

## Special exhibition “EXPO INOKUMA” Announcing a special media briefing and tour



MIMOCA exterior Photo: Yoshiro Masuda

The Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art (MIMOCA) will hold a media briefing on February 12 (Wed), and run a media bus tour on February 13 (Thu), ahead of the “EXPO INOKUMA” exhibition opening on April 12 (Sat) 2025. Members of the media are cordially invited to join us for these events.

<b>Exhibition title</b>	EXPO INOKUMA
<b>Media briefing</b>	February 12 (Wed) 2025, 13:30-16:00 Venue: MIMOCA 2F Museum Hall
<b>Media bus tour</b>	February 13 (Thu) 2025, 8:45-16:45 Stops: The Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum Japan, Shikoku Mura Museum, Kagawa Prefectural Government Office East Building

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## — About “EXPO INOKUMA”

April 2025 will see the opening of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai and Setouchi Triennale 2025, and to coincide with these events MIMOCA will stage the special exhibition “EXPO INOKUMA” from April 12 (Sat).

Genichiro Inokuma (1902–1993) was a painter whose life came to span almost the whole of the 20th century, and whose career unfolded over an incredible seven decades dedicated to the pursuit of beauty in painting and characterized by an ongoing drive to explore new forms of expression. Based in Paris during the prewar years, then afterward in New York and Hawaii, Inokuma was not only active as a painter, but in international cultural exchange, playing a vital role as an unofficial cultural ambassador in both the public and private domains. **This exhibition traces his legacy in Japan including Kagawa, and other parts of the world, focusing on his interactions with globally renowned artists such as Isamu Noguchi, Mark Rothko, John Cage, and Charles and Ray Eames; his collaborations with architects like Bunzo Yamaguchi, Kenzo Tange, and Yoshio Taniguchi; and the cultural fruits of his design work.**

## Exhibition details

Exhibition title	EXPO INOKUMA
Date	April 12 (Sat) – July 6 (Sun) , 2025
Venue	Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art
Organized by	Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art, The MIMOCA Foundation, The Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan (tbc), Japan Arts Council (tbc)

## — February 12 (Sat), Media briefing (MIMOCA 2F Museum Hall)

Time	Details
13:30	Sign-in begins (in front of MIMOCA 2F Museum Hall)
14:00	Media briefing <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Introduction to MIMOCA and FY2025 exhibitions Koichi Nakata (Deputy Director/Chief Curator)</li><li>2. “EXPO INOKUMA” exhibition details Kanakano Furuno (Senior Curator)</li><li>3. Information on “Genichiro Inokuma Form, People, Living Secret and Beauty surrounding us” at the Shikoku Mura Museum Takuya Honjo (Managing Director, Shikoku Mura Museum Foundation) Haruna Yamada, Hirokazu Kobayashi (SPREAD)</li><li>4. Tour of MIMOCA</li></ol>
16:00	Finish
16:00–	Individual interviews/coverage: Please contact the museum to arrange.

## — Media briefing registration

How to register

Scan this QR Code by February 8 (Sat) and complete the registration form.



## February 13 (Thu), Media bus tour

Kagawa Prefecture has earned a reputation as Japan's "art prefecture," most prominently as host of the Setouchi Triennale. Despite being Japan's smallest prefecture, Kagawa is dotted with world-beating aesthetic riches irresistible to fans of art, design and architecture. Unraveling the history of this transformation into a hub for art, we find a period during which the careers of a cluster of internationally renowned artists and architects, including Isamu Noguchi and Kenzo Tange, truly blossomed in Kagawa, with Genichiro Inokuma connecting them all. The tour will trace the footsteps of Inokuma in this role of cultural mediator.

\*Please note that times below may change.

Time	Itinerary (tbd)
08:45	Meet at JR Marugame Station
10:00	The Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum Japan
11:30	Shikoku Mura Museum/Waraya (lunch stop)
14:30	Kagawa Prefectural Government Office East Building (Designed by Kenzo Tange)
16:00	Arrive JR Takamatsu Station
16:45	Arrive Takamatsu Airport

## Media bus tour registration

How to register

Scan the QR Code on the right and complete the form to register. Please note that tour availability will be on a first-come first-served basis.



