



Yutaka Matsuzawa

My Own Death—Art via Color, Art via Language



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Saturday, October 4 - Saturday, November 29, 2025

Venue: Yumiko Chiba Associates

ROPPONGI HILLS Hollywood Beauty Plaza 3rd Floor, 6-4-1 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0032 Japan

Gallery Hours: 12:00-19:00 / Closed on Sundays, Mondays, and national holidays

Cooperated: The Estate of Yutaka Matsuzawa, Matsuzawa Yutaka Psi room Foundation, Reiko Tomii

Yumiko Chiba Associates is excited to present "My Own Death—Art via Color, Art via Language," an exhibition by Yutaka Matsuzawa.

Born in the Nagano town of Shimosuwa, Yutaka Matsuzawa (1922–2006) was a pioneering conceptual artist who took his art from this hometown where he spent most of his life, to the rest of Japan, and beyond.

The impressionable years of Matsuzawa's childhood and youth coincided with the turbulent period in Japanese history spanning from the Manchurian Incident through the Pacific War, to the nation's defeat at Allied hands. Such formative experiences of his younger years became the backdrop to the inquiries into matter and critiquing of civilization that permeate his art.

Throughout his life, Matsuzawa would approach his expressive activities with the goal of communicating the invisible to people from all places and walks of life. Commencing with poetry, that expression turned into "art via color" in the form of painting and object art, then from 1964, into "art via language," that is, artistic expression with no material embodiment.

The works submitted by Matsuzawa to the Bijutsu Bunka Art Association and Yomiuri Independent exhibitions in the 1950s used color to show his intellectual explorations. Experimenting repeatedly with painting materials, he tried everything from crayons to wax, soot, mud, and industrial paints, in the process developing a highly original practice characterized by the layering of different textures, a mandala format inspired by the Buddhist Mandala of the Two Realms, and the use of symbols.

On June 1, 1964, Matsuzawa experienced a personal epiphany in the form of a voice telling him to "vanish objects," and decided that from then on he would produce works solely in words; a methodology utterly rejecting and antithetical to modern civilization.

Thereafter, through the 1960s he undertook a series of experiments in presenting "concepts." *Independent '64 in the Wilderness* unveiled in the advertising section of *Bijutsu Journal* 51 (October 1964) could be described as his greatest artwork in terms of transmission, expression, and concept. He also set out a stream of revolutionary works at solo and group exhibitions, including *Ah, Nil, Ah, A Ceremony of Psi's Secret Embodiment Drowning in the Wilderness* as part of a solo outing at the Naïqua Gallery in which he endeavored to turn the exhibition space itself into a space for contemplation. In the "art via language" of this period, the art theory of Yutaka Matsuzawa unfolds in lyrical fashion, as if inviting the viewer into a realm of contemplation.

By using the actual "space" of the gallery and posting text in a passageway visitors had no option but to traverse, *My Own Death (Paintings Existing Only in Time)*—first presented at the 10th Japan International Art Exhibition (10th Tokyo Biennale: "Between man and matter") in 1970—encouraged people to engage in meditative thought, deeming the images that came to their minds "paintings," and is one of Matsuzawa's leading conceptual art works of this period.

Featuring Matsuzawa's "art via color" of the 1950s, with its beautiful colors and textures; early "art via language" from around 1964 when the artist was impelled by a revelation to "vanish objects"; and 1970's *My Own Death*, one of his most prominent concept-based works, this exhibition presents to viewers the very essence of the conceptual art of Yutaka Matsuzawa.

In staging this exhibition we are indebted to art historian Reiko Tomii for her generous assistance.



In the words of Yutaka Matsuzawa

My work of art, my work of *kannen** art, is made in our mind. That is to say, my art does not concern the sight, as in the “sight seen by the bodily organ called the eye.” Rather, let me say, it is a “painting seen by the mind.”

* *Kannen* 観念 has a twofold meaning in Japanese: 1) in premodern Japanese, it means “meditative visualization” of non-Zen Buddhism; and 2) in modern Japanese, it is the translated equivalent of “idea” in philosophy.

From Matsuzawa Yutaka, “My Work: Pictorial Works by Language,” in *Readings in Life*, NHK Radio 1, 1st episode, July 7, 1980.

I then decided: This will be what I must do. This is *the* methodology for total negation, the antithesis for contemporary civilization. It happened on June 4, 1964. Since then, I have made my works of art solely with text.

From Matsuzawa Yutaka, “My Work: Vanish *Objets* !,” in *Readings in Life*, NHK Radio 1, 2nd episode, July 8, 1980.

【Talk Event】

*Event details will be announced on the Yumiko Chiba Associates website/social media.

