

# The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama



## The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama Outline

### Introduction

With the aim of providing mental and spiritual enrichment to Saitama citizens, the Museum of Modern Art, Saitama (MOMAS) opened amid the lush greenery of Kita-Urawa Park on November 3, 1982.

In addition to collecting and exhibiting outstanding works of art from both Japan and other countries, we also organize special exhibitions focusing on unique themes. Also, we offer educational programs for children that help nurture sensitivity, creativity, and communicative ability among the adults of tomorrow. The museum also serves as a center for information on the arts, with art books on display and opportunities for people involved in the arts to connect with one another. At MOMAS, our goal is to be an easily approachable museum where people can encounter art and make new and exciting discoveries.

### History

November	1976	Policy council decision on construction of prefectural museum
October	1977	Committee on Saitama Prefectural Museum Construction established
November	1978	Policy council determines basic plan for construction of prefectural museum Special Committee on Saitama Prefectural Museum Construction established
April	1979	Enactment of ordinance on establishment of fund for acquiring works of art
March	1980	Construction contract signed, groundbreaking ceremony held
April	1981	Museum Project Office established within the Saitama Prefecture Public Services Division
February	1982	Construction completed
November		Ordinance on the Museum of Modern Art, Saitama enacted The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama opens as an educational institution under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education HOMMA Masayoshi named Director
October	1988	Fam.s (Friends of the Museum of Modern Art, Saitama) launched
May	1991	HOMMA Masayoshi resigns post of Director, succeeded by TANAKA Yukito
August	1997	Museum shop opens
April	2000	TANAKA Yukito resigns post of Director, succeeded by KIRIKAWA Takuo (also head of the Saitama Prefectural Board of Education) Museum guide volunteers begin activities
September	2001	Museum closes from September 10, 2001 to March 11, 2002 for work on heating and cooling system and expansion of permanent exhibition gallery (currently Exhibition Room A)
April	2002	KIRIKAWA Takuo resigns post of Director, succeeded by INABA Yoshinori (also head of the Saitama Prefectural Board of Education)
April	2003	Management of Kita-Urawa Park transferred to museum
April	2006	INABA Yoshinori resigns post of Director, succeeded by SHIMAMURA Kazuo (also head of the Saitama Prefectural Board of Education)
April	2010	SHIMAMURA Kazuo resigns post of Director, succeeded by MAEJIMA Tomio (also head of the Saitama Prefectural Board of Education)
April	2011	MAEJIMA Tomio resigns post of Director, succeeded by TATEHATA Akira
September	2013	Museum closes for first stage of major renovations from September 2, 2013 to April 1, 2014
September	2014	Museum closes for second stage of major renovations from September 1, 2014 to April 10, 2015

### MOMAS seeks to:

1. Offer the experience of encountering art and discovering new ways of thinking and value systems.
2. Serve as a community focal point where people assemble, participate, and interact.
3. Cultivate the sensibilities and creativity of children, who will build the world of tomorrow.
4. Be a dynamic museum that evolves along with the region and prefectural residents.



### Architectural Design by KUROKAWA Kisho

MOMAS is the first art museum designed by the renowned architect KUROKAWA Kisho. The building features an overall grid structure, and at the main entrance and porch is a birdcage-like structure protruding from the front like a bird's beak, which acts as an intermediate zone connecting the interior and exterior.

On the building façade, a wall of wave-like curved glass breaks up the hardness of the grid structure. The second-floor galleries are exposed to natural outdoor light through part of this glass façade, and there is a view of the beautiful foliage of Kita-Urawa Park.

In the center of the building is an atrium open from ground level up to the third floor, with a glass roof that lets in natural light. This unique space is utilized in various ways, such as having works of art suspended from the ceiling, and serving as a venue for museum concerts that capitalize on its rich acoustics.

TANAKA Yonekichi's Docking (Surface) No. 86-1985, installed in 1986 several years after the museum opened, is a unique work comprised of five structures that are connected to the building itself.



