

Press Kit / Ai Ikeda

1. Biography

Ai Ikeda is a visual artist working and living in Montreal, Canada. She is currently an MFA candidate in Painting and Drawing in the Studio Arts at Concordia University. Previously she earned a BFA in Oil Painting from the Kanazawa College of Art in Japan and stayed in England and Germany to immerse herself in art. In her early career, she studied Eastern and Western art history and philosophy, as well as classical and modern techniques. In her recent works, Ikeda tackles social issues and uses art as a means to reflect upon important matters, without abandoning aesthetic ideals. She expresses her artistic vision through various types of visual media, such as drawing, painting, print, graphics, photography, video, sculpture, and installation. Her work has been shown in several solo and group exhibitions in Nara, Kanazawa, Tokyo, New York, and Montreal.

2. Artist Statement

Japanese traditional aesthetics and thought have had a major influence on my early works, as I was mostly interested in the relations between nature and living beings. However, increasingly influenced by European and North American contemporary art, I was discovering the power of art as a thinking and communication tool. As I began to gradually form a more informed understanding of modern and contemporary art, philosophy, and critical theory, the tsunami and Fukushima nuclear disaster happened in Japan in March 2011. The disaster changed my perspective, and I realized that my perception of Japanese society and international relations and politics were becoming more critical. It became clear to me that art can not only affect people and inspire them to help others, can not only assuage pain and heal trauma, but it also has the power to stimulate social debate and even lay the groundwork for social change. Since the March 2011 triple disaster, the issues I have been expressing **in my art are mostly "political": gender, ecological, war-related, and nuclear issues.**

3. Exhibitions

Solo Exhibitions

- 2016 "Shadows of Crisis", CLC Montreal, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
- 2015 "In/visible Matters", held during the International Conference: "Rethinking Radiation Ecologies", University of Montreal, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
- 2013 "In the Interval of Memories", HANARART, Registered Tangible Cultural Property -Sugiyama Shounikaiin, **Yamatokōriyama**, Nara, Japan
- 2013 "Existence of the Goldfish", HANARART, Koriyama Chamber of Commerce and Industry, **Yamatokōriyama**, Nara, Japan
- 2012 "Old Toys and the Future Seen through Cats", Sabo Kouenjishorin, Suginami, Tokyo, Japan
- 2010 "Live in Nature", Ring Cafe, Nara city, Nara, Japan
- 2002 "Ai Ikeda Exhibition", Deux Egg Gallery, Kanazawa, Ishikawa, Japan

Group Exhibitions

- 2017 "Nuclear Body", Maureen II: Concordia's MFA Department of Studio Arts Exhibition,

École des beaux-arts de Montréal, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

- 2017 **"HŌSHANŌ: penser l'après Fukushima / HŌSHANŌ: Art and Life in a Post-Fukushima World"**, Visual Voice Gallery, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
- 2017 **"Femme"**, Galerie Mile-End, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
- 2011 **"Hanafuda de Goldfish"**, HANARART, the Old Kawamoto House, **Yamatokōriyama**, Nara, Japan
- 2011 **"Prayer – Everlastingness of Mujō"**, HANARART, Masaki Seminar House, Nara city, Nara, Japan
- 2011 **"Japanese Scenery – The Flowers of the Four Seasons"**, HANARART, Mr. **Tsuneoka's** Residence, Kashihara, Nara, Japan
- 2011 **"21 Spirits of Kanazawa"**, NY Co Gallery, New York, NY, USA
- 2011 **"Wa – Art"**, Onishi Gallery, New York, NY, USA / Ginza Art Hall, **Chūō**, Tokyo, Japan / 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Kanazawa, Ishikawa, Japan
- 2004 **"22ch"**, Ishikawa Ongakudo, Kanazawa, Ishikawa, Japan
- 2003 **"Precious Day"**, Hamachidori Park and City Hall, Uchinada, Ishikawa, Japan

4. Awards

- 2017 **"Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarships"** (SSHRC), Montreal, Canada
- 2012 **"Graphic Grand Prix by Yamaha"**, Award of Excellence, Tokyo, Japan

5. Publications

Itzkowich, Claudia. "Hōshanō: how to portray an invisible enemy", *Montréal Serai*, April 2, 2017.

Itakura, Alan. "HŌSHANŌ: Art and Life in a Post-Fukushima World", *Montréal Bulletin*, Vol. 72, No. 3, March 25, 2017, pp.13-15.

Carpenter, Ele, ed. *The Nuclear Culture Source Book*, Black Dog Publishing, 2016, p. 107.

Itakura, Alan. "Kizuna Japon Update, Remembering Fukushima 2016 – 5 Years Later", *Montréal Bulletin*, Vol. 71, No. 3, March 19, 2016, p. 2.

Yamasaki, Akiko. "HANARART – Art Festival of Machiya, Nara", *Art Action History Research Society News*, Vol. 124, 2012, p. 1–5.

The Hokkoku Shimbun, "Video Images about Every Day Scenes", August 19, 2003.

Yomiuri Shimbun, "Ambition – Challenging Other Mediums", **January 1, 2003**.

The Hokkoku Shimbun, "Exhibition of the Animal Series", October 22, 2002.

6. Contact Information

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7. Website

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