

- Events related to the “Domani: The Art of Tomorrow Exhibition” and/or Program of Overseas Study for Upcoming Artists
- Events related to the Agency for Cultural Affairs
- Events in the art world

\* All dates based on Japan Standard Time

\* This timeline focuses on activities of the Agency for Cultural Affairs and other parts of the Japanese public sector, as well as major developments in the global situation, and related cultural administrative measures.

- Jan.**
- 1 China: The Huanan Seafood Market in Wuhan is shut down in response to multiple cases of viral pneumonia.
  - 11 China: A Wuhan resident in his 60s dies from viral pneumonia of unknown origin. (This is considered to be the first death caused by this particular virus.)
- “Domani: The Art of Tomorrow Exhibition 2020—Landscapes in Our Age: Scarred and Reborn” opens (The National Art Center, Tokyo)**
- 14 WHO: The detection of a novel coronavirus in relation to the spread of pneumonia of unknown origin in China is reported.
  - 16 **Japan: The first case of the novel coronavirus in the country is confirmed.**
  - 18 Japan: The Artizon Museum (formerly Bridgestone Museum of Art) opens at Kyobashi, Tokyo.
  - 21 USA: The first case in the country is reported.
  - 23 China: Public transport in Wuhan is suspended, and railway stations and airports are closed, in order to prevent the spread of the virus. The city gradually goes into lockdown (until April 8).
- France: The first case in Europe is reported. (A case dating back to December of the previous year is later confirmed). Cases are subsequently reported in countries across Europe.
- 25 Australia: The first case in the country is reported.
- China: The Palace Museum in Beijing and the National Museum of China temporarily close (to reopen on May 1).
- 30 Japan: The government establishes the Novel Coronavirus Response Headquarters.
- Feb.**
- 1 UK: Britain leaves the European Union
- Japan: The novel coronavirus is designated as an infectious disease under the national infectious disease and quarantine laws.**
- 3 Japan: The Diamond Princess cruise ship arrives at Yokohama Port via Naha. Cases among passengers had been confirmed prior to landing at Japanese ports.
  - 6 China: The cancellation of Art Basel Hong Kong 2020 is announced.
  - 11 **WHO: The disease caused by the novel coronavirus is officially named “Covid-19” (Coronavirus Disease 2019).**
  - 13 Japan: The first domestic death from Covid-19 (a woman in her 80s) in the country is confirmed.
  - 15 Egypt: The first case on the African continent is reported.
  - 16 **“Domani: The Art of Tomorrow Exhibition 2020” closes**

- 17 China: The total number of cases in mainland China exceeds 70,000.
  - 22 The Agency for Cultural Affairs issues guidelines for organizers of cultural events, recommending practices including coughing etiquette, frequent ventilation, and no entry for persons with cold-like symptoms.
  - 24 Korea: The stepwise closure of public museums and libraries under the control of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism is announced, starting from this date. (Some places reopen on May 6, but there are repeated subsequent closures depending on the status of infections.)
  - 25 Japan: The government devises the Basic Policies for Novel Coronavirus Disease Control.
- Brazil: The first case on the South American continent is reported.
- 26 The guidelines for organizers of cultural events are revised, requesting the cancellation, postponement or major downsizing of all cultural events across Japan planned within two weeks from this date. Further revisions are subsequently made according to the situation.
  - 27 The Tokyo, Kyoto, Nara and Kyushu National Museums close. (The initially set reopening date of March 16 is later pushed back.)
  - 29 Six national art museums follow the government's request to close voluntarily. The privately operated Mori Art Museum temporarily closes as well, followed by numerous other museums across the country.
- Mar.**
- 1 Japan: The disembarkation of all passengers from the Diamond Princess is completed. At the time, 706 of the approximately 3,700 passengers had tested positive for the virus, seven of whom died.
  - 4 Japan: The cancellation of Art Fair Tokyo 2020 is announced.
  - 6 Japan: The postponement and partial program cancellations of “Art Sightama 2020” are announced. Many other art festivals are subsequently postponed (Ichihara Art x Mix, Northern Alps Art Festival, Oku-Noto Triennale, etc.)
- Italy: The Venice Biennale of Architecture 2020 is moved from May to August (and later to May 2021).
- 10 Italy: A nationwide lockdown is announced. (relaxed/lifted on May 4.)
  - 11 **WHO: The Covid-19 outbreak is declared a global pandemic.**
- Germany: German culture minister Monika Grütters announces a package of substantial financial aids for self-employed individuals in the fields of art and media, and for small- and medium-sized companies.
- 13 France: The Musée du Louvre temporarily closes (to reopen on July 6).
- USA: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Guggenheim Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and other art museums close. Subsequent closures and various downsizing measures in all parts of the country lead to dismissals of employees.

