

Blue Velvet Projects

KAITO Itsuki: Looming Digits

9 June — 29 July 2023

KAITO Itsuki delves deep into the intricacies of human identity and self-expression. Her work reveals the fluid nature of personality, shaped by the ever-changing interplay of time, space, and experiences. In our quest for connection, empathy plays a vital role, but it can also lead to conformity and societal pressures. Balancing this desire for connection with the need for individual autonomy is crucial.

Within Looming Digits, KAITO Itsuki's first solo exhibition in Switzerland, characters bound by plastic belts in room-like spaces provoke intrigue and discomfort. These unconventional actions, seemingly wasteful to outsiders, hold profound meaning. By indulging in non-productive "waste," individuals can explore different facets of their identity. Through the nocturnal realm of self-discovery, they find their place in society, carving out unique personas that distinguish them from the anonymous masses.

Masks, suits, and enigmatic numbers populate Itsuki's works, serving as puzzling metaphors. Inspired by Kigurumi cosplay, the masks and suits represent transformative experiences, blurring the boundaries between natural and fabric skin. The enigmatic numbers stem from cognitive function improvement training, symbolizing the quest for enhanced learning and social engagement. They evoke the importance of language as a means of communication, connecting us to society and excluding those who struggle with functional illiteracy.

Empathy, a fundamental aspect of human connection, can also destabilize one's sense of self when solely relied upon for validation. Our complex internal landscapes defy perfect expression and interpretation. Yet, the complexity that emerges through sharing grants each individual a distinct personality, bridging the gaps that separate us.

KAITO Itsuki embraces the liminal spaces of becoming, rejecting the notion of a singular "true self." The titles hold multiple connotations, encompassing both official approval and a spiritual journey. Their artistic toolkit, comprising brushes, belts, and blades, becomes an instrument of self-analysis, granting permission for unproductive and heterogeneous activities. It is through these tools that KAITO explores the intricate interplay between the mind and the body.

Itsuki invites us on a profound exploration of human identity, empathy, and self-expression. Through her work, we confront the ephemeral nature of the self and the delicate balance between individual autonomy and societal connection. Masks, suits, and numbers serve as powerful symbols, evoking transformation and the pursuit of knowledge. By embracing the complexities of the human experience, we may find the keys to unlock our true potential within the vast tapestry of existence.

— Mohamed Almusibli

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KAITO Itsuki

*b. 1993 in Sapporo, Japan

Education

2019 MFA Kyoto city university of arts (KCUA),
Painting Department, Kyoto, Japan
2016 BFA
Tōhoku University of Art & Design (TUAD), Fine
arts Department, Yamagata, Japan

Selected solo exhibitions

2023 "Looming Digits" Blue Velvet Projects,
Zürich
"The Elastic Edges" Ritsuki Fujisaki, Tokyo
2022 "The Monopolistic Sweet Spots" MAMOTH,
London
"Tools are validated" Tang Contemporary Art,
Bangkok
黠 Blacken" HIVE CENTER FOR
CONTEMPORARY ART, Beijing
"被制限の行動、心理電影" HUA ART SPACE,
Beijing
2021 "現れるのに勝手はない/ No excuses for
showing up" LEESAYA, Tokyo
"Hierarchy of Beasts" GALLERY MEME, Seoul
2020 "In search of..."14a, Hamburg, Germany
2019 "たりない循環 / Unsatisfied animals of the
cycle", GINZA TSUTAYA, Tokyo
"IDÉE FIXE, Tong Gallery + Project, Beijing
2018 "Tiger Poet", CLEAR GALLERY, Tokyo
2017 "THE WOMEN FROM THE GROUND, DNA",
N's art project, Osaka,
"Jungle -7,000,000", MORI YU GALLERY, Kyoto
"Tiger Technique", KCUA, Kyoto

Selected Group Exhibition

2023 CARE PACKAGE", Blue Velvet Project,
Zürich
2022 "The Tale of Tales", G Museum 金鷹美術館,
Nanjing
2022 "Cope", No Gallery, New York, curated by
Sven Loven
"Temple", Seventh Gallery, Melbourne, curated
by Michael Kennedy
2021 "Couple of", Hive contemporary art center,
Beijing
"Slow Culture", @KCUA, Kyoto
"Low Fever", Tang Contemporary Art, Hong Kong

2020 "COLLECTION AS POEM IN THE AGE OF
EPHEMERALITY", X museum, Beijing
"Y -generation artists" GINZA TSUTAYA ATRIUM,
Tokyo
"A Delinquent Child Having An Out Of Body
Experience" THE RESIDENCE GALLERY, London
2019 "Complete Metamorphosis" SuperDutches,
NewYork, US
"Scaffolds of Meaning / 懶音", MINE PROJECT,
Hong Kong
"Feelings for a spider" 4646, Tokyo, Japan
"Amazondom" Pulp, Osaka, Japan
"KUMA EXHIBITION 2019", Spiral, Tokyo, Japan
2018 "Encounters", PDX CONTEMPORARY
ARTS, Portland, Oregon, US
"KUMA EXHIBITION", Spiral, Tokyo, Japan
"KAISEI", Pehu, Osaka, Japan
Galerie P38, Paris, France
KG, Tokyo, Japan
2017 "The 4th CAF prize exhibition" Hillside
terrace, Tokyo, Japan

Awards / Honors / Residencies

2022 Art News Japan 30 artists nominated
2021 "30 artist Under 35" by ARTnews Japan
nominated
KUMA Foundation grant recipient
2020 The Peter S. Reed Foundation grant
recipient
2018 ARTIST'S FAIR KYOTO, Kyoto, Japan
KUMA Foundation scholarship student
2017 KUMA Foundation scholarship student
"Feldstärke International", Hunan University,
China
Daegu Art Factory, South Korea
Kyoto Art Center, Japan
2016 "End of summer", Yale Union Contemporary
art center, Portland, US

Public collection

Star Museum (Shanghai)
He art Museum (Guangdong)
X Museum (Beijing)
Tōhoku University of Art & Design (Yamagata)