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Artist Statement

My work humorously expresses the various groups and incomplete human self-portraits of modern people who want to escape from excessive competition, endless work, complicated thoughts, or emotions.

My persona 'Fish Daegari' means fish head in Korean and is half-human half-fish in pink flesh. 'Fish Daegari' is a liberation for me who is buried in too much thought in a complex modern society. I brought a fish head to my persona, wanting to forget all my worries and be free from pain. Pink flesh reveals the rawness of my flesh in such freedom.

'Fish Daegari' is almost always with alcohol in all its images. Alcohol is a way for me to become a 'Fish Daegari' in real life. Alcohol frees us from reason and oppression. This is reminiscent of the liberation of citizens in the ancient Dionysus Festival (Dionysia). The fish head is a mask worn for the Dionysus Festival in my art world.

Friedrich Nietzsche said that humans have both Apollonian things that symbolize reason and Dionysian things that symbolize irrationality. Nietzsche said that humans can gain vitality only when these two contradictory things are balanced and interacted, and I sympathize with this. The ancient Greek Dionysus Festival is an example of how people could become full and natural by fully revealing and accepting the Dionysian irrationality that they usually suppress. I want to convey humorously by featuring a contradictory existence mixed with humans and fish that this irrational, emotional, and venting desire is not negative or hidden, but extremely natural. I want to say that "Let's live more raw, let's mix together, let's have more time and feel happy. We are human beings who die anyway, and after peeling off our skins, we are just pink meatballs.!"

Contrary to conventional belief, the fact that fish can actually think and feel pain is a little ironic. It is the fish head that has led us to such misunderstandings. Fish have no eyelids and no facial expressions. Therefore, no matter how thoughtful and painful the fish is, it does not appear on the outside. The same goes for 'Fish Daegari' in my work. I hope my persona is completely free and liberated, but there may still be oppression inside. 'Fish Daegari' cannot be perfect as long as it is half-fish and half-human. Humans have reason and must think. The Dionysia only lasts for a while, we can't stay drunk forever, and we have to take off our mask. Nevertheless, the reason why I continue to work on 'Fish Daegari' is that I believe that even the superficial temporary liberation of that moment is desperately needed for me and for us. What I want is a rest, not a perfect Utopia.