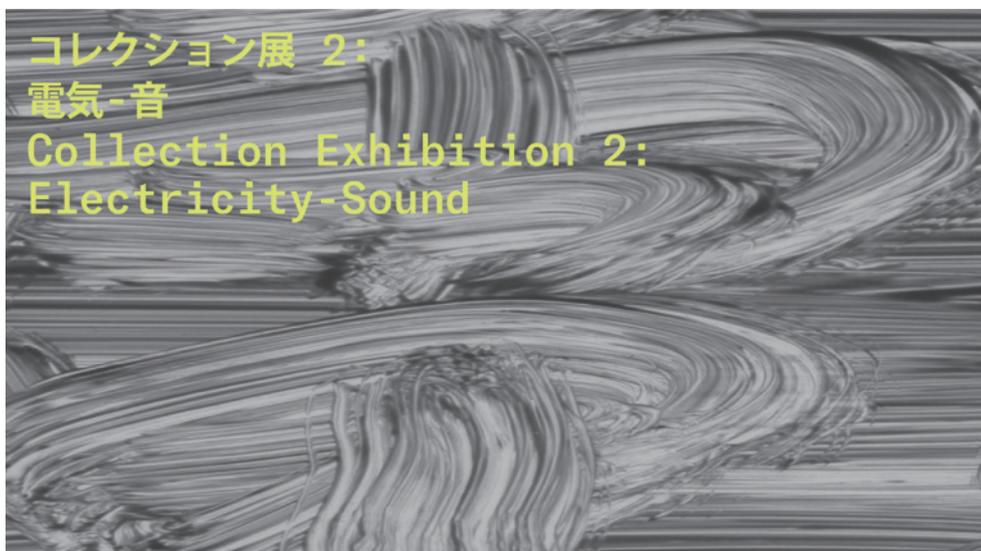


Collection Exhibition 2: Electricity-Sound



2023.11.18 (Sat)-2024.5.12 (Sun)

Exhibition Title	Collection Exhibition 2: Electricity-Sound
Period	Saturday / November 18, 2023 – Sunday / May 12, 2024
Hours	10:00-18:00 (until 20:00 on Fridays and Saturdays) *Ticket sales end 30 minutes before closing
Venue	21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Gallery 1, 3-6
Closed	Mondays (except January 8, February 12), December 29 – January 1, January 4, January 9, February 13, April 30, May 7, 2024
Number of exhibiting works	45 items (Some exhibits may be changed during the exhibition period.)
Admission	Adults: ¥450 (¥360) / Students: ¥310 (¥240) / 18 and under: Free / 65 and over: ¥360 *Fees in parentheses are for groups of 20 or more *Admission free for Kanazawa Citizens on Promote the Arts Day (second Saturday of each month). Proof of residency required.
Organized by	21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (Kanazawa Art Promotion and Development Foundation)
Inquiries	21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa Tel: +81-(0)76-220-2800

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**Exhibition
Outline**

Today, we live with all kinds of sounds, from natural environmental sounds to man-made electronic ones. Sound has the power to connect us to the world not only through the mere act of hearing/listening, but also through our bodily senses.

In the museum's collection, works with a deep relationship to sound are inseparable from electricity, which is both a natural phenomenon and an element of energy. This is because electricity is essential to the recording and reproduction of sound. Therefore, this exhibition will focus on both sound and electricity and the relationship between them, and train our ear, so to speak, to the electrical connections that emanate from these works.

The exhibition will also explore trends in art where invisible sounds have been transformed into traces, drawings, electrical signals, and data. The process of giving form to sound and the methodologies by which it is transformed are closely related to the evolution of sound reproduction technologies such as recorders and players, and their development promises to highlight issues related to contemporary art in general, such as recording and reproduction, and preservation and restoration. Through these themes, this exhibition introduces works from the collection that are not merely sound art, but also relate to a wide range of fields such as science and philosophy, and which unfold visually and acoustically.

Takagi Yuu (Assistant Curator)

**Exhibition
Features****Focuses on the relationship between sound and electricity, the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa presents a variety of works from its collection that can be perceived both visually and audibly**

Electricity is indispensable to the recording and reproduction of sound-related works in the museum's collection. Focusing on sound and electricity and the relationship between the two, this exhibition will explore the electrical connections between sight and sound, while also traversing the realms of science and philosophy.

