

EXHIBITIONS OF KENYA HARA

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Typography III, Spring 2015 with Benjamin Shaykin
Typeface used in Circular Std
Printed with Epson Artisan 1430 Inkjet Printer

Frist edition
Designed by Moon Hee Kim

Born in 1958, Kenya Hara is a graphic designer, professor at the Musashino Art University and, since 2002, the art director of MUJI. He is interested in designing “circumstances” or “conditions” rather than “things.” Kenya Hara has traveled the world widely in an attempt to investigate the meaning of “design.” He incorporated traditional Japanese cultural features in designing the opening and closing ceremonies of the Nagano Winter Olympics, as well as in the promotion of the Aichi EXPO. He has received numerous design awards, including the Japanese Cultural Design Award. His book, *Design of Design* (Iwanami Shoten, 2003) received the Suntory Arts and Science Award, and its new revised and expanded English edition, *DESIGNING DESIGN* (Lars Müller Publishers, Switzerland, 2007) has reached readers all over the world.

Kenya Hara also collaborates often with creators around the world, giving them exciting projects to do in Japan, and by doing so is helping to build the next generation of an international design network with a strong base in Japan. All of this Kenya Hara has done because he is well educated, cares deeply about the quality of life, and has a powerful set of ideas about what designers can do to make our lives truly pleasant, and what Japanese experience and understanding can do to add to this better future.

Design, is basically not self-expression. instead, it originates in society. The essence of design lies in the process of discovering a problem shared by many people and trying to solve it.

Because the root of the problem is within society, everyone can understand plans for solutions and process for solving the problem, in addition to being able to see the problem from the designer's perspective.

*Design is appealing
because the process creates
inspiration that is engendered
by this empathy among
human beings in our common
values and spirituality.*



For Hara, designing means to take the familiar and present it in a different way, different from the intuitive. Design creates change in the familiar. The familiar is the sum of all past experiences and memories, and what design do is to resonate them within it and present them in a renewed form. Thus, according to Hara, design is always re-design, and not new design.

Re-design does not create a new world, a new object; it creates changes in the extant, and as such it requires sensitivity toward individual and social past. It has to be sensitive and take affordance into consideration, the ability to change and be changed, it has to respect the whole and blend into it. He pushed a project on this concept by inviting 32 designers to redesign 32 different objects that we are using every day: Children book, toilet paper, tea bag, matches, stamps, etc., provided people a new way to use these daily stuff. Those new faces became more easily to operate and efficient or even cut down the cost and give users a whole new experience.

What Hara wanted to prove in this project was that: in our normal daily life, we can still make amazing changes, from which the designs could bring a brand new revolution to our life. Design is not just endless exploitation, which will lead to the depletion of nature resources. If we use the number as an example, design is not pursuing 5, 6, 7, 8, 9...the key trick is to find 6.3 or 6.8 between 6 and 7, because between these two simple numbers there are a lot of, or infinite possibilities. His project can also inspire both designers and us about how do we redesign the object and make the new product to be sustainable.





Exit/entry Stamps | Masahiko Sato

As part of the exercise, hara asked masahiko sato to re-design the exit and entry stamps for passports at international airports, with the underlying note that it should 'warm people's hearts'. His response features an airplane pointing to

the right' for arrival with the date graphically composed as the body of the aircraft, and an airplane pointing to the left as the departure stamp.



