文化と居場所

アートが開く新たな未来

Culture and Home—— New future opened by art

だれもが文化でつながる国際会議

Creative Well-being Tokyo

International Conference on Open Access to Culture

2024

International Conference on Open Access to Culture 2024

Culture and Home——New future opened by art

The International Conference on Open Access to Culture 2024 was organized as part of our efforts to create an environment where everyone can access arts and culture, contributing to people's happiness and promoting well-being, which is one of the targets of the Tokyo Cultural Strategy 2030. To promote a Paralympic legacy for Tokyo of inclusivity through arts and culture, we are building a network with many active individuals both in and outside of Japan, showcasing advanced initiatives from Tokyo to the world.

This was the second time this conference was held, following one in 2022. The theme for 2024 was "Culture and Home: New future opened by art." In today's increasingly diverse and complex society, everyone is seeking a place where they feel at home — a place of belonging. This conference considered how art can provide spaces where everyone feels secure and at home as a form of well-being, while exploring a new future.

As digital technologies develop and globalization advances, the ways we live and communicate have significantly changed. Meanwhile, many people are feeling isolated and alienated. This is why the role of arts and culture is becoming more important than ever. We will strive to make art take root in society and serve its role as something essential to connect people, foster empathy, and enable people of different backgrounds to understand one another.

This conference consisted of four components.

- **Conference:** Over three days, participants discussed "Culture and Home" from a variety of domestic and international perspectives.
- **Showcase:** Various programs were showcased, including exhibitions by domestic and international artists, along with screenings, talks, and interactive experiences combining art with the latest technology.
- **Networking:** Taking advantage of the international conference, a communication salon was set up, offering a space for speakers and attendees to exchange ideas and build networks.
- **Communication Lab:** Workshops and other programs explored different forms of communication.

Many people provided their cooperation and support in organizing this conference. We thank them and hope this conference served as a place of new discoveries and connections for everyone.

Tokyo Metropolitan Government
Arts Council Tokyo (Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture)


ドットイト計画

Event Overview

Dates: October 29, 2024 (Tue) — November 3, 2024 (Sun, National Holiday)
Website: https://www.creativewell-conference.jp/en
Admission: Free
Venue: Tokyo International Forum Hall B5, Conference Rooms G502 and G510, Lobby Gallery (5-1 Marunouchi 3-chome, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, 100-0005)
Organizers: Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Arts Council Tokyo (Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture)

Main Visual Concept

This graphic is designed with consideration for the diversity of individuals' color vision, in order to convey information to as many people as possible. The design for the main graphic features minute adjustments in hues to express the broad range of how people see and sense things. The main graphic represents the philosophy of Creative Well-being Tokyo — "open access to culture" — with an aim to share in the rich diversity of expression with all its fluctuations rather than to make adjustments to achieve ease of understanding for any one individual.
Main Visual Design: MIKAMI Yuuri (Graphic Designer)

*This main visual has passed color universal design (CUD) verification.

The CUD mark is a certification mark issued by Color Universal Design Organization, which can be displayed on printed materials and products that have been certified.

Accessibility Support

- Sign language interpretation JSL & IS*
  (*IS is available only at Hall B5)
- Japanese and English subtitles
- Support staff available

CONFERENCE

カンファレンス

INVITED TALK

November 1 (Fri) 1:00 - 2:00 pm

Between Different Generations and Cultural Diversity: A Challenge?

David de Keyzer

Clin d'Oeil, an international arts festival in sign languages, has been held since 2003 in Reims, France. David de Keyser serves as director and spoke about the background of the festival and the challenges it faces, as well as insights from his activism.

Written by SUGIHARA Tamaki, Translated by Sam Holden

Sign Language is Based on an "Open Mindset"

I have been running the Clin d'Oeil Festival, which brings together Deaf artists and performers, since 2003. The festival is held every other year, with the eleventh edition in 2024 attracting about 20,000 visitors from all over the world. The festival features a diverse range of arts, including theater, film, sculpture, and painting, and seeks to use art to promote sign language.

First, I want you to look at the festival's mascot[*1]. When starting an event like this, the first thing to consider is often a name and logo, but we thought of a mascot first. We came up with the mascot first because Deaf people live visually through their eyes.

At first glance, this character does not reveal any attributes such as nationality or gender. Society tends to apply labels to people easily, but this is not what is needed to sustain culture. Just as French can be used by non-French people, sign language is not exclusive to the Deaf. We created this character to promote this "open mindset" of sign language. Additionally, Clin d'Oeil means "wink" in French. This evokes how we may blink in astonishment when we are moved by art.

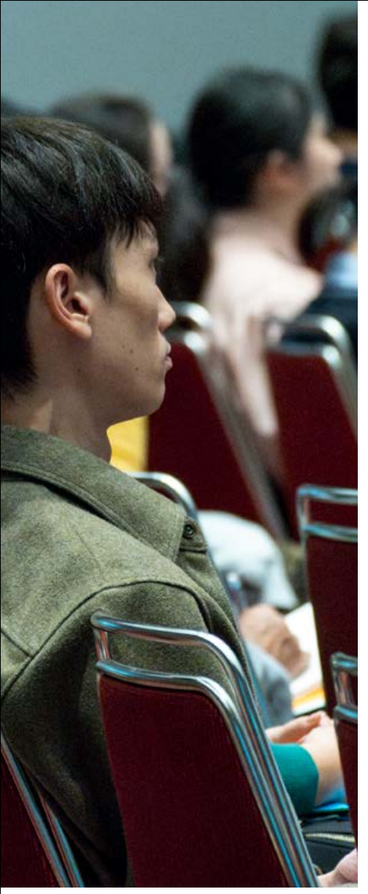
*1
Mascot of Clin d'Oeil.

Scenes of Clin d'Oeil.

An Art Festival Breaking Through Invisible Divides

When the art festival was launched, there was little awareness in France of the need to guarantee access to information for the Deaf. Only in rare cases were attendants in museums or subtitles in movies available, and even when subtitles were finally added to TV broadcasts, it was only about 30 percent of the total. At that time, there was only one theater company for the Deaf in the whole country, and there were no international events, so opportunities for Deaf people to experience the arts and culture were very limited. The purpose of the Clin d'Oeil was to spur a breakthrough in this state of affairs.

There were also gaps between different fields. Deaf people were working in the arts as well as the field of information accessibility, but there were no horizontal connections. We spoke with various people to understand their needs, as if we were collecting many things into one bag. So the festival is an event that was created together with many



others, not on my own.

When we launched the festival, it was also significant that the European Commission (EC) declared in 2001 that 2003 would be the European Year of People with Disabilities. Of course, there is resistance to the word “disability.” Disability does not exist on the part of the individual, but is created by society. However, I saw this social movement as a sign that attitudes were changing, and decided to take advantage of the momentum.

Through twenty years, our activities have attracted more and more participants. We started to ask ourselves, “Is it enough to be a festival that uses sign language? Isn’t our role also to create a comfortable setting for participants to gather and enrich their lives?” Our awareness as organizers changed. Nowadays, participants often say, “Participating in the festival feels like coming home. Sign language is used everywhere, in restaurants and on the streets. It’s a comfortable space.” Through art we are able to create an environment that promotes well-being, where everyone can be themselves.

We are also focused on constructing networks of people around the festival. For example, when cultural facilities aim to improve information accessibility, they shouldn’t think only about Deaf people or only about hearing people, but rather should promote sharing of opinions between different groups. When a company wants to hire a Deaf person, we can introduce them to talented people. We envision each organization opening new doors with the keys we give them.

A System for People to Participate Comfortably

Next, let me discuss the challenges and issues we face. First of all, at Clin d’Oeil, we use French Sign Language, French, International Sign, and English to communicate with our volunteers, many of whom come from abroad. During many preparations, we have to have these four languages ready at all times. This is quite a challenge.

When we invited a Norwegian theater company to perform in Norwegian Sign Language, the French audience complained that they could not understand the performance. This occurred because they were not fully aware that sign language differs from country to country. Each country has its own sign language that has been passed down within its culture. I learned how important it is to understand this background, while also creating a language environment that can reach the audience in a particular place.

Holding the festival requires a budget of approximately $160,000. Of that amount, the national government subsidizes about 20 percent, and we secure the remaining 80 percent ourselves. While this ratio is generally the opposite, Clin d’Oeil dares to keep the subsidy ratio low because we value the freedom to operate the festival on our own.

The biennial schedule is good because it allows us to engage in the project with a fresh mind each time, but because the team breaks up in between, it makes it difficult to accumulate experience and knowledge. There is also the challenge of communicating between generations. Even so, we need to involve the younger generation in our activities, because older and younger generations use different signs.

Staffing and security are also important in creating a comfortable environment. After all, this is an event that attracts 20,000 people. In order to be ready to respond to any situation, staff members who can use French Sign Language and International Sign always work in pairs.

Creating a Home Where Nobody is Excluded

Although these preparations are always challenging, many things have changed since we first started the festival twenty years ago. The number of Deaf theater companies has increased, and there are more opportunities for international exchange through theater. There are seven Deaf theater companies in Europe that use sign language, which have formed an association called AZUR. I am also a member of AZUR, and we are building a network across national boundaries to discuss what kind of activities we should pursue together.

Communication between young people and the elderly, which was often fragmented, has also become smoother. Groups in fields such as sports, education, and the arts are also finally bridging gaps to connect and interact with each other. We are also involved with large organizations such as the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD), the World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI), and the European Commission, and are gathering opinions on what can be done for future development.

What I have learned through these activities is that art is limitless. If we confidently pursue our activities, we can change society. Art has the power to change the world. It is important not to exclude anyone as we create art together. I feel lucky to have met and talked with so many different people through our activities. I want to continue to develop these activities and stage performances while respecting culture and history, so we can ultimately change society and the world.

“Home” for me is both the country of France and Deaf culture. I occupy the intersection of these two cultures. A home is not just a place of birth, but a place where one feels understood, a place where one is comfortable, a place where one can be oneself. It is something that is different for each person.

David de Keyzer
[Clin d'Oeil Festival Director]
Raised in the world of film, in 2000 David founded the NGO CinéSourds, which distributes mainly DVD documentaries and theatrical recordings. He also worked as a director of 26-minute documentaries for the *L'oeil et la main* program on France 5 television for over 10 years. In 2003, he founded the Clin d'Oeil Festival, with the goal of creating a space for creation and expression for Deaf artists. He works as a consultant to protect Deaf culture and rights, and vigorously promotes understanding of Deaf culture and sign language around the world.

KEYNOTE SPEECH

November 1 (Fri) 2:15 - 3:15 pm

Creating Spaces for Being Together: Lessons from Dialogue and Outreach

KAJITANI Shinji

In his role as a philosopher, Professor Kajitani Shinji of the University of Tokyo has staged “philosophy dialogues,” in which participants gather in a group to listen to each other’s opinions, and participated in the activities of the non-profit National Children’s Welfare Center, a youth-led organization in Nagoya. He spoke about the keys to creating places of belonging that he discovered through these activities.

Written by SUGIHARA Tamaki, Translated by Sam Holden

Understanding and Respecting Difference

I am specialized in philosophy, having studied contemporary German philosophy, medical history, and books on child-rearing. Since 2012, I have engaged in what are known as “philosophy dialogues.”

While words such as “coexistence,” “diversity,” and “inclusion” have become common in recent years, in reality discrimination has not disappeared, inequalities are widening, and conflicts seem to be on the rise. In these circumstances, the following questions come to mind. People say it is human nature to exclude those who are different from oneself, but is that really so? What does it mean to understand and respect others? And what makes a place somewhere where diverse people can feel like they belong on equal footing with others?

Free-ranging Dialogues Reveal New Sides of People

Philosophy is the practice of posing questions and thinking. Dialogue means talking and listening to each other. Therefore, I define “philosophy dialogues” as posing questions, thinking, and discussing together.

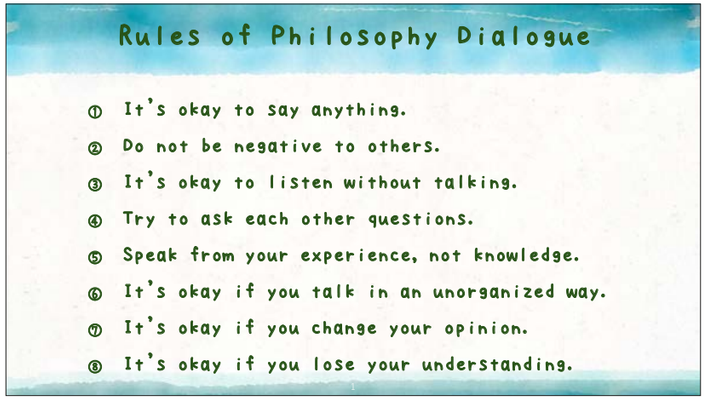
This activity began after I visited Hawaii in 2012 for a joint seminar with the University of Hawaii. I was told that I should go observe a local activity called Philosophy for Children, so I went, and it was very interesting. Instead of studying, the elementary school students discussed such topics as “What would you do if you couldn’t get out of a dream?” They spoke freely and seemed to have a great time, while some of the opinions were quite surprising. Watching them, I was deeply impressed, and thought that adults would also enjoy this sort of activity. After returning to Japan, I initially started the dialogues under the name Philosophy for Everyone. Subsequently, we have held philosophy dialogues in a variety of settings, from schools to local communities, companies, and child-rearing circles.

These dialogues reveal sides of people that I’ve never seen before. Usually, people have a serious look on their faces when thinking about things, but in these settings, everyone looks quite happy—even those who normally have no interest in philosophy. I realized that it can be fun to think freely together with others.

At one high school where classrooms were often chaotic, students who normally did not listen to their lectures engaged in serious discussions during the philosophy dialogue. In a farming village in Aso, when we talked about how to generate electricity in the local community, women and children were active participants in a decision-making process that would normally be dominated by older men, and everyone was able to discuss together. In a child-rearing group where some felt constricted by conversations that always demand empathy, I have seen mothers and fathers who openly discuss their family problems with each other.

Rules for Everyone to Feel Comfortable Speaking

Philosophy dialogues often result in an environment where everyone can talk normally without regard for generation, gender, occupation, or educational background. Strangely enough, this is not achieved simply by talking. There are eight rules for creating a comfortable place.



Rules for Philosophy Dialogues (Created by Kajitani Shinji).

First of all, "It's okay to say anything." We typically worry about what other people think or what the atmosphere is like, but here, we can say what we think frankly. Secondly, "Do not be negative to others." Importantly, this does not mean you should agree with the other person. If you disagree, don't deny it, just ask why. It's up to you whether you agree with the reason. Even if you do not accept a different opinion, you can take it seriously.

Third, "It's okay to listen without talking." This is because listening is also an important part of participating in dialogue. Value time to think quietly. On the other hand, philosophy begins with asking questions, so the fourth rule, "Try to ask each other questions," is also important. Asking questions may feel like pressing others, but asking questions in this setting serves the purpose of thinking together. That's why you can feel comfortable asking the most trivial questions, and answering when you're asked.

The fifth rule, "Speak from your experience, not knowledge," is also important. When each person speaks from his or her own experience rather than expertise, everyone can be on equal footing. Finally, when speaking, "It's okay if you talk in an unorganized way," "It's okay if you change your opinion," and "It's okay if you lose your understanding." When opinions grow more nuanced or change, it is evidence that people are listening. Dialogues can continue because you lose your understanding and have more to think about.

In most cases, it is people who are not usually at the center of attention in society who make the most interesting comments in these settings, where they feel comfortable speaking their minds. For example, people with disabilities, women, children, or students with lower grades. For these people, the opportunity to have others listen to their thoughts without interruption is significant in itself. In these settings, it is most interesting when everyone is different.

Don't Make Rules or Roles

Expanding on what I've thought about in these philosophy dialogues, since 2021 I have been participating once a month in the street fundraising of the Nagoya-based non-profit National Children's Welfare Center. In this activity, children and young people facing difficulties engage and interact with each other. The philosophy behind their approach is summed up by the organization director Arai Kazuki's words, "Support deprives people of their dignity." Rather than categorizing people as disabled or victims of sexual violence in need of support, the group places emphasis on encountering people on the street and socializing with them as friends.

The membership and rules of this organization are not clearly defined. People who are helped one day become helpers the next, and everyone is a volunteer. About twenty people stand on the street each week, but participation is not mandatory. If you don't want to come, you don't have to. There are no clear rules to follow. Even when there is trouble, it's seen as "an opportunity to learn about human relationships."

Most of the members are people who have struggled with truancy, bullying, parental abuse, sexual abuse, suicide attempts, and developmental and mental disabilities. But we don't talk much about that, so their backgrounds are often unclear. I am part of the group. When I participate in this activity, I wear a character costume just like the other participants. Putting on a costume makes it possible for me, despite my older age, to become one of the members of the group just like the young people. I think this kind of little trick is very important.

Both the philosophy dialogues and the street fundraising in Nagoya bring together many people in a very natural way. When I think about what allows us to be together, there are two important things. One is that we don't set rules that say "this is the way it has to be." Looseness is important because some people cannot stay if there are rules. Most of the things people talk about as "problems" are not really problems at all.

The other is to not make clear distinctions between roles. Distinctions are not made between roles such as speaker and listener, or those who give and receive help. It is important to create relationships in which both roles are ambiguous and sometimes interchangeable. When family, school, or work settings are places that make you feel that you have to assume a particular role in order to belong, they are not places where you can feel comfortable. I feel comfortable participating in the activities in Nagoya because I can just be myself, separate from my social affiliations.

Communities are often rooted in similarities. But this can also be exclusionary. In comparison, I feel that in the philosophy dialogues and street fundraising in Nagoya, people naturally accept being together because of our differences. What allows people to feel belonging in such settings is the way these places let people just "be themselves," with no expectation of rules or roles being a particular way.

KAJITANI Shinji
[Professor, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, the University of Tokyo]
Kajitani completed his Ph.D. at the Graduate School of Human and Environmental Studies at Kyoto University. His fields of research include phenomenology, cultural studies and medical history and he serves as director of the University of Tokyo Center for Philosophy (UTCP). In recent years, he has been pursuing a new genre of "inclusive philosophy" by creating "places to think together" in schools, companies, local communities, and other settings, where various people work together to develop their way of thinking. He is the author of books including *What Does It Mean to Think? An Introduction to Philosophy for People Ages 0 to 100* (Gentosha, 2018) and *What Does It Mean to Question? Lessons in Thinking for a More Human Life* (Daiwa Shobo, 2023).

SESSION 1

November 1 (Fri) 3:30 - 5:30 pm

Working People and Arts for Well-being

Speakers

KRIS Yoshie, UCHIDA Maholo, Georgie McClean, MATSUDA Tomoharu

What role does art play in well-being? Planner and poet Matsuda Tomoharu led a discussion featuring Slow Label artistic director Kris Yoshie, Uchida Maholo of the East Japan Railway Foundation for Cultural Innovations, and Georgie McClean from Creative Australia, on their respective practices and challenges.

Written by AKASHI Yuka, Translated by Claire Tanaka

Places for Minorities Also Become Places for the Majority

Do you remember the Opening Ceremony of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games? In *We Have Wings*, athletes and artists with disabilities took the stage dancing, singing, and running in a powerful display of self-expression. This performance was a source of courage and catharsis for many people. The creator was stage advisor Kris Yoshie.

From Earth∞Pieces, a project with musician Hasunuma Shuta. A public call for participants resulted in a highly diverse group that performed a one-day-only concert of Ode to Joy (Beethoven's Symphony No. 9).

KRIS Yoshie
[Artistic Director of Slow Label]
While working across the fields of art, design, and entertainment, Kris produces many community participation projects that attempt to connect people of differing cultures and communities, to change society through processes of dialogue and collaboration. Past positions include general director of the Yokohama Paratriennale (2014-20), stage advisor for Rio-Tokyo 2020 Paralympics Opening and Closing Ceremonies, and more. In 2016, she won the 65th Yokohama Culture Awards Contribution to Arts and Culture Award.

Kris began her work creating stage performances with people with disabilities in 2014, when she personally initiated the Yokohama Paratriennale. "There were so few performers with disabilities. I learned that an underlying reason was the many barriers to accessibility for stage performance, both visible and invisible."

The barriers that confront people before they feel ready to express themselves creatively range from physical issues such as lack of ramps, to difficulty in accessing information, psychological resistance, and more. However, Kris didn't want people's disabilities to be a reason to give up on going on stage. She wanted to create an environment in Japan where they would want to express themselves. This is how she began her work as an accessibility coordinator, adjusting environments so that artists with disabilities can participate in the performing arts, and training accompanists to join artists with disabilities in their creative process.

When Kris builds these places, she's also thinking about the people in the majority who may benefit from this form of well-being through the arts. In today's society, many people suffer from pressure to conform, and struggle to thrive under a narrow social code of acceptable behavior. Perhaps these people also need an environment where they can experience and be engaged in art? Many of the participants in Kris's performances without disabilities nonetheless said they felt as though they had found a place where they truly belonged for the first

UCHIDA Maholo
[Board Director of MoN Takanawa: The Museum of Narratives (East Japan Railway Foundation for Cultural Innovations)]
From 2002 to 2020, Uchida worked at The National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation (Miraikan) where she developed exhibitions that combined science with art and design. She also served as a guest curator and committee member for the Barbican Centre (London), Good Design Awards, and more, both in Japan and further afield. She is currently involved in preparing to open a cultural hub in TAKANAWA GATEWAY CITY, developed by East Japan Railway Company, that connects knowledge and beauty, tradition and the future with a mission to “transporting culture for the next hundred years.”

time in their lives. “Environments made for creating with people with disabilities are necessarily psychologically safe spaces. And, contrary to expectations, I think it is often people from the majority who need such spaces.”

Kris’s sentiment elicited sympathy from Matsuda, who has initiated manufacturing projects with people in many different positions, such as the Rendez-vous Project collaboration between corporations and creators, and the Dialogue In The Dark Towel Project between people with visual impairments and Imabari Towel. He said, “Looking at Kris’s work, I feel like so-called able-bodied people are drawing energy from her projects. I also think a lot about the necessity of making things with people who don’t normally work together.”

Kris says the concept for her work is “Empower All.” She brings together various people despite their hidden difficulties such as disability or illness, or responsibilities including work, nursing care, or childcare, and relies on that environment to transform these aspects into creation. Kris isn’t making therapeutic art or community art but rather using art as a type of innovation, to create places where everyone belongs and can create new value.

Envisioning the Future of Cultural Facilities

Uchida Maholo is preparing to open a new cultural hub, MoN Takanawa: The Museum of Narratives, in TAKANAWA GATEWAY CITY in Spring 2026. This project is taking shape based on similar beliefs. The facility envisions a future full of empathy for others, where everyone can connect to the world and freely pursue their curiosity. The name of the facility, MoN, is also the Japanese word for ‘gate.’ It aims to be a place that opens gates for all people, and transcends existing barriers and borders. Preparations are underway based on a concept of “transporting culture for the next hundred years”, spurring discussions of what a cultural complex should be, and how to create culture and ways of life that are spiritually rich.

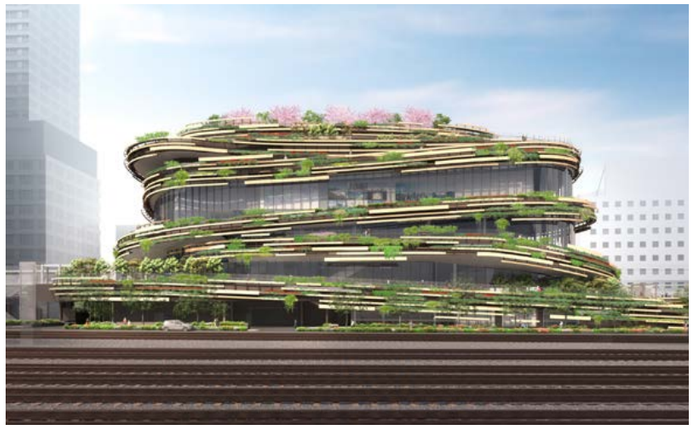


Image of MoN Takanawa: The Museum of Narratives. Image provided by East Japan Railway Company.

Uchida suggests that a ‘hospitality of knowledge’ is key. “People experience a range of barriers, whether they are people with disabilities or without visible disabilities, such as a person who is afraid to go somewhere alone, or who doesn’t feel welcome to bring their children along. I want to carefully build programs that respond to everyone’s needs.” Kris is also advising on accessibility issues for MoN Takanawa: The Museum of Narratives.