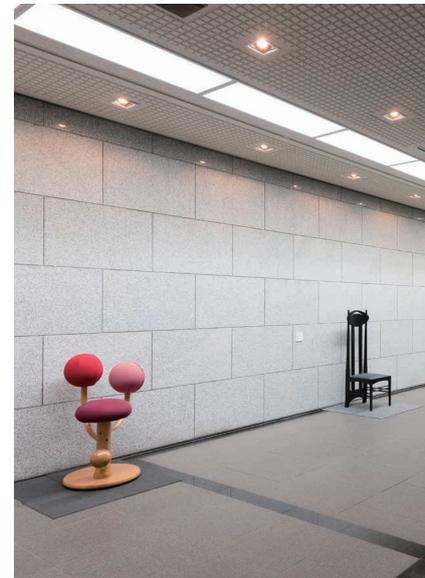
### Park and Open-Air Sculptures

With abundant greenery, a spacious lawn, and a musical fountain where the water dances to the music, Kita-Urawa Park is a place to relax and refresh body and mind. There are many open-air sculptures in the park, interweaving art with the everyday lives of visitors.



### A Museum with Chairs

Since the museum opened, it has collected outstanding, stylishly designed modern and contemporary chairs, and there are always several dozen on display in the museum. You are welcome not only to view the chairs, but also to sit in them. Find your favorite chair and see how it feels.



MOMAS organizes collection exhibitions four times per year, which are highly thematic and unconstrained by the parameters of the permanent collection, although based around works from the collection with the addition of works borrowed from external sources or with the cooperation of artists.

\*MOMAS is an acronym for the Museum of Modern Art, Saitama.

#### Works in the Collection

The collection is based around modern art from Saitama, as well as art from Japan and overseas that was an influence on this art. (3,706 works in the collection as of March 2018)

**Claude MONET** 1840 (Paris, France) – 1926 (Giverny, France)  
Grainstacks at Giverny; the Evening Sun  
1888-89 oil on canvas 65.0×92.0cm

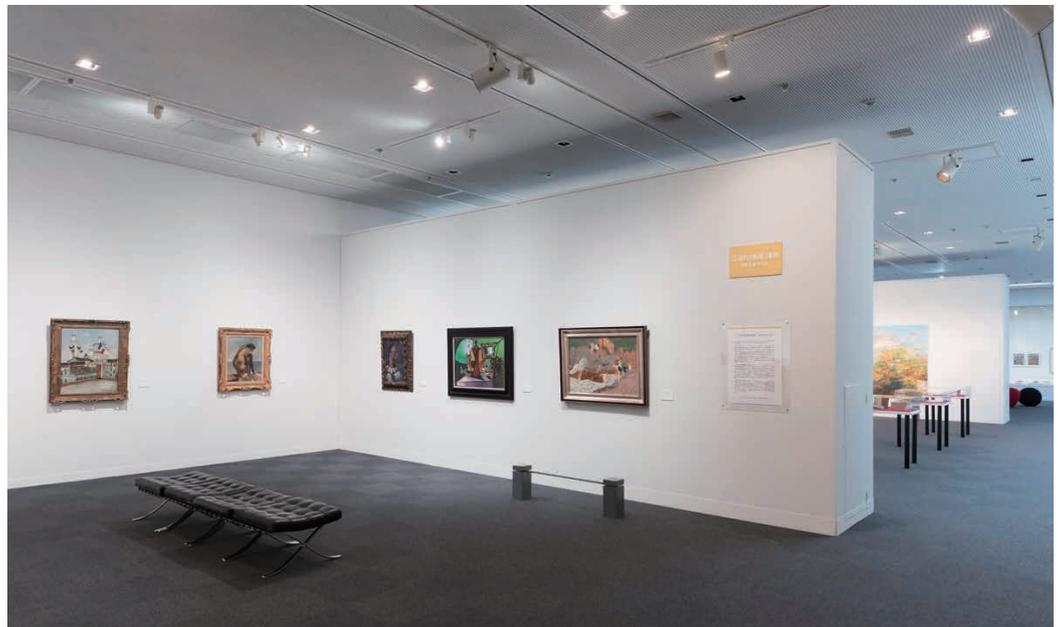
A leading artist of the Impressionist school, during the 1870s, Monet painted works in which the open-air light was captured in brisk touches. In 1883, he moved to Giverny, where he was to stay for the rest of his life, and pursued how to express reflections of light on the water surface and the subtle nuance of the light infiltrating through the atmosphere. Via a number of serial works beginning with Grainstacks, he reached the monumental series of Water Lilies. Monet had a significant influence on the subsequent trend in twentieth century art.

