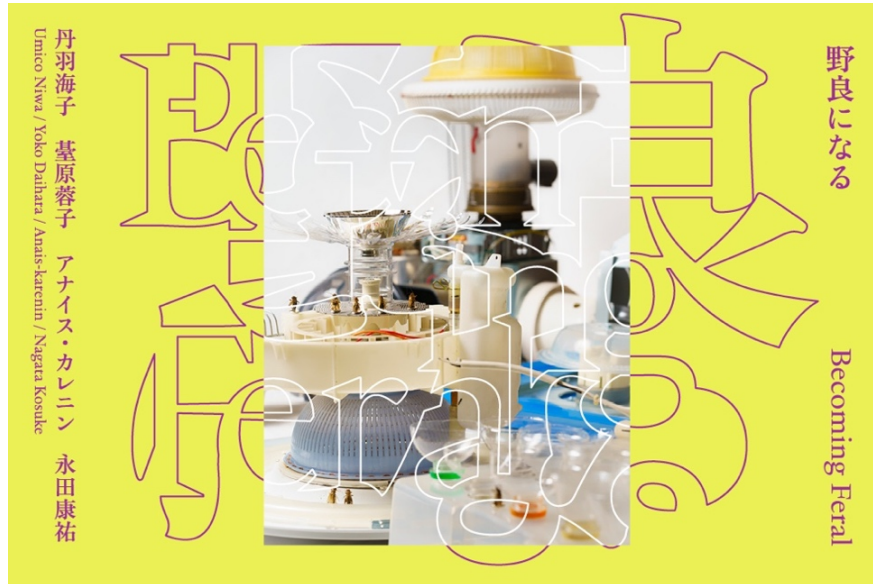


Becoming Feral

April 13–November 17, 2024



Presenting works by four emerging artists from Japan and abroad that consider nature from diverse perspectives

Towada Art Center is pleased to present *Becoming Feral*, a group exhibition featuring four emerging artists from Japan and abroad, from April 13 to November 17, 2024.

We live in a time of rising global temperatures, accompanied by ever more severe disasters. Having nurtured our lives for so long, the environment is now increasingly unstable, necessitating an urgent rethink of our attitude toward nature. But given that what we know today as “human” is a concept of our species as something external to nature, and which has almost always exploited, controlled, and managed nature, is it truly capable of “saving the planet”? This exhibition re-examines the “human” as a rational, autonomous entity that is a product of modernity, and focuses on the ideas and things that were excluded over the course of that process. It enables encounters with stories and determined ways of living that are neither tame nor wild, but feral, blurring the various binaries that have defined our thinking.

The exhibition showcases the practices of artists who understand nature in different ways: Umico Niwa, a transgender woman with Japanese and American roots who expresses her approach to life through her sculpture; Yoko Daihara, a self-taught artist who uses wool to convert drawings into colorful mindscapes with motifs from daily life; Nagata Kosuke, whose moving image and food-related works reflect on human control of flora and fauna through selective breeding and farming; and Anais-karenin, whose work re-questions the relationship between humans and plants, based on knowledge passed down in Brazil since before the colonial era. With a focus on new work by these young artists, the exhibition features a diverse selection of contemporary art across various forms and mediums, from sculpture to moving image, wall tapestry, sound, installation, and food.

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AOMORI GOKAN Arts Fest 2024

Becoming Feral is part of the main program of AOMORI GOKAN Arts Fest 2024, which runs from April 13 to September 1, 2024. *Becoming Feral* interprets the festival theme of “Interweavers in Open Fields” as the intersection of nature and humans, focusing on their intricate interplay.

Contemporary Art for All Five Senses

This exhibition presents a multisensory art experience featuring sculpture, video, sound and smell, textiles, and edible art.

Exhibiting Artists & Works

Umico Niwa

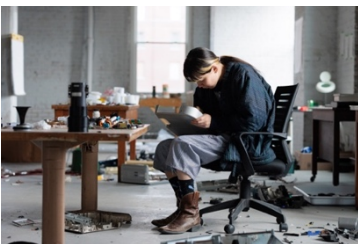
Works on View

Creating sculpture out of everyday materials, Umico Niwa will exhibit a new sculpture installation disassembling and reconfiguring disused or discarded objects like plastic bottles and electrical appliances, and combined with organic elements like carbonized plants as well as crickets, which the artist regards as symbols of loss and solitude. Though usually treated as a pest and exterminated, or sold as food for our pets, crickets will here swarm in a city made from the trash generated by human consumption.



