

# 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

PRESS RELEASE

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The Contemporary 2

Who interprets the world?

2015.9.19 (Sat.) -

2015.12.13 (Sun.)

Ei Anatsui *Broken Bridge* 2012  
Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York  
\*This is not an exhibit but a reference image for the exhibition.

Exhibition Title	Who interprets the world?	
Period	Saturday, Sep 19, 2015 – Sunday, Dec 13, 2015 10:00 - 18:00 (until 20:00 on Fridays and Saturdays) Note: Tickets available until 30 minutes before closing	
	Closed: Mondays (except Sept 21, Oct 12, Nov 23), Sep 24, Oct 13, Nov 24	
Venue	21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (Gallery 7-12,14)	
Admission	Adult: ¥1,000 (¥800) / University: ¥800 (¥600) / Elem/JH/HS: ¥400 (¥300) / 65 and over: ¥800 *( ) indicate advance ticket and group rates (20 or more) *Tickets for this exhibition also enable admission to "Collection Exhibition 1-2", "BCL Ghost in the Cell" during the same period	
	Advance Tickets: Ticket PIA Tel +81-(0)570-02-9999 [This exhibition ticket P code] 767-035 Lawson Ticket Tel +81-(0)570-000-777 [This exhibition ticket L code] 56939 Tickets Sales: To Dec 13	
Grants from	Nomura Foundation	Sponsored by UNION CORPORATION, MAPLE HOUSE
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In Cooperation with	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Embassy of Mexico in Japan, Instytut Polski Tokio	
Organized by	21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (Kanazawa Art Promotion and Development Foundation)	
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**About the Exhibition**

In 2015, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa is holding a series of exhibitions, entitled “The Contemporary,” presenting contemporary artworks that offer insight into today’s world.

“The Contemporary 1—In Our Time: Art in Post-Industrial Japan,” held this spring and summer, featured artworks by 10 artists and artist groups highly visible on the contemporary scene since 2000. It took four keywords important for understanding Japanese art today—“relationship,” “everyday,” “media,” and “vernacular.”

Next, our autumn and winter exhibition, “The Contemporary 2: Who interprets the world?” asks how contemporary artists rooted in different cultures see and convey the state of the larger world beyond their community. In contemporary society, where “displace” and “crossover” cultures is becoming the normal state, relationships of all kinds are made fluid. Historical perspectives and social values taken for granted until now obtain new meanings, depending on who is doing the interpreting. This exhibition views the diverse artworks born explosively, particularly from regions peripheral to Japan, as “practices for living.” It examines how people living in the same age as we, yet in different time-zones and locations, look at the world.

Works of art are created by freely combining a wide range of materials and methods. They are unique and ambiguous and cannot be reduced to signs interpretable using simple A-B-C or other codes. An individual work is the product of the artist’s words and actions, something both deeply personal and collective. We might say that it expresses the artist’s conscious of the world with which the artists come to grips. What, then, should be our approach to creative expression produced in a different arena informed by a different cultural context? Following the postcolonial critique of the Western Europe-centered historical perspective that prevailed through the latter half of the 20th century, many artists are engaged in taking back the act of interpretation, to seek proper understanding of their works in their own languages instead of words and gestures borrowed from the West. With meanings from different cultures mingled together from innumerable different directions, we must be careful to note that who interprets them can profoundly change those meanings. A space in which visitors can create new empathetic links, Who interprets the world? is an exhibition devoted to artistic expression rooted in different perspectives, an experiment in using culture (works of art) to interpret our world.

Hiromi Kurosawa, Chief Curator 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

\*Our exhibition title Who interprets the world? is a translation of the title of the book “Qui traduit le monde?” edited and prefaced by Majima Ichiro. (Jimibun Shoin 2005).

**Exhibition Features****The second exhibition in our series “The Contemporary” re-examining contemporaneity**

Currently, in fiscal 2015, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa is holding an exhibition series “The Contemporary” that re-examines contemporaneity. Our second exhibition in this series features artworks by overseas artists living and experiencing our same contemporary world. Specifically, it looks at how each of them “interprets” the state of that world into artistic expression.

**Our keywords—“displacement” and “crossover”**

In our rapidly globalizing 21st century world, people, objects, and information from different lands and widely divergent cultural backgrounds are “displace” and “crossover” in large numbers and volumes. Today, when contact among different cultures is becoming the normal state, it is no longer sufficient to discuss fixed concepts or historical views simply in a Eurocentric context. Asking, “who, as the principal, is addressing whom?” this exhibition considers “displacement” and “crossover.”

**Different cultural backgrounds—seen in the multifaceted allure of contemporary art**

“The Contemporary 2: Who interprets the world?” shows the multifaceted allure of contemporary art through artworks by 11 different artists and artist groups working with an array of techniques and materials—textile, print, sculpture, installation, video, and more. Rather than shallow, information-based understandings, viewers can obtain a visceral grasp of the “difference” between cultural backgrounds through artworks born from real feelings arising from the artist’s own native land and experiences.

