

挿借景／非の無い処に煙を立てる。 Haishakkei/ The “Basic”

2014.02.23 Sunday

In Japan, we have a saying that says "There is no smoke without fire". It means there must be a cause for a rumor. Where there's smoke, there's fire means that a result always needs a cause. Nowadays, we can also say "there is smoke without fire". We have started to appreciate products, goods, services, and rumors in our media society, we regard and exchange them as if they were fashionable goods, suitable for a man of fine reputation. Whenever we find new products or meet new people, we first look them up on the internet, in order to judge their value and abilities. The fire conceals the essential facts, and we only can see the results, as good smoke or bad smoke.

The artists of the show Haishakkei are honest and straightforward; one might even call them a bit backward in terms of the art market and fashion trends. However, they passionately devote themselves to produce works of art using their spiritual force for 場, pronounced “Ba” (which means place, or space, in Japanese). On the other hand, Japanese-style art projects and art festivals are all around Japan nowadays, and they can be fairly complicated, when something does not fit into their schemes. First and foremost, their discourse orbits around the art public. As long as they are well managed and economically successful, the result is regarded as good smoke instead of bad smoke, even they are poor quality, have no spiritual force, and just serve political purposes, for example to stimulate tourism or to hold a public event.

For me, the essence of art are processes and works that come from spiritual force. When we devote them places (or spaces), which do not have a primary function or value, the result is art. It is like magic. But I named it “Basic” ...

Since ancient times, people have believed and worshiped invisible gods and the Buddha by using Basic. Even in iconoclastic religions, which are against idolatry, people have been doing performances they call “ceremonies”, using the basic principle of Basic.

This exhibition shows artists who regularly use Basic and have close connections to Toride. It is different from the common Japanese-style art project or art festival, and it is certainly special from the point of view of the great Bagicians, those who care about the essence of art!

SHIMONISHI Susumu,
Organizer of the exhibition