

昭和30年代、まだ小学生にも満たない私と弟は、両親に連れられギシギシきしむ階段を上がり展覧会場に入りました。もともと絵を描くことが好きでしたのでそれは日常の出来事でした。四条通りにあった頃の京都府ギャラリー。展覧会展示作品よりも上り下りの恐怖にも近い感覚が今も脳裏に画像としてよみがえります。他にもよく覚えているのは、京都市美術館での鑑賞の後、大鳥居を挟んで向かいのスケート場の喫茶店アリーナで決まってソーダ水を飲むというのがローテーション。もちろん十歳にも満たない私たち兄弟にとって、ある種、好物に釣られて会場に誘われていたのです。その思惑にうまく乗せられたのか、作品を前にしてその都度感じることが多々あり、それが両親にとっての子供らに対する情操教育だったのでしょうか。

祖父との接点は、我が家と祖父の工房が嵯峨野で離れていたせい、年に数日、泊り掛けで過ごす夏休みくらいでした。そんな関係の中、高校に入って急に父から祖父のところで焼き物を作るかと尋ねられました。その時は事の重要性に気付く事も無く、拒否。二年後に祖父が癌で亡くなったのを考えると道を開かせようと思っていたのかもしれませんが。数年後、その父も急に亡くなり、弟・母と十年余りの間に相次いで旅立ちました。今も生み出された時の記憶が、それぞれが残した作品を前にした時に蘇って来ます。もちろん叔父八木純夫に関しては、父の話や著述によつてのみの知識でしたが。

今回我が家のアーカイブ作業で久しぶりに目の前に戻ってきた作品や、中長小西さん、柳澤コレクションにより「抗走の系譜 The Yagi Family: Rebels Against Convention」として八木家六人の其々の道を見て頂く事が出来、誠に嬉しい限りです。展覧会開催に際し御尽力頂いた京都国立近代美術館 大長智広先生、また共にアーカイブ作業にご尽力頂いた茨城県陶芸美術館 花里麻理先生、菊池寛実記念智美術館 高田瑠美・島崎慶子両先生に、あらためてここに御礼申し上げます。

令和4年 皇月 八木 明

In mid 1950's when my brother and I were still pre-primary school kids, our parents often took us to an exhibition venue where we had to go up the squeaking wooden stairs to enter. I always liked spending my time drawing, so frequenting an art exhibition was nothing extraordinary for me. The venue was a public gallery run by the Kyoto Prefecture then situated on Shijō-dōri in the center of Kyoto. A feeling of almost terror while going up and down the staircases of the building comes back to me like a vivid imagery even today, but less so the actual exhibits. Another lasting memory is our habitual stop at a coffee shop inside an ice skating rink called Arena opposite the Kyoto City Museum of Art across the large Torii gate that still stands today, where we always ordered soda water after our visit to the museum. Young kids like us were easily lured to go to the exhibition only by keeping us on hold for the soda water waiting for us afterwards. Whatever motivation it was for us, we always felt something different in front of pieces of art work in the museum and I guess that was our parents' manner of education to cultivate in us aesthetic sensitivity.

The memory of our grandfather when we were kids remained limited because his workshop was situated in Sagano area in Kyoto, far away from our house and the only time we saw him was when we spent a couple of days staying in his place during the summer vacation. Then, as soon as I entered high school, my father all of a sudden asked me if I wanted to take pottery training under my grandfather. I did not understand the importance of his proposal then, so I refused, though if I have known that two years later my grandfather died of cancer. My father at that time certainly wanted me to pave the way for future. Several years later my father passed away, followed by my brother and mother, all happening in the course of 10 years or so. The feeling and memory that I experienced in those days when they were still actively producing vividly revive in my mind when I stand in front of all the works left behind in my inheritance. Incidentally I know of Yagi Sumio, my uncle, only through my father's story told or written about him.

A group of works from the Yagi family archive have recently gone through reassessment and the selection, together with the works from the collection of Nakacho Konishi and Mr Yanagisawa, has been developed into an exhibition entitled *The Yagi Family: Rebels Against Convention*. I am utterly delighted to have this occasion to unravel separate creative journeys respectively pursued by six Yagi family members. My heartfelt thanks go to Daicho Tomohiro, curator of the National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, who helped to organise the exhibition, Hanazato Mari, curator of Ibaraki Ceramic Art Museum, Takada Rumi and Shimazaki Keiko, curators of Musée Tomo, who all helped me to classify the Yagi family archive.

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