

Takehiro likawa: Gathering Matters and Mediations



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Takehiro likawa
Gathering
Matters
and
Mediations

February 28–May 6, 2026
2026年2月28日(土)–5月6日(水・振)

水戸芸術館現代美術ギャラリー
Contemporary Art Gallery,
Art Tower Mito



Exhibition Title: Takehiro likawa: Gathering Matters and Mediations

Dates: February 28–May 6, 2026

Open Hours: 10:00–18:00 (no admittance after 17:30)

Venue: Contemporary Art Gallery, Art Tower Mito

Closed: Mondays (except for May 4),

Admission: ¥900. (¥700 for groups of more than 20 people.)

Free of charge for high-school students and younger, seniors over 70, and the people with disabilities and one accompanying attendant.

→ Student card or other age identification required.

- “One-year Pass”: ¥2,000 for a one-year pass

- “First Friday”: special discount for students and seniors

→ Student card holders and seniors 65 to 69 will receive a discount of ¥100 on the first Friday of each month. (March 6, April 3, May 1)

Organized by Mito Arts Foundation

Funded by Nomura Foundation

Sponsored by Namiki Clinic, MAXPULL MACHINERY & ENGINEERING CO., LTD.,
SINLOIHI CO., LTD.

Supported by Art Center NEW, gallery aM, KOTARO NUKAGA, Atelier Tuareg,
Gallery Nomart, Takashi Manda Structural Design, Suntory Holdings Limited.
Curated by Megumi Hatai (Curator, Contemporary Art Center, Art Tower Mito)

Intent of the Exhibition:

Takehiro likawa attends to the relativity of time and fluctuations in perception, creating works that draw our awareness to the uncertainty of human recognition and to presences often overlooked in society through his careful observation of ordinary scenes and familiar things. His *Decorator Crab* series, inspired by reflection on the act of recording and the things that inevitably slip through our grasp, freely combines sculpture, painting, photography, and video to create works that reveal the characteristics of their surrounding space—for instance, an enormous pink cat that suddenly appears in the middle of a city, or objects installed indoors and outdoors that shift and transform in response to viewers.

This exhibition offers a comprehensive overview of likawa's practice to date, alongside new participatory installations that embrace the ambiguity of information and the imperfection of perception as sources of new possibilities. The response these works elicit recalls the behavior of people so absorbed in play that they lose all sense of time. Perhaps it is beyond such "play," in a realm that transcends time and space, that someone someday may encounter a vision unlike the familiar sights of everyday life. But when we stumble upon something so completely unexpected—a strikingly vivid experience that leaves us raw with emotion—how can we convey those feelings to others who have not shared them? This exhibition is an invitation to think together about the (im)possibility of transmission.

Takehiro likawa

Born in 1981 in Hyogo and currently based in Kobe, Takehiro likawa is best known for his ongoing *Decorator Crab* series (2007–). His practice, which draws attention to the mechanisms of public spaces and exhibitions, centers on works that shift and change in response to the viewer's physical perception and imagination, as well as to the contingencies of place. Among his most representative works are *Expecting Spectators*, which transforms space and generates new relationships between objects through the viewer's active engagement, and *Arrangement, Adjustment, Movement*, which activates the fragmentary and incomplete nature of perception as a tool for interpreting physical environments. Notable solo exhibitions include *Measuring the Future, Pulling Time* (Kirishima Open-Air Museum, Kagoshima, 2023) and *Occurring simultaneously or awareness being delayed* (The Hakone Open-Air Museum, Kanagawa, 2022). likawa has also participated in numerous group exhibitions, including *Range of the Senses: What It Means to "Experience" Today* (The National Museum of Art, Osaka, 2022) and the *Yokohama Triennale 2020* (Yokohama Museum of Art/Plot 48). Concurrent with his exhibition at Art Tower Mito, likawa will also present solo exhibitions at KOTARO NUKAGA Tennoz (Tokyo) and gallery αM in April 2026.



【Exhibition Overview】

1. Largest Solo Exhibition to Date of Internationally Recognized Artist Takehiro likawa

Takehiro likawa is widely acclaimed for his works that employ rule-based structures to spark new perspectives or “scenes” and bring about unexpected events. His approaches not only link the inside and outside of exhibition spaces but also actively involve and engage viewers. Constantly aware of experiences that resist easy communication, likawa focuses on the forms of thinking and hesitation that arise from our impulse to share something with others. Central to his practice are the moments when viewers arrive at their own personal “realization.”

