

Tokyo

Winter / Spring 2023



Contents

The City Open to the Arts—for All	1
Japanese Tea for Everyone	3
Exploring Barrier-Free Tokyo	5
Making Space Sustainable	7
Crafting the Future	9
Breathing New Life into the Wall Street of Tokyo	11
A Lesson You Will Never Forget	13
Art, Identity, and Embracing Diversity	15
Opening New Doors	17
Paper Magic	19
Making Housing More Sustainable	21
Playing for the Present	23
Tokyo Basics	25

Tokyo is a publication issued periodically by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government with the aim to provide readers with the latest information on various aspects of Tokyo, including events, programs, and experiences.





The character of Shibuya's streets and vibrant people are delineated here in Honda Masaharu's *Shibuya no machinami*.

The City Open to the Arts — for All

Tokyo is expanding access to arts and culture, with the Art Brut 2022 Touring Exhibition “Form, Fluid, and Flexible.”

by Jordan A. Y. Smith

During the summer of 2022, in the modern, bustling, cultural hub of Shibuya, art enthusiasts and casual tourists could be lucky enough to encounter artists whose work is of the “art brut” genre. Works included Honda Masaharu's *Shibuya no machinami* depicting the lively, tessellated, pastiche of buildings and people in motion, a collaborative live painting on canvas carried out with general participants in a workshop prior to the exhibition. Some works, such as the

sculptures of Hagio Toshio, used flyers stuck together with cellophane tape to create fantastical creatures, recalling Japan's legacy of *kaiju* giant monster movies.

These works were some of the many highlights of the Art Brut 2022 Touring Exhibition, “Form, Fluid, and Flexible” at Tokyo Shibuya Koen-dori Gallery. The exhibition traveled from Shibuya to two other venues in Tokyo.

“The mission of the gallery is to help extend the

rising awareness of the existence of individuals with diverse backgrounds and to encourage interaction and communication between everyone,” the curators said. Exciting new perceptions of the world can be arrived at by coming into contact with the diverse sensibilities of people with intellectual or perceptual impairments. Similarly, “There is an interest from the hearing impaired regarding the audible world, and an interest among the visually impaired in what ‘seeing’ actually is. Art brut fosters particular awareness of the diversity and beauty in the ways the world is perceived, and images are created.”

The works were chosen for their relation to the primary theme: *form*. This simple word has a stunning variety of meanings—objects with material form, and also for things with no material form, such as relationships. All the art on display, which were contributed from around Japan, could be classified as art brut, a term that embraces the works of artists who have not undergone specialized art education and who have an independent approach to creativity and free-ranging styles and techniques. The show created opportunities for visitors of all backgrounds to enjoy art and artists they would not

Both participants and audience were enthralled, thoroughly enjoying the heartwarming Conference opening performance.



The fascinating art objects of Hagio Toshio seem like they will come alive at any moment.



normally have the chance to encounter, and appreciate the widest possible array of creativity in relaxed and familiar settings.

Around the same time, the International Conference on Open Access to Culture: Creative Well-being Tokyo 2022 was being held in Ueno Park, the northeast Tokyo oasis of greenery, arts, and culture. Conferences, showcases, short-term intensive camps, and networking featured specialists, organizations, and creators who are leading the way toward making a truly accessible art culture in the world. The kickoff performance took place in the open-air plaza of the park. It began with a lively, modern twist on the *shishi-mai*, or lion dance, and a variety of choreographed and semi-improvisational presentations showcasing a large cast of performers, including some with full range of motion, others incorporating their wheelchairs into the dance, and those hard of hearing enticing the crowd to feel rhythm in different ways. The event ended with the cast inviting the audience to join in the revelry, giving a lively flair and truly inclusive atmosphere to the event.

The legacy brought about by the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 is steadily being further strengthened. Tokyo's inclusive, open environment and vibrant arts programs make for a palpable community vibe. The events were organized by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and the Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture, who continue to promote various initiatives with the aim of realizing a city that is dynamic in the arts and culture.

Japanese Tea for Everyone

The “Art of Tea” is successfully re-interpreted from a French point of view.

by Florent Dabadie

“It’s the time you have wasted for your rose that makes your rose so important,” says the Little Prince in the famous novel by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. If the word “rose” is replaced with “tea,” this very poetic and philosophical line could symbolize Stephane Danton’s life in Japan.

Brought up by a single mother from a modest farming family, who ran a flower shop in the French city of Lyon, Stephane fell in love with Japan during his first short trip when in his teens. A bit before turning 30, he finally returned to Tokyo with the firm intention of settling in. While working in various positions in the

Danton brings a distinctive French style to his “Art of Tea.”



hospitality industry, he began to think about his future. He realized that: “There was too much competition in the field of importing tea and wine. However, there was a great opportunity to export Japanese tea abroad.”

Indeed, 30 years ago, there was no such market. He knew the Japanese tea world was not easy for foreigners to enter, so he was determined to be really good, and different.

The Frenchman, informed by his experience as a wine sommelier, felt that, to make Japanese tea more

gave him a huge confidence boost and he stayed almost a decade there.

In 2008, he was chosen to serve his Valencia orange flavored tea within the Japanese pavilion of the World Expo Zaragoza, Spain: it was a huge success. “I was serving 250 cups of tea every 15 minutes.” In 2014, his shop moved to a prestigious shopping complex in the historic commercial district of Nihonbashi. There, the foreign tourists started to pour in. Now he had added more than 50 flavors to his menu and was selling a total



Intriguing fragrances and flavors can be found at Ocharaka.

popular in the international market, first it would be necessary to get people overseas interested in the colors and flavors of the tea. He had to think of a totally new concept. “I asked myself: Can I make a good table tea, in the same way there are great table wines? Wine is about color, scent, taste, and fun; why not with Japanese tea?” While experimenting, he started to add different flavors to Japanese tea. “In Northern Europe they like the taste of berries, in the Southern Hemisphere they like tropical fruits; everyone is different.”

Then in 2005, Stephane opened his first shop, Ocharaka, in the hip suburb of Kichijoji, 12 kilometers west of Shinjuku. Nearby, the Ghibli Museum had just opened, but not many foreign people were visiting the museum yet. Did he fail? “Although no tourists showed up, to my surprise, the Japanese younger generation started to come in, and they really enjoyed my tea.” It

of 70 types of tea. Customers from the Middle East and Southeast Asia were especially ecstatic. In 2019, the talented French businessman was asked to lecture university students on *The Current Status and Issues of Japanese Tea Spreading Around the World*. “This has always been my dream. I want to give back to Japanese young people. To broaden their minds and to teach them how to help the tea farmers and producers thrive and prosper.”

Recently he relocated his shop again. Luckily enough, fate would bring him to an area which was a perfect fit in the traditional Ningyocho district. “The downtown part of Tokyo is an honest, diverse, and inspiring place to set up a business. Areas like Kuramae, Asakusabashi, and Ningyocho are flourishing, I love it.” For Stephane, a great explorer of the Japanese world, the adventure continues.

Exploring Barrier-Free Tokyo

START



Togashi contemplates the imposing steps that lead up to Tsukiji Hongwanji Temple.

The Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 were a global success amid unprecedented circumstances, and one lasting benefit they have brought is a range of improvements to make transportation, accommodation, and other types of facilities more accessible. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) is dedicated to building on those benefits for all tourists, including those with physical impairments. To help make these improvements widely known, the TMG has released Tokyo Sightseeing Accessibility Guide, which features sightseeing courses linking popular spots. The guide presents accessible ways to enjoy Japanese cuisine, go shopping, explore skyscrapers, and see traditional architecture, while also providing detailed information on accessible restrooms and much more.

