

Press Release

July 5, 2025

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Opening Dialogues



Opening Dialogues

Toda Sayaka: Blooms in Silence

June 28 (Sat.) – November 3 (Mon., nat. hol.), 2025



TODA Sayaka, *Blooms in Silence*, 2025, chromogenic print, Collection of the Artist

This year, as we mark the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II, the Yokohama Museum of Art presents a small exhibition in which we join the artist Toda Sayaka (b. 1988) in considering the issues of ongoing conflict and the potential for coexistence – two of the most significant concerns facing us today.

After Hiroshima was reduced to ashes in the wake of the atomic bombing of the city in the summer of 1945, it was expected to remain barren of vegetation for the next 75 years. Yet, roughly one month later in September, a canna lily was found blooming quietly about 800 meters from the hypocenter of the atomic bomb.

The brilliant flower of the canna lily, indigenous to Latin America, blossoms among the plant's large leaves under the blazing midsummer sun. The Asahi Shimbun newspaper photographer Matsumoto Eiichi took a picture of the flower in Hiroshima. His photograph later became a symbol of hope at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

Toda Sayaka began her career as a painter, but over the last few years she has expressed her worldview through other media, such as photographs and video installations. In 2021, at the height of the Covid pandemic, Toda began making works using the motifs of canna lilies and a friend who immigrated to Japan from Russia. These motifs inspired Toda to think about peace in Japan and “those who cross the sea from other lands to put down roots and live naturally in this island nation.” According to a text by the artist:

As I walked through the cityscape of Tokyo with a few canna lilies, I secretly documented the glorious bloom of the flower amid the ever-changing scenery. While thinking about a beloved friend listening to infinite sadness, cries, and despair, I staged my own humble demonstration as a prayer for peace.

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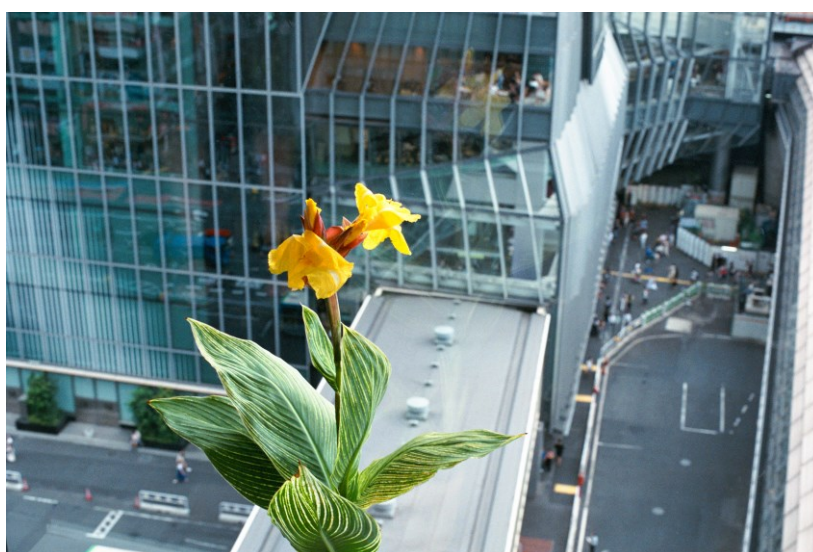
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Today, in 2025, after coming through the Cold War and Covid, the world faces new disputes and conflicts. In this exhibition, Toda focuses on works by two painters from the Yokohama Museum of Art collection. The first, Ogawara Shu, a Hokkaido native and member of the Tokyo-based Bijutsu Bunka Association who was subsequently drafted and sent into battle. The second, Catalan-born Joan Miró, witnessed numerous conflicts including World War I, the Spanish Civil War, and World War II.

In this exhibition, Toda shows new works, which once again deal with the motifs of canna lilies and the artist's Russian friend. These are based on Toda's thoughts of Ogawara and Miró, two artists who continued to make art while remaining committed to their own positions and attitudes despite the trials and tribulations of war.

The exhibition is being held in one room (Gallery 5) of a concurrent-running show of works from the collection called "A Small Something for the Sake of Peace".



TODA Sayaka, *Tokyo Canna Project #1*, 2023, chromogenic print, Collection of the Artist



OGAWARA Shu, *Dialogue of Twins*, 1940, oil on canvas, Yokohama Museum of Art

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About Opening Dialogues

New Artist Picks (NAP) was a series of small exhibitions held at the museum between 2007 and 2023. It was organized to introduce highly anticipated and promising young artists.

Developing on the NAP concept, Opening Dialogues is an annual program in which we join emerging artists in considering the future potential of art and museums, and facilitate trial-and-error efforts.

Following the Yokohama Museum of Art's post-renovation reopening, we have made a fresh start by adopting "diversity" as a keyword, and setting out to address the concept in a way that befits Yokohama. With this philosophy as a foundation, Opening Dialogues was launched in 2025 to implement collaborations between emerging artists and works in the collection, and explore the local and global history of Yokohama, among other things.

By making the most of the special characteristics of the museum collection, which focuses on a wide range of both Japanese and international works dating from the 19th century to the present, we strive to convey the ideas and values of artists who engage with the current era based on a perspective that is unconstrained by an existing context or history in collaborations between artists and the museum.

Biography



Toda Sayaka

1988 Born in Saitama, Japan.

2012 Completed an M.F.A. in Painting at Joshibi University of Art and Design, Graduate School of Art and Design, Fine Arts Course.

Lives and works in Ibaraki prefecture and Tokyo.

【Selected Solo Exhibitions】

2024 "TOKAS-Emerging 2024 - Echoes of the Unspoken: The Silent Voices of the Vanishing,"

Tokyo Arts and Space Hongo, Tokyo

"Adding Canna Flowers to Tokyo,"

KANA KAWANISHI PHOTOGRAPHY, Tokyo

2025 "Voice of Silence,"

KYOTO MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY Gallery Japanesque, Kyoto

【Selected Group Exhibitions】

2020 "SONO AIDA #COVID-19," Online Exhibition

2023 "Boundary texture," gallery cafe ULTRA, Hiroshima

2025 "Deconstructive Decoration," By Souya Handa Paichyu, Tokyo

【Awards】

2010 "Shell Art Award" Selected

"Art Award Tokyo Marunouchi 2010" Kazue Kobata Prize



Outline

Opening Dialogues Toda Sayaka: Blooms in Silence

Venue	Yokohama Museum of Art (3-4-1, Minatomirai, Nishi-ku, Yokohama) Gallery 5
Dates	June 28 (Sat.) – November 3 (Mon., nat. hol.), 2025
Open Hours	10:00-18:00 *Admission until 30 minutes before closing.
Closed	Thursdays
Organized by	Yokohama Museum of Art (Yokohama Arts Foundation)
Grant from	Nomura Foundation
Tickets	Adults: ¥500 (¥400) / University students: ¥300 (¥240) / High school and Junior high school students: ¥100 (¥80) / Children under 12: Free *()= Group of 20 or more (pre-booking required) *Free admission for high school and younger students with valid ID on every Saturday. *Visitors with disabilities and one caregiver accompanying them are admitted free of charge (Please present a certificate at the entrance). *The ticket for the “Sato Masahiko Exhibition” also gives admission to the “Collection Exhibition” and “Opening Dialogues” for the same day. *Visitors can also enjoy the ongoing Collection Exhibition in Jiyu Area (free admission) .

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