Tea Bags | Naoto Fukasawa



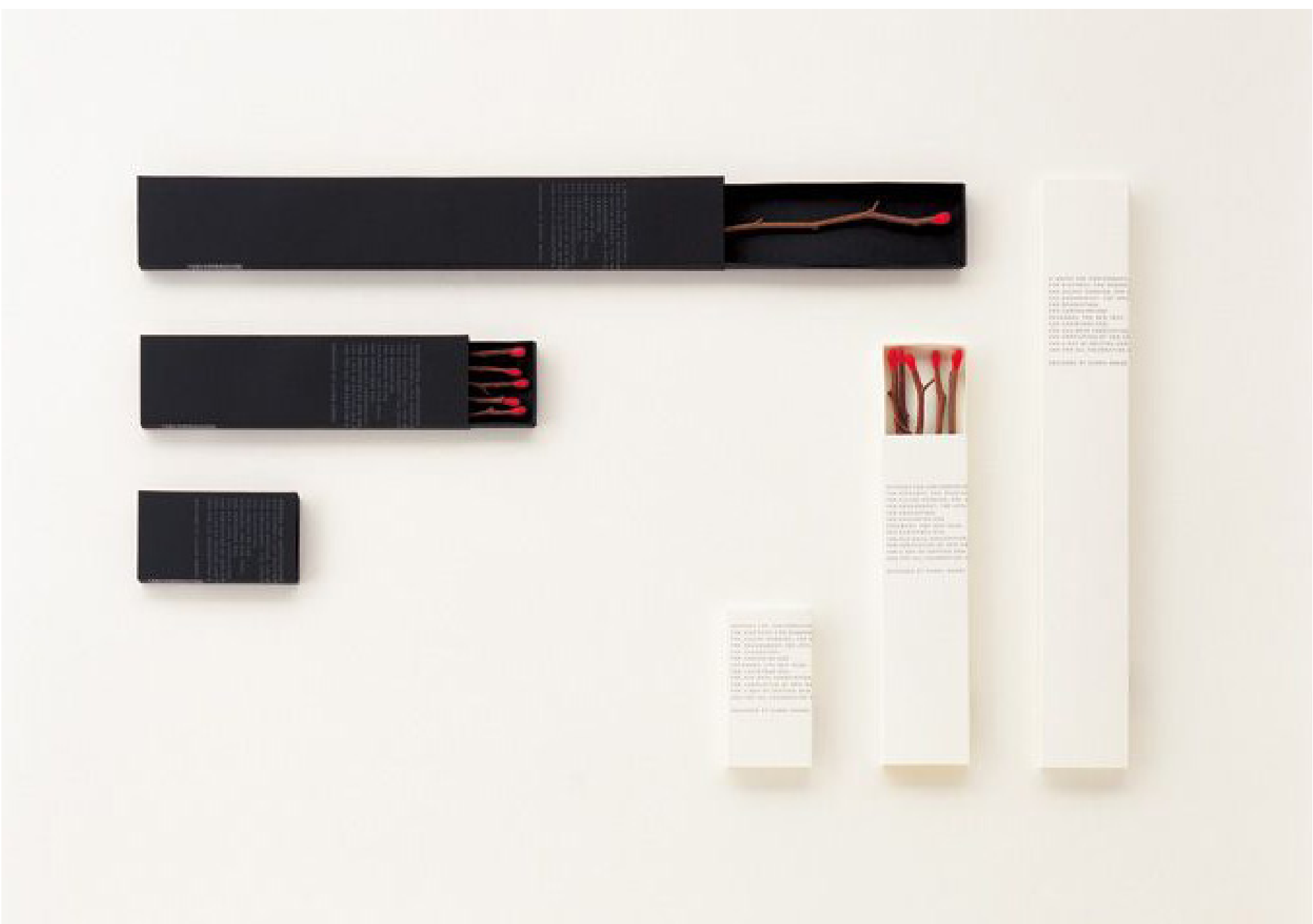
Tea Bags | Naoto Fukasawa



Tea Bags | Naoto Fukasawa



Tea Bags | Naoto Fukasawa



Design is not the act of amazing an audience with the novelty of forms or materials; it is the originality that repeatedly extracts astounding ideas from the crevices of the very commonness of everyday life.

Matches | Kaoru Mende

Hara asked to reconsider matches to lighting designer, Kaoru Mende. His concept was to take twigs and coat their tips with a combustible substance. The idea behind this was that, these small sticks have a final role before returning to the soil.



This industry is now reaching its end. We are going through a change, from having to create products to having to create value.

