# *C*ommentator

# Incredibly Interesting, FOR ALL THAT ….

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Actually, and it's a little affected to be saying so myself, but I am the one who designed the program and poster for this event. I'm saying this because that is the reason why I am here. They let me be here because I designed it.

As just introduced, I teach computer graphics, so the presentations were a completely new world to me, though I guess I intend to know it, and I was surprised and interested to hear about it. I listened with admiration. I learned a lot. It was superb.

But on the other hand there are various things I must relate to you, and if I don't say anything they won't let me go home, so I'll say something. But, I think as I create artwork. I am an artist, although my income as a professor is much higher, and I'd like you to understand that I think while I create. Therefore, I have taken in well what the presenters have explained.

However, from the point of view of someone who creates, one cannot create unless something exists. Actually, I am thinking about these various situations, from history, that is media history, to now, the direct expression of theater. All of this basically needs to be taken in without contradiction, or else I cannot express myself in response.

Well, one thing I'd like to say is about Mr. Ukai, who at the end – what should I say, timidly? – said with reserve that media is different from other things. What's important is that, actually, media connects virtual data. In the end, all of it.

Theater is basically – well, they do act out lies, but basically – direct. Direct expression. At the beginning of our long history – in primitive times, there was only direct expression. You transmit information directly. Learning by imitation. In that age, there were no words.

When you show anger in your face, like, "You bastard!"… but you can't say, "You bastard!" You say, "Ahhh!" In other words, I would say that history just may be leading the human race in the end to a place where words are not necessary. Media, too, would not be necessary. The symbols that we have assigned to various things would all be unnecessary. We would communicate with feelings. That might be a world of dance or drama or music.

But we are now in this society full of contradictions, so we can't communicate with only that. In other words, in order to explain the various contradictions we have words, we have theories, and we construct theory after theory. What with Marx and Engels and whoever, right?

Saying that capitalism is this or that, for the first time one has shown either one's legitimacy or lack thereof. Further, in a system that has contradictions, after hearing a particularly wonderful presentation and taking notes and thinking about it afterwards, you start understanding less rather than more, and get confused.

Actually, I have noticed that the public, or should I say consumers, are superbly selfish. In other words, they have no satisfaction. They were not even satisfied when they had direct communication. If you trace it through history, pictograms became necessary, and people came to be able to communicate various things. But here we are, with me at the highest level doing computer graphics, and doing 3D graphics as well, using high technology which gives the highest level of expression while researching communication itself. But this is no more than humans progressing towards the summit of their desires. And we have come to the point where those who are on the receiving end want media to give them more and more stimulation and things that are more and more real.

So, for example, the field of manga – that is, the field of printed manga – could not fully satisfy so we are now in an age of animation. Of course this is the same as the history of media where movies and radio and such media have overcome each other, one after another. Things change. They are now aiming at exceedingly realistic virtual realities with 3D technology for the future. In the end we will be able to touch it. No, now they are saying that even smells are necessary.

In the midst of this, we creators are always at first making our way within one form of media. I, too, am a painter. I am involved in the world of fine arts in France. There was a time when I was desperate to make a painting that surpassed everyone else's. But one comes to one's limit within the art circle. Well then, if one continues to do one's best within that limit, then one might become an Ikuo Hirayama. But one comes to think, is

there really meaning in that?

Or, one can step away from that media, and think, "Well, a different type of picture might be good. Maybe I'll try computers…" That's how one changes. There are many, many people who, as creators, fight to the death in this endeavor, and who die in this endeavor. For example, I'm sure you all know the artist Toshio Arimoto. This will give away my age, but we're about the same age. He lost himself in that, and really did lose his life. At an early age. There are people like that. But I do think he was an outstanding person.

However, as media expression changes over and over like this, and for us it is just to stay alive. Actually, creators are always in a battle such as this. This is going to run off into a lot of different topics, but on hearing Mr. Schodt's presentation, that is really a battle going on there. Of manga artists.

Whether your manga will become a hit in America, that is a real battle. I think it was a battle even before that. Everyone is in a battle from the stage before they start writing a work of their own. I really understand how the people who survived the battle went that far.

What really is the reason for this, you can understand if you study Arnold J. Toynbee. In brief, history is the usage of new strategy as it comes out… and depending on one's ability to fight back… culture prospers. However, at some point, when a culture wins and reaches its summit, people become complacent and the culture slowly deteriorates. This is Toynbee. This the type of material I prepared as a comment.

Actually, Mr. Morikawa's presentation was incredibly interesting, and after that it's not my place to create a disturbance by bringing up my own topic – so, I gave up on presenting that material. In the end, I need only to speak lightly, and then Mr. In-Sung will put everything together. So, let me pass the baton to him.