

21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

PRESS RELEASE

2015.12.25



A Centennial Exhibition
INOUE Yuichi

2016.1.2 (Sat.) -
2016.3.21 (Mon.)

Exhibition Title	A Centennial Exhibition: INOUE Yuichi		
Period	Saturday, January 2, 2016 – Monday(holiday), March 21, 2015 10:00 - 18:00 (until 20:00 on Fridays and Saturdays). Open until 17:00 on January 2 and 3. Note: Tickets available until 30 minutes before closing Closed: Mondays, Jan 12 (Open on Jan 11, Mar 21)		
Venue	21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (Galleries 7-12,14)	Number of Exhibited Works	217 (*Select artworks may be rotated)
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 "The Contemporary 3: BCL Ghost in the Cell" and "Collection Exhibition 2" during the same period Advance Tickets: Ticket PIA Tel +81-(0)570-02-9999 [This exhibition ticket P code] 767-201 Lawson Ticket Tel +81-(0)570-000-777 [This exhibition ticket L code] 53730 Tickets Sales: From November 14 to March 21		
Organized by	21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (Kanazawa Art Promotion and Development Foundation)		
Supported by	General Incorporated Foundations World Paper Heritage Support Foundation KAMIMORI		
In cooperation with	The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto; UNAC TOKYO		
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About the Exhibition

A Centennial Exhibition: INOUE Yuichi will be a large-scale retrospective marking the birth 100 years ago of Inoue Yuichi (1916-1985), one of Japan's most important postwar artists.

Inoue Yuichi is among the few Japanese contemporary artists to win broad international acclaim in the postwar years. Taking the ink and paper of calligraphy tradition as his expressive medium, Inoue became a pioneering voice in the postwar Japanese art scene. This exhibition will go to the core of Inoue's art through more than 200 of his most notable works from his early to late periods.

From his 1955 "Work" series, the exhibition will present examples of Inoue's abstract calligraphy, created in response to abstract expressionism. It will also display his foremost early-period work *Gutetsu*, submitted in the 1957 São Paulo Art Biennial, and works of the 1960s such as *Kō* (Fond), *Haha* (Mother), and *Kaze* (Wind) created using innovative materials and methods of his own invention, such as glue and frozen ink. The exhibition will then move to Inoue works of the 1970s that reflect the mind in accord with lifestyle, such as *Hin* (Poverty), and final period works of the late 1970s and '80s, such as *Tori* (Bird), *Tsuki* (Moon), *Fun* (Behead), and *Taka* (Hawk) which construct an increasingly rich world.

The exhibition will highlight the varying styles for which Inoue is known, his single-character calligraphy, needless to say, but also his multi-character pieces recalling his experience of the horror of war, *Tokyo-daikūshū* (Tokyo Bombing) and *Ah Yokokawa Kokumin-gakkō* (Ah, Yokokawa National School!) His kotobagaki (word works) in which he spoke the word as part of the creative action will also be featured: works such as *Kaeru Tanjō-sai* and *Yodaka-no-hoshi* rendered in conté pencil, pencil, or carbon. The exhibition will conclude with works of Inoue's late years undertaken amid his struggle with illness. These include *Nametokoyama no Kuma* (The Bears of Nametoko Mountain) and his free-hand copies (*rinsho*) of the classics *Yan Qingli Stele* and *Jō* (Above), as well as his final piece, *Kokoro* (Mind).

Through works representing every stage his career, the exhibition will explore the world of free, unconventional calligraphy to which Inoue Yuichi remained committed throughout his life.

Exhibition curator: AKIMOTO Yuji

Director, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

Exhibition Features

Exhibition Features Largest INOUE Yuichi Retrospective Ever!

On the centennial of his birth—the definitive exhibition of the work of Inoue Yuichi, an artist whose international acclaim keeps growing.

