

Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo

MOT Annual 2020 Invisible Powers

Sat. 14 Nov, 2020 – Sun. 14 Feb, 2021

*The exhibition schedule previously announced has been revised as above

MOT Annual is a group exhibition featuring young Japanese artists that invites inquiry and discussion by focusing on a particular aspect of contemporary art. The 16th MOT Annual will look at the workings of invisible powers in nature and society that affect people and things, through four artists and an artist duo who attempt to reconstruct the mechanisms behind such powers.

Invisible powers are at work around us producing a complex world. Examples are the forces of gravity, magnetism, and friction, which directly affect the movements of things, and the influence of DNA on the nature and behavior of living creatures. The systems and rules that move and shape our society, along with the views, emotions, and fixed concepts of the people behind them, can perhaps also be called an invisible power. Today, when research and business grow increasingly specialized and fragmented, we as individuals are hard-pressed to maintain awareness of the mechanisms making up our world. With the advance of the information society, moreover, many mechanisms grow hard to discern or hidden from sight. The ability to reflexively grasp and process information is demanded of us, and for the most part, the powers at work behind the information escape our attention.

This exhibition ponders the invisible powers around us and the mechanisms that move and change things, along with artists who attempt to reconstruct those mechanisms, alone or in collaboration. Often their work recalls a laboratory or the microcosmic world of a miniature garden. We feel as if we are watching things move autonomously in a system disconnected from reality. That experience, however, directs our attention to the “taken-for-granted assumptions” at the basis of our lives and lets us glimpse a world set in motion by complexly coinciding elements. The artists’ visualization of invisible powers confuses our senses and, in the process, offers us opportunities to reconsider the fixed assumptions to which we have long grown accustomed.

Artists

Junya Kataoka + Rie Iwatake, Yoko Shimizu, Yuta Nakajima, Goh Uozumi, Gaetan Kubo

Highlights

A world of diverse, distinctive art expression

From delicate handmade collages to artworks incorporating biotechnology, and even software-art that investigates protocols—a complex world of diverse, distinctive art expression. Through artworks that arouse your curiosity about natural and social phenomena, and artworks that explore new ways of living, you will feel moved to learn more about your society, your times, and the world.

Installations featuring “movement”

Experience invisible powers and their mechanisms through artworks, sometimes dynamic and sometimes placid, that move—mechanical devices that rotate and vibrate, video works displaying scenes of biological reactions, interactive program using smartphones, and participation-oriented projects.

The “now” of young artists active in Japan and abroad

Recent and new installations by young artists who actively participate in solo exhibitions, group exhibitions, art festivals, and residencies at art museums in Japan and abroad. Also planned: artist talks, performances, workshops, and other related programs.

Exhibits

Installations, three-dimensional works, two-dimensional works, video, and project materials.

Artist Profiles

Junya Kataoka + Rie Iwatake (both 1982-) formed an art duo in 2013 during their residence in Paris. They are known for installations composed around kinetic works and collage works. The duo’s kinetic works apply physical energy (gravity, wind, magnetism) to everyday objects such as light bulbs, tableware, and books to display movements alien to the objects’ original function. Their delicate collage works are assembled using fragments cut from wide-ranging materials, such as stamps and natural history encyclopedias.

Recent major solo Exhibitions are “As the inevitable spin of a light bulb and a fan on a marble slab” (Kana Kawanishi Gallery, 2019) and “Big Two-Hearted River” (3331 Arts Chiyoda, 2019) , “Under35 Junya Kataoka + Rie Iwatake” (BankART studio NYK, 2017) . Recent major group Exhibitions are “Metamorphosis, Perceptions of the Passage of Time” (Fujisawa City Art Space, 2020), “Trans_2018-2019” (Akiyoshidai International Art Village, Yamaguchi, 2019), “Art and Glasses Road Show” (Kamata_Soko, 2018) and “Pyeongchang Biennale 2017” (Gangneung, South Korea).



1 Junya Kataoka, *Spinning Light Bulb #4 Arare*, 2019



2 Rie Iwatake, *Bodyscapes # muscles of the face*, 2018

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Yoko Shimizu (1977-) creates artworks using the mechanisms of nature, life, and the universe, visualizing the beauty of the micro phenomena of microorganisms, cells, DNA, and organic compounds, and the macro phenomena of plants, nature, and the entire Earth. Some of her best-known works include *Cycles of Life*, in which microorganisms form colonies that emerge, proliferate and deteriorate on colorful medium, and *Photosyntheograph*, in which the artist uses photosynthesis to create high-resolution graphic prints on plants. Recent major solo exhibitions include the "Biodesign Lab Exhibition" (NARS Foundation, New York, 2019), "Layers of Life" (LAD GALLERY, 2017), and "The Clean Room" (LAD GALLERY, 2015). Recent major group exhibitions include "India Design ID" (New Delhi, India, 2019), "Link of Life" (Shiseido Gallery, 2017), and "Ars Electronica Festival" (Linz, Austria, 2016). Since 2020, she is an artist and researcher at the Ars Electronica Futurelab in Linz, Austria.