Within the facility are several spaces called “BOX” that will be used for exhibitions, events, concerts, plays, and other performances. Accessibility for the facility will not be limited to viewers. Arrangements will be made so that people with disabilities can participate as performers as well. Dressing rooms will feature showers that accommodate wheelchairs, programs will be developed to allow people to use avatars to perform on stage, and so on. There will be accommodations for a range of needs, such as hospitality rooms where noise-sensitive people can safely enjoy events.

Kris added to the discussion, saying that a new cultural facility designed from the start with accessibility in mind, assuming the existence of diverse people, is significant for arts and culture. “For example, digital devices are effective in supporting accessibility and inspiring the creation of new forms of expression, but the hurdles are higher for responding in the same way when rebuilding a preexisting facility. So, I think that new creative things will emerge if we can implement diverse perspectives and change how things work when building and equipping new theaters, art galleries, and museums in Japan with a mindset that includes diverse people from the start.”

This vision suggests the potential for generating groundbreaking art and culture in a new cultural facility where diverse identities intermingle. Perhaps a new form of well-being can be found through art in this place.

The Need for Evidence in the Arts

In addition to stories centered on initiatives in Japan, Georgie McClean introduced Creative Australia, which triggered a discussion on the differences in Australia and Japan’s perspectives and approaches to the environment surrounding arts and culture.

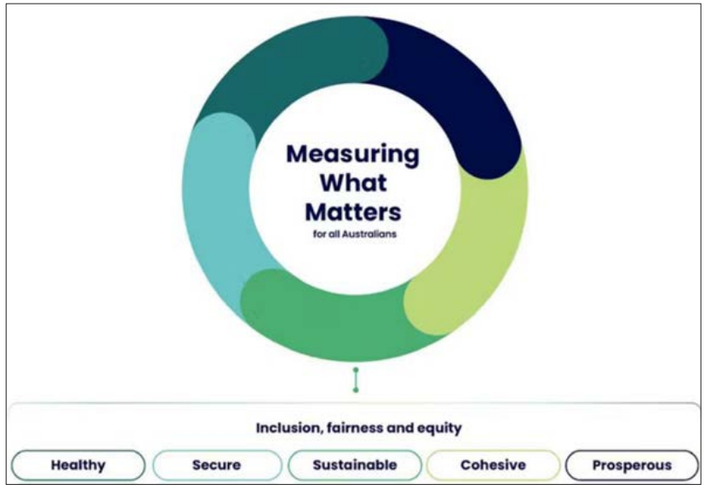
Creative Australia is an investment and development agency launched in 2023 to support arts activities that reflect Australia’s diversity. The government launched it in recognition of the important role the arts play in addressing long-term social issues such as mental health and well-being, inequality, and social cohesion. In Australia, a government five-year plan called Revive is an effort to restructure a wide range of cultural strategies in the fields of art, culture, and entertainment, and Creative Australia is included as an important initiative.

Creative Australia considers art policies and invests in projects that take new, creative approaches to social issues. However, it is independent of the government in deciding what to invest in. “A place for every story, a story for every place” is the concept behind policies that value First Nations cultures and utilize diverse identities in order to push Australia’s arts and culture policy forward.

Georgie McClean
[Executive Director in charge of development and partnerships for Creative Australia]
At Creative Australia, Georgie looks for opportunities to expand public value of culture and creative industries, through research, evaluation, impact measurement, professional development, and private investment. She has twenty years of experience in researching dynamics, programs, and policies of the creative industry in the field of media and the arts, and has served as CEO of the Australia Film, Television, and Radio School (AFTRS).

MATSUDA Tomoharu
[Planner, Poet]
Matsuda has directed a wide range of projects, including a collaboration project between companies and creators called the Rendez-Vous Project, a development program with people with visual impairments called Dialog in the Dark Towel, and an arts festival at Dogo Onsen called Dogo Onsen Art. He is also a senior planner at Wacoal Art Center Spiral and caretaker of the poetry collective oblaat.

Georgie's talk gave insight into Australia's policy of thoroughly utilizing data. There is a surprising amount of data and research results listed on the Creative Australia website, such as a WHO report[*1] that concludes that art greatly contributes to mental and physical health, results of research indicating the difficulties artists have in sustaining a career, data indicating that approximately one in three Australians face barriers to participation in music festivals and other creative places, and many more independent studies. Georgie: "We research in many ways, using strong evidence to build policy. We have to talk with people who still don't understand the value of art and make proposals to them, so evidence is very important." The organization also places great importance on monitoring progress, establishing key performance indicators, and proving what impact has been made. The process has been propelled by robust policies of transparency and accountability.



Creative Australia works towards a society with inclusion, fairness, and equity, measuring health, security, sustainability, cohesion, and prosperity.

After hearing about Australia's form of cooperation between government, the arts agency, and private companies to logically and creatively move policy forward, Matsuda, Kris, and Uchida highlighted some issues facing Japan.

For example, in Japan, it is difficult to get private companies to understand the need for arts and culture. In response to Kris's question of how to promote understanding, Georgie said, "In the world today, the value of the way companies are seen by communities, the so-called 'intangible assets,' is more and more important. If a company isn't accepted by the community, its value goes down. So, it's very important for companies to build trust with the community. Arts and culture help build that trust. The only way is to spread it little by little, and when it connects your heart as well as your mind, when you have that connection with an organization or a community or a public policy, that is incredibly valuable."

In fact, collecting data and evidence that builds trust is not such a difficult thing. "Even if you don't have an ample budget, there are many creative ways to conduct this research. It doesn't have to be perfect at first. Change takes time, and it takes many partners and actors to achieve such change. It's important for us to be aware of our individual responsibility, and think about what we can do now, and it's important for every group to fulfil their responsibilities."

Arts and Culture Connecting Hearts

The session concluded with a discussion about the striking difference in assumptions surrounding the word "diversity" when talking about culture in Australia and Japan. "There are many ways of interpreting the word diversity," said Matsuda. Georgie noted that there is still a tension between the majority and minorities in Japan. In Australia, there are many First Nations peoples and immigrants, and it is a given that there is a blend of many different cultures and personalities, and emphasis is placed on respecting those backgrounds and intersectionality in artistic endeavors as well. This is why there is a strong message of how "accessibility must not be a choice, but incorporated into everything we do."

Georgie summed up the discussion with the following words: "There certainly is a different environment surrounding art and well-being in Australia and Japan. But the way arts and culture improve us personally and join people's hearts is something we share. Personal expression can be a way to transcend various challenges. That's what is amazing about arts and culture."

Japan still has many challenges to overcome to connect arts and well-being. These include the division between the majority and minorities, accessibility, and promoting understanding in the private sector. However, in an increasingly polarized world, if people like the panelists of this session who believe that art can connect hearts take definitive action one by one, doors to art will open, reaching more people.

*1
What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review (WHO, 2019).

SESSION 2

November 2 (Sat) 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Life, Art, and Education

Speakers

HIBINO Katsuhiko, Lisa Phillips, SEJIMA Kazuyo

Hibino Katsuhiko, president of Tokyo University of the Arts, Lisa Phillips, director of the New Museum of Contemporary Art, and Sejima Kazuyo, director of the Tokyo Metropolitan Teien Art Museum, who have all worked together previously, discussed the role of art and culture from their respective positions. What approaches are needed for museums and art projects to feel welcoming to a diverse range of people?

Written by SUGIHARA Tamaki, Translated by Jaime Humphreys

A Place to Feel Safe and Embrace Challenges

“How do we create a space of belonging that is welcoming for all people?”

At the beginning of the session, Lisa Phillips, director of the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York (hereafter, the New Museum), posed this question to the audience.

When we think of a museum, many people might imagine a scene of visitors quietly standing before works of art. While this is one way to experience a museum, it falls short of achieving the sort of inclusive space that Lisa had in mind. For instance, some people may find it difficult to remain still or silent due to individual characteristics. Similarly, when explaining artworks to individuals with visual impairments, speaking aloud becomes essential. In other words, the idealized model of the “quiet viewer” already carries an implicit exclusion of certain audiences.

What about the attributes of the artists featured in museums? In recent years, the bias in the selection of artists for exhibitions and the creators of works held in museum collections has become a globally recognized issue. In the West, it is said that heterosexual white men account for a large proportion—an imbalance that is reflected in the faces of the “masters” who have shaped art history.

The New Museum has been actively addressing these issues since long before their recent rise to prominence. Lisa explained, “The New Museum was founded on the premise that much of official history has excluded large groups of the population and that we would welcome those who have been historically marginalized, such as outsider artists, women, LGBTQ artists, artists of color, and indigenous artists. We are dedicated to addressing and redressing this exclusion while embracing a broader community.”

The history of the New Museum began in 1977, in a small room of a building in SoHo. Its founder, Marcia Tucker, started the organization as a platform to amplify the voices of artists who were falling through the cracks of the existing system, creating a space for dialogue with the public. “Most of the five staff members were volunteers. She had no resources, no collection, no money—just an idea,” Lisa explained. Hibino Katsuhiko, president of Tokyo University of the Arts, remarked that the decision to base the Museum downtown, where many artists lived at the time, rather than in the uptown area where museums were concentrated, was groundbreaking. He also praised the Museum’s revolutionary position of actively highlighting the challenges faced by contemporary artists, rather than focusing on recognized masters whose value had already been established.

In 2007, the New Museum moved to a new building designed by Sejima Kazuyo and Nishizawa Ryue of the architectural unit SANAA. The innovative design, featuring shifting white boxes stacked in various directions, garnered much attention. Situated at the intersection of Chinatown and several other immigrant communities, the building has become a place that engages a diverse range of people.

The New Museum has hosted exhibitions that challenge the conventional image of museums. For example, a massive slide running

HIBINO Katsuhiko
[Artist; President, Tokyo University of the Arts]
Hibino began his artistic career while studying at Tokyo University of the Arts, gaining attention for expressions that fuse social media with art. Subsequently, he has engaged in diverse activities across various genres, exhibiting both domestically and internationally, including at the Sydney and Venice Biennales. He has continued to organize community-based workshops and art projects. He serves concurrently as director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Gifu and Kumamoto Prefectural Museum of Art, as well as the president of Tokyo University of the Arts, where he established the Geidai Platform of Arts and Knowledge for the Future (PARK) to explore the potential of contemporary art.

through multiple floors was installed inside the building, visitors have been allowed to draw freely on the walls and floors, and even herbal therapy sessions have been offered inside the Museum. Lisa noted the shifting role of museums: “Traditionally, museums have been places that care for ‘things,’ but today they have also become places that care for ‘people.’”

Pawel Althamer, The Neighbors (New Museum of Contemporary Art, 2014)
Photo by Benoit Pailley

The New Museum also runs programs focused on education, a prime example being “NEW INC,” which began in 2014. Positioned as a cultural incubator to support the Museum’s new initiatives, the program involves around one hundred young creatives specializing in art and technology. The NEW INC community, “58 percent of which are people of color, 33 percent women, and 32 percent gender non-conforming,” work together much like in an experimental startup to develop business plans, raise funds, and engage in hands-on activities. Starting in 2025, Tokyo University of the Arts will also join the program, and the outcomes will be showcased in a “demo day.”

“I believe that a museum is not just a sanctuary, but a place where new things can be safely tested, a place of invention that can spark new realities,” commented Lisa. From the New Museum’s activities, one could sense the creative energy that has reshaped the museum into a new form, embracing various communities along the way.

An Experiential Space Where Diverse People Can Learn Together

After Lisa’s presentation, Hibino suggested, “Why don’t the three of us have a conversation since we’re all here?” This led to a more relaxed exchange in the discussion that followed.

SANAA was invited to participate in the design competition for the New Museum in 2002, around the same time that the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (opened in 2004) was gaining attention as a model for a new type of museum that is open to the city.

The proposed site was a small plot surrounded by buildings, and to maximize the floor space, the only option was to build vertically. “Still, I thought it would be a problem if it ended up looking like an office building. Lisa had suggested it could resemble a warehouse, so unbound by the conventional image of an art museum, I wanted to create a building that would convey the sense of something new unfolding. That is what led to its current form.” (Sejima)

In New York, where skyscrapers crowd the skyline, many buildings are designed in a stepped form to account for sunlight and other factors.

To set their design apart, SANAA incorporated lateral movement into the museum’s structure. This created varied ways for light to enter, giving the building a more open feel. Lisa reflected with a smile, saying, “SANAA’s proposal was a beautiful solution to the requirements we had.”

Exterior of the New Museum of Contemporary Art (2007). Photo by Dean Kaufman

What surprised Sejima, however, was the openness of New York City. “Buildings are hidden when they are under construction in Japan, but over there, temporary enclosures are not used, so the entire process is visible. When we were on site, people from the neighborhood would shout words of encouragement from below. It felt vibrant, like being part of the city. Lisa also came up with many ideas that pushed us to try things we had never done before. It was an experience that expanded our sense of aesthetics.”

Sejima recalled that at the time, she often heard Lisa using the word “education,” but she did not fully grasp its meaning at first. However, when NEW INC began and she saw students and creatives collaborating, she realized the term referred to broad opportunities for learning. Hearing this, Lisa responded, “It is an outdated way of thinking to separate exhibitions from education. Museums should be multifunctional spaces.”

Through art and culture, people gather and think together. For Sejima, the place where this is happening is Inujima, an island in the Seto Inland Sea.

Sejima first became involved with this small island, which has a circumference of 3.6 kilometers, in 2008. Initially, she collaborated with artists to develop an art project that repurposed vacant houses and their materials, transforming them into art galleries across the island. Since then, she has expanded to projects beyond art, using the island collectively as a space to learn together about the cycles of nature, food, and other themes.

As she continued her work on Inujima, Sejima gradually began to think, “It would be wonderful if art, the landscape of the village, and the lives of people could blend together. I started to feel the joy of creating collectively, with both artists and visitors coming to the island and participating as one.” This idea led to the start of the Inujima Life

Lisa Phillips
[Toby Devan Lewis Director of the New Museum]
Serving as the Toby Devan Lewis director of the New Museum since 1999, Lisa has turned the Museum into a critically acclaimed, leading international cultural destination. In 2007, she conceived and realized the Museum’s first dedicated building, designed by SANAA. The Museum quickly became a catalyst for the transformation of the surrounding neighborhood, and inspired Lisa to co-found IDEAS CITY, an international program exploring the future of cities with culture as a driving force, as well as NEW INC, the first museum-led incubator for art, technology, and design. She has been recognized as one of the “Top 40 New Yorkers” by *New York Magazine* and named one of the “100 Most Influential Women in Business” by Crain’s.

SEJIMA Kazuyo
[Architect; Director, Tokyo Metropolitan Teien Art Museum]
In 1987, Sejima opened her own firm, Kazuyo Sejima & Associates, and in 1995 co-founded SANAA with Nishizawa Ryue. In 2010, she was appointed director of the 12th International Architecture Exhibition of Venice Biennale. She is currently a professor at the Polytechnic University of Milan, and an Emeritus professor at Yokohama National University. Major works in her portfolio include the Sumida Hokusai Museum, and as SANAA, the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, the New Museum, and the Louvre-Lens.

Garden around 2011.

This project, which involves collaboration with landscape designers and gardeners, is transforming approximately 4,500 square meters of land with a long-abandoned greenhouse at its center into a botanical garden. The project includes growing fruits and vegetables, creating a biotope, and addressing the island's drainage needs by constructing a purification system that utilizes a pond. Local residents and university students from around the world have participated, and through working together on the land, the island has become a space for learning about the relationship between nature and people.

"The island currently has a population of about thirty people. It may be difficult to move there permanently, but many people can visit the island, use the land, and think collectively about new ways of living. By engaging with a small place, people can truly feel involved in shaping their own living environment" (Sejima). Hearing this, Hibino remarked, "Inujima is like NEW INC for you." Lisa, who visited the island beforehand, also praised the project, saying "Island residents, students, and artists come together and interact in a mutually beneficial way, reviving a new culture. It's like a laboratory—what a wonderful approach!"

Art and Culture's Role in Subtly Connecting Diverse People and Challenges

The final presentation of activities was by Hibino. Initially, in the 1980s, Hibino began creating works as an artist using cardboard and other everyday materials. Sensing that "encounters with diverse people could unlock the power of art within society," he started to develop numerous art projects involving a wide range of people from the late 1990s. One such project is the Asatte Asagao Project.

Hibino Katsuhiko, *Asatte Asagao Project 21* (21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, 2006–2008)

The Asatte Asagao Project, which considers the community through the cultivation of morning glory (asagao) flowers and connects different regions by transporting the seeds to other places, began in 2003 in the village of Azamihira in Niigata Prefecture. Since then, it has been realized in over twenty locations across Japan. In 2007, it was also carried out at the newly opened 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa. The museum building has a glass exterior that opens out to the city, and Sejima recalled being greatly surprised by the sight of morning glories completely covering the glass. "Although the glass creates a sense of openness, the human body unconsciously perceives it as a transparent barrier. But when the morning glories covered the glass and the reflections disappeared, its presence seemed to vanish from the inside, giving visitors the sensation of walking under a roof outdoors. I was moved by how Hibino's action revealed the true beauty of the building."

Sejima explained that this experience caused her to recognize the power of art to transform the quality of a space and the importance of learning through dynamic experiences. In response, Hibino noted that similar creative spaces have emerged in places like Inujima and NEW INC. He explained that such innovation occurs in environments where, as Lisa mentioned at the beginning, everyone feels safe to embrace challenges. "Artists, by nature, possess diverse values and personalities. The appeal of culture is rooted in allowing such individuals to express themselves and take risks where they feel secure. Society needs spaces where artists are welcomed."

Hibino concluded by conveying the meaning of such approaches to art and culture through a single painting. The piece he introduced features a ring of colors representing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), seamlessly converging in the center to form a design reminiscent of a flower.

Hibino Katsuhiko, *Art is an Element of the Seventeen Goals*. (2021)

"To solve the seventeen challenges set forth by the SDGs in a sustainable way, people's hearts must be truly moved. They must feel the urgency of confronting these issues, and translate that feeling into everyday actions. This is precisely where art and culture excel. If we think of it this way, the role of art and culture lies at the very core of SDGs, where these challenges mix and merge together. It is about aligning the complex movements of diverse people and creating a space at the center where everyone can belong. I believe this space will become even more important in the future." (Hibino)

A multitude of colors merging together. This, in turn, suggests a dynamic space—one that never remains fixed in a single hue but continues to evolve through mutual influence. Perhaps the new possibilities and emergence of art lie in this embrace of change. This was the sentiment conveyed through the conversations of the three speakers, who have each come to embrace change.

SESSION 3

November 2 (Sat) 3:30 - 5:30 pm

Social Participation of Cultural Organizations

Speakers

KATAOKA Mami, Cosmin Costinas, June Yap

Mori Art Museum Director Kataoka Mami was joined by Cosmin Costinas, curator of the 24th Biennale of Sydney, and June Yap, curator of the Singapore Biennale 2022, to discuss how we should consider multicultural coexistence today.

Written by HAGIWARA Yuta, Translated by Jaime Humphreys

Cultural Organizations in the Multicultural Era

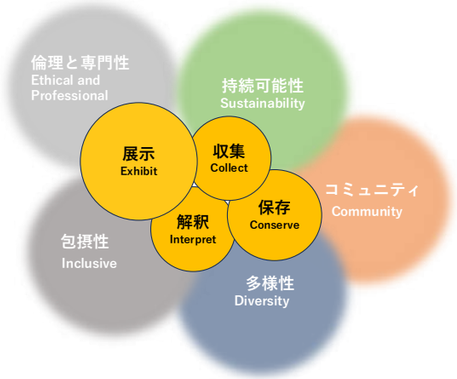
“We are not pursuing diversity because someone asked us to. We are not even doing it because it is the right thing to do. We are doing it because we have no other choice.” (Cosmin)

Cosmin Costinas, senior curator of Berlin-based Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW), which showcases non-European cultures, made this statement toward the end of this session. Cosmin, currently based in Berlin, has roots in Romania, a country located on the edge of Europe. His words reflect his own background as an immigrant and serve to symbolize the session’s theme of multicultural coexistence.

The session began with Kataoka Mami, director of the Mori Art Museum, introducing the International Council of Museums (ICOM)’s new museum definition, adopted in 2022. According to this definition, the role of museums and art museums is not only to research, collect, conserve, interpret, and exhibit artworks, but also to “be inclusive,” “foster diversity and sustainability,” and “operate with the participation of communities.” In other words, museums and art galleries are increasingly being questioned not only about how they handle their collections, but also with whom and in what manner they conduct their activities.

Kataoka went on to suggest that when these roles are considered in the context of the cities where museums operate, an important issue is the substantial increase in immigrant populations in recent years. While foreign residents only account for about 5 percent of Tokyo’s population[*1], statistics show that 22.8 percent of the population of New York[*2], 20 percent of the population of Paris[*3], and 16 percent of the population of United Kingdom[*4] have roots outside the country.

“In New York, Paris, or London, one in every five people is an immigrant. In the broader picture, this clearly implies that finding ways to coexist amidst different values is a pressing issue. What considerations need to be taken into account when creating an exhibition for people with various cultural backgrounds? I would also like to think more deeply about the cultural backgrounds of the artists with whom we create artworks.” (Kataoka)



Conceptual diagram of the International Council of Museums (ICOM)’s museum definition (Created by Kataoka Mami).

*1
Total Population of Tokyo; Total Foreign Population (Tokyo Metropolitan Government, 2024).
*2
Immigrants in New York (American Immigration Council, 2024).
*3
Working Together for Local Integration of Migrants and Refugees in Paris (OECD, 2018).
*4
BRIEFING: Migrants in the UK: An Overview (The Migration Observatory, 2024).

KATAOKA Mami
[Director, Mori Art Museum]
Kataoka joined the Mori Art Museum in 2003, and has held her current position since 2020. She has also taken on the role of director of the National Center for Art Research since 2023. Previously, she was the international curator at the Hayward Gallery (London) from 2007 to 2009, co-artistic director of the 9th Gwangju Biennale (2012), artistic director for the 21st Biennale of Sydney (2018), and artistic director of the the Aichi Triennale 2022. Kataoka served as a board member (2014-2022) and the president (2020-2022) of CIMAM, the International Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern Art.

Responding to Kataoka's question, Cosmin introduced the Biennale of Sydney. Since its first edition in 1973, the Biennale has proactively featured Asian artists who have been marginalized in the Western art scene, and has engaged in spirited discussions of how to incorporate the expressive forms of First Nations people. The 24th Biennale of Sydney in 2024, for which Cosmin served as co-artistic director, featured works under the theme of "Ten Thousand Suns." These included pieces responding to the climate emergency and works addressing the AIDS crisis that surged in the 1980s and 1990s, as well as works born from dialogues between Asian artists and First Nations communities. "We were trying to actively feature artists who have been overshadowed or marginalized in the past. Even in the art world, a Eurocentric view of history has long been taken for granted. Folklore, handicrafts, and other expressive forms from other regions were considered 'secondary' and were not even called 'art' in the first place."

What is revealed through these peripheral movements is a new form of culture born from various migrations and hybridizations. This is symbolized by the word "carnival," according to Cosmin. "For example, Alberto Pitta [1961-], an African-Brazilian artist, uses the carnival of the African community as a motif. In the past, people who were taken to Brazil from Africa were deprived of their culture. However, they overcame tragedy and colonial oppression to create a unique culture in a new place. Carnival as a form of such resistance is full of collective joy. I believe that in the 21st century, it makes us think about what it means to coexist with others who do not share the same culture."

The Pitfalls of Multiculturalism

Meanwhile, Singapore, where online speaker June is based, is known as a multicultural city home to people of various ethnic backgrounds, including Chinese, Malay, and Indian. "In a multi-ethnic Singapore, there are multiple cultural institutions such as the Indian Heritage Center, the Peranakan Museum, and the Inter-Religious Organisation (IRO) that seek to promote greater understanding and appreciation of communities beyond one's own." (June)

For June, who works in this social context of Singapore, multiculturalism is a prerequisite. In 2012, she became the South and Southeast Asia regional curator for the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative, a project by the Guggenheim Museum and financial giant UBS to support contemporary art and creative activities around the world. The culmination of the project was the exhibition *No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia*. "The phrase 'no country' was a literary and filmic reference, as well as a space to consider the subject of nationhood and its complexities. Nations in South and Southeast Asia emerged from conflict along ideological, communal, and local divisons. So it seemed disingenuous to be presenting artists as representing their countries in a manner that would gloss over important historical and personal experiences."

The nation-state system was originally created in modern Europe. In Southeast Asia, nations were created through conflicts and colonial rule, ignoring cultural spheres. In order to talk about South and Southeast Asia, we need to look at a different layer of identity than the nation-state, otherwise we will not be able to read the intentions of the artists and their works.