Explores trends in art where invisible sound has been transformed into various forms and made visible

Works related to sound are presented to us in visible form as traces, drawings, electrical signals, and data. Methods of converting sound into various forms have evolved along with the development of recording and playback equipment. Issues related to recording and reproduction, and preservation and restoration, highlight issues related to contemporary art in general.

Carsten Nicolai's *Realistic*, on view for the first time in 15 years, and works by John Cage and Mieko Shiomi, on view for the first time since they were acquired in 2022

On display will be Carsten Nicolai's *Realistic*, which was shown in the 2008 Collection Exhibition I "Connection," three prints by John Cage from his *Fontana Mix* series and pieces by Mieko Shiomi, also known as a member of Fluxus, from her *Events & Games* and *Bottled Music* series being exhibited for the first time since they were acquired in 2022.

The exhibition will feature new works by invited artists Kazumichi Komatsu and Tomohito Wakui, both born in the 1990s and active in a wide range of fields, including music

Kazumichi Komatsu will present *Earless* for the first time at the museum, in which the exhibition space itself becomes a sound reproduction device. Vibrating speakers embedded

in the walls playback AI-generated voices, Komatsu's own voice, and the vibrations themselves. Tomohito Wakui will transmit analog audio signals over one thousand meters of cable, exposing the materiality of analog audio signals. In addition, Mieko Shiomi's *Events & Games* and *Bottled Music* will be reproduced using Komatsu and Wakui's own interpretations and means. We hope you will take note of Komatsu and Wakui's new works, created by reflecting on the museum's unique exhibition space, and which capture the medium of sound through the information environment and technologies of our time.

Exhibiting artists (in alphabetical order)

John CAGE
Janet CARDIFF & George BURES MILLER
MOHRI Yuko
Carsten NICOLAI
SHIOMI Mieko
Elias SIME
TANAKA Atsuko

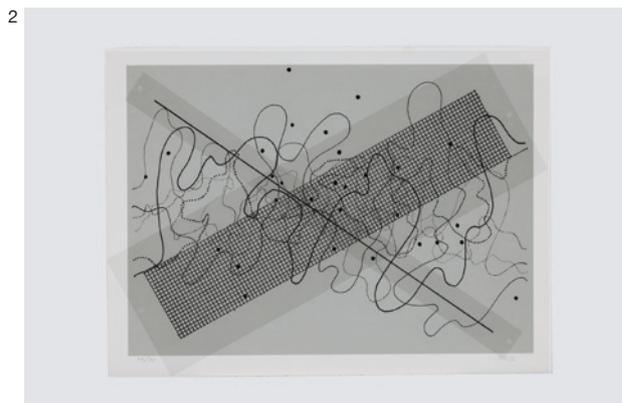
Invited Artists:
KOMATSU Kazumichi
WAKUI Tomohito

Gallery notes

John CAGE

Born in Los Angeles, USA in 1912. Died in New York in 1992.

John Cage was a pioneer of experimental music and is known as a composer, poet, thinker, and mushroom researcher. He revolutionized the concept of music, incorporating electronic and non-instrumental sounds, action, silence, and indeterminacy into his compositions. He was also devoted to Eastern thought and established the genre of "chance music" through works such as *Music of Changes* (1951) and *4'33"* (1952). In addition to music, Cage produced works in many other artistic fields, including drawings, prints, and sculptures. Cage also began working with electronic sounds in the 1950s, and his print (silkscreen) work *Fontana Mix* was based on the graphic score of the piece of the same name that he composed in 1958. This graphic score consists of six different curves on paper, with polka dots, grids, and straight lines printed on three sheets of film. During a performance, a musician freely combines these films to create a complete score, with the intersections of the lines and dots representing elements of volume, tone, pitch, and so on. Unlike conventional fixed scores, this method leaves the composition of the score itself up to the performer, and is representative of the music of indeterminacy and chance that Cage pursued from the 1950s onward. As one of the possible forms of musical scores in electronic music, this work provides an opportunity for us to consider how the medium of sound is recorded and reproduced in a museum.



