

## Related Events

### ■ Gallery Tour

The artist himself will talk about each of the works in the exhibition.

Date/time: May 15, 2022 [sun.] 11:00 -

Venue: Kyoto Art Center (Meeting place: Entrance)

Given by: ITOH Nobuaki

Interviewer: FUJIMURA Naho (Assistant Coordinator)

Facilitator: NAKAYA Keisuke (Art Coordinator of Kyoto Art Center)

Language: Japanese

### ■ ITOH Nobuaki Artist Talk

ITOH will talk about his production and artworks with the special guest.

Date/time: July 2, 2022 [sat.] 15:00 - 17:00

Venue: Kyoto Art Center, Multipurpose Hall

Given by: ITOH Nobuaki

Guest: IHARADA Haruka (Curator)

Facilitator: TANI Ryuichi (Program Director of Kyoto Art Center)

Language: Japanese

### ■ Closing Event: Live performance of Living "Living / Dead"

ITOH will perform one of his masterpieces "Living / Dead" for the last day of the exhibition.

Date/time: July 18, 2022 [mon. (\*National holiday)] 19:30 - 20:00

Venue: Kyoto Art Center, Multipurpose Hall

Performed by: ITOH Nobuaki

## ITOH Nobuaki

Born in Nara, Japan in 1981. Currently lives and works in Kyoto.

2009 Kyoto City University of Arts, M.F.A. in Concept and Media Planning, Kyoto, Japan

2016 Kyoto City University of Arts, Ph.D. in Art, Kyoto,

Recent major solo exhibitions include "The most beautiful moment in my life" (Doshisha

Women's College of Liberal Arts Gallery, Kyoto/2018), "Fiction / The most beautiful moment

in my life" (WAITINGROOM, Tokyo/2018), "Anyway, it's always the others who die." (The

5th Floor, Tokyo/2020), and major group exhibitions include "GRAVEDAD CERO"

(Matadero Madrid, Madrid, Spain/2015), "S-HOUSE Museum Opening Exhibition" (S-House

Museum, Okayama/2016), "Art Week in front of school 2015" (Asanuma Memorial,

Nara/2015), " Still moving @KCUA" (Kyoto City University of Arts Gallery @KCUA,

Kyoto/2015), etc.

Awards received include: The 12th Gunma Biennale for Young Artists (2012), Encouragement

Prize at Graduation Exhibition, Kyoto City University of Arts (2012), Taro Okamoto Award