To experience firsthand how Tokyo is moving towards a barrier-free future, wheelchair user Togashi Takeshi explores navigating Course 5: Tsukiji, Tsukishima, located in east Tokyo, one of the 30 courses outlined in the guide.

First stop: **Tsukiji Hongwanji Temple**

Right outside Tsukiji Station, this Buddhist temple has over 400 years of history. Japanese shrines and temples are very popular tourist destinations but entering them can pose quite a challenge to physically impaired people. He remarked that, “I did not think I would be able to get close because the stairs in front were rather intimidating, but thanks to the slope and elevator, I could enter the main hall and see the elaborate golden decorations up close.”



The Tsukiji Uogashi is a favorite destination for locals as well as most visitors to Tokyo.

Next destination: **Tsukiji Uogashi**

The Guide has a lot of information on how to enjoy Japan’s famous food culture, and just five easy minutes by wheelchair along the road from the temple, there is the long-established Tsukiji Outer Market, where the redeveloped Tsukiji Uogashi building stands. In late morning, the market is not so busy, making it easy to survey the dozens of fresh fish stores at leisure.

Further improvements in accessibility help anyone physically impaired make light work of visiting many of Tokyo’s popular spots.

by Ian Martin

Then: **Tsukishima Monja Street**

Barrier-free progress is being made on the Toei Subway lines, operated by the TMG, including the installation of elevators at all stations. It is a short ride from nearby Tsukijishijo Station to Tsukishima. Here, visitors can find Monja Street, where around 80 *monja-yaki* shops—a savory specialty dish of pan-fried batter, originating from Tokyo—make the area a center for one of Japan’s most celebrated iconic foods.



Tsukijishijo Station can be accessed by expansive elevator.

Last stop: **Tsukuda Park**

The foray is completed at the park along the Sumida River, which is accessible by ramps. Here, the calm, flowing water, the greenery and the dappled shade of the trees make a curious contrast with the dizzying geometry of the waterfront towers—Togashi, taking in the atmosphere, said, “To be honest, I was a bit worried that going sightseeing with my able-bodied friends might place a burden on them, but this guide really did put me at ease exploring the city.”

Looking to the future, the TMG plans to further its barrier-free support beyond the facilities and equipment such as accommodation and sightseeing buses, into “soft” support like human assistance. In this way, they aim to make the urban environment a place where ever more people can enjoy sightseeing with peace of mind.

Many interesting and beautiful destinations can be found in all of the 30 courses in the Tokyo Sightseeing Accessibility Guide.

GOAL



In 2009, two communications satellites accidentally collided, destroying each other. This created thousands of pieces of space debris that have threatened the International Space Station and other uses of space. And orbital lanes around Earth were already congested with hazardous waste. Based in Tokyo, space startup Astroscale is boldly developing technologies for an unprecedented mission: to clean up orbital junk and ensure the sustainable use of space.

and selected Tokyo as its new headquarters, and then, in 2022 the enterprise was named as one of the world's 100 most influential companies by *Time*.

"Japan is a country where rockets are launched, satellite parts are produced and ground stations handle data transmission for operations," says Ito. "That makes it very easy to carry out space development. Tokyo is one of the best places for obtaining financing and working with experts at universities. Our CEO's

Making Space Sustainable

Earth's backyard is littered with junk.
Tokyo's Astroscale has a plan to clean it up.

by Tim Hornyak

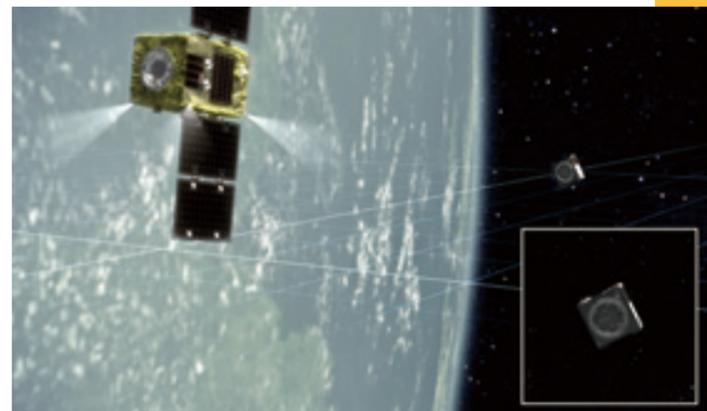
"This garbage patch has grown since the advent of the space age over 50 years ago, with spacecraft parts and artificial satellites," says Ito Miki, General Manager and Managing Director at Astroscale Japan. "It is said that there are more than 36,000 pieces of debris larger than 10 centimeters, and when traveling at high speeds they pack tremendous energy. This poses a threat to the invisible infrastructure in space we depend upon, such as GPS satellites."

In 2013, entrepreneur Okada Nobu attended the European Conference on Space Debris. He heard lots of talk about the growing space debris problem but no real solutions. Ten days later, he founded Astroscale in Singapore, the first private company aiming to tackle the very complex task of capturing and safely removing high-energy debris in orbit.

Since then, the new business venture has raised some 33 billion yen (\$300 million, as of 2021) in funding, formed partnerships with entities including the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) in 2017 and the European Space Agency (ESA) one year later. The startup has established overseas operations in Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In 2019, it reorganized itself as Astroscale Holdings Inc.

ambition to clean up space, which met with skepticism everywhere at first, has now become well received here." This point was further affirmed when the company was selected in 2020 as an Innovation Tokyo Project of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, to receive support for technological development through grants of up to 500 million yen.

A number of specific services are now in the pipeline. End-of-Life (EOL) services involve the retrieval and safe disposal of satellites that have ended their



The "servicer" spacecraft maneuvers to retrieve the CubeSat in the simulated ELSA-d technology demonstration mission.



Astroscale Japan General Manager and Managing Director Ito Miki explains the ELSA-d technology.

useful lives, preventing the increase of space debris. In March 2021, Astroscale launched the ELSA-d debris removal technology demonstration mission, which consisted of a 175-kilogram "servicer" spacecraft paired with a 17-kilogram "client" CubeSat acting as simulated debris. In a simulation of satellite retrieval, the two spacecraft were separated from one another and then the CubeSat was recaptured. It was the first such demonstration successfully proving the feasibility of many core technologies and operational functions required for debris removal, including guidance approach from long distances, carried out by a private space startup.

Other services under development by the startup include cleaning up existing larger debris such as used upper stages from launch vehicles, providing motion analysis of objects in orbit, and extending life of operating geostationary satellites. Research by Northern

Sky Research forecasts \$14.3 billion in such In-Orbit Servicing and Manufacturing (IoSM) revenue, driven by Life Extension, possibly generating \$4.7 billion through 2031. But more importantly, realization of these projects will lead to an awareness of the need, and the eventual achievement, of protection of the orbital environment around Earth.

Ito likens the current state of space development to the early days of motor vehicles, before the advent of comprehensive traffic regulations, when accidents were common.

"By the year 2030, the target year for achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we would like to have on-orbit services, like a space version of roadside service, as a fundamental part of space development," says Ito. "In that way, we can help make space development sustainable for the use of future generations."



Tanaka is very comfortable and welcoming in his cozy workspace in the downtown area of Tokyo.

Crafting the Future

Edo Kumiko Tatematsu stays true to traditional *kumiko* while putting a modern spin on the craft.

by Anne Lucas

Tanaka Takahiro, the second-generation owner of company Edo Kumiko Tatematsu, runs his fingers across one of his current woodwork projects. It is one piece of an exquisite screen featuring intricate *kumiko* patterns. It becomes even more exquisite to the eye when realizing that each tiny individual piece of wood has been meticulously handcrafted and assembled without the use of nails.

