

Creative Well-being Tokyo: International Conference on Open Access to Culture 2026

Provisional Update on Conference Speakers and Networking and Exhibition Programs



Design: Higuchi Maiko, Typeface "Clementite" : François Dey / Silly Type Foundry

International Conference on Open Access to Culture 2026

Provisional Update on Conference Speakers and Networking and Exhibition Programs

Since 2022, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture Arts Council Tokyo (hereinafter referred to as "Arts Council Tokyo") have jointly held the International Conference on Open Access to Culture 2026 as part of the Creative Well-being Tokyo initiative. The theme for 2026, the fifth year of the event, is **"Moving Together-A Culture of Mutuality"**. The event aims to look back on the journey of this initiative to date and to provide participants with an opportunity to consider what arts and culture can do to help everyone live a better life, thereby exploring a future vision for an inclusive society and well-being.

As a follow-up to the previous event outline issued in June, this release provides an overview on the three programs that constitute the entire event (a conference, networking program, and exhibition), as well as information on conference speakers. With the conference's subjects linked to both the networking program and exhibition, the entire event will delve into a single question from various angles. It is designed to allow participants to explore their own definition of "well-being" by immersing themselves in diverse values in various ways they like, including listening, speaking, participating, and watching.

Detailed Update on the Three Kick-off Events "Multispecies"

Prior to the opening of the main event on Wednesday, October 28, kick-off events will be held in August and September. Artists and researchers engaged in the pursuit of "A Culture of Mutuality," as well as the themes of the sea, mountains, and the earth, will share their insights and perspectives. The experiences and insights shared by them will be passed on to the main conference as premises for discussions on a future vision of well-being.

The kick-off events will comprise Vol.1 on Monday, August 3, Vol.2 on Thursday, August 20, and Vol.3 on Thursday, September 3, which will feature the following speakers, respectively: photographer Ishikawa Naoki; embroidery and installation artist Koretsune Sakura, who explores the folk culture of whaling, fishing, and other maritime activities through fieldwork; and historian Fujihara Tatsushi, a specialist in the history of food and agriculture, as well as related ideas, in the 20th century and the winner of the 41st Suntory Prize for Social Sciences and Humanities (in the Life and Society category) for his book *Bunkai no Tetsugaku: Fuhai to Hakko o Meguru Shiko* (Seidosha, 2019). For application information, please visit the event's official website.

Event Overview

Event Title	: Creative Well-being Tokyo: International Conference on Open Access to Culture 2026 Moving Together-A Culture of Mutuality
Dates	: October 28 (Wed) - November 1 (Sun), 2026
Venue	: Tokyo International Forum (3-5-1 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo) October 28 (Wed) - November 1 (Sun): Lobby Gallery October 30 (Fri) - November 1 (Sun): Hall B5, Hall D5
Organizers	: Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Arts Council Tokyo (Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture)
Admission	: Free (Registration required) * Registration opens in late August.
Languages	: Japanese, English, Japanese Sign Language, and International Sign * Simultaneous interpretation and live captions available (International Sign will be provided in Hall B5 only.)
Official Website	: https://creativewell.rekibun.or.jp/creativewell-conference/2026.html

Moving Together—A Culture of Mutuality

The theme for the 2026 event is “Moving Together—A Culture of Mutuality”.

In this event, “Well-being” will be dealt with as a “culture” that should permeate society, rather than simply as the happiness and good health of individuals. This approach refuses to separate the creative life of each individual true to themselves from their harmonious coexistence with others, including non-human beings.

Creative Well-being Tokyo has so far adopted a broad definition of “arts” or “arts and culture,” which encompasses not only “artistic expressions” in a conventional sense but also ingenuity and proactive endeavors found in people’s daily lives. Meeting others in person and talking, thinking, taking action, and expressing some things together with them allow us to take a fresh look at what we are and, at the same time, rebuild our relationships with others and society. Our exploration for “A Culture of Mutuality” has no predetermined right destination, nor is it a solitary inner journey. Instead, it will be nurtured through relationships of mutual inspiration built through arts and culture between each proactive individual and others.