for Contemporary Art, Taro Okamoto Museum of Art

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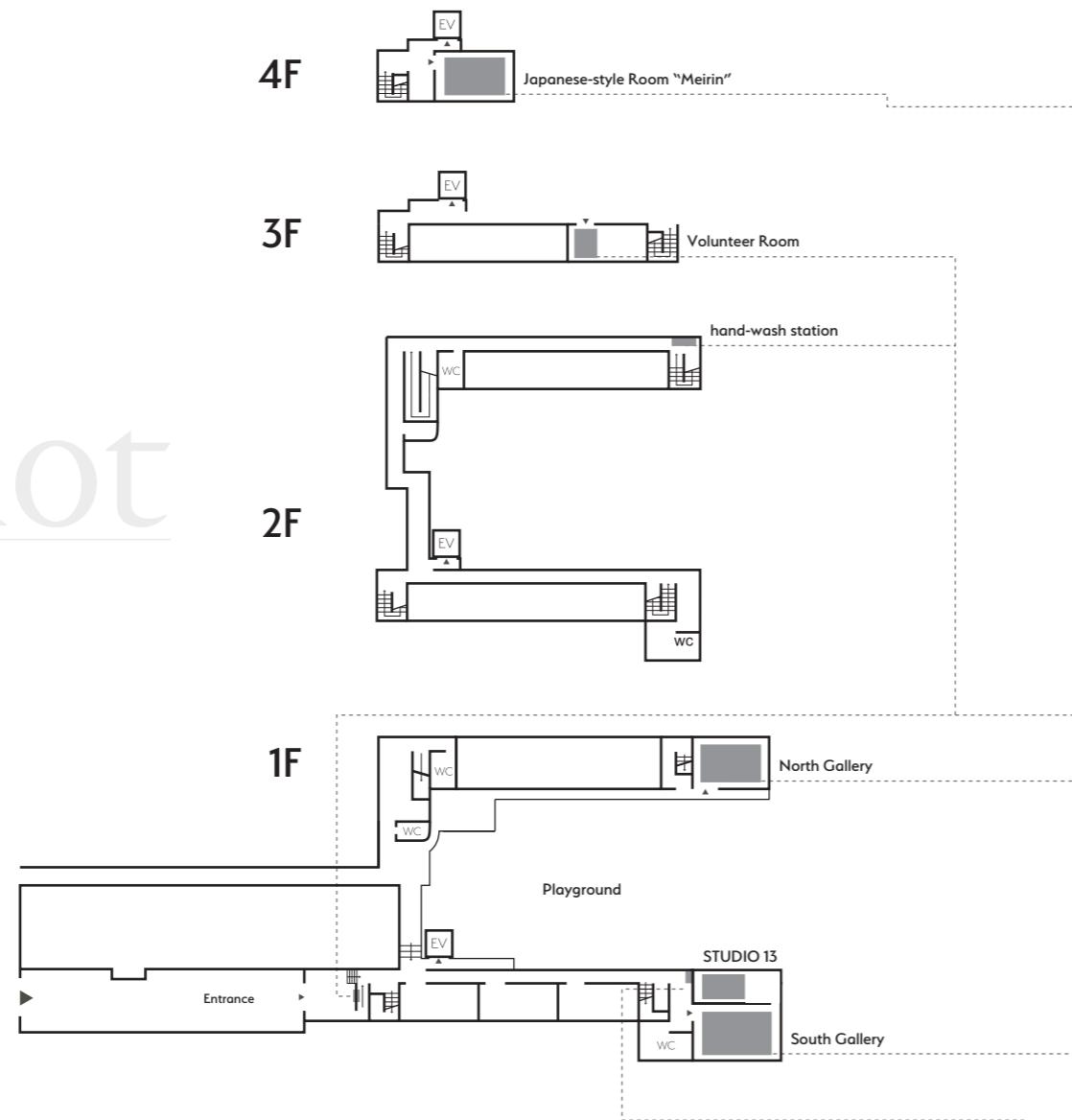
Sat, May 14–Mon, July 18, 2022 | Kyoto Art Center

10:00–20:00 | Temporary close: Wed, June 8

Admission free

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# Time Cannot Go Back



## Curatorial Statement

Although ITOH Nobuaki is already an artist with rich experiences and achievements, he has rarely had opportunities for his solo exhibitions in Kyoto, the city where he is based. This exhibition is designed to provide an opportunity to view his early and recent works all at once.

Itoh consistently confronts inescapable human concepts, such as "life/death," "spirit," "body," and "time". In this exhibition, Itoh's works are particularly concerned with "time," which indicates his insight into "video" as the time-based media.

His new work *Time Cannot Go Back* is a video work that uses reverse playback. This work makes us feel simultaneously surprised and uncomfortable at the fact that "nothing is happening anymore." Even if it were possible to "turn back the clock," ..... even if the loss of something or the events that cannot be undone were to become a thing that never happened, why do we still feel as if something exists in the flow of time?

Itoh's works remind us of many things: we are surrounded by a variety of media; the images or expressions are manipulable, or appear as a pre-manipulated reality. We can also become acutely aware of the passage of time, recall personal or social events, and indulge in nostalgia and irony.

However, what is recalled in this context has nothing to do with Itoh's works in essence. In his *Dead person / Living person*, Itoh's life and his grandmother's life, while seemingly close to each other to the viewer, are in fact two separate events. We, the subjects of his video, are soon separated from the images, and the images become a thing of the past. We are separated from the images, and we live our own lives. At the same time, however, we stop in front of the images as works of art. ITOH Nobuaki deals with the fundamental theme for human beings, and at the same time, the mystery of how we "live and watch together".