Toilet Paper | Shieru Ban

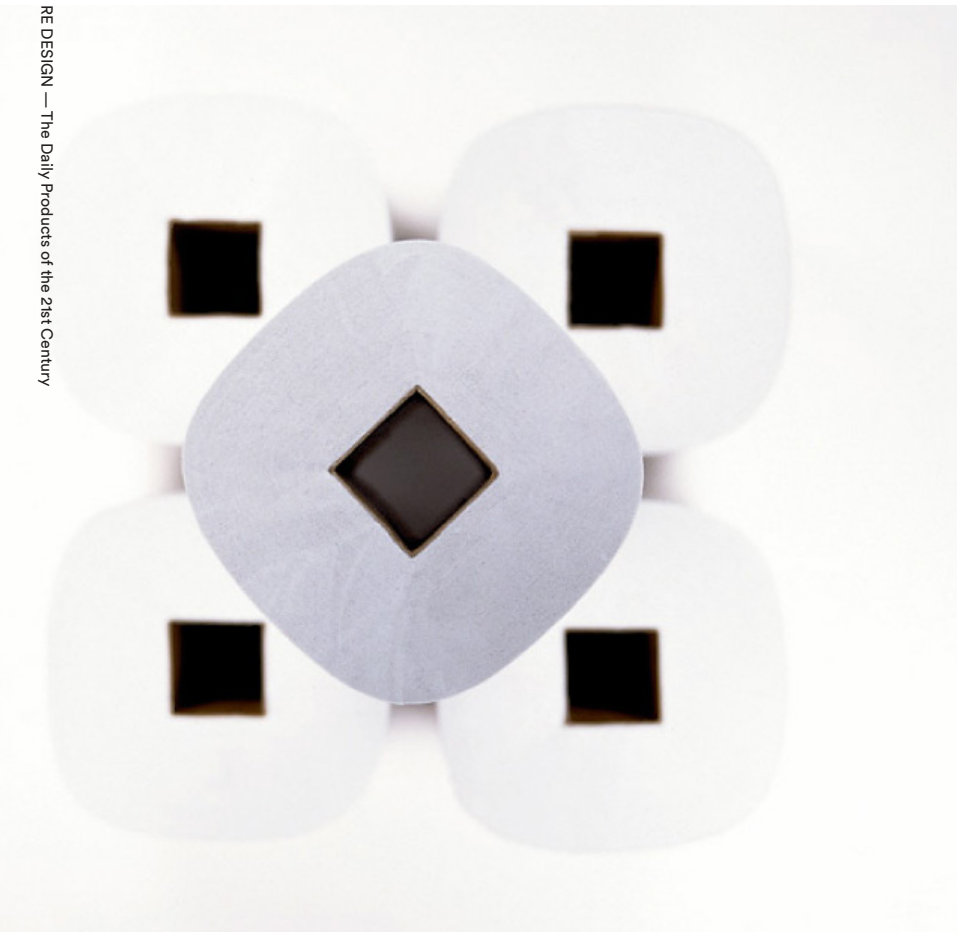




Toilet Paper | Shieru Ban

Architect Shigeru Ban transformed the typically round core of a toilet paper roll into a square. Though simple in its approach, the new design offered resistance, reducing the consumption of resources while also sending out a message

to economize. When packing the square rolls, they fit together more seamlessly saving space upon transportation and storage.