This year’s event theme “Moving Together” mentions specific actions aimed at fostering such well-being. It means “collaborating” and “putting communities and society in motion.” This event will bring together artists and other speakers who have actually “moved together” with others through arts and culture to explore a future vision for “Well-being” through their respective practices and works, as well as dialogue.

A kick-off event exploring the daily insights and perspectives of artists and researchers engaged in dialogue with the nature

“Multispecies” Kick-off Event (Three sessions)



Installation view at Aichi Triennale 2025
Koretsune Sakura, *After Efflorescence: Awakening the Whale beneath Us, 2025*
© Aichi Triennale Organizing Committee
Photo:ToLoLo studio

Prior to the opening of the main Conference on Wednesday, October 28, kick-off sessions will be held in August and September. Artists and researchers engaged in pursuit of “A Culture of Mutuality,” as well as the themes of the sea, mountains, and the earth, will share their insights and perspectives. The experiences and insights shared by them will be passed on to the main event as premises for discussions on a future vision of well-being.

Vol.1, featuring photographer Ishikawa Naoki, will be held at Jiyu Gakuen Myonichikan on Monday, August 3. Applications are now being accepted from Monday, July 13, on a first-come, first-served basis.

* Multispecies: a concept that describes a world shaped with intertwined relationships between all species, including humans, animals, plants, and fungi



[Vol.2] Speaker : Koretsune Sakura (Artist and Assistant Professor in the Department of Arts & Roots, Akita University of Art)
Date and Time : August 20 (Thu), 2026, 18:00 - 20:00
Venue : Jiyu Gakuen Myonichikan Cafeteria,
2-31-3 Nishi-Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku, Tokyo
Capacity : 30 participants (Registration required; first-come, first-served)
Admission : Free
How to Register : Registration opens on the official website at 14:00 on July 30 (Thu)
Language : Japanese *Japanese Sign Language interpretation and subtitles available

[Guest Profile]

After studying Native arts, painting, and sculpture at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, Koretsune Sakura completed a Master’s degree in Localized Design at Tohoku University of Art and Design. From 2022 to 2023, she resided in Norway as a trainee of the Program of Overseas Study for Upcoming Artists sponsored by the Agency for Cultural Affairs. Interested in the relationship between cetaceans and humans, as well as oceanic folklore, her practice combines writing and embroidered works based on fieldwork conducted in various regions of the world. She continually seeks to gather the memories and narratives of people connected to the sea and reweave them using thread and words. Her recent publications include *Ordinary Whales* (ELVIS PRESS, 2025), while her recent exhibitions include the Aichi Triennale 2025.



[Vol.3] Speaker : Fujihara Tatsushi (Historian and Professor at the Institute for Research in Humanities, Kyoto University)
Date and Time : September 3 (Thu), 2026, 18:00 - 20:00
Venue : Sendagaya Community Center (SCC) Circle Hall
1-1-10 Jingumae, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo
Capacity : 30 participants (Registration required; first-come, first-served)
Admission : Free
How to Register : Registration opens on the official website at 14:00 on August 10 (Mon)
Language : Japanese *Japanese Sign Language interpretation and subtitles available

[Guest Profile]

Since taking up a position as Research Assistant at the Institute for Research in Humanities, Kyoto University, in 2003, and subsequently teaching at the University of Tokyo and various other institutions, Fujihara Tatsushi has been engaged in historical research on food and agriculture. His work reexamines the processes of eating, cultivation, and decomposition within the context of modern history. He received the Hayao Kawai Prize for Social Sciences and Humanities for *Nachisu no Kitchin* (Kyowakoku, 2016), the Shizuo Tsuji Food Culture Award for *Kyushoku no Rekishi* (Iwanami Shinsho, 2018), and the Suntory Prize for Social Sciences and Humanities for *Bunkai no Tetsugaku* (Seidosha, 2019). He has also received the JSPS Prize from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science and the Yasushi Inoue Memorial Cultural Award in recognition of his research as a whole. His major publications include *Shokubutsuko* (Ikinobiru Books, 2022) and *Seirui no Shiso* (Katabami Shobo, 2025).

