

PRESS RELEASE

Yokoo Tatsuhiko: Beyond the Realm of Meditation



2023. 7.15 sat — 9.24 sun | The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama

I Exhibition Overview

Yokoo Tatsuhiko (1928-2015) was a painter who was active in Japan and Germany traveling back and forth between the two countries and developed his own unique sense of ambience in his artwork. After graduating from the Department of Japanese Painting at Tokyo Fine Arts School in 1950, Yokoo began his creative activities while working as an art teacher in Kitakyushu City. In 1965, on his maiden trip to Europe, he held his solo exhibition in Switzerland. After returning to Japan, he was highly regarded by intellectuals of the time, such as Shibusawa Tatsuhiko and Tanemura Suehiro for his fantasitic style paintings based on Christianity and mythology. From 1980, after being influenced by Zen and the spiritual philosophy of Rudolf Steiner, he aimed to fuse Eastern and Western thought, and began to create abstract paintings characterized by powerful brushwork and splashes. Before long, he established a style of random painting by meditating and attaining empty state of mind before production. He continually pursued the beauty of the world beyond the consciousness of self.

This is the first retrospective exhibition of the artist to be held at an art museum in Japan. Focusing on approximately 90 works left behind in his studio in Chichibu City, Saitama, we will trace Yokoo's life by introducing works and materials from his early days to his final years.

I Highlights of the Exhibition

1 The first retrospective exhibition

As the first retrospective of the artist to be held at a Japanese art museum, it is in collaboration with the Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art, Kamakura & Hayama. The exhibition features his works by each decade from the initial years of his painting career starting in 1960 to his very last days in 2014 to provide a full picture of the artist's endeavors hitherto not widely known.

2 Exhibits of numerous materials

In the 1970s, Yokoo created many illustrations for newspaper novels and cover designs of books. In addition to these materials, photographs and sketches from various periods are exhibited including the statue of *Virgin and Child* which is usually not on public display.

3 Video of his performance

Documentative videos of his performances in Japan and Germany from the 2000s will be shown. Please take a look at how he places the canvas on the floor and paints by moving his body as if he is dancing to the music playing in the background. Works created through such performance are also showcased together.

I Exhibition Structure

Chapter I From Kitakyushu to Europe and Tokyo

After graduating from the Department of Japanese Painting at Tokyo Fine Arts School in 1950, Yokoo participated in group exhibitions such as exhibitions held by the Nippon Hangain, the Nika Association, and the Shinseisaku Art Society, while working as an art teacher at a school in Kitakyushu City. This section introduces prints and oil paintings from the 1960s.

Chapter II Visions of Devils and Eros

In 1973, he published his first collection of paintings, *Phantom Palace*. His works that meticulously depict exotic human figures and mythical animals garnered fans from all over the country. Paintings published in *Phantom Palace* are featured in this section.

Chapter III Looking into the Blue Within

Seeking to develop a new style, Yokoo began to create highly abstract works base on blue in the late 1970s. Creating the groundwork of the picture surface with paint applied and churned directly by hand, he painted works on the theme of the biblical "Book of Revelation" and expansive landscapes. Here, his works from the 1970s to the late 1980s which he himself called the "Blue Period" are on display.

Chapter IV Between East and West

In 1980, on the recommendation of a German collector, Yokoo relocated to Germany. There, as a Japanese, Yokoo became aware of his soul that was completely different from the West, and gradually began to pursue a revival of Japanese elements. He then went on to create works with

brushstrokes reminiscent of calligraphy with subjects derived from Zen painting and calligraphy. In this section you will see works from the end of the 1980s to the late 1990s.

Chapter V Drawn by the Water, Drawn by the Wind, Drawn by the Earth

From the late 1990s, Yokoo said of his works that “I am not the one who is drawing them. They are drawn by the water, drawn by the wind, and drawn by the earth.” And he published the production process as a performance. The exhibition concludes with works from the 2000s to his final piece created in 2014.

I Exhibition Info

Yokoo Tatsuhiko : Beyond the Realm of Meditation

Period: July 15th (Sat) – September 24th (Sun), 2023

Days Closed: Mondays (except July 17th, August 14th, September 18th)

Opening hours: 10:00 - 17:30 (Last admission at 17:00)

Admission: 1,000 yen (800 yen)

University and High school students: 800 yen (640 yen)

*Prices in brackets are for groups of 20 or more.

