

# Tokyo Gendai 東京現代



2023.7.7-9  
PACIFICO Yokohama

Presented By



Press Release  
10 July 2023

## Tokyo Gendai Closes First Edition with Robust Sales and Strong Attendance

The inaugural edition of the major new international art fair Tokyo Gendai closed with robust sales, ambitious presentations from 73 international galleries, and strong attendance from local and international visitors. Organized by The Art Assembly, and with SMBC Group as Principal Partner, the Fair took place at Pacifico Yokohama from 7-9 July 2023 (VIP Preview on 6 July) and attracted 20,907 visitors, including leading collectors, art museums and institutions.

Cementing Japan's status as an unmissable art destination and a focal point in the regional and global art market, Tokyo Gendai gathered together collectors from across the world for presentations of established and emerging Japanese and international artists. The local art scene was brought to life for visitors to the fair through a dynamic program of satellite events at acclaimed local institutions, talks with leading lights from the Japanese creative community, special curated exhibitions, and new commissions highlighting the very best of the vibrant contemporary culture of Japan.

**Magnus Renfrew Co-Founder, Tokyo Gendai** says: *'The success of the inaugural edition of Tokyo Gendai establishes the fair as an important new fixture on the art calendar, and reinforces Japan's status as a key art market center. We are grateful to the support of our partners and galleries, and it has been wonderful to witness the ways in which the local art scene has embraced the fair with special events throughout the week. The level of engagement from the Japanese art community is testament to the strong appetite from local collectors and the great potential of the market here as a pivotal hub in the region. We look forward to continuing to build upon this in the years to come.'*

**Eri Takane, Fair Director, Tokyo Gendai** says: *'We have been thrilled to see the energy and enthusiasm from visitors to the first ever edition of the fair, where they have been able to enjoy and discover a world-class selection of artworks from across the globe. Through our special programs Tokyo Gendai has helped to celebrate Japanese contemporary culture: from shining a spotlight on pioneering Japanese women artists, to new commissions, to conversations with leading voices in the creative community. Our international visitors have been able to explore some of the most exciting art happening in Japan today, while locals were able to experience the global art world right on their doorstep.'*

**Jun Ohta, President and Group CEO of SMBC** says: *'We are pleased to announce that Tokyo Gendai was a great success with many visitors. We hope that the success of Tokyo Gendai will contribute to the ongoing development of Japan's art scene.'*



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## COLLECTORS AND VIP ATTENDEES

Leading private collectors, museum directors, curators and patrons from over 34 countries visited Tokyo Gendai and took part in the exciting array of cultural offerings taking place around the fair. VIPs in attendance included collector and Chairperson of The Obayashi Foundation **Takeo Obayashi**; collector and co-founder of the Taguchi Art Collection, **Miwa Taguchi**; **Shane Akeroyd**, collector and founder of the Akeroyd Collection; **Ryutaro Takahashi**, collector and founder of the Takahashi Ryutaro Collection; **Thomas Shao**, collector and Founder and CEO of Meta Media, as well as notable collectors **Pedro Barbosa**; **Rudi Lazuardi**; **Yusaku Maezawa**; **Shunji and Asako Oketa**; **Matthew Shieh**; **Patrick Sun**; **Shin Takeuchi**; and **Kankuro Ueshima**. The fair was also delighted to welcome visitors from leading institutions including **Yoshiko Mori**, Chairperson of the Mori Art Museum; **Mami Kataoka**, Director of the Mori Art Museum; **Yuko Hasegawa**, Director of the Kanazawa 21st Century Museum; **Fumio Nanjo**, Special Director of Arts Maebashi; **Naimah Khalid**, founder of the Ilham Gallery, **Edmund Cheng**, Chairman of the Singapore Art Museum, and **Michiko Kasahara**, Deputy Director of the Artizon Museum. Tokyo Gendai also extended a warm welcome to Digital Minister **Taro Kono**, and to the US Ambassador to Japan **Rahm Emmanuel** and his wife **Amy Rule**, as well as politician **Tamayo Marukawa**. Visiting artists included **Hiroshi Sugimoto**, **Kohei Nawa**, **Shinji Omaki** and **Nami Yokoyama**. Other notable visitors included Hong Kong actor **Tony Leung**, actor **Tadanobu Asano**, and writer **Haruki Murakami**.

