

ARTIST: Tohru Kanayama

(Dexter, MI)

***Uppercase O
in Franklin Gothic Demi
red and black***

(Installation)

March 18 – April 14, 2018

STATEMENT:

This project, “Uppercase O in Franklin Gothic Demi red and black,” consists of 400 red and 400 black photocopied “O”s, quarter of a letter size, mixed together. Quantity and obsessiveness are the main themes. As with all my other projects involving type, the letter O is used purely as an image, not as part of language or written communication. I like to disassociate type from words or symbolism and strive to give it an aesthetic quality. For this project, I wanted to create something visually interesting, perhaps compelling, and possibly enthralling.

My work is almost always project based; each project has a theme and the pieces within it are variations on the theme. In recent years, I have tasked myself with the question, how can I present type in an innovative, creative and visually intriguing manner? I then approach the creative process intuitively, not conceptually. My work is created digitally with Adobe graphics software and then produced as archival inkjet prints. This project is therefore an anomaly—a one-shot, large scale installation project, but definitely something I can call my own.

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Tohru Kanayama was born and raised in Tokyo, Japan in a family with a Computer Science professor father and a flutist mother. In middle school, he became interested in Surrealism, René Magritte in particular, and he made a painting inspired by his work. In high school, his interest expanded to Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, the Neo-Expressionists in NYC and graphic design. Tohru’s maternal uncle, a graphic designer specializing in corporate identity, gave him exercises in composition. After finishing high school and relocating to California with his family, he became an admirer of Cy Twombly and Ellsworth Kelly. Tohru began his formal art education at Cornell University and earned his BFA in Graphic Design from Rhode Island School of Design. He has exhibited his work all over the United States and currently makes his home in Dexter, Michigan.

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