**The latest work by El Anatsui, recipient of the 2015 Venice Biennale Award Golden Lion**

Participating artist El Anatsui (Born in Ghana; lives and works in Nigeria) received the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement in May 2015 at the Venice Biennale. His large-scale installation works, assembled from discarded metal caps and other scrap materials, evoke elements of Africa’s diverse history and culture, such as traditional African fabrics or bottles of wine bartered in the transatlantic slave trade. El Anatsui’s works of great beauty and power have captured broad attention throughout the world.

## Related Programs

**Artist Talk**

Date/time: Session 1 El Anatsui + Yukiya Kawaguchi (Prof. Rikkyo University)  
 Session 2 Susanta Mandal  
 Saturday, 19 September Session1 12:30-14:30 Session2 15:00-17:00  
 Venue: Lecture Hall, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa  
 Admission: Free  
 Reservations are not required. Accept first 90 persons on the day.  
 Consecutive translation from English to Japanese.  
 \*Please note that the doors are closed during each session.

**Workshop with the Aquilizans “From Here to There”**

Alfredo and Isabel Aquilizan hold a “Moving” theme workshop with participants, taking a different subject each day.  
 Date/time: Saturday 19 to Monday 21, September 13:00-16:00  
 Venue: Project Room, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa  
 Admission: Free (with ticket to this exhibition)  
 For: People of ages 10 or older (ages 10 to 12 must be accompanied by an adult)  
 \*with consecutive interpretation  
 \*Details will be available from mid-September

**Pedro Reyes’s project: The pUN**

*The pUN General Assembly* is an experimental gathering of volunteer citizen-delegates from as many of the participants and observer states of *The People’s United Nations (pUN)* as possible. Over the course of two days on 5-6 December, the group used theater games, group therapy, and techniques from social science to grapple with a set of urgent and sometimes unexpected proposals. Playfulness, humor, and experimentation are strategies that allow for creative solutions and imagining a better future.

**The pUN General Assembly**

Date/time: Saturday, 5 December 13:00-19:00 / Sunday, 6 December 10:00-15:00  
 Capacity: 50 persons  
 For further information and reservation <http://kanazawa21.jp/exhibit/pun/> from mid- October.

**Artist Talk by Pedro Reyes**

Date/time: Sunday, 6 December 15:00-17:00 (door is open at 14:30)  
 Venue: Lecture Hall, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa  
 Admission Free  
 Reservations are not required. Accept first 90 persons on the day.  
 Consecutive translation from English to Japanese.  
 \*Please note that the doors are closed during each session.

**Lecture**

Venue: Lecture Hall, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa  
 Admission Free / Reservations are not required. Accept first 90 persons on the day.  
 \*Japanese only  
 \*Please note that the doors are closed during the lecture.

## Session (1) “Walls of Life, Corridors of Life — Looking at Translation Again”

Date/time: Friday 16 October, 2015 18:00-20:00  
 Lecturer: Ichiro Majima (Prof., Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)

## Session (2) “El Anatsui — Speaks of the History under His Feet”

Date/time: Saturday 17 October, 2015 13:00-15:00  
 Lecturer: Yukiya Kawaguchi (Prof., Rikkyo University)

## Session (3) “Connecting with Africa through Marriage—Family, Music and Humanity”

Date/time: Sunday 18 October, 2015 13:00-15:00  
 Lecturer: Hiroyuki Suzuki (Prof., Kokushikan University)

## Featured Artists

Photos of artworks no. 1 to 11 below are available for promotional purpose.  
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Email: [press@kanazawa21.jp](mailto:press@kanazawa21.jp)

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## Artur Żmijewski

*Them 2007* (Production still)  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zurich  
©Artur Żmijewski



1

Born in 1966 in Warsaw, Poland, and resides there. Studied with Grzegorz Kowalski at the Warsaw Art Academy. Focuses on social intervention through art. Represented Poland at the 51st Venice Biennale. Has exhibited in Documenta 12 (Kassel) and other shows in regions around the world. His wide-ranging activities include curation of the Berlin Biennale and publishing.

## El Anatsui

*Bleeding Takari II* 2007  
Collection of The Museum of  
Modern Art (MoMA) reference image  
©El Anatsui



2

Born in 1944 in Anyanko, Volta, Ghana; resides in Nsuka, Nigeria. Studied sculpture at Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Ghana). Began producing wood sculptures showing the influence of dyed fabrics and traditional decorative patterns. In 1975, moved to Nsuka on becoming a professor at Nigeria University. Since around 2000, has created numerous large installation works suggestive of tapestries, using metal caps from beverage bottles and other scrap materials. Awarded the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement in 2015 at the Venice Biennale.

## Jananne Al-Ani

*Shadow Sites II* 2011  
Courtesy of the Artist and  
the Abraaj Group Art Prize  
Photo: Adrian Warren  
©Jananne Al-Ani



3

Born in 1966 in Kirkuk, Iraq, and resides in London, UK. Works with photography, film, and video. Gives prominence to absence and loss in stereotypical images of the Middle East and historical events. Has shown her work in solo exhibitions at the Heyward Gallery and Tate Britain (England). Has participated in numerous international exhibitions, including the Venice Biennale and Istanbul Biennial.

