

Aichi Triennale 2022 at halfway point. Words from Curatorial Team



Installation views at Aichi Triennale 2022, AKI INOMATA *Passing her a piece of cloth* (2022) ©Aichi Triennale Organizing Committee Photo: ToLoLo studio

Sept 2nd, 2022, Aichi, Japan - The **Aichi Triennale 2022** is at the halfway point and has attracted more than 170,000 visitors in total since its opening on July 30th, 2022. The fifth edition of Aichi Triennale is led by the Artistic Director **Kataoka Mami** (Director, Mori Art Museum / President, CIMAM), and goes on till **October 10, 2022**. The title as well as its theme **STILL ALIVE** was inspired by the artwork series *I Am Still Alive* by the Aichi-born conceptual artist **On Kawara**. Total of **100 artists/groups** hail from **32 countries/regions** spread across the five continents*: **Asia Pacific (Japan 38, South East Asia 8, Oceania 8, West Asia 1), Europe (17), North America (15), South America (8), and Africa (4)**. More than half of the overseas artists exhibited their works for **the first time in Japan**. In the contemporary art section, **49 artists/groups** including **Anne Imhof, Theaster Gates** and **Delcy Morelos**, were commissioned to create new works for the Aichi Triennale 2022. While **55 artists** are based outside of Japan, **27 artists/groups** managed to come to Aichi to create their works despite the strict Japanese border control due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, ticket sales for performing arts have been strong including **Steve Reich *Special Concert*** and **John Cage *Europemas 3&4*** which were well received. From Oct 4th, **Apichatpong Weerasethakul** will show his first VR performance and let visitors commune with invisible ghost-like presences.

*One artist does not specify the region.

Artist list

Full list of the artist and their biographies are available [here](#).

Official Guide Map

Official Guide Map can be downloaded [here](#) [10.4MB]. This map is a handy guide to help you prepare your visit to Aichi Triennale 2022. We have put together recommended routes for the Contemporary Art Exhibition in each of the venues. It will take 3 days to fully cover the exhibition.

Media Coverage

Ocula - [The 5th Aichi Triennale Is a Reminder to Keep Living](#)

The Art Newspaper - [爱知三年展“依然活着”：能与不确定的现实对抗的只有诗与想象](#)

Frieze - [The Aichi Triennale Tracks the Heartbeat of Post-Pandemic Possibility](#)

Artforum 艺术论坛 - [我在“正常”的日本](#)

Social media accounts

Official accounts:

Aichi Triennale 2022 Official [Facebook@Aichi2022](#), [Twitter@Aichi2022](#), [Instagram@aichi2022](#)

Instagram official hashtags [#aichitriennale2022](#) [#あいち2022](#) [#stillalive](#)

Nice to see:

Mami Kataoka [Instagram](#) / Rhana Devenport [Instagram](#) / Theaster Gates [Instagram](#).

We'd like to share the words from the curatorial advisers and the curators of the Aichi Triennale 2022 on how they approached the theme STILL ALIVE and their impression of the show.

Words from the curatorial advisers and the curators

Kataoka Mami, Artistic Director [Director, Mori Art Museum / President, CIMAM] says - “Working as the artistic director of Aichi Triennale 2022, I realized that I myself wanted to see how art can contribute to the world to survive this era. Each work of art gives me a tremendous amount of power and I am happy to be able to show it to you. After being assigned, I started with the question, ‘Is it possible to have an international art festival when we can't travel abroad?’ Consequently I sort of ‘curated the curators’ from across five continents whom I respect and have admired for a long time. This curatorial team suggested the artists whose work responds to the theme STILL ALIVE. Among the over 300 candidates, I weaved a story and made the final selection of 100 artists/groups. Walking through the exhibition, artists have presented works that far exceeded what I had imagined. It was as if what each curator had in mind was woven into the warp and weft of the story, crossing over the venues. By seeing the exhibition over and over again, I am sure you will see the connections between the various works. You will hear the messages from some unfamiliar or deceased artists. I hope that you will take the time to enjoy the festival and find out what STILL ALIVE means to each of you.”

