

Display of Japan's Masterpieces and Restoration Techniques using Natural Materials

Special Exhibition: "NATIONAL TREASURE: FROLICKING ANIMALS"



Tokyo National Museum: April 13 – June 20, 2021 (TBC)

* Temporarily closed. Resumption date undecided.

The National Treasure "Frolicking Animals" is one of the most famous works in the history of Japanese painting. It depicts the activities of anthropomorphized animals and people in energetic monochrome ink lines. All scenes from all four volumes of "Frolicking Animals" will be on view during the exhibition period.

Special Exhibition: "National Treasures of Kyoto: Preserving the Cultural Heritage of Japan's Ancient Capital"

Kyoto National Museum: July 24–September 12, 2021

This exhibition features National Treasures associated with the ancient capital of Kyoto, representing various kinds of decorative arts, paintings, calligraphy, ancient manuscripts, archaeological and historical materials, and sculptures. These works, passed down generation to generation for centuries, comprise approximately 120 objects or sets of objects, including some sixty treasures from the Imperial Collections. While highlighting the enduring appeal and significance of Japan's cultural properties, this exhibition also showcases a variety of cultural preservation initiatives.



Special Exhibition: Sacred Treasures from Ancient Nara: The Eleven-Headed Kannon of Shōrinji Temple



Eleven-Headed Kannon (Detail),
Nara period, 8th century, Shōrinji
Temple, Nara (National Treasure)

Tokyo National Museum: June 22–September 12, 2021

Nara National Museum: February 5–March 27, 2022

This exhibition will feature Buddha statues and other items from the temple on the grounds of Ōmiwa Shrine, which venerates Mt. Miwa, marking the first time these artefacts are brought together under one roof in the approximately 150 years since they were removed from the shrine following an 1868 edict ordering the separation of Shintoism and Buddhism. It will also be the first time that the eleven-headed kannon of Shōrinji Temple, one of the most renowned Japanese Buddha statues, is taken out of Nara Prefecture.

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Special Exhibition The 1,400th Memorial for Prince Shōtoku: "HŌRYŪJI, Prince Shōtoku and Treasures of Early Buddhist Faith in Japan"



"Prince Shōtoku" from Prince Shōtoku and Attendants, Heian period, 1121 (Hōan 2), Hōryūji Temple, Nara (National Treasure)

Nara National Museum: April 27–June 20, 2021
Tokyo National Museum: July 13–September 5, 2021

The next year 2021 will be a milestone of the 1400th commemorating the death of Prince Shōtoku. In honor of the achievements of Prince Shōtoku, who is legendary regarded as the founder of Buddhism in Japan, the exhibition will be organized in order to give visitors a rare opportunity to encounter the precious collections from Horyuji treasures relating to Prince Shōtoku as well as valuable cultural properties since the Asuka period.

Hokusai and Edo Culture Special Exhibition: The Mount Fuji Challenges: Hokusai and Hiroshige

Edo–Tokyo Museum: April 24–June 20, 2021

This exhibition will present the entirety of one of Katsushika Hokusai's most celebrated series, 'Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji', alongside works by his younger rival Utagawa Hiroshige, highlighting how the two artists took up the challenge of depicting sceneries and landscapes, including Mt. Fuji, which has long remained close to and been revered by the people of Japan.



The Great Wave off the Coast of Kanagawa, from the series Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji, Katsushika Hokusai, 1831–33. Edo–Tokyo Museum

Isamu Noguchi: Ways of Discovery" Encounter Japanese tradition and natural aesthetics"

Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum: April 24–August 29, 2021



Installation of "Akari"
Light Sculptures (reference image)
Photo : Sadamu Saito

This exhibition looks back over the achievements of leading 20th-century artist Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988). Featuring approximately 90 works brought from both in and outside Japan, primarily large sculptures, this marks one of the largest exhibitions dedicated to Noguchi ever to be held in Japan. With a space bringing together approximately 150 pieces from Noguchi's Akari series, inspired by the traditional Gifu craft of lantern-making, guests can enjoy installations that utilize the texture of Japanese paper and bamboo to cast a gentle light over the venue.

Dialogue with Nature through Food, Clothing and Housing in Japan



Fashion in Japan 1945-2020

Iwami Art Museum: March 20–May 16, 2021
The National Art Center, Tokyo: June 9–September 6, 2021

With a focus on the period of time from the end of World War II to the present, this exhibition showcases Japanese fashion culture, exploring the social background throughout the ages of the creative process woven together by clothes makers, the clothes wearers, and the media that connects the two.

