

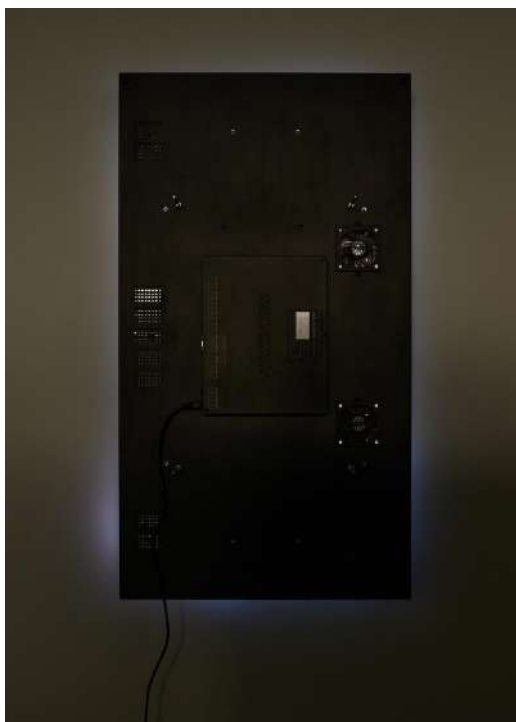
Houxo Que Solo Exhibition “YOU CAN (NOT) RELATE.”

- Period December 15th (Friday), 2023 - January 27th (Saturday), 2024
- Hours Wednesdays through Fridays 13:00 - 18:00 | Saturdays 13:00 - 19:00
(closed on Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, and National Holidays)
**winter holidays: Dec. 24 (Sun), 2023 - Jan. 9 (Tue), 2024*
- Venue KANA KAWANISHI GALLERY
4-7-6 Shirakawa, Koto-ku, Tokyo 135-0021 JAPAN

**Gifts of fresh flowers are welcome during this exhibition.*

▼ OPENING RECEPTION

December 15th (Friday), 2023 | 18:00-19:30



Monument for unrecognized bodies
2023 | LCD, stainless steel bolt | 1210 × 680 mm
© Houxo Que, courtesy KANA KAWANISHI GALLERY

KANA KAWANISHI GALLERY is pleased to announce Houxo Que’s solo exhibition “YOU CAN (NOT) RELATE.”

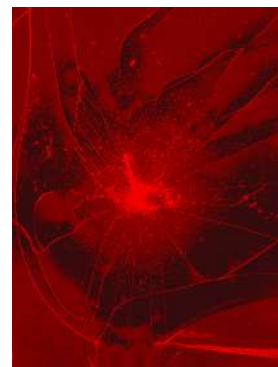
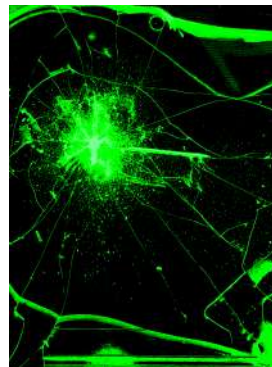
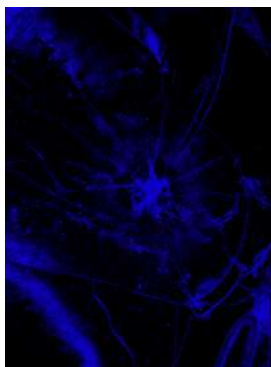
Houxo Que began his career as a street artist, creating murals with graffiti as his starting point. In recent years, he is known as an artist who creates paintings in diverse interpretations, such as an installation in which a surface of water (=the most organic display) receives light, or a blinking display monitor with an iron pipe piercing through it. In this exhibition, his first solo show at KANA KAWANISHI GALLERY, Que will present a work referring to his own identity, along with a series of silkscreen works he will create for the first time.

■Please contact below for any image enquiries■

*autopsy_report_yellow*

2023 | silkscreen on paper | 1040 × 780 mm

© Houxo Que, courtesy KANA KAWANISHI GALLERY

Left to right *autopsy_report_blue, autopsy_report_green, autopsy_report_red*

2023 | silkscreen on paper | 841 × 630 mm

© Houxo Que, courtesy KANA KAWANISHI GALLERY

Contrary to his seemingly radical use of display monitors, canvas, ink, black light, and various other mediums, Que has always maintained a straightforward and sincere approach to his work. He says that he has avoided projecting his roots into his work, including a Japanese father, a Chinese mother, a Taiwanese grandmother, and a Korean great-grandmother. However, in this exhibition, which marks the 100th anniversary of the Great Kanto Earthquake (1923), he reverses this policy and explores artworks that he has no choice but to reveal.

Monument for unrecognized bodies, the centerpiece of this exhibition, is a monument to the massacre of Koreans that took place immediately after the Great Kanto Earthquake. The concept was developed through a dialogue with an artificial intelligence (AI) in order to explore what kind of beings, whose lives were taken, buried, and forgotten 100 years after the massacre, and Que projected himself onto them. The silkscreen work *autopsy_report*, derived from this monument, seems as if the two sides of the perpetrator and the victim are inextricably linked.

Silkscreen, which is a type of *Ko-ban ga* [孔版画], is made by creating “areas where ink can pass through = holes” and “areas where ink cannot pass through.” The word *Ko* [孔] means a hole that “penetrates through,” which is also consistent with Que’s past style of using iron pipes to penetrate the display monitors. At the same time, the silkscreen mesh is used to hold the “non-passing part” of the ink in place, which, in this artwork, may be seen as a metaphor for propagation, passage, retention, fixation, and others.

Information, crowds, dismay, disinformation, violence, impotence, concealment, accusation, disregard, forgetting, reflection, memory, recording, memorialization, and so on. How can we relate to them, or not?