**Mar. 13 Responding to the global spread of Covid-19, the Agency for Cultural Affairs accepts applications for a temporary return to Japan from artists currently overseas on the Program of Overseas Study for Upcoming Artists.**

Problems with embarkation and re-entry procedures in late March prompt the implementation of special measures permitting delays and extensions.

14 USA: President Trump declares a national emergency

17 Germany: Cities around the country go into their first lockdown.

France: A nationwide curfew for two weeks is announced. (The period is subsequently extended, until the curfew is eventually relaxed/lifted on May 11.)

18 UK: Several of the country's major museums close (including the British Museum, to reopen August 27, and Tate Modern, to reopen July 27).

France: The Ministry of Culture announces an initial emergency fund of 22 million Euros.

China: The canceled Art Basel Hong Kong 2020 takes place in the form of an online viewing room. This inspires an increasing number of similar projects (including the subsequently canceled Art Basel and Art Basel Miami Beach)

Japan: The temporarily closed National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo offers live webcasts of their Peter Doig exhibition (with support from Niconico Art Museum online service by Dwango Co., Ltd.). Several other art facilities follow the example in their own online projects.

20 UK: Arts Council England unlocks an emergency fund of 160 million pounds for individuals involved in creative work.

23 USA: The curfew ordered by the state government for the State of New York begins (to be lifted on May 15).

The Agency for Cultural Affairs has decided to reduce the subsidy of 78 million yen for Aichi Triennale 2019, which was once rejected, to 66 million yen.

24 Japan: The postponement of the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo is announced.

29 China: As a measure to prevent the spread of virus, the Hong Kong government prohibits gatherings of more than five people in public places. This makes it virtually impossible to continue the pro-democracy demonstrations that started in the previous year.

30 USA: The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) announces a relief package of 75 million US dollars for arts and humanities organizations affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

**Apr. 3 The total number of infections worldwide exceeds one million. (According to figures published Johns Hopkins University in the US)**

Japan: All foreign nationals arriving in Japan are requested to quarantine for two weeks before entering the country.

7 Japan: A state of emergency is declared for Tokyo, Kanagawa, Saitama, Chiba, Osaka, Hyogo and Fukuoka (initially until May 6, but later extended until the end of May).

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology announces an emergency package of economic support for sports and cultural activities.

15 IMF: The recession caused by the pandemic is predicted to be "the worst since the Great Depression."

15 Japan: The Tokyo Metropolitan Government launches the Support Program for Arts and Culture. The system includes distribution of movies via a dedicated website, and payment of flat-rate performance fees. Support programs for arts and culture are subsequently announced in other municipalities, including Kyoto and Aichi (May).

16 Japan: The state of emergency is expanded to all of Japan, with 13 prefectures classified as "areas demanding special precautions."

17 Japan: The Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum announces the cancellation of the exhibition "Art & Power: From Pharaohs to Daimyos. Masterworks from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston" due to difficulties coordinating the transport of artworks.

18 Japan: The number of cases in the country surpasses 10,000 (excluding cruise ship passengers).

20 Japan: Based on the first Supplementary Budget for the fiscal year 2020, the distribution of financial aid for residents begins. Local governments begin distributing payments in late April.

29 USA: The number of cases in the country surpasses one million. (According to figures published by Johns Hopkins University)

**May 1 Japan: The Subsidy Program for Sustaining Businesses for companies that are particularly affected by voluntary temporary closures due to the spread of the coronavirus begins.**

Japan: A 3-D virtual reality archive tour around the "Future and the Arts" exhibition that had to close prematurely, are shown on the Mori Art Museum's website.

4 Japan: A panel of experts convened by the government proposes guidelines for a "new way of life."

14 Japan: The state of emergency is lifted in 39 prefectures, excluding Hokkaido, Tokyo, Kanagawa, Chiba, Saitama, Osaka, Hyogo and Kyoto.

20 Japan: According to data from the Japan National Tourism Organization, the estimated number of foreign visitors to Japan in April was 2,900, down 99.9% from the previous year. The decrease subsequently remains more than 90%, including a decrease of 93% in March.