Herein lies the awe-inspiring technique of traditional *kumiko*, a style of woodworking that was invented in the eighth to the twelfth centuries but developed more fully in the Edo period (1603–1868). It is used to make fittings of Japanese houses such as *shoji* screens and sliding doors. To create a fitting, the artisan begins with a base frame and then gradually assembles the

smaller parts to an accuracy of 0.1 mm, using only wood glue to help hold the pieces together. One of the advantages of *kumiko* is that through using smaller pieces of wood, the end product is lighter yet stronger, and does not warp. There are more than 200 *kumiko* patterns that have been handed down, each representing flowers, leaves, and other forms of nature. For the screen he is currently working on, Tanaka is featuring patterns to beautifully express the four seasons, such as cherry blossoms, hemp leaves, bellflowers, and snowflakes.

In a world where many companies can rely on machinery to make their work easier and quicker, Edo Kumiko Tatematsu is rare in that they are committed to handcrafting the work. In this way, they are staying true to the original technique. At the same time, they have found ways to keep the tradition moving forward, ensuring that *kumiko* has a place in the future. Tanaka has a willingness and drive to collaborate with young designers and artists to come up with new products



This light fixture exemplifies traditional techniques put to contemporary uses.

such as light furnishings and picture frames. Although he insists he is not an artist, merely a craftsman, it takes a creative mind to imagine that such a historic craft might find a place in more contemporary settings.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) has selected Edo Kumiko Tatematsu to be part of the Edo Tokyo Kirari Project in 2021. Twenty-eight companies have been chosen so far. The TMG supports their overseas expansion such as publicity and exhibitions at international trade fairs. The project was launched in 2016 to introduce representative Tokyo brands, based on the concept of “old meets new.” The project features long-established companies with over 100 years of history and companies that have inherited traditions that represent the spirit of Tokyo itself. Each selected business displays not only a passion for time-honored techniques but also a drive to reinvent and sustain these

methods through more modern applications.

When asked which part of the process he likes the best, Tanaka says it is the communication with the customer. “It is an enjoyable part of the work, but moreover, it is the most important part of the job,” he stresses. It is imperative that he understands exactly what the person is looking for so that he can come up with ideas on how to deliver the perfect end product. He explains, “Sometimes I get quite unexpected orders, like computer cases, for example.”

And what does the future hold for Edo Kumiko Tatematsu? Since the company was founded by his father in 1982, Tanaka hopes the business will stay in this family and that his child will follow in his footsteps one day. But until then, he will continue looking for new opportunities to spread the unique craft of *kumiko* throughout Tokyo and to the world.

The items produced by Edo Kumiko Tatematsu display extreme accuracy and precision, beautifully.





The entrance to one of Heiwa Real Estate's FinGATE buildings, also housing the Financial Market Entry Office.

Breathing New Life into the Wall Street of Tokyo

Heiwa Real Estate's FinGATE offices are drawing investment companies from overseas.

by Tim Hornyak

In 2017, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) announced "Global Financial City: Tokyo" Vision, a bold vision which aims to restore Japan's capital to its position as a leading financial city. Revised to "Vision 2.0" in 2021, the plan is based on the three pillars of green finance, digitalization of finance, and an increased number of asset managers. To play a part in the realization of this initiative, Heiwa Real Estate Co. has established shared offices in Kabutocho that support growth and business expansion of both domestic and global fund managers and other professionals.

Kabutocho is Japan's historic financial center, Tokyo's equivalent of Wall Street in New York. Kabutocho literally means "helmet town" and refers to the renowned samurai Minamoto no Yoshiie (1039–1106) having buried his armor there. Kabutocho's history as the center of securities and finance in Japan began in earnest with the establishment of the Tokyo Stock Exchange (TSE) in 1878, which fueled the growth of the economy over the next century and became one of the largest bourses in the world. In more recent years there have been fewer companies setting up offices in the

district, but now Heiwa Real Estate, owner of the TSE building, is bringing people back with FinGATE, a collection of shared offices and other facilities in the area.

"We have been trying to revitalize Kabutocho since around 2011 when it became a bit quiet with online trading," says Nakashima Moe of Heiwa Real Estate, which was founded in Kabutocho in 1947. "The neighborhood is changing. It used to be only businessmen in suits but now we're seeing young people on the streets, even on the weekend."

As part of the company's Nihonbashi Kabutocho and Kayabacho Revitalization Project, the share office project began with the opening of the first facility in 2017. The collection has grown to include five facilities of rental offices and event spaces, some with 100-person-capacity seminar rooms. The tenants represent a variety of about 60 enterprises: domestic and international asset management companies, fintech companies, and industry associations.

"We provide support for middle and back offices of financial companies," says Nakashima. "Also, due to our close connections with people from the Financial Services Agency, TMG, and national government agencies, we form a kind of community of people related to finance and securities, which makes us unique." Heiwa Real Estate is one of eight certified office operators participating in a TMG project to provide temporary office space to foreign financial companies considering expansion into Tokyo.

One of the tenants is Frontier Advisors Pty Ltd., an Australian investment consultant business whose clients include pension funds. In August 2022, Frontier Advisors established a subsidiary in Tokyo, choosing Japan over Singapore and Hong Kong because of its business potential.



Frontier Advisors Country Head of Japan, Takayama consults with a client in one of the shared meeting spaces at his office in FinGATE.

"We aim to connect potential clients in Japan with Australian and global investment opportunities as well as to use Japan as a gateway to expand our business in Northeast Asia," says Takayama Alex Yuichi, Country Head of Japan at Frontier Advisors. "One of the merits of working from here is that there are all kinds of financial institutions, including startups and fintechs in the same building, all with different points of view but sharing the same goals as us."

Source: National Diet Library Digital Collections



A map from the Edo period of the Nihonbashi Kabutocho area of Tokyo.

Takayama is now engaged in growing the business including hiring staff and obtaining the relevant licenses to operate as an investment consultant. "Another great strength of this system is that they also have a support office for opening new offices," says Takayama. The office was established in 2021 by the Financial Services Agency and the Finance Bureau of the Ministry of Finance to accelerate the entry of foreign firms into the Japanese market. "It is designed to help newcomers to Japan gain access to the Japanese market," he continued. "The organization provides a one-stop English-language service for new firms entering the Japanese market, including pre-registration consultation, registration procedures, and post-registration supervision. It is located in a nearby FinGATE building, so we consult with them."

"From the perspective of an overseas company, Tokyo has a lot to recommend it compared to other Asian, European, and U.S. regions regarding consideration for a base of operations, including excellent transport and accommodation infrastructure, a sense of safety, and also excellent food," says Takayama. "It's a great city."

A Lesson You Will Never Forget

There are very few countries that experience as many natural calamities as Japan does. From earthquakes to typhoons, volcanic eruptions to tsunamis, this far-east island country has always had to adapt its lifestyle to the threats of nature. From a very young age, kids learn about both manmade and natural disasters in school, but today, this experimentation becomes even more realistic at the Tachikawa Life Safety Learning Center. The Tokyo Fire Department here plays host to incredibly fun yet highly pedagogical facilities that can be enjoyed by both children and adults alike.

In August 2022, on a hot summer day, elementary school students Ryosuke (8), Yunao (9), and this writer visited the western Tokyo suburb of Tachikawa. There was a mini fire engine where the boys changed into fire-fighting outfits. Except for the size, the uniforms were authentic. The fabric was thick and heavy, and the suits were not particularly comfortable. However, the tactile experience of wearing the uniform invoked a visceral reaction as both the boys transformed into earnest fire-fighters, albeit really cute ones. The possible photo opportunity afforded here could provide mementoes that would invariably delight parents, grandparents, and of course, the kids too. More importantly, the photos

Both boys quickly took the initiative and showed responsibility beyond their years in the smoke room.



