

# LISTEN TO THE SOUND OF THE EARTH TURNING: OUR WELLBEING SINCE THE PANDEMIC

JUNE 29 [WED] - NOVEMBER 6 [SUN], 2022 MORI ART MUSEUM (53F, ROPPONGI HILLS MORI TOWER)

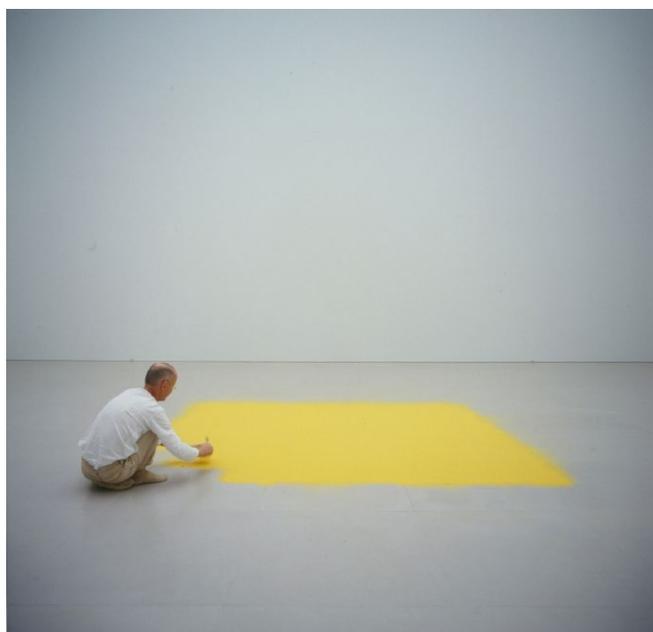
The Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, is pleased to present an exhibition entitled *Listen to the Sound of the Earth Turning: Our Wellbeing since the Pandemic*, from Wednesday, June 29 to Sunday, November 6, 2022.

Since 2020, an invisible virus has stolen away our everyday, and wrought havoc on our way of life and state of mind. Under these circumstances much artistic expression, including contemporary art, resonates more keenly than ever. *Listen to the Sound of the Earth Turning* explores ways to live this new life as the pandemic persists, and the nature of “wellbeing” that is the holistic health of both body and mind, from multiple perspectives found in contemporary art. Works on subjects with a connection to life and existence – nature and humans, the individual and society, family, the repetitious nature of daily living, the spiritual world, life and death – will encourage us to consider what it means to “live well.”

Emphasizing the type of experience only accessible in the real-life space of the museum, this exhibition will showcase works of sixteen artists from both home and abroad – including installations, sculptures, video, photography, paintings and more. Honing the senses and engaging with art by experiencing first-hand the materials and scale of works will prompt viewers to consider what “wellbeing” means for themselves, rather than what is suggested by others or wider society.

The title of the exhibition is a quote from a piece of instruction art\* by Yoko Ono and invites us to expand our consciousness to encompass all the majesty of the cosmos, reminding us that we are no more than a tiny part of its workings, and guiding us toward new ways of thinking. As we address questions of human life in the world at an essential level now that the pandemic has struck us, perhaps it is this very imagination that will present to us possibilities for the future.

\* A form of conceptual art where the artist’s “instruction” or its description is the work itself.



Wolfgang Laib installing *Pollen from Hazelnut* at Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi, 2003

Courtesy: Kenji Taki Gallery, Nagoya/Tokyo

Photo: Ito Tetsuo

\* Referential image

## PRESS RELEASE

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**FEATURED ARTISTS**

\* In alphabetical order of the artists' surnames

Ellen Altfest	Born 1970 in New York; lives in New York and Kent, CT
Aono Fumiaki	Born 1968 in Miyagi, Japan; lives in Miyagi
Montien Boonma	Born 1953 in Bangkok; died 2000 in Bangkok
Robert Coutelas	Born 1930 in Paris; died 1985 in Paris
Horio Akiko	Born 1937 in Tokushima, Japan; lives in Hyogo, Japan
Horio Sadaharu	Born 1939 in Hyogo; died 2018 in Hyogo
Iiyama Yuki	Born 1988 in Kanagawa, Japan; lives in Tokyo
Kanasaki Masashi	Born 1990 in Tokyo; lives in Tokyo
Kanazawa Sumi	Born 1979 in Hyogo; lives in Tokyo
Koizumi Meiro	Born 1976 in Gunma, Japan; lives in Kanagawa
Wolfgang Laib	Born 1950 in Metzingen, Germany; lives in Southern Germany, South India and New York
Zoe Leonard	Born 1961 in New York; lives in New York
Naito Masatoshi	Born 1938 in Tokyo; lives in Tokyo
Yoko Ono	Born 1933 in Tokyo; lives in New York
Tsai Charwei	Born 1980 in Taipei; lives in Taipei
Guido van der Werve	Born 1977 in Papendrecht, the Netherlands; lives in Berlin, Amsterdam and Hassi, Finland

**GENERAL INFORMATION****Exhibition Title:***Listen to the Sound of the Earth Turning: Our Wellbeing since the Pandemic***Organizer:** Mori Art Museum**Curated by:** Kataoka Mami (Director, Mori Art Museum)

Kumakura Haruko (Assistant Curator, Mori Art Museum)

Tokuyama Hirokazu (Associate Curator, Mori Art Museum)

**Exhibition Period:** June 29 [Wed] – November 6 [Sun], 2022**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 | \* 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:** TBD**[Also to Be on View]** *MAM Collection 015: Welcome to the Fairyland - Yanagi Miwa, Odani Motohiko, Yoo Seungho and Nawa Kohei; MAM Screen 016: Cao Fei; and MAM Research 009: Imagining Justice - Asian American Art Movements***General Inquiries:** 050-5541-8600 (Hello Dial, within Japan) / +81-(0)47-316-2772 (Hello Dial, from overseas)[www.mori.art.museum/en](http://www.mori.art.museum/en)

Yoko Ono  
*EARTH PIECE*  
 Spring 1963  
 Offset print  
 As published in Yoko Ono, *Grapefruit*  
 (Wunternau Press, Tokyo, 1964)

**The latest exhibition press images are available on our website for downloads:**<https://press.mori.art.museum/en/press-img>**PRESS RELEASE**

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## QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE EXHIBITION & FEATURED WORKS

### How to now live with the pandemic?

When the world ground to a halt due to the global spread of COVID-19, what could humans have done? What could art have done? And how ought we now coexist with the pandemic?

