

MORI ART MUSEUM 20TH ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION

**WORLD CLASSROOM:
CONTEMPORARY ART THROUGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS**

APRIL 19 [WED] - SEPTEMBER 24 [SUN], 2023 MORI ART MUSEUM (53F, ROPPONGI HILLS MORI TOWER)

ENCOUNTERS AND LESSONS IN THE UNKNOWN

The Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, is proud to present the Mori Art Museum 20th Anniversary Exhibition entitled *WORLD CLASSROOM: Contemporary Art through School Subject* to be on view from Wednesday, April 19, to Sunday, September 24, 2023.

Since the 1990s, when the development of contemporary art began to be considered from multiple perspectives in different parts of the world, we have been seeing that contemporary art today goes far beyond the framework of arts and crafts and fine art in the school classroom. It is a composite field with connections to all subjects, including language and literature, mathematics, science, and social studies. In each of these disciplines, researchers are exploring the “unknowns” of the world, delving into history, and making new discoveries and inventions from the past to the future in order to enrich our perception of the world. The stance adopted by contemporary artists that seeks to go beyond our preconceptions in a creative way is also connected to this exploration of these unknowns. In this sense, the contemporary art museum is something akin to a “classroom of the world” where we can encounter and learn about these unknown worlds.

WORLD CLASSROOM: Contemporary Art through School Subjects, commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Mori Art Museum, is an attempt for us to encounter a world we have never seen or known from a wide variety of perspectives, using the subjects we learn at school as a gateway to contemporary art. Even though this exhibition is divided into such sections as “Language and Literature,” “Social Studies,” “Philosophy,” “Mathematics,” “Science,” “Music,” “Phys. Ed.,” and “Transdisciplinary,” each work, in fact, crosses over multiple subjects and domains. While over half the exhibited works will be drawn from the Mori Art Museum Collection for the first time ever, there will also be newly-commissioned artworks for this exhibition - altogether creating a “classroom of the world,” place of learning with works by some 50 artists/artist groups.



Wang Qingsong *Follow Me* 2003 C-print 60 x 150 cm
Collection: Mori Art Museum, Tokyo

PRESS RELEASE Public Relations, Mori Art Museum

E-mail: pr@mori.art.museum Web: www.mori.art.museum/en

FEATURED ARTISTS/GROUPS * In alphabetical order of the artists' surnames

Ai Weiwei, Aoyama Satoru, Ericka Beckman, Joseph Beuys, Johanna Billing, Luke Ching, Manon de Boer, Sam Falls, Peter Fischli & David Weiss, Fujii Hikaru, Gu Minja, Shilpa Gupta, Hatakeyama Naoya, Aziz Hazara, Susan Hiller, Jakarta Wasted Artists, Christian Jankowski, Katayama Maki, Kazama Sachiko, Kikuchi Tomoko, Jacob Kirkegaard, Joseph Kosuth, Dinh Q. Lê, Lee Ufan, Klara Lidén, Park McArthur, Mario Merz, Miyagi Futoshi, Miyajima Tatsuo, Miyanaga Aiko, Morimura Yasumasa, Nara Yoshitomo, Pangrok Sulap, Sopheap Pich, Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook, Vandy Rattana, James Richards, Hrair Sarkissian, Sasamoto Aki, Seto Momoko, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Martine Syms, Mika Tajima, Takayama Akira, Tamura Yuichiro, Rodel Tapaya, Tsai Charwei, Tse Su-Mei, Umetsu Yoichi, Wang Qingsong, Yang Haegue, Yee I-Lann, Yoneda Tomoko, and Yu Cheng-Ta

GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition Title: Mori Art Museum 20th Anniversary Exhibition

WORLD CLASSROOM: Contemporary Art through School Subjects

Organizer: Mori Art Museum

Curated by: Kataoka Mami (Director, Mori Art Museum)

Kumakura Haruko (Assistant Curator, Mori Art Museum)

Kondo Kenichi (Senior Curator, Mori Art Museum)

Tsubaki Reiko (Curator, Mori Art Museum)

Tokuyama Hirokazu (Associate Curator, Mori Art Museum)

Yahagi Manabu (Assistant Curator, Mori Art Museum)

Martin Germann (Adjunct Curator, Mori Art Museum)

Exhibition Period: April 19 [Wed] - September 24 [Sun], 2023

Venue: Mori Art Museum, 53F, Roppongi Hills Mori Tower, 6-10-1 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo

Hours: 10:00-22:00 | Tue: 10:00-17:00 | * Open until 22:00 on Tuesdays of May 2 and August 15, 2023.

* Admission until 30 minutes before closing. | * Open every day.

* See the Mori Art Museum website for our countermeasures against COVID-19.