Regarded as one of the most compelling artists of his generation, likawa has presented a number of major solo exhibitions in recent years, including *Inside Space* (Galerie Monument SONGWAT, Bangkok, 2025), *Make Space, Use Space* (Artemis Gallery, Taipei, 2025), *Measuring the Future, Pulling Time* (Kirishima Open-Air Museum, Kagoshima, 2023), and *Occurring simultaneously or awareness being delayed* (The Hakone Open-Air Museum, Kanagawa, 2022). The exhibition at Art Tower Mito provides the most comprehensive, large-scale overview of likawa’s practice to date, featuring new works created specifically for the museum alongside drawings, photographs, and video works that collectively illuminate the diversity of his practice.



Takehiro likawa, Installation view: *Decorator Crab – Arrangement, Adjustment, Movement*, 2020, Yokohama Triennale 2020 (PLOT48), Kanagawa, Japan, Photo: Takehiro likawa, courtesy of the artist

2. Organic “Scenes” Emerging from an Accumulation of Experiments

For likawa, the ambiguity of information and limitations of sensory perception offer fertile ground for new artistic possibilities. This perspective underpins many of the installations presented in this exhibition,



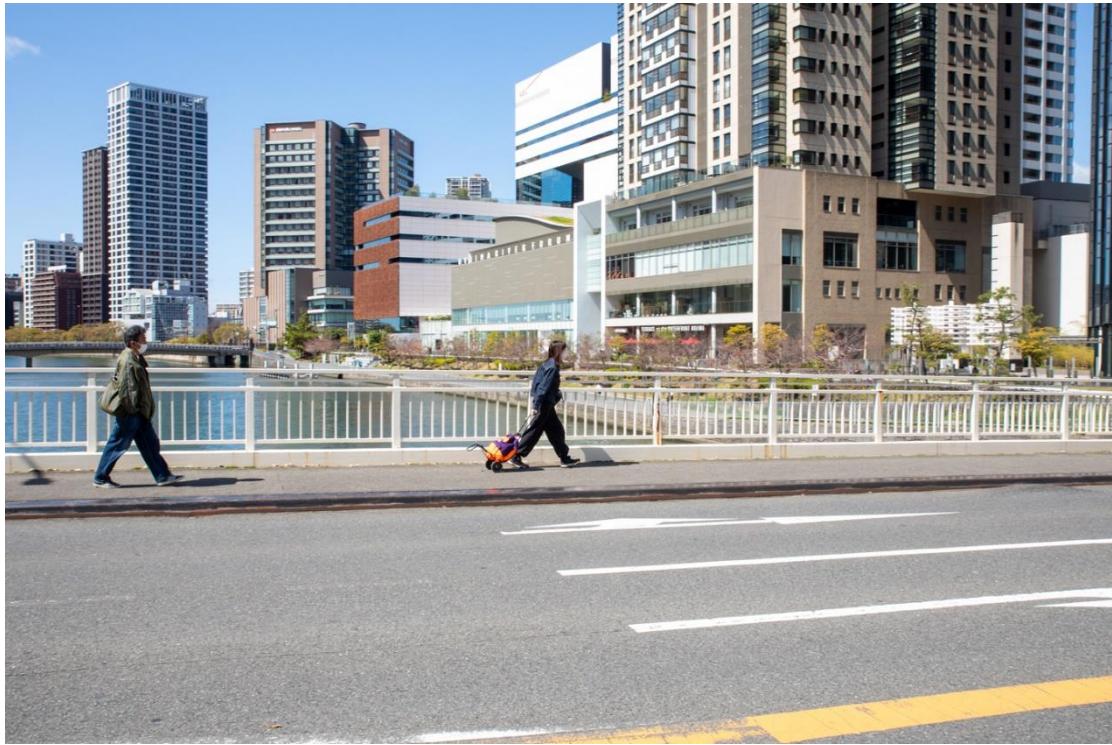
Takehiro likawa, Installation view: *Decorator Crab – Mr. Kobayashi the Pink Cat* (back view), 2022, The Hakone

including new works that

make use of the distinct architectural and spatial qualities of Art Tower Mito. These works resonate with earlier works to form a cohesive, organic exhibition environment. In many respects, this exhibition represents a culmination of the artist's long-standing interest in experimenting with ways to involve viewers. Throughout the galleries, visitors will be met with playful invitations to engage directly with the artworks. The shifts produced by these encounters extend beyond the gallery walls, expanding to other places and times and giving rise to new and unexpected “scenes.”

