

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

IO

— HRD FINE ART'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE EXHIBITION —

Venue: HRD Fine Art
(494-1 Kamigoryo-tatemachi, Kamigyo-ku, Kyoto)

Date: October 18 - November 29, 2025

Hours: **Thu: 11:00am - 3:00pm**
Fri & Sat / October 19 (Sun) / November 24 (Mon): 11:00am - 7:00pm

Closed: Sun-Wed (available for viewing by appointment)
- Opens on October 19 (Sun) & November 24 (Mon): 11:00am - 7:00pm

Artists: Axel Hütte, Figen Cebe, Reico Motohara, Tomohiro Takagi, Sinzow, Akihito Okunaka, Marguerite Dabaie, Keita Iehara, Nari Choi, Weixin Quek Chong

Opening reception: October 18 (Sat) 5:00pm-

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HRD Fine Art opened its permanent, physical gallery in Kyoto in April 2015. Hence, this year marks its tenth anniversary of its opening. At this occasion, we showcase a commemorative group exhibition, titled "IO," in the hope that it will provides us with an opportunity to look back on our ten years' operation as well as shed a guiding light for the next ten years.

The title of the exhibition, "IO" (read "ai-ou"), suggests the number ten, but it also is an acronym for "input/output." The show focuses on ten artists who have worked with HRD Fine Art or the director, Akikazu Harada, in some way, but have never exhibited their work at the gallery except for open-call exhibitions and collection exhibitions to date. We showcase one artwork by each artist, totaling ten artworks in an anthology-style format.

"I" or "Input" represents respect for and tribute to the artists who have provided precious and joyous collaboration opportunities to the gallery, including artists who do not take part in this upcoming exhibition, while "O" or "Output" refers to the role and responsibility of a gallery that owes a lot to its community and the wider public.

This exhibition is largely inspired and driven by the personal connections and sentiments of the director of the gallery, and may look different from HRD's past exhibitions, hopefully in a positive way. A booklet that includes essays by Harada introducing stories and episodes related to each of the ten artists will be published to coincide with the opening of the exhibition.

[ARTISTS & ARTWORKS] (* indicates artwork image for reference only)

①

Axel HÜTTE

Born in 1951 in Essen, Germany. Currently lives and works in Dusseldorf, Germany.
Studied photography at the Kunstakademie Dusseldorf under Bernd Becher.

Renowned worldwide, Hütte is widely recognized as one of the leading figures in the contemporary German photography. Known as "landscape painter," though being a photographer, he creates large-format photographic works that entail lyricism and mysticism as well as exquisitely elaborate composition and precision based on deep knowledge in the history of painting and image. An avid traveler, he travels around the world to take photographs both of urban landscape and architecture and of natural scenery. He made a photo-shooting trip in Japan between 2010 and 2015.

Axel Hütte's large-scale retrospectives were held in 2017 at two museums in Germany, one in Dusseldorf and another in Bottrop, and in 2025 at Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck. In 2026 another retrospective is slated to take place at Museum Villa Rot in Burgrieden.



Axel Hütte *Rigi Klum*

Diatone inkjet print on Hahnemühle natural paper 37x48.6cm (image) ed.50+AP10 2019

© Axel Hütte

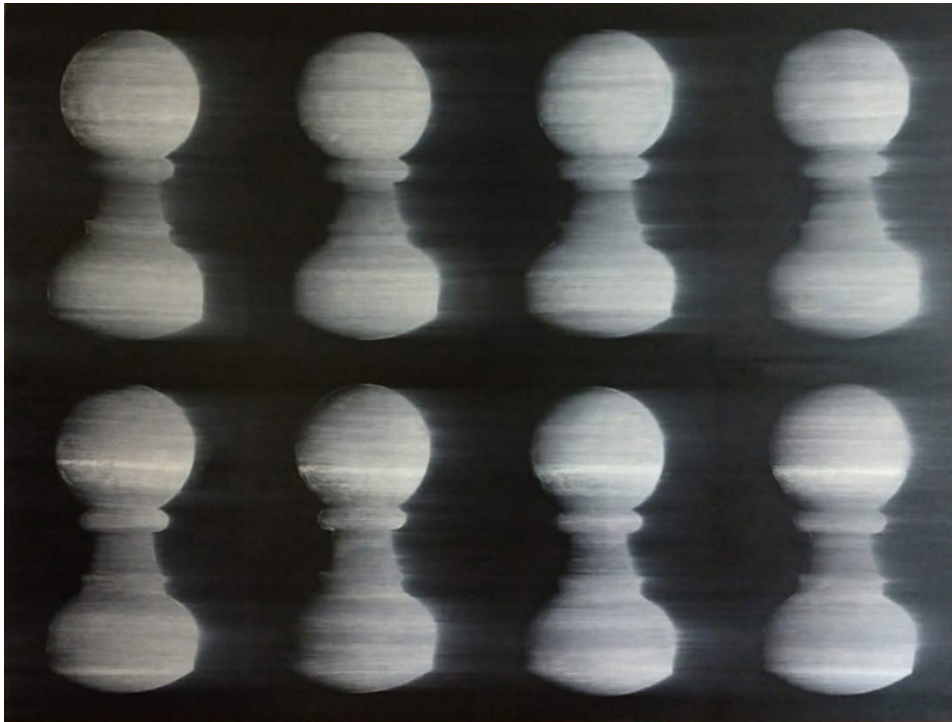
②

Figen CEBE

Born in 1956 in Ankara, Türkiye. Having both Turkish and French nationalities, she currently lives and works between Brittany region in France and Ankara.

