

Artist's Statement

Tit for Tat

I came across the word, "Tit for Tat" from the title of a tale book I purchased in Sri Lanka. It was a simple story about betrayal and revenge between two friends; one who is a merchant in the countryside and one in the city. I suddenly became curious about the origin and the usage of the word, and I found out that "tit for tat" is also a term used as a strategy of game theory in economics and mathematics. Game theory is the study of making the optimal decision in accordance with the reaction of the competitor.

'Tit for tat' strategy is composed of four tenets: First of all, be gentle. Second, retaliate if the opponent betrays. Third, forgive the opponent who betrays you if they ask for forgiveness, but do not forgive them hastily. Fourth, make clear actions.

These four simple rules intrigued me as a response to a complex society. It was particularly interesting that 'be gentle' comes first despite the goal of survival.

Martial Arts for Self Defense

Socially, "unprovoked attacks" have been exposed throughout social media. Some scenes were comically transformed into "memes," and some

accidents had social repercussions that caused political shifts. Nowadays, movies, dramas, and social media stage thrilling revenge plots that consume us. However, violence in reality is literally nothing more than violence itself. While the violence we consume evokes a fun and cheerful tempo, in reality, it may start from the individual's anxiety but end up as everyone's anxiety.

Martial arts books or emergency handbooks, which instruct me on ways to protect myself, indicate human movements through images. Since the images deviate from the body's natural ways of motions, I had to stare at the subtle nuances of the images that depict unnatural looking bodies for a long time. The relationship between assailants and victims were subverted and repeated in the images from the martial arts book, causing them to create a sort of loop. I thought it was similar to the way we form relationships with people, and that it was a reflection of society at large. Doing a favor for someone with a lack of understanding can lead to violence, and yesterday's victim can become today's assailant.

Capitalism

The root of capitalism starts from a "belief". That "belief" seems to be more powerful than religion. We draw a picture on paper and count the number, then with tacit understanding, we naturally consume and produce capitalism as if it does not exist.

If fear in the middle ages or ancient period came out of death, the fear of contemporary society derives from poverty. "Poverty of the future" is

more frightening than poverty itself. Media creates fear in various ways, and in order to relieve that anxiety, we do something. And if these actions repeat, they render "compulsion".

The so-called 'trade war' occurred between the U.S. and China. After that, the very same war occurred between Korea and Japan. Despite a seemingly complicated political relationship on an internal level, the war is based on a simple structure at surface level: if the opponent steals something from you, you steal something from them. Just like "tit for tat".

Ultimately, most of what I draw are emotions, thoughts and attitudes that come from conflicts between society and the individual. Sometimes my drawings are about being anxious or critical. Sometimes they are about seeking hope. This is the way people live their lives, and it's also the way I draw.