In recent years, Inoue Yuichi's reputation has burgeoned. Critical acclaim for his work is higher than ever internationally, and major art centers such as New York are hosting Inoue exhibitions. This year being the centennial of his birth, exhibitions large and small are being held, and his work is receiving particular scrutiny.

Numerous Inoue Yuichi retrospectives have previously been held, the largest being the exhibition "YU-ICHI works 1955-85" (1989) at The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, which featured 107 works. The upcoming centennial exhibition—which will explore every aspect of the artist's world through more than 200 works—will be the definitive Inoue Yuichi exhibition and largest-scale retrospective of his works ever presented. The exhibition will present the important works critical to grasping the power and depth of Inoue's art, in first and second terms, and show the entire scope of this artist's dynamic artistic development.

From art museum collections and private collections —INOUE Yuichi's most notable works

"YU-ICHI works 1955-85" held in 1989 at The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto and other museums, was the exhibition that underscored the importance of Inoue Yuichi's work.

The artworks central to that exhibition were from the collection of The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto. Our retrospective this time presents 31 of those works along with important works from many museum collections. They include *Gutetsu*, a recognized masterpiece of his early period, and from The Museum of Modern Art, Gunma his poems of four lines of seven characters, *Tokyo-daikūshū* (Tokyo Bombing) and *Ah Yokokawa Kokumin-gakkō* (Ah, Yokokawa National School!). Further included are important works from private collections rarely enjoying occasion to be shown. These include such single-character works as *Haha* (Mother), *Ai* (Love), *Hana* (Flower), *Hin* (Poverty), *Fune* (Boat), and *Tori* (Bird) and such multi-character works as the classic poem *Bukkōkokushi-ge*. They also include examples of Inoue's small-character calligraphy, kanji, hiragana, and katakana rendered in conté pencil, charcoal, and pencil.

Among them, particular interest will go to a 14 meter-long charcoal work of the entire text of Miyazawa Kenji's *Nametokoyama no kuma* (The Bears of Nametoko Mountain) and a some 30 meter-long *rinsho* (quotation) of the classical master, Yan Zhenqing. The exhibition will thus present not only Inoue's foremost works but large-size works having little prior occasion to be shown.

A physical immersion in INOUE Yuichi's artwork series

Another highlight of the exhibition will be the manner in which Inoue's works are displayed in the galleries of 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa. To physically immerse viewers in a dynamically unfolding sequence of artworks, a series of single-character Inoue works will be exhibited in a large gallery with a 12 meter-high ceiling. In their encounter with the distinctive spaces of this museum, the works of Inoue Yuichi will awaken a new world of calligraphy, never before known.

Related Programs

Opening Lecture Series

Two polemicists will introduce “the fascination of Inoue Yuichi’s calligraphy.”

Date/time Saturday 9 January Session [1] 13:30~14:45 (Doors open 13:15), Session [2] 15:00~16:15

Venue Lecture Hall, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

Admission Free

Capacity First 50 arrivals to each session (no reservation needed)

Session [1] “About Inoue Yuichi: Calligraphy is an Art for Everyone”

Lecturer: UNAGAMI Masaomi (Art critic)

Art critic Unagami Masaomi personally knew Inoue Yuichi and was among the first to position his work as contemporary art. Unagami will discuss the fascination of Yuichi’s calligraphy with its unique, richly expressive power transcending calligraphy and tradition.

Section [2] “The Fascination of Inoue Yuichi’s Work Seen in Objects, Characters and Onomatopoeia”

Lecturer: KURIMOTO Takayuki (Special research fellow, Institute for Art Anthropology, Tama Art University; Art critic)

The young art critic Kurimoto Takayuki, who has drawn attention with his analysis of contemporary calligraphy’s relationship with abstract art, will discuss the rich imagery of Inoue Yuichi’s works. Offering clear keywords, he will look at Inoue’s works broadly from varying perspectives including art and language.