## Qiu Zhijie

*Where is the Capital of Madagascar?* 2008  
Image courtesy of STPI - Creative Workshop  
& Gallery, Singapore.  
©Qiu Zhjie/STPI



4

Born in 1969 in Fujian Province and resides in Beijing, People's Republic of China. Had an important role in Chinese conceptual art and performance art in the mid-1990s. Has exhibited works of calligraphy, photography, and video, and participated in group exhibitions at P.S.I. (New York), The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and ICA London. Won international acclaim at the 25th São Paulo Biennial. Employs broad-reach media, including curation, magazine publication, magazine editing.

Rirkrit Tiravanija

*Third chapter: warp drive inn,  
sextant to the chrome universe* 2013  
Private collection  
Image courtesy of STPI - Creative Workshop  
& Gallery, Singapore.  
©Rirkrit Tiravanija/STPI



5

Born in 1961 in Buenos Aires, Argentina; resides in Chiang Mai, Thailand / New York, USA / Berlin, Germany. In the 1990s, became a foremost artist of "relational aesthetics." Gives visual expression to "relations" by communicating with viewers, such as by serving "pad thai" Thai fried noodles in the gallery. Upsets existing values and perceptions by introducing everydayness in public places. Uses unique methods to question history and social systems.

Shilpa Gupta

*Untitled (There is No Border Here)*  
2005-2006/ 2011  
Collection of 21st Century Museum of  
Contemporary Art, Kanazawa  
©Shilpa Gupta  
Photo: Kioku Keizo



6

Born in 1976 in Mumbai, India, and resides there. Has participated in international exhibitions in Venice, Sharja, Sidney, Yokohama, and Echigo-Tsumari. Works with a broad range of media including photography, video, and the Internet. Orients her works to the region or site of the exhibition. Closely observes issues of gender, religion, race, class, and economic disparity. Shows new ways to perceive contemporary social problems and creates new social narratives, often with sharp wit.

Susanta Mandal

*SACK-2* 2006  
Photo: Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2014  
©Susanta Mandal



7

Born in 1965 in Kolkata, resides in New Delhi, India. Works with light, video, and mechanical apparatuses to create kinetic artworks clothed in narrative, suggestive of India's traditional shadow plays, such as *Caged Sacks* (2007-8), which evoked dark realms of history. Has participated in exhibitions at the Guggenheim Art Museum in New York and in other regions around the world.

Teruya Yuken

*Parade from Far, Far Away* (detail) 2014  
Photo: Nema Yoshikazu  
©yuken teruya



8

Born in 1973 in Okinawa, resides in New York, USA. Attended Tama Art College and Maryland Institute College of Art. In 2001, graduated from the School of Visual Art. Explores issues of history and identity with insubstantial lightness from his own unique perspective, using cardboard tubes from toilet rolls, paper sacks, and other everyday materials as his media. Holds a strong interest in things that cannot be understood from one perspective, especially as concerns the complex history of his native Okinawa.

Zai Kuning



9

*Moving a grave* 2014  
 Courtesy of Ota Fine Arts Singapore/ Tokyo  
 Photo: Quek Jia Liang  
 ©Zai Kuning

Born in 1964 in Singapore; resides there. Works with diverse media including music, video, performance, sculpture, drawing, installation. Exhibits works that arouse our minds to thoughts of human history in the seas of East Asia, where people have come and gone without thought for national borders. Conveys a powerful message with abstract imagery, using branches, thread, and other everyday materials. Other important interests are physical actions of burying time and space, such as by coating his past works in hardened beeswax.

Pedro Reyes



10

*People's United Nations (pUN) Drone Dove*  
 Installation view at the Hammer Museum,  
 Los Angeles, 2015  
 Photo by Brian Forrest  
 ©Pedro Reyes

Born in 1972 in Mexico City, Mexico and resides there. Studied architecture. Employs sculpture, built structures, and projects to explore international relations, environmental issues, and other wide-ranging social problems. Has participated in solo and international exhibitions around the world. In recent years, has drawn attention with such works as *Disarm* (2013), which turns guns into musical instruments, and *The People's United Nations (pUN)* (2013), taking the United Nations as a motif.

Alfredo & Isabel Aquilizan



11

*Passage- Another Country* 2014  
 Collection of 21st Century Museum of  
 Contemporary Art, Kanazawa  
 ©Alfredo & Isabel Aquilizan

Maria Isabel Gaudinez-Aquilizan: born in Manila, Republic of the Philippines in 1965. Alfredo Juan Aquilizan: born in Ballesteros, Cagayan Province, Republic of the Philippines in 1962. Both live and work in Brisbane, Australia. The artists introduce personal exchange with regional communities in their works, thereby revealing distinctive local historical and cultural features. On moving from Manila to Brisbane in 2006, they began a new project entitled "Another Country" taking "home" as a subject. Their works are motivated by the objective view they obtain by commuting among different cultures. This objectivity they bring to bear on the framework of the nation-state and citizen in Asia, national boundaries, and adaptation.