Umico Niwa, *Baby Shoe Series: My Daughter Beluga*, 2023
Courtesy of the artist, xyz collective, and Someday, New York
Reference image

Profile



© Umico Niwa, 2022. Photo: Colin Conces

Born in 1991 in Aichi, Japan, Umico Niwa is based in the United States. Rejecting Western notions of personhood, she uses sculpture to explore alternative modes of selfhood unbridled by physicality or gender. Her practice incorporates organic elements like wilting flowers or ripening fruit to express the fleeting and mutable nature of existence.

Her major solo exhibitions include *My Life Inside a Shoe (the Phantom Cricket)* (Fig., Tokyo, 2023) and *The Quantified Elf (and how it came to love itself)* (Someday Gallery, New York, 2022), and her group exhibitions include *The Invention of Nature* (Nino Mier Gallery, LA, 2023) and *Spring Is Coming* (XYZ collective, Tokyo, 2022).



Umico Niwa, *Metropolis Series: Good Egg Community*, 2022
Courtesy of the artist and Someday, New York
Photo: Daniel Terna
Reference image

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Yoko Daihara

Works on View

To make her new works for the exhibition, Yoko Daihara visited Oirase Gorge, Mount Osore, and the village of Rokkasho in Aomori, witnessing the vast, at times awe-inspiring natural vistas as well as the local people and their spiritual connections to nature. She will exhibit five wool textile works that interweave her observations of the things around her in everyday life with the varied relationship between humans and nature she saw in Aomori, and which seemed so vivid to her as someone who lives in the city.



Yoko Daihara, *It doesn't get it*, 2022
© Yoko Daihara. Courtesy of Take Ninagawa, Tokyo.
Reference image

Profile



© Yoko Daihara. Courtesy of Take Ninagawa, Tokyo

Born in 1989 in Chiba, Japan, Yoko Daihara is based in Tokyo. She employs wool to convert drawings and digital images into textile works. She composes colorful and fantastical mindscapes out of motifs from daily life, such as plants, as well as imaginary elements. Her major solo exhibitions include *project N 88 DAIHARA Yoko* (Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery, 2022) and *Please eat, don't eat* (Take Ninagawa, Tokyo, 2022). Along with artists Togashi Tatsuhiko and Watanabe Yohei, Daihara runs Lavender Opener Chair / Tohmei, an art space and restaurant.



Yoko Daihara, *Neji*, 2022
© Yoko Daihara. Courtesy of Take Ninagawa, Tokyo.
Reference image

Anais-karenin

Works on View

Based on her interests in how colonial history intertwines with human management of flora, Anais-karenin has conducted research on the relationship people in the Tohoku region of northeast Japan had with plants prior to modernization, and on present-day forest management methods for vegetation. For this exhibition, Anais-karenin will show an indoor installation with new sculptures and scents, and an installation featuring an experimental garden of sounds and plants. Visitors to the garden will be rewarded with a sense of how the plants change through the period of the exhibition from spring to autumn.



Anais-karenin, *Rikomape*, 2022
Photo: Takehisa Naoki
Reference image

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Profile



Photo: Kato Hajime

Born in 1993 in São Paulo, Anais-karenin is a Japan-based artist and researcher. She situates her practice in an intimate engagement with plants, exploring the body of knowledge related to medicinal plants passed down in Brazil since before the colonial era, and re-questioning the relationship between humans and flora. She conducts her transdisciplinary research and fieldwork on such themes as animism, mythology, colonial history, language, and science, creating work that newly interprets plants through comprehensive approaches that appeal to smell, hearing, and our other senses. Anais-karenin's major solo exhibitions include *Things named [things]* (The 5th Floor, Tokyo, 2023) and *Mediate Plants* (Gallery Kobo Chika, Tokyo, 2023). She is a PhD fellow at the University of São Paulo and a visiting researcher and teaching assistant at Waseda University.

Anais-karenin, *Unnamed Transience*, 2023
Photo: Takehisa Naoki
Reference image

Nagata Kosuke

Works on View

Nagata Kosuke has pursued his interest in the relationship between humans and salmonids apparent in aquaculture by researching kokanee salmon breeding in Lake Towada. He will exhibit a video work that imagines the world as seen through the eyes of salmon as well as video footage of his discussion with cultural anthropologists and artists about how humans can envision the perspectives of other species. He will also present a work that allows visitors in July and November to eat the course of dishes that has resulted from his exploration of food production and flora and fauna.

