



Handout images show (from left) emblems created by Spain's Hey Studio, the Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee and Olivier Debie for a Belgian theater. | KYODO

NATIONAL

Tokyo Olympics logo designer strikes back at plagiarism claims

KYODO

ARTICLE HISTORY | JUL 31, 2015

BRUSSELS – The man behind the logo for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games has struck back at claims he plagiarized the design, saying Friday he knew nothing about a Belgian theater logo that has drawn attention for its similarities.

“I know nothing about the overseas piece of work that is being reported by the media,” Kenjiro Sano said in comments released by the Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee.

“I never referred to it when I was creating (the Olympic logo),” added Sano, who will reportedly speak further on the matter at a later date.

Olivier Debie, the designer of the Belgian theater logo, confirmed he and the theater have “decided on an action to ask for the withdrawal or the change of the (Olympics) logo.”

He said the exact nature of this “action” has not been decided, but that his lawyer will take steps as early as next week.

Facing a potential public relations blow, Toshiro Muto, director general of the Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee, said Thursday: “We made an announcement (of the emblem) after researching trademarks in and out of Japan. We believe it doesn’t pose any problems.”

Muto spoke to reporters in Kuala Lumpur, where the International Olympic Committee is holding a

meeting.

Debie said the theater logo is not registered as a trademark, but it predates the Olympics emblem that was revealed in Tokyo on July 24. His design was “made official in 2013.”

“It’s not difficult to find it on the Internet,” he added.

He noted that the envisaged action is a decision jointly made with the theater’s general director. The theater “is constantly engaged in exchanges with the whole world. I think they don’t want to have something resembling their logo,” he said.

For his part, “I prefer that my creation remain unique,” he added.

Besides Debie’s work, the Tokyo Olympics logo sparked attention on the Internet for its similarity to a design conceived by Spain’s Hey Studio for soliciting donations for victims of the major earthquake and tsunami that struck the Tohoku region in 2011.

The Barcelona studio has so far not taken issue with the Olympic logo, saying Thursday it would be proud if it inspired an emblem for a major event, but that it was probably a coincidence.

YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE



(<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/07/24/national/japans-new-sim-card-vending-machines/>)

The A-Z on Japan’s new SIM card vending machines

(News)

(<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/07/24/national/japans-new-sim-card-vending-machines/>)



(<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/life/2015/07/03/flavors-seven-elevens-new-japonais-ice-cream/>)

Stratified flavors in Seven-Eleven’s new Japonais ice cream

(Life)

(<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/life/2015/07/03/flavors-seven-elevens-new-japonais-ice-cream/>)



([http://blog.citigroup.com/2015/05/your-value-qampa-with-citis-ida-liu?](http://blog.citigroup.com/2015/05/your-value-qampa-with-citis-ida-liu?utm_source=outbrain&utm_medium=cpc&utm_content=Know-Your-Value-QA-with-Citis-Ida-Liu&utm_term=4936026)

From Fashion to Banking, One Woman’s Journey To Success

(Citi Blog)

([http://blog.citigroup.com/2015/05/your-value-qampa-with-citis-ida-liu?](http://blog.citigroup.com/2015/05/your-value-qampa-with-citis-ida-liu?utm_source=outbrain&utm_medium=cpc&utm_content=Know-Your-Value-QA-with-Citis-Ida-Liu&utm_term=4936026)

http://blog.citigroup.com/2015/05/your-value-qampa-with-citis-ida-liu?utm_source=outbrain&utm_medium=cpc&utm_content=Know-Your-Value-QA-with-Citis-Ida-Liu&utm_term=4936026)