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⟨Work⟩	“Burst” series
⟨Dissertation⟩	“Toward the revival of the three holistic concepts of grid, minimalism, and the environment from the perspective of <i>Isagiyosa</i> integrity”

(Abstract of the dissertation)

In this dissertation, I will discuss the flow from the grid to minimalism and then to the environment. I will also show how my work reconstructs this flow in a contemporary way from the perspective of *isagiyosa*, the uniquely Japanese concept of pure and unsullied integrity often used to describe the samurai spirit. I believe that throughout history, there has been a repeated transition from opulence to simplicity. I aim to revive minimalism, but not simply revive it; I want to revive a minimalism that is conscious of body, contact, and movement while also taking into account my characteristics as a Japanese person.

Chapter 1: Development from my original experience

There are two experiences that form the basis of my work. The first is my experience of living abroad from 1991 to 2003. During that time, I was able to come into contact with a relatively large number of actual works of art, some of which had a strong impact on me. All the works that shocked me were part of a single historical flow: the flow from the grid to minimalism to the environment. The works also shared a common characteristic of this *isagiyosa* integrity mentioned above.

The second experience was when I was in New York and witnessed the collapse of the World Trade Center buildings up close. This incident very easily released me from what I had believed were the shackles of physical and mental tension. The way things scattered in an instant was beautiful in its own way and somehow expressed the essence of *isagiyosa*. In the midst of the tumult that followed, I felt the power of the pure and innocent un wasteful drive for survival that usually exists unconsciously within me.

Chapter 2: The Presence of "Grids" in Modernism

A grid (including cubes) is a rectangular lattice shape. The grid is a unit that is inseparable from modern architecture. It is easy to make, easy to use, and easy to store. We are surrounded by grids that have structural strength and are the basic shape of efficient industrial products and architecture. A regular rectangular grid is the shape that humans have arrived at, which maintains maximum area using the minimum amount of building materials. The works of Yoshio Taniguchi and Mies, who are said to be the last modernists, exhibit a constant search for essential minimalist architecture that eliminates all unnecessary elements while enhancing and purifying life.

Chapter 3: "Minimalism" and its influence

Sol LeWitt, Carl Andre, Donald Judd, and others were influenced by the grid as they developed minimalist art. Minimalism is simplicity and at the same time the essence of things and events, which means reality and not fiction. Minimalist art embodies the "extremeness" of the aspects of "shape" and "materiality", that is, the "extremeness" of form. It is not too assertive and blends in with the environment, and is neutral. It gives a sense of stability, horizontality and gravity, reality, and sometimes raw roughness. Lee Ufan states that minimalism is the final form in the West, but in the East, it gives a sense of the beginning. Simple things and things with simplified structures contain the element of living refreshingly and with all one's might.

Chapter 4: "Environmental Art"

Three-dimensional minimalist works developed into early environmental art. The works of Robert Smithson and Walter De Maria are clear forms that have been stripped away to the extreme in pursuit of form. Though enormous in size, they are not imposing.

On the other hand, when discussing environmental art, as a Japanese person, I think it is important to consider the existence of Japan's traditional teahouses and teahouse gardens. Environmental art shares a common worldview with samurai retreats and teahouses in that it contains an infinite universe in a minimal world that has been cut down to its limits.

Environmental art is work that harmonizes with water, light, earth, and nature. The work changes from moment to moment, and moves our hearts. This is because our hearts are also constantly changing. The moment of that encounter is important, unrepentant, refreshing, and pure.

Chapter 5: On *Isagiyosa* Integrity as a Common Element

I felt that all of the above grid, minimal, and environmental works shared a common characteristic that could be expressed in Japanese as *isagiyosa*. *Isagiyo*i means brave, stark, decisive, and free from lingering attachments. The word seems to be a combination of the chant *iza* and *kiyo*i (pure). *Isagiyosa* integrity seeks an extreme form of survival within the limits that are the essence of human beings. I hope, however modestly, that *isagiyosa* can free the minds of people living in a chaotic world.

Chapter 6: The Revival of Modernism and My Works

I attempt to revive simplicity that includes an element of *isagiyosa* integrity. In my work "Burst", I focused on the gun as the realization of a simple, instantaneous act. The bullet instantly cuts the bonds between the tense molecules in the brass plate. This cutting signifies liberation from this world.

Conclusion

I dare to use the same technique and attempt to revive the minimalist movement of the 1960s for today. However, of course, I must not simply quote or repeat the past, but project myself as a Japanese person. In doing so, I focus on the spirituality shared by the Zen temples and gardens of Kyoto. According to Takeo

Narukawa, "Throughout Mahayana Buddhism, there is a conscious sense of time called 'the present exists, and there is no substance to the past or future'. (Omitted) When this sense of time is broken by the awareness of the imminence of death, the past no longer exists, and the future does not yet exist. I think that the conscious sense of time of Buddhism is expressed, in which only the immediate events that are born, die, and change from moment to moment truly exist." It is pure in the sense of forming a form that lives in the moment. This is not just about seeking minimal beauty. It is pure to live one's life to the fullest, with the goal of survival, and this appearance ultimately becomes minimal and beautiful, which moves me. I work on my creations and live with the belief that these emotions will be conveyed to the viewer.

(Summary of doctoral dissertation review results)

This dissertation is an argument by the author, who is searching for new ways to create beauty in the 21st century, to address the question of whether it is possible to revive the aesthetics of minimalist art and other 20th century art in the present day and turn them into artwork, through practical production.

