

Biography of a fictional mediocre painter, Yebosi Yuasa

1924

Born in Fusa-cho, now non-existing district called Higashi-Katsushika in Chiba, as the eldest son of Kouji and Kazue Yuasa, and was named Hiroyuki Yuasa.

One of his relatives is Kumesaku Yuasa.

1933 at 9

His parents took him to see the Hagenbeck Circus in Ueno.

1938 at 14

Finished his education at Fusa High Elementary School.

He set his heart to becoming an artist.

1940 at 16

Applied to apprenticeship with the illustrator Hidetsune Kobayashi, but was turned down due to his feeble health.

Began working at a sign maker in Tokyo.

Decided to join the Ichiro Fukuzawa Art Institute after seeing its applicant guidelines, that he read in the article of the Nikkan Bijyutsu Journal.

Was greatly inspired by Max Ernst's catalog The Hundred Headless Woman.

Produced artworks collaging cutouts from artist books and magazines, in imitation of Ernst.

Discovered his allergy to volatile oil such as turpentine. He painted with a mask covering his nose and mouth in the studio.

1941 at 17

Fukuzawa's institute closed due to his arrest under suspicion of breaking the Maintenance of Public Order Act.

Yuasa concentrated on being a sign maker.

1943 at 19

Met Kikuji Yamashita, who was looking after Fukuzawa's institute. Assisted Yamashita with his artwork The Disintegration of America.

Made collage works using illustrations from Shonen Club, a magazine enjoyed by children during the war.

(The paint was rationed in wartime, so poor artists couldn't paint as they wished. Yuasa too made collages instead of paintings.)

1944 at 20

Undergone a physical examination for conscription but was rejected due to hernia.

1945 at 21

Made a living gaining cash from the soldiers of US Occupation Forces, by painting portraits on roof tiles.

(Portrait painters of the time used nicknames to maintain anonymity. Yuasa was named Yebosi because his hair was always standing up like an eboshi hat, worn by the court nobles. He kept the name Yebosi Yuasa as his artist name.)

Was influenced by the Occupation Forces' American culture.

1947 at 23

Joined the painter association Zenei Bijyutsu-Kai (Japan Avant-garde Artists' Club) formed by Kikuji Yamashita and Ryosaku Takayama.

Exhibited at the 1st Avant-Garde Exhibition. Shown every year until the 4th in 1950.

Obtained a painting job called "nuriya" from Kouji Kata, an acquaintance from the Fukuzawa Institute, to color the paintings for the picture story show.

1950 at 26

Was deeply impressed by the American exhibition held in Nishinomiya, near Kobe. Made a resolution to visit the US in the future.

1951 at 27

Left the Zenei Bijyutsu-Kai being tired of its political rhetoric.

1953 at 29

Exhibited at the 1st Nippon Exhibition.

1956 at 32

Visited New York. Produced artworks and made living by washing dishes at a restaurant. Bought newspaper and magazines every day with intension of using them in his art.

Met and became friends with Kenzo Okada and Toko Shinoda.

Encountered acrylic paint and started to use it ever since.

1958 at 34

Returned to Japan due to relapse of hernia. Met Minoru Oda in Hawaii on the way back.

Produced artworks utilizing materials purchased in the US such as magazine articles.

Named his own painting "Americanized Displacement Style" with a hint of self-mockery.

(He developed his original style under the influence of Surrealism at Fukuzawa Institute, Occupation Forces' American culture, and the reportage painting from the Zenei Bijyutsu-Kai.)

1959 at 35

Married Yasuyo Ishijima. A woman of 2 years younger, she was introduced to him by Mr & Mrs Kikuji Yamashita.

1962 at 38

The eldest son Akio was born.

1964 at 40

Exhibited Knight at the 8th Shell Art Award, and received an honorable mention.

1965 at 41

Held solo exhibition at Kyobashi's rental gallery. Developed "Black picture story show" series together with Magician.

Met Minoru Oda again. Shunsuke Tsurumi visited the show with him and named the series "Black picture story show".

Started to work as a watchman due to poverty, undergoing depression after the Olympics.

1979 at 55

As of the 5th Hitohito Exhibition, he began to withdraw from the world and rarely presented works, immersing himself in production.

1985 at 61

His atelier completely burnt down. Suffered severe burn injured when trying to rescue his artworks and materials.

1987 at 63

Passed away following the subsequent complication from the burn he has suffered in the fire.