*Admission of junior high school students and younger, and those with a disability certificate (including one attendant) are free of charge.

*You can also visit the MOMAS Collection (Exhibition Room on the first floor).

Organizer: The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama

Sponsorship: ITOKI CORPORATION

Special Cooperation: Nichido Art Foundation

PR Cooperation: JR East Omiya Branch, FM NACK5

I Related Events

Special Talk

Kamata Toji (Professor Emeritus of Kyoto University) × Mizusawa Tsutomu (Director of the Museum of Modern Art, Kamakura & Hayama)

September 10 (Sun) 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm (Doors open at 2:30 pm)

Auditorium on the 2nd floor of the museum

Capacity: 60 people (first come first serve basis, no application required)

Participation fee is free

Mr. Kamata, who had a close friendship with Yokoo Tatsuhiko and witnessed his production up close, and Mr. Mizusawa, who was involved in the planning of this exhibition, will talk about Yokoo's work and philosophy.

Gallery Talk by the Exhibition Curator

Date & Time: Sun, August 6th, 15:00–15:30 approx. / Venue: Exhibition Room on 2F /

Admission: Included in the special exhibition admission fee.

I Slide Talk Information

We will guide you through the highlights of the exhibition through a slide presentation for your group on demand (reservation required).

For inquiries and reservations, please contact the department of Education and Public Relations (048-824-0110)

I Concurrent exhibition

MOMAS Collection

May 13th (Sat) –August 27th (Sun), 2023

“Selection” / “Sea of MOMAS”

September 2nd (Sat) – November 26th (Sun), 2023

“Selection” / “Suda Kokuta”

I Venue/Access

The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama9-30-1, Tokiwa, Urawa-ku, Saitama-shi, Saitama 330-0061, Japan
Tel: 048-824-0111 Fax: 048-824-0119

<https://pref.spec.ed.jp/momas/>

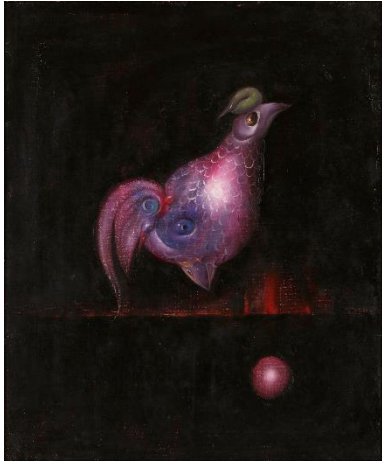
The museum is located inside Kita-Urawa Park, a 3-minute walk from the West Exit of Kita-Urawa Station on the JR Keihin-Tohoku Line. JR Kita-Urawa Station is approximately 35 minutes by train from JR Tokyo or JR Shinjuku Station. Parking is not available at the museum. Please use the coin-operated parking lot named “Mitsui Repark, the Museum of Modern Art, Saitama East,” which can be used at a reduced price (300 yen off for special exhibitions and 100 yen off for the MOMAS Collection). Please contact us prior to your visit if you are planning on coming by chartered bus. Persons with disabilities can use our business-use parking space. However, space is limited.

We ask for your understanding and cooperation. Depending on the circumstances, the museum may be closed, or the exhibition period may be changed. Please check the latest information on our website before visiting.

I Contact Us

Please contact the museum regarding the provision of images. The museum will provide the images as data. Please send your request by e-mail to p2401115@pref.saitama.lg.jp (Public Relations Manager, Yoshioka).

I Images for Publicity



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

I Caption

Please include a caption when posting the images. Do not crop or put text over the artwork portion of the images.

- 1 Phoenix, 1967, oil on canvas, Private collection
- 2 The Seven Candlesticks, , c.1970, gouache on paper, Fukuoka Prefectural Museum of Art
- 3 Silence by the Waterside, c.1985, gouache on paper, Private collection, long term loan to The Museum of Modern Art, Kamakura & Hayama
- 4 Apocalypse, Gog and Magog, 1977, oil on canvas, Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art
- 5 Morning Glow, 1983, oil on canvas, Private collection
- 6 Ensō(Circle Image), 1992, mixed media on canvas, Private collection
- 7 Dancing Chaos, 1996, mixed media on canvas, Private collection
- 8 Apocalypse, 2001, mixed media on canvas, The Museum of Modern Art, Kamakura & Hayama
- 9 Blue Wind, 2003, mixed media on canvas, Private collection