

**A series of video installations around Towada City by interdisciplinary artist Aoyagi Natsumi****Towada Art Center Satellite Venue space Exhibition  
Aoyagi Natsumi: Logbook of a Sea Goddess**

Saturday, September 17–Sunday, December 18, 2022



Towada Art Center will hold a solo exhibition of the artist Aoyagi Natsumi at its satellite venue space from Saturday, September 17 to Sunday, December 18, 2022.

In her practice, Aoyagi Natsumi uses moving image and writing to capture the invisible and engage with her surrounding environment. In recent years, she has explored the contemporary nature of the individual as well as ways to observe this through crowdsourcing and collecting the stories and images of others. Marking her first solo show in six years, the exhibition presents artworks in the form of a fictional nautical logbook inspired by the Chinese sea goddess Mazu, belief in whom spread through sea travel. A ship or boat is no longer a means of transport that most of us use regularly in our everyday lives, but was once the only way of traveling to a distant place and enabled people to embark on dangerous adventures to unknown lands. From records of sea voyages to science fiction's spacecraft, ships have appeared in countless examples of literature over the centuries. Belief in the sea goddess Mazu spread across East Asia as seafarers moved around the region. Cocktails are said to have developed as a way of keeping sailors hydrated and healthy during long sea voyages in the Age of Discovery. The exhibition features video installations interweaving such nautical elements from past and present, East and West, and unfolding like a picture book across six locations in Towada: the art center's satellite venue, space, and its café as well as a flower shop, spa, and two bars. The hopes and struggles of the vast numbers of people who crossed the seas in the past, along with the living creatures, alcoholic drinks, and beliefs rooted in each place. The shipless logbook that Aoyagi creates invites us, living as we do in uncertain times, to embark on a journey where we encounter these people and things, still quietly living in our present-day world.

**Contact**

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## Exhibition Highlights

### 1. Exploring new works by an up-and-coming artist

Aoyagi's previous work includes *Incubation Diary*, which attempted to detect the relationship between the self and nature through searching for insects not ordinarily found in Tokyo, and *The Calendar Story for the Family Friend*, which put a contemporary spin on nineteenth-century German calendar stories. In this way, her practice has focused on daily records like diaries and calendars while engaging with the medium of the moving image as a temporal art form. The exhibition presents new video installations dealing with a fresh theme for the artist, the nautical logbook.

### 2. Stories experienced while wandering the city

Constructed around several stories, the exhibition unfolds across several locations: Towada Art Center's satellite venue, space, the art center's café, a flower shop, spa, cocktail bar, and what is known in Japan as a snack bar. The result is a unique viewing experience in which visitors move around to see the exhibits adapted to each specific location, meet other people frequenting the baths or drinking in the bar, or enjoy a cocktail especially made by the barman in response to one of the exhibits. With some of the works only viewable at night due to the opening hours of the venue, it takes time for visitors to walk around the locations, physically experiencing the works' theme of travel and the flow of time, and gradually collecting the stories one by one.

## About the Artists

### AOYAGI Natsumi



Photo: Wada Shintaro

Artist. Born in 1990 in Tokyo. After observing the growth processes of the things that surround us—from insects and people to plants and landscapes—Aoyagi Natsumi has explored ways of expressing these processes without being bound to any one medium. Through repeated research and fieldwork, she aims to let the viewer experience her subjects exactly as she has experienced them, well aware of the impossibility of such a proposition. She completed studies in the Department of New Media at the Graduate School of Film and New Media, Tokyo University of the Arts, in 2016. Aoyagi's recent projects include TWO PRIVATE ROOMS—A Circle of Reading (online project, 2020 –) and New Ways to Grow: Artists Envision a Post-COVID World (The University Art Museum, Tokyo University of the Arts, 2021). She is a key member of the practitioner art collective that goes by the name honkbooks. She also works under the pseudonym “datsuo.” [datsuo.com](http://datsuo.com)

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## Public Program

### Artist's talk

Date: September 17, 2022 / Time: 14:00 – 15:00

Location: Towada Art Center – Café

Admission: Free / Speaker: Aoyagi Natsumi

\*Additional events will be held throughout the exhibition period. Details will be announced at a later date.

\*Schedule is subject to change. We update our website regularly, so please check there for the latest information.

