

Celebrating CAMOC 2019 in Kyoto

Japanese City Museums Special Dossier

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JOANA SOUSA MONTEIRO

CAMOC Chair, 2016-2019

Greetings form CAMOC Chair

Dear colleagues,

ICOM is holding a General Conference for the first time in Japan. It is a great honour for CAMOC, the ICOM international committee that deals with city museums, to promote activities and tours in this wonderful country.

CAMOC Museums of Cities Review is our main publication, which has once a year a printed version to be distributed among members and delegates. For the September issue, we decided to have a special dossier on Japanese City Museums, as a celebration of CAMOC 2019 being held in Japan. Here you can read all the articles written about city museums and municipal institutions, like the city museums of Kyoto, Osaka and Tokyo, related both to the conference programme and the CAMOC post-conference tour.

We hope it will be a useful resource for you to learn and enjoy!

City Museums in Kyoto



MASAKAGE MURANO

Curator in Archaeology,
The Museum of Kyoto

Museum-School-Community Collaborative Project in the Museum of Kyoto



Entrance of the Museum of Kyoto. © The Museum of Kyoto

Introduction

The museums in Japan are changing. Classifying their characteristics into categories, the first category is conservation-oriented, the second category is open-minded, and the third category is participation-oriented. In other words, the museum has changed from a treasure-storage facility, to a public exhibition hall, and into a place for people to engage in activities on their own terms. Despite the fact that this third category of museums has been around already for thirty years, new museums continue to be created that differ little from previous ones. A new, fourth category of museum presents problematic issues in local communities and provides ideas for solving them through discussions with the public; in other words, it is a “proposal-oriented” museum. In fact, many museums of all categories are increasingly encouraging the general public to participate in their activities. Further, in recent years we are finding the emergence of a more active museum that calls on the public to help resolve problematic issues together with museum staff. Comparing the discourse “the public can use the museum” with “let’s solve problems together”, the latter entails a far more active attitude.

For clarity, it should be added that the preservation work emphasized in the first category never became unnecessary. Rather, in regard to museum roles such as preservation, restoration, research, exhibition, participation, utilization, and proposal, these accumulate one on top of another. Such diverse activities are handled not by the curator alone, but the museum staff as a whole. Furthermore, collaboration

between museum staff and external organizations and people is now recognized as indispensable.

The Museum of Kyoto and its collaborative program

Let’s talk about the proposal-oriented approach. There are various examples, but here I introduce the Museum-School-Community collaborative project of the Museum of Kyoto. The Museum of Kyoto is located in the center of the Kyoto and was opened in 1988 as a comprehensive cultural facility. Kyoto is richly blessed with nature and, as the former capital of Japan for more than one thousand years, with cultural history. It developed a unique urban culture and has played a major role in the formation of modern Japan. This museum was constructed as a cultural facility to provide an overview of the history of Kyoto through collecting all types of cultural properties, engaging in research and investigation, holding exhibitions, hosting education program and public events related to historical and archaeological materials, art, film, traditional crafts, and annual religious events, customs, and organizations.

The collaborative project was initiated in 2014 as a part of new efforts to accomplish the above-described mission. The Museum of Kyoto has been collaborating with schools and community groups to propose and offer programs capitalizing on their ample and diverse resources. By so doing, the museum aims to become a vibrant cultural hub for various communities, capable of human resource-building and the further enrichment of Kyoto’s culture.

Proposing the significance of unrecognized voices

For example, famous cultural traditions in Kyoto such as the Gion Festival and Geisha attract many tourists each year. These cultural traditions are part of the reason people move to Kyoto. This also encourages the opening of new shops. However, these people are sometimes unaware of the living culture and the sense of value that long-term residents and established stores have inherited, despite the fact that they are the cradles of this prominent culture.

The museum, therefore, holds a monthly meeting to consider cultural issues with Kyoto's local associations such as the Kyoto Sanjo Machizukuri Conference and the Committee of Aneyakouji Neighbors Community Development. Based on these discussions from 2014, this collaborative team – including students and teachers of universities in Kyoto – started interviewing residents and collecting information of materials that have been cherished in the area. In 2016, the preliminary results of the research were introduced at an exhibition in the museum and some brochures were published (The Museum of Kyoto Neighborhood Joint Executive Committee, 2017a; 2017b; 2018). A part of these brochures can be obtained at <http://aneyakouji.jp/guidemap/>



Interview with a resident. © The Museum of Kyoto

The exhibitions and publications presented local history and lifestyles, the meaning of landscape cultivated by the old residents, and the hopes of residents for the future. Many neighborhood residents and company employees in the area were visited, and various opinions and suggestions on issues of local culture were received. By continuing this project further voices will be discovered.

Proposing potential “cultural heritage”

Looking at schools, there are some problematic issues. One of them is about the preservation and utilization of schools' collections such as old textbooks, folklore, and archaeological materials. Based on a survey, it has been estimated that the total amount of the collections at schools throughout the Kyoto Prefecture is equivalent to the collection of a city museum. These materials were once used in classes as teaching materials and collected by teachers and students as results of their research. Some materials also were donated to schools by nearby residents as a resource for studying local history and learning the memories of the place that have been passed down from generation to generation. Some of these collections, however, are now in a state of neglect because of the changes to the social and education systems in Japan.

The Museum of Kyoto and the collaborative team, therefore, conducted a survey by questionnaire and visited the schools in order to research the potential “cultural heritage” in their collections so that information about the collections can be shared with teachers and students and also their value can be assessed by them (Murano, in press). As a model project in 2015, the museum launched a collaborative year-long class with the Kyoto Prefectural Ohki High School. The museum, teachers, and students together investigated their collection, mainly focused on archaeological materials and examined their values. Teachers and students visited the Museum of Kyoto several times in order to find their own research themes and conducted their studies through discussions with the museum's staff. Also, the museum staff visited the school to communicate with the teachers and students as a part of the special lessons named “Kyoto Culture Course”. In 2016 the collaborative class was continued and the results were introduced at the exhibition of the Museum of Kyoto with explanatory panels created by the students and student-led talks. Through this project, there was a certain degree of educational benefit. For example, some students who initially were uninterested in



Collaborative lesson and exhibition.
© Kyoto Prefectural Ohki High School

the collection changed their minds over the course of the year. A ripple effect could be seen. It seems that this exhibition attracted more people than other archaeological exhibitions held in the Museum of Kyoto. Many visitors, including parents, former students, related associations, and local residents visited this exhibition and participated in the related events such as talks by students. Through this experience visitors shared their memories with the students and museum curators, and further explored the value of the collection. These memories are valuable in that they are different from the history presented in tourist guidebooks and by travel agencies. The experience will also lead to the discovery of new values in this school collection.

Assembling values

Up to now, many of the history and folklore museums in Japan have employed the “most appropriate” academic interpretations for their exhibits. The viewpoints of the academic community, however, are sometimes narrow, and for this reason the general public does not instinctively realize that the contents displayed at the museum have close connections to their own lives. This is especially the case with museums in cities with a diverse population. As a result, such museums have not had much contact with residents living nearby.

In recent years, however, the expectations of residents and neighborhood associations regarding the roles of city museums have been increasing. It is now being recognized that the dissemination of culture and history in museums is useful for resolving issues in the city, such as building a sense of unity between residents and reducing the threat on their life by mass tourism and loss of cultural heritage. City museums can be a place to present and discuss issues that are not yet answered and to propose solutions for them.

It is necessary, in conclusion, for museums to research information and materials that are hidden by urban residents or mass tourism, and gather and assemble them. The accumulation should not only be based on academic interest, but on the viewpoints and values of diverse people. Modern museums should embody “multilayering of values” and, with that, diverse input and story-telling will be possible.

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KOTARO WASAKI

Curator,
Kyoto Municipal Museum of School History

The Kyoto Municipal Museum of School History: How developments in the Japanese education system influenced evolution of Kyoto as a modern city



The museum's main timber gate, built in 1901. © K. Wasaki

Introduction

The Kyoto Municipal Museum of School History is the only museum dedicated to the history of school education in Japan. It was established in 1998 and is located in the Kyoto's historical area of Shimogyō-ku. The museum is dedicated to the development of the school system and to its influence to the modernisation of Kyoto and the rest of the country. Historical materials and cultural properties from the schools are used to tell this story. The museum is situated in a former primary school, originally established in 1869, but completed in the late 1930s in reinforced concrete. The present museum's main timber gate (built in 1901) and its stone walls (built in 1918) derive from the

original edifice, creating an image of a historical castle right in the middle of Kyoto. Both the main gate and the stone fence are registered as tangible cultural properties of Japan.

Kyoto is a medieval city whose foundation is primarily linked to the Heian era that spanned from 794 to 1185. Although it is frequently assumed that the medieval city has continued to this day, Kyoto is in fact a product of a more complex past. Kyoto was the site of many of the battles of the Edo *bakufu*, Japan's final feudal military government (1603–1867)¹, whose last days were devastating as they coincided with a number of natural disasters that caused significant damage to the area. Rapid development of the school system that followed this period played a significant role in the rejuvenation of the city.

The *Bangumi* elementary schools are a group of sixty-four schools established by the people of Kyoto in 1869. They were the first community schools in Japan,² set up by the local communities that provided them funding; the schools, in return, provided the community with a meeting place. By utilizing historical materials from the schools and the houses in neighbourhood, the museum exhibition shows how these *Bangumi* elementary schools were established and how their establishment influenced the modernisation of Kyoto.

Another legacy of the *Bangumi* elementary schools are numerous paintings and crafted artifacts that had either been donated to the schools by the artists or purchased by the local community members. Various artists who represented modern Kyoto had works exhibited in the *Bangumi* schools, and among them were painters working in the Japanese style – such as Shōen Uemura, Konoshima Ōkoku, Kayo Yamaguchi, Daizaburō Nakamura, Western-style painters – Sōtarō Yasui, Ryūzaburō

¹ The Tokugawa shogunate, also known as the Tokugawa bakufu, was the last feudal Japanese military government, which existed between 1603-1867.