John CAGE, *Fontana Mix (Dark Gray)*, 1982
Collection: 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa
©John Cage Trust.
photo: KIOKU Keizo

Janet CARDIFF & George BURES MILLER

Janet Cardiff: Born in Brussels, Canada in 1957. Lives and works in Grindrod, Canada.

George Bures Miller: Born in Vegreville, Canada in 1960. Lives and works in Grindrod, Canada.

Cardiff and Bures Miller began working together around 1995 and are based in Grindrod. Their sound installations are backed by a kind of stage-like formality and advanced sound technology, offering a combined perceptual experience of “hearing” and “seeing.” This gives them a distinctly theatrical quality that immerses the viewer in their own unique narratives. In this work, *The Cabinet of Curiousness*, speakers are built into each of the 20 drawers of an old cabinet. Different sounds are played when the drawers are opened, and stop playing when they are closed. These sound sources are composed of sound effects, voices, and music drawn from a diverse sound archive, ranging from the singing of the last castrato (a male singer castrated before his voice breaks) in history, to the sound of the artists themselves reading aloud. By opening and closing the drawers, the viewer plays the role of a performer who can manipulate these sound sources at will, thereby transforming the work into a kind of instrument. This work encourages the viewer to engage actively with the work, stimulating and expanding the auditory and tactile senses, and is unique in terms of how it allows us to experience the work without the aid of sight. It also showcases important themes such as the archivability of sound and the concept of time in sound, as a response to the emphasis on the visual in contemporary art.



3 Janet CARDIFF & George BURES MILLER,
The Cabinet of Curiousness, 2017
Collection: 21st Century Museum of
Contemporary Art, Kanazawa
© Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller
photo: KIOKU Keizo

MOHRI Yuko

Born in Kanagawa, Japan in 1980. Lives and works in Tokyo.

Mohri Yuko creates installations and sculptures focusing on “events” that change in the environment, using physical phenomena such as magnetism, electricity, sound, light, air movement, and gravity. Just as the title “copula” means “connection” in Latin, this work connects various elements, such as one object to another, viewer to artwork, or artwork to its surrounding environment through invisible forces, prompting us to examine all the relationships in the world we live in. Without specifying where it should be installed, and by allowing the spacing between parts to be freely determined, this work allows for the creation of an infinite number of new relationships between the place, people, and the work. Mohri’s mode of artistic expression, which incorporates familiar objects into mechanical devices, brings together knowledge of physical phenomena and electrical engineering while proposing the reconstruction of a new relationship between humans and the world. In this work, the way in which various actors are connected to the world through electricity becomes apparent, as alluded to by the exposed electrical outlets.



MOHRI Yuko, *copula*, 2020
 Collection: 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa
 photo: KIOKU Keizo

Carsten NICOLAI

Born in Karl-Marx, former East Germany, (now, Chemnitz, Germany) in 1965. Lives and works in Berlin and Chemnitz.

Nicolai is a visual and sound artist who produces and presents electronic music under the name *alva noto*. In 1999, he also founded the “raster-noton” label, which releases a wide variety of experimental music. Nicolai’s work explores the creation of new fields by fusing various disciplines such as painting, sculpture, architecture, sound, natural science, and philosophy.

On display at this exhibition are Nicolai’s *telefonken*, in which digital sounds including noise and pulses (electric currents) are connected to the video input of a monitor to create an image; *realistic*, in which all the sounds, including noise, are recorded and accumulated to visualize the complexity and connections of the world; and *milch*, which expresses the scientific fact that sound is the vibration of transmission medium such as air. These works not only question the relationship between information and human perception, but also present the diverse characteristics of sound as defined by the technological sound reproduction equipment of the time.



Carsten NICOLAI, *realistic*, 1998
 Collection: 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa
 © carsten nicolai
 courtesy: Galerie EIGEN+ ART Leipzig/Berlin
 photo: FUKUNAGA Kazuo



Carsten NICOLAI, *milch (20hz)*, 2000
 Collection: 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa
 © carsten nicolai
 courtesy: Galerie EIGEN+ ART Leipzig/Berlin



Carsten NICOLAI, *milch (110hz)*, 2000
 Collection: 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa
 © carsten nicolai
 courtesy: Galerie EIGEN+ ART Leipzig/Berlin

SHIOMI Mieko

Born in Okayama, Japan in 1938. Lives and works in Osaka.

