

# Artist Interview: Hiroshi Senju

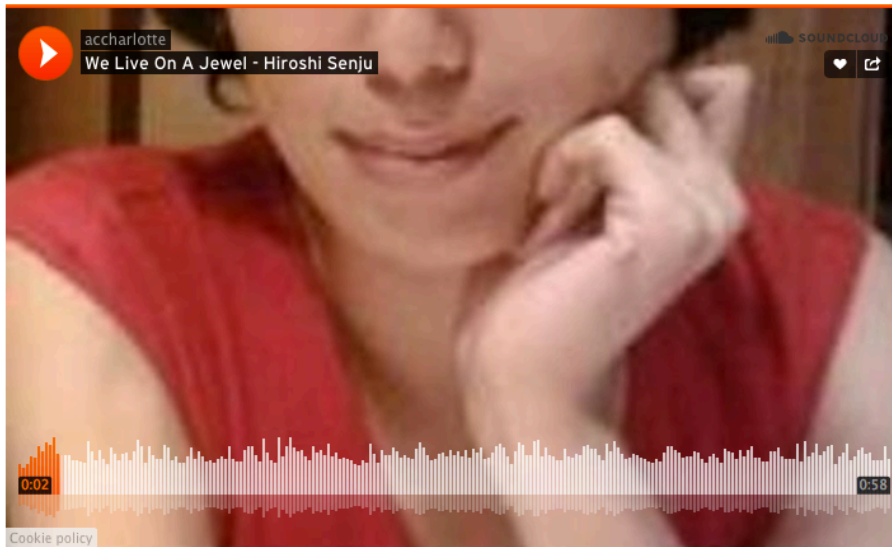


*By Celeste Yap*



*Image courtesy of Sundaram Tagore Gallery Singapore*

Fans of the Fendi baguette will remember a series of one-off pieces created by various artists. One such bag by New York based Japanese artist Hiroshi Senju depicts a waterfall on the back, and is also the carrier of an environmental message:



Known for his realistic – read: very, very big – portrayals of waterfalls, the 57-year-old artist had also been commissioned to produce works for several organisations, including the Toyama Museum of Modern Art in Japan and OUB Centre in Singapore.

His latest collection titled **Day Falls/Night Falls** is currently being shown at Sundaram Tagore Gallery until 8 March.

Stylexstyle caught up with him:

### **Why did you decide to use fluorescent pigments?**

I bought fluorescent powder, which is not meant for painting, then I mixed in glue. And finally I have fluorescent pigment, my original discovery.

Fluorescent pigment is unique. In daytime, it is a very beautiful white colour, and gentle and calm. After dark, it dramatically changes, there's a mysterious, spiritual feeling.

I think this is a lot like contemporary human beings: Daytime, very gentle, but at night we have more emotional feelings from deep inside our hearts.

### **You had a series called *Falling Colour* that featured red and green waterfalls. Why the use of these unconventional colours?**

I want to show feelings of diversity, and the many possibilities of harmony with colours.

Each colour has its original characteristic – like the different characteristics of humans. Many colours reflect the diversity of humans. Many colours make more good harmony than one colour. Many colours are more beautiful than one colour – like an orchestra, a jazz trio, piano and ballet.

I think this is the essence of peacemaking, where many diversities can collaborate – like a kind of friendship.



*Senju-san working on the Fendi baguette*

**Will you ever consider painting other natural phenomenon?**

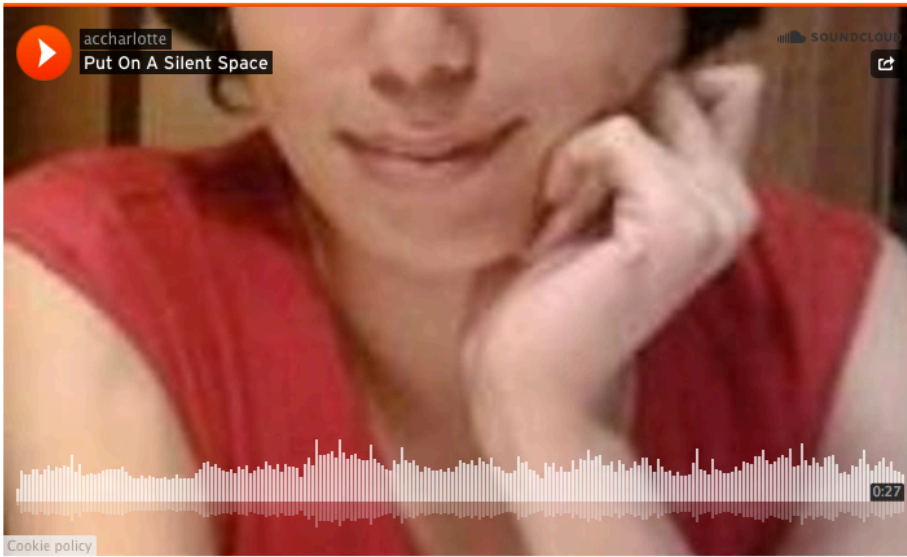
Actually, there's a lot a lot of charming natural phenomenon surrounding us. Now I paint waterfalls and cliffs. Before, I painted forests and seascapes. My subject matter changes as I progress. Maybe in the future I paint Mars, the moon, the space, the deep sea.

**Does the waterfall have any personal significance for you?**

I'm interested in the passing of time. The waterfall is about being in the now – and the universe is all about eternal movements – that appeals very much to me.

I know Chinese people associate water with wealth, and beauty is well living. Good life means beauty. Beauty itself is wealth, for example, flowers, beautiful birds, nice food, landscapes – make us feel we are surrounded by wealth. Our instinct is to live a life surrounded by beauty.

*The bag, originally commissioned for the opening of a Fendi boutique in Berlin, is now part of a museum collection – in other words, public property – but we couldn't resist asking the artist: How should one carry the bag, with the buckle or waterfall facing out?*



*Sundaram Tagore Gallery is at 5 Lock Road, #01-05.*