Rhana Devenport, Curatorial Adviser [Director, Art Gallery of South Australia] says - “For projects of this scale and ambition, the ultimate challenge is to ensure both the project's poetic charge and its acute relevancy to its time. The Aichi Triennale 2022 has achieved both. When Mami first shared her curatorial ideas, I immediately considered the radical insistence of Aboriginal Australian artists. They undertook the journey of determination towards political justice and recognition within a frame of deep time. As I witness the work of the 100 artists, what has moved me is the ebb and flow across artworks. I expected to

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see much great art, yet three things have surprised me: First thing is the stretch of time. The spirits of those who have gone before and their works are still an active force and resonate at play in the world. Secondly, I found the conversations. Thrilling calls and responses between works, between the concentric woven natural fibers and the architectonic and coordinologist gestures. The third is the shape of space. The poly spatial aspect of projects set up new propositions of site and meaning. In some ways STILL ALIVE may be the motif for any thoughtful gathering of art, actions and experiences. Despite the pandemic, despite the maelstrom of global tensions, and despite the heat, these works in totality register a celebration of the possibility of art as an act of living.

Martin Germann, Curatorial Adviser [Independent Curator] says - “I remember that it was a relatively warm winter day in Germany when I was told about the theme, STILL ALIVE. There are so many approaches to think about this theme. From the survival of humanity on the earth that is obviously destroying itself, to the way each singular individual lives in his or her personal life. Thinking of how I personally encounter art, I noticed that STILL ALIVE should be art itself. In respect to my recommendations one approach was that their work is showing a presence here and at the same time as reminders of other places in the world. In general this is an outstanding edition of the Aichi Triennale. The whole exhibition functions as one body, whispering, shouting, tender, soft, and hard. The exhibition is very political in its belief in the poetic. It is a sign of trust in art that art can make a huge change. There is a lot of hope. There is no cynical approach, but a very applauding approach, which is very beautiful.”

Tobias Ostrander, Curatorial Adviser [Independent Curator] says - “It is a very interesting time globally to think about what it means to be alive. For me, when I think of On Kawara’s articulation of time with the artwork *I Am Still Alive*, I am intrigued by the telegram format he used. Telegrams are used to relay historical events, such as ‘my child is born’ or ‘war breaks out,’ and as such address historical time. The message ‘I AM STILL ALIVE,’ also addresses morality, and thus speaks to physical time. Interestingly with telegrams there is also a discrepancy built into them, between the time of the sender and that of the receiver. So I approached the selection of artists thinking about these discrepancies between historical time and physical time. I thought of artists who play with slippages of time, bringing the past into the present in unusual ways. And artworks that address time beyond human experience, or explore the body’s ways of processing time. My first impression of the show is how beautifully ‘sited’ every work is- they all feel so perfectly placed in dialogue to where they are exhibited. With each exhibition context, from the white cube galleries of the Aichi Arts Center, to the off-site buildings, the historical narratives and conceptual contexts of each space emerges strongly in dialogue with the artworks. It is a Triennial that feels very ‘embodied’ as well, that our physical selves are sensorially activated by the artworks, as another way of addressing being alive. Overall, it is an ardent, poetic project that seems to say: ‘There’s no time for cynicism or irony in these difficult times, rather it is important to celebrate what it means to be alive.’”

Ralph Rugoff, Curatorial Adviser [Director, Hayward Gallery] says -”This third year of the pandemic is a timely moment to consider the work of artists who address not only our complex relationships with large-scale social and political concerns, but who also explore ways in which we can creatively confront and engage with the trauma caused by crises of one kind or another. As one of the curatorial advisors to this Aichi Triennale, I was especially interested in artists whose work forges tools that can be critical for acts of repair and recovery – both for individuals and larger social groups alike. Far from being blandly therapeutic, however, the work of artists like Kader Attia, Kate Cooper and Mohammed Sami often

functions to create something like a crisis - a disturbance of our conventional ways of seeing and thinking. But while it explores 'difficult' subjects and deals with material that makes us uncomfortable, this work offers important avenues of repair by prompting us to explore alternative circuits of connection between things, by inciting more inclusive and layered conversations, and encouraging us to work through our fears to open our hearts."