The intensity of the really strong earthquake simulation took the boys by surprise.

would serve as a powerful reminder of the vital lessons that were learned here.

Of the many disaster simulation experiences to be had here, we started in the earthquake simulator room. After a short warmup with a relatively mild tremor, we then had to brave a really strong quake! Now the pseudo cupboards made of soft materials were falling all over the place and the noise was stupendous. Of course, we recalled being taught of the crucial need to turn off the gas valve and to secure an escape route once the shaking had finished, but right then in the peak of the convulsions, and for the first time in our lives, the kids and I understood the importance of spreading your knees to keep good balance, while protecting our heads.

After enduring the massive earthquake simulation, we next went into the smoke room. The goal was to learn how to evacuate from a burning building without inhaling or being surrounded by smoke. All we had were small handkerchiefs to cover our mouths. Once we entered the maze-like space, corridors were dark, artificial smoke was dense, and even some door knobs were locked. As an adult, I was struggling to keep a low position. It was undoubtedly the two boys who lead the way, relentlessly looking for an exit. Wow! Emotions ran high when we finally touched home base; the kids seemed to be showing much higher interest and concentration levels in these situations than perhaps they

Everyone can have fun as they gain life-saving knowledge by experiencing disaster simulations.

by Florent Dabadie

would in a classroom or through a book.

We then went to the fire-fighting section, where we were told to extinguish images of fire projected onto a large screen using fire extinguishers that sprayed water. The extinguisher was heavy, but once we learned how to use it, it was simple and easy. We spent a lot of time trying VR simulations and fire extinguishing shooting games and finally left with a feeling of fulfilment, but with the urge to return. There was still so much more to experience and learn!

Usually some 270,000 people visit the Tachikawa facility and the two other learning centers in Tokyo annually. To date, the centers have welcomed visitors

from about 70 countries. Through learning how to act during disasters we are less prone to panic and mistakes. Whether you are a kid or an adult, the motto is “help yourself and help others.”

Thrilled by their half day at the special center operated by the Tokyo Fire Department, Ryosuke and Yunao got an official stamp, a couple of goodies, and above all, some indelible memories to share with their friends. The learning centers are great for all kids and adults, and some of the exhibits are in English, so many foreigners as well could benefit from the experience. The very serious subject of disasters is treated in a very clever and engaging manner.

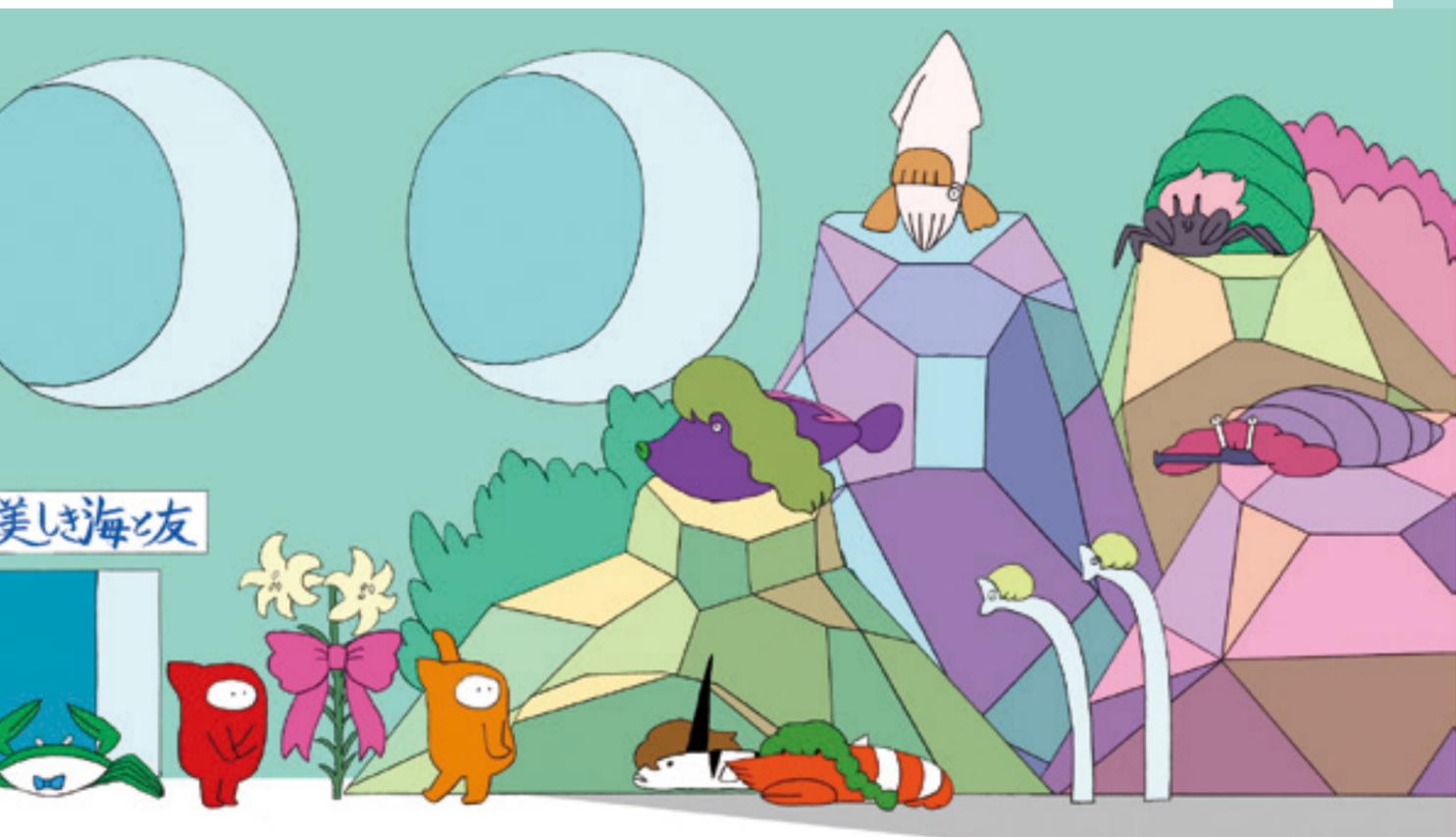
The experience of transforming into a fireman is certainly a joy.



Art, Identity, and Embracing Diversity

Artist Inoue Ryo opens up on his unique perspective
on art and LGBTQ+ acceptance in Tokyo.

by John Ontko



Ninja and Prefectural Seafood Girls' High School is an image from one of Inoue's exhibitions in 2017.

In the buzzing and incredibly diverse art scene of Tokyo, artist Inoue Ryo holds a wonderfully unique perspective. The artist was first rocketed into fame through his TV program, *Art Tunes!*, a show that introduces famous works of art through original animated music videos. It is televised on part of Japan's public broadcasting network NHK Educational TV (E-Tele).

In the more than 100 videos meticulously scripted,

animated, and performed by Inoue himself, classic works of art are masterfully reimagined through unbridled creativity and focus. For example, Leonardo Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* is a tough career woman, and the man from Munch's *The Scream* is a ramen chef whose noodles make customers shout with delight. Stunning, amusing, and instantly memorable, these colorful art tunes have become a big hit with families, allowing

them to enjoy and share in learning about famous art.

Inoue's career as an artist began with accepting himself. In true artistic fashion, Inoue came out to the world as gay through an original video work entitled, *Gay Song 2005*. Albeit slightly embarrassed over his choice of song title, he has not had an ounce of regret over his decision. Looking back on that time in his life, Inoue remarked, "I felt like a huge negative in my life had come back to zero. I felt like I finally reached the start."