<https://art-view.roppongihills.com/en/info/countermeasures/index.html>

Admission:

	[Weekdays]		[Sat., Sun. & Holidays]	
	On-Site	Online	On-Site	Online
Adults	¥ 2,000	¥ 1,800	¥ 2,200	¥ 2,000
Students (University/High School)	¥ 1,400	¥ 1,300	¥ 1,500	¥ 1,400
Children (Age 4 through Junior High School)	¥ 800	¥ 700	¥ 900	¥ 800
Seniors (Ages 65 and over)	¥ 1,700	¥ 1,500	¥ 1,900	¥ 1,700

* It is encouraged to make advance booking for a designated date/time slot and purchase the admission ticket on the booking website.

Once determined, the day the tickets go on sale will be announced on the Museum website.

* Admissions without advance bookings will be allowed so far as the time slots have not filled up on the day of your visit.

* All prices include tax.

* Admissions to Tokyo City View (indoor observation deck), Sky Deck (rooftop observation deck) and Mori Arts Center Gallery are separate.

General Inquiries: 050-5541-8600 (Hello Dial, within Japan) / +81-(0)47-316-2772 (Hello Dial, from overseas)

www.mori.art.museum/en

The latest exhibition press images are available on our website for downloads:

<https://taylori.com/f/worldclassroom-en/>

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HIGHLIGHTS

■ Groups Contemporary Art in Eight Accessible Subjects

Liberating contemporary art from the confines of fine art, drawing and craft to present works in eight sections by other subjects: Language and Literature; Social Studies; Philosophy; Mathematics; Science; Music; Phys. Ed.; plus a mixed section titled Transdisciplinary, the exhibition will offer encounters with unknown realms and opportunities to learn about them, transforming the art museum into an open classroom for lessons on the world. Encompassing both large and smaller galleries, *WORLD CLASSROOM* will unfold across an exhilarating 1,800 square meters-plus of display area.

■ Superb Showcase for the Mori Art Museum Collection

Pandemic restrictions on the movement of people and goods have prompted museums across the globe to revisit their own holdings, and pay fresh attention to the activities of local artists. From a sustainable development viewpoint this has also been an excellent opportunity to review the energy required to transport art, and for other museum activities. Over half the works in this exhibition will be from the Mori Art Museum Collection. Many of the around 460 works currently in that collection were acquired in association with exhibitions, and thus also serve to trace the Museum's trajectory over the past two decades.

■ Includes Seminal Works from Contemporary Art History

The exhibition will include a number of seminal works serving as excellent references for reflecting on contemporary art from multiple perspectives. Joseph Kosuth is a towering figure of 1960s conceptual art, which deemed ideas and concepts to be of greater importance than visual attractiveness. This is an approach that still underpins contemporary art today, and is exemplified by Kosuth's *One and Three Shovels* (1965) on show here. Joseph Beuys meanwhile, one of the most influential artists of the 20th century, championed the expanded concept of art known as "social sculpture," in which everyone is an artist helping to fashion an organic social structure. In a fitting choice for an exhibition titled *WORLD CLASSROOM*, the exhibition will include a blackboard written on by the German artist in a lecture he gave at Tokyo University of the Arts on his first visit to Japan in 1984. This opportunity for dialogue with Beuys had a life-changing impact on many of the young Japanese present who went on to forge careers as artists and curators.

■ Also Offers New Works from Artists of Global Stature

The world-renowned Yang Haegue will unveil an installation drawing on phenomena from around the world such as topical energy issues and climate change, and making reference to sculpture by Japanese-Brazilian artist Tomie Ohtake. Jacob Kirkegaard, Park McArthur, and Miyanaga Aiko will also present newly-commissioned works for the exhibition.

■ Traces 20 Years of the Mori Art Museum in Figures and Infographics

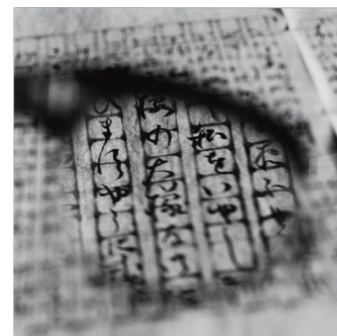
In the 20 years since its opening, the Mori Art Museum has undertaken 59 major exhibitions, staged 72 small exhibition programs, and run numerous associated learning and other programs. Displayed at the entrance to *WORLD CLASSROOM* will be a world map showing the names of artists and artist units - approximately 1,600 in total - who have exhibited at the Mori Art Museum, by their place of origin. A display at the exit will trace the Museum's activities over the past two decades and present, in numerical and infographic form information, ranging from the total number of visitors to date, to number of learning programs, and more.

