



JAPAN LADAKH Forest Art Festival

press release

5th April, 2024



Daisuke Kagawa "Return here again " Forest Art Festival 2023

The Forest Art Festival of 2023 took place in Ladakh, the northernmost region of India, known for its high elevation of 3800 meters. In collaboration with the local community in Matho village, a total of 6000 seedlings were planted on a five-acre land, symbolizing a collective effort towards environmental conservation and community engagement.

Daisuke Kagawa and Haruna Sugisaki were invited from Japan. They held workshops for Ladakhi Artists and School Kids, as part of the Forest Art Festival. Ten talented Ladakhi artists actively participated in the workshops, showcasing their unique works. These artworks watch/look after the planted seedlings in future.

The local community is nurturing and looking after the Sar-Chang (Local Willow) and Sia (Wild Rose) seedlings, which were planted during the festival. Building on the success of the previous year, the "Japan-Ladakh Forest Art Festival 2024" is scheduled to take place in July and August.

Forest Art Festival 2024

[Event Dates] 10th, 11th August 2024

[Residence Period of the Artists] 21st July to 9th August 2024

[Venue] Matho village, Leh, Ladakh, India

[Organizer] Wall Art Project

[Co-organizer] Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh

Link for Press Release



[Aim of the Forest Art Festival]

The impacts of climate change, such as melting glaciers and shifts in water veins, are leading to significant disruptions in the traditional agricultural practices and nomadic lifestyles of the people in Ladakh. Tourists from all round the world flock to Ladakh to see "Ancient Futures". Many are unaware of the actual challenges faced by the local community. The festival aims to bridge this gap in understanding. It strives to connect with the local reality by fostering a rich bond between nature, children, and artists in Ladakh. Through the creation of artworks and the facilitation of workshops, the festival seeks to raise awareness and share the profound connection with nature, acknowledging the pressing issues faced by the region.

The visiting artists from Japan immerse themselves in the essence of Ladakh, experiencing the region with both their body and soul. Through this profound connection, they channel their perspectives into their artwork. The two-day Forest Art Festival serves as a platform for all of visitors vividly to depict the current state of Ladakh and, by extension, the broader environmental conditions on Earth.

Invited artists

Yusuke Asai

Geoglyph & Workshop

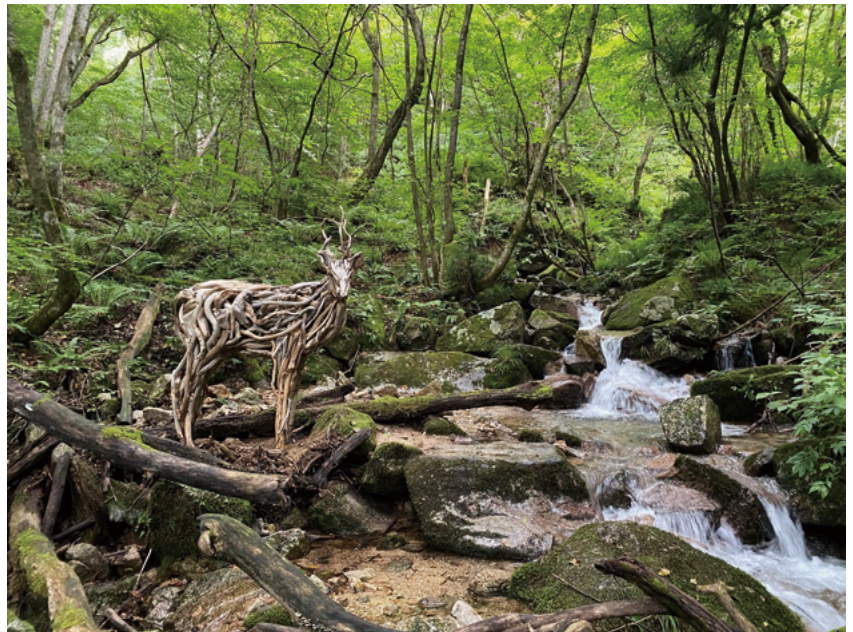
During the Earth Art Project in 2017, he collaborated with 15 Ladakhi artists to create a mural on a wall at the Ladakh Arts and Media Organization (LAMO). Utilizing soils collected from Ladakh, he employed them as a medium to paint an artwork, a collaborative effort with the local artists. This piece, still housed at LAMO, stands as a testament to their creative collaboration. In his upcoming project, he envisions working with Ladakhi artists to craft a geoglyph using soil.



Invited artists

Atsushi Tomatsu

Tomatsu specializes in crafting figurines of living things using driftwood. Driftwood is shaped over time by the flow of nature. In this project, he along with kids will collect driftwood pieces resembling birds or bugs, using them to create small artworks during a workshop. Additionally, Tomatsu will showcase his artistic process and ideas to Ladakhi artists and create a unique piece of work.



Invited artists

Daisuke Kagawa

During the Forest Art Festival (FAF) in 2023, he created “Return to here again,” a distinctive artwork comprising eight plywood pieces, completed over eight days (refer to the photo on the first page). In addition to this creation, he facilitated two workshops during the festival: “Paint without Thinking,” which engaged ten Ladakhi artists, and “Making a Beast Broach,” attended by 70 Ladakhi children.



Encouraging participants to tap into their instinctive creativity, he advocated a spontaneous approach to painting. In the “Paint without Thinking” workshop, he told the participants to go with the flow and paint on the natural form of stones without pre-determining the theme.