Shimabuku, Curatorial Adviser [Artist] says - "Even though I knew that STILL ALIVE is the title of On Kawara's work, it sounded ironic to me, personally. This is because I am STILL ALIVE and coming to terms with the successive loss of several people close to me. That was my first impression. After a while, I began to think that people who are dead are actually also ALIVE. Works created long ago are STILL ALIVE. So I strongly felt that I should be conscious of works by deceased artists and other old works. I also pondered why was it that I was chosen as a curatorial advisor when I am an artist who participated in the first edition of the Aichi Triennale and I live in Japan. I decided to choose an artist whom Kataoka probably did not know. I was happy when she told me that she did not know most of them. In the end, I felt relieved that many foreign artists could come to Aichi to physically create their works despite the pandemic. As a result, I think they made the exhibition come ALIVE."

Iida Shihoko, Chief Curator [Independent Curator] says - "I proposed artists to stitch between the other curators' ideas. I thought about life, physicality, decay, and the existence and extinction of the body. Besides realizing Kataoka's vision, I am also faced with the proposition of how to sustain the Aichi Triennale itself. I first got involved as a curator in 2013, then as the chief curator in 2019, and now in this edition. STILL ALIVE is a theme that not only confronts us human beings but is also pertinent for the festival itself. Lewis Biggs, my colleague curator of the Aichi Triennale 2013, says that the significance of an art festival is to 'measure the time.' What we should do now and how the festival can contribute to society in the long term. Simryn Gill is not a participating artist but I have often recalled what she once said in an interview article '(it's a politics of) how we can be political without being political.' And this attitude can be felt throughout the exhibition. As I move from one venue to another, I find myself revising the theme STILL ALIVE over and over again from different angles."

Nakamura Fumiko, Curator of Contemporary Art [Senior Curator, Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art] says - "I had a positive and cheerful impression of the theme STILL ALIVE. I felt faith in art and in creation. What I had in mind was to prepare and run the exhibition through a healthy process. The art industry is often criticized for its poor working environment. I aimed to build up the exhibition with a hale and hearty environment. While selecting artists, I was interested in art brut and outsider art, so I recommended artists based in welfare facilities. *I Am Still Alive*, by On Kawara is proof of survival. For those who are in the welfare facilities, creating a work is a pleasure and a joy, as well as a connection to society. Their works are also proof of their survival. As the Aichi Triennale unites plastic arts with music, performance, or traditional crafts, I was glad to introduce these art brut works while maintaining a reasonable distance between them."

Tsutsumi Takuya, Curator of Contemporary Art [Independent Curator / Graphic Designer] says - "When I first heard about the theme STILL ALIVE, I wasn't yet appointed and learnt about it through some news posts. Honestly, I thought it is a very smart and clever theme. It immediately evoked three layers in my mind: First, the Aichi-born artist On Kawara. Second, the pandemic that caused the cancellation of my curatorial jobs and is still having a great impact on the world. Third, the Aichi Triennale's determination

to continue the event despite the last edition. In line with the artistic director's concept, I primarily proposed young Japanese artists to the team. I was also in charge of setting up works outside the museum. In particular, in the Bisai area which is on the west side of Ichinomiya city. All artists displayed in that area happen to be female. Coincidentally, this area is a place where young female workers were collectively employed to work for the textile industry. This is an interesting connection for me."

Fujii Akiko, Performing Arts Adviser [Producer, Aichi Prefectural Art Theater] says - "I felt that the theme STILL ALIVE coincides with a time when people are actually greeting each other to establish that they are doing fine despite the pandemic. The theme will interest even those who do not usually come into contact with the arts or theaters. I thought of artists who deal with words and performances in different forms such as voice, music, and poetry. Their works give us a sense of being alive and are a response to life. I receive their works with my body and with a sense of reality. They remind me of things that I knew but have forgotten. A sense of buried sensations comes back to life. Aichi Triennale is a great chance to experience various physical senses responding to both performing arts and contemporary art."

Maeda Keizo, Performing Arts Adviser [Art Producer] says - "The theme for the 2013 edition was Awakening, provoked from the Tohoku earthquake in 2011. I think the earth is still shaking and the hard time is still continuing. I am pleased to be able to feature Steve Reich, with whom I have worked for many years. Although he is not visiting Japan, he responded vividly to the theme STILL ALIVE and was very impressed that his piece is being performed. During the days when I was preparing for the show, I suddenly saw a blue sky from the theater window and thought of the air raid on Nagoya in World War II. A burnt-out Nagoya immediately came to mind on its own. With the presence of the art festival, the usual scenery of the city took on a different aspect, as if in a flashback. I felt that this might be one of the meanings of holding an art festival."

