

DoNArTNeWs

Hiro Sakaguchi, Two Zero One Two at Seraphin Gallery

[Leave a reply](#)



October 13th, 2012 artist **Hiro Sakaguchi** presented an artist talk to a crowd of art enthusiasts at **Seraphin Gallery** on Pine Street. **DoN** excerpted and transposed some of the lecture as best as he could.

“This photo was 2011, I think it’s after everything happened in Japan, the tsunami and everything. I had the chance to go to New Hampshire and had the chance to view this mountain. But for me I wasn’t thinking about the mountain, looking at the horizon line, like everybody else, when you have this kind of landscape in front of you. For me, I thought about the tsunami, the tragedy you know and I started thinking about it. So this is the feeling I got on the top of the mountain when I was thinking about my native country, I know what people are thinking about, it’s very meditative that way. This was the first thing I was thinking about and it starts from here. It’s how it started in my head, every artwork.”



“Let’s start with drawing here. This drawing is called *Flower Happening* and as you see, there’s an image of an airplane. I think because of the apocalypse thinking in my head, documentary movies about war, natural disasters type of movies, so, one movie showed airplanes carpet bombing in Germany, Japan, everywhere. So it’s kind of like I had this it occurred to me that this violent act, I wanted to make it to something positive. Somebody told me the other day, like 60s people put flowers into the barrel of guns, you know Make Peace Not War, so putting instead

of bomb, I put flowers to make it peaceful. You can see underneath is actually the town where I came from. Chiba City, Japan. This is a drawing and then a painting. The drawing was different, conversation wise, was fast but the painting was next.”





Table top battle field with toy soldiers whose guns are replaced with flowers, tanks made from thread spools and hills made from Art Forum magazines on a soccer field of fake grass. "I was thinking about this one when I was making it, first of all, as a kid I didn't have the technique to do this, but if I was ten years old and I did this I would be so happy. But, it came back to me know that I can make a child's toy on this battle field. And also a toy I kind of think represents society, how our society functions, how we always build a toy, you know? Kids love their toys. It's a questioning of functional toys and our society. And also a question of human violence."

"I just got a FaceBook advertisement for a video game saying, "Peace is Not An Option!". It's really a violent way we have these games, war as a game. It's kind of interesting because we don't have to do it in real life. I always kind of question those things. So this has three things going on here: the field is a soccer field, a game field and also a battle field. And like I said about the question of human violence, soccer is one of the most popular sports in the world but supposedly started from an eighth century England people started kicking someone's skull. So, it's a violent game. And yet as a child we crave something like that. Of course, this is artwork, so you're questioning the function of art. See how thick this Art Forum is?"



"I enjoy doing splashing, throwing paint, my technique is actually air rifle used to splash the paint. This one is similar, a picture of a battle ship, the idea is a 21st Century Noah's Ark. So, it's a lot of bad things have happened in the world, somehow I saw this World War II Japanese battle ship, so similar (to the drawing) I wanted to make something peaceful. So I take all the weapons out and change and added trees, a green roof, and also solar and wind power, and then far away you can see the big tsunami coming in. It's like combining a History Channel program with recent events. I think if you go to Japan or Europe, you'll see these mangled concrete, to stop the force of the waves."



“These sculptures, I don’t know if you know this, this whole show is about Love and Peace. This is a toy from when I was a kid, this is a simple toy made from a spool, chop stick and candle. And when you wind it up it moves. And because of the cuts, it can climb over the landscape.”



“This big painting first I started from that rapid drawing. I imagined one theory of how wars end, a kind of imagined myself, start from that one (the drawing) then expand to that one (the battle ship) to this one. It's kind of three different stages of my thinking. You have to start from somewhere. For this painting I was thinking of a color field painting with the splash, kind of more of an abstraction. The painting started from a floor splash, paint and let dry, paint and let dry, then I put the drawing. So it is horizontal and vertical where it came together, a combination of drawing and painting.”



“There is an animation by Takaji Matsudo, he made an animation about a space ship based on WWII battle ship and then in the future aliens attacking it, so people on earth decommissioned this battle ship and made it into a space ship...I never grew up drawing comics but for me I enjoyed history stories, but I thought now it's kind of funny for me to make a comic image here, right now.”



This last drawing combines the photograph of Hiro Sakaguchi on the mountain top staring at the moon surrounded by swirls made from another child's toy, the Spirograph. Today is the last day for this inspiring show at Seraphin Gallery, so while you're out visiting POST shows take some time to visit and remember your childhood.

Make Love, Not War 2012.

Written and Photographed by DoN Brewer

