

On the duality of the world and the fusion of the two aspects

by AYA TAKANO

māc LYON

While watching a program by mythologist Joseph Campbell on YouTube, I came across a story about a statue of a god in India. The statue is on an island in Mumbai, located in a temple built around the eighth century. The statue has three faces, and the face in the middle represents eternity. The faces on the left and right each represents female and male, respectively, embodying all the opposing things in this world. Male and female, justice and injustice, ying and yang, past and future, life and death... everything has its opposite.

We human beings are living in the world of this statue with two sides, left and right. Good and evil, darkness and light, beauty and ugliness... However, Campbell said, we should strive to live with the middle-ground perspective of a god. Ancient Asian philosophies also mention this: that good and evil are relative, and that we are to realize that they are merely temporary illusions.

Our brains are divided into right and left hemispheres, each with different functions. The right brain has the function of intuitive thinking and is primarily responsible for the flashes of inspiration, flexibility, emotions, and art. The left brain has the function of theoretical thinking and is rational; it is primarily responsible for logic, scientific matters, language, and analysis.

Today's society is said to be predominantly left-brained. This is evident and visible in the areas of this planet today we call "cities," and in the structures that support them. The tendency of people building cities to put greater weight on rationality and theory, and to exclude anything beyond logic and science, like irrationality, chaos, and nature, is evident in cities that consist only of straight lines and exclude living things other than humans as much as possible.

I have always wanted to bring the right-brained world, like the irrationality and non-verbalism, which the mentality that shapes cities has excluded, back into this world. I was unable to verbalize this feeling as a child, and became a painter still without being able to verbalize it. Now that I think of it, I believe this has always been my motivation to paint. I wished that there were more things random, organic, in motion and changing, creative and stimulating, soft and undefined, and compassionate and friendly—not only towards humans but also towards all non-human beings—found in all places like schools, homes, streets, and where we dine... I still keep on wishing this. I paint as if I pray; to indicate how there is another path here, another possibility.

There is an academic theory that the right brain works 10,000 to 100,000 times faster than the left brain. I think the inspiration of an artist, or the mysterious flash of

inspiration of a mathematician or scientist, who wakes up in the morning with a formula or theorem in their head, may come through the right brain, from somewhere beyond the constraints of language or theory.

The difference between the left and right brains is said to be found in all mammals, fish, and insects. It may be a difference necessary for survival. Even so, I believe the human left brain is too dominant in today's urban areas and the structures that support them. I wish for the revival of all things right-brained. I dream for the strong revival of the right-brain-oriented things, including the feminine (not necessarily the biological "female"), plants, animals, and the wisdoms that have been dismissed as superstition, such as Oriental medicine and South American herbs, and to merge them with the left-brain-oriented things, allowing many of us to move beyond relativity and reach the eternal viewpoint of the center—like the statue of god in the Indian temple.

It excites me to think about what the cities and societies created by such a mentality would be shaped like and how it would be operated.

Depicted in this room are the landscapes I see by focusing my consciousness on such a future society. It is merely my vision, and everyone should each have their own vision.

I have been in a certain state of consciousness since when I was a child, and I see various landscapes. And I have always been painting them. As I grew up into an adult, I realized that staying in that state of consciousness was inconvenient and difficult for communication. So now, I usually seal off that consciousness. When I paint, however, I go and access it; then, I see visions. This will turn spiritual, but I assume my right brain is accessing and seeing something larger, like an akashic record. Once I started talking to different artists and creators, I have come to realize that it is a rare case for someone to paint what they actually see, as I do. As this is something truly illogical and irrational, I may be a confusing presence in the concept-oriented contemporary art world. However, as that is exactly the kind of chaos I want to bring in, I think it is just fine.

Everything is a myth, they say. Communities, laws, and cities are created through interactions with myths. You can say that the present-day myth is science. But science covers only a small fraction of this mysterious and infinite world. I wish that everyone will create their own new myths, and go on to build new communities and cities and the structures that support them. I hope my paintings will be the energy to trigger such myths.



AYA TAKANO, *new myth*, 2023 - Oil on canvas | 227.3 × 545.4 × 3.5 cm (3 panels: 227.3 × 181.8 × 3.5 cm)
©2023 AYA TAKANO/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Perrotin

The person and horse on the left and right depict every and all sorts of two opposing things in this world. Both contain change, and since all sorts of things can be interpreted from both the person and the horse, they are both darkness and light, justice and injustice, night and morning, and all other opposing things. The inspirations for the horse also come from Lascaux's wall paintings and Picasso's *Guernica*. The rock in the middle is the eternal world where the two merge.

This rock exists in real life. There was a period in Japan called the Jōmon period, which is said to have lasted at least 10,000 years, that started 13,000 years ago or even earlier. It is believed to have been a very peaceful time, with no traces of war or conflict. What was that society like, to have lasted 10,000 years without a conflict...?