3. *Decorator Crab—Make Space, Use Space: Connecting Viewers Across Space*

At Art Tower Mito, likawa presents *Decorator Crab—Make Space, Use Space*, an initiative to transcend the conventional boundaries of the museum. Through the project, the artist invites visitors to pick up and transport the *Very Heavy Bag* works placed throughout the museum to other venues hosting concurrent exhibitions by the artist (Art Center NEW, KOTARO NUKAGA (Tennoz), gallery αM). Carrying the *Very Heavy Bag* on their backs, participants will imagine their distant destinations as they travel, linking the exhibition space to the world beyond. Their journey will also confront them with the dynamics of seeing and being seen, and the boundary between the ordinary and the extraordinary. Those who witness these scenes, which resemble familiar moments of urban life, unexpectedly become part of the work as well. In this exchange, both those who carry the backpacks and those who look on are transformed into a new kind of spectator, their unique viewpoints intersecting. By linking multiple venues through the physical movement of an artwork, the project births a new dimension of artistic reception—a space in which multifaceted perspectives overlap and coalesce.



Takehiro likawa, Decorator Crab – Make Space, Use Space, 2022, Collaboration between the group exhibition Range of the Senses: What It Means to “Experience” Today (The National Museum of Art, Osaka) and the solo exhibition Decorator Crab – Make Space, Use Space (Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art)., Photo: Takehiro likawa, courtesy of the artist

【Concurrent Exhibitions by Takehiro likawa】 *The following venues will take part in *Decorator Crab—Make Space, Use Space*

- *Yokohama, Cat, Ping-Pong Table*

Saturday, February 28–Saturday, May 23, 2026 | Art Center NEW (Yokohama)

- *Decorator Crab: The Heavy Bag*

Saturday, April 4–Saturday, May 23, 2026 | KOTARO NUKAGA Tennoz (Tokyo)

- *Stop, Look Back, Face Forward. | vol. 5*

Saturday, April 11–Saturday, June 13, 2026 | gallery αM (Tokyo)

*As opening hours and closing days vary by venue, please check the official websites of the respective venues for the latest information.

【Related Programs】

- Unless otherwise noted, the following programs are free of charge (exhibition ticket required), do not require advance registration, and will take place in the Contemporary Art Gallery.
- *For information on eligibility for free admission, please refer to the ticketing information.
- Details regarding registration will be announced on the Art Tower Mito website once finalized.

Opening-Day Artist Talk

Date: February 28, 14:00–15:30 (doors open at 13:30)

Venue: Workshop Room, Contemporary Art Gallery

Speaker: Takehiro likawa (Exhibiting Artist)

Capacity: 80 people (no reservation required; first-come, first-served)

Fee: Free with exhibition ticket

*This program will be conducted in Japanese.

Gallery Tour with the Artist

Dates: March 8, March 29, and April 4, 14:00–15:00

Speaker: Takehiro likawa (Exhibiting Artist)

Capacity: 15 people (reservation required; first-come, first-served)

Reservations will open at 10 a.m. on February 10.

Artist Workshop: *Expecting Spectators*

This hands-on workshop offers participants the opportunity to experience Takehiro likawa's approach to making art. Works created by participants will be exhibited at Art Tower Mito, and participants will search for and view each piece together by following a series of hints. Together, participants explore how to create art that captures attention through subtle and unexpected means.

Dates: March 14 and 15, 10:00–16:00 *This is a single program spanning two days.

Instructor: Takehiro likawa (Exhibiting Artist)

Capacity: 15 people (reservation required; first-come, first-served)

Fee: ¥2,000, High School Students and Under: ¥1,000 (includes exhibition admission)

Reservations will open at 10 a.m. on February 10.

Expecting Spectators: View Art Installed Throughout Art Tower Mito!

Search for and view artworks by participants of the Artist Workshop installed throughout the museum, using a series of hints as your guide. *A map of hints to help locate the works will be available at the exhibition reception desk.

Dates: March 17–29

Venue: Art Tower Mito

Artist Talk

Date: April 29, 14:00–15:30 (doors open at 13:30)

Venue: Workshop Room, Contemporary Art Gallery

Speakers: Takehiro likawa (Exhibiting Artist), Mie Miyamoto (Professor, Tokyo University of Technology)

Capacity: 80 people (no reservation required; first-come, first-served)

Fee: Free with exhibition ticket *This talk will be conducted in Japanese.