June also introduced exhibitions she has previously curated on the theme of cultural diversity, including Japanese artists Akutagawa (Madokoro) Saori [1924-66] and Kato Tsubasa [1984-]. However, at the same time, she also sounded this warning: "I would like to cite Karachi-born and London-based artist Rasheed Araeen [1935-], who has been vocal about multiculturalism. For Araeen, the problem with institutionalized multiculturalism is that it is based on fear of losing what one values, and fear of others. The irony is that such protective multiculturalism can also be limiting and thus violent in defensive erasure. While Araeen notes the benefits of multiculturalism, his nuanced point is also important for a comprehensive examination that includes the pitfalls and paradoxes that might arise in the forms and remedies of multiculturalism."

For example, even if the category of "female artists" is created and includes active female artists, it has limited influence on the values of mainstream art dominated by male artists. Similarly, the idealized term "multiculturalism" may end up functioning as a safeguard protecting the mainstream. Unless we continue to carefully examine its essence, there is a danger that exploitation and exclusion may arise under the name of multiculturalism.

Exhibition at Tai Kwun Contemporary, Hong Kong, 2020

Tsubasa Kato, *They Do Not Understand Each Other* (2014)
Collection of the National Museum of Art, Osaka

Than Sok, *Srie Bun II* (2016) Five clerical garments
Collection of Singapore Art Museum

Saori Akutagawa (Madokoro)
From a Myth "The Birth of Gods" (1956)
Batik on cloth.
Collection of the National Museum of Art, Osaka

Some of the works from the exhibition *They Do Not Understand Each Other*, co-curated by the Singapore Art Museum and the National Museum of Art, Osaka, which was held at Tai Kwun Contemporary (Hong Kong) in 2020. June served as co-curator of the exhibition (Created by June Yap).

Engaging with Communities over Time

Following the first half of the session, in which participants discussed their activities and thoughts on multiculturalism through their presentations, the second half comprised a discussion facilitated by Kataoka.

The first question posed by Kataoka was, "When running a museum

Cosmin Costinas
[Senior Curator, HKW Berlin]
Born in 1982 in Romania. Cosmin assumed his current position in 2022. He was the co-artistic director of the 24th Biennale of Sydney (2024). Previously, he was the director of Para Site, Hong Kong (2011–22), artistic director of Kathmandu Triennale 2077 (2022), curator of Dakar Biennale (2018), co-curator of the 10th Shanghai Biennale (2014), curator of BAK, Utrecht (2008–11, and co-curator of the 1st Ural Industrial Biennial, Ekaterinburg (2010) among others.

June Yap
[Director, Curatorial & Research, Singapore Art Museum]
June oversees curatorial development at the Singapore Art Museum. She previously served as Guggenheim UBS MAP curator, deputy director of the Singapore Museum of Contemporary Art, and curator at the Singapore Art Museum, as well as co-artistic director of the Singapore Biennale 2022. Notable exhibitions include *Natasha, The Gift*, *Nam June Paik - The Future is Now*, and *No Country*. June has extensive knowledge and insight into contemporary art practices and discourses in Southeast Asia.

or art festival, can you recall any moments when you had to pay attention to different cultural backgrounds?" At what moments do those who manage museums and festivals, who hold a certain kind of power, become conscious of different religious, ethnic, and gender backgrounds?

In response to this question, June explained that when collecting artworks, one must pay attention to its cultural background. "The origins of the Singapore Art Museum is the collection of Southeast Asian artworks from a range of countries beyond just Singapore, including Malaysia, Vietnam, and Cambodia. This makes it inevitable that we assume representation of another. So from the Museum's perspective, we have to be really conscious of our approach because it is very easy to prioritize certain perspectives over others."

For Cosmin, on the other hand, the experience of working as a curator in various regions, including Western Europe, Asia, and Oceania, has already made him conscious of his own cultural background. "When I was working as a curator in Europe with my background as an eastern European, I felt a strong hierarchy centered on Western Europe. However, when I moved to Hong Kong and ran an organization, I found myself in the privileged position of being a 'European.' Privilege and one's identity changes in relation to who you are speaking to and where you are speaking from. This is a crucial aspect of the current conversation we are having about multiculturalism."

Another question raised by Kataoka concerned how to engage the community. How do we reach people who have never had contact with museums before? Cosmin responded by saying that building relationships requires a long-term commitment. "It is important to say this is an ongoing struggle that will continue for years and decades. It is very much about being rooted in the community, while being aware of the changes ahead. In the process, we must understand the feelings of its members."

June nodded deeply at this remark. "I agree that a longer perspective is essential in order to engage appropriately with the community. It may also be necessary to deviate from the conventional museum format and take a new approach that we had not previsouly considered."

Proceeding to give an example of just such a new approach adopted by the Singapore Art Museum, June's response reminded Kataoka of a project undertaken by Malaysian artist Shooshie Sulaiman [1973-] in Onomichi, Hiroshima Prefecture. "Shooshie was invited to the artist-in-residence AIR Onomichi, to which she returned regularly over a ten-year period. She gave new life to a ruined structure that was once a grocery, and in an exhibition held at the Onomichi City Museum of Art, exhibited works consisting of scraps and remnants of the building, which also served as an exhibition venue. By dedicating ten years to this undertaking, and simultaneously stepping outside the museum, she not only engaged people in the art world, but also diverse members of the local community who had become her friends."

"What problems are confronting the community? Shooshie turns her attention to this and tries to convey it to her audience. Perhaps art and museums need more of this sort of effort. How can we contribute to the community? What role can we play in addressing current social issues? I think we should consider these questions more seriously." (June)

How can arts and culture engage with communities and contribute to diverse ways of being? And how must art change in order to do so? The dialogue among the three speakers raised important questions for our time, when "we have no choice but to pursue diversity."

SESSION 4

November 3 (Sun) 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Finding Understanding in Not Understanding

Speakers

SHIMURA Kiyoe, Andreas Heinecke, Mandy Harvey

Birth therapist Shimura Kiyoe, Andreas Heinecke of Dialogue Social Enterprise, and singer-songwriter Mandy Harvey shared their personal experiences and talked about the possibilities of dialogues that begin from a place of "not understanding."

Written by AKASHI Yuka, Translated by Claire Tanaka

Living True to Oneself to the End

Worrying that others don't understand, feeling that one is alone in the world. Nearly everyone has surely experienced this at least once in their lives. This session began with speakers telling stories from their past about times when they were unable to understand or be understood by others. The session's facilitator, birth therapist Shimura Kiyoe started off the session. Shimura talked about how her family stucture and health issues caused her to begin thinking deeply about connections with others and the meaning of life.

"I am one of six siblings, but my four elder siblings have a different mother. My eldest sister is eighteen years older than me, and my sisters have their mother's culture, while I have my mother's culture. Even though we have the same father, the differences in our mothers' cultures caused all kinds of friction in our house. Overcoming that friction took many discussions to create a new family culture."

Shimura also spoke about how she had a weak constitution as a child and spent long periods of time in the hospital, which had a great impact on her life. She met people who were deaf, blind, or fighting illnesses, and ultimately began holding workshops with people with terminal cancer. Shimura says those times were critical in choosing her life path.

"When I talk with people whose lives are ending, everyone begins to smile, and they begin to think about how they want to live in a way that is true to themselves to the end. And in order to do that, they restore their bonds with others and look for ways to do this until the very end." Shimura's experiences inspired her to become a birth therapist.

Shimura met Andreas Heinecke, founder of Dialogue in the Dark through her work, and was impressed by his program. Dialogue in the Dark is a form of entertainment where participants use senses other than sight to experience daily life in a totally dark room. "I saw how people go beyond their differences, and able-bodied people become friends with their blind guides. I was surprised to see what can be done through entertainment."

Several years ago, Shimura experienced sudden hearing loss, and now she is in the process of losing her hearing. Then she encountered the Deaf singer-songwriter Mandy Harvey on YouTube.

You Are the Only One Who Defines What You Do

Mandy was hard of hearing from a young age. She was afraid to go anywhere, but music saved her. "I fell head over heels in love with music. Not because of its beauty, but because of this feeling of community. You get to work together to create that beauty. My hope was that I was going to find a way to have music be my career, my life."

Mandy decided to become a music teacher and enrolled in Colorado State University to major in vocal music education. But after one month had passed, her hearing deteriorated and she went from being slightly hard of hearing to profoundly deaf. Mandy, who had such a close relationship with music, felt lost in deep sorrow. But she began to think about what she needed and how to lift herself up again and began learning American Sign Language (ASL). By acquiring this method of communication, she began to see a way forward once again.

SHIMURA Kiyoe
[Birth therapist]
Active mainly with terminal care and grief care, Shimura supports clients by talking with them and their families to help make their wishes come true. In 1999, she encountered Dialogue in the Dark, and since then she has been involved in communicating the importance of dialogue through entertainment. She is president of the Dialogue Japan Society, and writer of several books including, *Ēru wa kienai* (Cheers Don't Disappear) (Fujinnotomosha, 2023), and *Sayonara no saki* (After Farewell) (Kodansha, 2013).

Andreas Heinecke
[Founder of Dialogue Social Enterprises]
Heinecke became deputy director of the Foundation for the Blind in Frankfurt and implemented Dialogue in the Dark. In 1990, he created an electronic newspaper for people with visual impairments, and in 2000, he opened the first permanent exhibition in Hamburg. He is the first European Ashoka Fellow and was selected as a Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship Global Fellow. He teaches social business at European Business School and continues to be active as an innovator who breaks down communication barriers.

For some time after Mandy lost her hearing, she felt as though without her hearing her life was over. She became self-conscious about trying something new, afraid that people around her were saying “you are broken,” so she stopped doing things. But by communicating in ASL she encountered many amazing Deaf people, and gradually her way of thinking changed. “The world does try to put you in a box of limited potential. To say, ‘This is who you are. This is what you’re capable of. This is how far you can go.’ But the reality is, the only person who knows who you are, what you are capable of, and how far you’re going to go, is you. And it’s your job to explore the boundaries. To push yourself past your comfort zone. To go places that you’d dared not go before. To see what’s possible in yourself. I met so many incredible people, and that is the reason why I have fallen in love with my life as it is now.”

With her father’s encouragement, Mandy picked up the guitar again and felt that “music never went away.” She realized that she could feel the vibrations from the guitar, each string with each of her fingers. She had given up, but music had been there all along. She began a journey to find a way to love music more. With new determination, she used a visual tuner, checked the notes by feeling the vibrations in her throat, and began practicing singing.

Mandy sang a song during the session, and her pitch was so perfect one would never guess she was Deaf. Her voice, rich with emotion as she sang a beautiful melody, enveloped the venue in a tranquil atmosphere.

Create Your Home in the World

Andreas expressed resonance with the stories of the other two speakers before telling his own story. He was born in Germany with a hearing impairment. He would speak and be confronted with laughter because his pronunciation was different, and he had trouble following the conversations of his peers. In addition to his hearing difficulties, his physical development was also delayed, which contributed to feelings of being alone in the world. On top of that, Andreas has experienced cancer twice. For over thirty years, he was unable to feel like a member of the world. He rejected his own life and felt deep despair.

His catalyst for change was something that happened in Germany. He had an opportunity to meet a blind man, and this led him to develop an understanding of the suffering of a person with a disability different from his own. However, he said that despite his disability, this person used stairs without hesitation and served him coffee. He was blown away by the man’s actions and words, and grew ashamed when he realized his perception of blind people being unable to do anything on their own was simply his own biased thinking. “It’s not about the fact that he lost his eyesight. He actually was not disabled. Of course, when you think (so-called) normality means you can see properly, so yes of course a certain differentiation, but on the other hand society disables a lot. There are so many barriers. Mental barriers, architectural barriers. There are so many barriers that I would really underline that society is actually disabling.”

Andreas decided he wanted to change the whole social context that caused disabilities to be seen as disabilities, and had the idea for Dialogue in the Dark. All the lights are turned off, and people with visual impairments guide people through complete darkness. Sighted people attend as guests. In the darkness, people with visual impairments become the ‘sighted people.’ People who are able to see in the outside world are unable to see anything, and their positions are reversed in this room, where a range of encounters are made possible.

Andreas encountered many difficulties when spreading Dialogue in the Dark worldwide, including nearly going bankrupt. But he felt that he was the only one who could make a home for himself, and that propelled him forward. “When you cannot find your place in the universe, you have to create your own universe. Don’t be discouraged when things are going wrong, but believe in yourself and rather than blame others, every single second every single moment, let’s live the best way we can.” He wove powerful words, stating that there will always be someone who can understand you, with the same anger and passion as yourself.

Know Yourself, Have Empathy

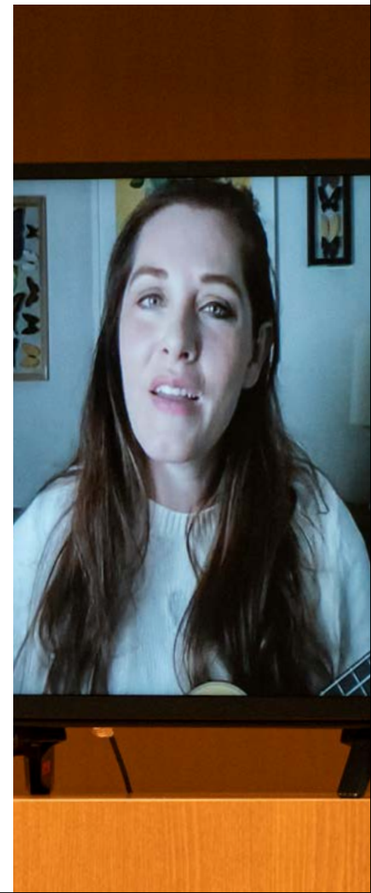
“We didn’t get caught up in our own troubles, we moved on to the next thing. I think this was something we three shared in our experiences.” After everyone had told their stories, Shimura offered this reflection. Family situation, illness, judgement from society. A wide range of difficulties befell them, and there were times when they felt like giving up, but they were all able to overcome these challenges with the help of others.

Andreas went on to say that the key is empathy. In Japanese there are words like *dōjō (同情)*, *kyōkan (共感),* and *awaremi (哀れみ)* which have similar but slightly different meanings, but in English there is a clear difference in meaning. The Japanese word kyōkan is like the English words sympathy and empathy, where “sympathy” means to feel for someone who finds themselves in a different situation from your own position. On the other hand, “empathy” involves incorporating another’s point of view. For example, considering what it might be like to be a Deaf person. Wanting to get closer to a person and learn about their perspective is the first step towards people getting to know one another.

Andreas continued further. “Every loss is a gain. For example, Mandy lost her hearing. Kiyoe is going to lose her hearing ability, so of course it was clearly mentioned. This is not an easy case. This is very difficult. But I think it’s up to us, how we actually position ourselves. Do we want to become a victim? Do we want to say, ‘this is unjust and impossible’? Do you reject and refuse with a longing to go back to your old life, to your previous home? Or are you curious and have energy enough to conquer a new world, a new home? That is inside our brain, our mind, and our heart.”

Mandy also strongly emphasized personal choice. “I have found that I get to choose if I’m going to pity myself or not. I get to choose if I’m going to get up off the floor or not. I get to choose if I’m going to allow my situation and my story to be a part of a motivation for somebody else. I get to choose if I’m going to open my eyes and to see inside

Mandy Harvey
[Singer-songwriter]
Born with perfect pitch, Mandy entered university to major in vocal music education, but at the age of 19 she lost her remaining hearing. She quit university and was on the verge of quitting music when she decided to try again. She met jazz pianist Mark Sloniker, and began performing onstage, writing songs, and releasing albums. In 2017, she appeared on America’s Got Talent and was given the golden buzzer by music producer Simon Cowell.



of others that they're going through their own thing. We don't have to compare stories. Even if you don't have a designated disability, you're going through life. And as a human, you have ups and downs and barriers that you have to face. I think that to have compassion and to have empathy with people is to understand that we're all on a journey. And to be able to share our experiences, share conversations, and learn from each other only makes us better. As far as music goes, it has been pure joy to be able to express myself in a new and profound way."

We can choose our own lives. The phrase seems simple at first, but these words that connect three people who have overcome great difficulty hold a strength and persuasive power. At the end of the session, Mandy taught everyone the ASL signs to part of a song, *Over The Rainbow*, from a film she loves, *The Wizard of Oz*, and everyone sang along.

When all the clouds darken up the skyway
There's a rainbow highway to be found

The two-hour session was like an embodiment of these lyrics.

CLOSING SESSION

November 3 (Sun) 3:30 - 5:30 pm

Culture and Home
Actions to Create Our Own Home

Speakers

KAJITANI Shinji, David de Keyzer, Morwenna Collett, KUMAKURA Sumiko

The closing session of the three-day conference brought together Morwenna Collett, a consultant involved in creating inclusive places in Australia, Kumakura Sumiko of Tokyo University of the Arts, who has been engaged in various local art projects, invited speaker David de Keyzer, and keynote speaker Kajitani Shinji. On stage, they discussed the challenges and prospects for creating inclusive homes for culture.

Written by SUGIHARA Tamaki, Translated by Sam Holden

What Art Connects, and What Art Divides

This international conference explored the theme of “Culture and Home” through a series of discussions of how to create places where all members of society feel at home. Professor Kajitani Shinji, who served as the facilitator of the closing session, appeared in a character costume.

His seemingly out-of-place appearance drew laughter from the audience. In fact, this costume is what he wears when he participates in street fundraising for the non-profit National Children’s Welfare Center in Nagoya. “Most of the people who solicit donations are young people in their teens and twenties,” he explained. “It’s a bit strange for an old guy like me to be part of the group, but dressing up like this makes it easier to connect on the same level.”

Kajitani said that “it is important to come up with arrangements that make it possible for everyone to be together, rather than trying to explain through words,” and pointed out that this function of breaking down invisible barriers may be similar to the role of art which has been discussed across the sessions of this conference.

At this point, Kajitani posed two questions to the participants: “What sort of tricks like this costume do you use in your activities to make places comfortable for a diverse range of people?” and “What are your thoughts about how art may cause some people to feel excluded?”

Opening the World of Art and Creating Inclusive Places

Morwenna Collett, originally a classically trained musician, became involved in arts management after she was diagnosed with a neurological disability. After working for Creative Australia, the Australian government’s arts investment and advisory body, and other organizations, she is now a freelance consultant who collaborates with many organizations, both across Australia and internationally, to promote inclusion in cultural settings.

The breadth of her work is impressive. She has worked with more than 60 organizations on over 80 projects. Among the organizations she collaborates with are museums, festivals, orchestras, zoos, and even a small dance company in rural Australia.

Some of the services that Morwenna provides include research, reporting, and evaluation, as well as strategic planning and policy advice.

KAJITANI Shinji
[Professor, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, the University of Tokyo]
Kajitani completed his Ph.D. at the Graduate School of Human and Environmental Studies at Kyoto University. His fields of research include phenomenology, cultural studies and medical history and he serves as director of the University of Tokyo Center for Philosophy (UTCP). In recent years, he has been pursuing a new genre of “inclusive philosophy” by creating “places to think together” in schools, companies, local communities, and other settings, where various people work together to develop their way of thinking. He is the author of *What Does It Mean to Think? An Introduction to Philosophy for People Ages 0 to 100* (Gentosha, 2018) and *What Does It Mean to Question? Lessons in Thinking for a More Human Life* (Daiwa Shobo, 2023).

David de Keyzer
[Clin d'Oeil Festival Director]
Raised in the world of film, in 2000 David founded the NGO CinéSourds, which distributes mainly DVD documentaries and theatrical recordings. He also worked as a director of 26-minute documentaries for the *L'oeil et la main* program on France 5 television for over 10 years. In 2003, he founded the Clin d'Oeil Festival, with the goal of creating a space for creation and expression for Deaf artists. He works as a consultant to protect Deaf culture and rights, and vigorously promotes understanding of Deaf culture and sign language around the world.

ADEI is a keyword that Morwenna emphasizes in her work. This concept consists of the words "Access," "Diversity," "Equity," and "Inclusion," and serves as a guiding principle that is being adopted internationally to connect historically marginalized people with cultural opportunities. Based on this principle, Morwenna has focused her efforts on building places that are inclusive of diversity, and advocating for countries to adopt indicators that encourage this movement.

Morwenna's freelance work style is part of how she remains so active. In Australia, the rate of entrepreneurship among people with disability[*1] is high, and the rate of self-employment is 40 percent higher than that of people without disability.[*2] This is because freelance work makes it easier for people with disability to accommodate their own and their families' access needs. Morwenna says that she includes an "Access Rider" in the contracts that she signs with her partners to make it even easier to work with disability. This clause includes language on issues such as the potential need for flexible deadlines due to health conditions, in order to ensure that there is shared understanding with the client in advance. Morwenna says, "It is important to build a buffer zone into timeframes, particularly with some of the communities I work with that often include other disabled people and have various needs."

Kumakura Sumiko, dean of the Graduate School of Global Arts at Tokyo University of the Arts, commented, "Japan is still lacking specialists like Morwenna who can be turned to when an organization is trying to adopt an inclusive approach." While pointing out how Japan is lagging in this regard, she also explained that Arts Council Tokyo, which she was involved in establishing, is an intermediary support organization established as part of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government's arts and culture policy to address these issues in an organized and systematic manner.

Kumakura and her students have been active beyond the university gates, developing numerous collaborative art projects that bring together local citizens and artists, while conducting academic research into the operation of these projects. One such project is Art Access Adachi: Downtown Senju – Connecting through Sound Art. This project, which began in 2011 in the neighborhood of Senju in Tokyo's Adachi Ward, is focused on the concept of "relationships created by art." In collaboration with artist Ohmaki Shinji (1971-), the project includes Memorial Rebirth Senju, an annual event that transforms the landscape with the release of countless soap bubbles. The community has embraced the event, with everyone from children to older residents involved in operation, and some residents even creating their own original dances.

Compared to the conventional model in which artists drive the process and local volunteers provide support, what makes these projects different is the way local citizens and artists create them together. Kumakura describes this approach as "co-creative," and says that there is an enormous number of similar projects throughout Japan. The sheer quantity of such projects makes Japan unusual in the world, and is an important resource for the country, she argued. "Art projects like this that bring together a wide range of citizens can be a means to expand inclusive places" (Kumakura).

Ohmaki Shinji, Memorial Rebirth Senju (2011-). Photo by Mori Kosuke

An Invention that Brings Different Worlds Together

David de Keyzer, director of the Festival Clin d'Oeil who participated in all three days of the conference, said he has felt the spread of voices calling for accessible places around the world. As a congenitally Deaf person, David introduced himself by saying, "I have lived between two cultures, Deaf and hearing." He spoke from this perspective about feeling growing momentum to create accessible places that can be easily enjoyed, such as festivals and street performances, without necessarily using language such as "inclusion" or visiting institutions such as museums.

"These opportunities result from creative efforts to connect different worlds, and are enriched even further when these creative efforts spread," David said. He described the need to promote such trends, such as how some cultural places adopt creative visual and tactile solutions to improve accessibility for Deaf and blind visitors, or when participants develop an awareness that others have different cultures from themselves, and internalize a sense of "combining what each person can do."

However, as Kajitani mentioned at the beginning of the session, culture and art have an image that can also be alienating to some people. Considering this, what special techniques could be helpful in welcoming more people into the sort of places that David describes?

Kajitani proposed the idea of changing names. He said he sometimes receives requests to host one of his philosophy dialogues in communities where half of the residents are older people. "In such communities, the word 'philosophy' doesn't resonate. So I change the name to 'Chatting Community,' and make it into a meeting where everyone brings homemade pickles and talks over a meal together" (Kajitani). Techniques such as changing the name or introducing food also have the effect of encouraging participation from women and young people who might otherwise stay away from discussion forums.

Morwenna Collett
[Consultant and Director]
Morwenna Collett runs a national consultancy, helping arts organizations improve through strategy, research, and training. A disabled person herself, she brings both her personal experience and professional expertise, having worked in government, non-profit, and university sectors. She has also chaired accessibility panels for the Sydney Festival and Sydney Fringe, and has served as director of the Australia Council for the Arts. She completed a Churchill Fellowship, studying inclusive music programs and festivals in the USA and UK.

KUMAKURA Sumiko
[Dean, Professor, Graduate School of Global Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts]
Kumakura has a BA from Université de Paris X and MA from Keio University (Art History and Aesthetics). She became a professor at Tokyo University of the Arts after working for the Association for Corporate Support of the Arts. She trains professionals in arts management and engages with students in local art projects such as Toride Art Project and Art Access Adachi: Downtown Senju – Connecting through Sound Art, exploring the relationship between the arts and the public and proposing cultural policies. She has also acted as an adviser on cultural policy for the Agency for Cultural Affairs and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government.