I have a strong admiration for the spirituality of that period. The earthenware and other artifacts from that period that have unearthed have very mysterious forms that would never come out of today's mentality, and they don't seem to belong to any other period or place, either. I have been dreaming that the spirituality of that period in Japan would have also existed in all other countries during the same period. So I was struck to find out that female figurines and statues that share similarities in form with the Japanese female figurines of the time have been unearthed in various countries, of course including France. At first, I was thinking of painting in the center that very mysterious goddess figure unearthed in France. However, as it seemed too specific as a form, I decided to paint a rock, which is even more ancient than the Jōmon period, from before human figures were made. At first glance, the rock is indistinguishable from natural objects, but it has clearly artificial lines engraved on it. This was unearthed in Japan.

By the way, here is how I got the inspiration for this painting: After deciding to paint two opposing things and an eternal being in the middle, I entered into a certain state of mind. The first thing I saw in this state was a person, slowly floating up in the air. Then, the next thing I saw was the ocean, the sky seemingly at dawn, a horse-like animal on the opposite side, and in the middle was some kind of a rock from ancient times. I create my paintings in this manner.



AYA TAKANO, *flying above the ruins from the 2020s*, 2023
Oil on canvas | 130 × 162 × 3 cm
©2023 AYA TAKANO/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Perrotin

One day, by car, I was returning towards Tokyo from a rural prefecture where my agriculture teacher lives, via a very long bridge over the ocean. It was right after rain, and the light was shining in a very special yellow color. Both sides of the road looked like a sea of clouds, with the factory areas on the sides looking like castles inhabited by final boss characters in a video game. I saw, in front of me, the sky and such a magnificent mountain surrounded by clouds, and it left me almost speechless. I am often profoundly touched by sceneries, and this was one of such very special moments. I had visions of people and animals in the future passing through the place as ruins after today's left-brained society has come to an end.



AYA TAKANO, *new festival and dance*, 2023
Oil on canvas | 116.7 × 91 × 3 cm
©2023 AYA TAKANO/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Perrotin

When I shifted my attention to the world I envisioned, as described in *flying above the ruins from the 2020s*, I could see a new festival taking place there.



AYA TAKANO, *new lifestyle*, 2023
Oil on canvas | 146 × 112 × 3 cm
©2023 AYA TAKANO/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Perrotin

I have always thought that to get to a nearby place, it would be nice to ride different animals like in the olden days. I have read that there even used to be a tribe that would ride orcas. Even today, people ride camels, elephants, and various animals, and I often see pictures online of turtles, birds, or monkeys riding capybaras and deers. I have also heard firsthand from a person who has seen a monkey riding a boar to cross the ocean. I feel that living things want to ride on living things, and that the ones being ridden may also actually want to be ridden. In Japan, there is a word “jinba ittai”, which describes a horse and a person moving as one, and there are some unbelievable anecdotes of what being in this state could accomplish. Even though I have only ridden horses a few times in my life, I think I know exactly how it would feel. Maybe such a memory is engraved in my DNA. Besides, don't you think there is something fundamentally enjoyable about carrying a person on your back, or being carried on someone's back?



AYA TAKANO, *new and intimate relationship*, 2023
Oil on canvas | 146 × 112 × 3 cm
©2023 AYA TAKANO/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Perrotin

I actually have very little interest in the clothes the majority of people wear today, but I don't have the courage to wear anything too deviant from the social norm, either, so I imitate others and reluctantly wear clothes with designs that aren't offensive on the street. I am more attracted to the traditional costumes, tattoos, and body paint worn by ethnic minorities and others. (The same goes for music, too.) I feel they contain everything from a true sense of innovation, creativity, and magic, to wisdom and wishes. I had this vision when I thought of a world where such clothing and decorations have returned.



AYA TAKANO, *new life*, 2023
Oil on canvas | 162 × 130 × 3 cm
©2023 AYA TAKANO/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Perrotin

I have a friend, Yuko Anda, a lady who runs a number of restaurants in Tokyo. Even though we work in different genres, I respect her as one of the few genuine creators. She uses mysterious ingredients that are uncommon in Japan, such as South American fruits, yet creates very pop and nostalgic flavors that appeals to the mass, resulting in a long line of customers. She has been awarded Bib Gourmand for a number of years as well. This friend told me the story of how, during the COVID-19 pandemic, she and several other local people were stranded by themselves for three months deep in the jungles of Peru. They survived there cheerfully with a lot of ingenuity, living self-sufficiently. As this is a such a wondrous and fascinating story of an adventure, I wish I could share this story with the world, yet Yuko thinks she only needs to share it with those whom she deems worthy. Perhaps she feels that the world isn't ready to accept her story... Yuko's adventure and the future I wish to visit overlapped and this vision came to me.



AYA TAKANO, *new and free love*, 2023
Oil on canvas | 100 × 83 × 3 cm
©2023 AYA TAKANO/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Perrotin

When I wondered what love would look like in the future world I wish to visit, I had a vision of two people playing on top of a traffic light no longer in use.



AYA TAKANO, *new communion above the ruins from the 2020s*, 2023
Oil on canvas | 91 × 72.7 × 3 cm
©2023 AYA TAKANO/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Perrotin

After the vision of two human lovers playing on a traffic light that has turned into a mere object, I thought of interspecies love, and this is the vision I had.



