Naoki Inagaki (稲垣 尚毅)

Born in 1989, Kyoto. Japanese contemporary artist based in Osaka. He began his artistic career in 2010 as a street poet in Kyoto, creating personalised calligraphic works inspired by the people he encountered. Over time, his practice expanded beyond the written word into painting, driven by an interest in human emotion, spontaneity and the possibilities of artistic expression.

Largely self-taught as a painter, Inagaki works with a wide range of materials, from acrylics and oil pastels to his own specially developed glue-based ink. His paintings range from vivid, colourful compositions to bold monochrome works. Often working without preliminary sketches, he allows gesture, movement and instinct to guide the creative process, embracing the unexpected rather than following a predetermined image.

Inagaki's transition towards painting was encouraged by an unexpected encounter with the work of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Seeing one of Basquiat's paintings reproduced on a T-shirt, he was struck by its uninhibited freedom and felt an immediate desire to paint himself. Since then, he has developed his own visual language, in which the physical act of painting is as significant as the finished image. His work reflects a continuing fascination with what it means to be alive, the freedom to express oneself and the relationship between human experience and artistic creation.

Selected Exhibitions & Artistic Projects

2026
Empty (空っぽ), Solo Exhibition, Gallery G-77, Kyoto, Japan (upcoming)

線が笑う 色が踊る, Solo Exhibition, C’est cool Shop & Gallery, Osaka, Japan

Affordable Art Fair Hong Kong, Hong Kong

2025
No Guard (のーがーど), Solo Exhibition, Gallery G-77, Kyoto, Japan

不正解, Solo Exhibition, Hirakata City Sogo Bunka Geijutsu Center, Osaka, Japan

AOARASHI, Solo Exhibition, C’est cool Shop & Gallery, Osaka, Japan
Affordable Art Fair Hong Kong, Hong Kong
NAKANOSHIMA ART COLLECTION, Art Beat Cafe NAKANOSHIMA, Osaka, Japan
ALICE IN WONDER WALL, Mural Project, Ario Kameari, Tokyo, Japan

2024
Mugamuchū (無我夢中), Solo Exhibition, Gallery G-77, Kyoto, Japan

還 〜おかえり〜, Solo Exhibition, C’est cool Shop & Gallery, Osaka, Japan

TEDxNagoyaU, Talk and Live Performance, Nagoya, Japan

2023
13+, Solo Exhibition, Art Gallery Manariya, Osaka, Japan
ART SHINSAIBASHI, Daimaru Shinsaibashi / Shinsaibashi PARCO, Osaka, Japan
Nankai Electric Railway × Suntory, Public Mural Project, Shin-Imamiya Station, Osaka, Japan

2022
UNKNOWN ASIA 2022, Osaka, Japan
saf ART AWARDS -浮世絵-, GINZA SIX, Tokyo, Japan

2021
紡ぐと解く, Group Exhibition, Tsumugi Cafe, Kyoto, Japan

Nishiki Market, Tapestry Design Project, Kyoto, Japan
2019
A World Without Words (言葉のない世界), Solo Exhibition, Endo Gohki Museum of Art, Kyoto, Japan
Artwork Exhibition, Kyoto Tower, Kyoto, Japan

2018
Tagawa Art Biennale 英展, Tagawa Museum of Art, Fukuoka, Japan

2017
Ennichisai, Live Calligraphy Performance, Jakarta, Indonesia

2016
ありがとう, Solo Exhibition, Dinosaur Jungle, Kyoto, Japan

Japan Expo, Live Calligraphy Performance, Paris, France

2015
Live Calligraphy Performance, Le chemin, Seoul, South Korea

2012
Japan Expo, Live Calligraphy Performance, Paris, France
2011
生まれたからには生きてやろう, Solo Exhibition, Himawari, Kyoto, Japan

Selected Awards

2022
Kazuya Fujikawa Award, UNKNOWN ASIA 2022, Osaka, Japan
Daichi Sakamoto Award, saf ART AWARDS -浮世絵-, GINZA SIX, Tokyo, Japan

2020
Grand Prize, Japan Fudemoji Association Joint Exhibition Vol. 4, Meister Division, Japan

2018
Selected Artist, Tagawa Art Biennale 英展, Tagawa Museum of Art, Fukuoka, Japan