Morwenna introduced the method of "relaxed performance" as a way to develop a personal connection to forms of culture that would otherwise feel elitist and distant. Audiences can move about freely during this kind of performance, which is said to have begun in the United Kingdom but has also been adopted in Japan in recent years. "Historically with classical music, we have to sit down and be very quiet, but in these performances, the audience is allowed to get out of their seats and move around," says Morwenna. Such settings open up new avenues for audiences who felt distant from concerts for various reasons.

Improving information accessibility and archiving past events are also important. Drawing on his experience organizing art festivals for the Deaf, David explains that sign language interpreters need to grasp the cultural background of an event and convey it in a way that the audience can understand. However, it is true that budget and time constraints sometimes make it difficult to provide such interpretation. Even in such cases, simply releasing the video with subtitles at a later date can broaden the audience. Preserving such film recordings is also important "as a means of passing on the culture of sign language, which has no written form, so future generations can see changes that occur with each generation and era," David says.

Kumakura also mentioned the importance of collaboration across different fields and how this can allow artists to demonstrate their unique character. In 2022, Kumakura started "Sumida River Art Round" as a forum to connect non-profit organizations, local citizen groups, businesses, and other private organizations active in the seven wards surrounding the Sumida River. People working on various issues, ranging from food to disaster resilience, gather and share their ideas in order to develop "mutually integrated programs" that address local issues, which are then put into practice by the art non-profits.

As part of this effort, a living facility in Tokyo that supports mothers with children has been developing artist-led workshops for three years to create a basis for the children living in the facility to grow up as "local children." "Our activities at the facility were originally centered on classical music, but artists are great at creating 'a good kind of chaos' where everyone is free to express themselves without being held back by rules. There is now a creative atmosphere in which children, people with disabilities, and the elderly express themselves together" (Kumakura).

Toward a Society Where Various Worlds Mix Together

Each person inhabits their own world and culture, which exist like countless bubbles within society. Being aware of the existence of bubbles and seeking ways to connect them through art—the closing session and the entire three-day conference discussed this topic from a range of perspectives.

What is important, Kajitani argues, is "not being satisfied with one-off events or superficial mixing, and adopting an attitude of understanding the worlds and cultures of others in their context." Before the closing session came to an end, each speaker touched on the significance of increasing opportunities to build connections, and what should be kept in mind in that process.

David pointed out that many people, both Deaf and hearing, "aren't even aware that Deaf culture and art exist," and staging events alone is not enough to increase recognition. Because of this situation, David has actively shared the existence of Deaf arts festivals with children at Deaf schools. "Knowing information is the first step for more people to connect with that world," David says.

Increasing the number of events is also important. "There are about fifteen Deaf festivals in the world today, but how many countries are there in the world?" David asked. Such scenes need to become ordinary.

Morwenna also spoke of the importance of increasing opportunities such as arts festivals, and went on to say that "when thinking about their future, I would love for us to think holistically, about what the artists, donors, and all the stakeholders want." She also argued that as diversity has become "non-negotiable," the next thing is to "set goals and targets in these areas," and bring greater ambition to these activities.

In closing, Kumakura drew on her experience at the living support facility for mothers with children mentioned earlier, before making the following observation. "If we think of society in the past as having built an efficient system for the majority by enclosing those in need of care in a single place, the future will be an era when we go beyond this system to create connections between those in need of care and society." She believes that art has an important role to play in this process, as an effective means of creating gray areas between rigid institutional frameworks and enhancing individuals' self-esteem.

Over two hours, this session explored how to create places where a diverse range of people can gather and access culture, with peace of mind and rooted in their own experiences. When the ideas exchanged here mature within each individual and reappear to mix into society, we are sure to see new scenes unfold.

*1
People with disability is the standard language used by governments and most organizations in Australia. PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY AUSTRALIA (PWDA), Australia's national peak disability rights and advocacy organization, has established a language guide recognizing that disability is part of being human.

*2
Australia's Disability Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: Experiences of People with Disability with microenterprises, self-employment and entrepreneurship (UTS Business School, University of Technology, 2020).

CASE STUDY 1-1

November 2 (Sat) 1:00 - 3:00 pm

Both Sides, Now: A Good Place to Live Is a Good Place to Prepare for Dignified Dying

Speaker
KOK Heng Leun

KOK Heng Leun, founder of the Singaporean theater company Drama Box, presented "Both Sides, Now," a project focusing on the end of life and dignified dying, developed over the past decade as a way to address social issues through theater.

Written by AKASHI Yuka
Translated by Jaime Humphreys

Producing Socially Engaged Plays

Our theater company, Drama Box, has been producing socially engaged plays for the past twenty years. Participatory theater takes social or political issues and engages the community and audience in a way that allows its members to interact with one another.

There are two important things to keep in mind when creating plays of this kind. The first is relationships. It is necessary to listen carefully to the voices of the community to find out what is needed and to respond accordingly. Since we devote a lot of time to listening, the initial idea develops over time, with many projects taking an average of three years or more to complete.

Another important aspect is dignity. In the words of a famous Singaporean sociologist, Dr. Teo You-Yenn: "Dignity is like clean air... You do not realize how much you need it, how important it is to you, until you don't have it."

Relationships and dignity are nurtured in a space of belonging. We must create a space that is personal, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, reflective, and brave. Only then can we be ourselves and speak out without fear.

Reflecting on Death: "Both Sides, Now"

Today, I would like to talk about a project called "Both Sides, Now," which we have been working on with ArtsWok Collaborative, an intermediary arts organization, from 2014–2024.

"Both Sides, Now" is a project that we initiated with a Singaporean organization called the Lien Foundation. In 2010, the Foundation conducted a survey across Asia of people's attitudes toward their own mortality. What they found was that more than 70 percent of Singaporeans had never heard of palliative care. Aging and dying are considered taboo in Singapore, as it is thought they are always accompanied by pain and suffering. According to the survey, even medical workers find it difficult to talk to patients and their families about preparing for the dying process.

This need to engage hospitals and healthcare professionals in addressing this important issue through collaboration with arts and culture organizations is precisely what led to our theater company being approached.

We named the project after the title of a song by Joni Mitchell. Why "Both Sides, Now"? Because if we want to talk about dying, we cannot avoid talking about living. If we cannot live well, we cannot pass away well. Furthermore, embracing the present moment is vital during the process of dying. The name "Both Sides, Now" reflects the importance of cherishing all those moments of "now" between living and dying.

Happenings in Public Housing

Let me give an example of "Both Sides, Now."

We were working together with a social work agency. They identified a particular public housing block for us to work with. It was a place where many low-income senior citizens lived, and in addition, most of them were living alone. It felt like this was exactly the place where discussions about dying should take place.

We invited four artists to work on this project and began by taking a walk around. In Singapore, the first floor of public housing is typically an open space without walls called a "void deck." They are designed so that people can gather there for communal activities.

As we began visiting this open space regularly, we naturally started talking with the residents, but quickly noticed there were few people around. Why? We soon learned that many residents liked the space, but avoided it because it was unhygienic. At night, drunken people would vomit there, while food meant for pigeons lay scattered across the floor. The residents' rooms are small and dimly lit, so although they would likely want to gather and spend time there, the conditions made this difficult.

When we asked the residents what they would like to do on the first floor, some expressed a desire for a cleaner place, while some wanted more activities. In response, we initiated mapping sessions and meetups with social workers, and

Discussions with residents on the "Void Deck."

gradually involved space designers and architects to make improvements.

We also held a party and invited each resident individually, to which about thirty to forty people came and shared various ideas over a meal. Through the continuation of such activities, the deck became a place to reflect on how to live with dignity. As more people gathered there over time, we realized the public housing was home to individuals from diverse backgrounds, and the activities began to emerge organically.

For example, some of the elderly residents rarely cooked as they grew older. They told us that the quality of the food they eat now is quite poor, so we decided to ask them to cook for everyone.

However, cooking in the open space was not an option due to hygienic concerns. This led one Muslim woman to invite us to use the kitchen of her house. This was truly significant! As a practicing Muslim, she had to be mindful of how food was prepared and cooked, but she still agreed to let neighbors who are Chinese use her kitchen.

We shopped at the market, cooked at her house, and then all ate together on the first floor. It was a wonderful event that allowed us to enter her home naturally, transition from social space to a personal space, and create new relationships.

When the artists made a video of the process and presented it in an exhibition, other community members also expressed a desire to do something similar.

Art Takes Time

In many cities, addressing the issue of dying is difficult. This is because cities are places where we grow and think about how to live. While dying is a part of life, it is associated with negativity and loss, making it hard to openly talk about. However, “Both Sides, Now” looks at the question of dying. It may be a painful and heavy question. But we want to acknowledge that everyone has a very different story, and wish to share perspectives on death that we may not have realized before. It is not only about whether one has prepared for the end of one’s life, but also about understanding one’s connections to the place and people around you. It is about listening to the voices of others. Thinking together about how to live well and how to leave well is an invaluable experience.

Both Sides, Now **两面之间**
Telok Blangah **直落布蘭雅**
(2019)

- From Personal Space to Social Space
- From Social Space to Third Space
- A space for exchange and learning

Heng Leun explained that the public housing project created a space for exchange and learning, transforming personal space into social space and social space into a third (or “third party”) space (Created by Kok Heng Leun).

Creating a space like this takes a great deal of time. I call this “slow art.” The work of an artist could be described as stealing time from people. But it is only through this process that meaningful relations and connections can truly be achieved.

KOK Heng Leun
[Artist, Founder of Drama Box]
Kok is known for engaging local communities on various issues through the arts, championing civic discourse across diverse societal segments. As artist and founder of Drama Box (Singapore), his career spans three decades. He has directed numerous works focusing on social issues in Singapore, for which he has received several national awards. He also served as a Nominated Member of Parliament (2016– 2018), representing the arts sector.

CASE STUDY 1-2

November 2 (Sat) 1:00 - 3:00 pm

Exploring ONGAKU
— Music for the Deaf

Speaker
MAKIHARA Eri

President of the Deaf Arts Society of Japan Makihara Eri presented her process of research into music for the Deaf—what she calls "ONGAKU"—with a focus on Japanese Sign Language and Deaf people's bodies and which she began after co-directing the film *Listen*.

Written by AKASHI Yuka
Translated by Claire Tanaka

Researching Music for the Deaf

Ten years ago when I was 27, I made a movie called *Listen* together with the Butoh dancer Dakei. It is a silent film approximately an hour in length that explores the questions, is there music within Deaf people? If there is, what is it like? That gave me the impetus to spend the next eight years in the Deaf community discussing these questions.

Music has been defined in many ways by different scholars. Alan P. Merriam proposed that, "music sound is the result of human behavioral processes," while John Blacking believed that "all humans are musical" and Leonard B. Meyer created a theory of musical style. But are Deaf people included in these definitions of music? We[*1] are testing theories that have been made in the past by hearing people, and researching music for the Deaf.

When considering music for the Deaf, we defined "Deaf" as "people who collect information with their eyes." This was not intended to exclude people who are hard of hearing, as we understand that there are people who experience deafness in different ways, but through repeated discussions, we felt that for our research it was important to target "people who have bodies that do not possess the concept of sound." We are considering music from the perspective of people who see the world with their eyes and do not have a concept of sound.

The Key is "Image"

Music is a culture that came from hearing people listening to sounds. When hearing people walk through a town they can hear many different sounds, from voices talking to train announcements. On the other hand, Deaf people live through sight, capturing everything with their eyes. They carefully watch the timing of when the interpreter nods, or where they are looking, living through sight 365 days a year.

We still have not developed a completely satisfying framework for thinking about music for Deaf people, but "image" seems to be an important keyword. Above all, the Japanese Sign Language used by Deaf people greatly values facial expression. Facial movements are used by hearing people to express emotions, but they are part of sign language grammar. Raising eyebrows, opening eyes wide or closing them, moving the chin and shrugging or widening the shoulders are all actions that can change the meaning of words.

Some examples of Deaf culture and performing arts created within the Deaf world include such methods of expression as sign poems, which are poems expressed in sign language, and VV (visual vernacular) which is a style of telling stories using movement, expression, and symbolic signs to tell a story like a movie.

We asked Deaf people what sort of things give them a sense of musicality, and what makes them feel good. Many answered, "things that move" or "repetitive/intermittent things." They feel musicality in the movement of a train, natural phenomena like wind and rain, and video montages or moments when the image changes through editing. I believe these examples show that music for the Deaf can be expressed through various things that are visually perceived.

Hypotheses on Music for the Deaf

After analyzing many discussions, we have established three hypotheses regarding the necessary elements of music for the Deaf.

The first one comes from the film I introduced earlier, *Listen*. Rather than professional actors, I had amateur Deaf people appear in the film. Deaf people who work professionally in dance or other performing arts have subconsciously incorporated hearing people's culture and rhythm into their craft, and it's very difficult for them to escape that. We wanted to know "What would it be like for people who learned sign language naturally and grew up using it to play music in a way that feels comfortable?" so we intentionally asked non-professionals to perform.

This caused us to understand that a physical characteristic of Deaf people is a certain tension

音響(sound)をろうの世界に置き換えてみる

音声 ≒ 手指 / 音（音響）≒ 映像？

		聴者の音楽	ろう者のオンガク
発信側	肉体	身体の器官（喉頭・声帯・舌・顎・唇など） → 音・振動	身体の器官 （指・手・手首・腕・胸・目・口・顎など） →映像（色・光・動き・形） ・振動（ない場合もある）
	物	自然の加工物 / 人工物→ 媒介（身体の器官・機械など） →音・振動	自然の加工物 /人工物→ 媒介（身体の器官・機械など） →映像・振動
	自然	自然→音・振動	自然→映像・振動
受信側	肉体	身体の器官 （音と振動を受信する耳・身体）	身体の器官 （映像と振動を受信する目・身体）

This table maps sound to the Deaf world. There is a different approach than the hearing world (Reproduced from the Music for the Deaf Discussion Group of the Training / Sign Language / Art Project).

and flexibility. For example, a person who is a native speaker of sign language from birth will have different sign language than someone who learned it later. People who grow up with spoken language don't have much tension and flexibility. Yet this is present in Deaf people's sign language.

This is not something we learn somewhere, but rather its use comes naturally through the acquisition of Japanese Sign Language as a "proprioception." Proprioception refers to a subconscious sense within the body. For example, when we swim, I think there are some things that are deeply ingrained in everyone as a sense. In the same way, once you learn to ride a bicycle, there's a sense that is created within the body. Sign language is the same way. I think proprioception may be deeply connected to music for the Deaf.

The second hypothesis is eye movement. Rapid eye movement caused by quickly transferring one's gaze is called "saccade." Rather than fixing the eyes on one spot, looking up and down or moving the gaze in a repetitive motion causes a sense of comfort. People who speak Japanese Sign Language feel a sense of tension and flexibility in this eye movement, and I think this could have a deep connection to music for the Deaf.

The third hypothesis is about intervals. Spoken language is fundamentally based on sounds. For example, with Japanese vowels "a, i, u, e, o" or musical notes, hearing people use characters that generally represent the sounds made, but the perspective of Deaf people is different. Sign language itself emerges not from single positions but from movements, so movements are given more emphasis than positions.

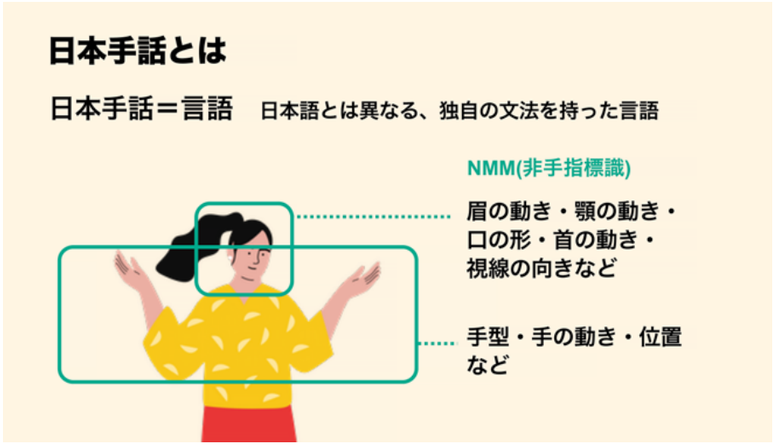
We noticed this while discussing rhythm. For example, when clapping out a rhythm, hearing people only pay attention to the moment the hands clap. Alternatively, Deaf people incorporate full body movements into hand clapping. People do this without being instructed to do so. Between hand claps, Deaf people naturally insert tension and flexibility, and this is subconsciously shared. We believe this could contribute to our understanding of music for the Deaf.

There is conventional music, and music for the Deaf. Regarding the earlier question of whether the conventional definition of music can encompass music for the Deaf, it is something that we will need to continue to debate. We are currently preparing for the Tokyo 2025 Deaflympics, with a performance that includes Deaf and hearing people called Breathe Move Don't Be Silent with the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and Tokyo University of the Arts.

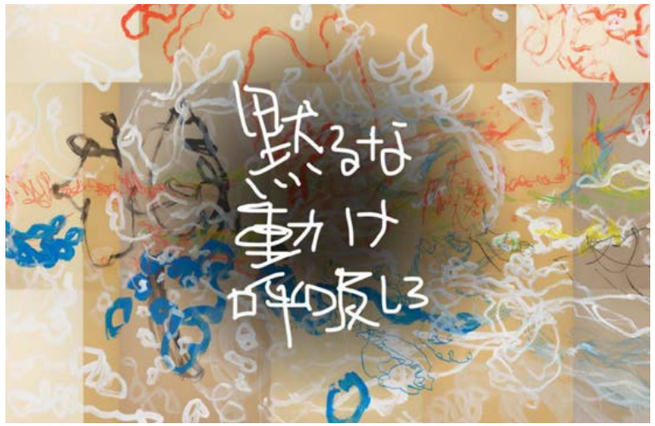
There are many kinds of music that Deaf people make naturally. I want to accumulate, analyze, and systematize them, incorporate them into lessons at Deaf schools, and create a foundation for the creation of "ONGAKU" for Deaf people.

MAKIHARA Eri
[President of Deaf Arts Society of Japan, filmmaker, and artist]
Makihara co-directed an art documentary film based on the theme of music for Deaf people called *Listen* with Dakei in 2016. She continues to engage in a creative process that taps into her own physical senses and those of the Deaf community, focusing mainly on sight and sign language. As director of the Tokyo International Deaf Film Festival, and co-director of sign language-based working place 5005, she strives to help Deaf and hard-of-hearing people build skills and create a community where Deaf and hearing people can gather.

*1
Deaf members include Dakei, Nishiwaki Shogo, Matsuzaki Jo, and Yokoo Tomomi.



In Japanese Sign Language, movements of the hands and face can change the meanings of words (Reproduced from the Music for the Deaf Discussion Group of the Training / Sign Language / Art Project).



Main visual for TOKYO FORWARD 2025 Cultural Program: Don't be Silent—Move, Breathe (Main Visual—Title: Hibino Katsuhiko)
https://duk-tokyoforward2025.jp

CASE STUDY 1-3

November 2 (Sat) 1:00 - 3:00 pm

The Architect Creating Spaces to Feel at Home

Speaker
KONNO Chie

Focusing on the community-based cultural hub Kasugadai Center Center as a case study, architect Konno Chie reflected on the formation of culture from the perspective of understanding a lifestyle rooted in the community, its activities, and relationships.

Written by AKASHI Yuka
Translated by Jaime Humphreys

Architecture with Lasting Richness

When I was a university student, I became fascinated by an architectural structure called the Loggia della Signoria in Florence. Built in the 14th century, it is a Gothic-style loggia (or gallery) with elegant triple arches. Originally designed as a stage for official state events, its function has changed over time, serving as a place for distributing wheat to citizens, a resting place for mercenaries, and today as a gallery for sculptures in a museum.

In this way, I am drawn to the idea of a place that, even after 600 years, continues to be used flexibly in response to societal needs. This is why I have aspired to design architecture with lasting richness, and why I have been researching loggia since my master's studies.

My First Project Related to Care

My architectural projects range from residential buildings and furniture to public facilities and offices, but my work in care-related architecture increased after designing Community Care Yoshikawa in 2014. Commissioned by Iida Daisuke, chairman of the Fukushi Gakudan Social Welfare Corporation, the project involved creating an office for a home care service on the corner of a shopping street in the city of Yoshikawa in Saitama Prefecture.

Until that project, I had the impression that places like home care providers and other welfare facilities had tinted windows, giving the sense that they were somehow places one should not look into. I felt that unless we changed this impression, the physical aspects of the care sector would not change either. So, I boldly suggested opening up the windows and creating a space where people from the community could see in and come inside.

Fukushi Gakudan aims to provide creative care, and from the outset, Iida wanted to name this base Community Care Yoshikawa. "I want to create a base that not only provides home care but also serves to cultivate the community, so I fully support that kind of design." Iida also taught me that the word "care" goes beyond nursing and looking after others, originating in the Latin word for "cultivate." And so, we ended up creating an open office.

That said, since it was a home care facility, I had initially expected the launch of something like a recreation salon for older residents. However, after the building opened, it turned out that it was children who showed up in large numbers. This led an older woman of the community to notice that some children were eating instant noodles alone and spending the entire day at the center, which inspired her to start a cafeteria open to anyone. Even now, about ten years later, the cafeteria is still thriving, with middle school students stopping by after their club activities and parents with young children coming in. Over time, various activities have naturally emerged.

The margins of architecture and thinking are turned into a place where people feel they belong, revealing hidden challenges in the community and giving rise to unexpected networks. As I witnessed the emergence of relationships where people naturally extended a helping hand to one another, I began to feel something similar to the attraction I had felt toward loggia.

Searching for Community Issues and Needs Together

From there, the care-related projects increased. One of these is the Kasugadai Center Center, a community-based cultural hub located in the town of Aikawa in Kanagawa Prefecture.

I first met Baba Takuya, chairman of the social welfare organization Aikawa Shunjukai, in 2015. The building was completed in 2022, so it was a project that took about six and a half years to complete.

Initially, the idea was not to create a facility, but rather to open one of the many shuttered properties in the shopping district and establish a home care facility. The client's initial request was to do something similar to Community Care Yoshikawa.

The site is located near the industrial area of Aikawa, along the central shopping street inside a residential complex built for local workers. Many shops in the area have their shutters down, giving it a somewhat lonely atmosphere. However, after spending some time there, I noticed children gathering under the trees, local residents having

Exterior of Community Care Yoshikawa.
Photo by YOKOYAMA Kotaro

casual meetings under the large roofed canopy, and interactions between older residents at the supermarket, leading me to feel a positive energy flowing through the area. At the supermarket in particular, there were interactions that you would not find at a convenience store or large chains, such as exchanges between children and the store owner manning the register. Sadly, when a major shopping center was built nearby, the store struggled and eventually closed down. At that point, the question arose: would it be enough to just create a home care facility in the middle of a shuttered street? I began to sense the underlying issues facing the community.

I discussed with Baba about wanting to start over with the plan and talk with the local residents about what they really need, which led to the creation of the Aikawa Living Lab, commonly known as Ai Labo.

At first, it was a small gathering where we listened to older men's stories, but as time went on, the number of participants grew to forty or fifty. By simply listening to local residents, we learned how an older woman was organizing a makeshift study group for children with foreign roots who had stopped attending school, and how a laundromat had become a gathering spot for young people, revealing various community challenges and needs.

After about three years of Ai Labo activities, I came to the strong realization that the community needed a place for everyone to gather. With Baba's decision to create a hub focused on welfare functions, the project grew into the creation of a new cultural center on the site of the former supermarket.

Creating Peace and Security While Caring

The Kasugadai Center Center was completed after an additional three and a half years. It was a seven-year journey during which I worked together with my client and the people of the community to envision how they wanted to live.

The site includes housing for older community members, a day service center, a workplace for people with disabilities, a learning space for children, a laundromat, a croquette stall, and a commons room that is open to everyone.

Typically, care facilities that combine so many different functions are designed with a large, rational structure that allows for easy oversight and management. However, in this project, we prioritized connections with the community, dividing the building into three separate sections to prevent it from becoming too large, while ensuring the roofs were connected as one continuous structure that extended seemlessly from the shopping street arcade.

Now, children park their bicycles in the square in front of the building, known as the Promenade, and gather there after school. Older residents live to the left side, but there are no fences dividing the boundaries or security cameras. Even the place where the children relax is actually the floor of the day service center. Yet, when the older residents want some quiet, they gently tell the children it might not be a good time to use the space, and the kids move to another spot to play.