Two other works depicting the morning effect from the same viewpoint are known to exist. Two years later, Monet painted twenty-five views of Grainstacks, which led to the spectacular series of Water Lilies. This painting is a monumental work that pioneered such masterpieces. Compared to his artistic style up to the 1870s, the brushwork has become softer and more delicate. The paint is applied in multiple layers and extends to all corners of the painting. With the substantial grainstacks at the center, the artist brilliantly captures the incessantly changing world of flowing air and infiltrating light. Enwrapped in dense air and light, everything seems to be leisurely in motion. The grainstacks, which Monet chose as his motif, were heaps of unthreshed wheat, which were also used to store food. They were a symbol of the fertile land in the agricultural country, France.

**EI-KYU** 1911 (Miyazaki, Japan) – 1960 (Saitama, Japan)  
Cloud  
1959 oil on canvas 162.2×130.3cm

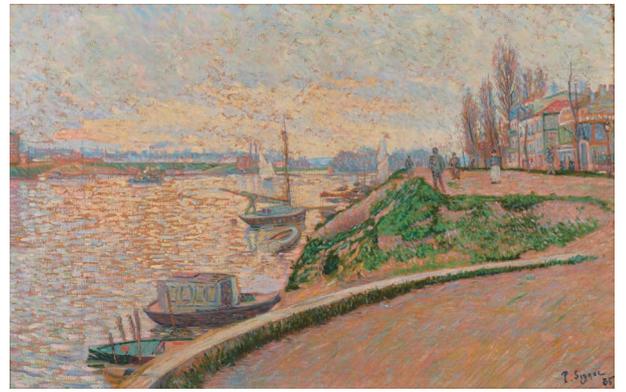
EI-KYU's real name was SUGITA Hideo. He studied painting at Nihon Bijutsu Gakko and began writing art reviews from when he was sixteen. In 1936, he published a collection of photograms entitled *Nemuri no Riyu* (Reason for Sleep) and it was from then that he used the pen name EI-KYU. In 1951, he formed the Demokrato Artists Association. He played a pioneering role in postwar Japanese art.

Beginning from figurative oil paintings of landscapes or people, EI-KYU produced many experimental works going to-and-fro between figuration and abstraction and including visionary expressions. The final method of expression he reached was abstract painting in pointillism. This painting was done the year before the artist died at the age of 48. He had been painting works composed of mainly organic forms in a freewheeling way from the latter part of the 1940s. From around 1957, he began to produce works in which the paint was sprayed on with an air compressor. The following year, numerous circles and cell-like patterns appeared on his canvases and they eventually evolved into the pointillism demonstrated in this painting. In his later years, EI-KYU pursued this expression to the point of obstinacy.