For the upcoming Forest Art Festival in 2024 (FAF 2024), he plans to lead an ‘open studio’ designed to guide participants in breaking free from the mold; constraints imposed by their own minds. Furthermore, he publicly showcase his own artwork as a demonstration, serving as a source of inspiration for workshop participants.

← Workshop with kids.
Kids selected their favorite motif from Daisuke’s ongoing work, and ceramic broach. They painted freely.
(supported by KOKUYO CAMLIN)



Invited artists

Haruna Sugisaki

Haruna Sugisaki's artistic expertise involves controlling the texture of her works through a thoughtful selection of soils and the application of either reductional or oxidized firing methods. In FAF 2024, she will research about Ladakhi soil and the traditional pottery techniques in Ladakh. She intends to collaborate with a Ladakhi potter.



Haruna Sugisaki
"KAMUY YUKAR
-sing about me-"

Haruna expressed Ainu
people's epic.



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Haruna Sugisaki crafted four pieces using mediums derived from soil, ash, and soot. During a workshop attended by ten Ladakhi artists, she not only showcased the method of creating and utilizing these mediums but also engaged in hands-on practice on canvas. The completed artworks were later exhibited in the plantation field during the Forest Art Festival in 2023 (FAF 2023).



Ladakhi artists in the workshop and students came to see.



Workshop started in the morning and ended in the evening.



One of the works by Haruna Sugisaki "Flying Human"
W 500 cm by H 120cm



Invited artists

Chieko Hanada (Dancer)



Performance video

https://youtu.be/_j87Hm6i7gc

Hailing from North Kyushu city, Fukuoka, Chieko Hanada embarked on her dance journey by studying modern ballet under Akiko Kuroda from the age of six to eighteen. Her dedication and talent earned her the Prize of the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology in the Fourth North Kyushu and Asia National European Dance Competition.

Chieko further expanded her repertoire by studying Korean Hourglass Drum and Traditional Dance at Noripan, Nagoya, and Tribal Traditional Dance at Yunnan Arts University, China. In Ladakh, the village communities come together to engage in traditional dance during festivals. Chieko aspires to learn these dances directly from the villagers. Experiencing folk dances is a gateway to understanding the spirits of the people and fostering cultural communication.

In her upcoming performance, Chieko intends to incorporate this understanding into her contemporary dance. Her sincere approach to contemporary dance is reflected in her expressive performances. Through her physical movements, she aims to deeply convey the cultural richness of both Ladakh and Japan.



Invited artists

Ryusuke Ishida / artist name **RRyusuque** (Handpan musician)



Performance video

<https://youtu.be/CqY1Ryy2xIM>

Residing in Kochi, near the pristine Niyodo River, known as one of the clearest rivers in Japan, after returning from a performance tour in South American countries. Inspired by his experiences in South America, he continues to travel for performance tours featuring music by the 'Handpan.'

The Handpan, with its ability to create both rhythm and melody, is an extraordinarily delicate instrument that reflects the personality of the player. In Ladakh, there is local orchestra in each village and a custom to play percussion and flute during festivals or rituals. RRYusuque is eager to collaborate with these orchestras using the Handpan.

What chemistry will ensue when the Handpan and Ladakh meet? The fusion of the Handpan and Ladakh's musical heritage promises a captivating synergy.

In the upcoming Forest Art Festival in 2024 (FAF 2024), the audience will have the opportunity to experience the beauty of sounds as RRYusuque performs amidst the majestic and breathtaking Himalayas. The song will be performed as a cultural exchange between Ladakh and Japan again and again.



Invited artists

Vayeda Brothers

The Vayeda brothers; Tushar Vayeda and Mayur Vayeda, belong to the Warli community in Northern Maharashtra, India. Within the Warli culture, there exists a traditional form of folk art known as “Warli painting,” traditionally crafted during rituals. The Vayeda brothers are dedicated to promoting Warli’s rich cultural heritage through painting, photography, and documentary videos.

In their artistic endeavors, they skillfully express the myths and stories passed down through generations within the Warli community. Their unique perspective extends beyond traditional themes to encompass the contemporary world. Their grand murals, adorning various locations in India, have garnered acclaim from art enthusiasts. Notably, the Vayeda Brothers have also engaged in residential projects in Japan and held exhibitions across Europe and the United States, including participation in the 10th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT10) in Australia.



“Emergence of the source”
Wall Art Festival Fukushima in Inawashiro
2023



Veer -Statue of Ancestors 2023



“Enchantment” 2023



བསྟན་འཛིན་ཚོས་འཕེལ།
STANZIN CHOSPHEL
Executive Councillor (Agriculture)
(Status of Deputy Minister)



འཛིན་སྐྱོང་།
ལ་དུགས་རང་སྐྱོང་གི་སྐྱོང་ས་ཡར་རྒྱས་ལྷན་ཚོགས། ལྷེ།
LADAKH AUTONOMOUS HILL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, LEH

INVITATION

Date: 28-11-2023
NO:- LAHDC/EC(Agr)/05/23/
270

To Wall Art Project

Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh invites Wall Art Project to conduct cultural workshops by Japanese artists for students and artists in Ladakh broadly. It is expected to create the opportunities to cultivate the creativities of children and stimulate the artists .As well as, the workshops and demonstrations by artists will enhance cultural exchanges between Japan and Ladakh.

I, as the Executive Councilor of Culture in Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh please to support the cultural activities , events which organized by Wall Art Project.

Sincerely,

Stanzin Chosphe





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