While being attentive to one another, everyone respects the shared environment and works together to create a sense of peace and security. I believe this environment was made possible through ongoing dialogue with the local residents and the sense of security that comes from having a place of refuge in the town accessible to all.

Façade and Interior of the Kasugadai Center Center. Photo by MORINAKA Yasuaki

KONNO Chie
[Architect]
Born 1981 in Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan. Konno graduated from Tokyo Institute of Technology in 2005 with a BA in Architecture. She was a scholarship student at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology from 2005-06 while in graduate school, and received her PhD in engineering from the Tokyo Institute of Technology in 2011. After founding KONNO in 2011, she became the representative of teco in 2015. Konno has been a specially appointed associate professor at Kyoto Institute of Technology since 2021. Major works include Sunny Loggia House (2012 Tokyo Society of Architects and Building Engineers Award for Residential Construction) and Kasugadai Center Center (2023 Architectural Institute of Japan Award) among others.

CASE STUDY 2

November 3 (Sun) 1:00 - 3:00 pm

The Methodology of KINO Meeting

Speakers

ABE Kota, TEI Ushin

KINO Meeting is a filmmaking initiative involving people who (also) have backgrounds overseas. Producer Abe Kota and Tei Ushin, who designed the workshops and also directed the film, introduced their methodology.

Written by HAGIWARA Yuta
Translated by Jaime Humphreys

A Place Where Communication Emerges

Abe: KINO Meeting is a project where people with roots in various regions outside of Japan come together to create a single film.

Tei: In the filmmaking workshop, which targets "people who (also) have backgrounds overseas," participants form groups with others who have different backgrounds from themselves, exchange perspectives, and collaborate to create a film. The goal is to discover new visual expressions, new forms of communication, and new ways of cooperating in the filmmaking process, while also establishing and disseminating the resulting methods.

Abe: Let me explain the key terms in this concept. First, the phrase "people who (also) have backgrounds overseas."

We have been focusing on the perspectives and creativity of people with roots overseas, but through this project, we realized that the term "roots" itself can be interpreted in various ways, and its meaning changes depending on individual perceptions. By adding the word "(also)," we aimed to create a project that embraces multiple roots, including those spanning different eras and regions, thereby encompassing complexity and ambiguity.

The next key term is "filmmaking." While Tokyo is already home to people with diverse backgrounds, the reality is that there are few opportunities for such people to come together and create something. We thought that providing a space for filmmaking could lead to new forms of communication and expression that have not existed before.

Tei: A key aspect of filmmaking is that it cannot be done alone.

Abe: In order to make something together, we are forced to communicate. We use the methodology of filmmaking to create such a situation.

The Filmmaking Process

Abe: In 2022, KINO Meeting created the film *New Tokyo Tour*. Tei served as the director of this work.

Tei: The story of the film is as follows: The protagonist, Lee, who lives in Tokyo, loses her job and breaks up with her partner, causing her to question the meaning of being in Tokyo. One day, she encounters a foreigner who has just arrived in Japan and gets caught up in her sightseeing tour...

The story is fictional, but it incorporates real-life episodes experienced by the project participants.

Abe: To create this film, we first began by uncovering the personal stories of each participant. For this, we used a method we call "Cinema Portrait."

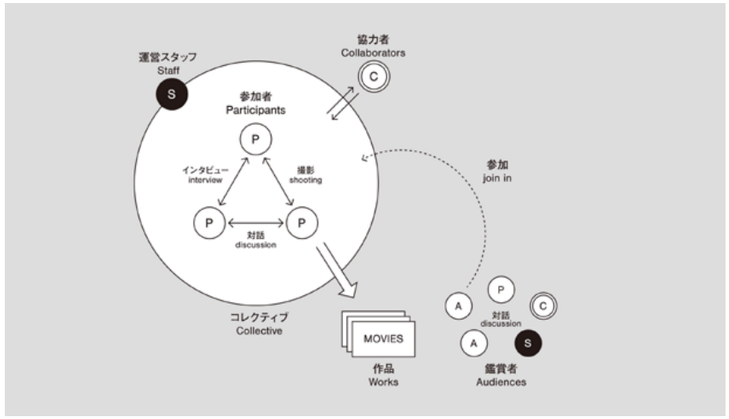
In this exercise, participants form groups of three and walk through the city while each taking on one of three roles: the "seeker," "interviewer," and "photographer." When the seeker encounters landscapes that link to their own background, they share episodes that the place and/or moment reminded them of.

Tei: The recorder is the person who documents the episodes shared by the seeker using an audio recorder. Additionally, the photographer captures the seeker's trip with an instant camera. The audio and photos gathered are then edited into a short film that portrays that person's background.

I remember when I became the seeker, I talked about makeup. I shared personal thoughts and episodes, such as how I believed everyone should be free to wear makeup, or how my not wearing makeup led to an argument with a former partner. Since my team members could relate to me, I was able to continue talking openly after that.

Filming Locations Filled with Multiple Languages

Abe: In this way, a "cinema portrait" capturing each participant's personal episodes was completed. Tei then wrote the script for *New*



The organizational chart of KINO Meeting.

Tokyo Tour, while quoting from the individual stories shared. Based on the script, the film was created with all the participants assuming multiple roles, such as camera operators and actors.

However, the members not only have diverse backgrounds but also face language barriers. During the creative process, did you experience any challenges in communicating with the other members?

Tei: Before the project started, I was worried because I am not fluent in Japanese and I was concerned I might make mistakes... I felt very anxious. However, time is of the essence in film production. Above all, we prioritized ensuring that the members could understand one another and that everything would proceed smoothly, leading us to mix simple Japanese, English, and Chinese rather than insisting on perfect Japanese.

Abe: I also think it was important that many of the members of KINO Meeting had no prior experience in filmmaking. In a typical filming environment, a hierarchy is usually established with the director at the top, but here, most people were beginners. That is precisely why the environment required relationships and processes that did not conform to such conventional norms.

Tei: It was also my first experience directing a film. For that reason, I consciously avoided comparing it to other filming environments, focusing instead on exploring new ways of making a film together with the members of KINO Meeting. For example, we decided on camera angles through discussions among members, and also talked with the actors about their performances. We placed great importance on creating the film together.

A Place to Reset Oneself

Abe: In KINO Meeting, creating a film is the core of the project. How do you think this goal has impacted this community?

Tei: I felt it was like a reset.

Abe: A reset?

Tei: Yes. Some participants had experience creating their own works, but in KINO Meeting, previous experiences and theoretical approaches are “reset.” The gathered members then work towards the shared goal of completing the film in a way that suits the group.

I also mean reset in the sense of returning to one’s true self. In KINO Meeting, there is no hierarchy, and everyone is free to share their opinions. Members do not need to worry about speaking perfect Japanese or fear having their opinions judged. we can interact as our true selves, free from the anxiety of how we might be perceived.

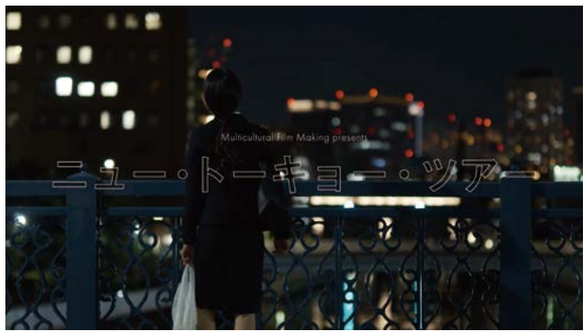
Abe: Since the experiences and values of the people gathered are all different, there is no single common understanding. I believe KINO Meeting is a place that requires you to change the way you have communicated thus far and be responsive to others in order to reconcile opinions and values.

At first, this process of alignment can feel burdensome, but once you get used to it, communication becomes organic, and the group moves dynamically. In my opinion, the greatest appeal of KINO Meeting is its creative environment, where different languages and values become entangled as the work is created.

ABE Kota
[Designer]
Born in 1986. After graduating from University of the Arts London and working at Hiromura Design Office, Abe began working with design and cultural anthropology as his guiding principle. In 2018-19, he conducted research on local street culture in São Paulo, Brazil, and presented the film *Whose city is it?* In recent years, he has found potential in collaborating with others from different backgrounds, and is developing a filmmaking project with people of diverse roots called KINO Meeting.

TEI Ushin
[Translator, Filmmaker]
Born in Taipei, Taiwan. After graduating from Taipei National University of the Arts with a BA in Filmmaking, Tei came to Japan in 2016. She has been involved in theater, film, and other art projects with urban and cross-cultural themes. In recent years, she has been conducting acting workshops and supporting the production of artworks as a research translator and interpreter. In 2022, she directed the film *New Tokyo Tour*.

A selection of photos from Cinema Portrait.



Trailer for the film *New Tokyo Tour*
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFZhVygRh2Y

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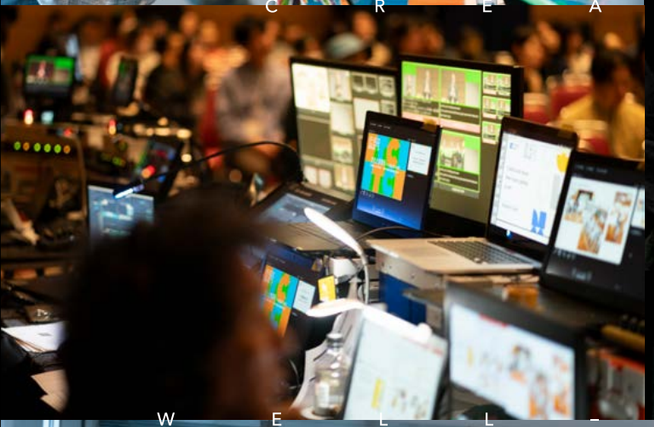


W E L L - B E I N G

BREAKOUT SESSION

1

November 2 (Sat) 10:00 - 11:30 am

Connecting Multicultural Societies Through Theater

Speakers

TAMURO Sumiko, Beata Anna Schmutz

Moderator

MIN Jinkyung

Beata Anna Schmutz from the Mannheim National Theater and Tamuro Sumiko from Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre spoke about the role of theater in multicultural society, with moderation by Min Jinkyung from Hokkaido University of Education.

Written by TAKAHASHI So, Translated by Claire Tanaka

TAMURO Sumiko
[Chief of Educational Programs Section, Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre]
Tamuro established the theater troupe Sin Titulo in 2004, which bases its performances at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan. In 2008, she launched the Multicultural Coexistence Project at Kani Public Arts Center ala with the aim of promoting exchange between foreign residents and Japanese people, and made documentary theater with the voices of participants for five years. Since 2017, Tamuro has been in her current position, developing theatrical workshops and HR programs for a multicultural society.

Making Theater with Communities and People

What role can theater play in a society with diverse populations such as immigrants, refugees, and people with disabilities?

In Germany, where Beata Anna Schmutz is artistic director of the Citizens' Ensemble at the Mannheim National Theater, theater with community participation has been popular since the late 1990s. "In Germany, we have a word 'partizipation.' This refers to people without professional theater training participating in theater. Ordinary people actively participating creates a risk of theater being used for political ends, but the original idea is that this is an important way of encouraging democratic process and inclusion."

Starting in 2010, community theaters were established across the country and a national foundation was created for them. Partizipation has spread, and in 2018, forty residents of Mannheim City came together to form the Mannheim City Ensemble (the City Ensemble) as a way to create theater over a longer term. Anna explained their shared mission to create a new genre that is different from preexisting theater, making each work together with the community.

Tamuro Sumiko, who is in charge of HR development and education at Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre, handled a multicultural project in Gifu prefecture at Kani Public Arts Center ala from 2008 to 2012. Kani is an auto parts and manufacturing town with many foreign workers. In 2008, the foreign population was 70 percent Brazilian and 20 percent Filipino. The foreign residents have few opportunities to interact with Japanese residents, so the project began as a way of using theater as a place for people to meet. However, once the project began, Tamuro found that although foreigners were eager to participate, no Japanese residents came.

"There was not much multicultural interaction occurring, but I interviewed each participant and used their voices to create a play. The result was a sort of documentary theater using the people's personal experiences. One thing I emphasized was use of language that made it easy for them to express their feelings. The work we made in our first year was a medley of four languages: Portuguese, Chinese, English, and Japanese."

A scene from a documentary theater.

Starting in 2011, Tamuro incorporated facilitator training and theater workshop development into the program together with the Kani International Exchange Association. While doing so, she learned that a lot of children with foreign roots were dropping out of school because they were unable to learn kanji, so she created a workshop to help them learn kanji and other activities to help people overcome challenges.

Going into the Community, Returning to the Theater

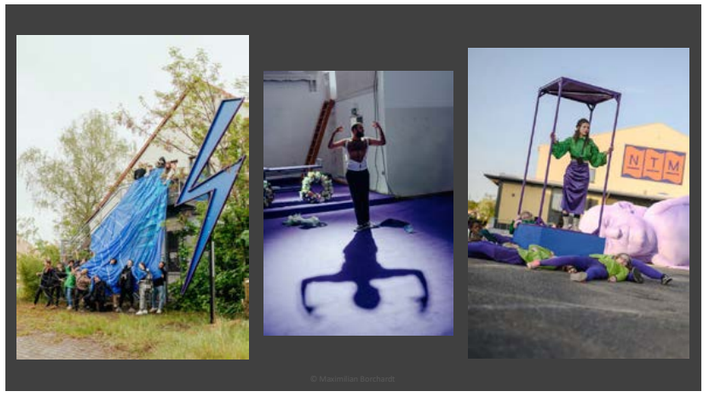
Tamuro currently works at the Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre, where she keenly feels the difference compared to Kani City. "We began our activities during the Covid-19 pandemic which made it difficult because when we tried to visit support groups they turned us down. Also, we are responsible for the entirety of Tokyo, so it was difficult to narrow down our purpose and select partners for collaboration."

Despite such challenges, Tamuro developed two streams of programming: skills training and workshop, program development. However, she realized that doing one-off workshops made it difficult to create a place that brought out the creativity of people from diverse backgrounds. In order to make a place where diverse artists could express themselves, she founded the Tokyo Borderless Theatre Project in 2024, a training program that makes theater based on dialogues between different cultures. Program participants divide the roles of director, facilitator, and coordinator, working on creative projects with an eye to ultimately staging the works.

At this point, Tamuro posed a question. "The hurdles are actually very high to participate in theater or attend a play. How can we get more people in Tokyo to participate?" Anna responded, "We don't just want a limited elite demographic to come, so we approach all kinds of people. A lot of people don't know about the theater, so in order for them to learn about what we do, the theater has to go outside. We go outside and then return to the theater. By repeating this, we become open to the community."

Anna introduced a project called *New World Franklin* that was held in 2023 at New Franklin Village in Mannheim. "This village is located

Beata Anna Schmutz
[Artistic Director, Citizens' Ensemble at the Mannheim National Theater]
Born in Gdansk, Poland, Anna began working in the field of cultural education in Heidelberg in 2005, as head of the arts and theater department for a municipal institution. In 2016, she became head of the Volkstheater department at the Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe, until 2018 when she took on her current position. She also founded the theater and performance group RAMPIG in 2005 where she works as director and dramaturge.



Scenes from *New World Franklin* (2023).

MIN Jinkyung
[Associate Professor, Cultural Policy, Hokkaido University of Education Iwamizawa Campus] Born in Seoul, Korea, Min worked as assistant director and producer at the Korea National Opera, then came to Japan in 2000 as a trainee invited by the Agency for Cultural Affairs. She went on to enter graduate school at Tokyo University of the Arts and got her PhD in Applied Musicology. In recent years she has expanded her research to include multiculturalism, regional arts councils, and artist welfare policies. She is on the executive board of the Japan Association for Cultural Policy Research and the Japanese Society for Musical Arts Management. In 2020 she was awarded the Hokkaido Arts Foundation Incentive Prize.

on the outskirts of town and was a residential area for the American military from the end of World War II until 2012. Now urban development has changed the area and wealthy people have moved in, but it was originally a battlefield. The City Ensemble went to this area and targeted the local residents to do a project together with an amateur orchestra. I wanted to consider the traces of war through this initiative. It ended up being an enormous project with over 120 participants. This is an example of how art facilitated communication."

Reflecting Diversity

After listening to the two presentations, Min Jinkyung, who researches cultural policy at Hokkaido University of Education, summarized the three perspectives necessary to incorporate diversity into theater: having diverse people participating in stage works, having diverse personnel within management organizations, and having diverse audiences. She asked about the current situation of management of Mannheim National Theater, and Anna shared that while many of the staff members are white men, there are discussions about how the staff structure should reflect the diversity in society, and this is changing little by little.

Min went on to ask if there is anything she is careful about when it comes to working with people like refugees and immigrants. Anna said that she engages community members with a focus on their interests in stage and expression, rather than their backgrounds. "While rehearsing *New World Franklin*, three teens were watching and seemed interested, so I talked to them. They could only speak Arabic, so I spoke to them through a cast member whose mother tongue is Arabic, and they told me that they had just come to the area one year before. I asked them if they wanted to participate in the project and they joined the performance. We have a lot of chance encounters like this, which is why it's important to go outside the theater."

Min then asked, "Do the members of the City Ensemble have other jobs?" Anna explained that all of the members have other jobs, and said, "We make theater with a diverse group of people, so it's very important that they are not professional actors. However, we do pay their expenses for participating in the project, for example travel costs and babysitter costs," emphasizing that there is no financial cost to participate.

Wrapping up, a Deaf participant asked about systems in place for having people with disabilities join in. Anna said that their rehearsal studio is wheelchair accessible, they have sign language interpreting at workshops and performances, and also collaborate with a network of groups such as those for people with Down Syndrome. Tamuro gave an example of a participant in Kani City who had an intellectual disability.

This session spurred a truly fruitful discussion, with the specific examples offering hints for the future.

BREAKOUT SESSION

2

November 2 (Sat) 12:30 - 2:00 pm

Designing Support for Expanded Theater Experiences and Participation

Speakers
TSUKIHASHI Tomoko, UKEGAWA Sachiko
Moderator
NAKAMURA Yoshiki

Nakamura Yoshiki of Tokyo Bunka Kaikan moderated this dialogue between Tsukihashi Tomoko, also of Tokyo Bunka Kaikan, and Ukegawa Sachiko of Saitama Arts Theater, where they used examples from their own theaters to discuss expanding the theater experience to be more responsive to each individual.

Written by TAKAHASHI So, Translated by Claire Tanaka

TSUKIHASHI Tomoko
[Program Chief, Social Inclusion Section, Tokyo Bunka Kaikan]
As leader of the Social Inclusion Project Team at Tokyo Bunka Kaikan, Tsukihashi Tomoko works to improve the accessibility of Tokyo Bunka Kaikan. Her aim is to provide opportunities for people to participate as audience members and creators of music regardless of age, disability or social handicap, and create an environment where they can actively participate in creating new culture.

Three Approaches to Accessibility

The Act on Cultural and Artistic Activities by Persons with Disabilities, which became law in 2018, made it mandatory to promote accessibility for theaters and music halls. The Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture takes three approaches to accessibility: first is “Making information accessible,” which ranges from assistance with coming to the cultural facility to support for appreciating and participating in arts and culture. “Making programming accessible” focuses on improving the experience of appreciating performances and exhibitions, and participative experiences. “Making participation accessible” seeks to expand participation to people with disabilities and others who need support. But how do these approaches play out in actual institutions?

At Tokyo Bunka Kaikan, ten members selected from all departments in 2024 began the social inclusion project team. The team leader is Tsukihashi Tomoko. “Accessibility at the hall is primarily discussed and promoted by this team. This year, we also created content for employee training and held a course on sign language and plain Japanese,” explains Tsukihashi. Recently, a braille and tactile map guidebook was completed for people with visual impairments, and plans are underway to create 3D tactile models.

Tokyo Bunka Kaikan has also been holding relaxed performances since 2020, with the aim of providing concerts that can be enjoyed by everyone regardless of age or disability. “The word ‘relaxed’ in the name implies ‘tolerance.’ The concert is held with support for people with visual or hearing impairments, people with developmental disabilities, autism, and other disabilities, and people who are anxious about going to a concert hall to comfortably enjoy the music together. Specifically, for people who don’t like being in complete darkness, the house lights are not turned off completely. There is a free seating area where people can sit when it’s difficult for them to return to their seats or when they want to change seats. There is also a hearing loop set up in the audience to help people who use hearing aids and cochlear implants to hear the sound on the stage more effectively. The front desk has sign language interpreters, and there is sign language interpreting on stage during the performance.”

The host also provides a detailed description of the surroundings so the audience can imagine what it is like. “For example, rather than saying ‘a large stage’ we try to use more specific language, such as ‘the stage is 18 meters wide and 24 meters deep.’ At the start of the program, we say that it’s okay to move around during the show and explain about the free seating area to help the audience feel less anxious and help them understand what we are trying to do.”

Building on the Experience of a Theater Group for Older People

As an example of making participation accessible, Ukegawa Sachiko from Saitama Arts Theater introduced Saitama Gold Theater. The project was a theater group for people aged 55 and older conceived and led by director Ninagawa Yukio (1935-2016) that developed over fifteen years from 2006. The project began with Ninagawa’s artistic

UKEGAWA Sachiko
[Associate Director, Production Department, Saitama Arts Theater]
Since 2004, Ukegawa Sachiko has been involved mainly in dance productions at Saitama Arts Theater, from invitational productions with internationally renowned choreographers, to collaborations with the local community. She has been in charge of the arts participation program for seniors promoted by the theater since 2016. As program director of World Gold Theater, she showcased the activities of performing arts groups for older people from around the world. She currently assists the artistic director and is responsible for promoting new programs such as Company Grande.

A scene from a Tokyo Bunka Kaikan relaxed performance. Photo by HOTTA Rikimaru

desire to see if theatrical performances by seniors could produce new forms of expression. It coincided with the advent of issues surrounding aging society and attracted significant attention, growing to such an extent that it held performances overseas in locations like Paris and Hong Kong.

At the same time as Gold Theater, Ninagawa also established a group for young aspiring professional actors called Saitama Next Theater. The actors from Next and Gold often performed together on stage and were often seen helping each other. “The Next members supported the Golds when they had trouble moving and hearing, and the Gold members helped the young actors by teaching them things like the fine points of Nihon buyo dance and how to put on kimono, and they even brought them homemade food to eat, building up relationships like a pseudo family.” (Ukegawa)

Ninagawa passed away in 2016, but activities with older people continued. Programming featuring senior citizens based on the experiences of the Gold Theater included *10,000 Gold Theater* (2016), held with approximately 1,600 performers over the age of sixty who came together in an open call for participants; Gold Arts Club (2017-2020), an arts club for people over the age of sixty; and an international performing arts festival called World Gold Theater (2018), as well as initiatives like the Dance Class for Parkinson’s (2019-). However, due to the increasingly advanced age of Gold Theater

Ravens, We Shall Load Bullets (2014), Saitama Gold Theater. Photo by MIYAGAWA Maiko

NAKAMURA Yoshiki
[Production Section Chief, Tokyo Bunka Kaikan]
Since 2002, Nakamura Yoshiki has produced concerts at Tokyo Bunka Kaikan, where he has learned production theory and music production from the late president, Miyoshi Akira. After transferring to the Tokyo Metropolitan Theater, he started a partnership with the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra to co-produce operas nationwide, ultimately producing a total of fourteen works. He promotes collaboration between theaters and concert halls across the country and is chair of the Music Division of the Liaison Council of Theaters and Halls in Japan, a group of innovative theaters.

members and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, Gold Theater became more difficult to continue, and its activities came to an end in 2021.

In 2022, Kondo Ryohei (1968-) became artistic director, and in 2024 a new project called Company Grande was created. Ukegawa talked about the goals of the group. “It’s a practice for people of all ages, genders, abilities, and nationalities to cross boundaries, come together, and explore the expressions and experimentation that results. Rather than specializing in a certain demographic of people like the programming we’ve been doing for older people, we want to express the potential for rich and creative activity by establishing a performing arts group that reflects the diversity in society.”

“Right now, about ten percent of the Grande participants have disabilities, and when the group started, we had support from access coordinators and accompanists. Because they have a range of disabilities, we thought that theater staff with limited experience and knowledge would have difficulty meeting their needs. But we soon realized that the sort of support to offer was closely related to what sort of group we wanted to create. Taking safety and cognitive considerations into account, what sort of experience of participation do we want to provide, and what sort of artistic expression are we aiming to achieve? It is up to the artists leading the program and the people participating, as well as those of us in supporting roles, to think about and implement the support needed to achieve that.”

