

Akio Niisato (b. 1977) continues to receive high acclaim for his works, with participation in numerous exhibitions both in Japan and overseas including the US, Italy, and Romania. His representative work “Luminescent” consists of vessels created by making perforations in translucent white porcelain, and filling each of the holes with clear glaze before firing. The works which give the impression of emitting light in themselves are conceived through independently developing the Chinese technique of ‘hotarude,’ which enable translucent patterns to emerge when it carries the light, with their luminescent appearance likened to a firefly. In addition to this technique that attempts to explore ways of vessels that transcend contexts of the everyday, in recent years he has engaged in producing works that while rooted in tradition, give form to the natural traces that are born out of the dialogue between the materials and his own body.

He went on to study at the Tajimi City Ceramic and Design Center where he received his Diploma 2001, after withdrawing from his studies at the Philosophy Department, School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Waseda University. His selected awards include, the Award for New Artist, Premio Faenza 54th Edition (2005, Italy); Grand Prize, Paramita Museum Ceramic Competition (2008) and Jury’s Special Award, International Ceramics Festival MINO.

Erika Kobayashi (b. 1978) lives and works in Tokyo. Her works are inspired by invisible elements, time, history, family, memory, and traces of places. Radioactivity and war are the main subjects of her works. There are personal and historical narratives, histories that Kobayashi herself has never experienced, and representations of materials that cannot be perceived by humans. Based on her extensive research, Kobayashi uses various forms of expression such as installations, paintings, and videos. Her work on radiation, which is closely connected to the atomic bombings and the Great East Japan Earthquake, her family history - her grandfather was a doctor / radiologist - is a privileged subject for the artist. The tension between narration and documentation - the connection between the fact that there were failed plans to transport uranium to Tokyo during World War II, and the 1940 Tokyo Olympics that never happened, as well as a series of works about Anne Frank's diary and the life of the artist's father, who was born the same year as Anne - is palpable to the viewer, and distinguishes it from a mere mixture of historical facts.

Kouichi Tabata (b. 1979) currently lives and works in Berlin, having completed a residency with the Grant for Overseas Research supported by the Pola Art Foundation in 2011. Tabata produces paintings that incorporate kinetic elements, and video works which have been composed under painterly constraints. Notable works include “bee” (2006), a video work created from countless images of bees that the artist had drawn until the ink of his pen ran

out, and the “one way or another” series comprised of drawings and oil paintings where a single motif is depicted across two separate support mediums and then “shifted” to meet their completion. Through such “shifts” between media and the very support medium, Tabata enable the various imagery contained within the subject before ones eyes to carefully emerge. Instead of converging a single thing and its surrounding traces into one, he presents a perspective that connect to their different means of presence and movement in the context of a time and space that could have simultaneously lapsed.

He received a B.A in Intermedia Art from the Tokyo University of the Arts in 2004, where he also received an M.A. in Oil Painting in 2006.

Reina Mikame (b.1992) lives and works in Tokyo. Mikame’s paintings are created in a manner that appears to drift back and forth between opposite ends of the spectrum of the abstract and the objective. Familiar elements that exist within the artist’s surroundings, the artist’s experiences, and the various phenomena that emerge around the artist are conveyed through means of a harmonious balance between the paint and the brushstrokes. At a glance harnessing a precise air of brevity yet at the same time profoundly orchestrated, the works seemingly evolve into abstract portrayals, while in other moments embody a sense of objectivity. Mikame’s works illustrate forethoughts towards the consistent conditions of painting while simultaneously enticing the viewers with her very own unique world, anticipating the artist to further expand her future endeavors towards contemporary painting. Mikame continues to pursue her investigation of painting through the consideration of various elements such as line, color, light, and temperature. She has developed her practice by linking issues regarding perception and image with individual themes through multiple series of paintings such as *Enduring Surface of Water*, *Weaving with Color*.

She graduated from the Program in Master of Oil Painting Course, Department of Painting, Tokyo University of the Arts.

Seiichiro Osa (b. 1985) has engaged in producing abstract paintings through a repetition of motifs such as circular, triangular, and square forms that are composed of minimum and fundamental elements. His production process that directly confronts mediums such as the canvas and paint creates a sense of arbitrariness and contingency while giving rise to autonomy and homogeneity, with the dynamic brushstrokes appearing to transcend the boundaries of the rectangular contours of the canvas. The very time within which Osa executes his brushstrokes in competing against the canvas in front of him, emerge before the eyes of viewers as works that convey traces and reverberations of the process the artist himself refers to as a “bout.” The production of these works begins by enclosing the divided

canvas with masking tape and applying paint to the spaces within. Each square is not completely painted, with the edges blurred and color overrunning here and there. This is the result of using pre-used masking tape, with the lack of adhesiveness and the unevenness of the canvas drawing out the arbitrariness of the paint material. He graduated with a Masters in Oil Painting from the Department of Painting, Tokyo University of the Arts in 2011.

Tomoya Matsuzaki (b. 1977) moved to the U.K in 1997, lives and works in London. In addition to producing his own work, he has been involved in a wide range of activities such as self-curating exhibitions and launching project spaces from his perspective as an artist.

Matsuzaki's artistic practice centers on the exploration of "landscape." His work involves a detailed examination of the elements constituting our environment, including their historical and cultural contexts, from which he extracts the unique characteristics of a place and transforms them into the subject matter of his paintings. Matsuzaki engages in fieldwork, such as collecting wild plants and creating ink from natural materials, to develop a personal understanding of the surroundings.

In 2018 his work was short-listed for the John Moores Painting Prize, a public painting competition and exhibition priding a history of over 60 years in the U.K, with former prize recipients including Peter Blake, David Hockey, and Peter Doig. He completed his BA at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in 2002, followed by an MA in Fine Art at Chelsea College of Art and Design in 2004.