

Commemorating the 1st “MIMOCA EYE” Grand-Prize Winner
Akane Saijo – Double Touch

Sun. 26 January 2025 - Sun. 30 March 2025

[Presenting a Solo Exhibition of Extraordinary Emerging Artist Akane Saijo]



Akane Saijo, *The Melting Laborers #4*, 2024
Photo: Takeru Koroda

Exhibition title	Commemorating the 1st “MIMOCA EYE” Grand-Prize Winner Akane Saijo – Double Touch
Date	Sun. 26 January 2025 – Sun. 30 March 2025
Closed	Mondays (except 24 February), Tue. 25 February
Venue	2F Gallery B, 1F Entrance Hall

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— About the exhibition

The public entry exhibition “MIMOCA EYE” began in 2022 as a venue for young artists to showcase their unique talents. We are pleased to present a solo exhibition of Akane Saijo (1989-), grand-prize winner in the 1st “MIMOCA EYE” exhibition.

Saijo creates organically shaped clay sculptures, using them to produce moments when viewers grow viscerally aware of their own and other people’s bodies. Struck by how pottery’s hollows resemble the hollow spaces in the human body, she in recent years has sought to extend her body by connecting it with her works. This she does

by sculpting shapes suggestive of the body and its organs and holding performances of blowing breath and sound into their hollows. Hoping to examine more deeply the boundary between artwork and body, this exhibition will additionally feature glass works produced through a process of blowing air into their interior. Making ceramics means touching the clay with hands, shaping it with hand movements, and leaving hand marks on its surface. Hence, Saijo views ceramics as a practice of being viscerally aware of one’s body and enabling communication between oneself and the world. In performances, she has newly introduced the act of transport to explore the kinds of communication possible between the artwork and the body, between the interacting bodies of people lifting and carrying, and their bodies and the physical surroundings.



Akane Saijo, *The Planets*, 2024 Photo : Takeru Koroda

Introducing “MIMOCA EYE”

“Art is an answer to the questions of that era, and artists have a responsibility to think about how to express their time. This is contemporary art. I would like this art museum to be a venue for artworks that emerge from the most important and most difficult undertaking—to orient oneself to the future and discover things not yet existing.”

Guided by these words from Genichiro Inokuma, MIMOCA launched the public entry exhibition “MIMOCA EYE” in 2022. It serves as a platform for young artists who will shape the future, offering opportunities for them to explore new modes of expression while reflecting deeply on their time and letting their talents soar to new heights.



“MIMOCA EYE” Combination Logo

— About Akane Saijo

Akane Saijo

Akane Saijo (b.1989) earned an MFA from Kyoto City University of Arts, where she majored in ceramics, in 2014. In 2013 she participated in an exchange program at the Royal College of Art, London, and in fiscal 2020 she was awarded the Kyoto City Special Bounty Program for Art and Culture. Her recent works consist of ceramic sculptures and performances that imbue these sculptures with life and voice. Saijo focuses on physicality, inspired by the hollow interiors and glossy surfaces that are key characteristics of ceramics. Her practice also involves participating in artist residencies at kilns worldwide, and producing works inspired by local legends and historical narratives from these sites.



Akane Saijo

Points

Supporting Emerging Artists

“Supporting emerging artists” was cited by Genichiro Inokuma, who played a major role in founding MIMOCA, as one of the museum’s crucial missions. In keeping with this ethos, in 2022 the museum launched “MIMOCA EYE,” a public entry exhibition for artists aged 35 and under. This exhibition features Akane Saijo, the grand-prize winner at the first exhibition, who has been gaining recognition for her extraordinary works in recent years.

The Artist’s First Solo Museum Exhibition

One requirement for “MIMOCA EYE” applicants is having had no prior solo museum exhibitions. Meanwhile, to propel artists’ creative development, the grand prize includes the opportunity for a solo exhibition at MIMOCA. Two years after winning this exhibition’s first grand prize, Saijo presents a long-anticipated solo show that incorporates her experiences since receiving the award.

All New Works

In keeping with the mission of “MIMOCA EYE,” Saijo has taken this exhibition as a chance for artistic growth and created an entirely new body of work. Having thoroughly considered what she aims to express, delved more deeply into her existing interests, and explored new directions, she presents these works at MIMOCA in a spare, unadorned space that highlights their true value.

Performance

A defining feature of Saijo’s practice is her integration of performance with ceramic works. She engages in dialogues with the material while creating ceramics, which after being fired and displayed, are breathed into or carried by performers in actions that give rise to relationships between performer and work or elicit interpersonal interaction. This exhibition includes videos documenting these performances, as well as live performances, creating spaces for spontaneous communication through living bodies, including the audience.



Akane Saijo, *The Planets*, 2024
Photo : Takeru Koroda



Akane Saijo, *The Melting Laborers #4*, 2024
Photo : Takeru Koroda



Akane Saijo, *The Melting Laborers #3*, 2024
Photo : Takeru Koroda

— Hours & Admissions

Exhibition title	Commemorating the 1st “MIMOCA EYE” Grand-Prize Winner Akane Saijo – Double Touch
Organized by	Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art, The MIMOCA Foundation
In cooperation	Shigaraki Share Studio General Incorporated Association, Kurashiki University of Science and The Arts, Marumasu Pottery Manufacture LLC, BLUM Los Angeles, Tokyo, New York
Venue	2F Gallery B, 1F Entrance Hall
Date	Sun. 26 January 2025 - Sun. 30 March 2025
Hours	10:00 - 18:00 (Admission until 30 minutes before closing time)
Closed	Mondays (except 24 February) , 25 February
Admission	Adults ¥950, Students (college, university) ¥650, Children (0 years to highschool) free *Ticket valid for admission to concurrent special exhibition and the permanent collection.

