

Nanami Hori  
Becoming ,phoon'  
May 22 – July 12, 2025

Layr is pleased to announce the first solo exhibition of Nanami Hori (\*1995, lives and works in Tokyo) at the gallery.

The energy source of a typhoon is the water vapor produced by the evaporation of warm seawater. As it moves, the typhoon grows stronger by drawing in more warm air. However, when it moves northward and the sea surface temperature drops, it can no longer draw energy from the ocean and begins to weaken. Eventually, the typhoon loses its strength and disperses completely. The title Becoming 'phoon' is a pun that plays on the idea of "ruining" a typhoon - that is, aiming for the failure of the typhoon. In *The Queer Art of Failure*, Jack Halberstam argues that „stupidity, failure, and forgetfulness are more important than knowing, mastering, and remembering.“ He further argues that failure can be a way of critiquing capitalism and heteronormativity. Using examples from popular culture, Halberstam explores alternatives to individualism and conformity.

Working with painting, drawing, text, comics, animation, and materials such as wood, paper, and clay, Nanami Hori sees her individual works as parts of a system or kind of network. Personal experiences and emotions are materialized to bring them to a state where they can be manipulated. “Specifically, I engage in wordplay, extract narratives or scenes, and use my hands in a craft-like manner. This is done to standardize texture, scale, temporality, and spatiality, so that I can rearrange and observe them.”

Narratives may evolve into full-fledged comics or animations, or they may remain in the form of rough scripts, like storyboards. Satire and humor are essential. These narratives are then expanded or fleshed out through further wordplay and crafting, or else abstracted and flattened again. This process of cartooning or caricature also functions as a coping mechanism for the artist.

If multiple people have reached a „BAD END“ through different branching choices, Nanami Hori created these texts as imagined continuations of those endings. Parts of the texts were consciously edited, while others were written in a more automatic, stream-of-consciousness style.

·           *The continuation of a total stranger's BAD END begins. It feels familiar. Faint red italic letters hovered in midair at the center of my vision. Things like this—I used to see them everywhere. My senses were dull; only the sense of foreboding felt truly real.*

· The arm that should've been crushed had returned to normal. From the open window came the wind, carrying a citrus scent. In the stagnant air of winter, the smell of fabric softener from other households blurs the images of ancestral faces. Behind the curtain, above my head-ears. Two. Triangular.

· Taxes peeled away the curse, and we became tourists by chance. The tourist spots were plastered with the faces of various IPs, but they all seemed to be the same on the inside. Of course, they also sold wooden swords and dragon blades. Time placed one hand on the drawing paper, then the other—each pulling in opposite directions. The paper wandered finely, branching out in arcs.

· The fluorescent coils snapped under the force of an intense spin, and the torn neon strands created a vast dent in the sea. Some of the coils collided with arrows from unexpected directions, shifted locations several times, spun and spun, and lost their original forms. A few arrows are still tangled in my head. Our eyes meet.

· A square window frame. If this weren't a game but a film or a seasonal drama, he/she might have had a more ordinary appearance. Something black lies on the road. Had someone been carrying something? Someone caught in the swirl of motion said, „This is a curse I don't mind receiving,“ and picked it up. Sure enough, it clung to their arm and wouldn't let go.

· After that, I was easily caught by a creature mimicking my mom's voice, and everything above my nose was cleanly peeled away. My mom's voice had said, “Can you help me for a sec?”— and the moment I showed my face in the living room, it happened. My torso is probably on the tatami floor, one leg hanging into the kitchen. I can see a spiderweb. Where are my eyes? A voice speaks: “Why is it that humans never stop speaking?”

· The act of sorting objects required a great deal of imaginal force. I extended a measuring tape into the air, trying to measure unseen interior dimensions. Because A viewed others as extensions of himself, he struggled to form relationships as one embodied being facing another. Others are not something one becomes, but something that exists. What might a shapeshifter's BAD END look like? There was a label on its nylon body: “This backpack can expand its gusset to increase volume when you have more gear. It comes with a detachable bottle pouch.”