

PRESS RELEASE

Ryota Aoyagi: sign

August 3 – September 27, 2019



Every morning I walked, for over half an hour, from a storage near the sea, to the train station, dragging my numb legs, having worked over night, carrying thousands of heavy parcels, one after the other.

Down the road, where only the trucks run; and nobody else.

One morning, I found stones on the roadside. And I stopped.

If it were a stone, I wouldn't have noticed it.

If it were two stones, I probably missed them.

But there were three stones.

Three stones in equal distance.

Abruptly there.

I have no way of knowing the message or the intention why it was done so, and by whom.

But I got to know, that someone was there.

A trace that someone breathed right here.

An elusive and faint cue.

However definite, as I am here now, someone else was also...

My paralyzed brain from heavy labor, suddenly felt lighter.

On the spur of the moment, the blurred world until then, turned crisp clear in front of my eye.

Shining brightly in the morning sun.

The lead is always something trivial.

If you understand what it really means, then the world changes completely.

Although it existed in front of you just the same, before, and after, the moment.

Nevertheless, I forget.

I doze off again.

That is why I do this, so to remind myself.

I keep on searching for the sign from this world.

Ryota Aoyagi

Gallery Koyanagi is pleased to present the first solo exhibition by Ryota Aoyagi, titled “sign” from August 3 to September 27, 2019.

“Just like the painters place colors on a canvas’s composition, I want to create a view, by placing colors, forms and textures in a space.” Ryota Aoyagi has been presenting installation art since 2005, by carefully finding places for the found objects, collected and selected by his sensibility, in different spaces, that are also chosen under the circumstances. Aoyagi picked up things such as ceramics, glassware, old utensils, worn out fabric, dolls, and small items from abroad with unknown usage; all filtered through his aesthetics, however miscellaneous. They were made in different times, places, and for diverse purposes; but once assembled by the artist, and reconstructed as an artwork, they became a part of a balanced, but a tense space. The result may be a crystallization of time and memory, or a harmonious layer of indications visualized; these things had been owned by various people, and mostly had been produced by people. Aoyagi would continue to search for such indications, the signs passed on from an unknown person, and for objects with essential requirement and accidental chance; and would wait for those who’d also notice the faint signs.

His recent activity took place in a shelter of a residence in Tokyo. It was opened to the public by reservation only for 9 limited days. In the shelter that was scheduled to be demolished, the artist himself attended a few visitors at a time, on each appointment. There one saw a dark shelter, with small objects, lit dimly. There were 2 works, titled “2015” and “2016”, and in between there was a card, sitting next to a candle, that said

There is no war in this place.

There is no wall in this room.

The art critic Noi Sawaragi has called this space “a tea room” and analyzed that it exemplified the essence of spirit of green tea ceremony as below:

“A place created to hide from weapons for the slaughter that pours from the sky is thus a quirky "tea room" for guests. I said it was strange, but it squeezes the spirit of tea far more than the metamorphosed "tea ceremony" and so on. The "things" selected from the limited time and space by the master's hand and waiting for visits ask constant questions to the invited guests. But there is no answer. Those who look at it lose their whereabouts they should be, as if they were hung in the air. But instead there is no conflict in this space anymore. There is no wall in this room as all origins and features coexist indiscriminately.”

(Excerpt from: Sawaragi, Noi. *Tea room for equivalent* – Ryota Aoyagi "2015" "2016" Exhibition. Bijutsu Techo. March. 2017. pp.162-163.)

We will be presenting a new installation work with newly found objects. For further information, please contact us at mail@gallerykoyanagi.com.

Press images



© Ryota Aoyagi / Courtesy of Gallery Koyanagi photo by Ichiro Mishima

Information

Ryota Aoyagi : sign
August 3 – September 27, 2019.

Opening Reception : Saturday, August 3, 18:00 – 20:00
* The artist will be in attendance.

Opening hours: 11:00-19:00
Close on Sundays, Mondays, and National Holidays.
Summer Holidays: August 13 – 17, 2019

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mail@gallerykoyanagi.com for additional visuals and documents.

Reference images—past works

Ryota Aoyagi, “2015”, “2016” (2017)
© Ryota Aoyagi
photo by Ichiro Mishima



Installation view of “2016”



There is no war in this place. / There is no wall in this room.



Installation view of “2015”

Ryota Aoyagi

Born in Osaka. He lives and works in Tokyo. After graduating the Tama Art University, he started in 2005 to show installation art, using found objects. Since 2010 he has been running an antique shop, on a small street of Kagurazaka, Tokyo. This cultivated his eye for antiques. In 2014, had a show titled “UNSOLD” with Hiroshi Sugimoto and Sophie Calle at Gallery Koyanagi. In 2017 he had a solo show in a residential shelter in Tokyo, showing 2 works “2015” and “2016.” This exhibition attracted a wide variety of attention, despite the limited presentation. From March 2018 on, he is writing a series of essays titled “Eureka” on a bimonthly art magazine Bijutsu Techo.