² Based on the then-extant municipal-level autonomous administrative unit known as the “bangumi” (a neighborhood unit).



An elementary school in Kyoto in 1876. The Steinway piano.
A stone tablet and a pencil used between the 1870s and 1890s.
© K. Wasaki

Umehara, and ceramicists – Rosanjin, Kanjiro Kawai, Yaichi Kusube, Yuzo Kondo. The fact that such art works were on show in elementary schools indicates how meeting of traditional Japan and the West was important in Kyoto's modernization. In case a school that hosted these works had to close down, it was the museum that collected, managed and displayed the works for future generations. The birthrate in Japan has been in decline ever since the 1980s, and figures from the 2000s indicate that around 500 schools close every year. This leaves a question of how to deal with historical materials and cultural properties that belonged to these schools. Even though the educational system has great significance for the modernisation of Japan, historical materials and cultural properties from the schools which had to be closed are currently given less attention than deserved. An ideal solution, would be having museums dedicated to education in different Japanese cities; however, this is yet to be achieved. Therefore, it falls to the Kyoto Municipal Museum of School History to fulfil the above mentioned mission, and to promote the value and importance of historical materials and cultural properties from former schools.

The Kyoto Municipal Museum of School History

Although permanent exhibition rooms, special exhibition rooms, storage rooms and staff rooms exist, there is currently not enough space for study rooms or video rooms. So, a small space in the corner of a corridor is used for this purpose. This constraint may also be seen as an opportunity to reference the building's past use as a primary school, where space was used similarly to exhibit students' works. Every year, third-grade students from the local elementary school visit the museum. The school trip is designed as an adventure for the children, who get to explore not only the exhibition but also the museum building that used to function as a school. The children get an idea of the kind of school their parents once attended, and feel rewarded for having made these discoveries themselves.

The permanent exhibition room houses historical materials and cultural properties related to the schools of Kyoto from the 18th century to the second half of the 20th century. For example, *the black and white image* shows an elementary school in Kyoto in 1876, which at the same time was a community center, government office and fire station. The construction on top of the school building, known as the Taiko tower, was once used for fire hazard observation and for public announcement of the time using a drum. *Next image*, showing an object resembling an iPad, is in fact a stone tablet and a pencil used between the 1870s and 1890s. The stone part is made of slate and a cloth was used instead of the eraser. The piano was donated to the elementary school in 1923 by the people from the school district. It was produced by Steinway & Sons, and, at the time, its price was equivalent to the

cost of around 10 houses. Elementary schools in Japan became a key element of the country's modernization, and elementary schools in Kyoto were particularly appreciated by local residents for being at the vanguard of educational advances.

It is worth considering complex effects of the increasing influence of government-led educational systems to the lives of children.

A good example is that of the propaganda during the Asia-Pacific War, when schools were used to teach children concepts of enmity and fighting for one's country. In the calligraphy work shown *above*, the artistic script translation is "to shoot and destroy enemies". The city is the place where people and information are closely intertwined, and ideas are fostered. This is particularly true during wartime, and here lies the reason why school museums, particularly when viewed as a kind of city museums, have a responsibility to convey memories and records of war.



Calligraphy work as propaganda during the Asia-Pacific War. One of the ceramic artworks on display in the museum. © K. Wasaki

Also, many cultural properties are exhibited in the museum. In order to maintain the works in good condition, paintings are usually only displayed for a short time, in themed shows in the special exhibition room; in other cases, one painting is displayed for a month in the permanent exhibition room. Ceramic artworks, such as Rosanjin's Flower Vase with Amber Glaze and Eternal Youth and Long Life, *left*, are exhibited in the permanent exhibition room.

Final remarks

Education and school systems in Japan have a long and fascinating history that contributed strongly to the foundation of modern Japan. The museum has extraordinary historical materials and cultural assets related to the history of schools in Kyoto, which make a visit to the museum a worthwhile experience

YOSHIHIRO NAKATANI

Curator of Nijo Castle Office
and Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art

Presenting History and Art in Two City Museums: Nijo Castle and Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art

Nijo Castle

In 1603, Tokugawa Ieyasu took control of Japan and built Nijo castle in Kyoto, relocating the political capital (the Tokugawa Bakufu)¹ from Kyoto to Tokyo, and separating away from the Emperor who had been based in Kyoto since 794 – and who would remain there once political governance was moved to the East. The building of the castle was of great cultural and political significance, as it was intended to stand both as a symbol of respect *and* dominance over the Japanese Royal Family, whose Imperial Court it overshadowed, being set just southwest of the of the Royal Enclosure. Decisions relating to the location and design of Nijo communicate key elements of the relationship between the Tokugawa Bakufu and the Imperial Court. One example is of the entrance gate; traditionally the official entrance would be a *south* facing gate, but at Nijo this is an *east* facing gate, built facing towards the Imperial Court. The entrance of *Kara-mon*, the Chinese-style gate at Ninomaru Palace was built into a southern wall. Further decisions dictated by the politics of power occurred in the internal construction; for example, the Shogun² would usually sit facing south from the upper room (where the floor is elevated) but when sitting in the meeting room where he would receive messengers from the Imperial Court, the Shogun would sit lower than the royal messenger – however, rather than facing south he would face west.



Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art. © K. Fukunaga

By understanding the delicate dynamics in play, demonstrated through the castle's design, one can come to understand the skillful balance of power that the Tokugawa Bakufu practiced in dealing with the Imperial court, and *why* they were able to govern Japan steadily for over 260 years. Therefore, it can be argued that Nijo Castle is more important than simply a military base or stronghold and, rather, is a site of cultural, social, and political allegory – and it is this that has earned its multiple historic accolades. In this sense, Nijo Castle has a remarkable value as a space – and may be considered a “museum” – providing its visitors with an understanding of the history of Kyoto as well as the fundamental elements of the founding of modern Japan.

As one of the *Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto*, Nijo Castle is registered as a World Heritage Site, and the entire castle is also designated a National Historic Site. Ninomaru Palace, on the grounds of Nijo Castle, is a National Treasure while the other 22 historical buildings are Important Cultural Properties as are the 1016 wall paintings inside Ninomaru Palace. Currently, the historical sites, buildings, and wall paintings at Nijo Castle are undergoing a number of long-term conservation projects. Full scale repair of the historic sites is ongoing, with detailed surveys of features such as the stone walls having begun, the important cultural properties *Kara-mon* and *Higashi Ote-mon* Gate having had completed repair programs, and the 5-year large-scale repair of the Honmaru Palace is in progress.

¹ The last feudal Japanese military government, which existed between 1600 and 1867.

² A shōgun was the military dictator of Japan.

The handling of the conservation of the wall paintings in Ninomaru Palace is an interesting case: the decision was made to replace all the original paintings on show inside the palace with reproductions, a process that started in 1972. The original paintings are being removed and stored in a thermo-hygrostat storage in the Nijo-jo Painting Gallery established in 2004. The top layers of the original paintings' paint and gold leaf is carefully conserved, while several layers of paper and a timber frames that support them have been completely renewed.

Of course, this is not the first time that interventions have been made; during the Edo and Meiji periods, when the castle was in use, there is evidence of the original wall paintings having undergone numerous repairs, and bold additions to missing parts were made. In the current project, *in situ* conservation was decided against as the works were considered too vulnerable to insect damage and sudden changes in temperature and humidity. This prompted the staff to replace the original paintings with reproductions, which are to be restored and missing parts added back. Arguably, one benefit of this approach is to allow for the interior space to be restored to its original early-Edo period style – allowing visitors to experience the palace as a representation of the distinctive power of the Shogun. The six buildings of the Ninomaru complex were a nucleus for face-to-face meetings with the Shogun and different functions are assigned to each. The paintings, as interior decoration, complement this. Thus, this conservation approach is one that allows a great deal of the political nature of the space to be communicated through the visitor experience.

A key part of the project has been the conservation and display of the original works, and this is done in the Nijo-jo Painting Gallery. The gallery shows the works on panels suspended from the ceiling that can carry multiple screens. This allows for the original partition paintings to be moved safely, without touching the original work.

Nijo Castle hosts more than 2 million visitors a year, and a 2017 survey revealed that 60% of the visitors come from overseas. In the same year, the information panels inside the castle were renewed and full review of the English language information leaflet was made. The staff continues to consider new approaches for greater inclusivity for visitors from different cultural spheres, helping them to understand the significance and meaning of Nijo castle. In terms of the conservation approaches, it is found necessary to consider the works from a global perspective.

Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art

The Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art was initially established as the *Kyoto Enthronement Memorial Museum of Art* in 1933. It was created as one of the major projects celebrating the coronation of Emperor Showa, which took place in Kyoto. The museum's founding was supported by the private enterprises of a large number of Japanese citizens. The Imperial Museum of Kyoto, now known as the



Top: Nijo Castle. © K. Fukunaga.

Bottom: Kara-mon Gate, Nijo Castle. © Nijo Castle Office



The Museum is undergoing extensive restoration. © Nijo Castle Office

National Museum of Kyoto, was established 1924, and it became the Onshi³ Kyoto Museum, therefore making the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art the second museum in Kyoto City.

Because the Onshi Kyoto Museum specializes in “antiquities” arts before the Edo Period⁴ it was inevitable that the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art was targeting “new” art, from the Meiji to the modern era. Although there was also a plan to establish the museum adjacent to the Imperial Kyoto Museum, the construction site was eventually established in Okazaki. This was an area developed for the 4th National Exposition in 1895. Subsequently, the Okazaki Town Exposition Hall (1897),

the Zoo (1903), and the Kyoto Prefectural Kyoto Library (1909) were built here, creating a cultural zone in the city.

