

# Kenji CHIGA Solo Exhibition: To begin with, we must try to do things ourselves.



2024.3.6 (Wed) – 4.14 (Sun)

## Greeting

BUG, which is operated by Recruit Holdings Co., Ltd., will hold a solo exhibition by Kenji Chiga, from (Wed.) March 6, 2023. This exhibition is being organized in line with one of BUG's activity directives, namely "Providing Career Support," with the objective of serving as a stepping stone for an artist looking to take their career to the next level.

Chiga won the Grand Prize at the 16th "1\_WALL" Photography Competition in 2017 with his entry "Bird, Night, and then," which addressed aspects of Indian society such as its caste system, poverty, and its overbearing emphasis on academic credentials. At "1\_WALL," the artist was praised for his perspective, understanding social phenomena in a structured manner, his ability to edit in such a way that blends fiction and non-fiction, and his adroit handling of the photographic medium.

Chiga has been researching special fraud over a period of around three years from 2019, and this exhibit will present new work that has emerged from that research on the themes of the social structures and individuals involved. There was a downward trend in losses caused by special fraud between 2014, the peak, and 2021, when Chiga first exhibited work on this topic. Over the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the figure started to rise again, with 2022 marking the first uptick in eight years. Underlying this, no doubt, were changes to individual lives brought on by shifts in society and the times, and at this exhibition Chiga will present works that focus on this area.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who in any way supported the operation of this exhibition.

Art center BUG

## A Message from the Artist

Special fraud is like a mirror that reflects the state of society itself.

The behavioral principles it involves, its system of exploitation, deception, and manipulation—what all these throw back is an image of ourselves.

"They took 1,000,000 yen from me," my aunt said to us all. When we, her relatives, heard this, we suddenly found ourselves confronted with this mirror that appeared before us, and with the figures we saw inside it. Only my aunt knew the face of the man who took her credit card. I tried to imagine the sort of person who had done this, and saw a villain in my mind's eye. What did this invisible perpetrator use the money for? I'm sure that the untraceable money ended up making someone in our society glad; the money may have even done the rounds and ended up sitting in my own wallet, right now. In creating this piece, I played many parts, sometimes a perpetrator, sometimes a victim, documenting the traces. But I was unable to see the difference between the actual people and the people my images showed.

Since 2019, individual financial hardships have spread to the whole of society. Despairing voices can be heard throughout our society, muttering, "The government won't help us, we have to fend for ourselves somehow." Amid continuing economic troubles, people have been left with limited options, and this has paved the way for special fraud to run rampant in our society. I myself found myself struggling to make ends meet, as did many of my friends; one even told me they toyed with the idea of signing up for yami-baito, "shady part-time job," as a last resort.

In 2022, fraud damage increased for the first time in eight years, and it has continued to rise since. By 2023, these scams had made victims of around 250,000 people among the older population, and criminals of around 25,000 among the younger population. Their hopes for a life of peace, for financial comfort, were converted into a sum of 650 billion yen in damages, were spent, and contributed to the economy. This situation suggests that these yami-baito are more than mere criminal acts; they symbolize the economic issues our society has created. They mix with everything else and shape who we are.

Back in September 2020, this phrase "To begin with, we must try to do things ourselves" bore the face of the nation. The phrase was cut off from its background and etched into our minds primarily as a code for self-accountability. News of the arrest of a "money mule" appears on my smartphone screen. The culprit, a former daycare worker, confessed they had looked for illicit part-time work after having had no work for over a month. But what really is the difference between me and them, between those on the two sides of the screen? Perhaps the boundary between us isn't so clear after all.

Special fraud is a mirror of society, a mirror that shows us who we are.

Kenji CHIGA



Photography and video are permitted.



DO NOT touch the artworks.



Security camera in operation.

## Kenji CHIGA

Born in 1982, in Shiga Prefecture. He graduated from Osaka University' s School of Engineering Science in 2008. He won the Grand Prize at the 16th "1\_WALL" Photography Competition, an Excellence Award at Canon' s 44th New Cosmos of Photography, and the Best Emerging Photographer Award at the 8th Dali International Photography Exhibition. He was also shortlisted for the Luma Rencontres Dummy Book Award Arles at the Rencontres d' Arles international photography festival in France (2019 and 2022). His exhibitions include the 16th "1\_WALL" Photography Competition Grand Prize Winner Exhibition "Suppressed Voice" (Guardian Garden, 2018), (Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, 2021), the solo exhibition "Hijack Geni" (Reminders Photography Stronghold, 2022), and the Prix Pictet Japan Award exhibition "Fire & Water" (Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, 2022).



