

January 7, 2020

Art Collaboration Kyoto Executive Committee Prospectus

Art and culture in Kyoto have long been connected to the local livelihood and industries and it eventually developed as the foundation for a vast range of socio-economic activities. Both tangible and intangible cultures, which have been accumulated in Kyoto's long history, are resources that still attract both Japanese and foreign visitors. Based on these kinds of regional characteristics, Kyoto Prefecture has examined various ways to support artists as a measure to stimulate new cultural creations. These programs include artist residencies in various areas of Kyoto Prefecture, art events with a focus on young artists, and exhibitions to introduce promising, up-and-coming artists.

Our experiences of running these programs led us to an awareness of the problem: the environment in Kyoto for the artists to focus on their activities is insufficient, particularly for those who are developing their careers. There are many art universities in Kyoto, which has taken in many talented students from all over the country and produced many artists who are actively working internationally. With all these affirmations, it is fair to say that Kyoto is a rich environment for art education and research. However, the art industry is underdeveloped when it comes to supporting the livelihoods of artists. This has been the ultimate reason for a fair number of artists leaving Kyoto to other prefectures and countries, for seeking a better environment.

Meanwhile, the acceptance of contemporary art among the wider community has gradually been growing in Kyoto by the efforts of different people involved in the arts. In order to turn this potential into actual support for artists, we need to have the means to stimulate the circulation of contemporary art: production, exhibition, distribution, and evaluation. It should also be a cross-field measure that is different from the conventional format of only promoting culture and art itself. By activating the art market, which has a large influence on the exhibition and distribution of artworks, we will be able to uphold artistic legacies and raise the reputation of the artists.

Private contemporary art galleries have contributed to spreading contemporary art and developing the art market by representing talented artists and introducing them to Japan and abroad through exhibitions and participating in art fairs overseas. The international networks of people involved in contemporary art, which each gallery has built by their own efforts, are extremely precious assets to the Japanese art world.

January 7, 2020

Art Collaboration Kyoto Executive Committee Prospectus

Under these circumstances, both private and public parties, who share a common awareness of the problems, need to collaborate to initiate suitable programs for the present Kyoto and mesh them together to expand the art market and support artists. Through numerous discussions with experts for creating an experimental project, which will explore a new framework of contemporary art between private and state parties, we have launched Art Collaboration Kyoto. Our project theme “Collaboration” represents guiding principles to explore different collaboration possibilities between public and private sectors, Japan and abroad, and art and other fields. Having Kyoto as our stage, we will conduct various programs, centered around exhibitions and sales of contemporary art, where art professionals: artists, gallerists, collectors, curators, critics, and researchers will all come together from Japan and abroad. Through Art Collaboration Kyoto, we aim to stimulate organic circulation, where art and economy work together and develop sustainably, support artists, and establish art in the local areas by activating art markets in Kyoto and Japan. With these prospects, we will establish the Art Collaboration Kyoto Executive Committee with the aim of introducing and distributing contemporary art through exploring the various collaborative possibilities in Kyoto and Japan.