of my childhood excavating unknown things like earthenware fragments, minerals, and fossils in my neighborhood. Then I wanted to become an archaeologist. Afterwards I devoted myself into running and musical activities for a long time. In 2000, when I was 21, I started creating artwork that is what I still continue working on today.

Now I am an artist after all, and all of my practice including work on paper, on panel, mural, installation, frottage, live drawing, video and so on are based on the simple act of drawing. The method I have in my mind through them is still closer to "excavating"—things that are hidden in here and now, than to "depicting" things in classical way.

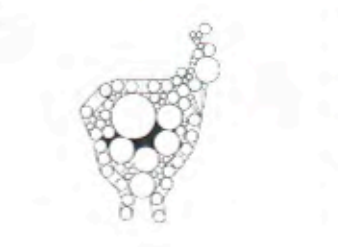
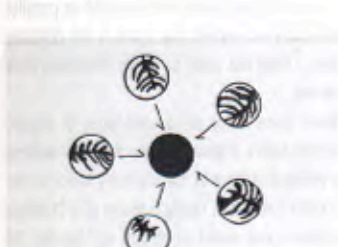
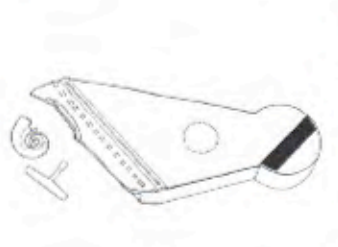
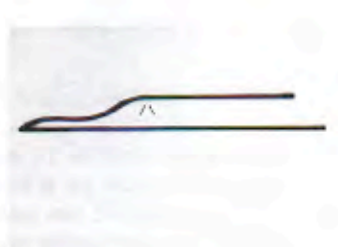
I feel many things while I draw. Every now and then I feel like am just an insignificant fisherman sailing on the midst of the vast ocean of white blank paper. Or it may be an archaeologist exploring on the other planet. It is the state of mind that seems to have nothing to do with anything, at the same time it is connected to everything. Always the process, at the same time the consequence.

"GENGA"—the name is consisted of two words being combined : Genga (language) and Genga (Galaxy) = GENGA (primal drawing). How did it develop to reach such perfect title that presents what the project GENGA stands for? Did you have the title in your head initially?

Initially I didn't have any titles or even think to make a series out of it. I think I draw #001 in 2004 inspired by a shape I saw on a pictorial book or something. I had just kept drawing a piece, using A4-size doubled Xerox paper and a marker everywhere in the world—in parallel with other works. Xerox paper are usually used for print letters, but I use it for drawing dots and lines, and as I scan it, it becomes data, I then felt good as if I've created a new language, or as if I did something I should have not.

Each drawing is completely different, since each piece is for me a new letter or signal, which then makes a compile of discoveries. In this series, I always try to draw something inspired by a moment, for example that a man walking in front of me suddenly looks to the side and the pattern of the back of the clothe looks twisted. A residual vision of a building I saw far from the train window. A moment where I saw weird signboard and graffiti. Of course there is a difference between the memory and what I draw. If I find a feeling of discovery in the drawing, then I select it as a piece of GENGA. I don't select drawings that are similar to the already existing GENGA pieces.

I can't help thinking about the moment that the first drawing had begun. There are some hypotheses about it, but basically the genesis of drawing has the synchronia with the beginning of language in the human history, and it is considered as the occurrence in the upper Paleolithic era. I think that the memory of that moment can be revived when today's people look at the unknown signals, and it happens in just a brief while before we draw the meaning out of them. I take each GENGA as not the meaning itself, but something before the meaning, or you can say it the state from which meanings are emanating.



To make GENGA pieces is, for me, like talking in a new language or discovering a new star in the sky on my own rather than drawing pictures. In other words, it's similar to re-enact activities such as ancient people in the Paleolithic era inscribed letters or as if someone started to create a new civilization in the distant future.

You currently reside in the UK, and extending your plans to be away from your home country. You've already acquired a lot of experiences abroad—how does it feel as an artist living and working under different circumstances, and how does it inspire you?

Now I'm simply enjoying it. I used to focus more on the unfamiliar place/material itself before, but now I take my work as more of an universal thing. I will do my thing wherever I am, but moving is a human instinct.

If you can choose one artist to collaborate with, who would that be, and how would you materialize the collaboration?

Collaborators are, for me, not who I choose or try to contact with. They always come to me and I'm just open to the new encounters. For example, I collaborated with Rei Kawakubo last year for the part of interior design for Comme des Garçons building in Beijing. She chose 3 of my GENGA drawings and combined them with her original dot pattern. It was very evocative experience for me, because she took my work in her own perspective and I found the new layer in my work. But to mention one, I think Richard D James's music could work very good on my video piece which is the 1000 drawings transform endlessly.

I'd like to ask you how you feel about the whole situation in Japan after 3.11. How has it changed your life? How do you now view it from where you are now?

In fact, I have very mixed feelings about it. Of course I'm checking the situation and thinking of my friends in Japan all the time.... "What we should do the most for Japan" is still the most common phrase at now. But who knows? I really don't want to understand what we should do at once. Because the answer will not to be just one thing, and this is already not only the matter of people living at the moment. So I just do what I do, not what I should do. I hope, someday in the future, I look back to the things I was doing then and come to know it was not bad. I mean, "now" is not only a dot that is separated from past and future. You can take it in your own perspective. I know it's difficult actually. Personally, I was born in the Tohoku area in Japan and moved to the suburbs of Tokyo with my family when I was 2 years old. So I had been feeling like that I was away from my roots originally. Then 3.11 happened in the Tohoku area, now I feel a deep sympathy for the words by Jonas Mekas in his film—he says, "I have never been able to figure out where any piece of my life belongs. So let it be, let it go just by pure chance and disorder. there is some kind of order in it. The order of its own."

Tell us about your plans for the rest of 2011.

My solo exhibition will be held in August to September at Wimbledon Space (London, UK). It will present the new works which I've produced during this residency in London. After that, I am going to NY for the residency program at Location One; staying and working at there for 6 months. Additionally, there will be some group shows in Tokyo which I will take part in.

Interview: Akiko Watanabe  
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<http://www.wardpublic.com/hiraku/>  
<http://www.genga.info/>  
Upcoming exhibition at Wimbledon Space ( 8th August - 16th September 2011 )  
<http://www.wimbledon.arts.ac.uk/wimbledonspace.htm>