Kyoto strives to both distinguish itself from and remain competitive with the capital city Tokyo. The venue for the National Exposition was the second to be held after Tokyo and the zoo was the second to be established in Japan after Tokyo’s Ueno. Kyoto also holds the second city art museum in Japan after the Tokyo Prefectural Museum, now known as the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum. After the Meiji Restoration, the Emperor’s Residence was transferred from Kyoto to Tokyo, effectively formalizing Tokyo as the capital city. It became the site of both governance and the Imperial Palace. Kyoto, however, remained the social and cultural focal point, with a long and established history and a unique cultural identity.

The museum’s building was derived from a concept by Kenjiro Maeda, who won the competition to design the space on the basis that it was to be “based on Japanese taste”. It has a Japanese style roof and steel-framed reinforced concrete construction that showcased the Imperialistic 1930s style. This aesthetic can be seen in numerous elements of the building; the dramatic lobby space made of marble and the large display room with a colonnade with a ceiling height of 17 meters.



The Museum is undergoing extensive restoration works. © Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art

In the first section of the “management policy” of the museum written at the time of opening, it was stated that there would be a “Permanent Display of New Art and Crafts”. The museum, however, was opened when it only had six objects donated from Emperor Showa’s coronation ceremony and fewer than another ten objects in the collection. In the absence of a large permanent exhibition, it became a site for commemorative exhibitions, including the “Ministry of Education Art Exhibition”, a competition established by the national government. Thus, it is undeniably an art museum with a big “gallery” personality – and a center of art museum activities.

³ Onshi refers to an action of emperor who gives some goods to his subject to show his gratitude or expectation for the loyalty and contribution dedicated or to be dedicated.

⁴ The Edo period or Tokugawa period is the period in the history of Japan between 1603 and 1867.

Kyoto has been responsible for the creation of sophisticated cultures including arts and crafts, as a city with a long history of imperial courts, after its title of the “capital city” was moved to Tokyo. Kyoto continued to develop unique arts that differed from Tokyo’s. Kyoto paintings play an important role within the canon of traditional Japanese painting, and crafts such as Kyo Yaki, Kyoto lacquerware, and Kyo Yuzen continue to be excellent works that respond to modern art movements. Even in modern times, Kyoto has ten universities where one can study art – including the celebrated Kyoto City University of Arts. The city has a unique character as a place where artists are nurtured and where many works are produced.



Wall paintings in the Ninomaru palace. © Nijo Castle Office

The Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art currently holds about 3,500 works based on the unique identity of Kyoto as a place of creativity and culture. In order to realize the intention of creating a permanent display, which was the policy at the time of opening this museum, and to be a space to introduce contemporary diversity of art expression, a reconstruction project was started in 2017. The renovation and expansion work is ongoing and the museum is intended to reopen in 2020. The costs of the project, about 10 billion yen, were supported by special funding mechanisms that include selling the naming rights to the museum. From the opening in 2020 and for the next 50 years, the museum will have the nickname “Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art” (the English name is not yet confirmed).

At the time of the ICOM Kyoto General Conference in September 2019, the museum will still be closed for renovation but it is expected that 90% of the work will be completed. ICOM members will have the exciting opportunity to get a first glimpse of the newly renovated space as we are planning to welcome ICOM participants from all over the world in tours and special events. In addition, an exhibition that introduces the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art’s exhibition facilities is being planned in conjunction with ICOM Kyoto General Conference. It would be our great pleasure to show CAMOC members this special venue, and have them see the redevelopment in progress in a city museum containing numerous artworks of modern Kyoto.



The future of the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art. © Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art

City Museums in Osaka

SHUNGO KATO

Curator,
Osaka Museum of History



History of Museums in Osaka: Overview of the development of Osaka city and its museums



Osaka Museum Park (Osaka-Hakubutsujo).
© Osaka Museum of History

The relationship between the city and its museums

Because every city has its own unique history and personality, it is extremely difficult to find a uniform definition of the word “city”. However, although every city is unique, sociological and historical studies seek to extract similarities between cities and to compare them. The Osaka Museum of History (OMH),¹ where I work, is a museum that addresses the unique nature of the city as the primary theme of its exhibitions.

OMH was established when its predecessor, the Osaka Municipal Museum, was relocated from Osaka Castle.² OMH not only inherited the collection but also the concept, from the municipal museum era, that the theme of the museum’s exhibitions is the city of Osaka’s history and culture. The site of the relocation was chosen in order to preserve the architectural remains of the ancient imperial capital of the 7th-century Naniwa Palace.³ In other words, OMH is both a city museum and a historic site museum. In Japan, it is relatively unusual to find museums of cities coexisting with historic sites, except in the case of castle museums. Moreover, as Naniwa Palace is a symbol of the city of Osaka, it may be said that OMH is a museum in the city and also a museum *exhibit of the city*.

We provide daily guided tour for museum visitors.

Just as finding a definition of the city is difficult, so too is finding a clear definition for “museum of the city”. From my point of view, a museum is strongly linked to the history and society where it is located, therefore a museum of the city has a strong relationship with both the city’s historical and contemporary identity. For this reason, it is important to take the long-view of the museum’s history: this article focuses on the questions of when the museums in Osaka were established and the kind of challenges they are now facing. I hope the article will be a stepping-stone for the other articles of this special dossier that make the review complete.

Osaka’s position and its early history (~ 1867)

Today, the name Osaka refers to two distinct administrative units – Osaka Prefecture and Osaka City. Osaka Prefecture consists of 43 municipalities, and Osaka City is its capital. It is generally regarded to be Japan’s second-largest city, especially when judged on economic indicators. However, its area is very compact with just 225 square kilometers, and, with its 2.73 million residents, it has the second-highest population density in Japan. Osaka has a long history; the city was the ancient capital and the present-day Chuo District contains the 7th-century Naniwa Palace. It was under the

* Shugo Kato, Osaka Museum of History

¹ The Osaka Museum of History (OMH): <http://www.mus-his.city.osaka.jp/eng/>

² Osaka Municipal Museum was established in 1960 and closed in 2001. The Museum’s function was to communicate the history of museums in Osaka. Its historical landmark is being transformed into a commercial complex “MIRAIZA, Osaka Jo”. The photos of the historical landmark can be viewed here: <https://en.miraiza.jp/about>

³ In Japanese: 難波宮 (Naniwanomiya). The special exhibition titled *Historical Heritage of Osaka, the Naniwa Palace Site* of Osaka Museum of History: <http://www.mus-his.city.osaka.jp/eng/exhibitions/special/2014/osakaisan.html>

leadership of Hideyoshi Toyotomi⁴ that the Osaka Castle and the 16th-century town that formed the foundation of the city were built, and these still form the basic structure of the city. When the era shifted to the world of Tokugawa,⁵ Edo (Tokyo) became the political center of Japan, but Osaka continued at its position of an economic center. Wealthy townspeople continued to invest in the city's cultural, artistic, academic prosperity by investing personal property.

History of museums in Osaka 1 (1867 - 1945)

Osaka Prefecture was created in 1868, at the very beginning of the Meiji era,⁶ the period when administrative divisions were laid in Japan by the government of the Meiji Restoration,⁷ and the *City of Osaka* was officially recognized 20 years later, in 1889.

The opening of Osaka Museum Park⁸ in 1875 was one of the first incarnations of a museum in the city. It was purposed with accelerated modernization by encouraging industry, and nurturing capitalism and social education. The site had numerous facilities including a zoo, art museums and theater, and eventually merged with a commercial display center in 1913.

Although Osaka City was established in 1889, it didn't really start expanding until the mid-19th century, when industrial development drew in workers and the population rapidly increased. This corresponded with an increase in problematic urban issues centered on housing and poverty. In 1914, an economist named Seki Hajime kickstarted various social policies when he became deputy mayor of Osaka City.⁹ When he eventually became mayor in 1923, he expanded the city and developed industries and social infrastructure such as boulevards, subways, the harbor, residential and welfare facilities, and established a period known as "Greater Osaka".

Ten years before Mayor Seki got involved in Osaka City Government, the Japanese Government and Osaka Prefecture organized the Fifth National Industrial Exposition in Osaka City, to encourage industry and commerce, and this exhibition greatly influenced the course of museum history in the area. After the exposition, Osaka City started to reuse the buildings and other materials as social capital for their citizens, and Tennoji zoo (1913) and the Osaka Citizen's Museum (1919 -1932) were founded at this time. In addition, the gardens and houses next to the venue of exposition belonging to Sumitomo family were donated to the Osaka City and the



Top: Main gate of The Fifth National Industrial Exposition.
Bottom: Tennoji Park under construction (around 1920s).
© Osaka Museum of History

⁴ Hideyoshi Toyotomi (1537-1598), in Japanese: 豊臣秀吉, was a preeminent warrior, general, samurai and politician, who is regarded as Japan's second "great unifier", as he unified Japan in 1590.

⁵ The Tokugawa Shogunate, also known as the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) and the Edo Bakufu (江戸幕府), was the last feudal Japanese military government, and existed between 1603 and 1867.

⁶ The Meiji era or Meiji period, in Japanese – 明治時代 (Meiji-jidai), is an era of Japanese history which extended from October 23, 1868 to July 30, 1912.

⁷ The Meiji Restoration, in Japanese – 明治維新 (Meiji Ishi): restoration of Imperial power in the late 19th century. The restoration led to enormous changes in Japan's political and social structure.

⁸ Museum Park, in Japanese – 博物館場 (Osaka-Hakubutsujo).

⁹ Hajime Seki (1873-1935), in Japanese – 関一, was a Japanese scholar and politician. He served as Osaka City Mayor for 20 years, and established the "Greater Osaka Era". He is known locally as the "Father of Osaka".



The ruins of Naniwanomiya Palace in OMH. © Osaka Museum of History

mansion opened as a house museum. This is the same place where the Osaka City Museum of Fine Arts is located today (since 1936).