Diapers | Kosuke Tsumura



Diapers | Kosuke Tsumura

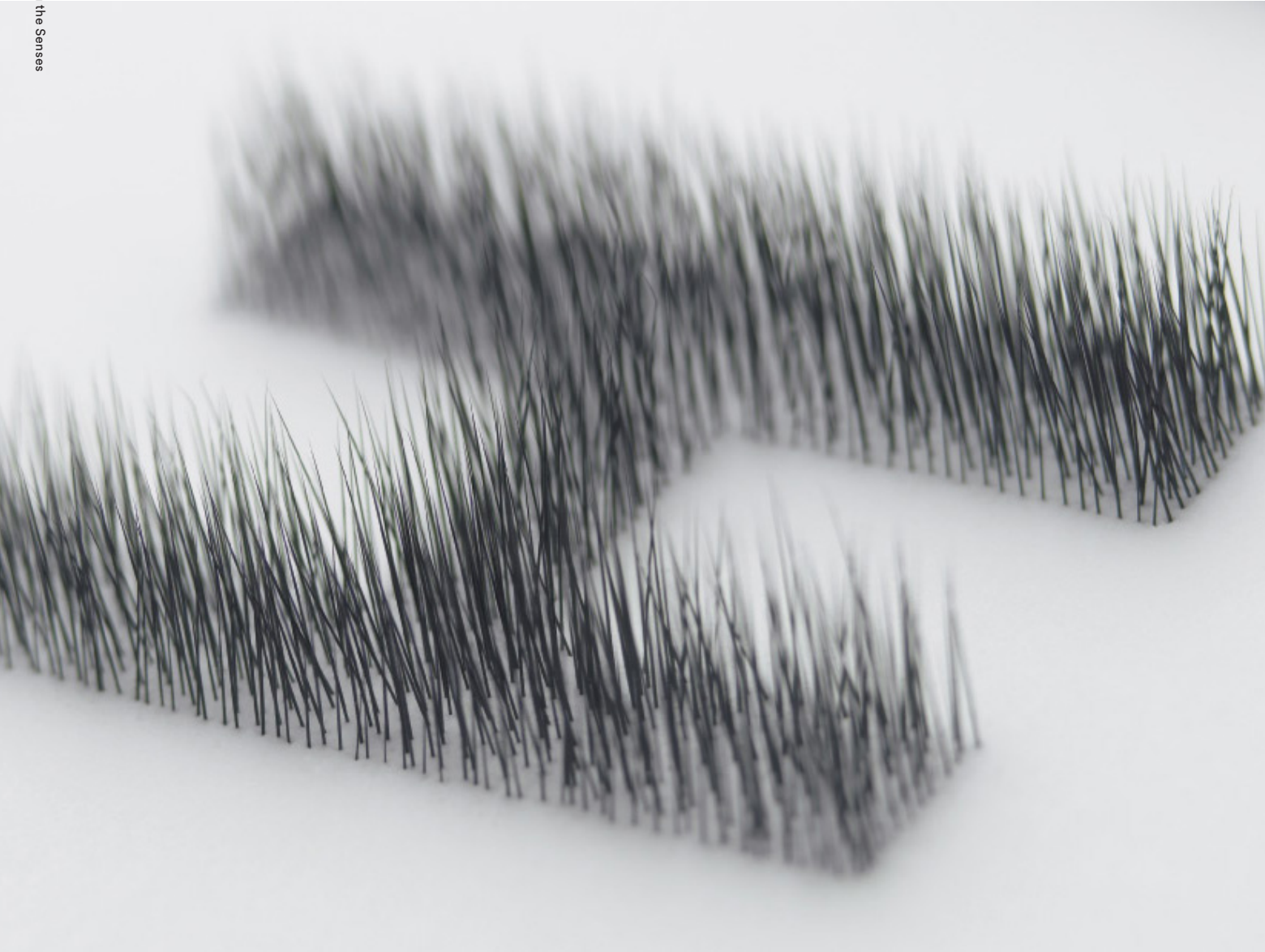


Diapers | Kosuke Tsumura

The term “haptic” means “relating or pleasant to the sense of touch”. Long ago, we became a technology-driven society; that is technology leads not only the economy, but also society. On the other hand, we might expect that, going along with scientific progress, there might be an evolution of the making of objects pivoting on the pursuit of an arousal of the senses. That contrasting world would be called “sense driven”.

The main point of design is not how to create an object, but how to stimulate the senses, “design of the senses”, to create creative stimulation of human senses. Hara does not regard the senses as information receptors, but as openings to the world; the way in which man interacts with the world. Sensory experiences are integrative and cannot be separated and defined by means of the five senses - sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. Just as sensation is integrative, thus too is meaning. Meaning is not obtained in the brain in our heads, but in all the “brains” scattered throughout our body, in all the memories ingrained in them. By exploring how senses work, the starting point of design changes, becomes different. The designer must think how he can awaken and stimulate the senses before he presents shape and color. If we focus on sensations we will discover an unexplored aspect of design. New sensory experiences design a renewed, different, and changing reality.

In 2004, Hara asked 22 participants including architects, designers, a traditional Japanese plasterer and the design team of a high-tech household electric appliances manufacturer to design an object motivated primarily by the goal of “awakening the senses”. The concept of “haptic” becomes instantly tangible, benefitting tremendously from the participation of these brilliant creators. It talks about how to bring the natural feeling into the product and make users start to think about what’s the relation between man and environment.



Haptic Logo | Kenya Hara

Hara presents the outcomes of an exhibition whereby he asked participants to design an object motivated by 'haptic' considerations rather than shape and color. It was an exercise in 'feeling' rather than form.



Haptic Logo | Kenya Hara

Refused the right to sketch out their designs, the contributors designed pieces which stimulated other senses and feelings upon interaction. For hara, design is about igniting the senses, using them to change our perception of that.



Geta | Shuhei Hasado

Shuhei Hasado has also used the tactile sense in his re-appropriated geta. The moss, wood, and many other textures of the geta cause one to use the sensory nerves on the bottom of their feet. These senses used to be very helpful to primitive

man in identifying rich soil, creature population and more about his surroundings.



Geta | Shuhei Hasado



Geta | Shuhei Hasado



Design is the provocation of the senses and a way to make us discern the world afresh.



Kami Tama | Kosuke Tsumura



Kami Tama | Kosuke Tsumura



Juice Skin | Naoto Fukasawa

Juice Skin consists of juice boxes that appear to be wrapped in the actual skins of the fruit whose juice they contain. The effect of the juice boxes is immediate: audiences quickly comprehend both the contents of the objects as well as

the pun Fukasawa is making, since the use of actual fruit skin would be unworkable for this application. Borrowing the precise Japanese craft of simulation developed to make fake plastic food for restaurant displays, Fukasawa creates vividly

realistic surfaces that conform to the improbable geometry of disposable beverage container.



