

Ay-O:

Over the Rainbow Once More

February 4 (sat) – May 6 (sun), 2012

Press Release 2011 December



Ay-O, *My 192 Friends*, 2011

Exhibition Outline

Discover the vibrant world of Ay-O through this retrospective of his work, covering his entire career, from his early works to the present day.

Born in Ibaraki Prefecture in 1931, Ay-O, together with Masuo Ikeda and others, was active in the Demokrato Artists Association during the fifties, attracting notice for his brightly-colored oil paintings. In 1958 he moved to New York, where he used tangible objects to try to create dialogues with the world that can be perceived through the senses, resulting in his 'finger boxes', in which a finger is inserted into a hole in the side of a box to feel the material hidden inside, installation works that incorporate their surrounding environment, etc., going beyond the confines of the painting to produce works that appeal to the five senses. During the sixties, when everyday things or actions were translated into art, Ay-O received attention for his pioneering installations that he called 'environments'. As a member of the Fluxus movement, which went beyond the narrow divisions of genre to include musicians, poets and artists, its activities extending to performances and printed works to establish the foundations of today's diversity of art, he worked with such people as Yoko Ono and Nam June Paik. Finally, he rebelled against the concept of creating works consisting of lines, instead filling his motifs with the colors of the spectrum, from red to purple, giving birth to his 'rainbow' works, becoming famous throughout the world as the 'rainbow artist' subsequent to his exhibition at the 1966 Venice Biennale. Ay-O's struggle with the rainbow was expressed in a variety of genres including prints, paintings and installations, and still continues to the present day. This is the largest-ever exhibition to be held of his work, presenting numerous paintings from the rainbow series, an interactive installation that people are invited to appreciate through touch, a new work that is 30 meters in length and contains a rainbow consisting of 192 colors, a 300 meters long banner that was suspended from the Eiffel Tower in 1987 and recordings of his performance works. The gallery will overflow with Ay-O's optimistic world.

Artist Profile

Ay-O



Photo: Ichiro Otani

- 1931 Born in Ibaraki Prefecture, Japan
- 1953 Joined Demokrato Artists Association
- 1954 Graduated Tokyo University of Education
- 1955 First solo exhibition at Takemiya Gallery
- 1958 Moved to New York (based his activities until 2006)
- Around 1962 Joined Fluxus group
- 1962 First solo exhibition in USA (Gordons Fifth Avenue Gallery, NY)
- 1964 Worked on tactile works including *Finger Box*
Presented first “Rainbow” interactive installation by “Rainbow Environment No.1: Rainbow Room” at Smolin Gallery, NY
- 1966 Represented Japan at Venice Biennale
- 1970 “Rainbow Environments No.7: Tactile Rainbow Room“ at Expo ‘70 in Osaka
- 1971 Represented Japan in São Paulo Biennale (awarded Banco Do Brasil prize)
- 1977 “Rainbow Environment No.11: Rainbow Laundry” at World Trade Center, NY
- 1987 “Rainbow Event” at Eiheiji, Fukui
“300 meter Rainbow Eiffel Tower Project” at Eiffel Tower, Paris
- 1990s Participated in many exhibitions related to Fluxus including “In the Spirit of Fluxus” (Traveled Walker Art Center etc., 1993)
- 1994 “Some Hanging Pieces No.9 Object Mandala” at Kasseler Kunstverein, Kassel
- 2006 “Over the Rainbow, Ay-O Retrospective 1950-2006” at Fukui Fine Arts Museum, Miyazaki Prefectural Art Museum
- 2010 “AY-O 1950s – 2010 : A Retrospective” at Tsukuba Museum of Art

Exhibition Information

Exhibition Title:	Ay-O: Over the Rainbow Once More
Venue:	Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, 1F, B2F
Period:	February 4 (Sat) – May 6 (Sun) 2012
Closed on:	Monday (except for Apr 30), May 1
Opening Hours:	10:00 – 18:00 (Tickets available until 17:30)
Organized by:	Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture, Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo / The Yomiuri Shimbun / The Japan Association of Art Museums
Sponsored by:	Lion Corporation / SHIMIZU Corporation / Dai Nippon Printing Co., Ltd. / SOMPO JAPAN INSURANCE INC. / Nippon Television Network Corporation
Curator:	Mihoko Nishikawa (Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo)
Admission:	Adult ¥1,100 (¥880) University students & over 65yrs old ¥850 (¥680) High school & Junior high school student ¥550 (¥440) Free for under Elementary school *() price for a group, over 20 people *Free entry to MOT collection for exhibition ticket holders *Combined ticket with “Atsuko Tanaka. Art of Connecting”: Adult ¥1,500 University student & Over 65yrs old ¥1,200 High school & Junior high school student ¥700
Also Showing:	-Atsuko Tanaka. Art of Connecting Feb 4 – May 6 -MOT Collection Special feature: Hideko Fukushima / Chronicle: 1964- OFF MUSEUM Feb 4 – May 6 -Bloomberg Pavilion Project Qosmo/Techno-Shugei Club Feb 4 – Mar 4 Fumiko Kobayashi Mar 24 – Apr 22 Performance by Company Derashinera May 6, 17:00-18:00
Exhibition Catalogue:	To be published in April 2012 Includes new text by Ay-O and past archives (Japanese-English bilingual)
Related Programs:	A performance event by Ay-O is planned in March 2012 *Details will be updated on the museum website.
Enquiry:	Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo 4-1-1, Miyoshi, Koto-ku, Tokyo 135-0022 Tel. +81 (0)3-5245-4111 / www.mot-art-museum.jp
Travelling schedule (Tentative):	Niigata City Art Museum Jul 28 – Oct 8, 2012 Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art Nov 3, 2012 – Jan 14, 2013