Cebe, primarily creates monochromatic, geometric abstract paintings using black, white and red hues, where symbolism and allusions meet meditative silence. Motifs are intentionally blurred and somewhat reminiscent of afterimages, constantly moving and vacillating. Thus, looking at her painting reminds us of how human memories and records are fragile and ephemeral. Cebe's paintings, at the same time, seem to reflect the artist's strong interest in Oriental thoughts and philosophy.

Cebe has once worked at the Press and Information Office of the E.U. before becoming a full-time artist, and actively expresses her opinions on politics and social problems through social media, which resonates with her art creations.



Figen Cebe *We Are All Ordinary and Broken Pawns**
oil on canvas

③

Reico MOTOHARA

Born in 1963 in Shizuka, where she currently lives and works. After graduating from Tama Art University in Tokyo, Motohara studied ceramic art in London, first at the Central Saint Martins of the University of the Arts London and then at the Royal College of Art.

Even though her creation is centered around ceramic and pottery, Motohara's practice involves a wide variety of media and expressions, including installation, performance, and video, with a particular focus on the interrelations between humans and nature, specifically soil and water. Recently she has participated in artist residency programs in Estonia and Sweden, interacting with the local people and cooking food together as part of her performative artwork.

Motohara participates in Biwako Biennale 2025 in Shiga.



Reico Motohara *Kitchen Stories in Joenju**

installation (photo from the exhibition "2023 East Asia Culture City Contemporary Art Exchange Exhibition: Harmony" in Jeonju, Korea)

④

Tomohiro TAKAGI

Born in 1972 in Gifu. Currently lives and works in Kyoto. In 1995 he moved to Europe and studied Western classical painting techniques.

Traveling in the remote areas of Papua New Guinea, interacting with the indigenous people there, and learning about their lifestyle and spirituality made him focus on the interconnection between humans and nature, or rather, the ambiguity of such stereotypical dichotomy. This has led to his trademark mystical, fantastical, and yet uncannily humorous paintings. Takagi has been exhibiting his work in Japan and abroad, particularly in Asian countries.

He also actively engages himself in curation of exhibitions. In November 2025 he will organize and participate in a group exhibition at Myoren-ji Buddhist temple in Kyoto.



Tomohiro Takagi *Sio-Sai**

oil on canvas 61x50cm 2025

⑤

SINZOW

Born in 1974 in Yokohama. Currently lives and works in Niigata. Graduated from the Department of Painting at Musashino Art University in 1997. Awarded the Silver Prize at "GEISAI" art festival in 2001.

Family relationship and interactions between society and individuals are the main theme subjects of Sinzow's paintings. Using vivid colors and dynamic brushstrokes, she depicts everyday, unspectacular events and experiences in a cartoon-like style. Human beings is and has always been at the center of her interest, and the viewer can take away different interpretations from her expressions deftly balancing humor and seriousness.

Sinzow has been actively exhibiting her artwork in places that include Niigata, Osaka, Kyoto, and Seoul. In recent years she practices ceramic works as well.