The Osaka Castle was opened to the general public for the very first time as a venue of the “Greater Osaka Exposition” (1925), which was a celebration of the urban expansion of the city by Osaka Mainichi Shimbun.¹⁰ Additionally, the Osaka Castle underwent significant renovations in 1928 for the accession of Emperor Showa. Also, after the introduction of electricity in 1923, the Electric Science Hall was opened in 1937 to help industries take advantage of the new technology. It was later closed and its responsibilities were assumed by Osaka Science Museum.¹¹

Mayor Seki’s social capital development strategies were aimed at enhancing Osaka City’s sustainability and were supported by stringent planning, and strong initiatives by the city administration.

History of museums in Osaka 2 (from 1945)

The Osaka Castle and the Tennoji Park Art Museum were requisitioned by the army during the Second World War and returned to the city in 1957. The future use of the buildings constructed by the Imperial Japanese Army in the Castle (completed in 1931) were discussed with citizens and resulted in the opening of Osaka City Museum in 1960 (until 2000), which was renewed as the Osaka Museum of History in 2001.

In 1950, the Natural Science Museum was opened on the second floor of the Osaka City Museum of Fine Arts. After that it was moved to the former elementary school building in the city and opened as a Natural Science Museum in 1958. In 1974, it moved again to Nagai Park in the city as Osaka Museum of Natural History (OMNH).

Besides the Osaka City Museum of Fine Arts in Tennoji, the Museum of Oriental Ceramics (MOCO) was opened in 1982 and was initially designed to hold the Ataka Collection. In addition, construction plans for the Museum of Modern Art were drawn up in 1990. After a long preparatory period, it will open its doors in 2021 as Osaka Nakanoshima Art Museum.

The present and the future

Currently, discussions about Osaka’s museums have been centered around a recent change whereby administration has been consolidated under a local independent agency established in 2019. The background lies in the 2000s, when Osaka city government’s financial decline became public knowledge, and as a result, the museums management systems were restructured and centralised. Osaka City promoted the integration of local independent corporations as a solution. Starting in

¹⁰ The Mainichi Shimbun, in Japanese – 毎日新聞 (Mainichi Shimbun, literally “Daily News”), is one of the major newspapers in Japan.

¹¹ Osaka Science Museum: <http://www.sci-museum.jp/>

April 2019, this is the first time in Japan that museums will be organized by an independent local administrative agency, and the nation is watching closely to see if the new scheme is successful.

The establishment of a new corporation and the integrated operation of museums is linked to the “Vision of Osaka City Museums”, formulated by Osaka City government. It is a rough sketch of individual “city planning” working through the museums. It enriches the city by having the museum utilized by a variety of stakeholders, and through receiving feedback. It remains to be seen if this concept will have the same lasting influence as Mayor Seki’s policies had one hundred years ago, and, furthermore, if values beyond economic viability will become prevalent.

Working with the new system is not an easy way to guarantee the continuity of the museum, whose purpose is to provide equal access to the museum collections. It will take time before the outcomes can start to be assessed, and we are able to see if the new system can provide a stable economic, managerial and political structure allowing museums to thrive.

What can we do in order to support the future of museums? There is certainly a value in looking back to their early beginnings and the values with which they were entrenched; research on collections, and finding and developing community and its culture. Sometimes it may be worth looking beyond the “masterpieces” that attract money and attention, in order to find under-appreciated value in the greater collection. If we embrace the parameters of the city and work within the accessible social network on our doorstep, creating a museum that is a “place of dialogue” becomes a more flexible and practical proposition. Ultimately, the worth of a city museum can be judged by many factors – currently, visitor numbers are given priority, but perhaps the greater value should be how well it serves its community.

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The Museum of Oriental Ceramics Osaka and the Nakanoshima Region of Osaka - Possibilities for a Museum of the City

The Nakanoshima and Osaka City

The city of Osaka is charming and vibrant, and boasts a varied cityscape that defies the standard expectations of a commercial center of this size. The area of Nakanoshima with its attractive waterways and greenery is perhaps where one feels furthest from external stereotypes of Osaka, yet it also has the greatest potential to stand as a symbol for the city.

Nakanoshima is an elongated and narrow island that sits between the rivers Dojima and Tosabori, in the north of Osaka City. It spans about 3 kilometres from east to west. Its development flourished during the Edo period when it became the commercial, transportation and financial centre of Japan. Goods that largely centered on the rice trade were gathered and sold here and then sent out across Japan using the extensive water transportation network.

Nakanoshima was at the economic and commercial heart of Osaka's food trade and the city was referred to in Japan as the "kitchen of the nation". Many *Daimyo*¹ *Kurayashiki*² (storehouse/residence) remain prominent architectural features in the area. Even today this is one of the leading business districts in Osaka where numerous commercial offices, Osaka City Hall and the Osaka Branch of the Bank of Japan (established in 1882) are situated.

However Nakanoshima is also a thriving cultural hub: museums, a library, theatre, an international conference centre and university facilities all coexist here. It is fast developing as one of the primary destinations for art and culture in the city. It holds cultural properties of national importance such as the Osaka Prefectural Nakanoshima Library (opened in 1904) and the Osaka City Central Public Hall (completed in 1918) as well as celebrated modern architectural heritage.

History of the Museum of Oriental Ceramics, Osaka and the characteristics of museums of Osaka City

The Museum of Oriental Ceramics, Osaka (MOCO) was opened in 1982 in Nakanoshima. It was initially designed to hold the "Ataka Collection", a world-class collection of ancient Chinese and Korean ceramics. Ataka & Co (*Ataka Sangyo*) was one of the ten largest trading companies in Japan after World War II, but catastrophic losses in international investments ultimately led to its bankruptcy, leaving the collection in the hands of Ataka's main lender, the Sumitomo Banking Group. Sumitomo made the decision not only to donate the collection but also to provide financial support for the construction of a museum building and a museum foundation. This drew on the longstanding



Outside of MOCO. © MOCO

¹ The Daimyo were powerful Japanese feudal lords (warrior class) as leaders of powerful warrior bands, who controlled the provinces of Japan from about the 10th century until the latter half of the 19th century. Dai (大) means "large" in Japanese, and myo (名田) stands means "private land".

² The Japanese word Kurayashiki (蔵屋敷) designates a clan's residence for storing and trading. Rice and other goods were brought from their domains in order to cover administration costs during Edo. This contributed to Nakanoshima becoming a commercial, transportation and financial center of Japan.

tradition in Osaka of private sector participation in cultural activities and was not the first time that the Sumitomo name was associated with such an endeavor.

The Osaka City Museum of Fine Arts³ was opened in 1936 and located in the Tennoji Park⁴ in the former Sumitomo family home.⁵ The house was donated to Osaka City together with the beautiful Keitakuen Garden⁶ to be a base for the Osaka City Museum of Fine Arts. The core collection of the Osaka City Museum of Fine Arts is comprised of donations from the Osaka and Kansai⁷ regions, coming from world-class oriental art collections including: Chinese paintings and calligraphy from the Abe Collection, Chinese Buddhist sculptures from the Yamaguchi Collection and Buddhist art from the Taman Collection.



Isolation Device. © MOCO

Thus like the Museum of Oriental Ceramics the Osaka City Museum of Fine Arts and its collection were shaped by the private sector. It is this journey from private to public collection, rooted in the philanthropic tradition, that could be considered the defining characteristic of the museums of Osaka City.



National Treasure TEA BOWL, Tenmoku glaze with silvery spots. China, Southern Song dynasty, 12th-13th century, Jian ware. MOCO (The Ataka Collection). Photo by Muda Tomohiro

The role of MOCO

The “Ataka Collection” consists of about 1000 pieces of Chinese and Korean ceramics, including two National Treasures of Japan (both Chinese ceramics) and twelve Important Cultural Properties. It forms MOCO’s core collection that has subsequently been expanded, in particular by significant donations from the “Rhee Byung-Chang Collection” of Korean ceramics, the “Mikio Horio Collection” of Shoji Hamada’s artworks⁸, and important examples of export Imari Porcelain collection – *Imari-ware*. It currently stands at around 7000 pieces and is accepted as a collection of world-class quality.

The mission of MOCO is to prioritize the collection it holds and to establish the ideal environment for appreciating the ceramic art works. To achieve this it was decided that no famous architect would be recruited to design the building and that the building should be a simple space that blended into the surrounding environment with a subtlety in height,

³ Osaka City Museum of Fine Arts: <https://www.osaka-art-museum.jp/en/> (2018/12/30)

⁴ Tennoji Park: <http://www.city.osaka.lg.jp/contents/wdu170/tennojizoo/top-en.html> (2018/12/30)

⁵ Sumitomo family is well-known as “Sumitomo Zaibatsu” (financial clique), which used to be considered one of the three major conglomerates of Japan, together with Mitsui and Mitsubishi. Zaibatsu (in Japanese – 財閥) refers to industrial and financial business conglomerates in the Empire of Japan, whose influence and size allowed control over significant parts of the Japanese economy from the Meiji period until the end of World War II.

⁶ Keitakuen Garden: <https://osaka-info.jp/en/page/keitakuen-garden> (2018/12/30)

⁷ Kansai region is south-western part of Japan, including Osaka.

⁸ Shoji Hamada was a Japanese potter, one of the most influential potters of the 20th century, and a major figure of the Mingei folk-art movement, that established the town of Mashiko as a world-renowned pottery centre. He was designated as Living National Treasure of Japan in 1955.



National Treasure BOTTLE, Celadon with iron brown spots. China, Yuan dynasty, 14th century, Longquan ware. MOCO (The Ataka Collection). Photo by Muda Tomohiro.

shape and colour, which were further dictated by park regulations. The discretion of MOCO's architectural design is best demonstrated in the exhibition room where through the incorporation of natural light, the color and texture of the ceramics are best appreciated. In Japan it has been said since antiquity that certain ceramics are best viewed in "the light at ten in the morning on a clear day in autumn, in a north-facing room partitioned off with a single *shoji* (panel screen)." It is the longstanding facility to view ceramics in natural light that has greatly distinguished MOCO's exhibition space.