**Takeo Obayashi, collector and Chairman of the Obayashi Collection** says: *The very first Tokyo Gendai was a roaring success. The quality of the works was high, and it was a great opportunity to see works that are highly valued in overseas markets. I hope that more overseas galleries will participate in future editions and that the fair will continue to develop'*

**Yoshiko Mori, Chairperson of the Mori Art Museum** said: *'All the booths were spacious, open and very easy to see, and the atmosphere at the preview was very positive; it was a pleasure to see many visitors from overseas, especially from neighboring Asia. It was great to see galleries from overseas, such as Sadie Coles HQ and Josh Lilley exhibiting at the fair. I also felt that the Japanese galleries brought forth a number of very talented artists.'*

**Mami Kataoka, Director of the Mori Art Museum** says: *'Perhaps because of the spatial composition at Tokyo Gendai, or because of the presence of overseas galleries, there was an atmosphere reminiscent of other international art fairs. There is a thirst for international events in Japan, and I hope that fairs will take root here and that contemporary art will be widely promoted among the general public.'*

**Chomwan Weeraworawit, curator of Bangkok Art Biennale** says: *'Tokyo Gendai is a well curated fair with a real focus on quality. I loved the multiple access points to the art and the very human approach of all the galleries.'*



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**Linda Neo, collector and founder of Primz Gallery in Singapore** says: *'The inaugural Tokyo Gendai was greeted with enthusiasm and excitement. Collaborative ventures between private stakeholders were strong and Japanese logistical excellence was not lacking. Visitors were treated to great Japanese hospitality and peripheral art programmes showcased both traditional Japanese culture and architecture, as well as introducing fresh artworks by emerging artists.'*

**Thomas Shao, collector and Founder and CEO of Meta Media** says: *'The first Tokyo Gendai is really excellent. Tokyo Gendai fuses international and local art; bringing audiences from all over the world, serving as a platform for international galleries introducing international artists to Japan, as well as for local Japanese galleries showcasing local artists to an international audience. Galleries presented multi-dimensional works ranging from traditional Japanese cultural motifs, characteristics, and aesthetics, to deep reflections on various social topics, to iconic Japanese pop cultural references. Both international and Chinese galleries seemed to be very optimistic and encouraged by the expanding Japanese market.'*

**Shane Akeroyd, collector and founder of the Akeroyd Collection** says: *'Tokyo Gendai was a fantastic opportunity to see both standout international galleries and to discover local Japanese galleries. It was extremely well attended and served as a meeting point for collectors, both from Japan and around the rest of the world. I was impressed by the quantity of events in and around the fair, bringing everyone together to explore Japan's vibrant art scene. The Japanese economy is in great shape and presented a perfect moment to launch a new fair.'*

**Takahashi Ryutaro, Founder of the Takahashi Ryutaro Collection** says: *'For the first time in a long time, I felt that a Japanese art fair had reached international standards. Tomoko Mukaiyama's performance on the 7th July was also a wonderful experience.'*

## SALES HIGHLIGHTS

Strong sales took place throughout the fair week, with some of the reported sales including: **Sundaram Tagore Gallery** sold a work by Hiroshi Senju, priced at USD 645,000 to the Hirosawa Museum collection; **Almine Rech** sold works by Tom Wesselmann ranging between USD 425,000 - 460,000, a work by Chloe Wise for USD 101,000 - 110,000, and a work by Alexandre Lenoir for USD 109,000 - 120,000; **Blum & Poe** sold works by Yoshitomo Nara, Kazunori Hamana and Kenjiro Okasaki, for prices between USD 20,000 - USD 400,000; **Fitzpatrick Gallery** sold a work by Jill Mulleady for over JPY 50,000,000; **Sadie Coles HQ** sold works by Alex de Corte, Wilhelm Sasnal, Kati Heck and Nicola Tyson ranging between USD 5,000 - 200,000; **Perrotin** largely sold out their booth by the end of the first day, with works by Mathilde Denize, for prices up to EUR 30,000, and Toh Djodjo, for prices up to USD 20,000. **Carl KOSTYÀL** sold out their booth of works by Marria Pratts ranging from EUR 30,000 - 50,000. **Hillside Gallery** sold six works by Shinya Sato at around USD 30,000 and three works by Masaru Shichinohe at around USD 40,000 on the first day; **Kaikai Kiki** sold out all works by Mr; **Ceysson & Bénétière** sold six works by Claude Viallat ranging from USD 10,000 - 30,000 to collectors from France, China, the United States, Korea and



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Singapore. In addition, the large-scale installation by Ryuichi Ohira created specially for Tokyo Gendai and displayed at the center of the fair was also sold by **NANZUKA** to a Japanese collector.

