Press Release
November 2025

√k Contemporary

Nelson Hor's Solo Exhibition

A Mere Reflection of Flower and Moon

Opens Saturday, December 6 at √K Contemporary

From December 6 (Sat) to December 27 (Sat), 2025, √K Contemporary (Shinjuku, Tokyo) is pleased to present *A Mere Reflection of Flower and Moon*, a solo exhibition by Malaysian-born artist Nelson Hor (1998–).

After studying Nihonga (Japanese painting) at Tama Art University, Hor has developed a poetic and delicate visual language while freely moving across diverse materials, such as mineral pigments, ceramics, photography and installation. His practice engages deeply with fundamental issues in our current society, including LGBTQ communities and mental illness.

"As a gay person who was raised in Malaysia where Islamic values are strongly embedded, beauty became a substitute for my religion."

As this statement suggests, the exhibition explores how "beauty" can serve as a spiritual anchor for LGBTQ individuals growing up in oppressive religious settings. It is an attempt to take a glimpse into the internal world and queer aesthetics from the artist's unique perspective.

Alongside Hor's new paintings, sculptural works and installations, the exhibition features furniture by designers such as Isamu Noguchi, Tadaomi Mizunoe and Sori Yanagi, who introduced a new sense of aesthetics to postwar Japan. By integrating these simple yet highly functional design objects that accompany our everyday life, Hor's works transform the gallery space into a queer sanctuary. Here, beauty emerges not as a luxury but as a vital tool for spiritual survival for queer people navigating harsh realities.

The artist's gaze resonates beyond questions of sexuality or background, reaching the hearts of all who live through the cruelties of the contemporary world.

During the exhibition, √K Contemporary will also host a gallery talk with Junya Utsumi, curator at the Artizon Museum, Ishibashi Foundation, as well as a Drag Queen performance by Andromeda and Nixie Humidity.

■ Exhibition Information

Nelson Hor, *A Mere Reflection of Flower and Moon*
Dates: 2025. 12. 6 (Sat) – 12.27 (Sat) * Opening Reception: 12.5 (Fri) 5pm
Venue: √K Contemporary
Address: 6 Minamicho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo
Exhibition website：https://root-k.jp/exhibitions_en/nelson-hor_2025/
Opening Hours：1pm – 7pm
Closed : Sundays and Mondays
Organizer: √K Contemporary
* Please refer to the gallery's website and social media for the latest updates.

■ Artist Statement

The title "A Mere Reflection of Flower and Moon" is from a Chinese idiom, "mirror flower, water moon (鏡花水月)", which means beautiful things are often ephemeral and unattainable. The solo exhibition will be about my own interpretation on Whitney Davis's "Queer Beauty".

Growing up in an Islamic country as a gay person, for me, beauty is my substitute for religion.

In the book, Davis mentioned the queer aesthetic is more than just the expression of desires but also a way to break free from the oppression. I believe queer individuals often find sanctuary in beautiful things because we feel betrayed by the religions we grew up in. Beauty can become a form of spiritual survival. Queer creativity often stems from having to reimagine the world from scratch and to find beauty where there was once pain. That shapes taste in ways that are nuanced, layered and often radical.

This exhibition will feature a series of my new artworks alongside furniture designed by Japanese post-war designers, including Isamu Noguchi, Tadaomi Mizunoe and Sori Yanagi. A central theme in post-war furniture design is the removal of elaborate decoration, focusing instead on simplicity and functionality. This approach has introduced a new understanding of beauty for future generations.

I plan to transform the gallery into a small shrine filled with queer memories and rituals. By combining these design objects, the space will allow the viewers to sit, pause and contemplate beauty not as luxury, but as necessity, much like how queer people reshape the concept of beauty.

I aim to let the tenderness of the artwork inhabit the space because beauty is not a revenge on the cruel reality but merely a reflection of the flower and moon.