Making Future Programming Accessible

As part of its efforts to make programming accessible, Tokyo Bunka Kaikan is currently considering implementing new hearing assistance tools. A braille program was implemented for the first time for an orchestra concert in 2024. “Being able to make programming accessible for performances outside the relaxed performances was a big step for Tokyo Bunka Kaikan,” says Tsukihashi. Although nobody who came to that performance asked to use the braille programs, she says they plan to continue offering them for other concerts in the same series.

At this point, Nakamura Yoshiki, who coordinates the “Convivial Project,” a social inclusion program at Tokyo Bunka Kaikan, mentioned that the Kanagawa Arts Foundation makes braille programs for all of their in-house productions. He explained, “Although the number of users may be small, theaters and music halls sticking to such initiatives is absolutely necessary in order to reach the people who need them. Making the option available is more important than whether it is actually used or not.”

Ukegawa talked about how a person with a disability who participates in Company Grande has begun attending other performances and has caused her to think anew about what steps are needed to make programming accessible. “I learned that beyond meeting basic accessibility needs, it’s important to share that person’s goals and intentions and think about them together.” This statement provoked thoughts about the basic support offered to each and every audience member.

BREAKOUT SESSION

3

November 3 (Sun) 10:00 - 11:30 am

Improving Accessibility and the Future of Cultural Facilities

Speakers
KOMAI Yuriko, SEKINE Chika, SANO Kodai

Three speakers involved in accessibility presented case studies on the future of cultural facilities. We heard from Sano Kodai of the National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation, Komai Yuriko from Arts Council Tokyo, and Sekine Chika, a universal design researcher.

Written by SATO Emi, Translated by Claire Tanaka

KOMAI Yuriko
[Coordination Director, Project Coordination Division, Arts Council Tokyo]
Komai has been in her current position since 2024. She oversees improvement of accessibility across all metropolitan cultural facilities. Since 2007, she has been involved in facility management, corporate operations, and project production for cultural facilities. During that time, she became keenly aware of the closed-off nature and various barriers present in arts and culture and cultural facilities. She wants to consider questions like “What are barriers?” and “How can we make our facilities for all people?” while thinking about the future.

Accessibility that Looks Towards the Future

Sano Kodai is a science communicator at the National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation (Miraikan) in Koto Ward, Tokyo. He is engaged in promoting accessibility at the museum as a member of the Accessibility Promotion Project. He introduced the project’s initiatives from three perspectives: exhibits, activities, and internal infrastructure.

First, exhibits. When renewing the permanent exhibits, Sano collaborated with individuals with diverse disabilities to introduce changes including sign language videos and adjusted braille plate heights. To improve the experience of wheelchair users who navigate parallel to exhibits, panel text and images were also changed from vertical to easier-to-read horizontal orientations.

Sano then moved onto the topic of activities, namely a project involving exhibit tours. In the Communicating with Text and Pictures Exhibit Tour, guides use a transparent device that displays live subtitles in addition to in-person sign language interpreting as they tour the exhibits. True to Miraikan’s innovative approach, this project incorporates cutting-edge technology. Participants naturally interact with each other through the tour, and Sano gave an example of an instance where a Deaf child spontaneously taught a hearing child sign language.

The third area Sano mentioned was internal infrastructure. This involves not only installing accessible equipment but also putting energy into staff training by developing educational programs, hospitality manuals, and guidelines for exhibit production.

Desipite these varied approaches, Sano says, “We still haven’t done everything we want to do. The reason we pursue accessibility is to look toward a future where people with disabilities can be a part of the world of science and technology.”

People with visual impairments participating in a trial session for an exhibition in development.

The Work of Making a Minus into a Zero

Komai Yuriko from Arts Council Tokyo mainly works to improve accessibility at ten metropolitan cultural facilities. In 2024, each of these facilities appointed a specialized staff of social inclusion officer. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government has set a goal of creating an environment in which everyone can enjoy arts and culture, and beginning in 2023, each year has had a different theme connected to this goal, starting with “Making information accessible,” then “Making programming accessible,” and finally “Making participation accessible.”

*1
Our Nation’s Seniors from a Statistical Viewpoint (Statistics Bureau of Japan, 2023)

SEKINE Chika
[Chairman & Senior Fellow, UDIT Inc]
In 1993, Sekine developed the SNS (Special Needs System) Center at IBM Japan, supporting information and communications technology use for people with disabilities and older people. In 1998, she founded UDIT (Universal Design Institute for Information Technology) Inc., a company where diverse employees work remotely to promote universal design. She has been a professor at the Faculty of Policy Studies at Doshisha University since 2012 (visiting professor 2017-23). Visiting professor at The Open University of Japan and Mimasaka University. She is the author of many books including *The Power of Universal Design* (Japan Productivity Center, 2010).

Komai highlighted initiatives done by the Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture in the fields of making information accessible, and making programming accessible.

In order to make information accessible, facilities are working to make guidance videos with sign language, subtitles, and voiceovers; create universal guidebooks with information about facilities for wheelchair users, people with small children, and others; and improve web accessibility. They are also creating tactile guide maps, tactile models, and pamphlets written in plain Japanese, and establishing support hours when sign language is available at the reception. Efforts to making programming accessible include gallery talks with sign language, stage performances with subtitles, and rental of vision and hearing assistance equipment.

Komai describes the work of improving accessibility as “making a minus into a zero.” “The act of implementing these improvements that cultural facilities haven’t had until now finally brings us to zero, making the cultural facilities ready to move forward into the future.”

The three steps towards accessibility being pursued by metropolitan cultural facilities (Created by Komai Yuriko).

Progress of Universal Design in Japan and Overseas

Sekine Chika, who started a universal design IT consulting company in the 1990s and has provided information accessibility support to many municipalities and companies, introduced case studies from Japan and further afield. She began by defining the phrase “universal design.” “Universal design is a way of thinking and process that considers together with diverse users how to make towns, things, information, and services available to more people regardless of age, gender, ability, physique, and so on, and incorporating insights in the initial stages.” Sekine explained the importance of keeping this premise in mind.

Universal design was mandated by many countries in the 1990s, and by around 2000, corporate thinking had also changed. Japan’s Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism formulated a universal design policy framework in 2005. In that year, Japan’s population of seniors was the highest percentage in the world. This percentage is projected to exceed 35 percent in 2040 and continue to rise.[*1] Sekine emphasized the need to make a major shift in awareness and perspective, stating, “Municipalities and companies will soon face a future where more than half of customers are above the age of 50.”

Next, Sekine shifted to case studies at cultural facilities. She introduced libraries that use communication assistance boards with

SANO Kodai
[Science Communicator at the National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation]
Sano has planned and researched projects like *Nanairo Quest: Stories of Living with Robots* and *Hello! Robot* as well as directing sign language video production for Nobel Q. He plans, manages, and facilitates exhibition-related events, develops and conducts tours for people with visual impairments as a member of the Accessibility Promotion Project, and collaborates with people with disabilities to develop exhibitions.

pictures to help communicate intentions, the Yokohama Noh Theater's Barrier-Free Noh program, and the New York Metropolitan Opera House that has multilingual subtitle displays installed in the seats. She also introduced universal museum initiatives at the National Museum of Ethnology and Tokushima Modern Art Museum, the AR app used by the Tokyo National Museum, and the Universal Design Promotion Support Book published by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

Over 200 people with disabilities were surveyed for *Universal Design Promotion Support Book for Museums and Art Galleries* (Ministry of International Affairs and Communications Kinki Regional Administrative Evaluation Bureau, 2022, available on PDF). https://www.soumu.go.jp/main_content/000828794.pdf

Sekine says that the mission of cultural facilities is to "communicate culture to as many people as possible and pass it on to the next generation." Her book, *Slow Life in Ubiquitous Society* (Jiyusha, 2005) is a novel depicting a future information society where people live happily in connection to others and nature, a depiction of the future that resonated with many engineers who were inspired to cooperate with her. Sekine finished with a message: "Please depict the image of the future you want to have. People who see it might want to build it with you. I want you to personally imagine and create a future with art galleries and museums that make all sorts of people happy."

Accessibility is Creativity

An exchange of opinions between the three speakers began with the key phrase, "imagine the future." Sano said, "Visions for the future are not created only by scientists and experts. That's why we don't want to create a situation where some people are left out when we say, 'Let's make the future together.'" From Sekine came a proposal: "Instead of doing 'forecasting' where we predict what will happen based on the current situation, there's a method called 'back-casting' where people depict the future they want. I wish there was a class where people could learn how to depict the future."

Sano's story about the young Deaf tour participant who taught other participants sign language reminded Sekine of a scene she saw at an aquarium in Boston. "A family began talking to another family who had a child with disabilities, and the children talked to each other. It became a place to learn about diversity. When children raised in such an environment grow up, I think it will be natural for them to build an inclusive society."

Sano then expanded on the discussion, talking about how he wants to foster accessibility through various encounters, rather than a sense of obligation to show consideration and care. Komai closed the session by saying, "Accessibility means creating a place for each person. This work is full of creativity. I want to share this with even more people."

BREAKOUT SESSION

4

November 3 (Sun) 12:30 - 2:00 pm

Art Addressing Dementia

Speakers

FUJIOKA Hayato, SAEKI Ken, LIU Chien-Liang

Moderator

KUMAGAI Kazumi

Three people with different perspectives on dementia, Fujioka Hayato of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, Saeki Ken of the Horai Community Comprehensive Support Center, and Liu Chien-Liang of the Taipei City Hospital, discussed the role of art in fostering social participation for people with dementia, with Kumagai Kazumi of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum as moderator.

Written by TAKAHASHI So, Translated by Jaime Humphreys

FUJIOKA Hayato
[Curator, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum]
Fujioka received an MA from Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London. In 2018, he was appointed assistant professor in the Global Art Practice course of the Graduate School of Fine Arts at the Tokyo University of the Arts, and has been involved in a wide range of cultural projects as researcher, curator, and filmmaker. Since 2021, he has undertaken "Creative Ageing ZUTTOBI," a project aimed at the super-aging society in the framework of Art Communication initiatives at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum. His activities include research on social prescribing in museums and the design of programs for people with dementia and their families.

A Society That Embraces People with Dementia

Dementia is expected to affect approximately one in five older people by 2025. In 2024, the Basic Act on Dementia will be enacted in Japan with the aim of promoting an inclusive society, raising important questions about the state of our society.

First to speak was Saeki Ken, a social worker at the Horai Community Comprehensive Support Center, whose presentation raised important issues and questions. Asserting that "people with dementia are not unable to speak, but rather have been silenced because we have not made the effort to listen," Saeki proposed three actions: "to incorporate the views of people with dementia in all dementia-related initiatives," "to practice greater inclusivity toward people with dementia," and "to value the insights gained from people living with dementia as individuals." He then proposed the issue of how people with dementia are perceived, along with the question of who should be speaking about dementia and in what manner, as themes for the discussion.

Liu Chien-Liang, director of the Dementia Center at the Taipei City Hospital in Taiwan, and Fujioka Hayato, curator of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, responded to these themes from their own perspectives. When asked how people with dementia are perceived, Liu explained that once someone is identified as having dementia, they are treated differently from others. He emphasized that it is important to create a society where people with dementia are naturally included.

From his position of administering "social prescriptions" to solve problems through community connections, Liu has developed two training programs. The first focuses on improving communication with people who have dementia, where the instructor is someone directly affected by dementia who shares his or her experiences and perspectives. The second program involves appointing individuals with expertise in a specific activity as instructors. "Whether it is painting or playing the board game go, learning from someone skilled in an activity and trying it together can help people realize that there are still things they can achieve. Since many people with dementia experience depression, it is vital to create an environment where they can engage in stimulating activities of this kind."

Treating an Individual as a Person

On the other hand, Fujioka, who oversees "Creative Ageing ZUTTOBI" as part of the Art Communication initiatives at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, explained, "To be honest, if we had not started ZUTTOBI, we might not have considered how to address the needs of people with dementia when they visit the Museum, along with other related issues. I also regret that, when considering accessibility at the Museum, we may not have been fully aware of people with dementia from the very beginning." Initiated in 2021, the ZUTTOBI program offers art-appreciation programs for active older adults, as well as for people with dementia and their families. In cooperation with hospitals, community general support centers, and the Taito City Council of Social Welfare based in Taito Ward, where the Museum is located, the Museum is creating opportunities for art appreciation and dialogue with the "Tobira" art communicators.

SAEKI Ken
[Social Worker, Horai Community Comprehensive Support Center]
Saeki has held his current role since 2018, while also serving as a dementia community support promoter. He manages dementia cafés, education programs for families of people with dementia, and support groups. Since 2022, he has joined the TURN LAND program, wishing to experiment with the creation of spaces where being a person with dementia itself has value. He continues to foster opportunities for collaboration between people diagnosed with dementia and those without dementia, working with local communities to envision a society that does not treat people with dementia as "others." He is currently enrolled in the master's program at Meiji Gakuin University's Graduate School of Sociology & Social Work.

LIU Chien-Liang
[Director, Dementia Center, Taipei City Hospital]
Dr. Liu Chien-Liang is a certified specialist in neurology and geriatric medicine. He possesses substantial experience collaborating with the community to advance integrated dementia care, emphasizing autonomy, dignity, respect, and quality of life. In recent years, he has actively championed social prescriptions, partnering with museums, symphony orchestras, zoos, theaters, and universities to bolster public health autonomy, foster stronger community ties, and promote greater social engagement.

"Many people with dementia tend to stay at home for various reasons, so I feel that participating in ZUTTOBI offers them an opportunity to leave the house. It is also a meaningful experience to mutually discuss each other's impressions of the works viewed" (Fujioka).

Viewing work in "Finn Juhl and Danish Chairs" (2022) at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum.

Among the "Tobira" art communicators, some wanted to know what they should be aware of about the individuals whom they would be interacting with. Saeki told them, "Even when we are not talking about a person with dementia, for example in a work environment, you take the time to understand what kind of person your boss or subordinates are before interacting with them, right? Of course, in the case of people with dementia, there are situations where medical knowledge is necessary, but considering and interacting with others based on their characteristics is something we naturally do in daily life." Whether someone has dementia or not, the approach is the same when interacting with them as a person.

Saeki further raised the question, "Regarding Fujioka's earlier comment about dementia and art museums, I wonder if he overlooked the perspective of museum staff who may develop dementia, or people with dementia applying for staff positions." This was something Saeki himself admitted to never really considering before, adding that he would like to use this opportunity to consider such issues in the future.

ZUTTOBI has published a Japanese version of *Museums on Prescription: A Practical Guide* (2022), produced by the National Taiwan Museum and Taipei City Hospital (PDF available).
https://www.tobikan.jp/media/pdf/2022/ac_museum.pdf

KUMAGAI Kazumi
[Curator, Chief of Learning and Public Projects, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum]
Kumagai received an MA from the Graduate School for Language and Society at Hitotsubashi University. She has been engaged in Art Communication initiatives at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum since 2013, assuming her current position in April 2022. She curated "BENTO—Design for Eating, Gathering and Communicating" in 2018 and "From the Depths of Ueno, a story begins—Tamana Araki" in 2023. She oversees projects that collaborate with people of various backgrounds, from children to older people ("Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum & Tokyo University of the Arts Tobira Project," "Museum Start i-Ueno," and "Creative Ageing ZUTTOBI").

At this point, Liu expanded on his earlier point about the prevalence of depression among people with dementia: "There are things people with dementia can still do, just as before. However, when those around them say they no longer need to do these things, it often leads to depression. The problem is the caregivers. People with dementia should be supported in doing what they are still capable of, to the greatest extent possible. The key is in how to communicate with them. It is vital that we listen to their needs and to be present without treating them differently. We need to provide education on how to communicate in this way."

On this issue, Saeki remarked that it is not just a matter of communication skills; it is about shifting to a way of communication that is better suited to people with dementia. "The original mode of communication was one that excluded people with dementia. It is important to consider who or what is being excluded in environments designed for people with certain cognitive or physical abilities." Similarly, he explained the need to be mindful of whether work environments are designed to facilitate only certain groups of people.

Art to Express the Individual

On the theme of who should speak about dementia and in what manner, Saeki posed the question, "What do you think about a person who has dementia playing the role of someone with dementia?" after first mentioning the film *Orange Lamp* (2023) based on the true story of Tanno Tomofumi, who was diagnosed with young-onset dementia. Liu responded first by saying, "Whether or not they can actually play the role depends on the severity of their symptoms." He then added, "Once I directed a project to make a film in Taiwan where I asked people with dementia to talk about the most important things in their lives. It is important to record any performances and not just those in films, since the symptoms may progress and such recordings also provide a means to communicate with the general public. Being in the same space as the persons concerned and interacting directly is essential to understanding dementia. When that is difficult, however, watching recorded footage can be a substitute."

Fujioka remarked that expressing oneself is possible at any age, citing the example of artist Ueda Kaoru [1928-]. Ueda, a leading figure of hyper-realism in Japan, began creating abstract works and pictures featuring character-like figures after being diagnosed with dementia, marking a sharp departure from his earlier style. "The works he created after developing dementia are equally fascinating. Ueda's wife, Ueda Yoko, a quilt artist, described creating an environment that allows Ueda Kaoru to continue working, focusing on what he can still do rather than what he can no longer do." This connected with the earlier comments made by Liu in the first half of the session.

Art in all its forms, from documentary films to physical works, has potential as a medium to visualize the presence and intention of individuals with dementia.

BREAKOUT SESSION

5

November 2 (Sat) 10:00 - 11:30 am

How to Create Inclusive Spaces

Speakers

KATO Hajime, ODAI Mami

Studio oowa works to create a place for children with Down syndrome and their parents, as well as collaborative projects with artists. In a conversation with Odai Mami from Sapporo Tenjinyama Art Studio, the organization's founder, Kato Hajime, introduced their activities.

Written by HAGIWARA Yuta, Translated by Jaime Humphreys

KATO Hajime
[Photographer, Owner of Studio oowa]
Based on the concept of recording, documenting, and archiving, Kato has directed numerous collaborative photography projects with artists and creators, as well as medium-to-long-term projects for companies and welfare institutions. In 2022, he opened Studio oowa in his hometown of Yokohama. As his own art project, he seeks ways to create new spaces, including collaborative projects between intellectually disabled children and artists. A father of three children, his eldest son was born with Down syndrome.

A Place That Embraces What is Not Right

Kato Hajime, the photographer for the entire international conference, has been running his own photography studio, Studio oowa, in his hometown of Yokohama since 2022, focusing on local children and their parents.

Odai Mami, who served as interviewer for this session, is artist-in-residence (AIR) director at the Sapporo Tenjinyama Art Studio, a cultural arts facility in Sapporo. Kato's relationship with Odai and Sapporo began in 2009. Kato was involved as a documentary photographer in the "Artist in School" program, which Odai founded, and had a major impact on the establishment of oowa. In this program, which utilizes unused classrooms in elementary schools in Hokkaido as artists' studios, children can visit the studios during recess and after school to interact with the artists. "When the children come in, the artist's work is disrupted. But these interruptions also form relationships. The children are not entertained, nor are they excluded. Similar to the Artist in School program, I created oowa with the idea of coexisting with children while building a relationship with them."

He explained that what he valued most is creating a place where even things that are not right can be accepted as they are. "'Oowa' is something my eldest son says to mean 'ookii' (big). In schools and hospitals, this word would be corrected to "ookii," but here, I wanted to accept the word 'oowa' as it is."

Three Activities Sustaining oowa

Kato currently lives with his three children, the oldest of whom, now ten years old, has Down Syndrome. Many of those who come to oowa are either children with disabilities or their siblings. However, Kato does not describe oowa as a place "for children with disabilities," out of concern that children without disabilities might be excluded. Nonetheless, if he were to promote oowa by saying that everyone is welcome, and children without disabilities made up the majority, children with disabilities might be pushed to the margins... Kato aims for a balance, avoiding categorization by simply calling it a "studio" where everyone can share the same space regardless of whether they have a disability or not.

The activities of oowa are focused on the three main themes of "daily life," "experiments," and "field trips." Related to daily life, oowa offers yoga classes for parents and a space called "oowa room," where parents of children with Down syndrome can exchange information. "The symptoms of Down syndrome vary greatly from one individual to another, so many parents are confused by all the information they receive. The room functions as a kind of refuge where such parents can share information. Another pressing issue for parents is deciding which kindergarten or elementary school their child should attend. Parents of children with Down syndrome or developmental disabilities, or those whose children fall into the so-called 'gray zone'—meaning they do not have a specific diagnosis but exhibit certain traits—gather to talk about which kindergartens will accept their children or which schools have well-supported special needs classes, helping each other navigate such important decisions."

ODAI Mami
[AIR Director of Sapporo Tenjinyama Art Studio]
In the 1990s, Odai started planning and organizing projects primarily with sound artists under the name "LOOK AT MUSIC." She organized the art event "BONUS" in Tokyo, Osaka, and other cities. After that, she was engaged in various collaborative activities with artists. Since 2003, she has been focused on developing and supporting the infrastructure (function, structure, and circumstances) that sustain cultural and artistic activities, including artist-in-residence (AIR) programs and their underlying frameworks. She has been actively involved in the operation of these programs as a program designer, residency producer, research coordinator, and program director.

oowa room is held on the second Thursday of every month.
Photo by HIROTA Riku

Alongside this focus on daily life, oowa also hosts activities they call experiments. Workshops are held for artists and children. One might take the theme of "wearing," in which participants try on costumes they would not normally wear; another might be themed around "hospitality," in which the children try their hand at hosting guests in a setting like a coffee shop. Various artists from dance, design, theater, and other fields visit the studio to engage with the children.

The third activity involves field trips to other places. In "Meeting in the Atrium," a collaboration with Yokohama-based art platform for theater and dance Steep Slope Studio, artificial grass was laid in the atrium of Yokohama City Hall and children and artists worked together to create a playground. "By not setting a specific theme, the space became a haphazard environment where various activities unfolded spontaneously. This made it hard to distinguish the artists from the guardians. In this way, a chaotic space emerged, in which relationships were formed organically."

View of Meeting in the Atrium.

Additionally, oowa members also made a trip to join a children's program at the Kanagawa Arts Theatre. With the exception of one member, it was the children's first time to see a play at a theater. When the interviewer, Odai, expressed surprise, saying, "But there are so many children's programs...," Kato explained the underlying reasons for this: "As parents of children with disabilities, we do not always know what will trigger a negative reaction in our children, and we cannot always be sure if they will be able to stay focused throughout the performance. So even when there is a program for children, we sometimes hesitate to participate."

Kato himself was nervous about taking the oowa members to the play, but they were all excited to see a live performance for the first time. Even Kato's child, who is usually shy around strangers, talked to the performers after the show. "There is no single solution that works for everyone. So it is easier for us to feel comfortable about going to an event when the organizers show an attitude of accepting whatever happens, rather than presenting us with specific conditions."

To Step Away from oowa

Now in its third year, Studio oowa continues to offer theater and art classes together with artists, while also conducting new experiments, such as a group led by teachers from special-needs schools focused on creating special-needs teaching materials. Originally, Kato envisioned a space where children with special needs, who typically cannot be separated from their parents, could play and engage independently. Through various activities, this vision is gradually becoming a reality. Kato also expressed his desire to eventually step away from oowa. "On the day we first invited an artist to hold a workshop, just ten minutes before it started, my eldest son said, 'Dad, go home!' I had asked the parents of other participating children not to get involved in the workshop, but from my eldest son's point of view, I too was a parent. Since then, I have been thinking that one day I will have to step down from the activities, and gradually, I have been leaving my duties to others so that the studio can run without me."

"My eldest son is now ten years old, so in eight years he will reach adulthood and begin working. Once he becomes an adult, the options for government support will decrease significantly. Moreover, even if he manages to find employment, he will struggle to find another job should he face a setback. I want to consider how we can provide support for adults in such situations."

The ideal image Kato envisions surely resembles a park, where children of all kinds are playing as their parents watch over them while conversing freely with one another. Neither a home nor a school, oowa continues to open up as a space beyond definition.

BREAKOUT SESSION

November 2 (Sat) 12:30 - 2:00 pm

What It Takes to Create an Inclusive Theater

Speakers

NAGATSU Yuichiro, HIRAI Toru

6

Kyushu University Researcher Nagatsu Yuichiro and KAAT Kanagawa Arts Theatre's Hirai Toru discussed inclusive theater from the stage technicians' perspective.