As a successful artist and outspoken member of the LGBTQ+ community, Inoue's career has been both challenging and immensely rewarding. Inoue has carved out a constructively positive niche for himself that allows him to create at his own pace and then share his works instantly with about 100,000 viewers online through his YouTube and social media accounts. When posting on social media or speaking to the press, he chooses his words with great care, both to ensure that he does not misrepresent other members of the community, and because he knows the tremendously positive effect his message can have in helping others to embrace their own identity.

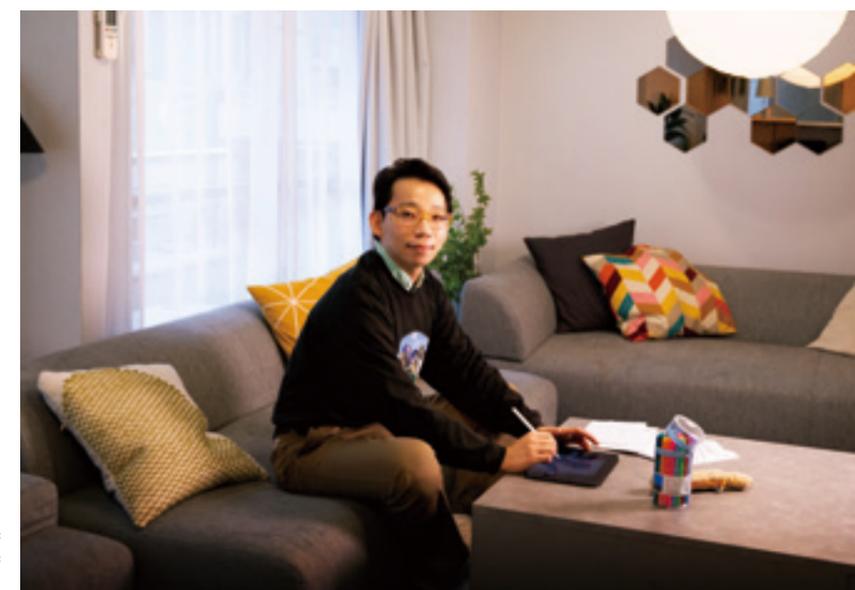
The artist's work style is remarkably well-suited to city life, and he takes great inspiration from the unending wellspring of culture that is Tokyo. "In Tokyo, if you want to see or experience something new, you can do it in less than an hour," the artist observed, and in a practical sense, being able to "people watch" has aided in his animation work tremendously. "In animation, observing how people move is important in order to capture movements naturally," he explained. "Living in Tokyo, I have constant references all around me."

In November 2022, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) introduced the Tokyo Partnership Oath System as an

important measure to deepen understanding of diverse sexuality and to create a comfortable living environment for the people concerned. Under the new system, sexual minority couples can apply and receive a Certificate of Acceptance from the TMG. Aiming for an inclusive Tokyo, where everyone can live their own way, this system will help ensure a smooth process for couples engaged in various procedures needed for daily life such as access to healthcare or social welfare and applications for public housing. The TMG is working to collaborate with municipalities and private businesses to encourage further utilization of the certificate of acceptance.

When asked for his thoughts on the system, Inoue was both pragmatic and forward-facing. "At this point in time, the partnership system is not the equivalent of marriage, but I believe we have made a leap forward in our understanding of the LGBTQ+ community compared to 10 years ago," he noted. "This is an important step toward marriage equality for all, although I strongly urge us to go further."

Powered by the vibrant energy of Tokyo, Inoue Ryo channels his fiercely unique point of view and delightfully original style into works that both entertain and uplift others. Inoue has an inspiring message for young artists everywhere: In a world full of magnificent diversity, true art and powerful creativity emerge from embracing and expressing one's own unique identity and perspective.



The future is very bright for one of Tokyo's most creative members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Kato Fumiko has used her experience in the travel sector to create a new and successful business.



Kato Fumiko founded WAmazing Inc. in 2016. The company provides online travel booking services for tourists visiting Japan. Kato's goal is to help visitors discover the beauty of the country's lesser known regions and encourage them to visit places other than the popular sites that everyone else visits. So, she developed an app service with the idea of matching more secluded regions with repeat foreign tourists who want to see arcadian Japan, rather than famous spots. Through the app, WAmazing provides a SIM card that allows free internet access for 15 days during the visitors' stay, and provides them with information on sightseeing in various localities across Japan, with the aim of revitalizing

the city, Kato has also been able to participate in the Acceleration Program in Tokyo for Women launched in 2017 by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government to support female entrepreneurs. The program has so far seen significant results, with 200 participants, making it one of the largest programs in Japan dedicated to women. About 60 businesses have advanced efforts to develop a presence in overseas markets. She says that the program was extremely beneficial, as it provided a comprehensive, well-balanced curriculum on the knowledge required for managing a startup. In addition, it was a valuable experience for her to share her struggles with other entrepreneurs of the same gender, she notes.

Opening New Doors

Kato Fumiko's WAmazing helps travelers explore hidden Japan.

by Kirsty Bouwers

the tourism industry. As of the end of January 2022, approximately 310,000 inbound travelers were using the service. The application also includes a tax-free e-commerce service enabling the user to shop free of tax online at any time and pick up the purchases at the airport, which saves time and makes sightseeing possible without that extra baggage.

In response to the extraordinary situation of the last few years, the company launched a new service. WAmazing now also works with local municipalities and provides consultancy services such as marketing research and inbound strategy development, in order to help attract more visitors to rural areas and also to help with the shortage of manpower, which has become an issue in the tourism industry.

When it came to picking a place to establish her business, Kato points out that Tokyo has the three essential elements for business growth: human resources, capital, and information. Thanks to her presence in

WAmazing's existing online travel business is gradually growing due to the recovery of the inbound market, and the new business, digital technology promotion for local tourism in collaboration with local governments and tourism businesses, is also growing steadily. WAmazing's human resources practices are also essential to its success, Kato says. The company actively hires people from diverse backgrounds, including women with childcare or long-term care responsibilities, personnel living in rural areas, and foreign nationals. They now have 162 employees living in 23 different prefectures, and they have adopted a remote-first policy.

Kato's background in establishing online travel agencies and community projects, and her strong desire to contribute to regional revitalization by inbound travel, are the driving forces behind the launch and expansion of her new business. With Tokyo as the gateway, she is opening new doors to charming, off-the-beaten-track destinations.



A simple sheet of paper is the only material necessary to be able to profit from all the rewards of origami. People with poor strength can use a spatula to help fold the paper.

Paper Magic

The absolutely simple practice of origami can produce an extraordinary range of outcomes.

by Ian Martin

Maybe one of the things that comes to mind when people think about Japan would be origami; the iconic folded paper crane is almost a symbol of Japan to many people. While the roots of paper art in Japan lie deep in these islands' long history, in its current form it is just as much a product of the modern era, and the Ochanomizu Origami Kaikan, situated slightly north-east of the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, is a fascinating part of that story.

The Origami Kaikan was a key starting point for the creation of origami as it is known today. Incorporating a paper-dyeing studio and classes that require reserva-

tions, there is also a gallery that is open to the public, as well as a gift shop carrying crafts, kits, books, and beautiful paper with different colors and patterns.

The director of the Origami Kaikan, Kobayashi Kazuo, explains that it began in 1858 as a paper-dyeing business. Changes were afoot in all walks of life in Japan, though, around the late nineteenth century. The newly established Ministry of Education was fascinated by the use of paper folding for children's education developed by German educator Friedrich Fröbel. So, at the government's request, this small paper-dyeing firm began manufacturing the first dyed paper for

origami in Japan. The manufacturing of origami paper by the Origami Kaikan helped with the spreading of origami at kindergartens and elementary schools, eventually reaching kids all over Japan.