A total of five sessions reimagining well-being with leading artists, practitioners, and researchers from various fields

Conference

The Conference will feature a total of five sessions designed to reconsider well-being alongside participants, inviting a diverse lineup of speakers, including leading artists, practitioners, and researchers from various fields. Serving as moderators throughout the three-day conference are Horiuchi Naoko and Roger McDonald, who have curated numerous projects at Arts Initiative Tokyo [AIT]. Drawing on their extensive knowledge of the international art scene and Tokyo's cultural policies, the two will accompany all five sessions, passing the baton of cutting-edge dialogue from one session's speakers and participants to the next. In the closing session, we will synthesize the discussions and ideas generated throughout the preceding sessions to broadcast, directly from Tokyo to the world, the vital role of arts and culture in shaping the future of well-being.

[Prologue] October 30 (Fri) 18:30-19:00

Since its launch in 2022, the International Conference: Open Access to Culture has served as a forum for exploring the relationship between arts and culture on one hand and well-being on the other hand.

Prologue will outline the background to the 2026 theme "Moving Together-A Culture of Mutuality". It will offer participants an introduction to the five sessions during the three-day event so that the entire event will be easier even for first-time participants to understand.

[Opening Session] "A Future Woven by Arts and Culture" October 30 (Fri) 19:00-21:00

In today's complex and ever-changing world, well-being is increasingly being redefined not as something confined to the individual, but as something shaped in relation to others, the environment, and a broader timespan. The speakers, who create spaces for dialogue from perspectives that go beyond a human-centered view (multispecies) and have pursued research and initiatives at the intersection of nature, cities, and human life, will explore the role of arts and culture in the years to come.



Konoike Tomoko

Artist



Koyamada Toru

Artist,
President of Kyoto City
University of Arts



Saito Yuriko

Philosopher,
Professor Emeritus, Rhode Island School
of Design

[Session 1] "Practicing Interdependence" October 31 (Sat) 10:00-12:00

Natural disasters and unforeseen accidents can suddenly transform familiar places and routine life, forcing people to live in radically changed environments. In such moments, when established ways of communicating and caring for one another must be reconsidered, how do emerging artists and researchers make sense of the situations before them and forge new relationships unlike those that existed before? Drawing on Practices born out of interdependence, this session will explore what a culture of mutuality might look like.



Morishita Yu

Researcher and Educator,
Project Associate Professor,
Institute of Industrial
Science, University of Tokyo



Seo Natsumi

Artist, Writer

Photo by: Hiroshi Ikeda



Christine Wong Yap

Visual Artist,
Social practitioner

[Session 2] "Identity and Culture" October 31 (Sat) 15:30-17:30

In our society, our sense of self is shaped by a wide range of factors, including culture, history, the body, the land, and our relationships with others.

However, things taken for granted in society can sometimes silence certain individuals and obscure their culture and roots. Together with experts whose creative and academic practices are informed by their lived experiences, this session will explore the challenges and tensions inherent in living together, as well as the possibilities created by dialogue and expression.



Jumana Emil Abboud

Visual Artist

Photo by : Ai Iwane



Kitahara Mokottunas

Professor,
Center for Ainu and
Indigenous Studies,
Hokkaido University



Matsuzaki Jo

Faculty of Education, Miyagi
University of Education
Professor specializing in
special needs education

[Session 3] "Moving Together-Living through Dreams" November 1 (Sun) 10:00-12:00

Society, culture, and the circumstances of the age may sometimes hinder our freedom and dignity, yet people can still find hope and seek their own paths in life. The speakers, who have pursued creativity and practices across different lands and situations, have passed on their respective experiences and visions to others while cherishing their dreams. Through a series of case studies in which the dreams of an individual connect with those of others, this session will reflect on human dignity.



Sangita Jogi

Artist



Kobayashi Erika

Writer, Artist



Nishi Kanako

Writer, Artist

Photo by : Shingo Wakagi



Gita Wolf

Author, founder of Tara Books

[Closing Session] “Creative Well-being-A Culture of Mutuality” November 1 (Sun) 15:30-18:00

In response to our complex and ever-changing society, we will share from Tokyo the concept of “Creative Well-being” born from the efforts of arts and culture. Reflecting on discussions that began with a multispecies perspective of the world and expanded to themes of interdependence, identity, and human dignity, speakers well versed in art and cultural policy will offer thoughts on the future.