AYA TAKANO, *seaside of femininity*, 2023
Oil on canvas | 194 × 162 × 3 cm
©2023 AYA TAKANO/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Perrotin

In accordance with the Indian god's statue Joseph Campbell taught me about, with a male and a female faces on either sides and the face of eternity in the middle, I wanted to recreate my own by placing a 5-meter painting of the ocean in the middle of the exhibition space, and by placing a painting of femininity and one of masculine on its left and right sides. This is the painting on the feminine side. Please interpret it as you like.



AYA TAKANO, *seaside of masculinity*, 2023
Oil on canvas | 194 × 162 × 3 cm
©2023 AYA TAKANO/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Perrotin

In accordance with the Indian god's statue Joseph Campbell taught me about, with a male and a female faces on either sides and the face of eternity in the middle, I wanted to recreate my own by placing a 5-meter painting of the ocean in the middle of the exhibition space, and by placing a painting of femininity and one of masculine on its left and right sides. This is the painting on the masculine side. Please interpret it as you like.



AYA TAKANO, *new ride*, 2023
Oil on canvas | 112 × 146 × 3 cm
©2023 AYA TAKANO/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Perrotin

I was born in a prefecture without a shoreline, but last winter, I moved to a seaside town and I have been going to the sea almost every day to gaze at it. When summer came, I went swimming every day I could. I have never regularly used cars because I disliked them due to environmental concerns (which still tears me apart; having this conflict and contradiction with myself), but I have purchased a very old car, and I love driving by the seaside, blasting music and keeping all windows down with no air conditioning on. In that future I want to visit, I have a feeling that there would be young people driving around remodeled cars that were built in the current era and remained. It would not be a convertible, but a car with the entire top half fallen off. The book the girl is reading is the *Bhagavad Gita*, which is like an Indian bible. The sunglasses were made in the distant past from the time of this painting, so one of the glasses is gone. I believe they are no longer made in this era.



AYA TAKANO, *new and cozy reading time*, 2023
Oil on canvas | 112 × 146 × 3 cm
©2023 AYA TAKANO/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Perrotin

I have a very strong desire to mingle with animals, and this is a vision I had of the future, derived from the feeling that it would be great to be able to read books on an animal. She is reading “The Doors of Perception” by Aldous Huxley.



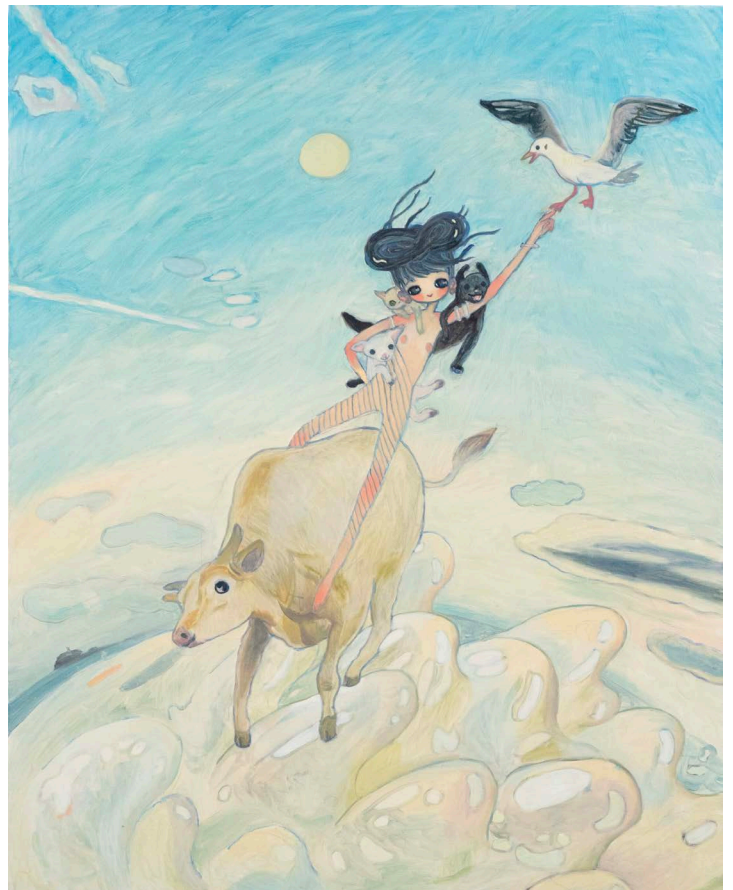
AYA TAKANO, *new drive through a town*, 2023
Oil on canvas | 100 × 83 × 3 cm
©2023 AYA TAKANO/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Perrotin

I believe one of the charms of a car is its mysterious shine and reflection, like an insect in a way. Another charm is its ability to let us freely go on adventures. I had a vision of driving through the future city in that reflective light and freedom.



AYA TAKANO, *new garment*, 2023
Oil on canvas | 162 × 130 × 3 cm
©2023 AYA TAKANO/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Perrotin

This is a new garment of the future.



AYA TAKANO, *new life and communion of souls*, 2023
Oil on canvas | 162 × 130 × 3 cm
©2023 AYA TAKANO/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Perrotin