HAGA Toru x UNAGAMI Masaomi INOUE Yuichi Centennial Talk

February 14, 2016 will be the centennial of INOUE Yuichi’s birth, the day he would have turned 100. In commemoration, a talk by two persons closely familiar with Inoue and his work will be held on the prior day, February 13. HAGA Toru, a researcher in Japanese culture with broad knowledge of art, and Unagami Masaomi, who can speak of Inoue Yuichi with deep insight into the man, will discuss Inoue’s daring yet sensitive character and his fascination as a revolutionary who brought calligraphy into a new realm of expression after the war.

Date/time Saturday 13 February 14:30~16:00 (Venue opens 14:15)

Lecture Haga Toru (Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo; Honorary President, Kyoto University of Art and Design; Director, Shizuoka Prefectural Museum of Art.) / Unagami Masaomi (Art critic)

Venue Lecture Hall, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

Admission Free

Capacity First 50 arrivals (no reservation needed)

INOUE Yuichi Centennial Commemorative Tea Ceremony

Host Unagami Masaomi / Rakushikai Unagami Soraku

Date/time Sunday 14 February

Venue Shoutou-an, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

*Details to be posted on the museum website at a later date

IMAFUKU Ryuta Lecture: “‘Fude [Brush]’ and ‘Fumi-te [Tramper]’ – INOUE Yuichi and MIYAZAWA Kenji”

Inoue Yuichi’s calligraphy was an unremitting rebellion against the reduction of characters to symbols. Between Inoue Yuichi and MIYAZAWA Kenji, a rich dialogue unfolded concerning physical “imitation” and “rapport” in older times before language was reduced to abstract writing systems. IMAFUKU Ryuta will discuss the beauty of Inoue’s art, which stands on the cusp between “language” and “physical memory.”

Date/time Sunday 13 March 14:00~5:30 (Doors open 13:45)

Lecturer Imafuku Ryuta (Cultural anthropologist and critic. Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)

Venue Lecture Hall, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

Admission Free

Capacity First 70 arrivals (no reservation needed)

Workshop

Lecturer KITAMI Otomaru (Supervisor, General Incorporated Foundations World Paper Heritage Support Foundation KAMIMORI)

Venue Kids Studio, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

*Details to be posted on the museum website at a later date

Artist Profile

INOUE Yuichi

- 1916 Born in Asakusa, Tokyo.
- 1935 Appointed teacher at Yokokawa National School, Honjo Ward, Tokyo.
- 1941 Studies calligraphy with UEDA Sokyū.
- 1952 Forms the "BOKUJIN" Group and serves as chief editor of its monthly magazine "Bokujin" (until its 50th issue).
- 1957 Shows "Gutetsu" at the São Paulo Art Biennial. Attracts the attention of English art critic Herbert Read.
- 1959 Submits work in documenta 2 (Kassel) at the urging of Kasper König. *Gutetsu* is published in Herbert Read's *A Concise History of Modern Painting*.
- 1976 Retires, after 41 years of teaching, as principal of the Asahi Elementary School in Samukawa-cho, Kanagawa Prefecture.
- 1985 Dies of liver cancer at the age of 69.
- 1986 The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto acquires 62 of his foremost works.
- 1989 Retrospective "YU-ICHI works 1955-85" held at The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto. (Exhibition travels to Saitama, Niigata, Yamaguchi, Fukuoka, Ehime, and Koriyama).
- 1994 His works *Ah Yokokawa Kokumin-gakkō* and *Muga* appear in "Scream Against the Sky: Japanese Art After 1945" organized by Alexandra Munroe (Guggenheim Museum, New York).
- 1995 "YU-ICHI 1916-1985" exhibition held at Kunsthalle Basel in Basel, Switzerland. Kasper König holds Inoue Yuichi shows simultaneously at three art museums in Frankfurt: "Yuichi HIN" (Schirn Kunsthalle, Germany), "Yuichi Die Bombardierung Tokyos" (Karmeliterkloster, Frankfurt), and "Yuichi Wirtschaftswachstum" (Museum Angewandte Kunst).
- 1996-2000 "YU-ICHI: Catalogue Raisonné of the Works 1949-1985" by Unagami Masaomi is published in three volumes by UNAC Tokyo.
- 2000 International art symposiums are held both in Kyoto and Tokyo to commemorate the completion in three volumes of the "Catalogue Raisonné."
- 2005 "Yuichi and Yecker" exhibition held at Langen Foundation (Germany).
- 2013 His work appears at the Sharjah Biennial 11 (UAE).