The museum is deeply conscious of visual interruptions and employs a unique "invisible" safety device to protect the works. It strives to stay up to date on developments in exhibition display methods, collections, research, exhibition planning and educational approaches at the world level.

A particular motivator for this is because MOCO doesn't house a collection drawn from a single region in Japan but rather has a broad and important East Asian collection, meaning it feels a responsibility to act in accordance with its national and international responsibilities. This differentiates MOCO from other speciality ceramic museums in Japan, which often have a primary function of representing specific ceramic regions and styles.

MOCO focusses its activities on original international exhibitions of independent projects, research activities and remaining abreast of world standards in spite of its small staff. The long- and short-term lending exhibitions and travelling exhibitions, both in Japan and

abroad, are an important part of the museum's mission – as is maintaining friendship and exchange with overseas museums and welcoming international researchers for on-site study.

MOCO: New roles and possibilities

City museums are able to present diverse cultures and differing values to communities, to increase understanding and provide the opportunity to create a new culture. The significance of MOCO as a specialty ceramics museum is inextricably linked to the diversity and creativity of Osaka City, making the sum value of the museum greater than the value of the collection. Just as the city is growing and transforming, so too MOCO has grown and will continue changing in the future.

The museum has begun collecting and exhibiting modern ceramics, western ceramics and even crafts relating to ceramics. Furthermore a new strategy designed to help realize MOCO's mission to be the "world's most sophisticated ceramic specialty museum" has opened up the possibility of discovering new value in the MOCO collection and creating a new modern culture from a global perspective, for example by reexamining the interplay between different eras, regions and genres of art.

Possibilities for museums of the city

Nakanoshima not only holds MOCO but also Osaka Science Museum (opened in 1989), the National Museum of Art Osaka⁹ (opened in 1977, moved to Nakanoshima in 2004), the newly

⁹ National Museum of Art Osaka: <http://www.nmao.go.jp/en/> (2018/12/30)

established private museum, the Nakanoshima Kosetsu Museum of Art¹⁰ (opened in 2018) and Nakanoshima Museum of Art (Osaka Municipal, planned to be opened in 2021). This has formed a museum cluster. Osaka City recently launched the initiative entitled “Nakanoshima Museum Island” in order to manage and promote the area as cultural and art center. The endeavor has begun by focusing on and celebrating the communities and individuals who contribute to the area.

For example, Nakanoshima is the main venue of the annual event “Festival of Light in OSAKA”¹¹ that is part of the project “Suito Osaka (Aqua Metropolis Osaka)” organized by public and private sectors.

The project uses Nakanoshima as the stage for connecting a wide variety of people through various cultural and artistic activities and events. Nakanoshima is at the intersection of change and development, culture and human interest.

As a member of “Nakanoshima Museum Island”, MOCO is working in cooperation with more facilities and people than ever before and in doing so is seeing record visitor numbers. It welcomes the challenges this brings and focuses on spreading the spirit and values of MOCO as a museum of the city.

Although never wavering from its mission as a museum whose primary role is the celebration of its collection – caring for and passing on a legacy to future generations – it is also important to find and expand on new values, to promote and create new relationships in order to nurture a museum that changes and grows alongside its community.

As the process and potential for change in a growing city becomes increasingly important to MOCO, the museum steps into its role of a steward not only for its collection but also to the city’s advancement. Although small MOCO sees and celebrates its new roles and responsibilities and endeavors to be a positive symbol of development in a historical period of dynamic change in Osaka City.



Daylighting exhibition. © MOCO

¹⁰ Nakanoshima Kosetsu Museum of Art: <http://www.kosetsu-museum.or.jp/nakanoshima/en/> (2018/12/30)

¹¹ Festival of the light in Osaka: <https://hikari-kyoen.j-server.com/LUCHIKARIK/ns/tl.cgi/https://www.hikari-kyoen.com/?SLANG=ja&TLANG=en&XMODE=0&XJSID=0> (2018/12/30)

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Building Collections, Nurturing People, Creating Culture: Considering the Potential for Museums of Cities, from the Point of View of a Natural History Museum



Osaka Natural History Festival 2018. © OMNH

The city museum and the collection

There are as many stories that tell of the establishment of museums as there are museums themselves. Royal collections, donations to the temples, artifacts brought home from explorations; some museums might freeze their collection at that point, choosing their sole focus to be on its preservation and utilization. However, other museums continue to add to their collections. The history of the museum's activities accumulates, new documents and materials are amassed that enhance the value of the collections – and for many museums of cities, they become better able to tell the history and memories of the city as a result.

The history of museums in Osaka is the history of Osaka itself. This link is especially important here, as so many of the collections are comprised of donations from private collections. This distinction means the collections were gathered not as symbols of the men in power (such as kings, or governors), but were instead the personal endeavors of private collectors, who focused on collecting things that they loved. Companies, shrines and temples and Osaka's residents have all contributed. With such a variety of sources, how museums organise and utilise these sorts of collections is an important question.

Considering the case study of Osaka Museum

The Osaka Museum of Natural History offers an important insight into the relationship between the city's inhabitants and its collections. The vision in the Museum's mission statement is to function as "a place to connect citizens and nature." This is done in a number of ways: activities and events about nature, providing science and education services, hosting opportunities to explore nature. The museum is a place where the community can gather and interact, sharing love of nature. The Osaka Museum of Natural History (OMNH)¹ was established in order to convey the importance of natural experiences to the next generation, in a world where much of the natural environment has been sacrificed to city development. The founding members, the curators and the city government of the time focused on creating a "specially localized" Natural History Museum, and not a copy of world's famous large museums. This does not mean a small, non-research museum, but, rather, a museum focused on the natural history of Osaka, biodiversity, geology, ecosystems and their developmental history. The museum tries to make sure that visitors do not merely pass through its exhibition rooms, but also leave inspired to get out in nature. If this is the weekend they come in to the museum, then the hope is that the following weekend they will be outside!

Surrounding ecosystems support the urban environment in many ways, especially through water and food. Natural history museums cannot ignore the nature that surrounds cities. Therefore, the permanent exhibition at OMNH starts with an exhibition about nature *inside* the city, especially

¹Osaka Museum of Natural History (OMNH): <http://www.mus-nh.city.osaka.jp/language/en/>

Osaka's ordinary parks and gardens, before stepping outside to the suburbs, farmed areas and forests. The display includes observation maps, making the museum a mechanism to connect people to the natural wonders they already live in, but may not always pay attention to.

The OMNH provides many guided tours and experiences. However, though the museum puts great amount of efforts on educational activities, its high-quality programs can only be provided for 10,000-20,000 people per year. It is impossible to implement an educational outreach programme to the majority of citizens in a city as large as Osaka, and conduct it solely by museum staff. The OMNH chooses an alternative strategy, investing its energy into training citizen-scientists. The OMNH has a long tradition of working with enthusiastic amateur scientists, so it is a natural step. We hope inspiring local people is one of the ways the museum has a positive influence on society.

Supporting local citizens with an interest in science is one of the Museum's most important activities. The Museum collaborates in various research programs and helps local research and conservation groups. Through these activities, information is gathered and shared. This enables the Museum to reach a wider range of people and develop local human resources, bringing the city together.

Education for citizen-scientists not only is valuable in itself, but also leads to the development of new scientific projects. For example, specimen-gathering activities create useful records, and if the information is published, it gains academic importance. There are 1.7 million specimens collected by curators or donated by researchers at the OMNH, and these include specimens collected by

citizen-scientists. Each collection is valuable, supporting the museum's activities from research to exhibitions. The amateur collections of regional specimens allow for improved records that enable more effective nature protection measures, for example, improving accuracy of the list of endangered species. There were a few researchers who collected insects inside the city for the exhibition in 2014, *Nature of the City*. The exhibition features local data, including the popular Yodogawa River Dictionary,² which addresses the substantial improvements made by local citizen-scientists to the major rivers in Osaka. The richness of the exhibition materials is one of the leading attractions of the special

exhibitions. They are particularly appealing to audiences who want to learn more on a specialist topic. The *2018 Mushroom Exhibition* saw numerous returning visitors, some revisiting over 10 times.

The OMNH's recent experiences have highlighted the effectiveness of virtual and computer graphics in creating new exhibits that are easy to understand. It is also extremely important for city museums to provide an exhibition experience for audiences searching for authenticity, looking for the "real



Observation meeting; Freeze-dried mushroom specimen. © OMNH



Mushroom Exhibition in 2018. © OMNH

² Yodogawa River Dictionary, in Japanese: 淀川大図鑑. <http://www.mus-nh.city.osaka.jp/tokuten/2010yodogawa/>



Workshop. (top). Watercolor painting of a mushroom donated by the researcher's family. © OMNH

thing". *The Mushroom Exhibition* demonstrated a range of engagements with exhibition materials, and audiences responded particularly well to being able to touch elements of the exhibition. They were interested in questions like: *How did Tsuguo Hongo influence researchers in Tokyo and overseas, and influence amateurs throughout the country?*,³ and *What role do specimens play in exhibitions?* The museum provided a genuine experience in connecting contemporary audiences with historically important researchers – there were even mushroom fans tweeting their interest online!

Materials collected by the museum and through curatorial research activities make the exhibitions attractive, inspiring interest, creativity, and scientific curiosity. This spreads the museum's vision and further enhances the collection. We feel it is important to record the "present", in addition to the past. If the activities of the museum can inspire children, that will increase the potential for continuing our pursuits into the future. This is true not only in nature museums, but in any kind of city museum for which record-keeping is important,

such as museums with a focus on history and industry. The future culture of the city will be born from culture it currently nurtures. The city also hosts new technologies. Science is an activity that "stands on the shoulders of giants". It cannot be done without the work of those who have been doing it before. This is true for history and art, and all of culture. Being able to view the past from various perspectives is essential in achieving SDGs.⁴ Museums are among the places where this can be done.

