



asian cultural council

2023 ACC Japan Grant Program Grants Announcement

Founded in 1963, the Asian Cultural Council advances international dialogue, understanding, and respect through cultural exchange activities in Asia and the United States to create a more harmonious and peaceful world. This mission is accomplished through fellowships and other programs that support individual artists, scholars, and arts professionals.

We are pleased to announce the grantees of the 2023 ACC Japan Grant Program, as listed below. We are also publishing the names of our Japan Grant selection panelists as well as comments from representative panelists of each field.

2023 ACC Japan Grant Program Selection Panelists

Visual Art

*Tomoko Yabumae (Curator, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum)

Kenichi Kondo (Senior Curator, Mori Art Museum)

Kota Suzuki (Curator, Pola Museum of Art)

Performing Arts

*Takako Shibata (Associate Professor, School of International Communication, Senshu University)

Hiroyuki Takahashi (Associate Professor, Toho Gakuen College of Drama and Music)

Music and Literature

*Jun'ichi Konuma (Professor, Faculty of Letters, Arts and Sciences, Waseda University)

*Representative panelists for each field.

2023 ACC Japan Grant Program
Fellowships and Grants

(Alphabetical order)

New York Fellowship (6 months in NY, US)



Nile Koetting

Visual Art

To investigate the movement probing interdisciplinary expression that emerged in the "anti-art" movement centred in New York City after World War I and to explore the possibilities of interdisciplinary expression to date.



yang02 (Takahiro Yamaguchi)

Visual Art

To conduct research on activities of Experiments in Arts and Technology (E.A.T.) as origins of today's "Media Art", as well as to exchange with artists whose works deal with issues of technology in NY.

Blanchette Hooker Rockefeller Memorial Fellow

Individual Fellowship



Kan Fukuhara and Shumpei Mitsuhashi

Performing Arts (Theatre, Dance)

To conduct research on creations, workshops, lessons, and classes held at various rehearsal spaces in NYC and to research the attitude of actors and dancers towards participating in rehearsals.

*ACC Saison Foundation Fellow **

Right: Fukuhara, Left: Mitsuhashi (Photo by Manaho Kaneko)



Yuni Hong Charpe

Performing Arts / Visual Art

To conduct research on how people have translated Japanese and Korean by focusing on the violence/hospitality of translation, as well as on how "healing" has been socially and culturally represented in South Korea on the theme of "healing colonial violence and its traumas." A translator and interpreter Akito Hirano will participate in part of the research.

*ACC Saison Foundation Fellow **



Yuki Kobayashi
Visual Art

To conduct research on the Chinese Martial Art “Wing Chun” to help develop a long-term project, as well as to learn and engage in cultural exchange with Hong Kong-based performance artists.



Madoka Mori
Music

To discover a new language of music through cultural exchange as well as to seek the possibility for innovative collaboration with diverse art and contemporary music in New York.

(Photo by Shigeto Imura)



SHIMURAbros (Yuka and Kentaro Shimura)
Visual Art (Film/Video/Photography)

To conduct research on Beate Sirota Gordon who contributed to the drafting of the human rights clauses of the Japanese Constitution in San Francisco where she had lived as a young adult.

Grants to Institutions



OFFICE ALB
Performing Arts (Dance)

To foster exchange and international collaboration among artists in Japan, Philippines, India and Indonesia to collaborate and conduct fieldwork and workshops together.

*ACC Saison Foundation Fellow **

* The *ACC Saison Foundation Fellow* is awarded to individuals/institutions supported by a designated grant from the Saison Foundation.

Comments from Selection Panelists

Visual Art

The periodic newsletters from ACC that introduce current activities of former grant recipients always remind us of how these awards have helped many artists in their future careers and influenced the current scene. In an art world that is increasingly dominated by market-driven evaluations and the initiatives of big corporate capitals, there are high expectations for ACC to provide artists with opportunities for development that are not related to any of these factors.

I joined the selection panel for the first time this year, and the first thing that struck me was the diversity of cultural identities of the artists who applied. In addition, there were some cases where mid-career artists who have already had some previous opportunities to present their works applied for the next step in their careers. While I found this to be a meaningful use of the grant, I also observed a sense of stagnation amid the weakening of the infrastructure to support artists, which has been caused by the lull in the rise and fall of art festivals and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Reflecting on this situation, the artists selected for this year's Visual Art section were mainly those who have already had opportunities to present their works in museums to some extent. However, the selected artists are also those who are expected to have a broad impact on the Japanese art environment beyond their individual work.

yang02 was recognised for his sense of history, in which he responded to the new technological situation by returning to the past —when various genres and technology were undifferentiated from art— starting over from there and moving toward the future. In addition to his progressive art practices, Nile Koetting was also noted for his awareness of the fragility of the infrastructure that supports art in Japan and his interest in the environment that supports new fields of practice. Yuki Kobayashi, who has been working in an area between art and performance, a field that is still underdeveloped in Japan, was also selected for his unique research and the impact that his experience in a place where various platforms are being established will have on his future career. The application by Yuka Shimura, who works in collaboration as SHIMURAbros, was a case with a clearly targeted proposal, but her interest in film as a medium, which she has maintained since the beginning of her career, has been updated as a way to share the stories of others and create a better world. Their proposal was highly evaluated as an appropriate support for mid-career artists.