Aoyagi Masanori

Director of Arts Council Tokyo,
Chairman of the Board of
Trustees of Tama Art University

Photo by : Itaru Hirama



Koike Kazuko

Creative Director

Photo by : Taishi Hirokawa



Miyajima Tatsuo

Contemporary Artist

Photo : LISSON GALLERY MILANO



Justine Simons

Deputy Mayor of London for Culture and
Creative Industries

Photo by : Rankin



Horiuchi Naoko

[AIT] Curator, “dear Me” Project
Director, Childcare Worker



Roger McDonald

[AIT] Curator, Art Historian

Photo by : Sayaka Takizawa

Programs that encourage interactions between participants and presenters through performances and workshop activities, thereby facilitating a corporeal understanding
Studio (Networking)

From Friday, October 30 to Sunday, November 1, a networking program featuring a talk program, a performance, and a workshop will take place at Hall D5, where visitors and presenters will interact and communicate.

The program comprises a talk program on the stage production *Breathe, Move, Don't Be Silent*, which was performed as part of the cultural program for the Tokyo 2025 Deaflympics, a flag-creation workshop based on Sangita Jogi's picture book *The Women I Could Be*, and the lecture performance *An Introduction to Playing a Hearing Person*, which re-examines the corporeality of deaf and hearing people. The entire program therefore has links to the conference's subjects. Participants will be able to not only simply encounter those works and the creators' words but also have a first-hand experience of “A Culture of Mutuality” through voices, corporeal activities, and interactions with others.



Open Meeting: What Emerges When the Deaf and the Hearing Encounter Each Other

Date: Friday, October 30 12:00-15:00, 16:00-17:30 (two sessions scheduled)

Speakers: Nagashima Kaku, Makihara Eri, Matsuzaki Jo, and other members of the production team of *Breathe, Move, Don't Be Silent*

What will emerge from an encounter between deaf and hearing people, or between people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, when they take time to interact head-on and understand each other? The stage production *Breathe, Move, Don't Be Silent*, which was performed as part of the cultural program for the Tokyo 2025 Deaflympics, was aimed at raising public awareness of deaf culture and deepening mutual understanding between deaf and hearing people.

This talk program will reunite members of the work's production team to talk about the difficulties they faced and the insights they obtained in the collaborative process. Approximately one year after the creation of *Breathe, Move, Don't Be Silent*, the speakers will share with the audience the activities and questions each of them are beginning to work on.



Workshop: “The Women I Could Be” – Making Our Flags

Date: Saturday, October 31 13:00-15:00

Artists: Sangita Jogi and Kobayashi Erika

The Women I Could Be is an artistic picture book by Indian artist Sangita Jogi, which celebrates the resilience of imagination while conveying a message of resistance to harsh realities. Having experienced a child marriage and being very busy with household chores and work, Jogi depicted the future “women she could have been” in hopes of freedom.

Based on the words of the picture book *The Women I Could be*, (green seed books) originally created by Tara books in India and later translated, participants will draw their own version of “I could be” and stitch their drawing together into a collective flag. How do the dreams depicted in the book resonate with the people gathered in our space? Together with the author and translator, participants will experience a journey from “I” to “we.”

Book cover: Japanese translation of Sangita Jogi's *The Women I Could Be* (green seed books, 2025)



Lecture performance: “Performing as a Hearing Person-Prologue”

Date: Two performance sessions

(1st session: Saturday, October 31 18:00-19:00; 2nd session: Sunday, November 1 14:00-15:00)

Director: Makihara Eri, Casts: Kazumi Akiko and Yamada Maki

The performance *Performing as a Hearing Person-Prologue* is a work by Makihara Eri, a deaf movie maker and performance director known for her movie *Listen* and other works. This project re-examines the corporeality of the hearing majority and the asymmetry between “deaf” and “hearing” people in society, with deaf actress Kazumi Yoko and sprinter Yamada Maki, who won two gold medals and one silver medal at the Deaflympics in Tokyo, playing “hearing” characters.