Kuma Kengo: Five Purr-fect Points for a New Public Space

National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo: June 18–September 26, 2021

Kuma Kengo masterfully combines the cultural characteristics of various Japanese ages and regions in his architecture. From the standpoint that learning about the works of Kuma provide a greater insight into Japanese aesthetics and culture, this exhibition presents a vision for cities in the post-Covid era, making ample use of cutting-edge audiovisual technology such as 360-degree VR and projection mapping to leave behind a legacy in a country where architectural exhibitions are typically comprised mainly of replicas and photographs.



The Exchange
(Australia) 2019
© Martin Mischkulnig

Kōgei Dining 2021

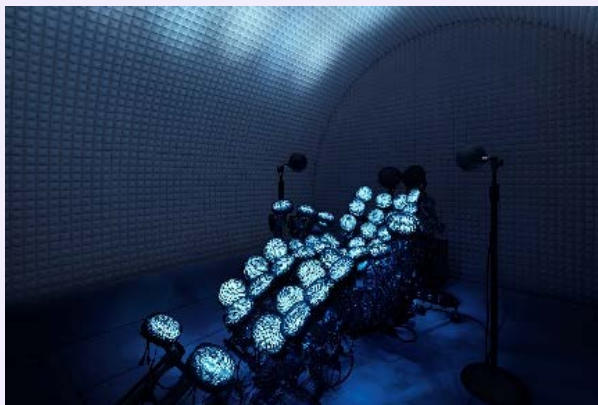
Atami City, Shizuoka Prefecture: November 21–25, 2021
Fukuoka City, Fukuoka Prefecture: February 5, 2022



This event provides an opportunity to enjoy using pieces by designated holders of Intangible Cultural Properties and other practitioners of Kōgei (Japanese craft arts) and to enjoy eating “Washoku, traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese,” which is registered on the Representative List of the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Media Ambition Tokyo 2021 (MAT2021)

Roppongi Hills (Tokyo) and other venues: May 12–Jun 8, 2021



Synesthesia X1 – 2.44 Hazo(Mind Waves)/
Synesthesia Lab feat. evala (See by Your Ears)

Media Ambition Tokyo (MAT), held eight times previously, takes an experimental approach to integrating the latest technology and culture into real urban environments. The initiative continues to expand as a platform encompassing a variety of programs, through multilayered development including ever-evolving technology, art, video, performance, seminar, and workshops. This year, the event will provide a boost to the Tokyo cultural scene by presenting the crossover between cutting-edge technology and art in the main Roppongi venue.

Meet Nature in Media Arts

Projects to promote Arts & Culture and revitalization of Tourism & Regional Economy utilizing local artistic and cultural resources centering on Sapporo International Art Festival (SIAF)

Moerenuma Park, Sapporo Community Plaza, and other venues throughout Sapporo: April 2021– March 2022

This initiative aims to communicate the appeals of Sapporo's unique culture and urban environment to a wide audience both in Japan and overseas and train staff to work on future art festivals through Sapporo International Art Festival, which promotes modern art and media art and distributes information involving the nationally designated Important Cultural Property Sapporo Shirayokan (formerly Sapporo Court of Appeals), through media arts projects run by SIAF Lab, and through arts events themed around Sapporo's characteristic snow and northern culture.



Exploring the Traditional and Contemporary Performing Arts related to Nature

Discover Traditional Performing Arts!

National Theatre, National Noh Theatre, National Bunraku Theatre, National Engei Hall,
Traditional Performing Arts Information Centre: June –December 2021

In addition to the KABUKI, NOH & KYOGEN, and BUNRAKU performances, the 2021 program will be expanded to new fields, with performances such as NIHON-BUYO (Japanese Traditional Dance) and HOGAKU (Japanese Traditional Music). The series of performances includes introduction and multilingual support for overseas visitors, foreign nationals living in Japan, and Japanese beginners.



Discover KABUKI image



Noh, "Yuya Murasamedome,"
starring Kanze Tetsunjo

Humanity and Nature in Japan Shunkashūtō, Sōmokujōbutsu, Kachōfūgetsu

National Noh Theatre: April–June 2021

The National Noh Theatre's April to June performances will feature monthly specials based on Humanity and Nature in Japan. Each month will feature an intensive lineup of Noh and Kyogen performances related to the month's theme, with April's being Shunkashūtō (Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter), while May's is Sōmokujōbutsu (All Things Have Buddha Nature), and June's is Kachōfūgetsu (Beauties of Nature). A special exhibition about the role of Humanity and Nature in Japan in Noh will also be concurrently held.