While a student at department of Musicology of Tokyo University of the Arts, Shiomi Mieko formed “Group Ongaku” with KOSUGI Takehisa and others, and has since been involved in improvised performances and unique “event” works. In 1964, she went to New York and participated in the “Fluxus”, an artistic movement led by George MACIUNAS that developed globally. After returning to Japan, she developed these events into performances, and also went on to organize many Fluxus events both in Japan and abroad. During the 1990s, Shiomi developed an interest in electronic technology, creating and staging the *Fluxus Media Opera*, which decoded many of the Fluxus events using the electronic technologies of the time. Since then, she has continued to work in multiple fields, including music, performance, and visual art, using the transmedia method of creating works in a variety of media based on a single concept. The presentation of Shiomi’s work at this exhibition will focus on *Events and Games*, a collection of poetic actions that could be seen as scores, called “events”; “the Water Music” series, arguably one of the sources of the transmedia concept that Shiomi has developed, which consists of “continuing the creative evolution of an artwork by transferring it from one medium to the next”; and the “Bottled Music” series, which gives music a physical form and presents its interplay of sound, word, and action with a touch of humor. In addition, several “events” and “water music” are reproduced through the interpretations and methods of the invited artists.



8 SHIOMI Mieko, *Events & Games*, 2005
Collection: 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa
© SHIOMI Mieko
photo: KIOKU Keizo



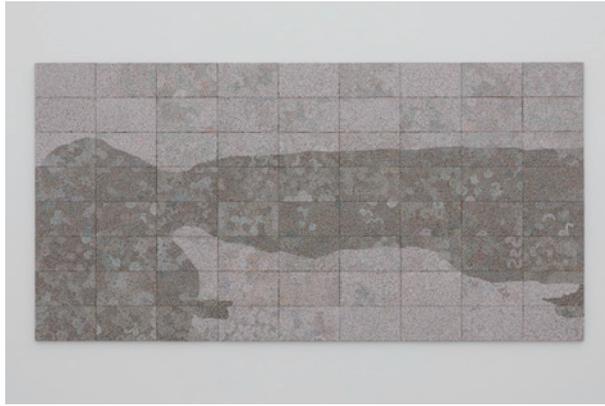
9 SHIOMI Mieko, *Water Music (blue label)*, 1964/2019
Collection: 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa
© SHIOMI Mieko
photo: KIOKU Keizo

Elias SIME

Born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 1968. Lives and works there.

Elias Sime has been creating collages and sculptures for over 30 years using thread, buttons, plastic, animal skins, horns, fabrics, and bottle caps. Most of these materials are items that have been discarded in Addis Ababa’s Mercato, an open-air market, said to be the largest in Africa. By reusing discarded electronic components in resourceful ways, transported from far-flung places around the world to his hometown of Addis Ababa, Sime creates intricate works of art on a massive scale. Sime titles these works the “Tightropes” series, a reference to the precision and discipline required to walk the tightrope, and the dangerous balance between the advances made possible by technology and its detrimental impact on the environment. In this exhibition, the work is presented as a demonstration of the electrical connections of technology on a global scale, and the subtitle, “Noiseless,” points to the fact that silence creates a creative space of free association. This silence can also be read as a metaphor for invisible wiring and electrical connections.

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Elias Sime, *Tightrope: Noiseless 5*, 2019
 Collection: 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa
 © Elias Sime 2023.
 Courtesy the artist and James Cohan, New York.
 photo: KIOKU Keizo

TANAKA Atsuko

Born in Osaka, Japan in 1932. Died in Nara in 2005.

