

“Is this art?” – The Art Festival We Encounter in the City

【Art Projects Originating in Local Areas of Tokyo】

Tokyo Biennale 2025 “Wander for Wonder”

Announcement of Event Information

“Tokyo Biennale 2025—Art Projects Originating in Local Areas of Tokyo” will be held between October 17 (Fri) and December 21 (Sun), 2025 (tentatively). This year's festival theme is “Wander for Wonder,” inviting participants to explore artistic expressions by walking through the city.

In addition to the “Bakurocho Art Site,” which will be held at Etoile Kaito Living Building, at the “Kan'ei-ji Art Site” visitors may tour the main hall of Toeizan Kan'ei-ji Temple, which is celebrating its 400th anniversary, along with various other structures located within Ueno Park. Overall, the festival will consist of art actions in six different areas in the northeastern area of central Tokyo.

The event program will begin close to one month before the exhibition period begins, and participating artists will go out into the city to conduct research, workshops, and other activities while interacting with local citizens to create exhibitions. The biennale will also include “SOCIAL DIVE 2025,” an international program that is now calling for art projects by overseas artists in response to the festival concept. Moreover, in April 2025 we will launch a comprehensive project aimed at exploring “sanpo*” in depth, including the “Sanpo University Special Lecture” series where participants will consider the meaning of “sanpo,” as well as the “Sanpo Art Map Project” (tentative name) in which artists, businesses, specialists, and local residents will participate. We hope that participants will share in our excitement of the possibilities of “sanpo” by joining us for the Tokyo Biennale 2025, along with the events leading toward it.

*“Sanpo” is the Japanese term for walking or strolling.

Press Release Key Points

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- Theme and Concept
- Producers and Directors

【Contact】 General Non-Profit Incorporated Organization Tokyo Biennale

5th Floor, Products Building, Higashi-Kanda, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo

TEL : 03-5809-1653 E-mail : pr@tokyobiennale.jp

PRESS RELEASE

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● Tokyo Biennale 2025 Main Visual



CD/Co-Director: Susumu Namikawa/AD: Tomonori Ozaki/ Photo: Sano Yusuke

PRESS RELEASE

● Event Information

【Title】 Tokyo Biennale 2025 -Art Projects Originating in Local Areas of Tokyo

【Theme】 “Wander for Wonder”

【General Producer】 Masato Nakamura

【Co-Directors】 Susumu Namikawa, Min Nishihara, Hiroyuki Hattori

【Supervising Producer】 Shinobu Nakanishi

【Period】 October 17 (Fri) - December 21 (Sun), 2025 (Tentative)

【Venues and Areas】

Main Venues: Bakurocho Art Site, Kan'ei-ji Art Site

Areas: Six total areas - Ueno-Okachimachi area, Kanda-Akihabara area, Suidobashi area, Nihonbashi area, Yaesu-Kyobashi area, Daimaruyu area (as of April 8th, 2025)

【Organizer】 General Non-Profit Incorporated Organization Tokyo Biennale

【Cooperation】 Tokyo University of the Arts

【Corporate Partners】 Mitsubishi Estate Co., Ltd., TOKYO DOME CORPORATION

【Special Venue Cooperation】 Toeizan Kan'ei-ji Temple, Etoile Kaito & Co., Inc.,

【Subsidy】 Japan Cultural Expo 2.0 (Japan Arts Council/Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan)
(as of April 8th, 2025)

【Tickets】 Advanced tickets will be available from early September 2025

Bakurocho and Kan'ei-ji Temple Art Sites Combined Ticket:

Advanced – 2,500 yen (Standard 3,000 yen) *Estimated fees

Other Admission Information:

Art Actions: Free (with the exception of certain venues)

Event Programs: Requires fee (varies by program)

Further details to be announced in late August

Tokyo Biennale Official Website : <https://tokyobiennale.jp/>

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PRESS RELEASE

● Theme and Concept

When walking through the streets of Tokyo, we feel the crowds of people moving quickly towards their destination. They are indifferent to each other and do not notice the troubles or small sufferings of others. Some may find this distance between people in the city relaxing, since facing people head-on takes energy. Yet, is there not a way to overcome such resignation and easily, gently connect all of us? Does art not have that power?

