

January 13, 2016 updated**PRESS RELEASE****NHK** international, inc.**Project for Participation in Overseas Media Arts Festival**
Special Exhibition: *Crazy Planet: Ghosts, Folk Monsters, and Aliens in Manga – An Aspect of Japanese Media Arts*

The Agency for Cultural Affairs organizes participation in various overseas media arts festivals etc. through projects planned and managed by NHK international, Inc. The aim is to introduce outstanding works in such fields as media art, video, the websites, videogames, cartoons and comics. Exhibitions, screenings, presentations and so on are arranged at foreign festivals and other venues with their focus on award-winning works from the Japan Media Arts Festival.

An exhibition, *Crazy Planet: Ghosts, Folk Monsters, and Aliens in Manga – An Aspect of Japanese Media Arts*, will be presented from Wednesday, 20th to Sunday, 31st January, 2016 at Matadero Madrid in Madrid, Spain.

Project for Participation in Overseas Media Arts Festival***Crazy Planet: Ghosts, Folk Monsters, and Aliens in Manga***
- *An Aspect of Japanese Media Arts* -

Venue: Nave 16, Matadero Madrid. (Plaza de Legazpi, 8, 28045 Madrid, Spain)

Period: Wednesday, 20th to Sunday, 31st January, 2016 *Closed on Monday

Opening reception: Wednesday, 20th January at 7:00p.m.

Hours: 16:00-21:00 on weekdays, 11:00-21:00 Saturday and Sunday

Admission: Free

<http://jmaf-promote.jp/>

Organizer: Japan Media Arts Festival

Co-organizer: Matadero Madrid, The Japan Foundation, Madrid

Honary patronage: Embassy of Japan in Spain

Planning Director: KANAZAWA Kodama (Independent curator)

Project advisor: YOSHIOKA Hiroshi

(Professor, Graduate School of Letters, Kyoto University / Aesthetics and Art Theory)

MOURI Yoshitaka

(Musical Creativity and the Environment, Tokyo University of the Arts / Sociology)

[Inquiries]

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Participation in Overseas Media Arts Festival***Crazy Planet: Ghosts, Folk Monsters, and Aliens in Manga*****- *An aspect of Japanese Media Arts* -**

A Japan Media Arts Festival's special exhibition *Crazy Planet: Ghosts, Folk Monsters, and Aliens in Manga - An Aspect of Japanese Media Arts* - will be exhibited at the comprehensive Matadero Madrid media complex in the Spanish capital of Madrid. Relations between Japan and Spain date back some 460 years to the arrival in Japan of the Spanish missionary, Francis Xavier, in 1549 and the visit of the Keicho Embassy to Spain more than 400 years ago. Artistic and other cultural exchanges and travel between the two countries have become very active in recent years.

The venue, Matadero Madrid, was built in the early twentieth century as Madrid's first modern market and became known as a lively place where citizens would gather. It was used as a military facility in wartime and army base under the Franco regime. A new era for the buildings began with the basing there of the headquarters of the Spanish National Ballet in 1990. Renovation work from 1996 then turned the Matadero into a citizens' cultural center, a center for contemporary art and design, in 2007. In these buildings which have borne witness to so much of Madrid's modern history, the exhibition of comic (manga) drawings will present Japan's long and distinctive tradition of depicting interactions between different worlds.

Theme**Planning director: KANAZAWA Kodama**

Rumiko Takahashi's *Urusei Yatsura (Annoying Types from the Stars)* (1978-87) was a comedy in which aliens, monsters, small gods, time travelers, ghouls and folktale characters appeared one after another in a commonplace Japanese town to woo the senior high school boy hero. The SF fantasy work could be said to have expressed the mistrust and disillusionment born of the great social changes of the 1970's, including the shifts from Chinese-based to contemporary Western culture, influx of post-war American culture and rise of the consumer society. This representative work of an era of extreme social turmoil for Japan exerted a far-reaching influence on the Japanese comics, cartoons and light novels which followed.

The exhibition picks up a number of works which handle this everyday interaction between different worlds as an aspect of Japan's visual arts. It places a special focus on the latest exemplars, the works of Ryo Hirano, to peruse his contemporary inspiration. In our Internet-connected contemporary world, these confusions may well seem familiar to the people of every land.

KANAZAWA Kodama / Independent curator**A contemporary art curator active in Japan and abroad who handles a broad range of Japanese and global contemporary art, including comics and new media art.**

Kanazawa has been curating exhibitions ever since graduating from the Tokyo University of the Arts: at the Contemporary Art Museum, Kumamoto (2001-6); Kawasaki City Museum (2006-13). She completed MA Curating Contemporary Art at Royal College of Art in London in 2015. Major exhibitions curated include *Yūichi Yokoyama: Wandering Through Maps* (Pavillon Blanc, Colomiers, 2014) and the Spiral 30th Anniversary Exhibition, *Spectrum: Examining Today, Searching for the Future* (Spiral, Tokyo, 2015). Co-author of *Manga to Myujiamu ga Deau Toki (When Comics and Museums Meet)* (Rinsen Book, 2009).