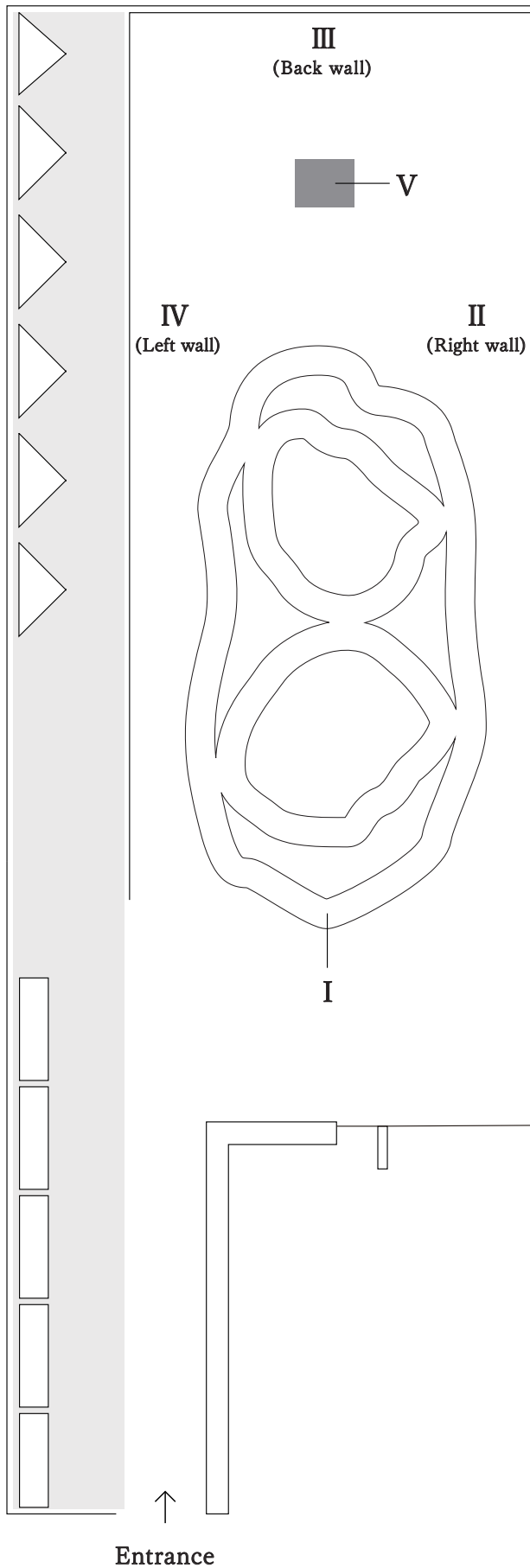
Interview  
(7'00")



Full Interview  
(20'23")

# List of Works

Work List For each work, title/year/medium/size are noted. All works are in the collection of the artist.