## Media bus tour stops

### The Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum Japan

The eclectic career of leading 20th-century sculptor Isamu Noguchi also encompassed landscape and interior design, and the performing arts. Between 1969, when he established a studio and residence in Kagawa, home of Aji stone, and his death in 1988, Noguchi worked in partnership with stone artist Masatoshi Izumi, while splitting his time between Kagawa and New York. The Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum Japan, realization of Noguchi's wish to leave a source of inspiration for future artists, researchers and art lovers, opened in 1999. The entire site, including more than 150 sculptures, a gallery/storehouse personally chosen and relocated by Noguchi, Noguchi's residence, and the sculpture garden, form a single environmental sculpture in its own right that is open to the public, while retaining as much as possible of the environment and ambience it possessed during the sculptor's lifetime. A place to truly savor the cosmic, cosmopolitan, genre-bending, open-minded worldview of Isamu Noguchi. <http://www.isamunoguchi.or.jp/>

### Isamu Noguchi and Genichiro Inokuma

Inokuma counted sculptor Isamu Noguchi as a close friend, and it was a friendship that lasted from Noguchi's arrival in Japan in 1950, to his death in 1988. It is also Inokuma who connected Noguchi to Kagawa. Visiting the region, after hearing from Inokuma that there was "good stone here," Noguchi met then-governor Masanori Kaneko, architect Tadashi Yamamoto, and stonemason Masatoshi Izumi, and in 1969 decided to establish a studio in the town on Mure (now part of the city of Takamatsu). That studio is now the Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum Japan, a popular destination for both domestic and international visitors.

## Kagawa Prefectural Government Office East Building

The tour will take in the exterior and pilotis area of the Kenzo Tange-designed Kagawa Prefectural Government Office (now the East Building: completed in 1958, designated an Important Cultural Property in 2022), as well as the ground-floor lobby featuring Genichiro Inokuma's tiled mural *Wa kei Sei jaku* (Harmony, Respect, Purity, Tranquility).

<https://www.pref.kagawa.lg.jp/zaisankeiei/higashikan/kfvn.html#>



Kagawa Prefectural Government Office East Building  
Photo courtesy Kagawa Prefecture.

### Kagawa Prefectural Government Office East Building and Genichiro Inokuma

When consulted by then-Kagawa governor Masanori Kaneko in 1954 on the construction of a new prefectural office, Inokuma stressed the importance of the architecture, and introduced the governor to promising young architect Kenzo Tange. Tange's steel-reinforced concrete interpretation of traditional Japanese architecture; the open, spacious feel of the columns and lobby; and the superbly designed furniture and other features, attracted favorable reviews in Japan and beyond, and the building came to be seen as a major example of the architect's early work. Inokuma was responsible for the mural *Wa kei Sei jaku* (Harmony, Respect, Purity, Tranquility) in the ground floor lobby, and Isamu Kenmochi for a portion of the furniture. The Kagawa Prefectural Government Office marked the nascence of an arts network that continued to grow, with Inokuma and Governor Kaneko at its center. Under Inokuma's influence, Kaneko pursued connections with artists both Japanese and international, pouring considerable energy into improving the prefecture's architectural and industrial design and becoming known variously as the "architecture governor" and "design governor." Kagawa's status today as Japan's most art-focused prefecture is the culmination of Kaneko's achievements in this domain, the foundations for which were laid by Genichiro Inokuma.

## Shikoku Mura Museum

This open-air museum situated in extensive grounds at the foot of Mt. Yashima gives visitors the opportunity to experience for themselves 33 restored historical buildings dating from the Edo through to the Taisho periods (between 1603 and 1925) including private houses, a sugar mill, village kabuki theater stage, rice storehouses, and a soy sauce brewery, all relocated here from the four prefectures of the island of Shikoku. Each was actually lived in or used by people, and their knowledge, labor, and prayers suffuse each pillar, everyday article on display. A stroll through the natural surroundings, lovely in every season, is accompanied by the soothing sounds of birdsong and waterfalls, perhaps revealing something lost from modern life. The village also includes attractions of such diverse interest as the Shikoku Mura Gallery, designed by Tadao Ando (with displays including works by Inokuma), and the Shikoku Mura Cafe, housed in an old *ijinkan* (foreign residence) transported from Kobe. <https://www.shikokumura.or.jp>



Fukita Family Sugar Cane Press  
Photo courtesy Shikoku Mura Museum.

### Shikoku Mura Museum and Genichiro Inokuma

Attending the opening ceremony for this open-air museum in 1976, Inokuma was pleased to see the many old traditional homes. This led him to recommend architect Junzo Yoshimura to design the restaurant and restaurant owner's house (not open to the public) situated below Shikoku Mura. In 2022 Shikoku Mura became "Shikoku Mura Museum," a name taken from a message Inokuma wrote at the time of its opening. In 2023 the "Inokuma Garden" was added to the complex, complete with olive trees from Inokuma's residence in Denenchofu, Tokyo.

## Waraya (lunch stop)

Serving the famous Sanuki udon noodles in a relocated late-Edo thatched house with original interior. <https://www.wara-ya.co.jp/>



Waraya  
Photo courtesy Waraya.

