

Artist Statement | Nishiki Sugawara-Beda

Land connects us all. This sentiment stems from my deep desire to connect with others and the world around me. To pursue this, I embarked on my own path to uncover the core of humanity—a place where I felt true connection with others could begin. As an artist and individual whose foundation and inspiration arise from tracing the roots of cultural and material origins, I am now delving into the concept of material embodiment in my work.

KuroKuroShiro, meaning black-black-white in Japanese, uses landscape as a conceptual framework for the interior world—a sublime space where we might all connect. *KuroKuroShiro +*, welcomes the materials from a specific place to take a significant role, including the state where I call home, Texas.

Palo Duro Canyon, the second largest canyon in the United States in west Texas, offers an immense scale that gives an individual a perspective on how small we are, and we are all part of the Earth. Even more fascinating, it allows us to touch land formed over 250 million years ago. I gently extract a small quantity of raw materials from the bottom of the canyon, such as pigments and gypsum, and manipulate them. I then use these materials in my painting to engage in a dialogue with other materials that I have collected from different places—for example, Japanese Sumi, ink traditionally used in East Asia.

Materials from Texas and Japan speak both quietly yet profoundly. Their dialogue takes center stage, visually showcasing a fusion of culture and materiality. I hope to invite viewers to experience this cultural conversation on an elemental, earthbound level.