Nelson Hor

■ Events

During the exhibition, we will host several queer-themed events, including a gallery talk that explores queer art in depth and performances that embody queer beauty, both of which echo around the central theme of the show.
For inquiries or to register for the events, please contact us at info@root-k.jp

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Event #1 | Gallery Talk: "Nelson Hor × Junya Utsumi
Date & Time: Saturday, December 6, 6:00 PM–

A gallery talk will be held at 6:00 PM on opening day, December 6, featuring Junya Utsumi, Curator at Artizon Museum, the Ishibashi Foundation.

Guest | Junya Utsumi

Born in Tokyo in 1990. Completed the Global Arts Curatorial Practices Program at the Graduate School of Global Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts. Following his work as a curator at the Koganecho Area Management Center, he is currently a curator at Artizon Museum, the Ishibashi Foundation. With a strong interest in gender, he conducts research on contemporary art in Japan and Southeast Asia while engaging in exhibition planning and writing.

Major exhibitions he has curated include:
Jam Session: The Ishibashi Foundation Collection × YAMASHIRO Chikako × SHIGA Lieko *In the midst of* (2025–2026, Artizon Museum, Tokyo)
Jam Session: The Ishibashi Foundation Collection × MOHRI Yuko *On Physis* (2024–2025, Artizon Museum, Tokyo)
Japan Pavilion Exhibition in Tokyo —From the 59th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia *Dumb Type, 2022: remap* (2023, Artizon Museum, Tokyo)

He was also responsible for the planning and production of Rachel Whiteread's outdoor sculpture *Artizon Conversations*, installed in July 2025 at the Artizon Museum.

Event #2 | 「Drag Queen Performance」 by Nixie Humidity and Andromeda
Date & Time： Saturday, December 13, 4pm

The second event will feature a drag queen performance by Nixie Humidity and Andromeda.
We are pleased to invite two queens to perform in the exhibition space by unfolding their own interpretations of queer sanctuary through the powerful expression of drag.

Every religion has its rituals; if queerness were a religion, the dance of drag queens would be its sacred performance. – Nelson Hor

Guest | Andromeda

Drag/performance based in Tokyo since 2019. Interested in exploring sexuality and gender through their creative expression. They have been performing in galleries throughout Tokyo like Gallery -1, and art spaces like BuoY in Kitasenju. As part of IWAKAN Magazine and Moto IWAKAN, they also curate and spread queer culture in Japanese. Through drag, they've become a staple of Shinjuku 2-chome at clubs like Kingdom, Arch, Eagle Blue and even at Soho House events for TOMO KOIZUMI. Instagram : @luna.andromeda.jp

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■ Artist ｜ Nelson Hor Ee Herng

Tokyo-based Malaysian artist.
Nelson Hor creates his own storytelling through paintings on washi paper using mineral pigments, as well as ceramic works, installations and photography. His practice centers on his lived experiences as a queer person along with his ongoing dialogue with religion and the processes of memory and healing.
With observation and sensitivity to materials and techniques drawn from East Asian painting techniques and culture, his works quietly weave together intimate narratives of gender and sexuality with universal emotions of anxiety and hope that connect to human existence.

Artist Website https://nelsonhor.com/

Major Solo Exhibitions:
Christmas Through the Eyes of a Child (2024, Spiral, Tokyo,), *The Red Cloud Over My Head* (2024, KYOBASHI ART ROOM, Tokyo), *Memory is a Garden*（2022, GALLERY ETHER、Tokyo), *A Letter a Day*（2021, haydEn Tokyo, Tokyo), *not seeing is a flower*（2020, PULPLISM、Tokyo）

Awards:
「CRAZY PEACH Pilot Micro-Grant」Finalist（2025, Crazy Peach Art Foundation、London、UK），「KYOBASHI ART WALL」Outstanding Award（2023, Toda Corporation, Tokyo），「Spotlight 2022」Finalist（Penang Art District、2022,Malaysia）