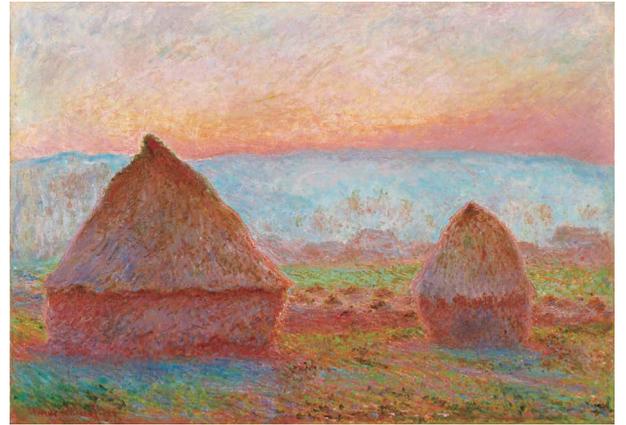


Information on  
OperationsThe  
MOMAS\*  
Collection

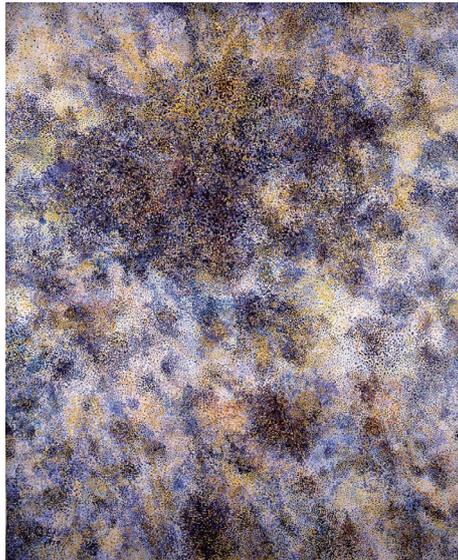
OMODA Seiju, Spring Night, 1930



Paul SIGNAC, Bank of the Seine, Asnières, 1885



Claude MONET, Grainstacks at Giverny; the Evening Sun, 1888-89



EI-KYU, Cloud, 1959



KOMURA Settai, Green Willow, c.1924



SAITO Toyosaku, French Landscape II, c.1910

## Information on Operations

### Special Exhibitions

#### Basic Policy on Special Exhibitions

MOMAS organizes special exhibitions on unique themes five times per year.

Special exhibitions fall into one of the following categories:

- (1) Artists with a relation to Saitama Prefecture
- (2) Explorations of modern art in Japan
- (3) Presentation of work by overseas modern artists from Europe, the US, Asia, etc.
- (4) Presentation of contemporary art in general, without regard for nation of origin
- (5) Works outside the above periods and categories, interpreted from the perspective of a modern art museum

#### Major Past Exhibitions

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1982 | From Impressionism to École de Paris – Its Passion and Struggle  |
| 1984 | Seiju Omoda  |
| 1985 | Manjiro Terauchi   |
| 1986 | Black and White in Art Today   |
| 1987 | Toyosaku Saito and Japanese Pointillistic Expressions  |
| 1990 | Yori Saito and His Times   |
| 1991 | Tsunetomo Morita and His Times   |
| 1992 | The Sting of Satire<br>Retrospective Exhibition of Kokuta Suda<br>Adam & Eve   |
| 1993 | New Vision Saitama – Art by Hand: A Natural Way in Contemporary Art  |
| 1995 | Matter and Perception 1970 – Mono-ha and the Search for Fundamentals   |
| 1997 | James Turrell: Where Does the Light in Our Dreams Come From?   |
| 2002 | From Monet to Cézanne – Impressionists and their Epoch   |
| 2005 | Chairs and Japanese Design   |
| 2007 | Songs in Praise of Rural Life – The Nature and Man Relationship in Modern Art  |
| 2009 | Nagasawa – Dove Tende Aurora<br>Settai Komura and His Age  |
| 2011 | 100th Birth Anniversary Q Ei   |
| 2012 | Yayoi Kusama: Eternity of Eternal Eternity<br>The 70s in Japan 1968-1982   |
| 2013 | TAMAMONO: From the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art, Saitama<br>Floating Design: Shiro Kuramata and His Contemporaries |
| 2014 | Legendary Houses in Postwar Japan – Provocative/Introspective  |
| 2015 | Travels and Art – Discovery, Wonder and Dreams   |
| 2016 | NEW VISION SAITAMA 5 The Emerging Body<br>CUBISM in JAPAN: Picasso's Impact  |
| 2017 | ENDO Toshikatsu – The Archaeology of the Sacred<br>Diego Rivera and His Contemporaries                                       |
| 2018 | TOEKO TATSUNO: ON PAPERS A Retrospective 1969-2012<br>Impossible Architecture -Another History of Architecture-              |

#### Education and Public Outreach

MOMAS organizes programs to help foster a rich sensitivity and creativity among children, who will one day lead a new generation, through art appreciation and various expressive activities.

##### Door to MOMAS

We implement the “Door to MOMAS” program for children and people of all ages, based around works in the museum’s collection. After viewing and discussing works of art, participants engage in creative activities related to the work that enable them to experience the artist’s ideas vicariously, and provide an experience uniting art appreciation with artistic expression.

