

MOT ANNUAL 2024: on the imagined terrain

December 14, 2024 – March 30, 2025

The “MOT ANNUAL” is a group exhibition that has explored the latest currents of contemporary art in Japan through the work of emerging artists, held at the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo (MOT) since 1999. For its 20th edition, the exhibition will feature four artists: **Yuki Shimizu**, **Satoshi Kawata**, **Ryohei Usui**, and **Asami Shoji**, showcasing their latest works.

In recent years, it has become increasingly difficult to maintain a sense of being “here and now”. With the development of communication technologies and transportation, we are constantly exposed to an overwhelming amount of information and can easily move anywhere, amplifying this challenge. In such a world, re-examining what forms the terrain around us and where it connects can help to bring awareness to the space our bodies occupy and serve as a means to explore the direction we ought to take.

The term “shima / しま / 島,” meaning “island” in Japanese, appears in the Japanese version of the exhibition subtitle “こうぶくのしま” and reflects the intention to redefine the geographical conditions of Japan, a nation composed of islands, where the four featured artists live. It speculates on this archipelago in the northwestern Pacific, not as an “isolated terrain” floating in the ocean, separated from other lands, but as part of an “open terrain”, an uplifted land surface that emerged at sea through tectonic movements and is connected to other continents and islands at the ocean’s depth. This alternative perspective, which searches for and finds invisible connections beneath the water, makes us look beyond conventional frameworks and boundaries, allowing us to imagine a world where everything is inextricably interconnected.

The works of the artists in this exhibition are also open to broader contexts and relationships, starting with the terrain around them. Through their respective approaches, they capture and depict the world, confronting the multiplicity and complexity of both their surroundings and their own selves. Their works function as devices that encourage viewers to actively find meaning through their individual perspectives, sensations, and experiences, transcending the artists' interpretations and intentions and thus fostering diverse ways of seeing and feeling.

After World War II, the Japanese people rebuilt from the ruins and embarked on a path towards happiness and prosperity, driven by capitalistic and materialistic development. However, since the 1990s, Japan has found itself in a persistent state of economic stagnation and decline. Within these linear narratives, the conflicts and ambivalent struggles arising from multiple intertwined factors are often overlooked and left unresolved. Consequently, this exhibition addresses the challenge of engaging with the complexity of an entangled world, alongside artists who revisit the myriad things and situations surrounding them, giving them form through individual perspectives and artistic practices.

Artists

Yuki Shimizu / Satoshi Kawata / Ryohei Usui / Asami Shoji

Highlights

In *MOT ANNUAL 2024: on the imagined terrain*, we will showcase works created specifically for this exhibition by four artists who are expected to present their work both in Japan and internationally in the future. This exhibition provides a valuable opportunity to experience the ongoing creative practices of these artists. **Yuki Shimizu** will weave a narrative that connects Dalian, China, and the Tokyo Bay area through an installation composed of photographs and text. **Satoshi Kawata** will produce a mural painting approximately 50 meters long, focusing on the urban and suburban landscapes that characterize postwar Japanese society. **Ryohei Usui** will present installations that relocate small objects and seemingly trivial situations from daily life, offering viewers new perspectives. **Asami Shoji** will explore the connections between the world within her works and the real world through a series of paintings that strongly evoke the physicality of drawing and seeing.

Artist Profiles

Yuki Shimizu

Yuki Shimizu was born in 1984 in Chiba, Japan, where she currently lives and works. She graduated from Musashino Art University, Japan in 2007. Shimizu creates fictional narratives by weaving photography and text based on her research into the history and lore related to the seaside. In recent years, she has been experimenting with more multilayered storytelling, using techniques such as intentionally damaging negatives with seawater and incorporating voice readings of her texts.

Her recent solo exhibitions include *Surfacing* (PGI, Tokyo, 2024) and *Fall asleep or into the sea* (PURPLE, Kyoto, 2023). Recent group exhibitions include *Summer Vacation at a Certain Art Museum* (Chiba City Museum of Art, Chiba, 2022) and *Hundred years glass*, (Chiba City Gallery Inage, Chiba, 2021). Shimizu received the 5th photography 1_WALL Grand Prize in 2011 and the 18th Miki Jun Award in 2016. She began writing novels around 2017 and won the R-18 Literary Award of Shinchosha for her work as a novelist.



Above: 01. Yuki Shimizu, *Dalian seaside*, 2024
Bottom: 02. Yuki Shimizu, *The house of aisin-gjoro pu-giye*, 2024

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*All Programs are subject to change.