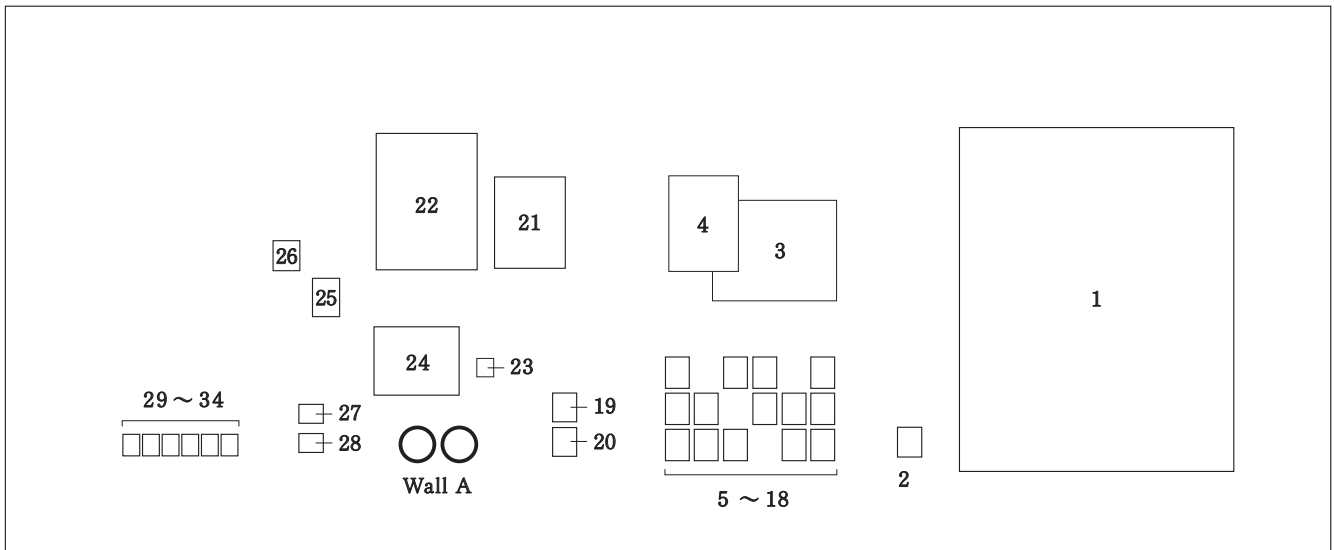


**I**  
Circuit of life  
2024  
about 400×800 cm  
Cutting sheet

**II~IV**  
See the next page

**V**  
HIJACK GENI  
2022  
19.7×26.2×4.8cm  
Laser print on paper, binding with polyurethane reactive  
hot melt adhesive

II (Right wall)



1  
**UNTITLED**  
 2024  
 360×450 cm  
 Tarpaulin

2  
**UNTITLED**  
 2023  
 38×45.5×2 cm  
 Pigment ink and  
 laser print on paper,  
 mounted on wooden panel

3  
**FILE\_07**  
 2024  
 162.5×130 cm  
 Pigment ink on paper

4  
 20190329  
 Shooting year 2019  
 94×125.3 cm  
 Pigment ink on paper

5 ~ 18  
 To begin with,  
 we must try to do things ourselves.(B)~(O)  
 2024  
 31.8×41×2 cm  
 Pigment ink on water-soluble paper,  
 mounted on wooden panel

19  
 Vestige #02  
 2024  
 38×45.5×2 cm  
 Pigment ink and laser print,  
 resin on paper,  
 mounted on wooden panel

20  
 Vestige #01  
 2024  
 38×45.5×2 cm  
 Pigment ink and laser print,  
 resin on paper,  
 mounted on wooden panel

21  
**FILE\_06**  
 2024  
 97.6×122 cm  
 Pigment ink on paper

22  
**UNTITLED**  
 2023  
 133×183 cm  
 Pigment ink on paper

23  
 Vestige #04  
 2024  
 22×27.3×2 cm  
 Laser print on paper,  
 mounted on wooden panel

24  
**UNTITLED**  
 2024  
 112.5×90 cm  
 Pigment ink on paper

25  
 Vestige #03  
 2024  
 31.8×41×2 cm  
 Pigment ink and laser print on paper,  
 mounted on wooden panel

26

To begin with,  
we must try to do things ourselves. (A)  
2023  
43×53×2 cm  
Pigment ink on water-soluble paper,  
mounted on wooden panel

27

Lack with money (A)  
2024  
30×24×4 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, aluminum,  
acrylic framed

28

Lack with money (B)  
2024  
30×24×4 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, aluminum,  
acrylic framed

29 ~ 34

willful negligence (A)~(F)  
2024  
21×26×3 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, aluminum,  
acrylic framed