Tanaka Atsuko attended the Art Institute attached to the Osaka Municipal Museum of Art, where she began exploring figurative painting and new forms of artistic expression. In 1955 she joined the Gutai Art Association, attracting critical attention for works she exhibited at the group's exhibitions, such as *Work (Bell)* and *Electric Dress*, a work consisting of a human figure with lighting tubes attached that flickered. Around 1957, she began producing paintings inspired by the bulbs and electric cables of *Electric Dress*, and thereafter consistently produced paintings based on the same theme. Tanaka's paintings, with their countless circles and intricate lines, have been highly acclaimed both in Japan and abroad. Tanaka's work at this exhibition consists mainly of prototypes based on *Untitled (Study for "Bell")*, which our museum produced in 2007. This work consists of 20 bells connected to each other with an interval of two meters between them, made to automatically ring in sequence by a motor. Also on display are drawings and paintings, including *Drawing after "Electric Dress"* and *Untitled (Study for "Bell")*, which can be considered both the blueprint and score for the installation work. The focus here will be on Tanaka Atsuko as a conceptual artist, who was one of the first to incorporate immaterial elements such as sound and light into her art after World War II.

11



TANAKA Atsuko, *Untitled (Study for "Bell")*, 1954
 Collection: 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa
 © Kanayama Akira and Tanaka Atsuko Association
 photo: NAKAMICHI Atsushi / Nacása & Partners

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TANAKA Atsuko, *work*, 1968
 Collection: 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa
 © Kanayama Akira and Tanaka Atsuko Association
 photo: NAKAMICHI Atsushi / Nacása & Partners

KOMATSU Kazumichi (Invited Artists)

Born in Kochi, Japan in 1992. Lives and works in Kyoto.

Komatsu Kazumichi is a musician, artist, and DJ who graduated from Kyoto City University of Arts in 2022 with a doctorate in Media Arts. He has released his music under multiple labels, including *angoisse* (Barcelona), *BUS editions* (London), *flau* (Tokyo), *Manila Institute* (New York), *psalmus diuersae* (San Francisco), and *REST NOW!* (Milan). He also works with light and songs while conducting research on the relationship between information and the body, and the adjacent methods of memory and the transmission of tradition. At this exhibition, Komatsu presents *Earless*, where the exhibition space itself becomes a sound reproduction device. In this work, a vibrating speaker installed inside a wall plays AI-generated voices, Komatsu's own voice, and pure vibrations. This acoustic space, where the sound source is invisible, alludes to the information environment that we inhabit alongside all kinds of sounds, seems to hold the potential to reorganize our perception of the body in a way that goes beyond hearing and listening. Furthermore, it raises the question of how non-material elements such as "voice", "sound", and "time" will be inherited within the context of museum as institution for collecting and preserving artworks.



KOMATSU Kazumichi

13

14



[Reference Image]
KOMATSU Kazumichi, *Painful (carpet)*, 2022
LED, fiber cable, video, carpet
photo: TAKEHISA Naoki

15



[Reference Image]
KOMATSU Kazumichi, *Sucker*, 2023
Sound
photo: TAKEHISA Naoki

WAKUI Tomohito (Invited Artists)

Born in Niigata, Japan in 1990. Lives and works in Tokyo.

Wakui Tomohito is an artist and musician, working in a wide variety of fields. In addition, as the director and curator of WHITEHOUSE, an alternative space, he has been envisioning how to generate an uncontrollable, integrated art space. Wakui has been expressing how “organic nature” has been abandoned as technology has evolved, mainly by using junk parts and audio-visual equipment. For this exhibition, he develops his “Monaurals” series, in which analog audio signals are transmitted over one thousand meters with RCA cables to increase the fragility and vulnerability of the signals. As a result, the sound played back is interrupted and altered, revealing the materiality of these analog audio signals. Furthermore, the audio cables spread throughout the exhibition space reconnect us, who have been divided by excessive information, and evoke various relationships that have been abandoned in our subconscious.



KOMATSU Kazumichi

16

17



[Reference Image]
WAKUI Tomohito,
MONAURALS/FANTASIA, 2023
Sound, speakers, audio cables,
power amplifiers, playback equipment
photo: WHITEHOUSE

**Related Programs
(tentative)**

Collection Exhibition 2: Closing Live Performance

Date: May 11 (Sat) and 12 (Sun), 2024

Venue: 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa Theater 21 or Project Room

*When details are finalized, they will be posted on the museum’s website and social media.

**Free days for
Kanazawa citizens**

Promote the Arts Day

2nd Saturday of each month during the exhibition period

(December 9, January 13, February 10, March 9, April 13, May 11)

*Admission on the above days is free for Kanazawa citizens. (Proof of residency required.)

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