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EXHIBITION STRUCTURE: THE EIGHT (8) SECTIONS

1. LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

The “Language and Literature” section presents works on the theme of words or language, or including literary or poetic elements. In addition to its role in forms of expression like literature and poetry, “language” has featured frequently in contemporary art down the decades as part of the current of conceptual art. Showcased here are works from conceptual art behemoth **Joseph Kosuth**; **Susan Hiller**, whose works pursue the political and social nature of language; **Miyagi Futoshi** who focuses on aspects of identity such as nationality, race, and gender; **Yoneda Tomoko**; **Wang Qingsong**; and **Yee I-Lann**.



Yoneda Tomoko
Tanizaki's Glasses - Viewing a Letter to Matsuko
(from the series "Between Visible and Invisible")
1999
Gelatin silver print
120 x 120 cm
Collection: Mori Art Museum, Tokyo

2. SOCIAL STUDIES

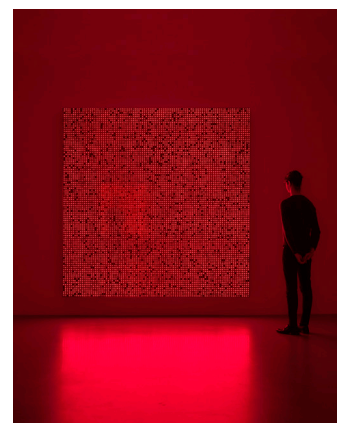
Kicking off with a blackboard left by “social sculpture” champion **Joseph Beuys** on a visit to Japan, the “Social Studies” section, largest in the exhibition, deals with historical, political, geographical, economic and identity issues around the world. Since the 1990s, art has been disseminated from every corner of an increasingly globalized world, and perhaps, by taking up some of the millions of individual stories spilling over from official versions of history and sweeping national narratives, as well as minority viewpoints, artists do take on a role of growing and adding diversity to our ways of seeing the world. Here, **Ai Weiwei** and **Morimura Yasumasa** address art historical themes, while **Dinh Q. Lê**, **Fujii Hikaru** and **Hatakeyama Naoya** engage with the legacies of war, violence and disaster; **Park McArthur**, exhibiting in Japan for the first time, debuts works on accessibility in cities; and **Tamura Yuichiro** and **Gu Minja** address the economics of everyday living.



Morimura Yasumasa
Une Moderne Olympia 2018
2017-2018
C-print, transparent medium
210 x 300 cm
Collection: Mori Art Museum, Tokyo
Photo: Muto Shigeo

3. PHILOSOPHY

Exploring what it means to be alive, and the truths and universalities of this world, philosophy has long been intimately connected to art. Philosophy relates to everything about the way human beings are born, live, and die, and the same can be said for artistic endeavor. Both attempt to elucidate the fundamental principles of life and the wider world, and doggedly tackle questions for which there are no fixed answers. This section includes the work of **Miyajima Tatsuo**, whose blinking LED counter expresses a Buddhist view of life and death; **Lee Ufan**, who explores the existence of things and their relationship with their surroundings; and a painting by **Nara Yoshitomo** of a young girl seemingly at prayer. Works on the themes of time, nature, the afterlife, “being” plus faith and salvation demonstrate how each artist in this section observes, interprets and gives expression to the world.

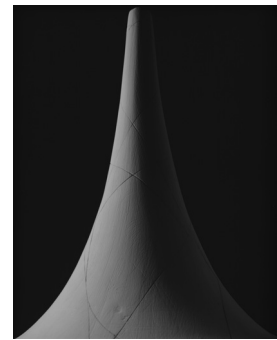


Miyajima Tatsuo
Innumerable Life/Buddha CC100-01
2018
Light Emitting Diode, IC, electric wire, steel, stainless, transformer, LED type “Time Hundred” (Red) 100 plates
251.7 x 251.7 x 15 cm
Collection: Mori Art Museum, Tokyo
Photo: Omote Nobutada
Photo courtesy: Lisson Gallery

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4. MATHEMATICS

Arithmetic, or mathematics, is actually a highly creative domain. Numbers are also connected to the universal theme of “time” taken up by artists across the centuries. A survey of art history yields Renaissance figures such as Leonardo da Vinci, not only an artist, but an extraordinary polymath whose interests extended to mathematics, science, anatomy, and astronomy; and Albrecht Durer, also known as a mathematician. The Golden Ratio described by mathematician Luca Pacioli in his *Divina proportione* (1509) is another example of the close link between mathematics and art. This section opens with a large piece by **Mario Merz** using neon tubes to show the Fibonacci sequence, before going on to works by **Katayama Maki**, **Hiroshi Sugimoto**, and videos by **Sasamoto Aki**, who projects mathematical concepts onto performance/installations.