Concurrent Exhibition

Special exhibition “Genichiro Inokuma: Foundations of a life in painting-from art school to France”

Venue : 3F Gallery C

Permanent collection “Genichiro Inokuma: Play in three dimensions”

Venue : 2F Gallery A

— Related Programs

Artist Talk

On the exhibition's opening day, Akane Saijo will give a talk on her creative process and approach to the exhibition.

Date and Time : Sun. 26 January 2025, 14:00- / Venue : 2F Museum Hall

Capacity : 170 people / Admission: Free

Performance

Multiple performers will interact with Saijo's ceramic works through breath and movement, generating spontaneous communication among the works, performers, and audience.

Date and Time : Sat. 1 February, 2025 14:00-, Sun. 2 February, 2025 11:00-,14:00-

Venue : 2F Gallery B

Admission free, but Special exhibition admission ticket required.

No application required, please gather in the 2F Gallery B on the day.

MIMOCA Family Day

Up to two adults will be admitted free with each high school or lower grade student, or visitor aged 18 or younger. Sat. 1, Sun. 2 February 2025, 10:00-18:00

Workshop

Saijo will lead a workshop in which participants can handle the works, fostering communication through tactile engagement.

Teacher : Akane Saijo

Date : Sat. 15, Sun. 16 February 2025 / Time : undecided / Venue : 2F Gallery B

*Details and how to apply will be announced on the museum's website as soon as decided.

Curator Talk

The exhibition's lead curator (Madoka Matsumura) will discuss its highlights in the galleries.

Date : Sun. 2 March 2025, 14:00-

Admission free, but Special exhibition admission ticket required. No application required, please gather in front of the 1st floor reception on the day.

*Other related programs will be announced on the Museum's website as soon as they are confirmed.

— Exhibitions in 2025

We are pleased to announce the exhibitions scheduled to be held in the first half of fiscal year 2025.

“EXPO INOKUMA”

Date : Sat. 12 April 2025 - Sun. 6 July 2025

“Shinro Ohtake: Ratina”

Date : Fri. 1 August 2025 - Mon. 24 November 2025

— Images for Press Use

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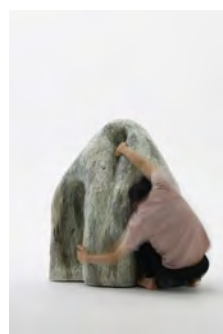
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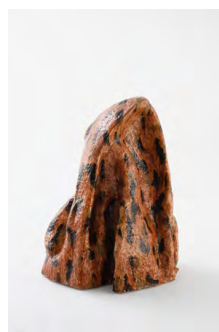
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01-07 Akane Saijo, *The Melting Laborers #3*, 2024 Photo: Takeru Koroda

08-11 Akane Saijo, *The Melting Laborers #4*, 2024 Photo: Takeru Koroda

12-14 Akane Saijo, *The Planets*, 2024 Photo: Takeru Koroda

15 Akane Saijo

About MIMOCA

Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art

The Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art (MIMOCA) was opened November 23, 1991 as a project commemorating the 90th anniversary of the city of Marugame, Kagawa Prefecture and with the full cooperation of the artist Genichiro Inokuma, who spent his youth in and around Marugame. The beautiful station-front museum designed by architect Yoshio Taniguchi has a permanent collection introducing some 20,000 works personally donated by Inokuma and holds special exhibitions focusing primarily on contemporary art. A diverse program of lectures, concerts, and other events, including workshops to foster sensitivity and creativity among children, are part of the Museum's dedication to education.

These features of the Museum are the result of discussions held by Inokuma with the city of Marugame. It was Inokuma's fervent wish that MIMOCA be a facility for contemporary art that would actively introduce new art. The sunlight-filled and spacious spaces of the building fulfill the aspiration architect Taniguchi shared with Inokuma for beautiful spaces in an art museum. Inokuma also wanted to encourage opportunities to expose children to art, advocating free admittance to the Museum for children and proposing the establishment of the "Creative Studio" space for children.

Inokuma wanted the Museum to be a place people would visit frequently. The experience of beautiful spaces and the sight of quality works of art are the source, he believed, of the fresh and exhilarating stimuli that is healthy and energizing. He even thought of MIMOCA as a kind of "health resort for the spirit." We hope everyone will think of MIMOCA, which embodies the ideals Inokuma held dear, as that kind of "resort" for mind and spirit.



Photo by Yoshiro Masuda



Photo by Akira Takahashi

On the founding of the Museum

I am delighted that the Museum has been built in Marugame, the place that is associated with many vivid memories of my youth. Specializing in contemporary art, the Museum is unique in Japan and has been realized with the support of all the citizens of Marugame. I hope the Museum will help the city as a whole to become a rich cultural environment.

Genichiro Inokuma 1991

[Access] 1 min. walk from Marugame Sta.