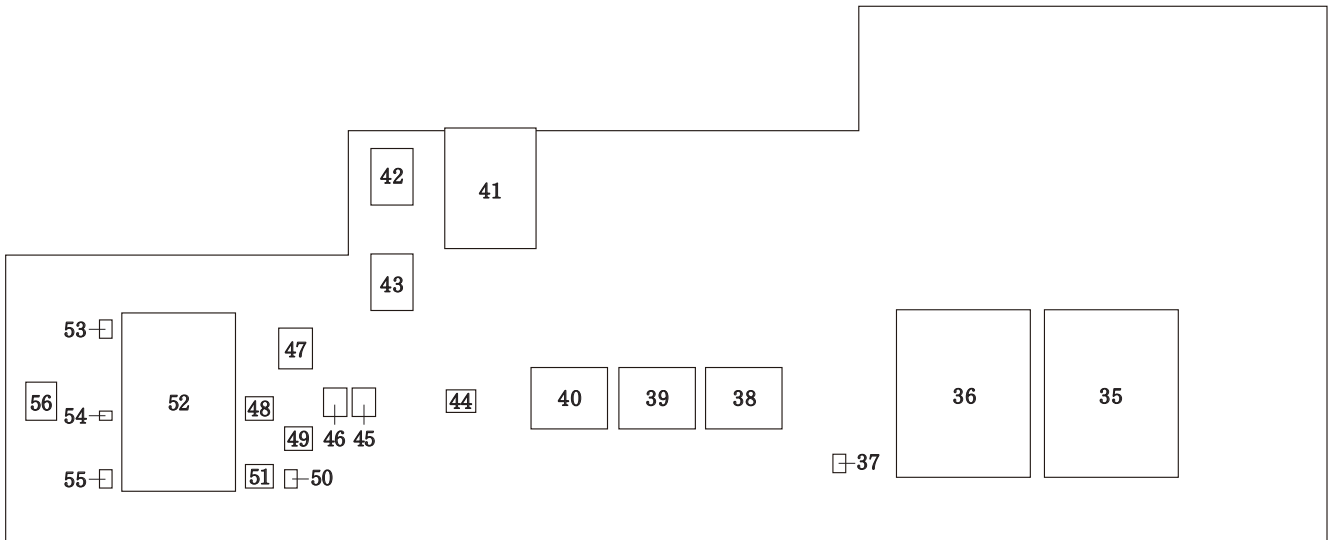
### III (Back wall)

132 Monuments

2024

13.9×17.9 cm (each)  
Pigment ink and laser print,  
mounted on wooden panel

IV (Left wall)



35  
To begin with,  
we must try to do things ourselves. (P)  
2024  
130×162×3 cm  
Pigment ink on water-soluble paper,  
mounted on wooden panel

36  
Vestige #05  
2024  
130×162×3 cm  
Pigment ink on water-soluble paper,  
mounted on wooden panel

37  
UNTITLED  
2024  
13.5×19 cm  
Pigment ink and resin on paper

38  
FILE\_09  
2024  
80×64 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, aluminum,  
acrylic framed

39  
FILE\_05  
2024  
80×64 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, aluminum,  
acrylic framed

40  
FILE\_01  
2024  
80×64 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, aluminum,  
acrylic framed

41  
UNTITLED  
Shooting 2014  
120×186.7 cm  
Pigment ink on paper

42  
Grandma  
2021  
43.5×59×5 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, ash and mirror,  
acrylic framed

43  
Mom  
2021  
43.5×55×5 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, ash and mirror,  
acrylic framed

44  
Dining table  
2024  
30×24 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, aluminum,  
acrylic framed

45  
FILE\_03  
2024  
24×30×2 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, aluminum,  
acrylic framed

46  
FILE\_08  
2024  
24×30×2 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, aluminum,  
acrylic framed

47  
FILE\_02  
2024  
24×30×2 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, aluminum,  
acrylic framed

48  
UNTITLED  
2024  
27×21.6×3 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, veneer and ash,  
acrylic framed

49  
UNTITLED  
2024  
27×21.6×3 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, veneer and ash,  
acrylic framed

50  
UNTITLED  
2024  
13.5×19 cm  
Pigment ink and resin on paper

51  
UNTITLED  
2024  
27×21.6×3 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, veneer and ash,  
acrylic framed

52  
Eco system  
2022  
120×186.7 cm  
Pigment ink and resin on paper

53  
UNTITLED  
2024  
13.5×19 cm  
Pigment ink and resin on paper

54  
UNTITLED  
2024  
10×7 cm  
Pigment ink on paper

55  
UNTITLED  
2024  
13.5×19 cm  
Pigment ink and resin on paper

56  
Mirror  
2024  
32×40×3 cm  
Pigment ink on paper, aluminum,  
acrylic framed

## Kenji CHIGA Solo Exhibition: To begin with, we must try to do things ourselves.

Date 2024.3.6 (Wed) – 4.14 (Sun)  
Organized by BUG  
Cooperation: Canon Inc.

Curated by Aya NOSE (BUG)  
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