3 Yoko Shimizu, *Biospeaker*, 2017

Yuta Nakajima (1985-) examines our "taken-for-granted assumptions" from perspectives different from those of everyday life. Through workshops and playful activities, he attempts to reconstruct and rewrite such assumptions. As his motto "Not by myself and not with everyone" suggests, his projects take unpredictable elements and appear relaxed and unrestrained; yet, they concern issues such as household rules, public conventions, and social divisions, and explore the familiar themes of rules and taboos.

Recent major group exhibitions are "Even if we were to disappear someday, would the "world" continue to exist?" (Utsunomiya Museum of Art, 2019) , "Forest of Expression: Art as a Communal Act" (Arts Maebashi Gallery, 2016), "Play: Taro Okamoto" (Taro Okamoto Museum of Art, Kawasaki, 2015) , "Artists and the Disaster : Documentation in Progress" (Art Tower Mito, 2012)

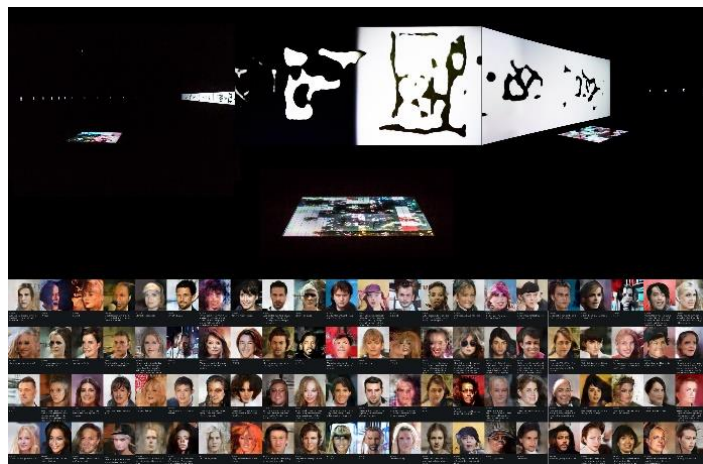
His major projects include "Family's Rule – Sugitani," in which a family obeys unique rules on October 13 each year, and "This A Side and That B Side," in which participants, separated in two groups under familiar themes, construct a barricade between them



4 Yuta Nakajima, *This A Side and That B Side*, 2015
Photo: Hajime Kato

Goh Uozumi is an artist working in the art and technology field. Since studying Media Art under Seiko Mikami, he has exhibited works that examine "automation trends in civilization," such as distributed autonomous systems, programmable money, machine learning, mass surveillance, and creative coding. His recent work includes *State of Empty* in which artificial intelligence creates a nation for itself, and *NewOrder/SirenCall?* which envisions cryptocurrencies and distributed ledgers as the origin of a new order.

Recent major solo exhibition is "OBSERVER N" (The Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM], 2012). Recent major group exhibitions are "Lux Aeterna in ISEA " (Asia Culture Center, Kwangju, Korea), "Media Conscious" (NTT InterCommunication Center, Tokyo, Japan, 2016), "Machines" (Zinc&SecondNature, Marseilles, France, 2015). He won Digital Choc Grand Prize (2015) and Japan Media Arts Festival Excellence Award (2009).



5 Goh Uozumi, *State of Empty*, 2016, from Exhibition "Media Conscious" NTT InterCommunication Center (ICC)

Employing originally designed devices, **Gaetan Kubo** (1988-) studies invisible relationships occurring in paranormal phenomena, scientifically imperceptible phenomena, psychoanalysis and social sciences — collectively referring to such relationships as the "occult." By means of his devices' intense kinetic energy of rotation, rupture, and vibration, Kubo recreates the moment when people's subconscious desires and anxieties—suppressed in a rational society—erupt and move them to action. With the artist's quiet delivery of the narration, the devices speak strongly to the viewer's physical senses.

Recent major solo exhibitions are "My body is my laboratory. Or I call it Earth Coincidence Control Office" (Kodama Gallery | Tennoz, 2017), "emergencies! 028" Research & Destroy" (NTT InterCommunication Center, 2016), "Perspective of Memory" (TAKO terrace, Tokyo, 2016) and "Hysterical Complex" (Kodama Gallery, Kyoto, 2013). Recent major group exhibitions are "STEAM THINKING 2019 (Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art, 2020) "Gaetan Kubo・Keisuke Jimba"(ARTZONE, 2019) and "New 'Artists Today' Exhibition 2017-Compilations of Memories and Records-" (Yokohama Civic Art Gallery, 2017).



6 Gaetan Kubo, *Perspective of Memory*, 2016
Photo: Keizo Kioku

* All photos depict reference works

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Public program

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Information

Exhibition Period	Sat. 14 Nov 2020 – Sun. 14 Feb, 2021
Closed	Mondays (except 23 Nov., 11 Jan. 2021), 24 Nov., 28 Dec. - 1 Jan. 2021, 12 Jan.
Opening Hours	10:00 - 18:00 (Tickets available until 30 minutes before closing.)
Admission	Adults – 1,300 yen / University & College Students, Over 65 – 900yen / High School & Junior High School Students – 500yen / Elementary School Students & Under - 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
Supported by	Rikashitsu, Rikashitsu-Distillery, SEKIYARIKA Co.,LTD
Curated by	Hikari Odaka (MOT)

Concurrent Exhibitions

“Eiko Ishioka: Blood, Sweat, and Tears—A Life of Design”

“MOT Collection”

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