

Osaka Contemporary Arts Festival Cultural Activation City Programme Breaker Project 2003 - 2005

Creation is not a privilege that is given only to artists. There is a creativity found in everyday life: cooking, tidying up, changing the layout of your room, selecting what you wear every morning, and even coordinating a tie with your suits, Deskwork and housekeeping, which look like very simple jobs, still have room for creativity. Creativity is also indispensable to solving the trivial daily problems. It is a source of energy that enriches our lives.

My definition of artistic expression is something that stimulates and fosters that potential creativity. The role of art in society should lie there. Unfortunately, however, for whatever reason, art is cut off from our daily life, and does not have a place to fully function.

The Breaker Project, which started as a part of the Cultural activation City programme in the Osaka Contemporary Arts Festival that City of Osaka promotes, gave me a golden opportunity to answer the above questions with the chance to realize some long-cherished plans to solve these problems.

This is a project to reconsider the role of culture/art in contemporary society and to reorganize the "active relationship between art and viewers".

Here, I selected 4 artists who dare to present their works in their own unique ways rather than who show in the orthodox venue of a closed white cube:

FUJII Hiroshi, who develops his projects inspired by the locations at each time, proposes and creates new public spaces through a dialogue and cooperation with people who are involved. DATE Nobuaki, who organizes the "Ukulele-ization: a Building Conservation Project", discovers beauty on the surface of building constructions where human activity happened to leave its trace and he transforms it into an art piece. KIMURA Toshiro Jinjin takes out the process of the ceramics (raku-yaki) to the streets and performs the 'mobile café - Nodate'. It is a charming scene that draws out that 'something' lying subconsciously within all of us. Franck BRAGIGAND, who thinks that it is important to place himself inside of society rather than to relate to it from outside as an artist, makes works that also function in the real world.

They keep an eye on the trivial phenomena of everyday life, each operating as 'living person'

before being an 'artist'. This is the starting point for their ideas and activities. As they are joining with daily life, whatever the outcome, it is connected to our underlying consciousness and senses. The strength of the philosophies behind their actions arises as a quality of the place they create.

My essential criterion to see art is whether I am moved or not. When I am moved, the adrenalin pours out of my brain. It is as if I got hit on the head by a new perspective that I have never seen or thought about, which then gives me a clear consciousness. The same thing can happen not only with visual art, but also with music, writing and theatre, or trees and insects in nature, and an encounter with people and conversation. If I put it a little roughly, the worth lies only in the experience of being moved. And the experience becomes a food to the next action.

Although this project is entitled "Cultural Activation City Programme", the activation of the town is not the initial purpose. Nowadays as economic depression drags, there are many cultural projects that attempt to activate towns throughout the country. However, art is not such a convenient magic tool that can change towns all of a sudden by temporary events, nor a quick-acting medicine to change economic situations. A town is made by residents over years, and above all spontaneously. Our last two years' activity is just a beginning. As we have built the relationship with a town, Shinsekai, various senses of values from both artists and public have met and crossed directly through the projects, by sharing time, place and/or work. This new 'platform of creativity' has just come into bud.

Each one of us can thus regain his/her own creativity and develop a new way of living by a new perspective, that eventually leads us to acquire the image of 'our town' in the true sense of the word, by the continuation and accumulation of such grass-roots artistic activities. And when we can finally be proud of where we are, the town or the city becomes a culturally attractive place, that will also result in economic development. It is therefore needless to say that culture is indispensable for us, and an important factor to bring a future to us.

AMENOMORI Nov