##### Partnerships with schools

MOMAS offers opportunities for “memorable encounters with art” to children and students who visit the museum through educational programs. We also take part in programs involving art appreciation at schools so as to enrich students’ educations in the arts.

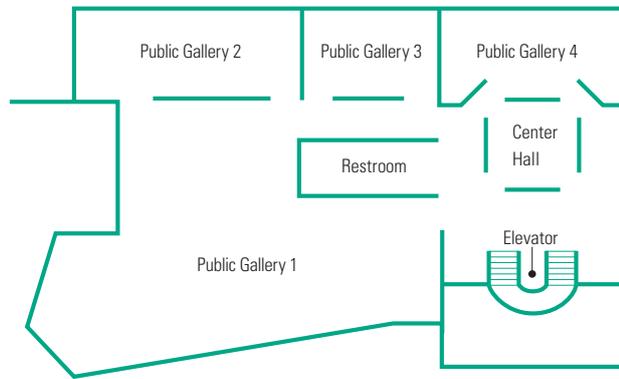


## Facility / Visitor Information

### Floor Plan

#### BF

Public Gallery 1
612.88m <sup>2</sup>   CH 4.31m
Public Gallery 2
231.52m <sup>2</sup>   CH 4.01m
Public Gallery 3
138.91m <sup>2</sup>   CH 4.01m
Public Gallery 4
161.36m <sup>2</sup>   CH 3.00m
Center Hall
81.43m <sup>2</sup>

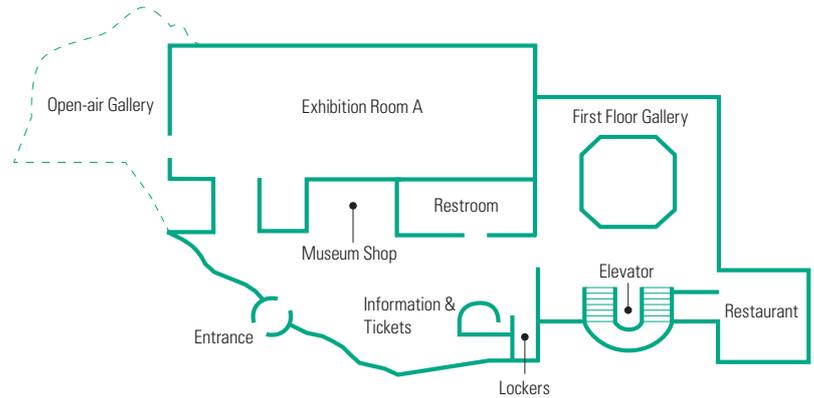


#### Public Gallery

The galleries on this floor are available to the general public to rent for presentation of works of art. Before permission for utilization of galleries is granted, works will be screened to ensure that they meet certain criteria.

#### 1F

Exhibition Room A
550.40m <sup>2</sup>   CH 4.06m
Open-air Gallery
First Floor Gallery
242.26m <sup>2</sup>
Museum Shop
27.75m <sup>2</sup>
Restaurant
89.21m <sup>2</sup>



#### For disabled visitors

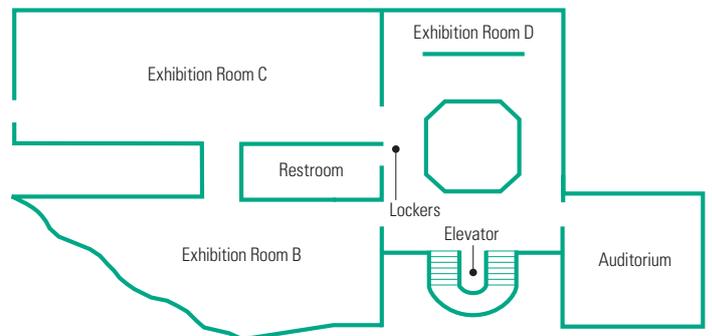
The museum is equipped with wheelchairs and special restrooms for disabled visitors.

For those in need of parking, please contact us before your visit.