Usually plain on the back and patterned on the front, Kobayashi explains that Japanese origami paper also tends to be thinner and easier to fold than most other paper, although he insists that any paper can be used. To illustrate his point, Kobayashi pulls an ordinary paper napkin from his desk and with extraordinary dexterity folds and twists it into a ballet dancer.

In more recent years, origami has attracted a lot of attention for its therapeutic benefits, particularly its physical benefits. As Kobayashi explains, "Just as walking is good for the heart, it is said that origami is good for the brain because it's so tactile."

Many of the books Kobayashi has written about origami have been translated into foreign languages. Over the years, the Origami Kaikan has been happy to welcome many visitors from overseas hoping to learn more about this Japanese art form—including an internship program in paper-dyeing and folding techniques in collaboration with France's prestigious École Polytechnique. Furthermore, Kobayashi has been invited to many countries including Germany, France, India, and China, to visit schools and hospitals and spread the wonders of origami.

"I do not speak English, but I speak through origami," says Kobayashi as we sit down to follow him in crafting a samurai helmet out of a single small sheet of paper, "With origami, language does not matter—I put

myself in their position and show by doing."

There is something of the stage magician to Kobayashi, keeping your attention fixed on him with his energy and passion as he talks about the history and applications of origami, while his hands are always moving, illustrating his points creatively with whatever paper comes to hand. A small child walks by, and within seconds he has crafted an origami frog for him as a ca-

sual gift. It is clear that this is more than just showmanship: he passionately believes origami should be fun and for everyone.

"That is the beauty of origami," he agrees. "It is not an art that can only be made by artists. Without tools, and using materials found everywhere, it is something that anyone, from anywhere, regardless of age, can enjoy."

One of the many impressive origami examples on display at the Origami Kaikan gallery.



Making Housing More Sustainable

At first glance, the house in Tokyo's northeastern Adachi Ward looks completely ordinary: it is just another home in an area of relatively new residences. On closer inspection, however, it reveals a few secrets: solar panels on the roof, insulated walls, airtight construction, and all electrical appliances. This kind of house is called a "Tokyo Zero Emission House," an energy-saving house that meets the Tokyo Metropolitan Government's own requirements, incorporating high levels of insulation and energy-saving equipment. As approximately 30 percent of the city's CO₂ emissions come from the residential sector, the spread of these houses is exactly what is needed to promote Tokyo's climate change countermeasure target of virtually zero CO₂ emissions by 2050, and the naming of the house reflects this intention.



Energy generated by the solar power system covers about half of the family's electricity costs.

Ishida Yoshinobu moved into the house in October 2020 with his wife and two young children. When he was thinking of building a new house, the environment was not foremost in his mind. Nevertheless, the building company took them to some showrooms, where they realized the advantages of a highly airtight and insulated house and decided that if they were going to spend money on a new home, they would build an energy-efficient one.

"We used to live in an apartment, but after we moved to our new house, we immediately noticed that the temperature inside and outside was completely

different," says Ishida, noting there is only one air conditioner in the house but the family also uses fans.

Ishida points to a display on a wireless device that tracks the amount of energy generated by his home's solar panels and how much is sold to the local utility company. It indicates that the monthly costs are about

Tokyo is fighting climate change by promoting "Tokyo Zero Emission House."

by Tim Hornyak

13,000 yen to 14,000 yen, of which about 9,000 yen is covered by solar power generation. That represents a significant saving compared to Ishida's previous residence. He says he has become more conscious of reducing waste in his life, not only in terms of electricity bills, but also in terms of his home as a place to live.

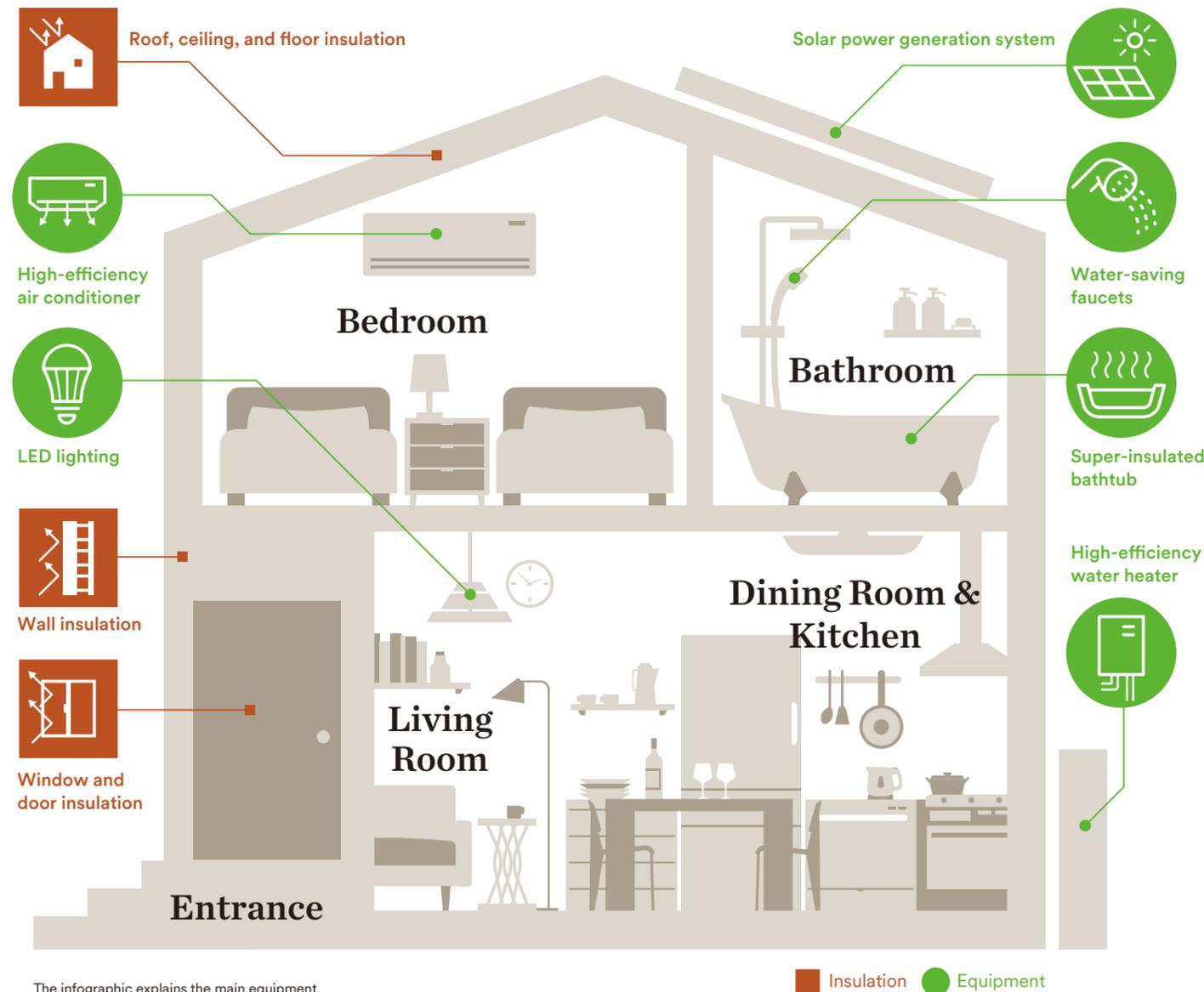


The Ishida family is very happy with the comfort of their new home.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) has announced it will aim at halving greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 from levels in 2000. The TMG is not only responding to the climate crisis, but is also strengthening and accelerating energy-saving initiatives from the perspective of securing energy stability in the medium to long term. They have launched a campaign calling for saving, generating, and storing electricity, and are promoting concerted efforts by both residents and businesses. From April 2025, it will be obligatory by ordinance for major housing suppliers to install solar panels on new houses and other buildings in Tokyo.