Nagata Kosuke, *Purée*, 2020
Reference image

Feasting Wild

Feasting Wild is an artwork in the form of a course of dishes based on research into farming and selective breeding carried out by Nagata Kosuke in Aomori. Participants partake of around eight seasonal dishes and drinks, accompanied by texts written by the artist.

Summer Dates: July 14, 20, 21, 2024 / Time: 18:00–21:00
Admission: 8,000 yen / Capacity: 8 (reservation required)
Location: 14-54 (14-54 Inaoicho, Towada)

Autumn Dates: November 10, 16, 17, 2024 / Time: 18:00–21:00
Admission: TBD / Capacity: 8 (reservation required)
Location: 14-54 (14-54 Inaoicho, Towada)

Nagata Kosuke, *Feasting Wild*, 2022
Photo: Oku Yuji
Reference image

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Profile



Born in 1990 in Aichi, Nagata Kosuke is based in Kanagawa. Through photography, moving image, and installation, his practice explores the self and the other, nature and culture, the body and the environment, and other binary oppositions that undergird modern thinking, and their latent ambiguity. His recent work has focused on video essays and performances in the form of meal courses, reflecting on how food culture shapes national identity, the body techniques and power relations contained within table manners, and the control of animal and plant life in food production. Nagata's major solo exhibitions include *Eat* (gallery αM, Tokyo, 2020) and group exhibitions include *Seeing as though touching: Contemporary Japanese Photography vol. 19* (Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, 2022) and the Aichi Triennale (Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art, Nagoya, 2019).

Exhibition Merchandise

At Towada Art Center's Cube Café & Shop, visitors can find original merchandise featuring the exhibition's key visuals by graphic designer Kano Daisuke, as well as images from the works of the exhibiting artists.



Stickers



Postcard

Special Dessert

Towada Art Center has teamed up with Fukuda Confectionery Shop, a seventy-year-old store in the shopping arcade in downtown Towada, to create a special chocolate cake featuring an image from a new work by exhibiting artist Yoko Daihara. The cake is available in limited numbers on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays at the Cube Café during the exhibition period.



Becoming Feral dessert available (with drink) for 1,300 yen

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About the Exhibition

Title	Becoming Feral
Dates	April 13–November 17, 2024
Hours	9:00–17:00 (last admission 16:30)
Closed	Mondays (except for national holidays, in which case closed the following day) Open on: April 22/29, May 6, July 15/29, August 5/12, September 16/23, October 14, and November 4
Admission	1,800 yen 200 yen discount for groups of 20 or more Under 18: free Free admission for AOMORI GOKAN Arts Fest 5-Museum Pass holders
Location	Towada Art Center
Organized by	Towada Art Center
Endorsed by	Embassy of Brazil, Asahi Broadcasting Aomori Co., Ltd., Aomori Broadcasting Corporation, Aomori Television Broadcasting Co., Ltd., Aomori Fm Broadcasting, The Daily-Tohoku Shimbun Inc., The To-o Nippo Press, and Towada City Board of Education
Curator	Toyama Aruma

AOMORI GOKAN Arts Fest 2024

Dates: April 13–September 1, 2024

Since 2020, Aomori's key art destinations—Aomori Museum of Art, Aomori Contemporary Art Centre, Aomori Public University; Hirosaki Museum of Contemporary Art, Hachinohe Art Museum and Towada Art Center—have been working together on the AOMORI GOKAN: Five Museums for the Five Senses project. This collaboration invites both locals and tourists to immerse themselves in art while promoting an exploration of the region's rich cultural offerings. The inaugural AOMORI GOKAN Arts Festival in 2024 has been organized by the five venues under the theme of "Interweavers in Open Fields." Curators from each museum have organized a diverse program of exhibitions, projects, performances, and other events that highlight the unique features of the venues. AOMORI GOKAN Arts Fest is a new approach to art festivals, its effects designed to last well beyond the period of the festival itself. It will also offer visitors an opportunity to discover the charms of Aomori, delving into the region's rich culture of nature, food, and architecture through art.

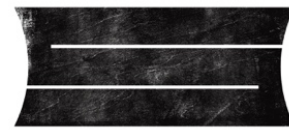
<https://aomori-artsfest.com/en/>

Towada Art Center

Towada Art Center opened in 2008 as the first contemporary art center in Japan's Tohoku region. Its permanent exhibition comprises thirty-eight works by world-class artists, including Kusama Yayoi, Nara Yoshitomo, 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 artworks.

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

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**AOMORI
GOKAN**
ア-ト7x7
2024

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