The theme of the Tokyo Biennale 2025 is “Wander for wonder” When walking side by side, even in silence, a gentle connection is born. Walking slowly without a purpose opens up our perspectives and allows us to see scenery we had not noticed before. Through this art festival, “art” is made up of all the events that we encounter, as they come to life during the course of a walk.

Together we can creatively change the relationships between the people we walk with, come to notice things we did not know (or already knew), realize what is hindering our mind and body, be able to empathize with others emotionally, and feel that we are not alone, even when we are by ourselves. Events for anyone, that can be joined as many times as one likes - this new type of biennale where we can take a stroll together with our minds and our bodies is about to begin.

Susumu Namikawa, Min Nishihara, Hiroyuki Hattori
Co-Directors, Tokyo Biennale 2025

About the Tokyo Biennale

Art Projects Originating in Local Areas of Tokyo through the Hands of Citizens

Created together with local citizens, the Tokyo Biennale is an assembly of “Art Projects Originating in Local Areas of Tokyo”. Since 2021, the Tokyo Biennale has explored the social practice of art through its two previous editions, and this coming festival marks its third running. Tokyo, the capital of Japan, is one of the world's leading economic cities, with a rich cultural foundation dating back to the Edo period. Tokyo is also a leader in Japan and the world as a cosmopolitan city with a dense population and great number of visitors from all across the world. On the other hand, it also faces various social and resilience issues unique to a large city with such a concentrated population. What can art do under such conditions? Art has the power to affect people's emotions, cross the boundaries of human consciousness, academia, and business, and ultimately influence society. Art that is developed in a variety of forms outside of art museums has the ability to lean in closer to people and become an integrated part of their day-to-day lives, work, and social activities. The presence of art in turn influences people's behavior, ethics, and builds communities to confront social issues. The Tokyo Biennale will serve as an artistic platform that allows people who live and work in the city, as well as visitors, to dive into Tokyo together, bringing them new perspectives on our environment and our ways of living.

PRESS RELEASE

- Producers and Directors

- General Producer



Masato Nakamura

Masato Nakamura is an artist and professor at Tokyo University of the Arts. He served as General Director of Tokyo Biennale 2020/2021 and Tokyo Biennale 2023. He is the General Director of Chiba City Arts Triennale 2025, and the Director of 3331.

- Co-Directors



Left to right: Hiroyuki Hattori, Min Nishihara, Susumu Namikawa

Susumu Namikawa

Susumu Namikawa is a copywriter, poet and programmer. He serves as Executive Creative Director at dentsu Japan.

Min Nishihara

Min Nishihara is a curator and psychotherapist. She served as General Director of Tokyo Biennale 2023. She is also an associate professor at Tokyo University of the Arts and Director of the Akita City Cultural Creation Center.

Hiroyuki Hattori

Hiroyuki Hattori is a curator and associate professor at Tokyo University of the Arts. He serves as Director of Aomori Contemporary Art Centre [ACAC].