Press Images

Seven images including the cover are available for press use.

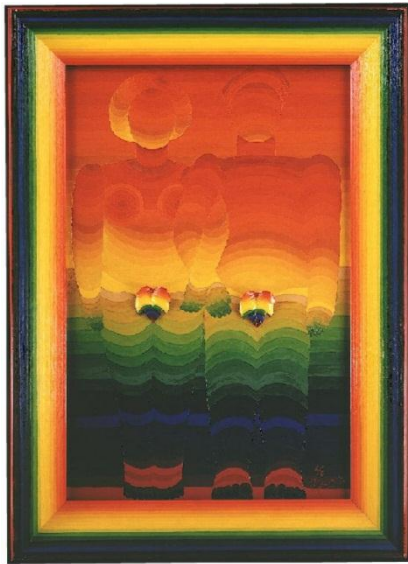
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① Ay-O, *Pastoral*, 1956,
Collection of Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo



② Ay-O, *300 meter Rainbow Eiffel Tower Project*,
Paris, 1987 Photo: Kenji Mizuyachi



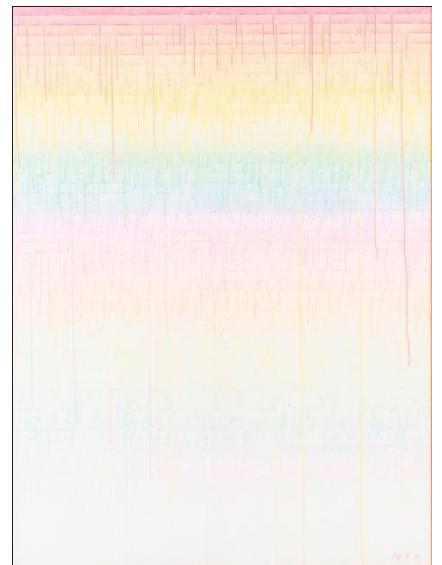
③ Ay-O, *Adam and Eve*, 1967-71, Collection of
Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo



④ Ay-O, *Hanging Pieces No. 10 Object Mandala*, Installation
view at Kitakyusyu Municipal Museum of Art, 1997



⑤ Ay-O, *Rainbow Environment No. 7: Tactile Rainbow Room + Rainbow
Ames Box*, 1969



⑥ Ay-O, *Rainbow Rain*, 1977

Press Image Request Form

To: Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Public Relations Section

FAX. 03-5245-1141

As for Press Images, we have 7 selected images for this exhibition. These can be obtained upon request using this image request form. Please FAX us at 03-5245-1141 or drop an e-mail at the press contact.

Regards to the usage of these imageries, please be aware of the following:

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2) Trimming and editing of the imagery is prohibited.

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- Cover: Ay-O, *My 192 Friends*, 2011
- ① Ay-O, *Pastoral*, 1956, Collection of Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo
- ② Ay-O, *300 meter Rainbow Eiffel Tower Project*, Paris, 1987 Photo: Kenji Mizuyachi
- ③ Ay-O, *Adam and Eve*, 1967-71, Collection of Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo
- ④ Ay-O, *Hanging Pieces No.10 Object Mandala*,
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- ⑤ Ay-O, *Rainbow Environment No.7: Tactile Rainbow Room + Rainbow Ames Box*, 1969
- ⑥ Ay-O, *Rainbow Rain*, 1977

Press inquiry: Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Public Relations Section
Mutsu Yoshikawa m-yoshikawa@mot-art.jp / Reiko Noguchi r-noguchi@mot-art.jp
4-1-1 Miyoshi, Koto-ku, Tokyo, Japan TEL.03-5245-1134 (direct) / FAX.03-5245-1141