

MORI ART MUSEUM 20TH ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION

OUR ECOLOGY: TOWARD A PLANETARY LIVING

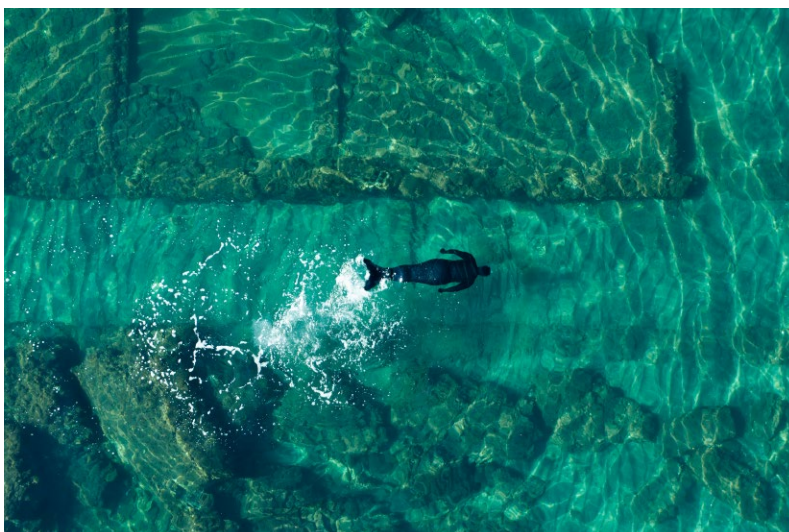
OCTOBER 18 [WED], 2023 – MARCH 31 [SUN], 2024 MORI ART MUSEUM [53F, ROPPONGI HILLS MORI TOWER]

The Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, is pleased to present the Mori Art Museum 20th Anniversary Exhibition entitled *Our Ecology: Toward a Planetary Living* from Wednesday, October 18, 2023 to Sunday, March 31, 2024.

The impact of humanity on our planet since the industrial revolution is said to match that of the thousands of preceding years of geological change. The environmental crisis is a challenge of utmost urgency, and right now an important theme on the international art scene.

Our Ecology will feature four chapters of diverse expression courtesy of an impressive lineup of international artists, from historical works to a number commissioned especially for the exhibition. The first chapter, "All Is Connected," touches upon the complex intertwining of environment and/or ecosystems with human political and economic activity. The next chapter, titled "Return to Earth," reexamines works by Japanese artists from the 1950s to 1980s, decades in which pollution formed a dark downside to the country's rapid economic growth. The third chapter, "The Great Acceleration," introduces works revealing the exploitation of the Earth's resources by mankind, while at the same time offering a kind of hope. The fourth and final chapter, "The Future Is within Us," is devoted to today's diverging discussion around utilizing ancient as well as cutting-edge technologies for drafting possible futures through artistic expressions of activism, indigenous wisdom, feminism, AI and collective intelligence (CI), and also spirituality.

Above all, the title *Our Ecology: Toward a Planetary Living* asks who we are, and to whom the Earth's environment belongs, and the exhibition urges us to think about environmental problems and other issues not only from an anthropocentric perspective, but also by looking at the Earth's multiple ecologies from a broader, more comprehensive standpoint. This sustainable exhibition, designed to reduce the use of transport to a minimum by reusing and recycling as many resources as possible, will make the Mori Art Museum a place to contemplate how contemporary art and artists have to date engaged with environmental issues, and how they can continue to do so in the future.



Emilija Škarnulytė *Sunken Cities* 2021 Video installation 9 min. 33 sec.

FEATURED ARTISTS

* In alphabetical order of the artists' surnames

Monira Al Qadiri, Nina Canell,
Julian Charrière, Ian Cheng, Ali Cherri,
Agnes Denes, Jef Geys, Hans Haacke,
Sheroanawe Hakihiiwe, Pierre Huyghe,
Koie Ryoji, Jochen Lempert,
Matsuzawa Yutaka, Ana Mendieta,
Nakanishi Natsuyuki, Kate Newby,
Saijo Akane, Emilija Škarnulytė,
Taniguchi Gaho, Daniel Turner,
Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Yasura Takeshi,
and others

PRESS RELEASE

Press Inquiries: Mori Art Museum Public Relations Office [within Kyodo PR]
Tel: +81-(0)80-2340-8755 (Ms. Wada) E-mail: mam-pr@kyodo-pr.co.jp

GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition Title: Mori Art Museum 20th Anniversary Exhibition
Our Ecology: Toward a Planetary Living

Organizer: Mori Art Museum

Curated by: Martin Germann (Adjunct Curator, Mori Art Museum)
Tsubaki Reiko (Curator, Mori Art Museum)

Guest Curator for Section 2: Bert Winther-Tamaki (Professor, Art History Department and Visual Studies Ph. D. Program, University of California, Irvine)

Exhibition Period: October 18 [Wed], 2023 - March 31 [Sun], 2024

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 January 2 and March 19, 2024.