- Supervising Producer



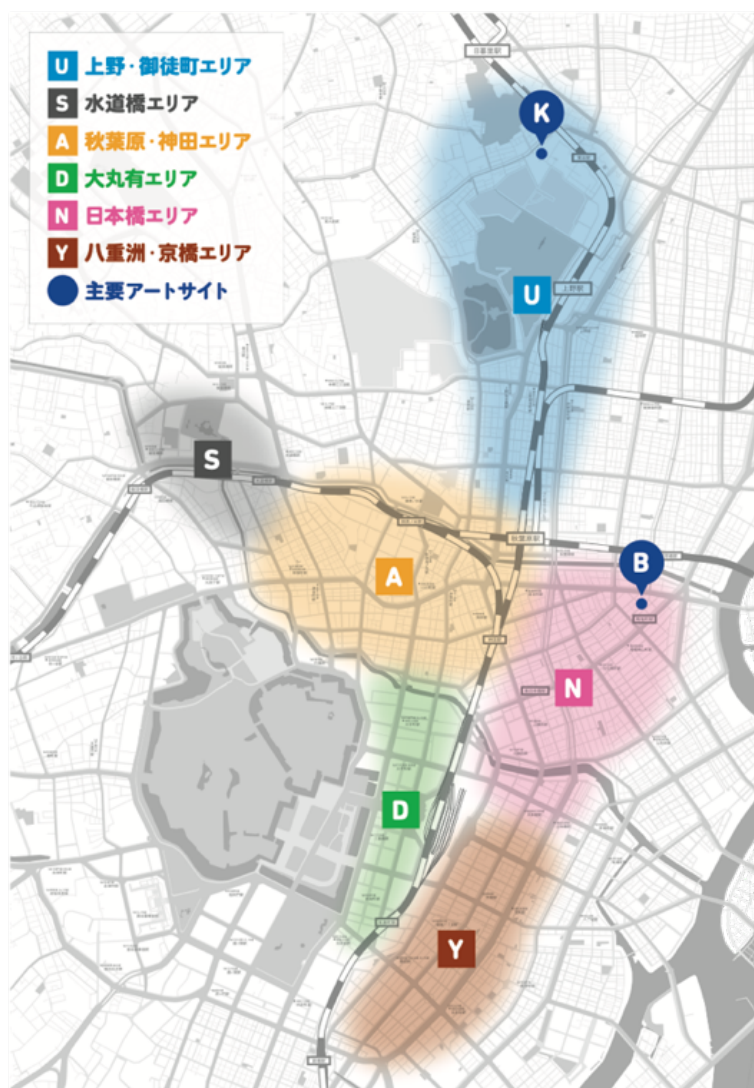
Shinobu Nakanishi

Shinobu Nakanishi is an architect. After working for Dentsu Inc., he joined the Japan Science and Technology Agency in 2015 as Deputy Director of Miraikan - the National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation until March 2021. He is also the Director of IDEAL COOP Inc. and a visiting professor at Tokyo University of the Arts.

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About the Event Area

Exhibitions by Japanese and overseas artists will be held at two main venues: “Bakurocho Art Site” at Etoile Kaito Living Building, and “Kan-eiji Art Site” at the main hall of Toeizan Kan'ei-ji Temple, which is celebrating its 400th anniversary, as well as various structures located in Ueno Park. In addition, art actions including exhibitions and events will be held in six areas scattered across the northeastern part of central Tokyo.



Main site:

[K] Kan'ei-ji Temple Art Site
Toeizan Kan'ei-ji Temple and
other Structures
(1-14-11 Ueno Sakuragi, Taito-
ku, Tokyo)

[B] Bakurocho Art Site
Etoile Kaito Living Building
(1-15-15 Higashi Kanda,
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo)

Art Actions:

[U] Ueno-Okachimachi Area
[S] Suidoubashi Area
[A] Akihabara-Kanda Area
[D] Daimaruyu Area
[N] Nihonbashi Area
[Y] Yaesu-Kyobashi Area
(As of April 8th, 2025)

PRESS RELEASE

● Projects in Motion Toward the Tokyo Biennale 2025

“Social Dive 2025” open call project has been launched!

Now calling for project ideas from across the world! (Deadline: May 2nd, 2025)



Free Seat: Pedro Carneiro Silva, Ardalan Aram, 2023, Tokyo

Tokyo Biennale 2025 has opened a call for projects by artists living overseas for the international program, “SOCIAL DIVE 2025”.

“SOCIAL DIVE” is an artist-in-residence project held in Tokyo, which invites artists to delve deeply into the city, communities, localities, society, and people to discover local characteristics and new values through the creation of artworks. The call is open to art projects from all fields that are based on the underlying concept of “SOCIAL DIVE”. Selected artists will be given the opportunity to exhibit their work through the biennale and receive various forms of support toward realizing their project.