Ballet for Children 2021 "RYUUGUU - The Turtle Princess"

New National Theatre, Tokyo: July 24–27 2021

The revival of the highly acclaimed a new ballet production for 2020. Based on a fairy tale from the well-known story of Urashima Taro, this work has elements of classical Japanese theatre throughout. Taro is mesmerised by the delightful sea creatures in the magnificent Palace of Ryuuguu and the mysterious Chamber of Four Seasons where all four seasons can be enjoyed all at once. But what fate awaits Taro when he returns home? This Japanese-themed New National Theatre, Tokyo's ballet fantasy is a must-see for all ballet fans, whether children or adults.



RYUUGUU, Act 1
(Photos by SHIKAMA Takashi)

YOSE (vaudeville performance) -Show "RAKUZA" 2021

Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture and other venues: May 2021–March 2022



The 2021 program will feature performing arts shows in unique venues such as temples, shrines, Tokyo Tower, and museums as well as online content targeted at both domestic and overseas audiences created using new visual entertainment technology. Ways of holding performances in regional areas amid the pandemic will also be explored and developed. By bringing together performances and broadcast technology, the program will attempt to instill online streaming with a sense of real-world dynamism characteristic of live performances.

*In addition to initiatives selected for the 2021 year, initiatives selected during the previous year that will also be run in 2021 are also listed.

Exploring the Traditional and Contemporary Performing Arts related to Nature



Alter 3 (Supported by mixi, inc.)

New Opera with Children and an Android "Super Angels"

New National Theatre, Tokyo: 2021 August 21-22

This special programme is for the enjoyment of children and grownups alike. Witness the birth of a new opera, performed by Alter 3, an android with artificial life who makes friends with children in the chorus as they sing and perform together. This is the birth of a very new style of opera infused with cutting edge technology and a message of future coexistence. We welcome you to the NNTT, as we show the world what the art of the stage can achieve.

Osaka Culture and Art Festival Project

Expo '70 Commemorative Park and other locations around Osaka: October 10-mid November, 2021

This initiative promotes Osaka's diverse and rich culture and arts, including the area's proud tradition of Kamigata Kabuki, as well as the city's World Heritage sites and other cultural assets to wide audiences both in Japan and abroad in an effort to attract domestic and international tourists to the city. Through these efforts, the program aims to contribute to making Osaka an international entertainment city and pave the way for Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.



Humanity and Nature in Japan As Seen in Traditional Performing Arts: Experiencing the Multifaceted Nature of Traditional Performing Arts, Japanese Aesthetics, and View of Nature

National Theatre, National Noh Theatre, National Bunraku Theatre, National Engei Hall, Traditional Performing Arts Information Centre: April 2021- March 2022



The artists varying from the youth to Living National Treasures perform iconic Japanese traditional performing arts, including artforms that are nationally designated Important Intangible Cultural Properties, such as Traditional Japanese Dance, Traditional Japanese Music, Gagaku, Shomyo, and Japanese Folk performance. The varied program will include performances with explanations; pieces that bring together classical and modern arts in the aim of reaching out to new audiences; and performances based on classical arts that explore new forms of expression.

Sado's International Festival Development Project Centered Around the "Earth Celebration"

Sado City, Niigata Prefecture: April 2021 – March 2022

Earth Celebration is an annual event that brings together diverse forms of culture in the abundant natural surroundings of an island with the aim of building a new 'earth' culture. Centered around an international outdoor festival with a long history in Japan, this initiative will see entities involved such as Sado Island Galaxy Art Festival and other projects that utilize the island's unique culture to come together to create an international festival across the entire island.



Earth Celebration Committee

Enjoy Culture in Nature

Japan Cultural Expo in Izumo: Experiential festival in Izumo, land of the gods

Izumo City, Shimane Prefecture: April 2021 – March 2022



Izumo Kagura: Ōdochi Kagura Hozonkai Kagurakata

This project will see a variety of content created around four key themes: Izumo Kagura, a traditional performing art that incorporates Izumo's abundant nature, history, and culture, which has been passed down for generations after taking shape from the late middle ages through the early modern era; Japan Heritage – The Sunset in the Sacred land of Izumo, which comprises a variety of tangible and intangible cultural assets; Izumo Taisha Grand Shrine, which was called Ame no Hisumi no Miya in Japan's oldest historical manuscript; and various cultural assets that are said to have originated in Izumo, such as zenzai (red bean soup) and Japanese sake. In addition to enabling visitors to Izumo to enjoy the city's nature, history, and culture as well as Japanese aesthetics through walks and tours throughout the city, a variety of video content will be produced and broadcast to a wide domestic and international audience through websites and social media.

