

“My Museum”

Making Museum Displays / Contemporary Art & Curatorial Studies

Associate Prof. Jesse Hogan

& Research Assistant Rinzo Yamashita

Assistant Artists: Mamoru Hirata, Kazumasa Tanaka, Takumi Kurosawa, Keisi Sudo

Creating a Personal, Free Curation Box

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This page introduces my experience in the open lecture assignment “My Museum.”

The task was to curate a personal theme within a box, creating what would become “My Museum.” On the final day, all participants displayed their works together, curating a one-day exhibition open only to the class. Through this process, we were invited to both learn and experience what it means to “enjoy contemporary art today.”

Note

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The Lecture in Outline

Professor Hogan—playful at times, even mimicking James Bond with a smile—along with the skilled support of Hirata-san and others, guided us with remarkable craftsmanship.

The first two mornings began with participant introductions, followed by presentations from the assistant artists and, lastly, Professor Hogan’s own works. These video presentations were both inspiring and thought-provoking.

Professor Hogan then explained the assignment, referencing works such as Marcel Duchamp’s *Boîte-en-valise* (“Box in a Valise”), and further introducing artists including Joseph Beuys, On Kawara, Yoko Ono, Mieko Shiomi, Rirkrit Tiravanija, and Wolfgang Tillmans, as well as the V&A; Museum.

The Assignment

Each participant selects a personal theme and expresses it through a box as “My Museum.” Materials may come from existing works, everyday objects, or newly created items. On the second day, they bring a few photos and items related to their theme. Over the following two days, they collect, create, and arrange elements to build their curation box. On the final day, the classroom is transformed into an exhibition space where everyone’s works are displayed and viewed collectively.

This was both exciting and intimidating. As someone with no background in making art, I wondered if I could possibly take on such a genuine contemporary art curation project. At the same time, the opportunity to exhibit—even for just one day—within a contemporary art setting was a thrilling challenge.

Theme and Concept

Although hesitant, I decided to tackle a broad theme I had long pondered: Art and humanity, humanity and AI, and AI and art.

On the second day, each participant presented their concept with items brought from home. I declared my intention to use AI in my work.

This sparked a critical question: “Is it necessary to use AI for this assignment? Why should AI be involved at all?”

That question became central to my process. My answer: “Precisely because the necessity of AI in art is questionable, I wish to use it. I will employ AI where its use is most debatable and openly state that fact within my work.”

From Chaos to Clarity

At first, my box became a chaotic collection of fragments—clay figures, scribbles, junk objects, even items from the 100-yen shop—meant to embody imperfection and disorder.

But Professor Hogan offered crucial advice: “You can include many elements. But the strongest expression of your theme may already exist in a single item. If you focus on that one, your theme will be clearer.”

Thus, I discarded almost everything. What remained were just two items: a poem co-created with AI, and a transparent case filled with shredded paper labeled ‘AI is humanity’s echo.’

The result was a work titled “The First Drop — Boundaries.”

Final Work

Inside the box: A poem co-created with AI. Shredded paper sealed in a transparent case. A printed label read: AI is humanity’s echo.

Excerpt from the poem: The First Drop — Boundaries. The first drop into the ocean is chosen by humankind. AI also creates. But only humans begin the ripple. Art is play beyond survival, a proof of existence. At this boundary, we stand.

Reflections

Debates continue over whether AI should be used in art, alongside the unresolved challenges of copyright. Meanwhile, AI rapidly penetrates society and business, sometimes embraced uncritically, sometimes failing to deliver.

In this context, I chose the theme of ‘Art and AI’ not to argue for or against AI in art, but to embody the reality that we cannot avoid confronting it. The process itself was the true lesson: to experience firsthand the creative struggle of contemporary art.

Ultimately, it was the participant’s question—‘Why AI?’—that unlocked my idea and shaped my work. For that, I am grateful.