Exhibition

The early part of the exhibition features Japanese comic masterpieces which have long dealt with the inter-dimensional crossovers of the everyday and extraordinary worlds. In the middle, there is a largescale visual presentation of works by representative contemporary manga artists. The final zone reproduces Hirano's world with a big screen for animations and rich displays of original drawings and characters on the walls and in space.

The comic, cartoons and installations that make up Ryo Hirano's world

*Texts by KANAZAWA Kodama

■ *Paradise* [2013 / Animated short film / 20 min.]

Medium: Projection, Acrylic Painting, Installation



© Ryo Hirano / FOGHORN

A cemetery floating in space, a typical Japanese town, Asian jungle, a cave, a café... the eyes whorl as one scene follows another. A young man and a bear with an injured snout appear on stage, a Japanese soldier, a tooth, naked woman... The accumulation of unrelated sequences confuses us with its incoherent narrative but the brushwork, rhythm and scenery are also deeply nostalgic. They summon up associated memories and the visions which the author presents weave context.

■ *Holiday* [2011 / Animated short film / 14 min. 16 sec. / 15th Animation Division Jury Selections]

Medium: Projection, Acrylic Painting, Installation



©RYO HIRANO

Cable cars cross on the ropeway linking mountain peaks in a resort with a somehow rustic air. We meet a girl whose ears change shape, a naked yellow man, and a newt which walks like a cat and a human being. Water flows, water is drunk, rain falls from the sky, waves lap on the lakeshore and, as the water cycle turns on this vertical axis, the horizontal axis is that of yearning for a particular woman, longing, passion, tension and collisions, descriptions which cut and paste across space and time, luring the viewer into an uncomfortable but unforgettable empathy.

■ *Fantastic World* [2014 / Online comic / 18th Manga Division Jury Selections]

■ *Tobidase! Mirror ball-chan (Mirror Ball-Chan Jump!)* [2015 / GIF animation]

Medium: Tablet / Spanish language booklet



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This current web comic is based on the theory of a hollow Earth. A human being Biko from the surface world is stranded in the interior, and he and his best friend Ha-chan encounter various characters and incidents in a series of adventures. The fantastic human forms astonish as the classical storyline of friendship and victory pulls us in. It is a work that both follows the royal road and brings us in contact with the state-of-the-art.

(*Fantastic World*)

■ HIRANO Ryo

Born in Kasukabe City, Saitama Prefecture in 1988. Graduated in Information Design from Tama Art University. His works are pop, deep and bizarre and he selects his motifs at will in fields ranging from cultural anthropology to folklore and subculture. His perspective, however, is always rooted in the familiar and everyday. He dotes on romance and evil-doing.

From *Urusei Yatsura* to current works, creations which combine multiple cultures, spaces and times.

■ ***Urusei Yatsura (Annoying Types from the Stars)* TAKAHASHI Rumiko**

[1978-1987(Weekly Shōnen Sunday) / Comic]

Medium: Reproduction of original manga



©Rumiko Takahashi / Shogakukan

Senior high school boy Ataru Moroboshi is selected to represent the Earth in a game of tag on which the fate of the planet hangs. He eventually defeats Lum, the ogres' representative, but Lum then settles into the Moroboshi home as Ataru's wife and her friends, relatives and others from across the universe and other dimensions then start to turn up one after another in the town of Tomobiki where they live. *Urusei Yatsura*, the first comic book series by ever popular Rumiko Takahashi, one of Japan's representative manga authors, features not only aliens but also everything from ghosts and, folk-tale characters to local gods. This witty comedy broke radical new ground and influenced many comics, cartoons, novels and other works which followed.

■ ***Yoru no Sakana (Night Fish)* AZUMA Hideo**

[1992 / Comic]

Medium: Reproduction of original manga



©Hideo Azuma / OHTA Publishing Company

Yoru no Sakana is an "I novel" in which cult author Hideo Azuma depicts friends and people he meets in the street as animals, insects and ghouls. This everyday life in which fish swim around inside the house, a giant slug lives in the bath and missiles follow him around for no reason may be called a metaphor for both the author's own inner turbulence and the welter of diverse visual information which disrupts Japanese cities and the mentality of people who live there.

■ ***No.5* MATSUMOTO Taiyo**

[2000 - 2005 (Monthly IKKI) / Comic / 7th Manga Division Jury Selections]

Medium: Reproduction of original manga



©Taiyo Matsumoto / Shogakukan

The story is set in a distant future where 70% of the Earth is now desert. It is a human-interest drama about life and love which focuses on nine leaders of a Peace Force of artificially created life forms and draws on wide-ranging sources from machine and animal forms to fashion, urban and global landscapes, ethnic clothing from around the world, traditional plastic arts, folk tales and animations. The setting is in the future but the effect is to produce a distinctive world view that could just as well be in the past or on another planet.