**Yoko Ono**'s book of instructions *Grapefruit* is full of words with the power to make our world larger simply through imagination, including among its instructions, "Listen to the sound of the Earth turning," also the title of this exhibition. The performance by **Guido van der Werve**, in which he ran around his home thousands of times to cover a total of 100 kilometers, demonstrates that repeated everyday actions can turn into grand endeavor. **Wolfgang Laib** meanwhile has forged a career using familiar materials such as pollen, beeswax, and milk to present the essence of life in the most simple, yet stunningly beautiful ways. **Ellen Altfest**'s pictures of trees painted in the forest reveal the essence of the natural world, including the teeming life within it.

Perhaps when considering how best to live in these pandemic times, we might begin by borrowing the imagination in these works to reflect on the character of our vast and complex world, and reexamine what constitutes its essence.



Guido van der Werve  
*Nummer Negen, the Day I Didn't Turn with the World*  
2007 High-definition video installation 8 min. 40 sec.  
Courtesy: Monitor, Rome; Grimm, Amsterdam; Luhring Augustine,  
New York  
Photo: Ben Geraerts

### How did our minds come to view society and what pictures did we paint in our minds?

COVID-19 not only brought a global health crisis, it highlighted latent problems, divisions and conflicts in our societies, and forced us to move away from the larger frameworks of nation, race, and religion and focus directly on the more familiar environments of community and family, and even our lifestyles. Amid it all, what scenery were we painting in our minds?

**Iiyama Yuki**'s new work on a domestic violence theme is an installation centered on interviews with both victim and abuser, which encourages each of us as viewers to ponder our own day-to-day life from a different viewpoint. **Koizumi Meiro**'s new video employs hypnotism to at once elucidate the fragility of human cognition, with its reliance on language, and offer the possibility of healing trauma. The installation by **Zoe Leonard**, dedicated to a friend who died of AIDS in the 1990s, also shows the salvational potential of everyday acts, and the power of united communities.

These works by artists who engage with society and themselves in various situations demonstrate the importance of observing and reassessing our lives and surroundings from different perspectives.



Iiyama Yuki *Moomin Family goes on a picnic to see Kannon*  
2014 Video, slide projection  
Photo: Miyazawa Hibiki  
\* Referential image

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## Can living itself be art?

There are artists who paint, sculpt, engage in all kinds of expression not to earn plaudits from others, but simply to go where their impulses take them. **Horio Sadaharu** viewed artistic expression as like the air we breathe, a “natural” part of living, and devoted body and mind to his practice using a wide variety of media – the number of works he made counts over 100,000. His wife **Horio Akiko** lived in the same household making works of an entirely different nature, the couple’s day-to-day life in itself leading to artistic expression. **Robert Coutelas** put the art world behind him for a life of poverty pursuing an artistic universe he could truly believe in. Exercising extraordinary powers of concentration, **Kanasaki Masashi** layers fragments from magazines, advertising leaflets and similar to create abstract sculptures.

Perhaps now, with our definitions and preconceptions shaken, is the time to address once more the question of “what it is to be alive.” These works overflowing with creative impulse and energy, and directly linked to the fundamental meaning of life, may well offer an answer.

## What connects the self with the universe, this moment today with eternity?

The history of *homo sapiens* is one of endless struggle with natural disaster, conflict, and disease. How have we overcome such threats to our everyday lives? Perhaps one approach has been to learn from the past and from nature, and try to position ourselves within the great flow of time and space.

The photographs of **Naito Masatoshi** and installation of **Aono Fumiaki**, both featuring the Tohoku region, connect the distant past with the present, and give a feel for how a reverence for nature, the cosmos, the gods, and spirit beings has always been part of the human journey. The work by **Kanazawa Sumi**, made using the quotidian material of newspaper, expresses in form of a large installation how the chain of events major and minor covered in newspapers eventually form a great current of time even reminiscent of the universe. Bringing the exhibition to an end, **Montien Boonma**’s installation gives the spectator space to catch their breath and meditate, while that of **Tsai Charwei** seems to show that our own presence reflected in the mirror is part of the vastness of the cosmos shown by a mandala.



Robert Coutelas  
*Composition of My Nights (Reserved Cards)*  
1970  
Oil on cardboard  
Approx. 12 x 6 cm (each)  
Photo: Uchida Yoshitaka + Okano Kei, Katamura Fumihito



[left] Tsai Charwei *The Womb & The Diamond* 2021  
Hand-blown glass, mirrors, diamond 300 x 600 cm  
Installation view: *Charwei Tsai: The Womb & The Diamond*, Live Forever Foundation, Taichung, 2021

[below] Kanazawa Sumi Installation view: *6th Emerging Artists Exhibition: Shadow ↔ Light*, Kawaguchi Art Gallery ATLIA, Saitama, 2017  
Photo: Abe Moemi



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