Hiroshi Sugimoto
Conceptual Forms 0010—Surface of revolution with constant negative curvature
2004
Gelatin silver print
58.4 x 47 cm
Courtesy: Gallery Koyanagi, Tokyo

5. SCIENCE

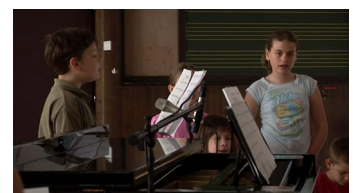
Natural sciences such as physics, biology and chemistry are not without connection to contemporary art, either. Ecosystems the world over are naturally projected on the materials artists adopt for their works, and the natural laws and visions of nature emerging from scientific viewpoints have long served to inspire artistic creativity. Artists were also some of the first to sound warnings about the climate crisis and environmental problems that constitute some of the most serious issues facing the planet today. This section presents a video piece by **Peter Fischli & David Weiss** showing everyday household items sparking a series of chain reactions and transmitting energy, plus works by **Umetsu Yoichi** and **Sam Falls**, a new offering from **Miyanaga Aiko** using naphthalene, and pieces from **Mika Tajima** making use of black light.



Sam Falls
Untitled
2021
Pigment on canvas
869 x 446 cm
Mori Art Collection, Tokyo

6. MUSIC

In the sense of being vibrations of the air, music qualifies as a scientific discipline alongside subjects like science and mathematics. In contemporary art, we find works informed by the visual elements of sound and music, conceptual art that prompts us to ponder the meaning and mechanisms of sound and acoustics, works in which we actually experience sounds, and others in which we sense its absence. **Manon de Boer**'s video employing John Cage's *4' 33"* focuses on both pianist and audience to present an interlude of silence. Music is also closely tied to identity, for example, through its use in religious rites. And examples in this section are **Aziz Hazara**'s lyrical video featuring Islamic prayer drifting through the Afghan night; **Johanna Billing**'s work in which children born after the former-Yugoslav wars sing the song “Magical World;” and a work by **Martine Syms** that focuses on hand gestures and sounds that evoke images of black women.



Johanna Billing
Magical World
2005
Video, sound
6 min. 12 sec. (loop)
Courtesy: Hollybush Gardens, London

* Works on video will be presented in a screening format.

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7. PHYS. ED.

Expression in contemporary art that turns its gaze on physical movement and conduct, and turns the body itself into a work of art, became established in the 1960s as “performance” and today is a common theme of works on video. Examples of artists using their own bodies to express different themes include the standards and copying expressed by **Klara Lidén** through ballet. Bodies on film may also represent the “politicality of the body,” such as the history and liberation from that history seen in the work of **Christian Jankowski**. *WORLD CLASSROOM* also focuses on the architectural aspects of a stadium where sport takes place, and sport seen in the media, observing how “Phys. Ed.” extends into society.

* Works on video will be presented in a screening format.



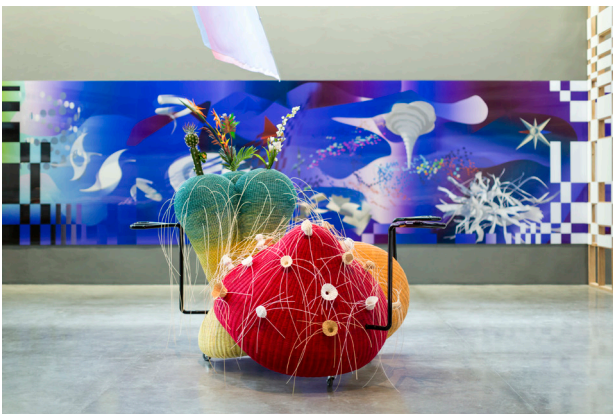
Christian Jankowski
Heavy Weight History
2013
Video, sound
25 min. 46 sec.
Courtesy: Lisson Gallery

8. TRANSDISCIPLINARY

None of the works in *WORLD CLASSROOM* fit entirely into the framework of any single subject, language or section. There are mathematical themes in the Language and Literature section, and social topics in Science. This final section, “Transdisciplinary,” presents such artworks and projects that do not fit neatly into any one subject area, but instead occupy somewhat broader territory. Now globally high-profile **Yang Haegue**, and Denmark-based yet internationally prominent **Jacob Kirkegaard**, present new-commissioned works for the exhibition. Also featured is a project by **Takayama Akira** employing a theater-based methodology to transform everyday scenes from the metropolis of Tokyo, via our own consciousness.



Jacob Kirkegaard
Permanent Cloud
2023
Sound and video installation
Dimensions variable



Yang Haegue
Installation view: *Haegue Yang: The Cone of Concern*, Museum of Contemporary Art and Design (MCAD), Manila, 2020
Photo: At Maculangan
* Referential image

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