

stage is the most exciting recent development in the Japanese art world.

Japanese art, since the Meiji era, had been primarily influenced by Western art, and had been considered weak, lacking nationality or originality from a European and

exhibit works in important international exhibition such as "Metropolis," the Carnegie International, etc. This is very interesting for the Japanese art world.

Kohji Ogura is the director of Kohji Ogura gallery in Nagoya.

At the moment, there are a few who get an internationally high appraisal in the world market. Besides, the Japanese government is far behind Europe and America in cultural policy and therefore the number of national grants offered to artists is insufficient.

exporting one, we hope that people in the world become aware of what Japanese contemporary artists are thinking.

Yoshio Katoh is the director of Kodama Gallery in Osaka.

Ikkan Sanada



I think the recent recession of both the Japanese and world art markets is one of the most dramatic changes which will positively influence the Japanese contempo-

rary art scene in the long run, while in the short term, selling art has become almost a crisis situation for many galleries and dealers. The sharp setback of market activities, especially in the secondary market, seems to have demonstrated to those who were lured into buying art for financial and prestigious merit that art is not their playground for speculation.

Because of the new market environment today, it is obvious that only serious art lovers/collectors with vision and long term commitment would and should remain art buyers. This new reality is already leading to the dis-

appearance of many Japanese investors/collectors of the late 80s and is convincing serious collectors that their time has come back again.

The shift of the collecting focus is beginning to happen in the Japanese art market; a shift from the traditional, well-established "big-name" artists toward the younger and emerging generation of artists. This trend is more than likely to be fueled by the new market reality. I find this to be the most promising effect of the current market softness.

Nevertheless, I cannot be overly optimistic about this change

since collectors of contemporary art are still marginal in Japan. Furthermore, Japan seems to be still decades behind the international standards in terms of public interest, education, and awareness of contemporary art. Although this maturing process is an enormous challenge for Japan, we all know that the Japanese are excellent in mastering unexplored tasks.

Ikkan Sanada, based in New York City, founded Ikkan Art International Inc. in 1982 to advise Japanese dealers, corporations, and collectors with purchases of American and European contemporary art.

Hitomi Kobayashi



TADASHI KAWAMATA INSTALLATION, 1991. KOBAYASHI GALLERY.

Since Japanese economic power has been making rapid growth, it seems that people abroad are paying much more attention to Japanese contemporary art than before. It is a fact that some recent events are contributing to the introduction of today's Japanese contemporary art scene to foreign countries. For example, Japanese contemporary art exhibitions are being held all over the world, like:

What I am interested in at the moment is to construct a system to make Japanese and foreign contemporary art easier to comprehend for the general public, as well as for art specialists.

For that reason, the New Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum Project, scheduled to open in 1995 and intended to be Japan's largest museum to date, with

Yasuyoshi Saito

video facilities and educational and extension activities open to all. We would also like to prepare international exhibitions of contemporary art in the near future.

The museum has been planned to promote the artistic and cultural activities of