## GALLERY RESPONSE

The fair welcomed 73 international galleries to the fair, several of whom were showing work in Japan for the first time. The fair comprised a main **Galleries** Sector presenting leading galleries from Japan and around the world as well as three dedicated sections. These included **Hana** (meaning 'flower'), featuring one or two artists at an early or mid-stage in their careers; **Eda** (meaning 'branch'), dedicated to a solo or two artist presentation by established or historically significant figures in Asia or to a thematic exhibition; and **Tane** (meaning 'seed'), focusing on digital media including NFTs, animation, film, AR, VR and gaming.

Galleries exhibiting across all sectors of the fair applauded the launch edition:

**Tim Blum, Co-Founder Blum & Poe (Los Angeles, New York, Tokyo)** says: *'I've been very impressed with how in a relatively short period of time in an already very crowded art calendar, Tokyo Gendai pulled off a beautifully designed, well-constructed fair with an excellent group of both local, regional and international galleries. We had excellent overall sales, both domestically and regionally.'*

**John O'Doherty, Director, Sadie Coles HQ (London)** says: *'The fair provided an excellent opportunity to strengthen our relationships with existing clients as well as introduce our program to an emerging class of new collectors in Japan.'*

**Masami Shiraishi, Director, SCAI The Bathhouse (Tokyo)** says: *'It was really interesting to see the same space 30 years after the last international art fair. Things have really changed since then, and the number of globally recognised artists being shown has grown hugely, making this event a major international phenomenon. I have high expectations for the future of the fair.'*

**Sundaram Tagore, President & Curator, Sundaram Tagore Gallery (New York, Singapore, London)** said: *'It was very exciting to be at Tokyo Gendai. I've been coming to Tokyo since 1993, but this is the first time we were able to show our artists and to represent one of the most internationally famous Japanese artists (Hiroshi Senju). We are absolutely thrilled that Hirosawa Museum has bought this truly museum quality piece.'*

**Maho Kubota, Founder of Maho Kubota Gallery (Tokyo)** says: *'This has been our most successful fair ever. As it is the first edition we wanted to make the best possible presentation with sought-after artists from our gallery program. At the same time, I'm very happy that visitors to this fair are eager to discover something new, and to get a deeper understanding of the art at the fair and the artists' rich insights.'*



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**Junko Shimada, Director, Gallery Side 2 (Tokyo)** says: *'It is really impressive that this contemporary art fair is happening in Japan because we have not had something similar for more than 30 years. People seemed to enjoy the fair, and it feels like it has helped with opening up the local mentality too, which we are pleased with.'*

**Stephanie Vaillant, Senior Director, Perrotin Tokyo** says: *'We found Tokyo Gendai to be energetic, successful, and well attended by both local and regional collectors, institutions, and professionals. It was a good opportunity to introduce the artists we presented to a larger audience and to gauge the market. We were pleased to have been able to establish connections with new clients and hope that the special measures that Tokyo Gendai was able to provide will continue and help the Japanese art scene to further diversify and flourish.'*

**Joeonna Bellorado-Samuels, Senior Director, Jack Shainman Gallery (New York)** says: *'As Tokyo Gendai comes to a close, we feel as though we were able to introduce ourselves to an exciting new mix of collectors, curators and critics. We also had the pleasure of spending quality time with those who we have existing relationships with. The energy of the fair was palpable and one could feel that the city was ready and excited for what Gendai is bringing. We were also able to place works with notable collections in Japan and the surrounding region.'*

**Almine Rech, Director, Almine Rech (Paris, London, New York, Shanghai)** says: *'The first day was particularly successful, with some strong sales confirmed in the first hour of the fair. It was very busy and we met a lot of new Japanese and Asian collectors. There was a good energy, and people felt enthusiastic. It is a promising first edition.'*

**Robert Okuda Fitzpatrick, Owner / Director, Fitzpatrick Gallery (Paris)** says: *'It was our first time doing a fair in Asia, and I was very impressed by the caliber of people that we met, including some very interesting local collectors. But, more importantly, we were impressed by the number of museum curators that came by and expressed interest in learning more about the artist we showed (Jill Mulleady), whose work they may have seen before but were otherwise unfamiliar with. For us, this was a great introduction to Japan, with a strong curatorial audience.'*