■ ***Dai Nana Joshikai Hoko (The Seventh Girls' Wandering)*** TSUBANA

[Current series from 2008 in Monthly Comic Ryū / Comic / 17th Manga Division Jury Selections]

Medium: Reproduction of original manga



©2013 TSUBANA / TOKUMASHOTEN

Entirely ordinary high school girls Kane-yan and Takagi-san live in a far from normal world where a dead classmate lives on in a digital paradise and the school decides who each student's friends will be from the time of entry. It is a place of extraordinary happenings where patrols from the future pop over from time to time, weird creatures slip in and a person may be trapped in the mirror world but the days pass by slowly for these girls who take everything for granted and enjoy their everyday life.

■ **Haruko Ichikawa Anthology: *Kusaka Kyodai (The Kusaka Siblings)* from *Mushi to Uta (Insect and Song)*** ICHIKAWA Haruko

[2009 (Monthly Afternoon) / Comic / 14th Manga Division Jury Selections]

Medium: Reproduction of original manga



©Haruko Ichikawa / KODANSHA

The stories depict life, communication, love and separation in a family whose members take different physical forms from the norm, whether as insects, plants, sea creatures, metal parts or whatever. In *The Kusaka Siblings*, a part of senior high school boy Yukiteru's wardrobe grows into a little sister, Hina, who is actually a shard of meteorite and eventually turns into a replacement piece for Yukiteru's injured shoulder and becomes a part of him. The pair understand and comfort each other but here the one who shares those emotions is not another person but an inorganic thing, leading us into the limitless possibilities of meetings with alien life.

■ ***Senro to Ie (Track and House)* from *Boku-wa Mondai Arimasen (I Have No Problem)*** MIYAZAKI Natsujikei

[2012-2013 (Monthly Morning Two) / Comic]

Medium: Reproduction of original manga



©Natsujikei Miyazaki / KODANSHA

Set in a place furnished with all of the physical necessities of life but somehow depopulated and run-down, the main characters are wrapped up in inconsolable loneliness but even so retain the secret hope of linking to another person. Even in this distorted world, every story provides a tiny moment of catharsis as a connection with another is made. There are no aliens, ghosts or monsters in these works but the confusing pictures suggestive of repeated drawing failures and sudden appearances of scenes and objects that seem to have nothing to do with the story make us wonder whether the characters are really people who see things the same way as we do; whether this is present or future time; and whether this is even the Earth. What we are shown is not relations between people at the characters' own level but instead relations at the level of visual information. This may be regarded as a global, post-Internet phenomenon.

Related Event

■Talk Event

-Where does fantasy come from? Ryo Hirano talks on the sources of inspiration.

**Speakers: HIRANO Ryo (Artist), Carlos RUBIO (Professor, Complutense University of Madrid)
Marc BERNABÉ (Manga translator)**

Moderator: KANAZAWA Kodama (Planning director)

Date & time: 17:00 on Saturday, 23rd January

Venue: Taller, MATADERO

Exhibiting artist Ryo Hirano will participate online. Planning director Kodama Kanazawa moderates a discussion on the environment and culture which produced the sources of inspiration for Hirano's works between 2 speakers experts on Japanese culture with a focus on comics and literature.

Screening Event

■Screening of award-winning works from the Japan Media Arts Festival

Date: Saturday, 23rd January, 19:30-

Screening program: Portrait of Japanese Animation

Venue: Taller, MATADERO

Gallery Tour

Date: Saturday, 23rd January, 13:00-

Venue: MATADERO Madrid Nave 16

Co-hosting Event

■The Japan Foundation Media Art Conference:

"Crossing Point – Japanese media art, Game and Popular culture"

**Speakers: YOSHIDA Hiroshi (Professor at Ritsumeikan University)
OKUBO Miki (Lecturer at University of Paris 8)**

Date & time: 16:00 on Tuesday, 26rd January

Venue: Medialab-Prado

■Screening of award-winning works from the Japan Media Arts Festival

Date: Tuesday, 26th January, 18:30-

Screening program: Beyond the Technology / Entertainment & Animation Selection 2015

Venue: Medialab-Prado

Reference**JAPAN MEDIA ARTS FESTIVAL**

The Japan Media Arts Festival, established in 1997, is a comprehensive festival of the Media Arts (= *media geijutsu*). It recognizes and provides an opportunity to appreciate works of outstanding artistic and creative merit in a diverse range of media, including animation, manga, and games. Prizes are awarded in four divisions: Art, Entertainment, Animation, and Manga. It holds an annual exhibition of award-winning works, as well as symposiums, screenings, and various other events. The Japan Media Arts Festival is evolving into a major international event. The 19th Japan Media Arts Festival received a very large response – about 4,400 entries from 88 countries and regions in total.

■ Project for Participation in Overseas Media Arts Festivals

This project draws attention the Japanese media arts through exhibitions, screenings, presentations, and suchlike at media festivals and other venues outside Japan. The focus is on award-winning works from the Japan Media Arts Festival.



The 18th Japan Media Arts Festival, 2014



Exhibition View at the 12° Bienal de Artes Mediales, 2011

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19th Japan Media Arts Festival

Exhibition of Award-winning Works:

Wednesday, 3rd February – Sunday, 14th February, 2016*The National Art Center, Tokyo will be closed on Tuesday, 9th FebruaryWebsite <http://j-mediaarts.jp>Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/JapanMediaArtsFestival>

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