Written by HAGIWARA Yuta, Translated by Claire Tanaka

NAGATSU Yuichiro
[Associate Professor, Graduate School of Design, Kyushu University]
Nagatsu is a researcher who accompanies artistic occasions where diverse relationships are born. He specializes in arts management and cultural policy. His research focuses on the artistic practices of people with diverse backgrounds, including people with disabilities. He has a PhD from Tokyo University of the Arts. Publications include *People with Disabilities On Stage (butai no ue no shogaisha)* (Kyushu University Press, 2018).

The Necessity of Involving Stage Technicians

In April 2024, the Act for Eliminating Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities went into effect, making it mandatory for private businesses to "provide reasonable accommodation." Around that time, several public theaters began providing audio guides and Japanese subtitles, aiming to create theater that can be equally enjoyed by people with and without disabilities. Of course, attending a performance is not the only way to enjoy it. Over the past ten years or so, even in Japan it has become more and more common to hear about stage works in which people with disabilities appear and works that are made together with people with disabilities.

Nagatsu Yuichiro, who researches the relationship between disability and performing arts, has recently been working with Yoshino Satsuki of Aichi University to research stage technicians, or *urakata*: the people who work behind the scenes in sound, lighting, and stage departments, and how they are involved in inclusivity programs.

"There has been a significant change in the environment surrounding public cultural facilities over the past decade, including how social inclusion was raised as one role of cultural facilities during debate over the Act on the Vitalization of Theaters and Halls that was enacted in 2012. We have proposed many ways to make theaters more inclusive, but as concepts alone they are slow to spread. When thinking about how to spread these concepts, we had the idea of sharing the practical knowledge of the technicians working behind the scenes at theaters, which was the beginning of this research."

Although the numbers are growing, past surveys show that there are still few programs and theaters that have engaged in disability-related programs. Survey results indicate that of all in-house works produced in public theaters, only 13.5 percent targeted people with disabilities, and only 14.4 percent of employees reported having conducted disability support.[*1] Concepts like coexistence and diversity have only taken root in a limited number of progressive theaters.

"Although the people in charge of planning and production are aware of inclusivity programming, it still has not filtered down to the on-site technicians. However, putting on programming at a theater cannot happen with planners alone. It is vital to ensure that stage technicians are involved."

From a Stage Technician's Perspective

How does this look from the perspective of a stage technician working on site? KAAT production manager Hirai Toru, whom Nagatsu interviewed for his research, joined in on a dialogue that revealed another side of inclusive programming.

Before his current position, Hirai was on the technical team at Saitama Arts Theater. In 2011, Saitama Arts Theater was host to Jenny Sealey (1963-), co-artistic director for the Opening Ceremony of the London 2012 Paralympic Games and artistic director of Graeae Theatre Company, where she works with many people with disabilities among the professional actors and staff. Hirai worked on the production of R&J (Romeo and Juliet) that Sealey directed at Saitama Arts Theater, gaining experience creating something together with people with disabilities. At that time, the concept of inclusivity was not yet widespread, but Hirai said he was easily able to adapt his creative process. "Even then, it wasn't such a big difference to me whether someone had a disability or not. People with and without disabilities both have all kinds of characteristics. I'm able to accept those differences easily, so I think that's why I could participate so smoothly."

A stage manager is responsible for bringing artistic visions that sometimes seem unachievable into a real theater space and doing it safely. No matter what is thrown at them, they must always stay calm. Hirai says that because of the nature of his job, the first time he worked with people with disabilities he was able to do it without getting flustered. In addition to the project with Jenny Sealey, Hirai also worked with Handles, a dance team made up of people with disabilities run by choreographer Kondo Ryohei, thus gradually building up knowledge about working on projects with people with disabilities.

Hirai wanted to gain further insight into creating with people with disabilities, so in 2015 he used the Agency for Cultural Affairs Program of Overseas Study for Upcoming Artists to spend one year in the UK. What kind of progressive work is happening in the UK, where in addition to Jenny Sealey's work, there are many other productions being made in collaboration with people with disabilities?

"Actually... the situation in the UK wasn't so different from Japan. Some theaters are serious about implementing programs with people with disabilities, while others are involved for cynical reasons, thinking 'if we don't work with people who have disabilities we won't get our grant money.' In the same way, some stage technicians are serious about that sort of work while others aren't interested at all. However, when it came to stage technicians in the UK, most of them were sincere about it even if they weren't interested."

HIRAI Toru
[KAAT Kanagawa Arts Theatre Technical Department]
After working as a freelance stage director, Hirai joined the stage technical staff at Saitama Arts Theater in 1997, where he was involved with stage performances both in Japan and overseas produced by Ninagawa Yukio, Takeuchi Juichiro, Jenny Sealey, Kondo Ryohei & Handles, and more. In 2015, he went to the UK as an overseas trainee with the Agency for Cultural Affairs Program of Overseas Study for Upcoming Artists where he studied theater technology and social inclusion. After returning to Japan, he was involved with shows at BiG-i International Communication Center for Persons with Disabilities, where he further studied social inclusion. In 2019 he joined the Kanagawa Arts Theatre to work as a production manager.

Egalitarianism Can Hinder Inclusivity

At Hirai's current workplace, the Kanagawa Arts Foundation, which includes KAAT, the foundation's stated priority is to be a cultural facility

At the KAAT Social Inclusion Portal, a handmade model of a pipe organ is used to explain its structure to visually impaired participants.

*1
Report on the Situation of Initiatives by Theaters and Music Halls to Promote Arts and Culture Programming With People With Disabilities (The Association of Public Theaters and Halls in Japan, 2020).

that is open to all people and to strengthen community ties through arts and culture. In order to achieve this, it has established a Social Inclusion Portal Department at the foundation headquarters. It trains people in stage arts/theater management, and coordinates audience support for people with disabilities.

However, unlike large-scale, progressive theaters like KAAT, budget and human resources are obstacles for most theaters, and many are unable to embark on such programs. Speaking from the perspective of a technician working on-site, Hirai offered insight into other obstacles. “Public theaters have to offer the same services to all users. No matter how hard a single staff member works, unless other people also step up, there will be an inequality between patrons. I think a lot of places choose not to provide services in order to preserve that equality.”

Being a theater for everyone means that it has to be made so everyone can use it, while being for everyone also means nobody can have special treatment. This is where we see the dilemma that public theaters face. Hirai posits that recent labor shortages and work style reform have also had a significant impact. “In order to make a piece together with people with disabilities, one must do research into the characteristics of the disability in advance. However, considering that there are personnel shortages and work hours restricted by work style reform, there is no time for tasks outside normal work. When that happens, we’re no longer able to prepare for such things.”

An audience member who works at a small theater remarked that if a large theater like KAAT with several specialized staff has such issues, and inclusive programs take an enormous amount of additional work, then it sounds impossible for small theaters to implement. Hirai responded. “In a smaller theater there are things that can be done because there is a single person who has a grasp of everything. Even better is if someone really wants to do something and involves the stage technicians and other people with respect. If you move forward in this way, it’s not impossible even at a small theater with few people.”

Inclusive programming is finally becoming more widespread in Japanese stage arts, but the movement has only just begun. If planning and production staff, technical staff, and artists can come together to advance such projects, public theaters will finally become “theaters for everyone” in the truest sense.

BREAKOUT SESSION

7

November 3 (Sun) 10:00 - 11:30 am

Sign Language Interpretation of Art by Deaf People: Learning from a British BSL Guide

Speakers

KANNO Natsumi, MINAMIMURA Chisato

Performance artist Minamimura Chisato is a Deaf BSL (British Sign Language) art tour guide at art museums in the UK. Kanno Natsumi of the Re; Signing Project interviewed her about her experiences in a discussion of issues surrounding Deaf people and art museums in Japan.

Written by HAGIWARA Yuta, Translated by Claire Tanaka

KANNO Natsumi
[Director of Re; Signing Project]
Kanno founded Re; Signing Project, an art project that explores new forms of artistic expression for Deaf people and sends questions out into society. In 2023, she held the ~ People who perceive the world through sight exhibition which reexamines the body and senses from a Deaf perspective. She works as a community manager as part of management for the sign language and visual language-based coworking space 5005, while creating artworks on the theme of the relationship between language, culture, and physicality.

Deaf Guides for Deaf Visitors

In this session, Kanno Natsumi and Minamimura Chisato, who are both Deaf, discussed the example of Deaf BSL (British Sign Language) guides who hold tours at art museums in the UK.

Minamimura, who has been Deaf since losing her hearing at the age of seven months, is a performance artist who bases her practice in London. Before attending the conference as a speaker on this day, she traveled to Korea and Australia to stage her performance, *Scored in Silence*, which explores memories of war experienced by Deaf people. Minamimura is also active as an art guide who provides tours to Deaf visitors as a BSL guide at the Tate Modern, British Museum, London National Gallery, and other institutions.

Art museums in the UK began offering sign language for guided tours after London's Victoria and Albert Museum pioneered the practice in 1988. The museum supplied sign language interpreters in order to allow Deaf people to enjoy guided tours conducted by hearing curators, and since then many other museums have followed its lead.

However, sign language interpretation of speaking art guides was not easy for Deaf patrons to understand, explained Minamimura. "The speaking rhythms of hearing people and Deaf people are different, and because the speeds of the curator guide and the sign language interpreter would go out of sync, it was hard for Deaf people to understand the content. If everyone here were to visit the British Museum, which would you be more interested in joining, a tour by a Japanese guide, or a tour by an English guide with a Japanese interpreter? I think most Japanese tourists would choose the Japanese guide. Deaf people feel the same way. Rather than be guided by a hearing curator with a sign language interpreter, a tour with a Deaf guide is easier to understand and more educational. Because of this, it is now possible to request a BSL guided tour by an art guide who is Deaf.

Fans that Flock to Minamimura's Guided Tours

The Tate Modern, a national art gallery that opened in 2000, was influenced by the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act, and began an art guide training course for Deaf people when it opened. Minamimura took this course herself in 2012. Of the fifty people who applied and made it through screening and interviews, ten people were selected for the rigorous program, which included research, training, and presentation practice.

After finishing the course, Minamimura received requests from many different art museums and galleries in the UK. The types of exhibitions she has guided range from conventional art to conceptual art, street art and more. "When I get a request from an art museum, I select eight to ten works from the exhibit and research the background of the pieces and the artists, creating a tour that lasts about one hour. There are two types of tours: monologues where the guide simply gives an explanation, and dialogues where the guide has a conversation with the participants."

This year, Kanno actually traveled to the UK and joined a BSL guided tour delivered by Minamimura. "I could only understand about half of the BSL, but Minamimura's tour was very enjoyable. As the dialogue-style tour progressed, the atmosphere helped me feel comfortable and I was able to ask questions directly and give my opinions. The British Deaf person beside me told me that they were a fan of Minamimura's tours, and said, 'I have new discoveries every time I join one of her tours, so I make a point of attending.'"

Minamimura Chisato giving a guided tour at Royal West of England Academy.

MINAMIMURA Chisato
[Performance artist and BSL art guide]
Based in London, Minamimura is an internationally active creator, performer, and teacher. She is currently a Work Place associate artist at The Place. Minamimura trained at Trinity Laban in London, and has a MA from Yokohama National University. As a Deaf artist, she creates choreography and performance from a unique perspective, experimenting with and exploring visualization of sound and music. Using movement and technology, she aims to share experiences of sensory perception and human encounters.

Gaining support from Deaf people in this way has resulted in certain changes. "When I began providing BSL guided tours, the fee for sign language interpreting was higher, but as the tours got more popular with Deaf people, the fee for Deaf guides has exceeded the fee for interpreters."

Regarding the importance of Deaf BSL guides, Minamimura said, "For example, at an exhibition of works by a Black photographer at the Autograph Gallery, the BSL guided tour was attended by many Black Deaf visitors. Previously, when there was an exhibition of photographs from apartheid-era South Africa, many people said they had not been aware of the specifics of what went on during apartheid until participating in a BSL guided tour. Looking at a single work brings out many opinions in dialogue with participants, and lets me deepen my own way of thinking. I think it contributes to lifelong learning."

Popularizing Deaf Guided Tours

In comparison to the UK, Japan has some art museums that offer sign language interpretation of guided tours given by hearing curators, but there are not yet any museums that offer guided tours by Deaf guides.

"At Japan's art museums, I get the impression that budget issues have caused them to decide that sign language interpreting and written information are sufficient. But for Deaf people, Japanese is their second language and they are more comfortable giving their opinions and

reflections in their first language, which is sign language. What can we do to communicate the need for art museums to provide Deaf guides? I hope that I can talk about it with everyone here today," ventured Kanno. One participant who works at an intermediate support organization for art museums said, "There is currently no organization that can support that sort of need, so art museums have to respond on their own."

Another participant who works at an art museum said that it is difficult to ensure information reaches Deaf people. "At the art museum where I work, we always provide sign language interpreting at lectures and classes, but often nobody who needs sign language attends. Or if they do attend, they only write things like 'it was easy to understand' on the survey, so it's hard to know how to improve." In response to this concern, a participant who operates a support group for Deaf people offered the following advice. "Currently, there isn't a sufficient environment in place for Deaf people to get information about events that have sign language interpreting. Even if Deaf-related groups get information, it's not being communicated to everyone. I think you have to think about why there isn't more motivation to communicate this information."

Another Deaf participant said, "It's easier to give opinions using sign language. A survey that only uses Japanese is a barrier." This led to several more remarks by Deaf and hearing participants.

Minamimura told a story about a time when she was performing at a festival in Switzerland, and there was a Deaf person on staff who suggested she make a promotional video for her show in sign language, and as a result many more Deaf people came to see it. Minamimura offered some advice, saying, "I think it would help art museums and galleries if they had Deaf people serve as advisors."

In 2025, the Deaflympics will be held in Tokyo and Deaf people will be coming to Japan from around the world, so the situation for Deaf people is predicted to change substantially. When places for Deaf people to enjoy art using their first language of sign language become commonplace, it will bring us closer to a society where "Everyone can connect with culture."

BREAKOUT SESSION

8

November 3 (Sun) 12:30 - 2:00 pm

Accessibility Without Limits; Case Studies from the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

Speakers

SATO Maiko, Cathelijne Denekamp

Moderator

YAMAKI Kasumi

While researching inclusive art in the Netherlands, Sato Maiko met Cathelijne Denekamp of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. Yamaki Kasumi, from the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, who has also spent time living in the Netherlands, served as moderator for this case study on museum accessibility.

Written by SATO Emi, Translated by Claire Tanaka

SATO Maiko
[Art Educator]
After working as an art educator at the Contemporary Art Center, Art Tower Mito, Sato began working freelance. In 2021, she was awarded the Agency for Cultural Affairs Program of Overseas Study for Upcoming Artists, and travelled to the Netherlands. She surveyed local museum education and inclusive art, in addition to coordinating an artist in residence program at a psychiatric hospital. She is currently completing her master's degree in Applied Museum and Heritage Studies at Reinwardt Academy, Amsterdam University of the Arts.

Towards Equality, Independence, and Hospitality

The Rijksmuseum, the national museum of the Netherlands in Amsterdam opened in 1885 and is known the world over by its Dutch name. Over 900 people work at the museum, and Cathelijne Denekamp is in a specialized position as the manager of accessibility and inclusion. She introduced herself, "I have blonde hair and I'm 170 centimeters tall, and I have a suit with flowers and a green shirt." She went on to explain, "In an accessible world, no one has a disability anymore. Unfortunately, we are not there yet." The Rijksmuseum has three visions of Equality, Independence, and Hospitality to work toward that end.

Cathelijne told a story about a time when a wheelchair user participated in a workshop. The venue was the museum's education center, which did not have a wheelchair-accessible front door. The participant was able to enter through the back door using a stairlift but had to wait for staff to come to operate it, and it took time to arrive at the venue. That person said, "Next time I'll go to a course somewhere else where I can enter through the front door." Cathelijne continued, "It can be accessible, but it's not equal when you cannot enter through the same door." Since then, the museum has installed automatic doors and a lift that can be operated independently so that everyone can use the front door.

The museum also places importance on creating an environment where visitors can enjoy the content independently. For example, there is a free app that guides people with voice and vibration to the works they want to see, so that people with visual impairments can move through the museum without staff support. Staff are trained in basic sign language so that they are able to greet Deaf visitors without panicking, which contributes to a welcoming atmosphere.

Outside view of the Rijksmuseum.

Building Systems in Which People with Disabilities and All Departments Participate

When Cathelijne started in the position seven years ago, she was assigned to the education department. However, accessibility is about more than just developing programs for the education department. So, she began connecting with other departments, developing guided tours for people with visual impairments and low-stimulus evening openings for people with sensory sensitivities, and after five and a half years, she was promoted to a newly created position in management with involvement in all departments.

She made accessibility initiatives for all seven departments in the museum. Using a method called Theory of Change, she designated specific results and actions for each department to have people with disabilities participating in the museum.

For example, the Facility Department works on accessibility in the museum and offices, while also creating and installing an architectural model that integrates touch and audio information. In the Education Department, they adjust flexibly to the needs of individual participants, instead of assuming all people with a certain disability will want the same programming. The staff sign language training is carried out by the Service & Safety Department. That department has the most contact with visitors, so they receive training in social accessibility. In the Exhibitions Department, employees think about accessible presentation of the art, for example installing works at a height that makes it easy to see from a wheelchair, or installing mirrors to make objects easier to see if lower lines of sight cannot reach the work. The Curators Department researches the collection so that people with disabilities are represented.

All departments at the museum are involved with accessibility, and people with disabilities are always checking their work. Cathelijne mentioned two conditions for implementing accessibility initiatives: "nothing about us without us" and "keep working on awareness of all staff."

Cathelijne Denekamp
[Manager of Accessibility & Inclusion at Rijksmuseum]
Based on the philosophy that "an accessible museum is a better museum for everyone," Cathelijne's work in improving accessibility spans across physical, social, digital and more, to create a museum experience where all visitors and employees can be on equal footing, feel welcome, and be recognized. She wrote about her experiences in the book, *Accessibility Without Limits – Rijksmuseum* (2022).

The Theory of Change model, implemented to make the museum a place where people with disabilities participate (Created by Cathelijne Denekamp).

Not Only Theory, but also Emotional Aspects

Next, art educator Sato Maiko explained her reason for wanting Cathelijne to speak on the panel, talked about the characteristics of the job of an accessibility manager, and gave her perspective on accessibility as a foreigner in the Netherlands. Sato worked at the Contemporary Art Center, Art Tower Mito until 2021. Although her work as a museum educator entailed developing programming with an awareness of accessibility, she gained a lot of insight through meeting Cathelijne.

Sato's first insight was about how the possibilities of accessibility in each department were theorized and verbalized. Another insight was about how emotional aspects are taken into consideration. She lauded

YAMAKI Kasumi
[Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo]
Yamaki assumed her current position in 2018 after working at the Tokyo Metropolitain Teien Art Museum in exhibition planning and educational programs. She lived in the Netherlands from 2020 to 2022, and used her experiences to plan exhibitions as a practice of decolonization and demarginalization such as *How I feel is not your problem, period.* (2023), and *Where My Words Belong* (2024). She is interested in facilitating dialogues or workshops for people with disabilities and people from different cultures.

the example of the improvement that allowed everyone, including wheelchair users, to use the front entrance, saying “I felt the spirit of hospitality that doesn’t make people feel like they are special.”

She also expressed an understanding for Cathelijne’s work position. When accessibility is limited to program development and coordination, it isn’t sustainable if it’s dependent on a certain person or situation. Involving the entire museum in the system means accessibility can be maintained, and diverse options are created.

Lastly Sato, who has been living in the Netherlands since 2021, spoke about an experience she had visiting a gallery where she noticed that the artworks and captions were placed at a higher position than in Japan. The average height of a Dutch person is more than 10cm taller than an average Japanese person. However, she noticed the efforts made with display methods at the Rijksmuseum, which caused the short statured Sato to have a renewed appreciation for the importance of accessibility.

Based on her own experience with accessibility, Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo Curator Yamaki Kasumi emphasized that for Japanese museums to engage with accessibility, the structure of the organization itself needs to change so that more staff can be involved.

A Museum That Makes People Feel Like They Belong

Continuing, Sato asked Cathelijne about staff training. “I joined a program where participants used goggles and headphones to block their sight and hearing, and attached weights to their bodies to experience physical disabilities. Why is this program not being held now?” Cathelijne replied that there had been some national research done on the subject that caused them to switch to a different program. The old method had been causing a wider psychological gap to open between people with disabilities and people without disabilities. Presently, she hires people with disabilities to work as staff, and the training now involves going around the museum together and sharing realizations and change. “The best thing is to hire people with a disability in each department. I am working with human resources to make that possible.” (Cathelijne)

Even with these diverse activities, Cathelijne continues to make steady efforts to bring about change, training staff regularly, holding conferences, and publishing books to spread information outside the organization. When she wanted to start a program where visitors with visual impairments could touch the artwork, she says it was difficult to gain understanding from curators at first. But by continuing, staff who saw the actual program approved of it and the idea began to take root. Sato added, “First, start off by finding a few people who understand and try it out, and gradually involve more people. It’s important to change things little by little.”

At Rijksmuseum, all departments are involved in accessibility. Cathelijne says, “I am in a specialized position, but I see myself as a spider in a web. All the input is given by people with a disability.” She is working towards creating a museum where more and more people can say, “I feel like I belong!”

The Challenge of Providing International Sign Interpretation Through Relay Interpretation

TAKAGI Machiko
Sign Language Interpretation Coordinator

A 19-Member Team of Sign Language Interpreters

During the recent International Conference on Open Access to Culture 2024, sign language interpretation was provided in all of the conference halls. The provision of both Japanese Sign Language (JSL) and International Sign (IS) interpretation by Japanese interpreters in an international conference of this scale was an unprecedented undertaking.

My mission was to coordinate the Japanese Sign Language and International Sign interpretation in Hall B5 over three days, from the Opening Ceremony to the Closing Session on the third day. In the lead-up to the conference, I coordinated the assembly of a team of the most skilled and reliable interpreters, assigning each member to the most suitable sessions and ensuring that none of them would be overworked, scheduling briefing sessions with the presenters, and providing materials to the interpreters well in advance. During this period, I focused on building trust with the interpretation team.

Providing JSL interpretation on stage right and IS interpretation on stage left throughout the three-day conference required a team of nineteen sign language interpreters. A cohesive team spirit was essential for such a large number of interpreters to support each other and to work together harmoniously. In the end, the nineteen members of the team collaborated smoothly and staged an unbelievably intricate relay interpretation.

Deaf Interpreters Play the Key Role

All of the IS interpreters on stage were Deaf Interpreters (DIs), in other words interpreters who themselves are deaf. Signed languages differ from country to country, so IS developed as a means of communication when deaf people got together for international conferences and events. In Japan, the only people who have acquired IS to interpreter-level proficiency are these DIs.

Hearing interpreters, known as “feeders,” convey or “feed” the spoken information to the DIs in JSL. The hearing feeder and DI work together as “co-interpreters,” meaning that they aim to collaborate harmoniously as if a single interpreter is interpreting.

When there was just one presenter on stage, relay interpreting was not unusually complicated. It would start with the spoken language interpretation from English into Japanese. The feeder would interpret this Japanese into JSL and “feed” it to the DI on stage. The DI would then interpret the JSL into IS for the audience.

However, in the Closing Session, there were English and Japanese speakers on stage along with an IS user, David de Keyzer. The spoken English and Japanese were interpreted as explained above, and David would follow by watching the IS interpreter on stage, displayed on a monitor in front of him. When David made a comment in IS, it was interpreted into JSL by two DIs working below the stage. This JSL was voiced into Japanese by two hearing interpreters sitting

in front of the DIs, which was then interpreted into JSL by the interpreter on stage right and also into English simultaneously. If the audience did not realize that such a complicated relay interpretation was taking place, it was proof that our “co-interpreting” was working successfully.

David presenting during the Closing Session.

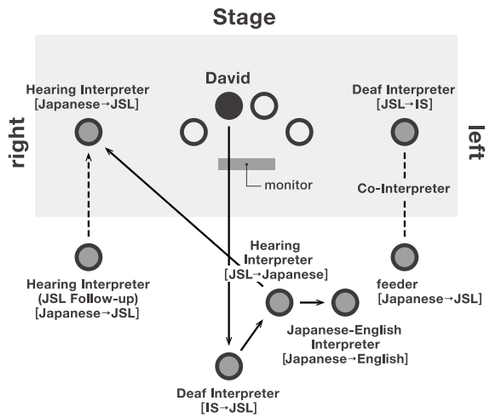


Diagram of the relay interpretation when David presented in IS.

Furthermore, when David attended one of the breakout sessions where the presenters, Kanno Natsumi and Minamimura Chisato, were both deaf and presenting in JSL, I assigned three DIs to interpret the session into IS.