Application Condition:

The call is open to artists residing outside Japan. *Individuals or groups are welcome

Open Call Schedule

Application Period: March 10 (Mon) - May 2 (Fri), 2025 Selection Results: To be announced in early June 2025

Selection Committee

Masato Nakamura (General Producer, Tokyo Biennale 2025)

Min Nishihara (Co-Director, Tokyo Biennale 2025)

Hiroyuki Hattori (Co-Director, Tokyo Biennale 2025)

Support for Selected Artists:

-Opportunity to create and present an art project for the Tokyo Biennale 2025

-Support fee for project development *Within budget

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-Round-trip travel expenses (between the selected artist's country of residence and Japan) and accommodation. *Within budget (budget may not be increased in case of artist units and other certain cases)

For more information: <http://socialdive.jp>

- **“Sanpo University” has been opened!**

Two projects will be held to explore the theme “Wander for Wonder” in a deeper context.



Image of Sanpo University, photo by Yuka Ikenoya(YUKAI)

“Sanpo University” is a project that aims to academically decode the everyday act of “sanpo” by walking around the land we call “Tokyo”, visiting localities, alleys, terrains, buildings, and waterfronts to trace the overlapping layers of time and memories from the past to the present. While walking through the city during fieldwork, participants will experience the thrill that comes with making discoveries, and enjoy the process of their perspectives on the world being turned upside down. These special lectures will take on a multi-disciplinary approach to “sanpo”.

- **Lecture Series “Sanpo University Special Lectures”**

“Sanpo University” was launched in January as a kick-off program to the Tokyo Biennale 2025. The president Shunya Yoshimi (sociologist) and vice-president Hidenobu Jinnai (architectural historian) have been invited to give a series of four lectures on “sanpo”, covering academic, historical, natural, and practical aspects of “sanpo” with the aim to thoroughly investigate the field of “sanpo studies”.

Schedule:

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Lecture 1 – “Shall we ‘sanpo’?” January 30 (Thurs), 2025 *This lecture has ended.

Lecture 2 – “Sanpo no ‘toki’ (刻)* (1)”, May 19 (Mon), 2025

Lecture 3 – “Sanpo no ‘mori’ (杜)* (2)”, July 24 (Thurs), 2025

Lecture 4 – “Sanpo no ‘machi’ (街)* (3)”, November 6 (Thurs), 2025

Note: The titles of lectures 2-4 are subject to change. There are special offers for participants who attend more than one session. Please check the event guide for further details.

* (1) “Toki” (刻) is a wide term for “time” in Japanese.

* (2) “Mori” (杜) is a Japanese term that signifies a forested area holding spiritual, cultural, historical, or other special significance.

* (3) “Machi” (街) is a Japanese term that signifies a bustling area.

- **“Sanpo Art Map Project” (tentative name) has been launched!**

Located in the heart of the city, the northeastern area of central Tokyo is built up on a foundation of rich historical and cultural layers. This project aims to rediscover “art” in the city and create a “Sanpo Art Map” that can be used by everyone. Research will be conducted with artists, local residents, businesses, and specialists, guided by modernology* researcher Izumi Kuroishi (Professor at Fukushima Gakuin University, Japan Society for Lifestyle Studies) leading the team. Development of the project's activities will be posted periodically on the Tokyo Biennale social media.

* “Modernology” (Jp: kogengaku) is a branch of sociology founded in Tokyo, which focuses on studies involving the city and people.

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● Launch of Web Magazine “Tokyo Biennale Notes on note”



The web magazine “Tokyo Biennale Notes on note” has been launched with Shinichi Uchida (writer and editor) as editor-in-chief. In addition to reporting on the art festival's ongoing activities, the magazine will feature conversations and interviews with guests active in diverse genres, while exploring a variety of art-related topics including “city”, “community”, “region”, “society”, and “living”, and will include critiques on the festival’s activities.

URL: <https://note.com/tokyobiennale/>

● Crowdfunding Announcement – Let’s Make the Tokyo Biennale Happen Together!

Created together with local citizens, the Tokyo Biennale is an assembly of “Art Projects Originating in Local Areas of Tokyo”. Our audiences’ support and participation will help us to deliver art in public spaces, which could be said is the core aspect of the Tokyo Biennale. Crowdfunding will be used to realize the Tokyo Biennale across the northeastern area of central Tokyo in an event where everyone can participate together with artists. Unique return gifts of gratitude will also be prepared. More details will be announced in May. Gathered funds will be used to run projects in public spaces in which all people can join free of charge.

Crowdfunding period: May 13th - late June 2025

Target amount: 5 million yen