Mie Miyamoto

Upon graduating from the AA Diploma Course at the Architectural Association School of Architecture, Mie Miyamoto received her PhD from the Graduate School of Fine Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts in 2006. She has since held positions as a researcher at the Bartlett, University College London; worked with the Yokohama Triennale 2001 Organizing Committee; and served in the Future Planning Office of the Faculty of Fine Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts. She is currently a professor at the School of Design, Tokyo University of Technology. Miyamoto's research, practice, and creative work focus on children's embodied perception and spatial experience. From 2023 to 2024, she collaborated with Takehiro Iikawa on the development of the Architectural Appreciation Support Tool, a tool designed to encourage visitors of the National Museum of Art, Osaka to engage with the museum's architecture. The project was developed together with people holding diverse perspectives on vision.



Photo:Kumi Oiwa

Gallery Tour for Parents with Babies

Dates: March 18 and 22, 10:30–12:00

Participants: Pre-school children and their families

Capacity: 5 families per session (reservation required; first-come, first-served)

Fee: ¥1,500 for guardians only (includes admission to the exhibition; general admission fee applies to a second accompanying guardian)

Reservations will open at 10 a.m. on February 10.

Supported by Pigeon Manufacturing Ibaraki Corporation

Weekend Gallery Tour

CAC (Contemporary Art Center) gallery volunteers will guide visitors through the exhibition and introduce the featured works.

Dates: Saturdays from March 14 onwards, at 14:30 (the tour is roughly 40 minutes)

Fee: Free with exhibition ticket

【Concurrent Exhibitions and Events】

CRITERIUM 102 Takuto Shiromaru

Dates: Saturday, February 28–Wednesday, May 6, 2026

Venue: Gallery 9, Contemporary Art Gallery, Art Tower Mito

Admission: Ticket for *Takehiro Iikawa: Gathering Matters and Mediations* is required.

Sponsored by: Corp. ASIASYSTEMSERVICE

Curated by: Oko Goto (Curator, Contemporary Art Center, Art Tower Mito)

CRITERIUM 102 presents the work of Takuto Shiromaru (b. 1992 in Hyogo). Using sound and poetry as his primary artistic pathways, Shiromaru approaches social, historical, and emotional dimensions of place through its people and landscapes.

Having shifted his base from Yamagata to Mito and now to Oarai in Ibaraki, Shiromaru develops his practice by entwining his experience of terrain with the residue of different periods of time. Tracing the words and verses that emerge from each locale, he pursues his own forms of expression that weave

together sound, language, gesture, public records, and personal memories. His ongoing works include *Translating the Voice of Poets into Song* (2016–), in which he sings the words of poets such as Kenji Miyazawa and Chuya Nakahara to probe resonances between the words and lived experiences; *in FREESTYLUS* (2021–), which captures phrases crafted along walking rhythms and city noise; and *Or Like the Tides* (2024–), his first solo presentation, in which the exhibition itself shifts and transforms through its contact with space and people inhabiting it. Incorporating both his and others' physicalities—sometimes including their absence—Shiromaru unfolds a practice grounded in attentiveness to landscape and embodied experience.

For this exhibition, Shiromaru turns his gaze to the neighbourhood of Oarai, the coastal town where he currently resides, presenting new work developed through his observation of the currents of people, nature, and time that flow through the region.

High School Student Weeks 2026

High School Student Weeks began in 1993 as an initiative for high school students to visit exhibitions free of charge. Today, it serves as an opportunity for people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives to gather together. During the event period, a cafe in the Workshop Room will offer workshops and activities related to the ongoing exhibitions, as well as other programs including reading and sewing. For more information, please visit our website.

Bridge Cafe

This community cafe is designed for seniors, individuals living with dementia, their families, and caregivers. It offers opportunities to view the exhibition, engage in crafts, enjoy conversations, and discuss any concerns. Members of the general public are also welcome to participate.

Date: March 25

Venue: Workshop Room, Contemporary Art Gallery

Supported by Mito City Senior Welfare Section, Welfare Department

Reservations are required for group visits.

NOTES

CONTACT

Contemporary Art Center, Art Tower Mito

1-6-8, Goken-cho, Mito City, Ibaraki, 310-0063, Japan

Tel: +81 (0)29 227 8120 / Fax: +81 (0)29 227 8130

Regarding the exhibition, contact Megumi Hatai (Curator, Contemporary Art Center, Art Tower Mito).

Regarding educational programs, contact Junko Moriyama, Yoshihiro Nakagawa (Educational Program Coordinators)

For public relations and publicity of photographs, contact Kaori Torii (PR).