The potential for museums of cities

Museums in Osaka City are associated with the local government, in their role as Local Independent Administrative Agencies. Osaka City governance was a part of discussions about museum policy that led to the establishment of the "Vision for Osaka City Museums". This policy, which uses *museum as the core of the city* as a key phrase, carries out city strategy and human resources development based on the city's tradition and culture. It is a policy that sets an expectation for museums to be social and educational institutions that cultivate human resources. The document expresses ► Osaka City's long-term commitment to all city museums in Osaka, recognizing that the museum is not simply a cultural attraction, but a place that provides social education and supports collections and research. In order to maintain a program of this sort, it is necessary to have specialized human resources, and to have these resources publicly accessible. Of course, the museum has been influenced by historic developments in Osaka, particularly the period of rapid economic growth (especially that of Japan in the post-WWII period), and the point where the economy "bubble" burst. Positive developments in the near future, from the 2020 Tokyo Olympics to the 2025 Osaka EXPO,⁵ indicate that Osaka might be at a turning point. Today the administration of local government is changing, and the museum must seek to maintain and improve its sustainability, expertise, and publicity. But, its priority remains being responsible for the collection, education, and in passing culture to future generations. It is a place to feel welcome and safe, one where free thought is fostered, scientific endeavor is nurtured, and people may truly appreciate the value of museums and collections. It provides a pathway to a deep consideration of the city's identity and culture. It is therefore imperative that it remains a space that people can enjoy both now and in the future.

³ Tsuguo Hongo was a Japanese mycologist who specialized in the biogeography and taxonomy of *Agaricales*.

⁴ Sustainable Development Goals: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>

⁵ 2025 Osaka EXPO: <https://www.expo2025-osaka-japan.jp/en/>

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Towards conceptualizing the Museums of Cities in Osaka

Museums of cities and the topography of Osaka

In 2016 the City of Osaka launched a project called the Osaka City Museum Vision, which aimed to integrate six of the museums within the area into a single Local Independent Administrative Agency. While the project stems from an administrative requirement there was also an intent to conceptualize “Museums of Cities” in Osaka. The Nakanoshima Museum Island Project (which intends to establish a museum zone) and the Living Architecture Museum Project (which aims to regenerate the modernist buildings as urban attractions) were both launched by the City in 2013 and respond to this movement.



The permanent exhibition of the Osaka International Peace Center after the renovation in 2015. © Mariko Murata

While these projects are clearly intended to promote the “Museums of Cities” concept in Osaka there is room for further consideration. In the process of developing a new “museumscape” within the city it is important to acknowledge how each museum was established, and each one’s relationship to the topography of the city. Here, I will outline two areas as examples.

The first example is the Osaka Castle area, which is the most popular tourist site in Osaka today. The area not only was the center of administration in pre-modern Osaka but also played a significant role as a military and industrial base in modern Osaka. After the Sino-Japanese War (1894-85) the city of Osaka was called the “Manchester of the Orient” for its flourishing spinning and metal industries. The Osaka Castle area, which the Meiji Government diversified as a military facility, became eastern Asia’s largest weapon factory after World War I. In the last year of World War II the city experienced more than 50 air raids from the United States.

The Great Osaka Air Raid was intended to destroy the city, which had been designated as Japan’s largest weapon manufacturer. While the reconstruction of the bombed area started under the occupation of the Allied forces, the burnt remnants of the artillery arsenal zone remained abandoned until the 1980s after which the area was converted and combined with the Osaka Castle Park.

In 1991, the Osaka International Peace Center was established inside the park. The museum exhibits the story of the Great Osaka Air Raid and its historical background (dating back to the Sino-Japanese War when Japan’s imperialism started). Today the Park is home to the Osaka Castle, the Osaka International Peace Center and the former Headquarters of the Imperial Japanese Army’s Fourth Division, with many other war remnants and memorials. Just outside the park is the Osaka History Museum, which stands on the historical remains of the Naniwanomiya, the capital city of the 7th century. Since 1960, the former Headquarters of the Imperial Japanese Army’s Fourth Division housed the Osaka Municipal



The Osaka Castle and the former Headquarters of the Imperial Japanese Army’s fourth Division located side by side in the park. © Mariko Murata



*The entrance of the Osaka Tennoji Zoo. Abeno Harukasu can be seen further ahead (top). The Osaka Museum of Fine Arts in Tennoji Park. The land was originally donated by the Sumitomo family (bottom).
© Mariko Murata*

Museum, which closed when the Osaka History Museum opened in 2001. It is now a shopping and restaurant arcade.

Another important area for the Museums of Cities in Osaka is the Tennoji area, which was redeveloped in the 20th century. The Fifth National Industrial Exhibition of 1903, the largest exposition ever to be held in Japan, took place in this area. The land was mainly converted into a park with the Osaka Tennoji Zoo (1913) and the Osaka City Museum of Fine Arts (1936) built side by side. Part of the land, named Shin-sekai (a new world), was sold to the private sector and was converted into a theme park (for which Coney Island in Manhattan was the model), with a tower (radial streets stretching out from it just like in Paris) and a shopping area. While the theme park had already been demolished in 1925, the tower (Tsutenkaku, rebuilt in 1956) and the shopping arcade remain with a distinctive atmosphere suggesting the passage of time. Recently the neighbouring area has been renovated into a huge shopping complex and the Abeno Harukasu, a towering shopping mall, also holds a museum that is intended to be a “city museum”. The whole area juxtaposes museums and consumerism, referencing the fact that museums developed as part of the exposition culture in Osaka and Japan.

The origin of these various museums in the city of Osaka dates back to 1875 when the Osaka Prefectural Museum (Osaka Hakubutsujo) was established. The “Museum” was a complex of institutions including a trade fair site,

a library, a museum, an art museum, a zoo, a botanical garden and a park, among others. The site represents the birth of Japanese museums in which museum integration was part of the government industrial development policy (Shokusan Kogyo). When the site closed down in 1917 to convert it into a new Export Sample Warehouse (Shohin Chinretsujo, also translated as Commercial Museum), these institutions were dispersed across the city. The Osaka Tennoji Zoo, the Osaka City Museum of Fine Arts, the Osaka Museum of Natural History, the Osaka Science Museum and the Osaka Prefectural Nakanoshima Library all carry the ‘gene’ of this very first museum site.

The “Museums of Cities” in Osaka concept should be based on the museum’s relationship to the city’s topography. The featured museums represent an aspect of the city’s history or highlight its urban characteristics. It should be added that it was leading business figures and not city authorities who supported this cultural movement, which is a significant feature of the museum culture in Osaka.

From regions to cities: A perspective of museums of cities in Osaka

Despite their significant history and diversity, the Museums of Cities in Osaka have hardly been discussed. This is probably because the idea of a museum, assumed to be culturally sophisticated, did not match the stereotype of the City of Osaka. As a city of commerce, Osaka has a reputation for

being blunt, tacky and particular about money. The city has also been characterized as a no-culture-zone, especially compared to older cities in the vicinity like Kyoto and Nara. While Kyoto and Nara are often represented as cultural cities with museums, temples and other historical sites, Osaka has been reputed for prioritizing business or being gluttonous ('kui-dao-re'). This image has continued to the present.

While these stereotypes have entertained the people, they have also prevented many from understanding the rich culture of the city. In Kansai University, where I belong, a project to discover and record Osaka's unique culture started in 2005.

However, the reason for the Museums of Cities not being conceptualized should be considered from a broader context. It is deeply related to the state of Museum Studies and Urban Studies in Japan. In Japan, museums were always discussed in relation to regions as opposed to cities. Since the early 20th century, the desire to locate one museum in each prefecture has driven the establishment of museums in Japan. The idea of having museums in equal distribution was initiated by the vision of Gentaro Tanahasi (1869-1961), the father of Museum Studies in Japan, who emphasized the importance of establishing Local Museums (Kyodo Hakubutsukan) at each prefectural and municipal level. Thus, while the role and meaning of local/regional museums were often discussed, having museums in urban areas was never considered. It was finally in the 1990s when museums that represented cities and their urban issues were established.

This is related to the fact that the study of Urban History in Japan began around this time. The first movement towards writing the history of the region was a simple appeal to promote one's home town culture (Kyodo-shi). After World War II, Japanese history was strongly influenced by a state-centered point of view, and the research concentrated on how local areas were affected by the state policy (Chiho-shi). The importance of Regional Studies (Chiiki-shi) was only acknowledged in the 1970s when the lack of regional diversity had been identified. Museum Studies in Japan resonate with these movements.

Since then the focus on the regions has increased while urban areas remained stagnant. Urban areas finally attracted attention in the 80s, and urban studies from a social and cultural perspective developed. Museums reflecting such new perspectives towards cities were introduced, with the Edo Tokyo Museum (1993) among them. In Osaka, such a museum was launched in 2001: the Osaka History Museum.

However today there are still issues to tackle when trying to conceptualize the Museums of Cities in Osaka. In my opinion, what the "museumscape" of the City of Osaka lacks is a perspective of the people living in the area and of its diversity. As a city of commerce, Osaka has attracted many migrant workers from all over Japan. Communities were formed within the city, including those of the Okinawans and the Koreans (later called the "Zainichi").



*The tower Tsuten-kaku and the shopping street of Shin-sekai.
© Mariko Murata*



The Osaka Human Rights Museum. The building was the former Sakae Primary School established with financial support of the Buraku community in 1872. © Mariko Murata

Perhaps the permanent exhibition of the Osaka Museum of Human Rights is the only museum space in Osaka where we can learn details about these communities. However, this museum was initially intended to raise awareness about the human rights of the 'Buraku', a marginalized community considered to be the lowest social class since the feudal era. The museum is situated in the periphery of the old Osaka and divided from the city by the Kizu river, an area that had long been the residence of the Buraku people. Here, they worked in industries such as leather tanning and drum manufacturing, a feature that is noticeable when walking around the museum. Afterwards the museum was renovated in order to more comprehensively exhibit the question of human rights of people in Japan including the Koreans, the Okinawans, the aboriginal Ainu, LGBTQs, homeless, and people with disabilities.