Kiyobishi Kensetsu Co. is a construction company based in Adachi Ward. It recommends the "Tokyo Zero Emission House" to all customers making inquiries about new home projects, and has built six over the past three years including Ishida's home. According to architect Takahashi Toshiyuki, representative director and president of Kiyobishi, "Customers have become more interested, especially this year, as the TMG has been more generous in providing subsidies, with a maximum of 2.1 million yen for qualifying custom-built houses." Although the "Tokyo Zero Emission House" is built to be airtight, that does not mean that they need to be kept closed at all times, Takahashi points out. He encourages customers to let fresh breezes in when the weather is good.

"It's not perfect, but it is satisfying," Ishida says of his house. "We also want to get closer to real 'zero emissions' in the future by also using the electricity we store in an electric vehicle eventually. While it is true that the 'Tokyo Zero Emission House' is costly to build, I think we should increase them in the future."



The infographic explains the main equipment of the "Tokyo Zero Emission House."

Insulation Equipment



Still bright and still beautiful, Muroi Mayako is 101 years old.

At 101 years old, Muroi Mayako is as sharp and spirited as many people decades younger than her. The centenarian pianist has had a long professional career spanning the globe, and continues to play to this day. Her secret? Balancing wisdom learned from different culture, not overdoing it, and maintaining a good diet.

Muroi was born in Tokyo in 1921 and grew up in the residential area of Seijo, a quiet area west of the center of the city. She says that the atmosphere of her community greatly helped her development as a musician. She looks back on her school days fondly, noting the disci-

plined but friendly environment at the liberal school she attended. Her piano journey started at six years old, when she was gifted a piano by her father. Her mother was keen to further her music education, and by the age of 10, Muroi was training with a tutor from what is now the Tokyo University of the Arts. In 1938, she entered that same school. Although it was during wartime, she was requested by the national government to teach classical music to students who were mobilized to work, and her involvement with music has never ceased.

In 1945, she debuted as a soloist in Japan, soon becoming very successful. Something was missing,

Playing for the Present

101-year-old pianist Muroi Mayako matches her classical skills with a lust for life.

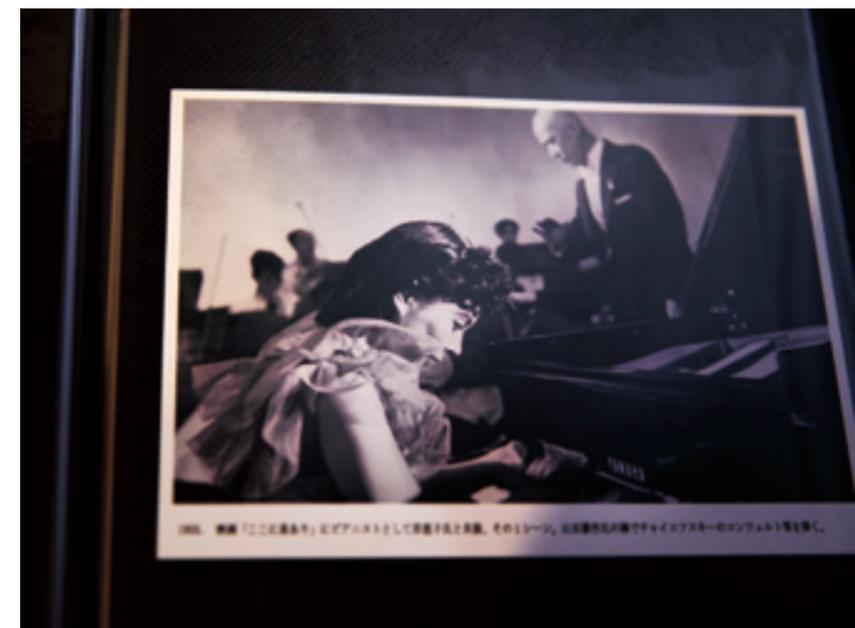
by Kirsty Bowers

however; although her career was progressing, she felt she needed to go abroad to improve her skills. In 1956, at the age of 34, she was invited to represent Japan at the Mozart bicentenary celebrations in Vienna, Austria, where she gave a speech. This led her to being chosen for a special scholarship by the German government, and she spent several years studying in Berlin. Living in Europe, the home of classical music, was a life-changing experience for her, as it strengthened her confidence and affirmed her life views. "I've always been quite strong-minded and opinionated," she says. "Going to Europe reaffirmed that, as the students there were allowed to express their own will and opinions quite freely."

After returning to Japan in 1980, she has continued to hold concerts and recitals for decades now. "I feel as if I only really started to understand Beethoven's 'Für Elise' after I turned 50. It feels as if I'm having a conversation with the great composer through the score. Playing the piano allows me to understand further the narrative presented by the composer, and I make new discoveries every time I play." At her centenary special concert held in 2021, the moving approval she received from the audience on this memorable day gave her great joy and emboldened her to continue playing the piano.

To do so for such a long time requires serious stamina. Indeed, Muroi's life philosophy revolves around keeping fit through a simple diet of meat and seasonal produce, a routine she picked up in Germany. "You can't play well if you haven't eaten well," she laughs. Besides this, she enjoys walking and caring for flow-

ers in her garden, and is mindful to not wear herself out with anything. This has clearly paid off, as it has given her the energy that has enabled her not only to perform professionally, but also to find the time to write over 100 articles for a monthly piano magazine as a regular columnist for eight years, as well as author several books.



Muroi has performed in 13 countries abroad and her performances have received worldwide acclaim.

Ultimately, Muroi is very content with her life in Tokyo at present and is very happy with her life as a pianist having been able to deliver the magical music of Beethoven and Mozart for a long time. She is not pining for the past at all. "I'm actually happier now, and accept myself as I am." We can all hope to grow older in such a way.

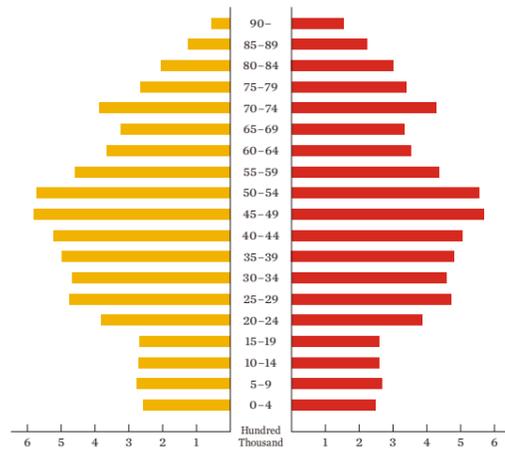
Tokyo Basics

Population

Total Population of Tokyo (2022)

14,042,127

Population Age Structure by Gender (2021)



Men (2022)

6,889,012

Women (2022)

7,153,115

Average Life Expectancy (2020)

81.77

Average Life Expectancy (2020)

87.86

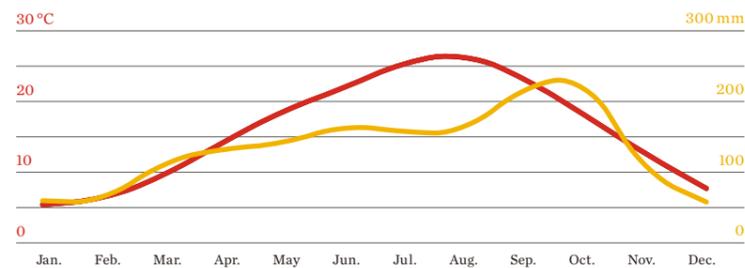
Foreign Residents (2022)

