

Haroshi

GUZO

Sat 22 April – Sat 10 June, 2017

NANZUKA

Nanzuka is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of works by the Tokyo-based Japanese artist, Haroshi. The exhibition marks the artist's first presentation at the gallery.

Haroshi is an artist who since 2003, has engaged in creating unique sculpture and installation works with parts from used skateboard decks. He continues to receive much acclaim for his work, such as his collaboration with the street brand HUF led by charismatically renowned skater Keith Hafnagel, as well as holding exhibitions in New York, Los Angeles, and London, recognized through his receipt of the BATB* trophy as one of the few artists to embody the depths of contemporary street culture.

The production of Haroshi's work begins by collecting worn-out decks (boards) that are usually discarded by means of cooperation from his network of friends and skateboard shops, in exchange providing them with his originally designed T-shirts. Haroshi himself, who has been a skater since childhood, is very much aware of the extensive training that is needed in the process of mastering various skateboard techniques. Moreover from such experience, he had developed various attachments to his skateboard as his significant companion growing up. The more seriously one devotes themselves to skateboarding, the more all of its parts become damaged and worn out, eventually resulting in them breaking. Even so, Haroshi had kept his worn out deck in his room without throwing it away, and mentions how one day he glance upon it and envisioned the idea of using it as a material to create work.

The sculpture works presented in the exhibition are created through stacking used decks in layers to comprise a block from which forms are carved out. The reason Haroshi's works garner a deep empathy from the people surrounding the street culture scene throughout the world is because the work is not a mere means of recycle, but is in fact a seeming act of salvation that is derived from a personal affection towards skateboarding.

Skateboards are said to have originated in California in the 1940s, in which people skated on wooden boards with iron roller whets attached to the bottom. The term "street culture" has now become a general part of our vocabulary, yet from observing the present progressive forms of graphics, music, fashion, and art that is derived from it, it is indeed evident that skateboards are a central presence within this realm. Today, the number of skateboarders throughout world is estimated to be around 20 million or 30 million people, and it was also selected as an official sport for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games. Haroshi's solo exhibition is not a challenge against "fine art," but rather is perhaps testimony to the fact that the progressively ever-changing forefront of art is venturing towards street culture, and to Haroshi's creative practice.

The exhibition features a series of over 20 sculpture works created from "salvaged" skate decks, as well as a quarter-ramp* installation also created from such used decks. An opening reception with the artist will be held on April 22nd (Sat).

(We would like to ask visitors to please refrain from skating at the venue)

*BATB

THE BERRICS is a private skate park established in 2007 by the professional skaters STEVE BERRA and ERIC KOSTON.

BATB (Battle at The Berries) refers to a SKATE GAME tournament held there in which professional skaters compete.

*Ramp

A ramp refers to a form of R-shaped curved runway for skateboarders.

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