In 2012 the then mayor claimed that the museum was biased and decided to discontinue all subsidies. The city filed a lawsuit against the museum asking it to pay rent and eventually leave the property after restoring it to its original condition. Today the museum, whose management refused to leave, is run by the foundation alone. Since then it has halved its working hours and its debts are constantly increasing. As the only museum showcasing the people of the city it is perhaps more beneficial for the city to reconsider what the museum can potentially offer.

The time has come for Osaka to configure its Museums of Cities. The CAMOC meeting at the ICOM Kyoto 2019 may be an opportunity for further discussion.

City Museums in Tokyo

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The Edo-Tokyo Museum Renewal of Permanent Exhibition Galleries



The facade of Edo-Tokyo Museum. © Edo-Tokyo Museum

Tokyo Metropolitan Edo-Tokyo Museum opened on March 28th, 1993, in Ryōgoku, Tokyo, as a space to look back on the four hundred years of “history and culture of Edo-Tokyo,” from the founding of Edo by Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1603 to the modern times, and to reflect on the future of the city and life in Tokyo.

The permanent exhibition galleries are divided into two zones: the “Edo Zone” and the “Tokyo Zone.” The “Edo Zone” highlights the founding and development of Edo and the life of the shoguns, daimyo, and the townspeople through historical materials as well as large-scale models such as those of the Nihonbashi Bridge and theater house of the Edo period.

The “Tokyo Zone” features the development and changes that Tokyo underwent, from the Meiji Restoration in 1868 to today, also through historical materials and large-scale models such as the Chōya Newspaper Company building. As a “museum for fun learning” the Edo-Tokyo Museum has been visited by more than 35,000,000 people over the past twenty five years. In average, we have had more than 1,400,000 visitors annually.

After some renovation work, the permanent exhibition galleries had its renewal opening on March 28th, 2015. The renovation was much needed, due to deterioration of exhibits and facilities after more than twenty years of its opening. We were determined to resolve these issues with an aim to improve the satisfaction of our visitors through our exhibit of diverse collection and accumulated research results under safe and comfortable environment. We were also determined to further promote Tokyo to people within and outside of Japan.

The three main points of the renewal of our permanent exhibition are as follows:

(1) Installment of New Exhibit Corners

We added new topics to both the Edo and Tokyo Zones. To the Edo Zone, we added an exhibit, “From Edo to Tokyo,” that describes the transition by focusing on Katsu Kaishū, a shogunal retainer who made remarkable contributions in the era of upheaval as Edo transformed itself into Tokyo, the capital of new Japan.

For the Tokyo Zone, which had previously only covered up to the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games, we added the “Tokyo Today” corner, expanding the time period of the exhibit to the 2000’s. This section divides the period between the 1960s to 2000s into five sections, and explores the changes that the city of Tokyo underwent through fashion, culture, and lifestyle that were in trend during those times.

The adding of the section on “From Edo to Tokyo” allowed for a smoother flow from the Edo Zone to the Tokyo Zone, and by adding the “Tokyo Today” section, we were able to illuminate the period that is closer in time to the visitors.

(2) Installment of New Models

New models appeared in both the Edo and Tokyo Zones. The model “Edo Castle in the Late Tokugawa Period: the Honmaru and Ni-no-Maru Palaces” reconstructs the late Tokugawa period Edo Castle in a 1/200 scale on a 6-meter diameter circular platform. Through this model, viewers can capture a full view of the palace architecture. Actual-size models of the stalls for sushi and soba noodles--the “fast foods” of the Edo period--and the peddler’s pole, on which goods to be sold were carried, were also newly added. Visitors can actually carry the pole on their shoulders and feel its weight, and experience being a peddler during the Edo period.

In the Tokyo Zone, we recreated the apartment complex “Hibarigaoka danchi,” which was built in 1959 in response to housing shortage. For this model, we used actual construction parts collected from its demolition site. Viewers can imagine the lifestyle of the people who lived in the apartment through the dining room area that had been reconstructed.

The existing models of *munewari nagaya* (row houses) that demonstrates the daily life of the



Permanent Exhibition Galleries. © Edo-Tokyo Museum

commoners of the Edo period and the model of the Ginza Brick Street, which illustrates Tokyo and Ginza during the Meiji era, were also expanded, relocated, and improved using audiovisuals, in order to make them more comprehensible and easier to view.

(3) Enhancement of Multilingual Descriptions

Due to an increase in the number of foreign visitors, we expanded and enhanced our multilingual descriptions. The new explanation panels set up in the permanent exhibition spaces use tablet terminals and offer explanations in Chinese (both Simplified and Traditional), Korean, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Russian, Thai, Portuguese and Malay in addition to the Japanese and English ones that we have already had.

We also continue to offer “Exhibit Volunteer Guides” (in Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean, French, German, Spanish and Italian) and “Audio Tours” in Japanese, English, Chinese(both Simplified and Traditional), Korean, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Russian, Thai, Portuguese and Malay.

Since the renewal opening of March 28th, the permanent exhibition gallery has received many visitors. In particular, we have been extremely pleased to see a remarkable increase in the number of foreign visitors. To fulfill our mission to transmit the history and culture of Edo and Tokyo to as many people as we can, regardless of nationality, we wish to continue to enrich and improve our permanent exhibition galleries.



*Edo Castle in the Tokugawa Period, Honmaru and Ni-no-Maru Palaces.
© Edo-Tokyo Museum*

All cities around the world today are facing their own problems. As for Tokyo, the rapid changes in the population have resulted in a society of “decreasing birthrate and aging population” that has never been experienced before, and this has become a grave national issue. Furthermore, the age of “mass consumption” has long been gone, and instead, the Japanese expression “MOTTAINAI”([that is] wasteful) has come to represent a concern of global scale of various “environmental issues.” We, at the Edo-Tokyo Museum, will constantly be aware of such problems and will reflect them on our various projects. As we await for the opening of the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, we believe that our mission, as the museum of the city of Tokyo, is to further deepen our exchange and cooperation with other city museums around the world and to continue to assume our social responsibility in the ages to come.

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Introduction of Large-Scale Experimental Study Programs Undertaken by the Museums in Association with the Local Firms: Example of Tamaroku Train Explorers



Group photo in front of the Tamaroku Train. In the train: children participating in the summer program.
© Tamarokuto Science Center

The Tamarokuto Science Center

The Tamarokuto Science Center (referred to as “the Center”) is a science museum located in Nishitokyo City, situated near the center of Metropolitan Tokyo.¹ In 1994, the Center was jointly inaugurated by five local governments – those of Kodaira City, Higashimurayama City, Kiyose City, Higashikurume City, and Nishitokyo City, all located in the Northern Tama area of Tokyo.² This type of organization is unique in Japan. Since 2012, the Center has been managed by a private company under the designated management system. According to the 10-year plan created in 2014, the main mission of the Center is defined as contribution to the local community development. That mission is based on providing a variety of study opportunities for the five cities and on serving as a lifetime study base.

Tamaroku Train Explorers (2016): an experimental study for the children of Northern Tama

The experimental study for the Northern Tama children was organized by the Working Committee of five cities and the Center, and subsidized by the Tokyo Mayors’ Association. The Center played a pivotal role in its implementation. Students from the elementary and middle high schools of Northern Tama area could participate in the study programs throughout the year. In 2016, there were 700 to 800 participants under the program of Tamaroku Train Explorers. The program could count on the kind cooperation of Seibu Railway Co., Ltd., which covers the Northern Tama area, and of FM Nishitokyo Co., Ltd.

¹ For further information of the Center, please refer to (<http://www.tamarokuto.or.jp/english/>).

² The Northern Tama (Nishitokyo City, Kodaira City, Higashimurayama City, Higashikurume City, and Kiyose City) has about 700, 000 inhabitants (data from August 2017).

- **Summer program: *Find a variety of town faces in a special train and walking trip***

About 240 children participated in the summer program, held over four days. Each morning, special trains were operated in the Northern Tama area, so that the children could communicate with each other and learn about the surrounding landscapes. The Center closely coordinated with the train staff that helped the participants take advantage of the unique experiences and enjoy the program. Each afternoon, they walked from the five stations with the “walking bingo”, a feature specially designed for this program. They reported on the trip outcomes at the end of the tour. Each group consisted of six students (aged from the first grade of elementary to the third grade of middle high school), and a facilitator. The Center developed the “walking bingo” as a unique tool to help the participants explore new towns from their own points of view. The purpose of the bingo program was to encourage participants’ own discovery, which lies not only in their visits to each city but in uncovering them through walking. In the “walking bingo” cards, there were 25 fields containing different elements with items differing in size, shape, time, colour, written down. Some of those elements were expected to be found beforehand on the participants’ routes, yet many new elements were found in the course of the program thanks to its spontaneity and acknowledging participants’ own points of view. For example, the element of “persons” was intended to facilitate communication with strangers through surprise interviews with them. Along with the bingo as a motivation tool, the participants seemed to be motivated to create their own rules and share their roles. The participants gathered at the Center after the tour and each group reported on its top three attractions of the town.



The walking bingo at the Minamisawa spring. © Tamarokuto Science Center

Besides the usual attractions and well-known places, many new discoveries emerged among the attractions selected: for example, the interviewed persons, insects, or swallows’ nests. Some of the most interesting participants’ impressions of the: “ All the people interviewed were so kind” (girl, third grade, elementary school); “Old buildings are so impressive” (boy, first grade, elementary school); “Strangely shaped roofs” (boy, fourth grade, elementary school)). It was concluded that the participants’ impressions obtained through their experiences and communication with others were diversified and multi-faceted.