If you experience any inconveniences, please inquire at the general information desk on the first floor. Written inquiries are also welcome.

#### 2F

Exhibition Room B
405.67m <sup>2</sup>   CH 3.16m
Exhibition Room C
517.66m <sup>2</sup>   CH 3.86m
Exhibition Room D
92.42m <sup>2</sup>   CH 3.00m
Auditorium
234.99m <sup>2</sup>   CH 3.00m, capacity 120 people

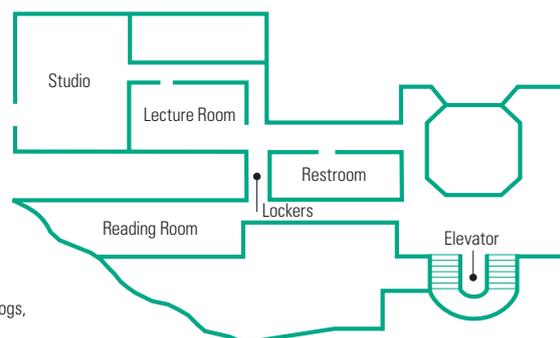


#### Auditorium

Auditorium is used for various museum lectures, events, etc., and is also available for rental.

#### 3F

Studio
137.45m <sup>2</sup>
Lecture Room
66.26m <sup>2</sup>
Reading Room
136.68m <sup>2</sup>

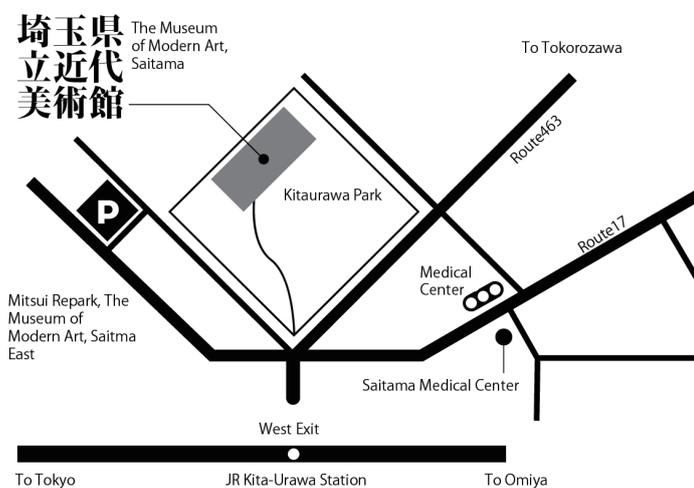


#### Reading Room

Visitors can freely view art books, exhibition catalogs, art magazines, etc. in the museum's collection.

**Facility /  
Visitor  
Information**

<b>Construction Data</b>	Location: 9-30-1, Tokiwa, Urawa-ku, Saitama-shi, Saitama, Japan Design / Supervision: Kisho Kurokawa architect & associates
<b>Hours</b>	10:00 - 17:30 (entrance permitted until 17:00) *3F reading room open from 13:00 - 17:30
<b>Holidays</b>	Monday (open Monday on national holidays and special prefectural holidays), New Year's holidays, closure for maintenance
<b>Admission</b>	Museum admission fee: Free MOMAS Collection: 200 (120) yen, university and high school students 100 (60) yen *Numbers in parentheses indicate admission fees for groups of more than 20 people. *Children of junior high school age or younger and persons with disabilities who show certificates (plus one accompanying person) admitted free of charge *Special exhibitions: Admission fees vary.
<b>Transportation access</b>	Approx. 3 minutes on foot from Kita-Urawa Station, JR Keihin Tohoku Line (in Kita-Urawa Park) Approx. 35 min. to Kita-Urawa Station from JR Tokyo Station or Shinjuku Station MOMAS does not have its own parking area, but discounted parking fees are available at Mitsui Repark, The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama East, a parking area with which the museum has a partnership (300-yen discount for special exhibitions, 100-yen discount for MOMAS collection exhibitions.) Please contact the museum beforehand regarding buses bringing groups of visitors. Special parking spaces are available for persons with disabilities, but space is limited, so please contact the museum beforehand to ensure parking space availability.

**Publication  
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