Satoshi Kawata

Satoshi Kawata was born in 1987 in Osaka, Japan, and currently lives and works in Kyoto. He holds an MFA in Painting from Kyoto City University of Arts, Japan. Kawata explores the structures and systems that support the foundations of Japanese society, as well as their transitions, through the production, deinstallation, and relocation of mural paintings using traditional fresco techniques. In recent years, he has also been involved in creating murals with various materials, such as ceramics and enamel. Additionally, he is interested in the relationship between architecture and murals in public spaces.

His recent solo exhibitions include *Kawata Satoshi: Techne for the Public* (Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art, The Triangle, Kyoto, 2024) and *Letters from A Far* (ARTCOURT Gallery, Osaka, 2022). Recent group exhibitions include *AJI / DOKORO* (Kanagawa Kenmin Hall, Kanagawa, 2023) and *The Fragments of Homo Faber: The Future of Humans and Crafting* (Aichi Prefectural Ceramic Museum, Aichi, 2022). Kawata received the Best Young Artist Award by City of Kyoto in 2019 and the Tokyo Midtown Award 2020 Semi-Grand Prize.



03 Satoshi Kawata, *Techne for the Public* (detail), 2024, installation view of The Triangle "Kawata Satoshi: Techne for the Public," Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art Photo: Takeru Koroda



04 Satoshi Kawata, *Noside* (detail), 2017 Photo: Tetsuo Ito

Ryohei Usui

Ryohei Usui was born in 1983 in Shizuoka, Japan, and currently lives and works in Tokyo. Since around 2011, Usui has engaged in the production of a series titled "PET (Portrait of Encountered Things)," which replaces plastic bottles and containers with glass sculptures and juxtaposes them with industrial products. His works, which capture trivial daily moments and relocate them in different spaces, provide an opportunity to focus on objects and situations that we are not usually aware of.

His recent solo exhibitions include *Still life on the street* (MUJIN-TO production, Tokyo, 2022) and *Solid, State, Survivor* (MUJIN-TO production, Tokyo, 2020). Recent group exhibitions include *Captivated by Detail: Edo and Meiji Era Craft to Contemporary Art* (Yokosuka Museum of Art, Kanagawa, 2024) and *Settai Style: From Edo Chic to Tokyo Modern* (Museum of Modern Ceramic Art, Gifu, Gifu, and others, 2019-21).



05 Ryohei Usui, *Isle*, 2024 Courtesy of the Artist and MUJIN-TO Production ©Ryohei Usui Photo: Kei Miyajima



06 Ryohei Usui, *Fence*, 2020 Courtesy of the Artist and MUJIN-TO Production ©Ryohei Usui Photo: Kenji Morita

Asami Shoji

Asami Shoji was born in 1988 in Fukushima, Japan, and grew up in Osaka, Aomori, and Tokyo, where she currently lives and works. She holds an MFA in Department of Printmaking from Tama Art University, Japan. Shoji uses semitransparent acrylic panels and canvas as supports, applying and wiping away paint numerous times to create her paintings. In her works, images are generated to evoke an extension beyond the confines of the body through the brushwork, intertwining various entities such as nude figures, apparitions, birds, and animals.

Her recent solo exhibitions include *October, Much Ado About Nothing* (Semiose, Paris, 2024) and *A Gait Without Foot* (gallery21yo-j, Tokyo, 2023). Recent group exhibitions include *Body, Love, Gender* (Gana Art Center, Seoul, 2023) and *Yearning for Vision* (Taro Okamoto Museum of Art, Kawasaki, Kanagawa, and others, 2023-24). Shoji received the Tokyo Wonder Wall Prize in 2015 and the FACE 2019 Grand Prize in 2019. In 2020, she received the Gotoh Cultural Award for Fine Arts Division, and in 2022, she stayed and worked a year-long in Georgia.



07 Asami Shoji, *24.8.13, 2024*



08 Asami Shoji, installation view of "a gait without foot," gallery21yo-j, 2023 Photo: Ken Kato

Information

Exhibition Period	Saturday, December 14, 2024 – Sunday, March 30, 2025
Closed	Mondays (except Jan 13 and Feb 24), New Year Holidays (Dec 28 – Jan 1), Jan 14, and Feb 25
Opening Hours	10 AM – 6 PM (Tickets available until 30 minutes before closing.)
Admission	Adults: 1,300 Yen / University & College Students, Over 65: 900 Yen High-school & Junior High-school Students: 500 Yen Elementary School Students & younger: Free
Venue	Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Exhibition Gallery 3F
Organized by	Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo operated by Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture
Curated by	Ai Kusumoto (Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo)
WEB	https://www.mot-art-museum.jp/en/exhibitions/mot-annual-2024/

Also on view

- December 21 – March 30, 2025: Ryuichi Sakamoto | seeing sound, hearing time
- December 14 – March 30, 2025: MOT Collection

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Credit lines

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