- **Autumn program: *Local radio station’s commercials***

The autumn programs were organized five times from September to December 2016. About 40 people participated. On the first day, they visited the studio of the FM Nishitokyo radio, and reflected on the summer programs on the second day. They made reports on the third day and were given lectures by the radio announcers on the fourth day. On the fifth day, they recorded in the studio. Based on the materials gathered under the summer program at the five spots they walked (Kodaira St., Akitsu St., Kiyose St., Higashikurume St., and Higashifushimi St.), they produced about ten items. All of them turned into attractive radio commercials based on the participants’ summer fieldwork experiences, vividly bringing back into mind the impressions of the towns.

The children who made the best pieces could participate in a special radio program, broadcast during the entire month of January this year. The public broadcast of the children's viewpoints of the towns and their attractions hopefully contributed to the residents' own understanding of their town.

The participants were excited about the unique programs, which included not only voice training but also learning bases of vocal communication and reading rehearsals. The program enabled them to experience how it is to work in a radio station, through contacts not only with radio announcers, but also with directors and sound mixers.

Presentation of the commercials and special program

Two presentation meetings were held in the Center's planetarium to share the experiences and present the commercials produced in summer and autumn. In total, about 300 participants and their families attended these meetings. The commercials were broadcast on FM Nishitokyo for a month and people can still enjoy them on the special site.³ The broadcast was, however, only in Japanese.

Future development

This program aims at creating more experiences by increasing the number of participants and also by including people from different age groups. Development of such programs is also important in order to meet specialized needs of higher elementary and middle high school students who

are interested in the Center and science in general. We have been studying ways to develop new programs with more enriched outputs. We are thankful for the kind cooperation of the public, private and related organizations in the Northern Tama area in carrying out our programs. We are committed to achieve our mission by continuing our cooperation and assuming the role of a core museum in this area.



The walking bingo card.
© Tamarokuto Science Center

³ <http://www.tamarokuto.or.jp/blog/rokuto-report/2016/12/23/tamarokutrain/>



Creating commercials at the local radio station. © Tamarokuto Science Center

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Museum Trip: Social inclusion program for children with overseas roots

Ueno Park is an area of Tokyo popular among residents and tourists alike. The park is home to many cultural establishments – a concert hall, a library, a university – and to numerous museums, one of which is the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum (nicknamed “TOBI”), where this author works.

For the past five years, TOBI and its next-door neighbour, the Tokyo University of the Arts, have been organising the “Museum Start iUeno” project in partnership with these cultural institutions.” This project helps children between their first year of elementary school and the final year of high school make their “museum debuts”, through activities like the “Museum Trip” programs that promote social inclusion. In this article, one particular Museum Trip program will be introduced, targeting children with overseas roots that struggle with cultural differences or financial problems.



The Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum. © Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum

Tokyo is a city with a population of roughly 13.7 million, and among its residents there are many children of international origin. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of foreign workers in Japan. According to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, there was a 19.4% increase from 2015-2016, which marked the fourth consecutive year to record these numbers rising. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the number of children with overseas roots has also been increasing, and that those children may face difficulties in daily communication. There are also more and more children who, despite being Japanese nationals, do not understand Japanese and are having issues in their everyday lives. A

particular problem is the limited linguistic support available for older children who come to Japan with their parents, especially those older than 16 and therefore beyond the age of compulsory education in Japan. Children with limited communication skills in Japanese may become isolated and unable to get involved in social activities.

Since the first year of the “Museum Start iUeno” project, we have collaborated with schools in order to organize lectures that would help children enjoy artwork through dialogue. We noticed that students who couldn’t speak Japanese well found it difficult to enjoy the lectures – and couldn’t participate in them without support. One example is of a group that had a student who could only understand Mandarin: we introduced an art communicator speaking Mandarin to be a facilitator for the group and to stimulate the dialogue between students. We were impressed with how all the children responded to the enlivened dialogue and were very pleased with the lecture.

Several such experiences brought us to keenly sense how museums in multicultural cities are places that can serve to champion multiculturalism, and to cultivate both understanding of one’s own culture and empathy towards others. We launched this program last year with an idea the museums in Ueno Park would be an ideal setting for programs aimed at children with overseas roots. The program has the following five characteristics:

1. Rich cultural resources at the program's core

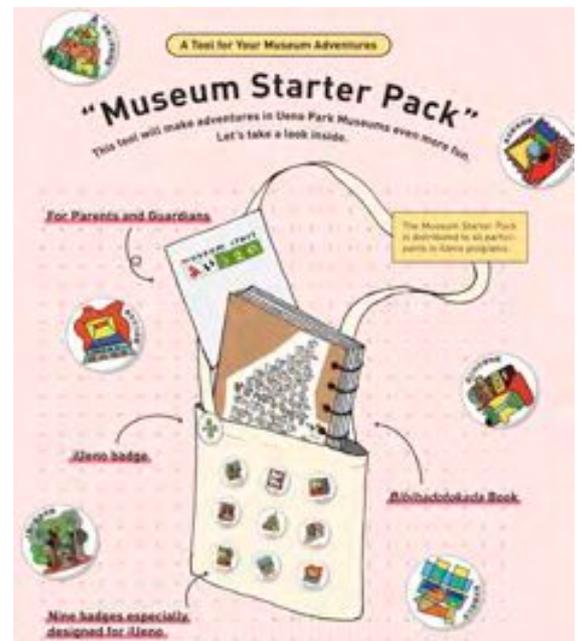
The project's main resources are the exhibits at the nine cultural facilities in Ueno Park.

2. Community design that creates connections between diverse people

The programs have been tailored specifically for the participants, planned by TOBI's curators and the faculty of the Tokyo University of the Arts, consulting experts from each of the partner institutions in Ueno Park. The program is facilitated by our "art communicators" (nicknamed Tobira), who accompany each child one-on-one and encourage independent learning.¹

3. Participatory learning tool

Participants are given the "Museum Starter Packs", in which they can compile the record of their experiences at the museums, like in a scrapbook. On the front-side of the bag, children can attach and collect the badges issued by different facilities, each with its own design.



The museum starter pack. © Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum

4. Publicly financed initiative to rectify the education gap

The participation is free. Depending on circumstances, transport and lunch costs are also provided through the NPOs and such.

5. Continuing support, not one-off care

The program consists of three steps, unfolding before, during and after the children's visit. After the visits, those who register are given opportunities to participate in programs held exclusively for members.

The greatest challenge for us as the organizers is to create an effective communication scheme, so that the target group of the children can acquire information about this program, take interest, and actually come to the museums. We routinely plan and manage programs for all sorts of children as part of our work; the experience has given us confidence that, once the children arrive at the museum, we would be able to provide a program they enjoy. However, the prerequisites for that are that we reach the children with overseas roots, build a relationship of trust with them, with their parents and guardians, as well as with the non-profits that look after the children – and ultimately, that we make them interested in the museums in Ueno Park so they decide to visit us. We need to build a communication circuit that can make this happen, and it is the most essential and most difficult part of the work.

Let us present an example from last year. The project staff approached non-profit organizations running art and education programs for young people, asking them to contact children suitable for our program. Those organizations got in touch with children they have previously worked with, thus extending the new communication scheme. As those adults already had the children's trust, the children could accept this information without worry. Through the organizations, we then messaged

¹ The Tobira are the active members of the Tobira Project, a social design project run collaboratively by TOBI and the Tokyo University of the Arts. Their role is to foster communication through art. Every year, about 40 members are chosen through applications from the public, and they serve for three years. Throughout the year, they sit specialist seminars and work as volunteer art communicators. Through their activity, a structure that can organically connect people and art is developed, producing a positive cycle of communication.

the participants using the LINE messenger app, to say hello and to invite them to the museums, informing them about the fun experience awaiting there. Nine students from a part-time high school founded by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government came on the day of the program, accompanied

by one of their teachers; one of the participating students was child sitting an elementary school first-grader, who also joined. They were welcomed by the program's facilitators: a faculty member from the Tokyo University of the Arts, a TOBI curator, and seven Tobira. This group of twenty enjoyed the program that lasted for a few hours. It was a relaxed program, consisting of touring the art museum and the architecture in the morning, and viewing the exhibition Dialogue with Trees we then had on after lunch. Hands-on activities involving touching trees were a part of the program, thus creating opportunities to communicate in a form other than language.

The purpose of this program is to encourage children to become involved in the society by using artworks and cultural assets. Children get acquainted with our art communicators – grown-ups who are neither parents nor teachers; they share viewpoints with them through the cultural assets, and deepen the communication. This program also aims to improve children's self-esteem and their understanding of other cultures. By using the artworks as intermediaries, the relationship between the children and the art communicators becomes more equal, creating a healthy atmosphere. We were told by the participating high school students that having people listen and commend their opinions made them feel good, and that they would like to have the learning opportunity again if possible.

Since ancient times, artworks have had the function of connecting people in a society; churches, shrines and temples with artworks have always played a role in the ways people communicate. Through this project, we realized that a museum with cultural resources has the ability to connect people in a very similar manner. A city museum is a place where groups of diverse people can gather together. The city museums' activities can be a powerful resource for the community they serve.

To achieve our project goals, our first step is to build strong relationships with external NPOs and NGOs and collaborate with them. We hope that, by combining our museum knowledge with their expertise in the field of migration, a strong social resource can be created. Although our first step is small, we feel that that the work being done here can already provide real value to individuals and we are committed to the future of the project.



A detail from one of the Museum Trip programs. © Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum

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CAMOC Kyoto 2019 venues:

- **Kyoto International Conference Center (ICC Kyoto)**
Takaragaike, Sakyo-ku,
Kyoto 606-0001
Nearest station:
Kokusaikaikan Station
(Karasuma Subway Line, Exit 4-2)
- **Inamori Memorial Hall**
* Accessible through "Kyoto
Institute, Library and Archives
(Rekisaikan)"
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Kitayama Station (Karasuma
Subway Line, Exit 1)
- **The Museum of Kyoto**
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