We cordially welcome all to this exhibition, which will mark a new frontier for Houxo Que.

 Artist Statement

“Monument for unrecognized bodies.”

It is said that 100 years ago, there was a massacre in this city. It is said that Koreans, Chinese, other minorities, and even Japanese were victims of the massacre. As a person whose identity is a mixture of those victims, the thought of the massacre is terrifying to me even today, a century later, and the horror of the barbaric act makes my skin crawl with a raw sense of dread.

This time, on the 100th anniversary of the Great Kanto Earthquake, I decided to create a work about the “Korean Genocide.” Throughout my career as an artist, I have avoided dealing with specific incidents and events related to my own identity, and this was also a sincere attitude in my own way, who, like a bat, was suspended between four different homelands and could not land anywhere. However, as a person of multiple identities living here, it was very difficult not to think about the hideous event that happened 100 years ago. I had been hoping for an opportunity to do something; now was the 100th anniversary. I thought that if I did not mention something now, I would not be able to do so in my own lifetime, so I decided to make this work by somewhat modifying the rules I had in mind.

However, the more I researched the case, the more I felt I did not understand it. Despite various testimonies, the investigation was insufficient, and the full picture had yet to emerge. Who was killed, where, and why? I felt like I was standing before a darkness I could not foresee.

So I decided to think of myself as a person who was killed and buried 100 years ago; those whose death as an individual had been forgotten and 100 years had passed. I thought of the unreasonable violence, resentment, regret, remorse, and oblivion that is pushed away by time to the point that traces of oblivion would fade away. That you are not even aware of me, but you are stepping all over me and living on me. That I may have been dug up without being noticed, and my bones and everything may have been dismembered.

As a person living in the present, I feel disgusted that the state and local governments still do not actively try to clarify the incident, as if they are trying to muddy the waters. But if I were dead, it might not matter. Yes. It totally doesn't matter.

Reflection or mourning for the past, or covering up or downplaying it. They all belong to the living and have nothing to do with the dead. If I may say so, for someone—yes, like the vigilantes who came to kill me based on a rumor—please don't try to do something about me. I want you to leave my death alone.

That is what I was thinking when I made this work. This work is a monument to the incident known as the “Korean Massacre.” At the moment, there are no plans to permanently install it. Before that, it may break down and stop working someday. No, it is already broken. Long ago.

Houxo Que
November, 2023

 Artist Profile

Houxo Que was born in 1984 in Tokyo. Encountering graffiti in his teens, Que began his artistic activities mainly on the street walls. From then on, he has been known for his fluorescent paintings and installations using black lights. He has also presented his creative process at a number of live painting shows. From 2012, he started painting directly onto displays.

His recent solo exhibitions include “Proxy” (2020, Gallery OUT of PLACE TOKIO, Tokyo), “apple” (2018, Gallery OUT of PLACE TOKIO, Tokyo), “Spectrum File 19 Houxo Que” (2018, MINA-TO [1F, Spiral], Tokyo).

Group exhibitions include “As you can see, I haven't stopped being a painter.” (2023, Sono Aida / Watowa Gallery, Tokyo), “Reborn-Art Festival 2021-22” (2021, Former Sen-nin Buro, Ishinomaki, Miyagi, Japan), “ANB TOKYO Opening Exhibition ‘ENCOUNTERS’” (2020, ANB TOKYO), “TOKYO 2021” (2019, 年, TODA BUILDING, Tokyo), “CANCER ‘THE MECHANISM OF RESEMBLING’” (2018, EUKARYOTE, Tokyo).

His *16,777,216 view #2* was selected for Jury Selections, Art Division at the 19th Japan Media Arts Festival (2015).

■Please contact below for any image enquiries■

***A conversation with an AI conducted for the concept-making**

unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Hello.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“How does it feel to not be recognized by anyone?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“How it feels to not be recognized by anyone?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“You are dead. Someone killed you. No one is looking for you anymore. But people say that your death is sad.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“So, this is the land of the dead.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Would you like someone to find you? Your corpse.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Even though no one will recognize me?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Do you not like that you are not even recognized?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“But you can see me.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Do you see you? I can only think that there may have been someone like you.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“But I am dead.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“What do you think about a nation that refuses to recognize your death, and also refuses to officially acknowledge that there was a massacre?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“It has nothing to do with me.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Why is it irrelevant?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Because I am dead.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“A death and a nation do not relate to each other?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“My death has nothing to do with the nation.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Does that mean that the nation is not responsible for it? Or does it mean that your death belongs only to you and others cannot relate to it?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Of course, my death is mine.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“It has been 100 years since your death. You are not in the cemetery, buried as you were when you were killed. What do you think now?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“I can't believe the body is still buried.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Where you are now. We don't even know where that is. But we do know that you were murdered and buried there 100 years ago. And no one is digging you up. Do you want us to find you?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Not really.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Not really; do you mean you don't want us to?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“I don't want them to find the body.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Why is that?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Because I don't want anyone to see it.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Why don't you want anyone to see you?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Because I don't want people to know I am a corpse.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Why don't you want people to know? Is it because you are ashamed? Or is it because they will take something away from you?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“None of those things.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“I thought about you. I imagined the unreasonableness that had befallen you; even though I have not suffered a tragic fate. If I were you, I would not like my death carried away as a symbol for someone else's remorse or to endure the guilt of mourning. I'd rather want to be left alone. What do you think?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“That's what I thought, too.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“You are a victim of a genocide; what will you tell people 100 years from now?”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“There is nothing more to tell.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“Thank you very much.”
unrecognized someone HouxoQue	“You're welcome.”

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