## About the Exhibition

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Title</b>               | Aoyagi Natsumi: Logbook of a Sea Goddess  |
| <b>Dates</b>               | Saturday, September 17–Sunday, December 18, 2022  |
| <b>Admission</b>           | Free<br>*Visits to Airi no Heya and Cocktail Bar RED DOOR require drink order.<br>*The exhibit at Michinoku Onsen is located in the lobby. Paying the entrance fee for the baths is not required.       |
| <b>Organized by</b>        | Towada Art Center   |
| <b>Supported by</b>        | The Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan in the fiscal 2022   |
| <b>In Cooperation with</b> | Airi no Heya, Cocktail Bar RED DOOR, Michinoku Onsen, Tashima Flower Shop, honkbooks and Tokyo University of the Arts Graduate School of Film and New Media: RAM Association                            |
| <b>Endorsed by</b>         | Asahi Broadcasting Aomori Co., Ltd., Aomori Broadcasting Corporation, Aomori Television Broadcasting Co., Ltd., The Daily-Tohoku Shimbun Inc., The To-o Nippo Press, and Towada City Board of Education |
| <b>Curator</b>             | Toyama Aruma  |

## Venues

### space

Address: 18-20 Nishi-Sanbancho, Towada City, Aomori Prefecture

Opening times: 10 a.m.–5 p.m. (Tuesday–Sunday)

### Towada Art Center – Café

Address: 10-9 Nishi-Nibancho, Towada City, Aomori Prefecture

Opening times: 9 a.m.–5 p.m. (Tuesday–Sunday)

### Airi no Heya (bar)

Address: 2-48 Higashi-Nibancho, Towada City, Aomori Prefecture

Opening times: 8 p.m.–12 p.m. (Monday–Sunday)

### Cocktail Bar RED DOOR

Address: 1-47 Higashi-Sanbancho, Towada City, Aomori Prefecture

Opening times: 7:05 p.m.–2 a.m. (Tuesday–Saturday)

### Tashima Flower Shop

Address: 18-5 Inaicho, Towada City, Aomori Prefecture

Opening times: 9 a.m.–6:30 p.m. (Monday–Saturday), 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. (Sundays, national holidays) (closed every first Sunday)

### Michinoku Onsen (spa)

Address: 21-5 Higashi-Sanbancho, Towada City, Aomori Prefecture

Opening times: 6 a.m.–10 p.m. (Monday–Sunday)

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\*The businesses above are open as usual during the exhibition. Please be aware that venues may close due to unforeseen circumstances. Please also refrain from contacting venues about opening hours or the exhibits as it may interfere with their regular operations.

\*Exhibits are available with Japanese subtitles and audio only. English translations will be available in October (TBC).

### space

The Towada Art Center operates *space* as a satellite gallery located in downtown Towada just a 7-minute walk from the art center. *space* is a bold renovation of an empty building into a gallery space by the Japanese art collective 目 [mé] as part of the *Arts Towada 10th Anniversary Exhibition: Inter+Play* exhibition, which concluded in May 2022. A work of art in and of itself, *space* will now serve as a special gallery to introduce the creativity of emerging artists and offer a place to discover fresh perspectives and new possibilities.



### Towada Art Center

The Towada Art Center opened in 2008 as the first contemporary art center in Japan's Tohoku region. The art center's permanent exhibition is comprised of 38 works by world-class artists, including Yayoi Kusama, Yoshitomo Nara, Shiota Chiharu, and Ron Mueck. The collection expands beyond the art center to the Art Square, a park-like area where children and adults alike can stroll, relax, and interact with the outdoor artwork.



10-9 Nishi-Nibancho, Towada, Aomori 034-0082

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### Promotional Artwork

Please circle the number of the desired image and send this request form by email or fax.

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10-9 Nishi-Nibancho, Towada-shi, Aomori Tel: +81 (0) 176-20-1127

Towada Art Center Communications: Otani Sae

[1]



[2]



*A Calendar Story for You Waiting at Home*  
2021, Video installation  
\*Reference work

[3]



*Her Rights: The Turk of Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*  
2019, Video installation  
Photo: Wada Shintaro  
\*Reference work

[4]



*Incubation Diary, 2014–2015*  
2016/2018, Video installation  
Installation View from Yebisu International Festival for Art & Alternative Visions 2018: Mapping the Invisible  
Courtesy: Tokyo Photographic Art Museum  
Photo: Ohima Kenichiro  
\*Reference work

[5]



Photo: Wada Shintaro

[6]



目 [mé], *space*, 2020  
Photo: Oyamada Kuniya

[7]



Towada Art Center

**Media Name**

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