Ryuichi Tani, Program Director, Kyoto Art Center

## Commentaries by the artist

### *Dead person/Living person*

2009, 2 channel videos, sound, 11 min. 05 sec.

"Death will no longer be absolute" — the Lumière brothers, known as the inventors of cinematograph, are believed to utter this phrase when they invented cinema. This utterance not only means that even those who have died can live and walk freely in the world of cinema, but also implicates that movie fundamentally bears "death" in its nature.

This work consists of two voices (or songs) and moving images: the artist's grandmother (the deceased) talking about her memories five years before she died, and her final moments; the artist himself talking about his grandmother's past memories. Here, the "living" traces the "living who are about to become the dead" and attempt to reveal the "death" contained in "life".

### *The most beautiful moment in my life*

2018, Single channel video, sound, 8 min. 53 sec.

In this work, about 20 men and women around 20 years old, the same age group as Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa, strike the same pose as the painting and declare to viewers in 10, 100, and 1,000 years, "I am now the most beautiful in my life". In fact, this is a fictional declaration prepared in advance by the artist and read out by the performers.

The digital images, which will not deteriorate even after 1,000 years, paradoxically make the viewers aware of the finite bodies of the performers, and assume that this fictional declaration will be accepted as fact by the viewers in 10, 100, and 1,000 years.

### *Time Cannot Go Back (2020-2022)*

2020-2022, Single channel video, sound, 1 hr. 14 min.

Inspired by René Magritte's oil painting *The Treachery of Images*, this work is composed of images taken by the artist in his daily life during the COVID-19 crisis of 2020 to 2022, in which everyone was inevitably caught up. The work combines images played back in reverse, the phrase "time cannot go back" that emerge from the reverse playback, and the viewer watching the images in a world where "time cannot go back".

### *0099 (Kyoto2013 Ver.)*

2013, Single channel video, sound, 24 min. 11 sec.

This work, which is exhibited at several locations in the building, shot a piece of paper with the numbers 00 to 99 at various locations in Kyoto using only the zoom-out function of a Handycam camcorder. The cuts flow from 00 to 99, back again to 00 and continue in a same manner, thus it looks as if the same cuts just repeat themselves eternally. In reality, however, the video consists of approximately 1,000 cuts, combining 10 patterns per location.

### *Living/Dead Kyoto Art Center Edit Ver.*

2020, Single channel video, sound, 30 min.

\* Individual captions are posted at the gallery

In this series, which has been produced continuously since 2012 while changing the shooting location, the artist beats dead flesh to the beat of his own heartbeat, capturing his own body as it gradually ages and transforms into dead flesh.

The work will be completed when the artist eventually dies, and the images will continue to convey his "life".

### *Candle / Cut Flowers / Sleep / Smoke*

2020, Single channel video, sound, 1 hr.

In this work, the artist himself appears to be peeling off his own skin, while emitting the death metaphors that have been depicted as motifs in paintings around the world, such as candles, cut flowers, sleep, smoke, stuffed animals, fruits, the Bible, hourglasses, and bones. The repetitive shedding of skin seems like the replacement of cells (so-called metabolism), but it is also a gradual process of dying.

### *STUDIO 13*

A temporary studio will be set up at the back of the South Gallery, which is named "Studio 13". During the exhibition, the artist will stay in the studio for irregular periods of time to create artworks. Here, visitors can participate in the creation of artworks as subjects. Filmed images will be exhibited in front of the south gallery as a special version of "Time Cannot Go Back".

\* Filming is available only when the artist is in the studio.

\* "Studio" is the name of the production space for artists provided free of charge by Kyoto Art Center. Kyoto Art Center has 12 production rooms throughout the building, which are used as rehearsal spaces and studios by artists selected for the support program.