## About Genichiro Inokuma

- 1902 Born in Takamatsu, Kagawa Prefecture, where he spent his youth.
- 1921 Graduates from Marugame Middle School (now, Kagawa Prefectural Marugame Senior High School).
- 1922 Enters Tokyo Fine Arts School (now, Tokyo University of the Arts), where he studied under Takeji Fujishima.
- 1926 First selected for inclusion in the Imperial Art Academy's 7th Art Exhibition. (Until 1934, Inokuma would mainly be active in the exhibition.)
- 1927 Leaves oil painting program at Tokyo Fine Arts School.
- 1935 Organized the Dainibu-kai group with like-minded associates who also pledged not to submit work to the new Teiten as a protest against government interference, and showed work in the group's first exhibition.
- 1936 Joined artists of a similar age to form the Shinseisaku-ha Kyokai (now the Shinseisaku Kyokai), where he subsequently presented any new work.
- 1938 Studies in France (until 1940), and receives some instruction from Henri Matisse.
- 1950 Designs "Hana-hiraku" wrapping paper for Mitsukoshi department store.
- 1951 Paints mural *Freedom* in main hall of Japanese National Railways Ueno Station (now the central concourse in JR-East Ueno Station).
- 1955 Traveled to the US and set up a studio in New York.
- 1975 Gives up his New York studio, and begins spending winters in Hawaii and working the rest of the year in Tokyo.
- 1989 Donates 1,000 of his works to the city of Marugame.
- 1991 Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art opens.
- 1993 Dies in Tokyo at the age of 90.



Genichiro Inokuma  
Photo: Akira Takahashi

## Concurrent Exhibition

### Special exhibition "Commemorating the 1st "MIMOCA EYE" Grand-prize Winner Akane Saijo—Double Touch"

MIMOCA will also host Akane Saijo (b. 1989), grand prize winner of the MIMOCA EYE open-call exhibition launched in 2022 to showcase the unique talents of young artists, in her first-ever solo outing at a museum. This exhibition will be devoted exclusively to Saijo's new work.

### Special exhibition "Genichiro Inokuma: Foundations of a life in painting—from art school to France"

The MIMOCA EYE open-call exhibition launched in 2022 reflects this, and to complement the concurrent exhibition "Akane Saijo: Double Touch" commemorating the first MIMOCA EYE Grand Prize Winner, "Foundations of a life in painting" focuses on the painting of Inokuma himself during his 20s and 30s, introducing the struggling young painter engaged in a quest for his own unique expression.

### Permanent collection "Genichiro Inokuma: Play in three dimensions"

# About MIMOCA

## Opened in 1991, over 30 years in operation

MIMOCA opened on its site in front of JR Marugame Station on November 23, 1991. Staying true to Genichiro Inokuma's wish for a contemporary art museum dedicated to the new artistic expression of the moment, MIMOCA offers a variety of exhibitions and programs, including a permanent exhibition primarily of work by Inokuma, special exhibitions with a contemporary art focus, and workshops for children.

## Housing 20,000 works by Genichiro Inokuma

Home to around 20,000 paintings, drawings and other works by Genichiro Inokuma, MIMOCA covers Inokuma's life and career with incredible breadth and depth through its permanent and special exhibitions, plus a diverse range of resources from the tiny works Inokuma dubbed "Dialogue Sculptures," to items he and his wife collected around the world and made part of their daily lives.

## As a museum specializing in contemporary art

MIMOCA presents exhibitions of work by both Japanese and international artists, with a focus on contemporary art. To date this has included solo exhibitions devoted to the work of, among others, Jan Fabre, Marina Abramović, Marlene Dumas, Ernesto Neto, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Chiharu Shiota, Takashi Homma, and Miyako Ishiuchi. The museum is also proactive in showcasing emerging artists such as Teppei Kaneuji, Takehito Koganezawa, Rieko Shiga, and Koji Nakazono, and in recent years launched the MIMOCA EYE open-call exhibition aimed at young artists. Casting its gaze even wider to contemporary creative expression, the museum also covers fashion and furniture design, and contemporary architecture.



Photo: Yoshiro Masuda

## Stunning architecture designed by Yoshio Taniguchi

The MIMOCA building was the work of Yoshio Taniguchi, a highly-regarded designer of multiple art museums. His dialogue with Inokuma resulted in a building that embodies the ideals of both artist and architect, down to the smallest detail. The expansive facade featuring Genichiro Inokuma's massive, eye-catching mural *Creation Plaza* loosely connects station frontage and building. Entering the museum, one finds a wide, open space suffused with natural light. On the second floor are two galleries of contrasting size, then on the third, a generously proportioned exhibition space with a ceiling height of over seven meters. The large staircase at left front of the building connects to a public space that allows diverse approaches to the creation and display of art. The second-floor art center is equipped with a library, hall and studio, while the Cascade Plaza and cafe at the rear of the third floor also offer pleasant ways to pass the time.

### [Access] 1 min. walk from Marugame Sta.