Japan: The Japanese Association of Museums publishes "Guidelines for Controlling the Spread of Covid-19 Infections in Museums."

21 Japan: The state of emergency is lifted for Osaka, Hyogo and Kyoto.

25 Japan: The state of emergency is lifted for all remaining areas: Hokkaido, Tokyo, Kanagawa, Chiba and Saitama.

26 USA: The killing of George Floyd by a white police officer in Minneapolis triggers worldwide protests, taking the Black Lives Matter movement to a new level of awareness.

The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto reopens. Other museums that reopen around the same time include the National Museum of Art, Osaka, the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo (June 2), the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (June 4), the National Art Center, Tokyo (June 11), and the National Museum of Western Art (June 18).

The renovated Kyoto City Kyocera Museum of Art (formerly Kyoto City Museum of Art) opens with some delay due to the spread of Covid-19. Measures such as advance reservation systems, temperature checks and mask mandates are implemented by an increasing number of facilities.

- June**
- 1 **The Agency for Cultural Affairs announces the opening of its first online exhibition, “Domani plus Online 2020: Living on the Eve.”**
- 12 **The Agency for Cultural Affairs includes a 56 billion yen “Emergency Comprehensive Aid Package for Cultural Art Activities” (partly also covering sports) in its FY2020 Secondary Supplementary Budget.**  
The aim is to financially support the activities of self-employed individuals who were forced to restrict activities, as well as infection control measures at cultural art organizations.
- 19 Brazil: The number of cases in the country surpasses one million. (According to figures published by Johns Hopkins University)
- 26 Responding to the prolongation of the pandemic, the Agency for Cultural Affairs officially proposes measures including extensions of stay and/or departure, and according adjustments of training costs for participants in the Program of Overseas Study for Upcoming Artists.
- 28 The total number of infections worldwide surpasses ten million. On the following day, the total number of deaths exceeds 500,000. (According to figures published by Johns Hopkins University)
- 30 China: The National Security Law in Hong Kong takes effect.
- July**
- 3 **“Domani plus Online 2020: Living on the Eve” opens.**
- 4 Japan: “Galleries Without Artworks” opens at the Setagaya Art Museum.
- 10 **The Agency for Cultural Affairs starts accepting applications for their “Ongoing Support for Cultural Arts Activities” as part of the secondary Supplementary Budget for FY2020 (closing on July 31, but implemented again later).**  
The aim is to promote art and culture by providing art and culture-related groups with the necessary funds to cover expenses involved in the continuation of their activities. The total budget is about 50 billion yen, divided into assistance packages for self-employed individuals (type A-1: up to 200,000 yen; type A-2: up to 1.5 million yen), small groups (type B: up to 1.5 million yen), and joint applications by small/private businesses (up to 15 million yen in the case of ten co-applicants). The office in charge is the Japan Arts Council. Applications are to be made online, and to simplify application procedures, a system using advance confirmation numbers issued by organizations in the respective cultural field is adopted. In the field of fine art, the Japan Artists Association. accepts applications also from non-members, whereas the certification of applications from art-related individuals that do not belong to a specific group is carried out by a specialized association for the issuance of authentication certificates for independent artists (at an office at the Kyoto Art Center).
- Japan: The Sompō Museum of Art (formerly Seiji Tōgō Memorial Sompō Japan Nipponkoa Museum of Art) opens in Shinjuku, Tokyo.
- 11 Japan: The Hirosaki Museum of Contemporary Art opens in Hirosaki, Aomori.
- 17 Japan: The Yokohama Triennale 2020 opens.  
India: The number of cases surpasses one million. (According to figures published by Johns Hopkins University)
- 22 Japan: The government launches the “Go To Campaign” aiming to domestic tourism. (Plans later have to be changed in order to prevent the further spread of infections.)
- 22 Japan: The cancellation of the Sapporo International Art Festival 2020 is announced.  
China: The government launches an emergency Covid-19 vaccination campaign for medical workers.
- 28 Japan: Prime Minister Abe Shinzo announces his resignation due to the worsening of a chronic illness.
- Aug.**
- 1 Japan: The Kadokawa Culture Museum opens with some delay in Tokorozawa, Saitama.
- 7 Africa: The number of infections on the African continent surpasses one million.
- 8 The second term of applications for the Agency for Cultural Affairs’ Ongoing Support for Cultural Arts Activities begins (closing on August 28).
- 28 USA: The Museum of Modern Art, New York reopens to visitors from the general public. Other museums in New York gradually reopen thereafter.
- Sept.**
- 1 Russia: The number of cases surpasses one million.
- 5 Japan: “Yamagata Biennale 2020: Shape of Mountains, Shape of Life,” the event’s fourth staging, is held for the first time mainly online.
- 12 The third term of applications for the Agency for Cultural Affairs’ Ongoing Support for Cultural Arts Activities begins (closing on September 30).
- 16 Japan: Suga Yoshihide is appointed as the 99th Prime Minister of Japan.
- 17 Japan: “Rokko Meets Art 2020” opens.
- 18 **The “Domani: The Art of Tomorrow Exhibition 2021” schedule and participating artists are announced.**  
The theme, “Creating Space,” is announced on November 6.
- 19 The 23rd Exhibition of Award-winning Works at the Japan Media Arts Festival opens (The National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation). Adopted an advance reservation system and VR images of the venue on the festival website.
- Oct.**
- 3 Japan: “Okuyamato Mind Trail—Museum in your Mind,” an art festival premised on walking in the natural environment of Nara Prefecture, is held for the first time.
- 11 **“Domani plus Online 2020” closes.**
- 15 UK: Responding to the second wave of infections, the government prohibits indoor gatherings of people from different households in London.
- 17 Japan: “Art Sightama 2020” opens with some delay.
- 21 Spain: The number of cases surpasses one million. (According to figures published by Johns Hopkins University)
- 29 Japan: The number of cases exceeds 100,000 (including cruise ship passengers).  
Japan: The relocated National Crafts Museum opens with some delay in Kanazawa, Ishikawa.
- 30 France: Responding to the rapid increase of infections, cities across the nation go into lockdown again (until December 15).
- Nov.**
- 2 German: Impose one-month partial lockdown
- 3 USA: The US presidential election takes place. On November 7, the media declare Democratic Party candidate Joe Biden (and Kamala Harris as vice president) winners of the election.
- 5 UK: Cities in all parts of England go into lockdown once again (until December 2).