Email: cacpr@arttowermito.or.jp

Information is available on the ATM X (twitter) account https://x.com/MITOGEI_Gallery

Requests regarding publication of information:

1. Please make sure to use the official title of the exhibition, along with the exhibition dates.
2. When using photographs, please put captions, credits and any other information attached to a photograph adjacent to the photo.
3. The phone number of Art Tower Mito to be published is +81 (0)29-227-8111 only.
4. Please send Kaori Torii a copy of the video footage, newspaper or magazine for our archives.
5. For interviews with an artist or to photograph the exhibition, please contact Kaori Torii in advance. Requests may not be accepted under some circumstances.

ACCESS

Train:

Take the Limited Express on the Joban Line from Ueno Station (also from Shinagawa and Tokyo Station), Tokyo, and get off at Mito Station. The Express runs every 30 min. The ride takes 65-85 min.

From Mito Station, take a bus from stop no. 4, 5, 6 or 7 at the North Exit bus terminal and get off at "Izumi-cho 1-chome," the fourth stop. Walk toward the direction of the Mito station and cross the street (route #50) on the first crossing. Walk ahead in a narrow lane in parallel to the main road. It is a 2-min. walk to Art Tower Mito.

For details, please contact East Japan Railway Company (JR). Tel: +81 (0)29-221-2836

<http://www.jreast.co.jp/>

Highway Bus:

Take a highway bus bound for Mito (via Akatsuka route or Ibarakidaigaku route) from the stop No. 4 at the highway bus terminal located at the Yaesu South Gate of Tokyo station. The ride takes approx. 100 min. Get off at the "Izumi-cho 1-chome" stop. It is a 2-min. walk to ATM.

For details, contact Ibaraki Kotsu (Transport). Tel: +81 (0)29-251-2331 <http://www.ibako.co.jp/>

Car:

Get off at Mito IC on Joban Highway, and drive toward the city center on the route #50 for about 20 min. ATM is near the crossing of route #349. Pay parking is available on the basement level of Art Tower Mito. The gate is on the north side of the east end of the ATM building. Free for 30 min., ¥200 for an hour and ¥100 for every additional 30 min. Open from 7:00 to 23:00. For highway tolls and routes, please refer to E-NEXCO Drive Plaza "DoRaPuRa."

Tel: +81 (0)570-024-024 <http://www.driveplaza.com/>

【Press Image Stock】 The images are available for press purpose. Please contact Torii at the office.

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1. Takehiro likawa, Installation view: *Decorator Crab – Arrangement, Adjustment, Movement*, 2020, Yokohama Triennale 2020 (PLOT48), Kanagawa, Japan, Photo: Takehiro likawa, courtesy of the artist

2. Takehiro likawa, Installation view: *Decorator Crab – Mr. Kobayashi the Pink Cat (back view)*, 2022, The Hakone Open-Air Museum, Kanagawa, Japan, Photo: Takafumi Sakanaka, courtesy of the artist

3. Takehiro likawa, Installation view: *Decorator Crab – Expecting Spectators*, 2024, Tokyo Shibuya Koen-dori Gallery, Tokyo, Japan Photo: Takehiro likawa, courtesy of the artist

4. Takehiro likawa, *Decorator Crab – Make Space, Use Space*, 2022, Collaboration between the group exhibition *Range of the Senses: What It Means to “Experience” Today* (The National Museum of Art, Osaka) and the solo exhibition *Decorator Crab – Make Space, Use Space* (Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art)., Photo: Takehiro likawa, courtesy of the artist

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5. Takehiro likawa, Installation view: *Decorator Crab – Make Space, Use Space*, 2022, Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art, Japan, Photo: Takehiro likawa, courtesy of the artist

6. Takehiro likawa, Installation view: *Decorator Crab – Measuring the Future, Pulling Time*, 2023, Kirishima Open-Air Museum, Kagoshima, Japan, Photo: Takehiro likawa, courtesy of the artist

7. Takehiro likawa, Installation view: *Decorator Crab – Measuring the Future, Pulling Time*, 2023, Kirishima Open-Air Museum, Kagoshima, Japan, Photo: Takafumi Sakanaka, courtesy of the artist

8. Takehiro likawa, Installation view: *Decorator Crab – Arrangement, Adjustment, Movement*, 2018, A-Lab, Hyogo, Japan, Photo: Hyogo Mugyuda, courtesy of the artist

9. Takehiro likawa, *Fade out, Fade up "Expressway"*, 2012, Lambda print, mounted on acrylic board, 42×56cm

10. Takehiro likawa, *Referee Stop #1*, 2024, Colored pencil on paper, 38×27cm, Photo: Takehiro likawa, courtesy of the artist

11. Takehiro likawa, Installation view: *Decorator Crab – Very Heavy Bag*, 2021, Chiba City Museum of Art, Japan, Photo: Takehiro likawa, courtesy of the artist