

Kanji Hasegawa Solo Exhibition “My Sútra”

- Period December 7th (Saturday), 2019 - January 18th (Saturday), 2020
■Hours Tuesdays through Fridays, 13:00 - 20:00
Saturdays, 12:00 - 19:00 (closed on Sundays, Mondays, and National Holidays)
*Closed during Dec. 29th (Sun), 2019 - Jan. 6th (Mon), 2020 for a winter vacation
■Venue KANA KAWANISHI GALLERY
4-7-6 Shirakawa, Koto-ku, Tokyo 135-0021 JAPAN
tel +81 3 5843 9128 e-mail gallery@kanakawanishi.com

▼OPENING RECEPTION

December 7th (Saturday), 2019 18:00 - 20:00



Koka Kola

2019 | Japanese cypress, gold leaf, ceramic | 560 × 310 × 200 mm
© Kanji Hasegawa, courtesy KANA KAWANISHI GALLERY

KANA KAWANISHI GALLERY is pleased to announce the opening of Kanji Hasegawa's solo exhibition, *My Sútra*, from Saturday, December 7th. Hasegawa, who received his B.F.A. and M.F.A. at Tokyo University of the Arts and had been heavily influenced by punk rock culture, became interested in Buddhism while studying sculpture in his art school, as he found similarity in the process of art making and the Buddhism spirit and punk rock culture, as they all undergo the figuration of shapeless concepts in order to share with others. Following his interest towards Buddhism, Hasegawa completed his training at Eiheiji-temple, and currently works as both a Buddhist monk and an artist.

■Please contact below for any image enquiries■

Hasegawa comments as follows: “Creating artwork lead me grow my interest towards Buddhism, and I have now become a Buddhist monk. I think one of the reasons why Buddhism could attain authority as a culture was because it converted its origin and past into ceremonial forms, while it must have had its dilemmas and difficulties upon giving them shapes while they also saw the necessity of doing so in order to transcend to the next generation. Buddhism is essentially transcending something that does not have a physical form, while it is impossible to share with others without giving it some kind of shape. I see this is the exact same dilemma that art connotes in itself as well.” Although the works by Hasegawa have forms of realism, the representation of its motifs are intervened and modified, and therefore questions the ways of seeing our culture and society we currently live in.

Hasegawa combines motifs and mediums in which have diverse conceptual and historical backgrounds, including ceramics of contemporary motifs, antiquity glassware, and delicate wooden sculptures with gold leaf of vegetation which all combine into creating a unique beautiful harmony. For example, he often features the cannabis leaf at a motif for his wooden sculptures, which in the current society is globally renowned in the name of marijuana as an illegal drug. However, when you would reach out to its history, the plant had been appreciated all over the world including ancient India, China, Egypt, medieval Europe and many other cultures beneficial medicine, as well as in Japan where the Shinto shrines still utilize the plant to this date as *Shuhatsu*, a tool used for ceremonies in the Shinto shrines.

In this exhibition titled *My Sūtra*, which will be the first solo exhibition by Kanji Hasegawa at KANA KAWANISHI GALLERY, the artist will attempt to reach out to a world outside of Buddhism and then sublime them all into his sphere of expression, and will exhibit the attitude of Hasegawa’s identity in which he organically combines being both a Buddhist monk and an artist and fill the gallery with the essential core of Buddhism.



A Girl Holding a Flower

2019 | Japanese cypress, gold leaf, antique glass, copper wire
240 × 150 × 90 mm

© Kanji Hasegawa, courtesy KANA KAWANISHI GALLERY



A Flower and a Vase (detail)

2019

© Kanji Hasegawa

courtesy KANA KAWANISHI GALLERY

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Artist Statement

sūtra

Buddhism is shapeless.

It is a religion that believes in things that do not have their shapes.

Researchers point out that in *Sutta Nipāta*, the earliest Buddhism sūtra,

no expressions unique to the language of Buddhism are found.

i.e., Buddhism originated by gathering materials that were outside of Buddhism from its very beginning.*

I believe this attitude itself is nothing but the core of Buddhism.

Punk is attitude. Not style.

My sūtra too, is spreading outside of Buddhism.

Kanji Hasegawa

*Hajime Nakamura. (1991). *Budda no kotoba (Buddha's Words)*—*Sutta Nipāta*. pp442

Artist Profile

Kanji Hasegawa was born in 1990 in Mie Prefecture, Japan. He received a B.F.A. at Tokyo University of the Arts, Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Sculpture in 2014, and a M.F.A. at Tokyo University of the Arts, the Graduate School of Fine Arts, Department of Sculpture in 2016. Hasegawa became a monk in Daihonzan Eiheiji in the same year after ascetic training. His major solo exhibitions include *ALLDAY TODAY* (2018, Gallery HIROUMI, Tokyo) and *RESEARCH&DESTROY* (2015, CC4441, Tokyo). Group exhibitions include *CC NIGHT -PLAY ANARCHY-* (2015, CC4441, Tokyo). Hasegawa was shortlisted at “sanwacompany Art Award / Art in The House 2019.”

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