As a result, we have selected artists who we believe best embody at this time the significance of the ACC grant —which is to reweave the self through encounters and observation of others. We hope that the applicants who were unfortunately not selected this year will keep these points in mind as they continue to take on new challenges in the future.

Tomoko Yabumae
Curator, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
Representative Panelist (Visual Art)

Performing Arts

As a general trend of this year's application cycle, many of the proposals aimed to renew or supplement the existing framework of genres and production sites within the Japanese performing arts. Since ACC's individual fellowships allow up to two collaborators, we also saw a new trend in the number of such applications with collaborators working together not only as artist units, but also with collaborators working in other fields.

Together with dancer Shumpei Mitsunashi, actor Kan Fukuhara will focus on the "rehearsal space," the starting point of creations. Although there are theater companies in Japan that have ateliers also serving as rehearsal spaces, Fukuhara stressed the need for a place where performers can study by themselves, and through visits to and surveys of numerous rehearsal spaces in New York, he envisions to co-found a rehearsal space in the future. The application was selected because it is unique in that it focuses not on the work as a product but on the process, and because it also takes into consideration the training of future generations. We look forward to seeing the results obtained from the perspectives of both actors and dancers.

Yuni Hong Charpe, who focuses on the violence and hospitality of translation, will also be collaborating in part with Akito Hirano, a translator and interpreter. Positioning translation as the mediation between the body and language, the application, which proposed archival research and interviews with experts on the history of translation/interpretation between Japanese and Korean, as well as observation of the "healing body" in Korean society, is considered specific and highly feasible. In addition to inter-media production methods, we look forward to Charpe's research into their own roots.

Office ALB, which was selected in the category of Organization and Project Grants, is an organization led by choreographer and dancer Akiko Kitamura. For this proposal, Kitamura plans to conduct fieldwork in the Philippines with artists she has come to know through previous ACC grants. The application was highly evaluated for its consideration of expanding the field of activities for artists in Asia and networking with them. We hope that deeper cross-cultural ties will be realized through ongoing cultural exchange and its developmental activities.

By joining ACC's selection process for the first time, I was reminded that artists are also expected to have the ability to verbalize their own activities. It is difficult for applicants to write feasible budgets at a time of inflation, but I was impressed by the care taken by the office staff to make the project proposals feasible. Some applicants are accustomed to writing application forms, while others are not, but everyone has the experience of doing it for the first time. We encourage those who wish to expand the scope of their activities to apply without fear. I hope that those who have been selected for fellowships and grants will fully utilize this opportunity and make the most of it in their future activities. As one of the selection panelists, I look forward to seeing the outcomes.

Takako Shibata
Associate Professor, School of International Communication, Senshu University
Representative Panelist (Performing Arts)

Music and Literature

Among the applications from both the literature and music fields, I initially narrowed down the list to a few candidates based on their application materials and information collected through the interviews by the office staff. In the case of literature, the applicants could be creative writers, critics, researchers, translators, editors, etc. In the case of music, they could be composers, performers, critics, researchers, or producers. In this selection process, the candidates were narrowed down based on their intentions, motivations, detailed plans for proposed activities, and feasibility, rather than on their type of work or discipline. Furthermore, working alongside the visual art panel to determine grantees from visual art, literature, and music together, it was decided that only one candidate from the music and literature fields was to be selected due to the grant budget.

In the first place, it is not easy to compare and contrast literature and music together, or literature, music, and visual arts together. We then had to evaluate the impact of the grant and what it would mean to the applicants to go and stay abroad at this time, while taking into account their age, gender, and genres. Although the list of candidates was narrowed down, after a discussion and calculation of the budget allocation, we finally decided to select the composer Madoka Mori from among the applicants of literature and music.

Madoka Mori has already been presenting her works in Japan as well as collaborating with visual arts and working in educational settings. Toshi Ichiyanagi, a composer who sadly passed away last year, strongly encouraged her to travel abroad and be exposed to musicians and audiences abroad, and she cited this as one of the reasons for her application. Behind this recommendation was the fact that Toshi Ichiyanagi had studied in the United States from his late teens to his twenties and later stayed there on ACC's fellowship. Given this, Madoka Mori's intention to "act now" was firm. In addition, in light of the balance of the proposed budgets of other candidates, we felt it was most appropriate to award the fellowship to Madoka Mori. I wish Mori a fruitful and productive stay in NY in the future.

I would like to add that I would have liked to see more applications from the field of literature. I believe that both researchers and creators will benefit from the opportunity to conduct research and discuss issues from the same or different perspectives, and that they will be stimulated by the local scene abroad. Therefore, I would like to encourage active applications from the field of literature as well.

Jun'ichi Konuma
Professor, Faculty of Letters, Arts and Sciences, Waseda University
Representative Panelist (Music and Literature)

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