Juice Skin | Naoto Fukasawa



Juice Skin | Naoto Fukasawa

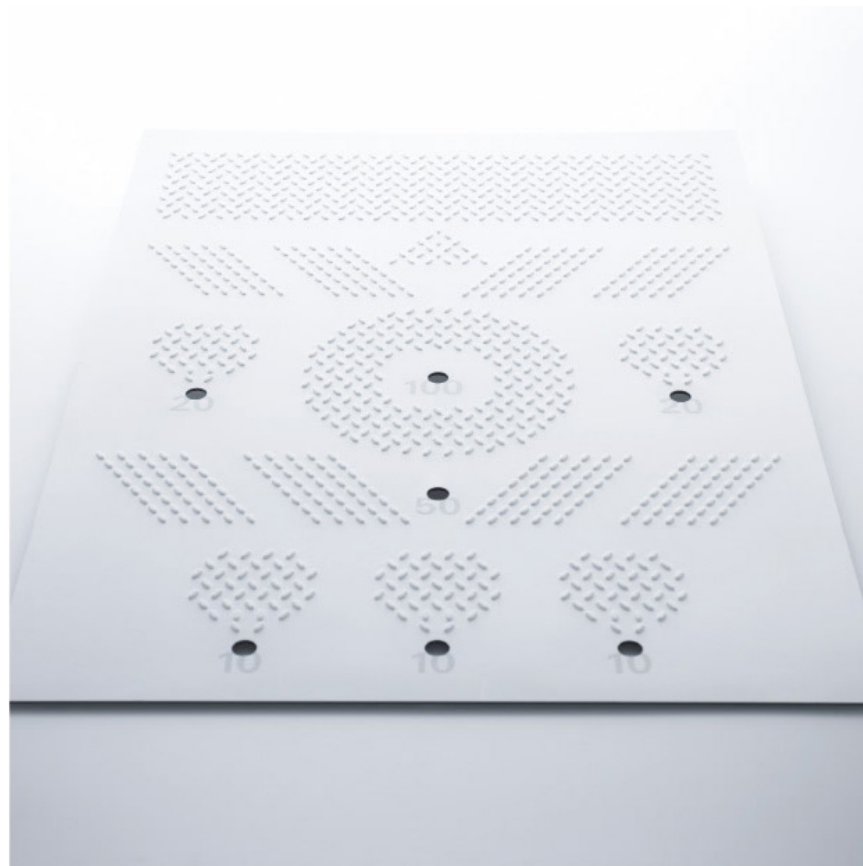
We might be able to limit the senses more by narrowing them down. If we think of the sense of taste as a combination of smell and the oral sense of touch, the sense of taste becomes part of each smell and touch.





*If we set the hurdle
for discerning
separate delicate
stimuli as language,
then sight, hearing
and touch could
pass, but smell and
taste are a little iffy.*





Water Pachinko | Kenya Hara

Hara is interested in the technology and phenomenon of super-hydrophobic surfaces that he couldn't suppress his creative appetite. Super-hydrophobic technology is developed to keep snow from accumulating on satellite

dishes, because when snow piles up, their antennae don't function as well. The result is the invention of a surface that accumulates neither snow nor rain. The water-repellent phenomenon is called the lotus effect, working on the same

principle as water droplets rolling off lotus leaves. The same phenomenon occurs on paper and that's how strong the water repellent is.

White is not white. The receptivity that senses white is what gives birth to whiteness. So we cannot look for white. We need to search instead for a way of feeling that will sense white.



Cabbage Bowls | Yasuhiro Suzuki

Depending on this search, for the receptivity that senses white, we will be able to aim our consciousness towards a white that is a liter whiter than the average white.



Cabbage Bowls | Yasuhiro Suzuki

Hara's philosophy comes through in the book itself whereby white acts as space in which images and text are arranged in a manner which allows everything to 'breathe' in such a way that provides the reader with a sense of calm. There is no chaos,

just simplicity so that even though the information at hand may seem complex, the 'white' brings a sense of clarity.



With that ability, we will become conscious of white. And then we will become aware of white enmeshed in an incredible diversity in the world's many cultures.

*We will become able to
understand words like
'tranquility,' or 'emptiness,'
and discern the meanings
dormant within them. as we
turn our attention toward
white, the world gathers
more light, and shadows
deepen in degree.*