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

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.

* 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.

* Ticket also valid for admission into the following Mori Art Museum small programs that run concurrently:

MAM Collection 017: Sawa Hiraki; MAM Screen 018: The Karrabing Film Collective; and MAM Project 031: Jinushi Maiko.

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

www.mori.art.museum/en



Yasura Takeshi

fruiting body

2022

Installation

Installation view: Reborn-Art Festival 2021-22: Altruism and Fluidity [Second Term]

Photo: Saito Taichi

* Referential image



Nina Canell

Muscle Memory (7 Tons)

2022

Hardscaping material from marine mollusc shells

Dimensions variable

Installation view: *Tectonic Tender*, Berlinische Galerie Museum of Modern Art, Berlin

Photo: Nick Ash

* Referential image

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HIGHLIGHTS

■ Contemporary Art's Response to the Environmental Crisis

How does contemporary art respond to the environmental crisis, a pressing issue of utmost importance common to the entire world, and how can it raise awareness of the issue as our own? The exhibition will decipher the concepts, metaphors, materials, and production processes behind works by about 35 artists from 16 countries around the world, and we will together consider the possibilities for the future.

■ An Ecological Decoding of Japanese Society and Contemporary Art History

Chapter 2 titled "Return to Earth - Art & Ecology in Japan, 1950s-1980s" assembled by guest curator Bert Winther-Tamaki characterizes this exhibition in the Japanese context among environmental problem-related exhibitions held around the world. It shows how Japanese artists from the 1950s to the 1980s addressed topical social issues of the time such as pollution and radioactive contamination.

■ Networks, Not Objects: Many Exciting New Works from High-Profile International Artists

Every effort has been made with this exhibition to keep the transport of actual objects (works) to a minimum, instead planning for the artists to come to Japan in person and make new works here. Seeing artists as vehicles for culture, the exhibition thus finds ecological value not so much in the movement of objects, as the forging of interpersonal networks and bonds. Newly-commissioned works for the exhibition by international artists are based on their research in Japan and will fill up more than a half of the gallery space.

■ Reuse of the Everyday

Our Ecology: Toward a Planetary Living will feature numerous works that reuse materials found in familiar surroundings. These include pressed weeds collected after a protocol by **Jef Geys** from a one-kilometer radius of the Mori Art Museum, in accordance with the artist's view of the Museum itself as an environment in its own right; **Kate Newby**'s installation assembled from items discovered en route from Roppongi to Ginza; **Daniel Turner**'s painted installation consisting of waste from a Yokohama hospital; **Yasura Takeshi**'s installation juxtaposing slag obtained by melting rubbish at a high temperature, to marble, and **Nina Canell**'s work that gives visitors the chance to experience the sound and sensation of trampling seashells that will then be reused as raw material in cement.

■ Environmentally-Friendly Exhibit Design

The displays for *Our Ecology: Toward a Planetary Living* have been designed with the environment in mind, for example, by reusing parts of display walls and wall panels from the previous exhibition, and eschewing painted finishes. Other efforts to save resources include employing the world's first 100 percent recyclable plasterboard, reducing waste by employing construction components made from recycled materials, and reusing various other materials.

The latest exhibition press images are available on our website for downloads:
<https://tayori.com/f/ourecolgy-en/>

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STRUCTURE OF THE EXHIBITION

Chapter 1 All Is Connected

In this exhibition, “ecology” does not begin and end with “the environment.” Everything on our planet, living or otherwise, is part of a cycle of sorts, and through that cycle everything, tangible and intangible, is connected. This first chapter presents works by contemporary artists who give expression to that cycle and the process of connection in different ways.

