

Announcement

Mai HANAMURA has been defamed by pointing out that HANAMURA traced Satoru YUIGA's work, since around 2019 (hereinafter "the case").

1) Outcome of the Lawsuit against YUIGA

Regarding the case, we filed a civil lawsuit, demanding a payment of damages based on defamation, etc., and the case was accepted to the Tokyo District Court as of October 7, 2020. After a three-year trial at a department specializing in intellectual property, the court found the pointing out is UNTRUE and ordered YUIGA to pay 3.14 million yen.

2) Before the Lawsuit

HANAMURA received the pointing out of trace from her in the early summer of 2019. Because the pointing out was untrue, HANAMURA consistently and politely explained to her that HANAMURA never trace her and gave demonstrations to make sure that she was understood. However, as mentioned at the beginning of this article, YUIGA unilaterally posted on the Internet that HANAMURA was tracing her work. This has led to a situation where irrational criticism and personal attacks against HANAMURA are still being repeated.

3) The Court's Decision

The following is an example of a tracing verification image created by YUIGA.

Fig. 1



The illustration of the person in the lower left of the fig.1 (blue in the superimposition on the right) is YUIGA's, and the illustration in the upper left (red one) is HANAMURA's. The HANAMURA's obviously predates YUIGA's and cannot be traced.

In this example, the "overlapping lines" are recognized in the outline of the chin area, but little else is recognized in the overlapping lines.

The court concluded that such "overlapping lines" alone could not prove the act of tracing. As reasons for this, the court noted that "when examined from an artistic perspective, standard illustrations of the human face are drawn based on the anatomical human skeleton, so the placement and shape of parts such as eyes, nose, mouth, hair, and contours are almost identical," and that "if the facial orientation of the parts is the same, the range of choices regarding their placement is narrow," among other things.

Importantly, the court found that the hundreds of illustrations YUIGA cited as evidence of tracing, all of them were not all created by tracing.

3) Thank you and appreciation for your support

We would like to report that it has been publicly acknowledged that there is no basis for the tracing points made in this case, and we would like to express our sincere gratitude to all of our fans for their support.

We ask for your continued support so that HANAMURA's honor as an illustrator can be properly restored in the future.

4) Additional Notice

Around 2011, there was a plagiarism scandal over one of the "hug pillow-style illustrations" included in the purchase bonus (booklet) of "AMNESIA," a game for which HANAMURA was involved in character design. However, it was NOT HANAMURA who did the plagiarism, but another illustrator. There is a rumor that HANAMURA is the culprit in this case as well, but it is UNTRUE.

Thank You.

Dear Fans

Nov. 9th, 2023

Mai HANAMURA and her agent Akihiro KOMOTO, Attorney at Law

* The above is a summary of the Japanese Release Document translated into English.