

観音山古墳の印象

シルバーインクの吹き付けによる鍵穴のような巨大な壁画と、ワイヤーが貫通して空中に連なる溶岩を組み合わせたインスタレーションです。作家は、群馬県立近代美術館の北ほど近くにある観音山古墳を訪れた時、天に開かれた鍵穴のような形状や、石で構成された穴に強い印象を受け、本作品を着想しました。展示室の空間と呼応して現地制作された二つの記号的な壁画は天と地が反転しながら向かい合っており、それらを空中でつなぐ溶岩の並びは、宇宙における惑星直列のようにも見えできます。

Impressions of Kannonyama Kofun

The installation consists of large murals sprayed with silver ink that appear reminiscent of keyholes, and a series of lava stones suspended in the air through penetrating wires. The artist was inspired to create this work after visiting Kannonyama Kofun, located slightly to the north of the Museum of Modern Art, Gunma, where he was strongly impressed by the shape of the ancient burial mound that opened out to the sky like a giant keyhole, and its burial chamber lined with stones. The two symbolic murals, produced on site in correspondence to the exhibition space, face each other in inverted positions, while the sequence of lava stones connecting them in mid-air look like the alignment of planets in outer space.



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It started with collecting permeable lava stones. Walking around in the world about him Hiraku Suzuki pocketed the beguiling specimens wherever he found them. Then he took his elegant silver inks and improvised streams of light to emanate all around them in mirror-like reflective surfaces, now generating *The Writing of Meteors*. In somewhat of a coincidence as I write these notes, we are nearing the peak time in mid-August to witness the meteor showers known as Perseids. These showers are clouds of "space dust" (traces) that produce the meteor displays. If meteors are space rocks, then the lava stones reveal in their igneous pores an unfamiliar writing. The great French thinker Marguerite Yourcenar, ruminating on the lives of stones that can be read in their lines and fissures, wrote that these "authorless inscriptions may be regarded as a first draft of a chronicle of stones."¹ Indeed, these silent storylines that unfold in dramatic settings join cosmic time to real time in a fantastical kind of time-based art. This is speculative drawing in the same sense that imagining other worlds creates what is called speculative fiction. Can we not designate it an archive of writing styles?

There is an unmistakable performative aspect to this kind of drawing. That comes as no surprise because Suzuki makes performance a key aspect of his practice. There is his drawing as live performance event enacted in museums and outdoors, the improvisations with sound artists, and even a *Drawing Orchestra* with several players drawing at once, their pens sounding across paper, some making scratches, and others gliding markers that animate the screen in a true Cagean field of sounds. Shaped by his interests in the cosmos and matter, Suzuki adds formidable new dimensions to the strategies of intermedia that has defined so much of postwar artmaking, pushing it toward the sublime. His discoveries are truly the realization of art media and life media embodied in this way of working. Intermedia showed the way to a new ecology of the arts, and Suzuki's expanded field of drawing/writing proposes an ecology of drawing that crosses boundaries between human history and natural history, art and science.

In earlier years, he took notice of the signs and objects that were all around him in the city to make the thousand drawings of *GENGA*. Ordinary things, like bolts and knobs and levers and hooks, which are so prevalent as to go unremarked by the public, following page-by-page in a small book of refined, studied images. Lines going in all directions, sometimes suggesting an ancient language not yet literary. There is also his *GENZO*, the unidentifiable grid

of silvery shapes on black paper, more excavations from the world book of knowledge. Every line a penetrating light into the darkness. Every gesture another addition to his own archive of drawings.

I love the idea of a *Walking Language*, Suzuki's name for his wall of random squiggles and lines and strange alchemies stretching the length of a museum room. Where is this geography pointing to? What language do its people speak? How do they move through it? Suzuki is not your average flaneur in the city. He observes in a special way. He requires of himself—and ultimately, of us—a meticulous kind of looking. The sense of time that it takes to really see what he is looking at is more important than the object. He discovers writing on the ground, in outer space, in everyday tools, in found things, in urban space. Though he practices geomancy he is also a dreamer reaching for the stars. To draw is to know. Suzuki's work has to do with scale, motion, lines, dots, black holes, signs, sedimentation. The *Constellation* offers a glimpse into outer space and untold mysteries of the universe in bursts of light and dark. His *Interexcavation* demands that the artist travel inside his own images to comprehend them. These works, so tactile, read like ancient inscriptions on walls of ruins. Where? What do they reveal to us? His lava rocks bolted to a wall frame messages in meteors. And thus, the oldest rocks in the world are repositioned in our era. These are earth-bound signs from another world, another vision, another time. Mind and matter are everywhere. Everything matters. Robert Smithson: "The brain itself resembles an eroded rock from which ideas and ideals leak."²

I wish I could enter the empty spaces in the drawings. When I look at them I don't know where I am, on land or in the sky. I follow their spiritual energy wherever it may take me.

1 Marguerite Yourcenar, Introduction to *The Writing of Stones*, by Roger Caillois. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1985), p. 18.

2 Robert Smithson, "A Sedimentation of the Mind: Earth Projects," in *The Writings of Robert Smithson*, edited by Nancy Holt. (New York: New York University Press, 1979), p. 90.