

Reconnecting to our Common Roots: Exploring the Beautiful Simplicity of Yusuke

*Asai's Yamatane*

We often reminisce about the simpler days in our lives. A scene might come to life in your mind's eye of kids playing in the grass, digging their hands into the dirt. Yusuke Asai's *Yamatane* creates a playful juxtaposition between the simplistic idea of doodling with dirt and the academic art world that reminds us to reach back down to our roots.

The walls and floor of *Yamanate* come to life with the youthful familiarity of a complex doodle on the side of your paper that can't ever be quite finished. On the west wall is a pair of cats seated next to each other, but one is faded and not all the way completed. The level of rich, complicated detail throughout the piece leads me to believe that this is no accident. Rather, it is Asai's take on the never-ending drawing that we've all fallen victim to. The lack of technical perfection and completion helps the installation be more relatable, and just as the simple use of dirt as a medium does. This personal reminder of the more simple times in our lives resonates throughout the room.

It's impossible to spend any amount of time within the walls of Asai's work and not think about your roots. We all share the same earth, and stand in the same soil. Connecting with the human experience doesn't require a PhD in arts studies; all it calls for is dirt, water, and a brush. Asai invites you to hold on to the simplicity of your life, love it, and share it. I'm thankful to have walked before the seed of a mountain.