■ Exhibiting Works

① Nelson Hor《Among Thorns》（2025）
Mineral pigment on Washi paper / 45.5 × 45.5 cm

② Nelson Hor《HOLOTHUROIDEA》（2024）
Clay with glaze / 7×7×5cm

③ Nelson Hor
《Mirror Flower, Water Moon》
（2025）Photography

④ Nelson Hor《The Murder of My Faith》
（2025）
Installation (Image: Installation view from Art Fair Tokyo 2025)

⑤ Nelson Hor
《My Addiction to Validation》
（2025）
Mineral pigment on Washi paper

■ [Concurrent Program] √K Contemporary Artist Support Project | Sung Nam Han, *Hand Grenade, or Heart,*

In addition to the main gallery exhibition, Space √K, located on the basement level of the gallery, will host Sung Nam Han's solo exhibition, *Hand Grenade, or Heart,* , as part of √K Contemporary's Artist Support Project, presented concurrently during the same exhibition period.

Sung Nam Han, *Hand Grenade, or Heart,*
Inspired by the COVID-19 pandemic, Han developed the concept of an art museum viewable only underwater, and launched the Japan Undersea Art Museum in 2022, the first initiative of its kind in Japan.
Designed specifically for the display of contemporary art, this project represents the world's first underwater museum and offers a new perspective on contemporary society by tracing human activity beneath the sea. Through the experience of viewing artworks underwater, the project also explores expanded possibilities for perception, bodily awareness, imagination, creativity and underwater activities.

Because viewing art underwater allows visitors to experience a near-weightless state through neutral buoyancy, the Space √K exhibition experiments with a spatial composition in which the gallery's vertical orientation is rotated by 90 degrees.

The exhibition will also feature weekly performances, and additionally, the video work on view will be updated with new content every Friday, making this a dynamically evolving and highly experimental show.

■ Performance

Please refer to the √K Contemporary website and social media for the latest event updates.

December 11 (Thu), 19:00–19:30 — Viola and Video Night (Admission by donation) Viola: Yukiko Morimoto
December 18 (Thu), 13:00–19:00 — All-day performance by Sung Nam HAN (Free admission)
December 25 (Thu), 13:00–19:00 — All-day performance by Sung Nam HAN (Free admission)

■ Artist | 韓成南（Sung Nam Han）

Video artist and director.
Creates works including single-channel videos, video installations using blue-screen keying, AR photography and video pieces, art performances, and installations themed around “blue.”
Representative of Interdisciplinary Art Festival Tokyo, Art in Country of Tokyo, and Interdisciplinary Art Project Kobe.
Founding director of Japan Undersea Art Museum (JUAM).
Instagram: @sungnamhan_jonart.net_

■ Exhibition Information

√K Contemporary Artist Support Project | Sung Nam Han, *Hand Grenade or Heart*

Dates: December 6 (Sat) – December 27 (Sat), 2025
Venue: Space √K
Address: 6 Minamicho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo (√K Contemporary B1F)
Opening Hours: 1-7pm
Closed: Sundays and Mondays
Exhibition Website: https://root-k.jp/exhibitions_en/root-k_artistsupportproject_sung-nam-han

■ About √K Contemporary

Established in 2020 in Kagurazaka, Tokyo, √K Contemporary is a contemporary art gallery that transcends borders of genre, generation, and nationality. With a 300-square-meter space reminiscent of a gallery in outer space, √K Contemporary redefines the relationship between artwork and viewer.
The gallery curates exhibitions with a distinctive aesthetic, presenting exceptional artists from prewar Japan to the contemporary era. By engaging deeply with works that span art history, the gallery fosters a dialogue that links past and present, and contributes to the shaping of future cultural landscapes.

Web | https://root-k.jp | FB : @rootkcontemporary | X / IG : @rk_contemporary

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For press inquiries:
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