Soma Chiaki, Curator of Performing Arts [Art Producer / Representative Director, Arts Commons Tokyo] says - "When I heard the theme STILL ALIVE, I felt it was about myself. My core pursuit was to rebuild the Aichi Triennale from the last edition. In a catalog, I wrote: 'There is no such thing as art that won't hurt anyone. If so, then perhaps there is no such thing as an art festival that never hurts anyone either. Let us hope that at the end of this long Passion Play, a true reopening/reunion (both words read Saikai in Japanese) will quietly begin.' Theaters and museums were closed because of the pandemic, and a new interpretation of reopening/reunion emerged for me. Projecting the fact that 50 years have passed since On Kawara had started his *I Am Still Alive* series on the history of conceptual art, we have brought that era into the present. We are using VR to provide a physical experience for the audience even if the artist cannot be present. I also wondered about the 'I am' part of the telegram. Atsushi Watanabe's I am here project focuses on those who cannot come to museums or any public spaces. People who have been made invisible by modern circumstances. The expression of 'I am' of these people will be visualized in the exhibition. In addition, the 'I am' of non-human beings will be summoned into the museum through performing arts."

Aida Daiya, Curator of Learning [Artistic Director, Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media (YCAM)] says - "When I heard about the theme STILL ALIVE, it reminded me of the 800 volunteers. Forty to fifty percent of them are newcomers to the organization, which has been in existence since Expo 2005 in Aichi. I referred to the visual thinking method developed at MoMA in the 1980s and 90s. It originated from the hypothesis that it is possible to weave a context through the creativity of the non-professionals,

general viewers beside the historical context of the art. Volunteers have received this training and it is very impressive to see how they learn this method. As the exhibition opens, I feel that the creativity of the viewers will begin to flourish. I believe that artists are the initiators, and art is only possible when the viewers are present and they speak about it. Viewers attach various contexts to art. I look forward to seeing people spin a story about their personal life, and hearing a unique story that I could never have imagined.”

Yamamoto Takayuki, Curator of Learning [Artist / Co-Director, School in Progress / Director, Ongoing School] says - “In putting together the learning programs for the Aichi Triennale, I wondered what kind of preparation is needed for the viewers and local people, how can the learning programs can contribute to the 12-year old Aichi Triennale to be STILL ALIVE after the 2019 edition. So I planned a lecture series to think about what an art festival is, led by specialists in various fields such as sociology, urbanism, and history. In addition, I organized long-term research projects on the uniqueness of the Aichi prefecture. Artists and local participants spent several months conducting multi-faceted research from historical, cultural, and sociological perspectives. Their results are exhibited as a part of the Aichi Triennale. I have run these projects since last summer as a preparatory exercise to welcome the art festival. As the Aichi Triennale is an art ‘festival’, I want the festival to be loved for a long time and continue to inspire the locals to look forward to it.”

Artistic Director: Kataoka Mami

[Director, Mori Art Museum / President CIMAM] Kataoka Mami joined Mori Art Museum (Tokyo, Japan) in 2003, and assumed the position of Director in 2020. Prior to that, she was Chief Curator at Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery (1997-2002; Japan); International Curator at the Hayward Gallery (2007-2009; London, UK); Co-Artistic Director for the 9th Gwangju Biennale (2012; South Korea); and Artistic Director of the 21st Biennale of Sydney (2018; Australia). Since 2014 she has served as a Board Member of CIMAM (International Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern Art) and is currently the President (2020-2022).

The Aichi Triennale

The Aichi Triennale is an urban international art festival, held every three years since 2010 across a wide region including the Aichi Arts Center and other city venues. The festival spans a wide range of fields, synthetically exhibiting performing art and other forms together with a contemporary art core, and make Aichi Prefecture a beacon of the artistic avant-garde.

Press Release

Check the [Press Releases](#) for complete information of the Aichi Triennale 2022.

Press Contact / Image Request

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