Hans Haacke’s photographic documentation taken from the perspective of connecting social and economic systems with ecosystems such as animals and plants, and a large installation by **Nina Canell**, providing a chance for visitors to experience vicariously the process by which the organic material of seashells is converted into the construction material of cement, remind us of how we too are part of the world’s grand, intricately-entwined cycles: its ecologies.

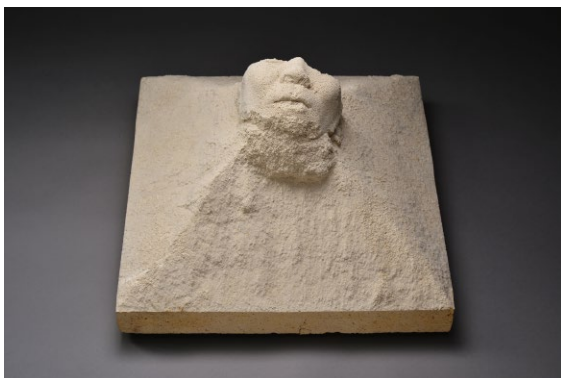


Hans Haacke
Monument to Beach Pollution (detail from *Untitled*, 1968-1972/2019)
 1970
 Digital C-print
 33.7 x 50.8 cm
 Courtesy: Paula Cooper Gallery, New York
 © Hans Haacke / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Chapter 2 Return to Earth - Art & Ecology in Japan, 1950s-1980s

During its postwar era of high-growth Japan suffered from serious environmental problems triggered by natural disaster, industrial pollution, and radioactive waste. As a regional environmental art history, this chapter centers works by Japanese artists and their engagement with environmental issues over the decades, set out in chronological order from the 1950s through the '60s, '70s and '80s, simultaneously tracking major developments in expressive technique.

Works featured include **Nakanishi Natsuyuki**’s *Compact Object* (1962-1968), in which reused everyday items are packed in egg-shaped acrylic resin. Also, *Return to Earth* (1971) by **Koie Ryoji**, who used dirt to make works on nuclear and anti-nuclear themes, shows the artist’s own face baked into earth, crumbling away back into the soil, while **Taniguchi Gaho** reproduces a flower arrangement she created in the 1980s, expressing the relationship between nature and humans.



Koie Ryoji
Return to Earth (1)
 1971 Ceramic 32 x 50 x 50 cm
 Collection: Tokoname City (Aichi, Japan)
 Photo: Ito Tetsuo

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Chapter 3 The Great Acceleration

Homo sapiens has availed itself of all the planet's available resources to advance civilization and propel industrialization, modernization, and globalization. Yet as the new geological classification of "Anthropocene" suggests, accelerated advances in science and technology and industrial society since the industrial revolution have changed the Earth's environment in a very short space of time. This chapter takes a fresh look at the relationship between humans and the Earth's resources from a broader perspective, analyzing these pressing issues for humanity from a critical viewpoint in works that address the cultural and historical underpinnings of the current state of the world.

Monira Al Qadiri's new work on the theme of cultured pearls shows the dreams and desires of humans interfering deeply in a natural ecosystem. Meanwhile, **Yasura Takeshi** expresses different timelines by juxtaposing slag obtained by melting rubbish at a high temperature to marble formed naturally over millions of years. Other works in this chapter, ranging thematically across ancient myth and personal experience, social and environmental issues, also point to the diverse links between human existence and planetary resources.



Monira Al Qadiri
The Disturbance (rendering)
2023

Chapter 4 The Future Is within Us

The current environmental crisis is the outcome of our own personal choices - and to break our current impasse will require us as humans to change our way of being. What options remain for the future? This chapter attempts to reframe the future, and reflect on the forms of intelligence we should rely on, be that by taking in and utilizing the knowledge of non-western worldviews, expressing doubts about modernist progress and principles of endless growth, activism/advocacy, adopting indigenous and feminist perspectives, spirituality, or exploring the potentials and risks of digital innovation.

Agnes Denes questioned developmentalism back in 1982 by making a wheatfield materialize in Manhattan. **Jef Geys'** project with the Roppongi Hills community makes us look at weeds differently, as a tool for healing. **Saijo Akane's** ceramic vessels, resembling musical instruments shared and played by multiple people, suggest new possibilities for coexistence.



Saijo Akane
Orchard 2022 Ceramic 130 x 82 x 82 cm
Installation view: *Phantom Body*, ARTCOURT
Gallery, Osaka, 2022
Photo: Koroda Takeru

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