Audiences see with their own eyes how people with hearing who have been regarded as individuals are lumped together in a category. The actors are Kazumi Akiko and Yamada Maki, who are both deaf. To what extent can we refer to people with hearing performed by the bodies of people without it? Is it possible to overcome the relationship of performer and performed, and share with each other? (From the official production description)

Introducing how arts and culture can contribute to “Creative Well-being” through art works and examples of initiatives both in Japan and abroad

Gallery (Exhibition)

From the afternoon of Wednesday, October 28 to Sunday, November 1, a five-day exhibition will be held in the lobby gallery, showcasing artists' works that resonate with the event theme “Moving Together-A Culture of Mutuality” as well as examples of initiatives implemented by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and Arts Council Tokyo.

The exhibition will feature works and projects by Miyajima Tatsuo, Christine Wong Yap, Jumana Emil Abboud, Komori haruka+Seo Natsumi, Koretsune Sakura, Sangita Jogi, Usui Yui, Aoki Akira, and others.

While immersing themselves in memories of earthquake disasters, wishes for peace, activities rooted deeply in local communities, and the feeling of being together with others, visitors will rediscover “well-being” not only within themselves but also in their relationships with others, society, and nature. Further details will be announced in late August.

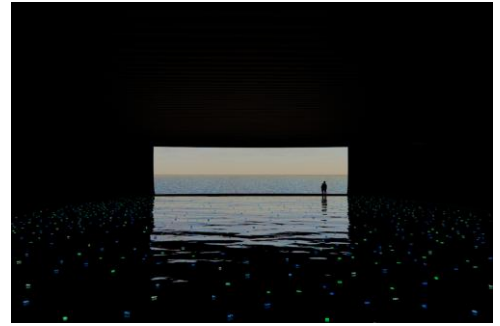
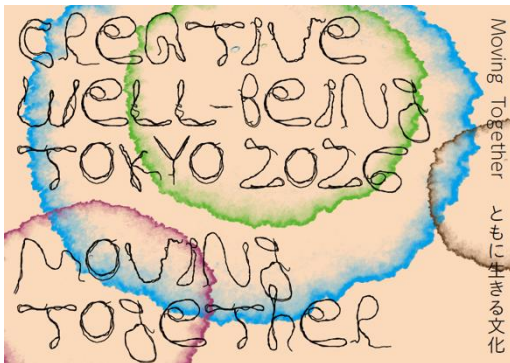


Image : Sea of Time TOHOKU Museum Concept Image ©ATTA - Atelier Tsuyoshi Tane Architects

“Moving Together” drawn by accidental blurring and vine-woven letters

About Bleed and Clementite used in the key visual



The key visual uses Bleed, a graphic material created from the bleeding of ink, and Clementite, a typeface formed from the vines of wild clematis.

Bleed is a graphic material created by designer Higuchi Maiko. Inspired by the way ink bleeds when water droplets fall on printed paper, she developed the accidentally generated ripple-like patterns into the graphic material. Meanwhile, Clementite is a typeface originated from workshops held at Malévoz, a psychiatric hospital in Switzerland. When artist François Dey walked with patients through the gardens and forests surrounding the hospital, he found wild clematis and wove and bent its vines to create the shapes of the alphabet letters.

Bleed, with its gently spreading, ripple-like patterns, feels like clouds moving and expanding while overlapping and separating from each other, while Clementite, created through people's collective physical activities in grappling with plant vines, conveys a feeling of vitality and dynamism. The key visual, which combines these two elements, represents the process of creation of new forms through encounter and mutual inspiration between different beings—between various people and between people and nature. Furthermore, as a visual that resonates with the event theme, “Moving Together-A Culture of Mutuality”, it symbolizes our attitude of thinking and taking action together through arts and culture, thereby weaving new relationships.

We believe that Creative Well-being comes from living with a sensitivity to the beauty of things emerging from ordinary life and even to small changes.



Image: Clementite (Source: Silly Type Foundry, official website, <https://sillytypefoundry.com/types/clementite/>)

Inquiries regarding this press

Arts Council Tokyo (Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture)
Public Relations : Sekiji, Yagyu
Tel: +81-3-6256-8432
E-mail: press@artscouncil-tokyo.jp

For Inquiries About This Project

Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture,
Arts Council Tokyo, Projects Department, Project Coordination Section, Social Coexistence Division
E-mail: info-cwt@artscouncil-tokyo.jp