

Micros Macro

~ Streams of letters that create my own universe ~

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It is difficult to process a notion or a concept, and create artworks without any help of “words”. Because I am Japanese, in many cases I imagine the concept in the thought process with the help of Kanji.

Kanji is a logogram, and each character represents a word. When several characters are placed next to each other, they will create a phrase and improve our imaginations. When several phrases are linked together, they will create a story, which will add further meanings and evoke our emotions.

Each letter consists of simple lines and dots (micro perspective), however, a cluster of letters could create a huge “something” (macro perspective). This reminds me the structure of the universe. A group of stars form a constellation, billions of stars form a galaxy, and galaxies form a galaxy filament.

Similar structure can also be found in our brain. A brain cell itself does not create memories, but when they are connected with synapses, memories are formed. Recently, our technologies succeeded to visualize the “Group of Neurons” (micro) and the “Cosmic Web” (macro), and it intrigues me to find that both images are almost the same.

Each letter in my works represent a small existence such as people, stars, water drops, sands (micro), but when it gathers, streams of letters form a large shape of something different (macro) that came up in my mind.

The Spider's Thread

The piece depicts paradise and hell, and spider's web that connects between them. At the same time, it represents the sands in an hourglass to portray a stream of time.

The Night of the Milky Way Train

Each letter represents a person and a planet; they flow in whirls and make one world.

The Heart Sūtra

The piece depicts Buddha preaches a sermon to congregation.

Requiem and Revival (LACMA collection)

My home town Ishinomaki in Miyagi Prefecture was heavily damaged by the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011. I decided to create this piece when I saw newspapers and magazines stuck on the walls of damaged houses. The text is from the newspaper articles related to the Earthquake. The entire piece depicts the wave and at the same time, towns and villages that were swept away by the tsunami. Each letter represents human and the souls.

English translation by Mikako Nakagami