

# LA ART SHOW 2016

MODERN | CONTEMPORARY

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## **Japanese Contemporary Art Program at LA Art Show Features Galleries, Performance Art and Lecture**

### **Artist Issai Tanaka Presents *Beyond Kaisho, Sumi-ism* Live Performance**

(Los Angeles, CA– December 15, 2015) The LA Art Show will present a Japanese contemporary art program at the upcoming show taking place from January 27-31, 2016 at the Los Angeles Convention Center. Comprised of galleries, a daily performance piece and lecture, the program is curated to showcase Japan's diverse landscape of emerging art.

#### ***Beyond Kaisho, Sumi-ism* Live Performance by Issai Tanaka of Gallery Kitai:**

**Performances will take place at the following times: Wednesday, 1/27 at 9pm; Thursday, 1/28 at 4pm; Friday, 1/29 at 4pm; Saturday, 1/30 at 4pm and Sunday, 1/31 at 12pm.**

Issai Tanaka of Gallery Kitai is one of Japan's leading young calligraphy artists. His style ranges from modern to traditional. Tanaka writes in huge *KAISHO* (a printed style of calligraphy). It is said that only a giant or monster can write in this size, but Issai is a regular sized man.



Japanese calligraphy is one of the most popular fine art forms in Japan, but very few artists are able to write large scale *KASHIO*, because it requires a bird's eye view. Not given to chance, each line is carefully constructed. From the direction, the form and the ending of lines, to the balance between elements, and the empty spaces in between, Japanese calligraphy is the essence of the wabi sabi mentality so valued in art. The pieces he will be creating at the LA Art Show will be approximately 10 ft x 10 ft.

Issai Tanaka will begin with one word, which will be explained as the piece progresses. At the end of the show, the artist will have explained why each word was chosen. Careful and meticulous, it takes the artist more than 10 minutes to create each word.

**Japanese Pop Art Now: Panel Discussion, Thursday, January 28 at 3pm**

Japanese Pop art has become very popular in the US and thru out the world. This lecture will look at the influence pop art has in Japanese culture and the evolution of this art form in the Japanese art scene. Anime, manga, superflat and 'cool in Japan' will all be addressed.

The panel discussion will feature three contemporary Japanese artists, each with a different and distinctive style.

Panelists include: Hiroshi Mori (S.E.A Gallery), Kenji Tsutsumi (Watanabe Fine Art), and Takahiro Ima (Taimei Gallery), with anime voice-over actor Lisle Wilkerson, moderating.

**Curated selection of Japanese Contemporary Art Galleries:** A selection of galleries that focus on pop art, manga, super-flat, and contemporary brush / word art will be on view at the 2016 LA Art Show. Participating galleries include:

**Fukuda Gallery:** Niigata-based Fukuda Gallery will present a solo show of Ryuma Imai's works. A son of the late Toshimitsu IMAI, an internationally acclaimed Japanese contemporary artist, Ryuma Imai uses 'gravity' as a driving force in his colorful paintings of living creatures. Imai pours enamel directly onto the surface of paper and canvas creating spontaneous lines and forms following the images he has in his mind.



**Gallery Kitai:** Tokyo-based Gallery Kitai will present leading calligraphy artist Issai Tanaka, who will be painting live, daily. The gallery will exhibit contemporary works in various mediums including several pieces by Mizuho Koyama. The artist's featured series combine letters and words through geometrical and architectural approaches. Drawing on ancient poetry such as the Japanese Man'yoshu and the works of the Persian mystic poet Rumi, Koyama forms her own designs and images in a process that utilizes ancient artifacts to build contemporary structures. Additional featured artists include: Reiko Tsunashima, Sanmu Kunizaka, Michiyoshi Deguchi and Kunio Abe.

**Mizoe Gallery:** Tokyo-based Mizoe Gallery will present a solo show of the internationally renowned artist Tamie Okuyama. The artist will be attending the LA Art Show and available to speak about her work. In addition, the gallery will feature a piece by artist Paul Klee.





**S.E.A:** Los Angeles-based Shima Entertainment & Art (S.E.A) was founded by Kyoko Shima with a mission to establish a bridge between Japan and the United States through the exploration and understanding of culture, art, and the creative process. S.E.A provides a collective environment for emerging and accomplished artists who want to create and show their work in both countries.

S.E.A. will present a solo exhibition of Hiroshi Mori. The artist is known for his delicately embossed details and the glittering signature gold that endow each piece of work with dramatic complexity that images can never fairly portray. Born in 1977, Mori creates works that fuse modern Japanese animations and manga together with classical paintings of the West. “My current works are mainly focused on the mixing of animation and classic paintings. My take on the two revolves around the gap between the coterie culture of Japanese animation and manga, and the absolute authority that coils around Japan’s traditional art and classic religious paintings. By combining images from these two worlds, both the professionals from the circle of Fine Arts and people familiar with animation and manga can look at my paintings and hopefully understand the mischievous sense of humor I try to convey,” states Mori.

**Taimei Gallery:** Taimei Gallery will present a solo show by the artist Takahiro Imai. Known for his unique portraits of women, the artist merges solid drawing technique with a contemporary sensitivity. Imai’s paintings reflect contemporary Japanese culture. Takahiro Imai grew up in an environment full of animation, manga, Internet. His paintings are loved not only in Japan, but also in Asia, Europe, and America. Though adopting traditional techniques of oil painting for the female motif, Imai succeeds in making a contemporary taste and narrative feature stand out.



**Watanabe Gallery:** The Osaka-based gallery will present a solo show of Tsutsumi Kenji. “I am a traveler on the journey and my work has evolved to the theme of travelers. I have drawn a solitary journey, a journey with a dog, a journey with a family contentedly settled, and so on. I visualize those journeys taking place in locations that look familiar but do not exist,” states Kenji. The artist is a member of the Kokugaki Society for National Painting. The artist will be on hand to discuss his works.

In recent years, the LA Art Show has become the most internationally diverse art platform in the Western world, bringing in the largest groupings of Korean, Chinese and Japanese galleries outside of Asia. Beginning in 2010, the Show has actively developed its international gallery offerings to provide collectors with a unique opportunity, to spot international trends and zeitgeist through art, a medium that has the ability to transcend language.

The LA Art Show takes place from January 27-31, 2016 at the Los Angeles Convention Center, West Hall A 1201 South Figueroa Street, 90015. For additional information, visit [www.laartshow.com](http://www.laartshow.com). General admission to the LA Art Show is \$20. Media inquiries please contact Agnes Gomes-Koizumi at [agnes@agkmedia.com](mailto:agnes@agkmedia.com) or call 323-937-5488.