

BLOUIN ARTINFO

Kazuki Umezawa's Augmented Realities

By Darryl Wee 16/08/133:57AM EDT



(© Kazuki Umezawa 2013)

TOKYO — **Kazuki Umezawa** opens a new solo exhibition entitled “Extreme AR Image Core” at the Diesel Art Gallery in Shibuya starting August 23.

The “AR” in the title stands for “augmented reality”— actual environment enhanced with graphics, video images, and other elements that are produced by computers. In addition to a range of new pieces, Umezawa will also showcase a large-scale installation produced in collaboration with **The 3 AR Brothers**, a media art collective known for their real world interventions supplemented with various computer-generated sensory inputs.

Drawing both thematic inspiration and an urgent sense of existential anxiety from the “database culture” of Japanese anime and videogame subcultures, Umezawa takes apart

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images scattered throughout the Internet and recomposes them into frantic, writhing masses of collaged figures, avatars, lettering, and fractured backgrounds, creating mandala-like surfaces that approximate the content and texture of the mass otaku imagination.

For this exhibition, curated by **Erika Matsushima** of CASHI Gallery, Umezawa has buried elements of AR within artworks that are designed to be viewed on a computer terminal — hybrid forms fusing reality with fiction that transcend the framework of conventional painting. According to the artist, this represents an “artistic world where characters and motifs made to appear in the real world return inside the monitors from which they came.”

Born in 1985, Umezawa studied film and video at Musashino Art University. He is a member of **Chaos Lounge**, a young art collective that first earned a reputation thanks to the support and patronage of Japanese A-lister **Takashi Murakami**.

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