"Throughout history, there have been repeated transitions towards splendor and returns to simplicity." The author begins by saying this. Minimalist art is representative of the "simplicity" mentioned here, and the postmodern art that followed it was related to "splendor." In the contrast between these two, the author loves the beauty of "simplicity" and seeks to bring it to fruition in his own work. The keywords that emerged were "grid, minimalism, and environment." This dissertation is an argument that weaves together these three elements as the warp of a story, so to speak, and the perspective of "*isagiyosa* integrity" as the weft.

In the first chapter, the author describes his experiences abroad, providing a foothold for discussing the world of beauty that leads to the concept of "simplicity" that he learned there.

In the second chapter, he discusses the presence of "grids" in modernism, presenting a concrete "form" in the form of a square grid.

In the third chapter, he discusses "minimal" art, examining the works of Donald Judd and Lee Ufan. The author believes that minimal art developed from the influence of grid design, but that it further developed into environmental art.

In the fourth chapter, he discusses "environmental art," citing several contemporary works of art, and then goes on to discuss traditional Japanese beauty, such as Shugakuin Imperial Villa in Kyoto. In other words, the author discovers something in 20th century art that is similar to Japanese beauty.

In the fifth chapter, he introduces the perspective of "*isagiyosa* integrity", presenting an element that connects all of his previous discussions. Furthermore, as one of the "achievements," the author takes up his own work, and concludes that it is a sculpture that connects the subject of this thesis, "grid, minimal, environment," with "*isagiyosa* integrity."

The author takes up Western art and old Japanese art, which are the roots of his own work, and connects them together. In other words, he organizes, examines, and further refines the thoughts behind the creation of his works. Such an argument is meaningful as a doctoral research project, and is also

valuable in that it shows what lies behind the creation of an artist's work. This thesis is, so to speak, the crystallization of the work and thoughts he has undertaken in graduate school. The theme and argument of the thesis are clear, and it is well organized as a thesis. Therefore, this thesis is deemed to be a successful doctoral thesis.

(Summary of the work review results)

The applicant said about the appearance of things that live in the moment, "The appearance of living to the fullest for the purpose of survival is clean, and the appearance is minimal and beautiful in the end, which moves me. I work on my creations and live with the belief that the impression will be conveyed to the viewer as well."

The work that was judged, the "Burst" series, is an installation of objects that the applicant shot with live ammunition at two types of materials. The first material is a gold-plated 1.9mm brass plate with a bullet hole or without a bullet penetrating it. These are composed of a total of eight works, which are hung at eye level so as to surround the exhibition space. As the viewer carefully observes these mirror-finished targets, they suddenly notice that their own image is being reflected. The viewer, who sees the target with a bullet hole or a bullet stuck in it reflected in the mirror, is drawn into the work along with the surrounding environment, feeling that he or she has been hit both physically and mentally. At that moment, the relationship between the aim and the target is related to a line connecting the points of the viewpoint, and the viewer is made aware that the sniper and the victim have an interchangeable ambiguity. The second material is a 50mm thick three-dimensional silicone in which fine shrapnel has not penetrated the work and remains stuck there. This soft, transparent three-dimensional object is placed on a pedestal, creating a work that evokes the appearance of a supernova explosion that is said to occur in outer space.

These works, which consider and develop the correlation between society and art through the physicality and materiality hidden in the ever-changing time and space, and embody the relationship between humans and time and space, are the culmination of the themes that I have been working on consistently throughout my master's and doctoral programs.

This research work, developed from the perspective of "*isagiyosa* integrity," is an expression that reveals the existence of beings living in the moment that we have almost lost, but it also has universality and was highly praised by all the judges as opening up the possibilities of artistic creation. Future developments are highly anticipated.

(Summary of the overall judging results)

The "Burst" series is a work that approaches with extreme tension. The artist sublimated the conflict between the grid space seen in traditional Japanese architecture such as "Katsura Imperial Villa" and "tea house" and the grid structure of modern Western architecture into a minimal moment of tension and relaxation that is trapped in the time and space of the moment of an action shot by a bullet, and created it

as an installation work as a place of action seen in a tea house.

The artist attempted to revive the Minimalism movement that arose in art history within a Japanese sensory system, and crystallized his work in the raw sensation of "shooting a steel plate with a gun." The work, installed in the exhibition hall, forces the viewer to witness the act, and the raw materiality of the gold-plated steel plate is neutralized, and the impact of the bullet is transformed into another dimension where time is removed. The bullet shot into the silicon is received by the soft silicon as a strong, hard impulse, and the work is an outstanding piece that allows the viewer to experience an unprecedented encounter.

The judging process was unclear because the judging committee did not attend the actual works, but by touching the works in front of the viewer, the judges were able to understand how important physical inspirations the actual works can be.

The unexpectedness and uniqueness of the thesis lie in the bold theme of the thesis, "*isagiyosa* integrity," which is the background to the artist's work creation.

He brings the aesthetic interpretation of *isagiyosa* as a Japanese way of life, a language that speaks of a way of feeling, into the context of art, and uses the extremely simplified grid structure of minimalist art and architecture and design.

The thesis, which reinterprets functional beauty in the context of the physical environmental art of Katsura Imperial Villa and teahouses, and attempts to revive the minimalism of contemporary art within a Japanese sensory system, opens up new horizons for Japanese art and calls for a new interpretation of art in the present day. As it is a thesis that discusses the background of an outstanding creator, all the judges highly praised both the work and the thesis, deeming them equivalent to a doctorate, and passed the thesis.