Sinzow *Holiday**

acrylic on canvas 116.7x91cm 2021

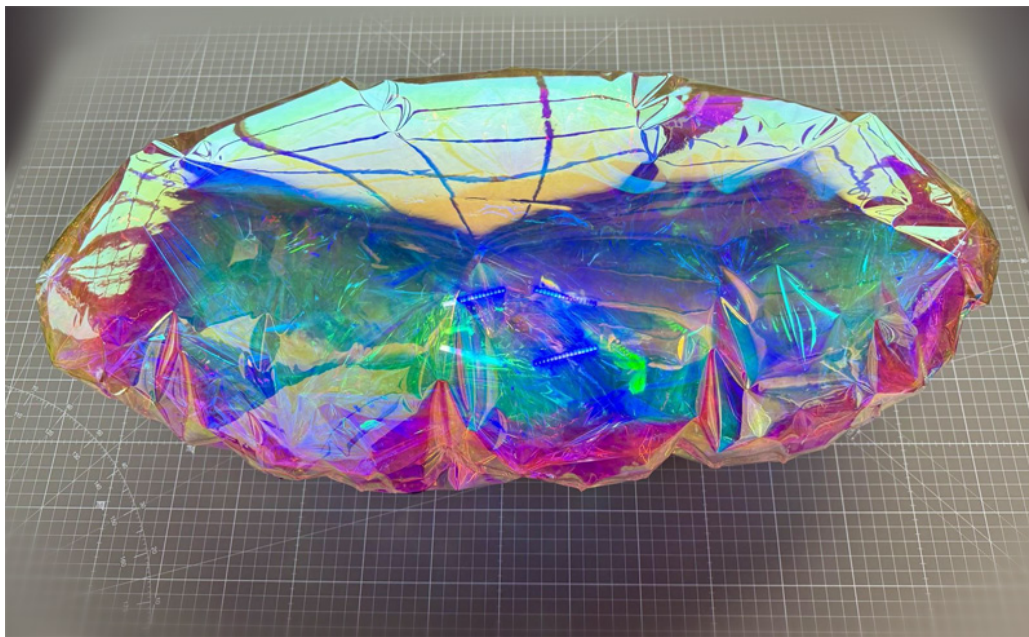
⑥

Akihito OKUNAKA

Born in 1981 in Kyoto. Currently lives and works in Kizugawa, Kyoto. Graduated from the Faculty of Education at Shizuka University in 2004.

Flow and movement of air, water, light, and other elements, which cannot be fully captured with human vision, are the main subjects of Akihito Okunaka's art creation. He produces large-scaled, touchable and movable sculptures that the viewer can "experience" rather than just observe and that interact with the surrounding environment. In recent years, Okunaka uses special iridescent-colored films to present huge inflatable balloons that the viewer can actually go inside, as well as giant, bouncy water pillows that the viewer can lie down on.

Okunaka also hosts a variety of interactive art workshops in and outside Japan, leveraging his expertise in art education acquired while studying at the university.



Akihito Okunaka *INTER-WORLD/Cocooner: Apparent motion of celestial bodies_mobile*
nano-multilayer film, air, light, fan, LED light, stainless steel plinth 25x30x60cm ed.5 2025

⑦

Marguerite DABAIE

Born in 1981 in San Francisco. Acquired a BFA at the School of Visual Arts and an MFA at the Fashion Institute of Technology, both in New York.

Inspired by her own identity and personal experiences as a Palestinian-American, Dabaie creates in a variety of medium, such as illustrations, comics, and collage. Her work focuses on themes of social justice and combating racism and discrimination of all kinds. She invokes historical themes into the work while adding modern twists.

In 2024, she permanently left her native country and now lives and works in Kyoto.



Marguerite Dabaie *thaqafa bunka**
collage (fabric) 2025

⑧

Keita IEHARA

Born in 1982 in Kyoto, where he currently live and works. Graduated from the Printmaking Course at Kyoto Seika University.

Iehara's main theme subejct is "house." His focus is on the aesthetics or the morphology of the residential architecture, as well as human memories and lifestyles that are connected with the notion of "home" and "residence." In recent years, however, his interest has been shifting to include human-nature relationship and the concept of "life" itself, as a result of his personal, on-hand experience working as a farmer and interacting with various farm animals.

He works with a variety of media and methods, including painting, sculpture, print, photograph, video, as well as music, which makes his art creation quite unique and expansive.



Keita Iehara *Prayer of the Sheep**
installation (sculpture, felt doll, video) 2023

⑨

Nari CHOI

Born in 1983 in Seoul. Currently lives and works in Hanam, Gyeonggi-do. Acquired a BFA in Painting at Sungshin Women's University in Seoul in 2007 and a Ph.D in 2023.

Choi creates her paintings using pop and vivid colors, depicting human figures in a cartoon-like style. Her main interest lies in gender and social roles, focusing on often desire-driven interactions between women and men. Her characters are usually faceless and without clothes, allowing for the viewer's free interpretation based on their own personal experiences and emotions.

Recently, she also produces sculptures, and is extensively engaged in collaboration with fashion and interior brands.



Nari Choi *Sexy Mato 38*

acrylic on canvas 53x45cm 2024

⑩

Weixin Quek CHONG

Born in 1988 in Singapore. Currently lives and works between Spain and Singapore. Acquired a BFA at Lasalle College of the Arts in Singapore in 2011, and earned a MA in Fine Arts at the Royal College of Art in London in 2014.

Chong creates cyberpunk sculptures and installation works using unconventional materials such as latex, silicone, gelatin, or even living flowers and plants, which triggers multi-sensory reactions within the viewer including vision, touch, and smell. She also uses photography and video, and reveals and questions fluctuating, ambiguous nature of the relations between human bodies and society as well as self and others.

She also actively engages in collaboration with artists from various other fields, such as dancers and designers.



Weixin Quek Chong *Flesh skin surface. 3 / Chrysanthemum indicum, YSL Touche Eclat Shade 2.5*
photograph (printed on Awagami paper), aluminum board 80x54.1cm ed.3+AP1 2017

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For further information or for artwork images please contact us:

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