One DI sat facing the presenters in order to see the JSL presentation and to feed it to a second DI who was seated facing the audience and David. This second DI received the feed and interpreted into IS. With a third DI on the team, they would take turns feeding and interpreting. This was a rare example of relay interpretation where the entire team, including the feeder, was comprised only of DIs, and was made possible because all three had sufficient skills to handle the situation.

An Ideal Environment for Sign Language Interpretation

Sign language interpreters stand on the stage without any memos or materials, facing away from the screen and towards the audience with nothing to rely on but themselves. Providing an environment where these sign language interpreters can work without anxiety and can be seen clearly by the deaf audience requires special adjustments and considerations.

In this conference, the understanding, patience, and cooperation of the staff in charge of the venue and stage, lighting, audio effects, and cameras allowed us to create an ideal environment both for the interpreters and for those watching them. Such an achievement is only possible with cooperation from the venue staff, good teamwork among the sign language interpreters, and commitment on the part of the organizers to ensure accessibility. Through this joint effort, I believe this international conference truly provided “open access to culture.”

TAKAGI Machiko
[Sign Language Interpretation Coordinator]
Takagi started her career as an English-Japanese interpreter/translator, but later began to focus on sign language interpretation, a field she has been working in for thirty years. In 2001, she became the first person in Japan to undertake English-Japanese Sign Language interpretation, and has since been supporting the international activities of the Deaf at the U.N. in New York and Bangkok, at the WFD World Congress, Deaflympics, and many other venues. She started coordinating sign language interpretation for international conferences in 2012 and has extensive experience in this field. She also teaches interpretation theory to sign language interpreters throughout the country.

SHOWCASE/ NETWORKING/ COMMUNICATION LAB

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LOBBY GALLERY REPORT

October 29 (Tue)—November 3 (Sun) 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

The Lobby Gallery served as a venue for experiencing the diversity of arts and culture, hosting workshops and exhibits by domestic and international artists.

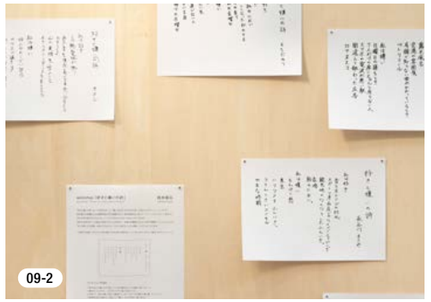
Written by AKASHI Yuka, Translated by Sam Holden

Changing Our Gaze Towards Boundaries and Mistakes

The first thing that attracted attention upon arriving at the venue was *Blinking Leaves* by artist Suzuki Yasuhiro. Pieces of paper with eyes on them flutter down from the top of a large white chimney-like tube. The front of the paper has open eyes, while the back has closed eyes. As moments of blinking

*Photo numbers correspond to the Lobby Gallery Floor Map on p.109.


09-1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10

Photo by UMEDA Ayaka

fall before viewers' eyes, we are made to realize that there are moments even in the "act of seeing" when we do not see or cannot see, and think about the tenuous manner in which we perceive the world.

In the back of the exhibition hall, Suzuki's *Poems of Likes and Dislikes* was also exhibited. A wall was filled with poems and other words created by people who participated in workshops during the conference, starting from the prompts "What do you like?" and "What do you dislike?" These words show that one person's likes may be another's dislike and that the same word can hold different meanings and values.

Both *Blinking Leaves* and *Poems of Likes and Dislikes* are works that dissolve the various boundaries that we often draw unconsciously. In today's society, where there is so much division and conflict, the soft yet genuine perspective Suzuki provides can be enjoyed by adults and children alike as an opportunity to change the way we look at frameworks in the world.

Another artist, Ise Katsuya, exhibited the knitted work *Freestyle Knitting Macaroni / Body*, which he created with older residents at the welfare facility Nishiogi Fureai no Ie. This work was created as a result of the ongoing exchange that began in 2015 with an art project called *TURN*, which creates expressive works out of the interactions spurred by encounters across difference between diverse people, such as those with or without disabilities. Even variations such as knitting mistakes are considered as expressions, and visitors can touch the works at the exhibition. Some of the people who helped to create the work also visited the venue.

LOBBY GALLERY REPORT

Creating a Place for Sign Language and Rethinking Touch for the Visually Impaired

The exhibit *My World, Your World* was curated by Wada Natsumi, who grew up with Deaf parents and uses sign language as her first language. Wada displayed her research on how people can create a place where they feel comfortable both physically and mentally, along with a track record of workshops she has conducted in the past.

For example, in the part on “Home,” Wada presented the results of research on issues of identity and loss of home that people with dementia experience when moving from their own homes to care homes, and the importance of the three elements of “Safe place,” “Each person’s own small world,” and “Connection” in building a safe and comforting home. The exhibit also discussed “Fantasy,” “Structure,” and “Creation” as necessary elements in the process of creating a home.

In addition, Kanno Natsumi, who collaborates with Wada to operate 5005, a working place with the starting point of sign language and visual language, presented a report on accessibility at cultural facilities in the UK, the Netherlands, and France.

In the booth across the aisle, Mogi Kazuji and Ouchi Susumu, experts in education for the visually impaired, presented an exhibit titled *What Does ‘Tactile’ Mean?* People with the ability to see obtain most of their information from sight. However, while the sense of sight allows us to capture the whole picture at once, it sometimes omits details. People with visual impairments depend on multiple senses, especially hearing and touch, in their daily lives.

The exhibit included examples of multi-sensory materials, such as an educational program for “plastic arts for the blind” that is rooted in auditory and tactile sensations, a tactile picture book, and a touch-based table for tactile workshops. The space compelled visitors to think about ways to grasp the world using a multitude of senses while relying on both knowledge and experience.

Technologies That Will Change the Future

Other booths showcased cutting-edge technological devices that will transform the future of accessibility. RETISSA ON HAND is a handheld visual aid device with an embedded camera module. Using a proprietary ultra-compact projector, it allows people


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with nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism, and presbyopia to see images without glasses or contact lenses or depending on their eyesight (ability to adjust focus). Because the system projects images onto the entire retina, people who have poor vision in the center of their field of vision can make use of their peripheral vision. The system is currently being introduced at cultural facilities such as art galleries, museums, theaters, zoos, and stadiums.

FILLTUNE is a fully wireless hearing support device developed to help people experiencing hearing loss regain their previous ability to hear. The proprietary bone conduction technology dramatically improves the intelligibility of speech and has proven effective for those with sensorineural hearing loss, enabling people with diminished hearing to hear natural and clear sounds and voices. Moreover, this device can be useful not only for people with hearing loss, but can also improve operations in medical settings. The physical and mental exhaustion of continually explaining to patients in a loud voice is a longstanding issue in medical environments, and FILLTUNE has proven its usefulness in such situations.

WHILL is a short-distance mobility system that has innovated on the concept of the wheelchair with unconventionally stylish design and ease of operation. This new mobility service can make

LOBBY GALLERY REPORT

moving more enjoyable for users, lowering the psychological hurdles associated with using a wheelchair, not only for those who use one on a daily basis, but also for people who have difficulty walking when shopping or appreciating artwork.

Visitors were able to try out these devices at the booths. On the outside wall of the exhibit area were photographs by photographer Ikeda Masanori that showed the accessibility initiatives at metropolitan cultural facilities in Tokyo. These works conveyed a sense of possibility that technology will gradually bring greater comfort to the lives of people with disabilities and those around them.


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Clues to Become a Society Connected by Culture

There were many other interesting exhibits as well. For example, a video and photo exhibit of Carmen Papalia, a nonvisual artist based in Vancouver, who talked about her impressions of using Coco Tape (walking tape for the visually impaired) during his stay in Japan and compared the accessibility in Canada and Japan. In the video, Carmen talks about the appeal of Coco Tape, which allows people to change their environment to make it easier to walk anywhere, while also criticizing the coldness of many Japanese toward people with disabilities and the standardized approach to accessibility in Japanese society. He also conveys the need and difficulty of simultaneously improving both the tangible and intangible aspects of accessibility.

IGENGO Lab. booth presented *CAN YOU HELP THE ANDROID?*, an interlingual escape game that combines International Sign with the puzzle solving games that are currently popular in Japan. Participants learned International Sign and were challenged with a mission to save an android that had suddenly shut down. Participants experienced the fun of communicating and understanding each other through trial and error using a different language.

In addition, a spatial connection product called Conova was installed in the venue and used to create a remote connection to Mugiwaraya, a welfare facility in Maebashi, Gunma Prefecture. Users making art and other nearby at Mugiwaraya were visible on the screen, occasionally interacted with people at the exhibition venue, providing a unique view that could only be created in real time.

Another corner introduced the arts and cultural activities undertaken by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government. Among the exhibits were a timeline visualizing the activities of Creative Well-being Tokyo, a booth introducing the Deaflympics to be held in 2025, and Tokyo Support Center for the Arts and Culture ARTNOTO provided an on-site consultation service, which helps artists and cultural practitioners respond to problems and concerns related to copyright, grants, accessibility, and other affairs. There were also exhibits and workshops on plain Japanese that uses grammar, word level, and sentence length that is easier for foreign people to understand.

The Lobby Gallery offered various perspectives for thinking about culture and home, through awareness gently arrived at through art, academic viewpoints from history and research, practical hope for technology, and policies implemented by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government.


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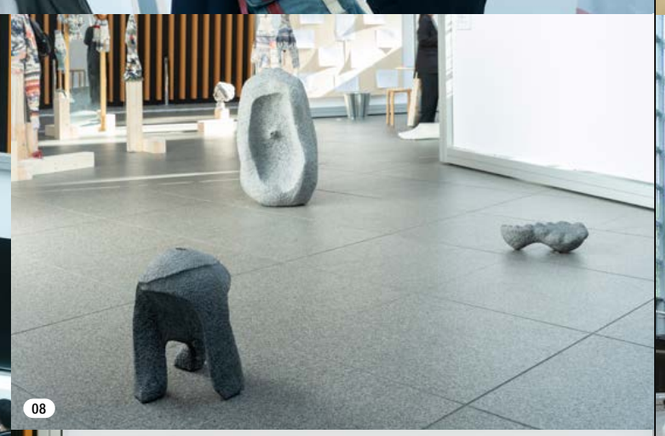

08

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10


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03


Creative Well-being Tokyo's Initiative
2021
2022
2023
CWT was Started
11


ARE YOU
14


01


社会の
つながりが
薬になる
「文化的処方」とは？
ART
共創拠点
06


14


14

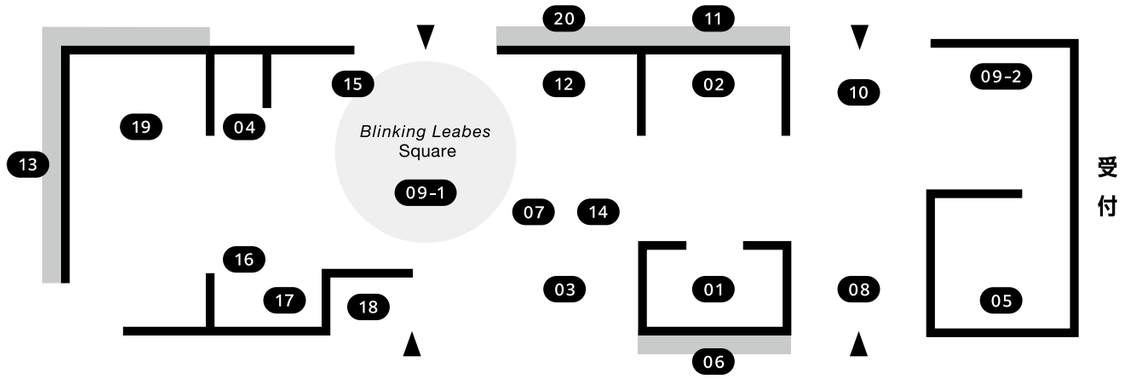

14


The question is,
02


困ったら、
まずノック。
アートノト
3つの機能
相談窓口
情報提供
スクール
アートのあんなコト、こんなコト、
19

PROGRAMS

Lobby Gallery
Floor Map



01 | Communication Lab | My World, Your World
02 | Communication Lab | What Does “Tactile” Mean?
03 | Communication Lab | Introduction to the Deaflympics (Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Bureau Of Citizens, Culture And Sports, International Sports Projects Division)
04 | Communication Lab | Convey and Connect! Plain Japanese (Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation TSUNAGARI)
05 | Communication Lab | Inter-Lingual Escape Game: *CAN YOU HELP THE ANDROID?*
06 | Communication Lab | Tokyo University of the Arts Arts-Based Communication Platform for Co-creation to Build a Convivial Society
07 | Communication Lab | Nurturing and Expanding Cultural Prescriptions | Workshop | Convey and Connect! Plain Japanese Workshop | Lecture | Leadership Workshop by David de Keyzer
08 | Artwork Exhibition | HASEGAWA Sachi (Sculptor)
09-1 | Artwork Exhibition | SUZUKI Yasuhiro (Artist)
09-2 | Talks, Screenings, and More | SUZUKI Yasuhiro Workshop *Poems of Likes and Dislikes*
10 | Artwork Exhibition | ISE Katsuya (Artist)
11 | Exhibition | Learn About Creative Well-being Tokyo
12 | Talks, Screenings, and More | Carmen Papalia × Coco Tape | KATO Hajime (Photographer), MORIUCHI Yasuhiro (Filmmaker)
13 | Artwork Exhibition | Accessibility Initiatives | IKEDA Masanori (Photographer)
14 | Talks, Screenings, and More | What is TURN LAND? Welfare Facility × Art Project | Efforts to Improve Web Accessibility | Screening and Talk: Documentary *Homescape Dialogue* | Screening and Talk: Documentary *Utau Kanata* | International State of Accessibility | Shunputei Shokichi: Rakugo Performance
15 | Talks, Screenings, and More | Mugiwara-ya with Conova
16 | Equipment Exhibition and Experience | QD Laser
17 | Equipment Exhibition and Experience | FILLTUNE
18 | Equipment Exhibition and Experience | WHILL
19 | Networking | Tokyo Support Center for the Arts and Culture ARTNOTO Temporary Consultation Booth
20 | Networking | Introduction of Speakers of the Conference

Creative Well-being Tokyo

International Conference on Open Access to Culture 2024 Culture and Home ——New future opened by art

Exhibitions

• Showcase

[Opening Performance]

Performer:

KIHIRA Kyle (piano)

[Closing Performance]

Planning:

FURUKAWA Kiyoshi,

Tokyo University of the Arts:
ART Collaborative Creation Hub,
Furukawa Unit

——

Cooperation:

SUZUKI Yasuhiro

——

Technical Support:

coton Co., Ltd

——

Performers:

YOSHII Mizuho (oboe), ARAKI Ryota (oboe)

——

Facilitator:

FURUHASHI Karin (Tokyo Bunka Kaikan workshop leader)

• Lobby Gallery *In alphabetical order

Exhibited Works:

Carmen Papalia, HASEGAWA Sachi,

IKEDA Masanori, ISE Katsuya,

KATO Hajime, MORIUCHI Yasuhiro,

SUZUKI Yasuhiro, PLAYWORKS Inc.,

Tokyo Arts and Space (TOKAS) Residency

——

Special Exhibitions:

KANNO Natsumi, MOGI Kazuji,

OUCHI Susumu, SUZUKI Yasuhiro,

WADA Natsumi

IGENGO Lab.,

NPO Mugiwara-ya,

Snow Peak Business Solutions Inc.,

Tokyo University of the Arts: Arts-Based Communication Platform for Co-creation to Build a Convivial Society,

Tokyo University of the Arts: OZAWA Tsuyoshi Laboratory *Goat's Eyes Project*

——

Booth Exhibitors:

FILLTUNE, Inc.,

QD Laser, Inc.,

Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation

TSUNAGARI,

Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Citizens, Culture and Sports, International Sports Projects Division,

Tokyo Support Center for the Arts and Culture ARTNOTO,

WHILL, Inc.,

——

Screenings and Talks:

David de Keyzer,

FUKUMOTO Rui (Nagaoka Institute of Design),

HAGIWARA Shunya,

ITO Tatsuya (Tokyo University of the Arts),

KUWAYAMA Tomoyuki (HERALBONY Co.,Ltd.),

Linda Rocco (Royal College of Art),

MATSUI Itaru, SAKAMOTO Yuji,

SAKURAI Shunsuke/SATO Risei (ArtsCouncil Tokyo, Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture),

SERIZAWA Takashi (P3 art and environment),

SHUNPUTEI Shokichi,

TOMIZUKA Emi (Yanaka-no-Okatte),

YOSHIHARA Tae,

ADD.LIVE Architects + Rakugo Space Ochiba,

Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation TSUNAGARI

Organization

Organized by:

Tokyo Metropolitan Government,

Arts Council Tokyo, Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture

Planning and Production:

MORI Tsukasa, SAKAMOTO Yuri,

TAKEMARU Soko, OKAZAKI Miyu

(Arts Council Tokyo, Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture)

——

Venue:

Tokyo International Forum

Administration:

Convention Linkage, Inc.

Public Relations:

annex inc.

——

Graphic Design:

MIKAMI Yuuri

Website Design:

YONEYAMA Shinji, SUGAI Rumi,

SAKAMOTO Kazuma (QANDO Inc.)

Documentation Photography:

KATO Hajime＋KAWASHIMA Ayami＋

OHNO Ryusuke＋TOMITA Ryohei

——

Lobby Gallery Setup:

NOMURA Co., Ltd.

——

Sign Language Interpreting Coordination:

IIZUMI Naoko, TAKAGI Machiko,

SETOGUCHI Yuko

Sign Language Interpreters:

*In alphabetical order

• Hall B5

[Japanese – Japanese Sign Language]

ARAI Mika, HARA Emi, HASUIKE Michiko,

HONOBE Yasuko, KOMATSU Tomomi,

MORIHASHI Yukio, SAITO Jun,

SHOZEN Sachi, TAKIZAWA Aki,

YAMADA Yasunobu

[Japanese Sign Language – International Sign]

GOTO Keiji, KAWAMATA Ikumi, KORI Miya,

NAGAI Yumiko, NASU Eri, TAKEDA Taichi,

YUYAMA Yoko

[English – American Sign Language]

Debby Kajiyama

——

• Conference Rooms G502 and G510

[Japanese – Japanese Sign Language]

DOI Yuki, HASEGAWA Miki,

HASUIKE Michiko, IMOTO Maiko,

ISHIKAWA Arisu, KATO Yuko,

NAGAMATSU Fumihisa, NITTA Ayako,

TAKIZAWA Aki, YAMASAKI Kaoru,

YAMADA Yasunobu

——

• Lobby Gallery

[Japanese – Japanese Sign Language]

GOYA Fumie, IIZUMI Naoko,

IWAMOTO Hanako, HASUIKE Michiko,

KATAOKA Risa,KAWAGUCHI Chika,

KOTOKU Yoshie, KUNUGI Keiko,

NANRI Kiyomi, OHARA Ikuko,

SAWAE Sachiyo, SHIBATA Shiho,

SHIMIZU Masato, SHOZEN Sachi

[Japanese Sign Language – French Sign Language]

NAGAI Yumiko

Report

Planning:

MORI Tsukasa,

SAKAMOTO Yuri,

TAKEMARU Soko,

OKAZAKI Miyu (Arts Council Tokyo, Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture)

——

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Jaime Humphreys

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KAWASHIMA Ayami,

OHNO Ryusuke,

TOMITA Ryohei

——

Book Design:

MIKAMI Yuuri, OMIYA Yoshimi

——

Printing:

Yamada Photo Process Co., Ltd.

——

Published by:

Tokyo, March 31, 2025

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Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture, Arts Council Tokyo

5th Floor, Kudan First Place,

4-1-28 Kudan-kita, Chiyoda-ku,

Tokyo 102-0073

Tel: 03-6256-8435

https://www.artscouncil-tokyo.jp

Development of Creative Well-being Tokyo

クリエイティブ・ウェルビーイング・トーキョーの展開

Arts and Culture for Everyone

This project aims to enhance accessibility to arts and culture, ensuring that people of all ages, from infants to senior citizens, can connect with cultural facilities and art programs regardless of disability, language, or cultural differences.
Launched in 2021 with the goal of building an inclusive society through the arts, this project is aligned with Tokyo Cultural Strategy 2030.

2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029

2021

The Movement of Tokyo Metropolitan Government

Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 was held

Tokyo Cultural Strategy 2030 was formulated

CWT was Started

Website
https://creativewell.rekibun.or.jp/en

2021

Jointly initiated by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and the Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture, the project seeks to enhance accessibility in metropolitan cultural facilities and projects. Efforts include creating supportive environments, developing programs, and building networks.

Creating an Accessible Environment
Building Networks
Developing Programs

This initiative is being expanded through collaborative efforts across various facilities and Arts Council Tokyo.

2022

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government Sign Language Ordinance was enforced

Tokyo was chosen as the venue for the 2025 Deaflympics

Creating an Accessible Environment
環境を整える

The 1st International Conference: The first comprehensive international conference in Asia

Over 100 specialists, organizations, and creators gathered from five countries and regions. As Asia's first comprehensive international conference, this event positioned Tokyo at the center of a network advocating for an inclusive society through arts and culture. There were over 5,000 participants from both inside and outside Japan, including online viewers.

Building Networks
ネットワークを築く

Keynote lectures

What Now for Culture in This Complex Ever-Changing World?
Justine Simons OBE / Deputy Mayor for Culture & Creative Industries, London

Art and its Possibilities in Realizing Our Well-being
OSUGI Yutaka / Professor, Tsukuba University of Technology

Being Not "Typical," Which in Turn, Brings Possibilities to Life
MATSUDA Takaya / CEO, HERALBONY Co, Ltd.

2023

アート/ト 東京都障害者芸術情報サポートセンター

Support Center for the Arts and Culture was Launched

Making Information Accessible

Setting up environments to ensure everyone can access cultural facilities and engage in art and culture. Efforts are being made to enhance website accessibility and improve facility guidance (such as providing sign language guidance, tactile maps, route guides, universal guides, and facility introduction videos).

The 1st Domestic Conference: Accessibility and Co-creation

Building on the outcomes and challenges shared at the international conference, this initiative was implemented and examined in collaboration with cultural facility staff, NPOs, and other stakeholders across Japan. Approximately 4,000 participants, including those from museums, theaters, and concert halls, discussed issues around information accessibility and creating enjoyable experiences for all. The conference served as a platform for exploring new approaches.

Topics

- Cultural "social prescription" and a place for co-creation
- Connections with society become someone's medicine
- How can we make the museum more accessible to everyone?
- Accessibility fostered by the relationship between technology and people
- Co-creative experience in theaters and halls
- Towards the Deaflympics
- Discovering the world through touch
- Art becomes the foundation of a society of coexistence
- What does co-creating mean?
- About Deaf Expression
- Gathering, Dialogue and Sharing

Developing Programs
プログラムを開発する

Launch of the partner program

This program involves collaboration with cultural facilities, NPOs, universities, and social welfare facilities to conduct research, evaluation, and model development for programs aimed at improving accessibility.

Examples of themes

- Appreciation support program for the hearing impaired: Creating subtitles and providing subtitle machines
- Appreciation support program for the visually impaired: Audio guides
- How to welcome a variety of people to the facility
  Dementia/people with disabilities/infants and parents, etc.
- Program development and personnel training for multicultural coexistence
- Utilizing Plain Japanese
- Development of a Deaf guide training program by Deaf people
- The role of access coordinators at arts and cultural facilities
- Dissemination of appreciation support

2024

Making Programming Accessible

Creating environments that enrich everyone's experience of viewing exhibitions and participating in programs. This includes introducing services, tools, and programs that enhance the experience of art viewing and participation.

Grant for Accessibility began

The grant program also conducts courses to provide know-how in conjunction with ARTNOTO

Establishment of a sign language interpreter training program in the field of arts and culture

The 2nd International Conference: Culture and Home - New future opened by art

Since the last international conference, collaborative efforts have continued to grow inside Japan and internationally. Participants shared these developments and other innovative practices, exchanging ideas on how arts and culture can create a sense of belonging.

2025

Tokyo 2025 Deaflympics will be held

Making Participation Accessible

Setting up environments that enable everyone to participate in the planning and management of arts and culture projects. Efforts are focused on expanding opportunities for individuals with disabilities to participate in the planning and management of projects that improve accessibility to arts and culture.

Keywords

#society of coexistence
#well-being
#accessibility
#place to belong
#multicultural coexistence
#education
#deaf culture
#inclusive
#empathy and dignity for others

Creating an environment where everyone can enjoy arts and culture