

Setouchi Triennale: For the happiness of the elderly on our islands

Kagawa Prefecture



Background

The Seto Inland Sea has been a popular route with people coming and going since ancient times. Although the islands flourished and developed their own cultures distinct from one another, recent times have seen a loss of local vitality with the progress in globalisation, streamlining homogenisation, as well as accelerated population decline and aging. This has led to a vicious circle of population decline.

Under such circumstances, a movement was created to revitalise the region by holding an art festival harnessing modern art and architecture, which led to the Setouchi Triennale held in July 2010 (called Setouchi International Art Festival until 2013).

Project Aims

With “Restoration of the Sea” as the theme, the Setouchi Triennale aims to face the reality that population of the islands is decreasing and aging, and to energise the residents more. Through the following themes, the art festival aims to revitalise the Setouchi islands, where beautiful nature and people have mingled and harmonised, in order to transform the Seto Inland Sea into a Sea of Hope for every region on the globe, and to offer a model for regions with similar problems.

- To energise the elderly on the islands
- To take pride in the region and to develop a future perspective
- To have an awareness of the global environment.

Project Outline

The Setouchi Triennale has been held three times: in 2010, 2013 and 2016. The fourth instalment will be held in April 2019. An overview of the Setouchi Triennale is provided below.

Organiser

Setouchi Triennale Executive Committee

Chairperson: Keizo Hamada (Governor of Kagawa Prefecture)

Executive Producer: Soichiro Fukutake (Director of Fukutake Foundation)

Director General: Fram Kitagawa (Art director)

Terms

Spring Encounters:

From 26 April to 26 May 2019

Summer Gatherings:

From 19 July to 25 August 2019

Fall Openings:

From 28 September to 4 November 2019

A total of 107 days

Locations

Islands of Naoshima, Teshima, Megijima, Ogijima, Shodoshima, Oshima, Inujima, Shamijima (spring), Honjima (autumn), Takamijima (autumn), Awashima (autumn) and Ibukijima (autumn), and Takamatsu Port and Uno Port.



Participating artists and projects

Approximately 200 artists from more than 30 countries and regions participate.

Triennale Passport (general admission)

Types: A Three-Season Passport good for the entire festival and Seasonal Limited Passport, which is good for one season, either spring, summer, or autumn, are available. A special advance-purchase price is available for the Three-Season Passport, but some works and events are not included.

Purchasing method: Available on the official website of the Setouchi Triennale (online payment is available in Japanese, English, and traditional Chinese as well as at various ticket agencies including convenience stores.

Strengths and Innovations

The Setouchi Triennale’s unique style lets people encounter the beautiful landscape and nature of the region along with the culture and lifestyle while island hopping using art as signposts. Its big feature is that artists interact with islanders, feel the tradition and culture of the island, and create wonderful works that can only be generated in this setting, which many visitors appreciate. Visitors also interact with locals and the volunteer supporters known as Koebi-Tai to deepen their understanding and appreciation of the islands and their beauty. In other words, artists as

well as a number of people across generations, regions and categories get together and create art in collaboration with local people, which attracts international attention as a great example of a community-based art festival.



“Red Pumpkin” by Yayoi Kusama: 2006 Naoshima Miyanoura Port Square

Photo: Daisuke Aochi



“Sora-ami (Island Hopping)” Yasuaki Igarashi

Local residents join the creation.

Results of the Project

Past festivals brought many visitors to the islands and caused a ripple effect on the regional economy. Moreover, the events were widely covered by diverse media such as television, newspapers, and magazines. Such publicity improved the recognition and image of the region. Various movements towards the revitalisation of the islands triggered by the art festival is apparent, which is made especially clear by the recommencement of a primary and junior high

school, which had been closed, owing to the increase of new residents.

Number of total visitors

2010: 930,000

2013: 1,070,000

2016: 1,040,000

Visitor trend (from Setouchi Triennale 2016 questionnaires)

Female visitors account for 67%, and visitors in their twenties and thirties account for 49%.

Overseas visitors account for 13.4%.

Economic ripple effect (estimation by external organisation)

2010: 11.1 billion yen

2013: 13.2 billion yen

2016: 13.9 billion yen

Increase of new residents (case of Ogijima)

- The rural island with a population of 170 welcomed forty new residents.
- A primary and junior high school, and a nursery centre which had been closed reopened



Recommencement ceremony of Ogi Elementary & Junior High School



In and around Takamatsu Port

Photo: Shintaro Miyawaki

Future Developments

In the past, locals built and gave a boost to the art festivals together by actively involving themselves in the creation of works in collaboration with artists, the provision of food making use of local characteristics, and picking up and seeing off visitors at ports. It is a crucial challenge to enhance such potential for regional revitalisation as a constant approach without treating it as a temporary solution. Therefore, an initiative called ART SETOUCHI exhibits existing works and holds art events in the years between the festivals in order to aim for constant regional revival.

Reference URL

<https://setouchi-artfest.jp>

Contact

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