569,979

People Over 100 Years Old (2022)

7,181

Average Monthly Temperature and Rainfall



Source: Japan Meteorological Agency, 1991-2020 ● = Average temperature ● = Average rainfall

Average Annual Temperature

15.8 °C
(60.4 °F)

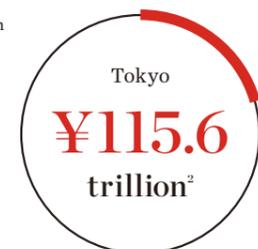


Average Annual Rainfall

1,598.2 mm

Tokyo's GMP¹ (Nominal) as a Share of Japan's GDP (FY2019)

Japan ¥559.7 trillion



20.7% of Japan's GDP

Tokyo
¥115.6
trillion²

1. GMP: Gross Metropolitan Product 2. US\$1.06 trillion
2019 annual average conversion rate ¥1 = US\$0.0092

Tokyo's Budget (Initial FY2022)

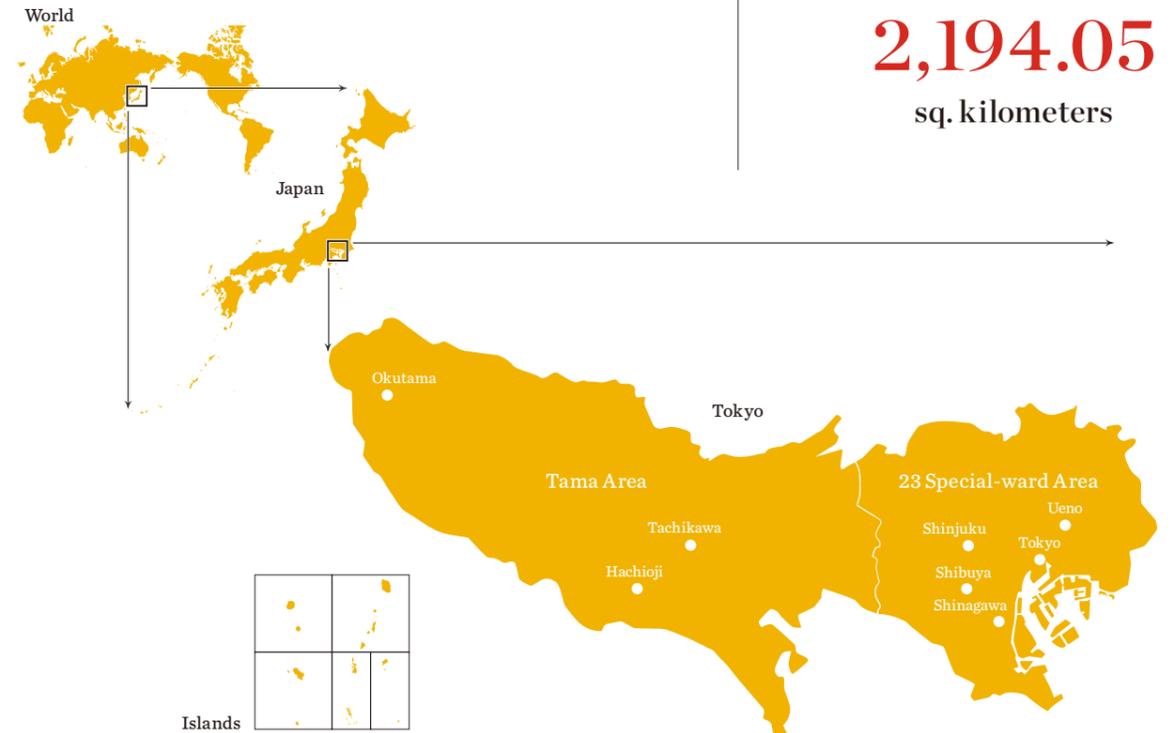


¥15,393

billion*

* US\$112 billion
¥1 = US\$0.0073 (Bloomberg, December 8, 2022)

Location

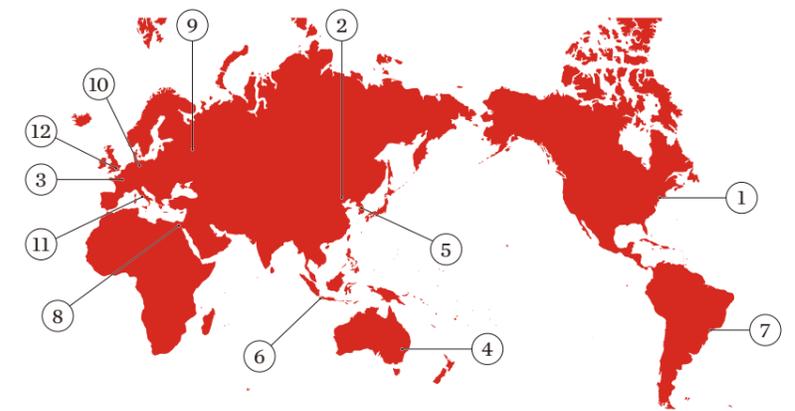


Area

2,194.05
sq. kilometers

Sister and Friendship Cities/States*

- ① New York (USA)
- ② Beijing (China)
- ③ Paris (France)
- ④ New South Wales* (Australia)
- ⑤ Seoul (South Korea)
- ⑥ Jakarta (Indonesia)
- ⑦ São Paulo* (Brazil)
- ⑧ Cairo (Egypt)
- ⑨ Moscow (Russia)
- ⑩ Berlin (Germany)
- ⑪ Rome (Italy)
- ⑫ London (UK)



Symbols



The *somei yoshino* cherry tree was developed in the late Edo period to early Meiji era (late 1800s) by crossbreeding wild cherry trees. The light-pink blossoms in full bloom and the falling petals scattering in the wind are a magnificent sight to behold.



Ginkgo biloba is a deciduous tree with distinctive fan-shaped leaves that change from light green to bright yellow in autumn. The ginkgo tree is commonly found along Tokyo's streets and avenues and is highly resistant to pollution and fire.



The *yurikamome* gull has a vermilion bill and legs. It comes south to Tokyo in late October every year and sojourns at the surrounding ports and rivers until the following April. A favorite theme of poets and painters, it is also called *miyakodori* (bird of the capital).

Related information

▶▶ Pp. 1-2

Tokyo Shibuya Koen-dori Gallery

<https://inclusion-art.jp/en/>

▶▶ Pp. 5-6

Accessible Tourism Tokyo (Tokyo accessible tourism portal website)

<https://www.sangyo-rodo.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/tourism/accessible-tourism-tokyo/en/>

Tokyo Sightseeing Accessibility Guide

<https://www.sangyo-rodo.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/tourism/accessible/en/>

▶▶ Pp. 9-10

Edo Tokyo Kirari Project

<https://en.edotokyokirari.jp/>

▶▶ Pp. 11-12

Global Financial City: Tokyo

<https://www.seisakukikaku.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/en/pgs/gfct/>

▶▶ Pp. 21-22

Bureau of Environment

<https://www.kankyo.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/en/>

 www.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/english/

 www.facebook.com/TokyoGov/

 www.youtube.com/c/TokyoGov

 twitter.com/Tokyo_gov

 www.tokyoupdates.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/en/

 www.instagram.com/tokyo_gov/

Editor in Chief: Ryan Peter John

Design and Art Direction: Kutsuno Yusuke

Cover Art: noa1008

Infographics: Tokuma Takashi

Photographers: Hamanaka Kensuke, Hoashi Munehiro, Irwin Wong, Marutani Yoshihisa



© Copyright 2023 Tokyo Metropolitan Government

Registration number (4)54 All rights reserved.

Reproduction in whole or part without permission is prohibited.

This brochure is made from FSC® certified paper.