**Masahiro Maki, Director of Maki Gallery (Tokyo)** said: *'It was great to see new and existing collectors coming together at the fair. Collectors from Taiwan, Macau, Singapore, Korea, and beyond came to make purchases. It's satisfying to know that collectors who were new to Japan responded so well, 90% of works on the booth have sold already.'*

**Jason Hwang, High Art (Paris)** says: *'Our experience in Tokyo has been very productive. In the last two years, we have begun to work with Japanese artists, and we hope to work with more in the next few years, so we are very happy that Tokyo Gendai has happened.'*

**Steven Lee, Managing Director, Asia Art Center (Taipei)** says: *'It's been a great pleasure taking part in the first edition of Tokyo Gendai where we met many Japanese and international collectors'*



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*who are passionate about art and have shown enormous interest in our artists' work – we very much look forward to Tokyo Gendai 2024.'*

**Loic Garrier, Director of Ceysson and Bénétière (Paris)** says: *'It was a really good fair for us. We have had sales and have made connections with museums and institutions from Japan and the wider region. We hope to get more recognition in the region.'*

## PROGRAM & SATELLITE EVENTS

The fair program included **Tsubomi 'Flower Bud'** showcasing a special exhibition spotlighting the work of major Japanese women artists; the premier of a newly commissioned installation performance "figurante" by **Tomoko Mukaiyama**, an **Art Talks** program of conversations with leading lights from Japan's creative community, the NE section (meaning 'root') presenting several leading local foundations, who host special showcases of their work; satellite exhibitions at renowned local institutions such as the **Mori Art Museum; The National Art Center, Tokyo,** and **Artizon Museum.**

The week around the fair featured a series of special events, exhibitions and gallery evenings that encouraged Tokyo Gendai visitors to immerse themselves in the local culture of Japan including a special open gallery evening on 5 July **'YUKATA de ART'** where visitors were invited to enjoy the buzzing galleries of Roppongi, a district in Tokyo known for its exciting cultural scene. Meanwhile **TERRADA ART COMPLEX**, one of Japan's most significant art complexes and home to numerous leading art galleries, hosted a series of special programs, **TERRADA ART WEEK**, including **Gallery Night** on 7 July.

Tokyo Gendai was supported by a grant from the Japan Tourism Agency which went towards a bespoke VIP program of unique experiences highlighting cultural havens around Japan including special events within the city of Tokyo, Yokohama, Kyoto, including a visit to the **Sankeien Garden**, and the **BankArt Station + KAIKO**, as well as Kanagawa's **Odawara Art Foundation Enoura Observatory**. This marks the first step in Tokyo Gendai's collaboration with the Japan Tourism Agency, to warmly welcome the global art community and support the development of cultural tourism in various regions of the country.

## NOTES TO EDITORS

### Media contact:

Polly Brock

[media@theartassembly.com](mailto:media@theartassembly.com)

**Tokyo Gendai**



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Launched in 2023, Tokyo Gendai is a new art fair and meeting place for the international art world, organized by the Art Assembly. Taking place in one of the most dynamic and active art and design scenes in the world, the Fair is an exciting platform for commercial, artistic and intellectual exchange, and a nexus of cross-cultural discovery. Tokyo Gendai is a world class event showcasing curated presentations by internationally recognised contemporary artists. The Fair is accompanied by an extensive VIP program of exhibition and museum openings, studio visits and cultural experiences allowing visitors to explore the very best that Tokyo has to offer.

## **Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group, Inc.**

The companies of Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group primarily conduct commercial banking through the following financial services: leasing, securities, consumer finance, system development data processing, and asset management.

## **The Art Assembly**

The Art Assembly is an affiliation of major international art fairs with a particular focus on the Asia Pacific region comprising Taipei Dangdai, India Art Fair, Sydney Contemporary, PHOTOFAIRS Shanghai, ART SG and Tokyo Gendai. It represents a joint initiative between three of the world's leading art fair organizers headed by Sandy Angus, Tim Etchells and Magnus Renfrew.

The Assembly's member fairs provide an important meeting place for the local and international art worlds and act as regional focal points for creative and commercial exchange. Informed by a deep-rooted understanding of the local market, each event is tailored to its unique orientation.

The Art Assembly aims to drive innovation, deepen engagement with contemporary art and encourage cross-cultural conversations. It achieves this by strengthening collaboration and promoting knowledge and resource sharing across the group. The Assembly pulls together decades' worth of experience, expertise, and an extensive global network of contacts and assets, to the benefit of its member fairs, galleries and audiences. [theartassembly.com](https://theartassembly.com)