Source: *Shukan Asahi*,
February 5, 1956 issue

Related Publication

Inoue Yuichi 1955-1985

Together with this large-scale retrospective marking the centennial of Inoue Yuichi's birth, the history of the artist's career during thirty years from 1955 to 1985 will be surveyed in a publication compiling important works from his early to late periods. Included will be analyses on Inoue Yuichi's work by leading authorities, introducing the entire scope of his art.

Essay contributors

UNAGAMI Masaomi (Art critic)

IMAFUKU Ryuta (Cultural anthropologist and critic; Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)

KURIMOTO Takayuki (Special research fellow, Institute for Art Anthropology, Tama Art University; Art critic)

KITAMI Otomaru (Supervisor, General Incorporated Foundations World Paper Heritage Support Foundation KAMIMORI)

AKIMOTO Yuji (Director, 21st Century Museum of Art, Kanazawa; Director, The University Art Museum, Tokyo University of the Arts)

Number of illustrations About 210

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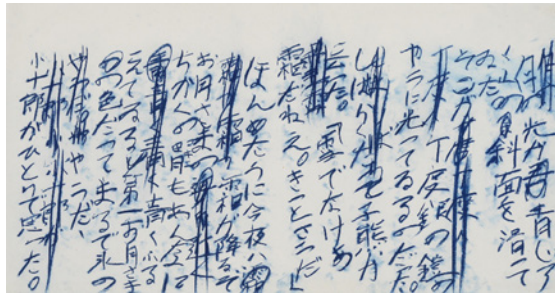
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Nametokoyama no Kuma 1985
charcoal and conté pencil on Japanese paper
50 x 1,407 cm
Private collection

3



Gutetsu 1956
paste ink on Japanese paper
187 x 178 cm
The National Museum of Art, Osaka

4



Kokoro 1985
ink on Japanese paper
143 x 182 cm
Private collection

5



Jō 1984
ink on Japanese paper
137 x 180 cm
Private collection

6



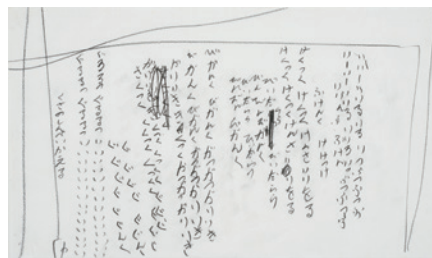
Hin 1972
ink on Japanese paper
125 x 180 cm
The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto

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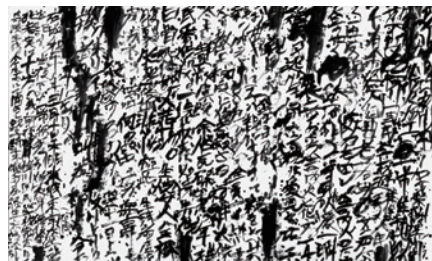
Tokyo-daikūshū 1978
ink on Japanese paper
188 x 71 cm (each)
The Museum of Modern Art, Gunma

8



Kaeru Tanjo-sai 1983
pencil on Japanese paper
32 x 55 cm
Private collection

9



Ah Yokokawa Kokumin-gakkō 1978
ink on Japanese paper
145 x 244 cm
The Museum of Modern Art, Gunma
(This work on display until February 14, 2016)