Traveling Promotion in the Metropolitan Area Introduction of Tohoku's recovery efforts and charms through the "Tohoku Kizuna Festival" which has assembled the region's best six historical festivals -- one from each prefecture of Tohoku

Online, Tokyo: April–October 2021



“Tohoku Kizuna Festival” was started after the Great East Japan Earthquake to hope for Tohoku’s recovery and also to honor the souls of those whose lives were lost. The festival has assembled six of the region’s best festivals: Aomori Nebuta Festival, Akita Kanto Festival, Morioka Sansa Odori Festival, Yamagata Hanagasa Festival, Sendai Tanabata Festival, and Fukushima Waraji Festival. Taking advantage of opportunities, which attract worldwide attention, we aim to expand inbound tourism through culture by holding special performances of the “Tohoku Kizuna Festival” in the Metropolitan area, and also by spreading the charms of Tohoku’s culture to both inside and outside of the country through videos and other means.

Recovery from Natural Disasters

「TOHOKU HOUSE」project that conveys the reconstruction and the charm of the traditional culture of the Tohoku region

Akiba Square (Tokyo): July 22–August 7, 2021
Online: August 24, 2021–January 24, 2022

Contents to spread the charms of the Tohoku region “The View from TOHOKU & NIIGATA”



TOHOKU HOUSE is a limited-time information center created as the tenth memorial year of the Great East Japan earthquake to broadcast messages to the world based on; “Sending our gratitude to those who supported us from over the world,” “Showing the Tohoku region’s energetic reconstruction process and the renewed sense of security in the area,” and “Spreading the charm of the “Tohoku region” in the form of tourist spots that can’t be experienced anywhere else in Japan.” With the three concepts of “gratitude,” “exchange,” and “towards tomorrow,” TOHOKU HOUSE expresses our gratitude for recovery support and spreading the charm of the Tohoku region throughout the world.

*In addition to initiatives selected for the 2021 year, initiatives selected during the previous year that will also be run in 2021 are also listed.

Culture and Art Hub Creation Project for Persons with Disabilities

BiG-i International Communication Center for Persons with Disabilities (Osaka) and other venues: throughout the year

The fully barrier-free environment at the International Communication Center for Persons with Disabilities (BiG-i), know-how that everyone can enjoy cultural and arts activities, and making full use of the international network of people with disabilities create the environment (“people”, “know-how”, “skill”, and “making a place”) where everyone can enjoy culture and arts and promote development and maintenance through the project.

Collaborating between choreographers, professional dancers who are active in Japan and Asia and dancers with disabilities, and implementing the attractive large-scale dance projects based on the nature and traditional culture of Japan establish an international cultural and arts base for people with disabilities with the ability to attract customers and lead to the creation of a symbiotic society.



DANCE DRAMA promotion photo Photographed by Ryohei Tomita

Inclusive Society and Coexistence of Cultures

Art Brut Creation Nippon

Tohoku Block: Iwate Prefecture, Kanto/Koshin Block: Saitama Prefecture, Kinki Block: Shiga Prefecture
April 1, 2021–March 31, 2022

A strong sense of compassion for natural colors and sounds continues to permeate the artistic expressions of persons with disabilities and the way they engage with their characteristics in their lives. This nationwide project aims to share with audiences in Japan and around the world the concept of Humanity and Nature in Japan from the perspective of persons with disabilities, expressing Japan’s unique spiritual culture. Launched with Grand Opening held in February 2020, the festival encompasses events across a variety of genres, such as exhibitions and performing arts in seven facilities around Japan. Through partnerships with 500,000 members of organizations for persons with disabilities and welfare workers groups from around Japan in addition to local authorities, the project shares the charms of regional areas with unique cultures.



Iwami Kagura
(Iwami Welfare Association Performing Club)

Inclusive Society and Coexistence of Cultures

Japan Cultural Expo Special Event: Ainu Culture Festival

Sapporo Cultural Arts Theatre hitaru (Hokkaido):
September 18, 2021



Traditional Ainu dance (crane dance)

Irancarapte! (Hello in Ainu language)

The Ainu Culture Festival brings together Ainu successors from around Japan, featuring performances on Mukkuri, a traditional Ainu instrument, and Ainu traditional dances. Musical performances will also convey the charms of Ainu music through new and innovative sounds by Ainu musicians, incorporating elements of modern music into Ainu tradition. Musical performances will also tell the tale of the interaction between the Ainu and Matsuura Takeshirō, who searched for ways for Ainu and native Japanese to coexist harmoniously. A compact version of the event will be broadcast online after the stage performance in order to provide a wider audience with the opportunity to encounter Ainu culture.