Nov. 9 **The total number of infections worldwide surpasses 50 million. (According to figures published by Johns Hopkins University)**

USA, Germany: US company Pfizer and German BioNTech announce results of their clinical trials, according to which their jointly developed Covid vaccine is more than 90% effective.

20 Korea: The number of cases surpasses 30,000.

25 **A new term of applications for the Agency for Cultural Affairs' Ongoing Support for Cultural Arts Activities begins (until December 11).**

Those who applied during the first three terms may apply for an additional payment covering the difference between previously received funds and additional aid of up to 1.5 million yen. This is the final term in this program. According to preliminary figures, a total of 96,280 applications had been made (by 77,697 individual applicants) as of December 25, combining 54,241 applications during the first three terms, and an additional 42,039 during the new term.

More than 12,000 of these applications came from the fields of art and photography, with 5,890 and 1,262 applications respectively made during the first three terms (as of October 16), and 4,163 (including 2,546 first-time applications) and 856 (583) respectively during the new term. Advance confirmation numbers issued through the Japan Artists Association total 4,117 (2,864 in the first three terms, and 1,253 in the new term).

As of December 25, the reported total number of granted applications (from all fields) amounts to 44,075, combining 28,814 type A-1, 12,013 type A-2, 2,985 type B, and 263 joint applications.

Dec. 8 UK: The first senior citizens and medical/care workers receive the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine. Vaccination also starts in the US, EU member states and Latin American nations later this month.

13 UK: The discovery of a new and possibly more contagious variant of the coronavirus is reported. Yet another variant is discovered on December 23.

15 **The Agency for Cultural Affairs includes a 37 billion yen package to support cultural activities during the coronavirus pandemic in the tertiary supplementary budget for FY2020.**

19 Japan: The canceled Sapporo International Art Festival 2020 launches an online program showing videos of interviews with artists and distribution programs via the festival website.

20 UK: London goes into lockdown for the third time.

21 Japan: The number of cases surpasses 200,000. Two days later, it is announced that the number of deaths has surpassed 3,000 (including cruise ship passengers).

23 Antarctica: The Chilean army confirms infections of 36 persons working at an Antarctic base, which means that the coronavirus now spans seven continents.

24 Japan: The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama temporarily closes (until January 18, 2021) as a measure to prevent the further spread of the virus.

25 Japan: The first case of the new variant found primarily in the UK is confirmed.

27 **The total number of infections worldwide surpasses 80 million. (According to figures published by Johns Hopkins University)**