■Related Information

【Solo Exhibition】

“A Paradigm Shift in Art: Yutaka Matsuzawa, Quantum Art Manifesto—1988”

Thursday, 16 October- Sunday, 26 October, 2025

Venue: d-lab gallery

Organizer: Matsuzawa Yutaka Psi room Foundation

Cooperated: The Estate of Yutaka Matsuzawa, Yumiko Chiba Associates

【Talk & Dialogue】

‘Matsuzawa and Science’

Guide: Hiromasa Naganuma (Photographer)

Sunday, 19 October 2025, 14:22:02 -

Venue: d-lab gallery

‘Matsuzawa and Philosophy’

Guide: Hiromasa Naganuma (Photographer)

Sunday, 26 October 2025, 14:22:02 -

Venue: d-lab gallery

【Group Exhibition】

“NAM Collection 2025 – II”

Saturday, 2 August- Tuesday, 7 October, 2025

Venue: Nagano Prefectural Art Museum

■Artist Profile

Yutaka Matsuzawa

1922 Born in Nagano, Japan.

1946 Graduated from Waseda University, the Faculty of Science and Engineering, Architecture department.

2006 Died in Nagano, Japan.

Selected Solo Exhibitions

1955 Solo show, lobby of *Hikawa-maru*, along the Aleutian coast

1956 *Yutaka Matsuzawa One Man Show*, Wisconsin State College-Superior, USA

1963 *Y. MATSUZAWA [Matsuzawa Yutaka Solo Exhibition According to ψ]*, Aoki Gallery, Tokyo

1964 *Ah, Nil, Ah, A Ceremony of Psi's Secret Embodiment Drowning in the Wilderness: Prototype Exhibition*, Naiqua Gallery, Tokyo
(venue) + Outer Space Situation Research Center, Shimo Suwa (anti-venue)

1965 *Ah, Nil, Ah, A Ceremony of Psi's Secret Embodiment Drowning in the Wilderness: Matsuzawa Yutaka's "Anti-Civilization"*, Naiqua Gallery, Tokyo

1966 *Matsuzawa Yutaka's Ritual for Vanishing of All Matter 1966*, Modern Art Center of Japan (MACJ), Tokyo

1967 *Matsuzawa Yutaka Solo Exhibition V.1010 with 9 Canvases of Nothingness, 9 Psi Chairs, and 9 Ultra-futurist Methods*, Azuma Gallery, Kyoto



- 1971 Solo exhibition in conjunction with the publication of *Bulletin 42* featuring Matsuzawa Yutaka, Art & Project, Amsterdam
1974 *Death Poem Room*, Impact Gallery, Lausanne, Switzerland
1975 *Yutaka Matsuzawa*, Galeria Akumulatory 2, Poznań, Poland
1977 *Yutaka Matsuzawa*, CAyC (Centro de Arte y Comunicación), Buenos Aires, Brazil
1979 *Solo Exhibition of New Works by Quoting Old Works*, Ginza Kaigakan, Tokyo
1980 *Podio del Mond per Arte*, Middelburg, Holland
1982 *Nine Mandalas*, Media Gallery, Switzerland
27 Boxes from Psi Room, Okazaki Tamako Gallery, Tokyo
1983 *Psi Boxes and Their Origins*, Okazaki Tamako Gallery, Tokyo
1984 *Eshiki-ron II*, Okazaki Tamako Gallery, Tokyo
1986 *From Psi Room: Correspondence from Nine (Kyū) to Sphere (Kyū)*, Okazaki Tamako Gallery Tokyo
1988 *Quantum Art Manifesto 1*, Okazaki Tamako Gallery, Tokyo
1990 *(Toward Quantum Art) Expedient 9*, Okazaki Tamako Gallery, Tokyo
Twin Room, Brigitte March International Contemporary Art, Stuttgart, Germany
Expedient 9, Brigitte March International Contemporary Art, Stuttgart, Germany
1992 *Quantum Art Manifesto*, Okazaki Tamako Gallery, Tokyo
1994 *Matsuzawa Yutaka: Memento Mori*, Yamaguchi Prefectural Art Museum

1995 *1st One-Work Exhibition (Quantum Art Manifesto)*, Museum Haus Kasuya, Yokosuka (also in 2002, 2006, 2013, 2020, and 2023)
Matsuzawa Yutaka: The 15th Exhibition Homage to Shūzō Takiguchi, Satani Gallery, Tokyo
1996 *Quantum Art Manifesto 4*, Okazaki Tamako Gallery, Tokyo
1997 *To Spiritualism: Yutaka Matsuzawa 1954–1997*, Kawaguchi Museum of Contemporary Art, Saitama Prefecture
1998 *Quantum Art Manifesto 5: Five-Colored Thread*, Okazaki Tamako Gallery, Tokyo
Matsuzawa Yutaka: E.T.H.! Extraterrestrial Lifeforms Hypothesis!—Have You Encountered with Quantum Art?, Komagane Kogen Art Museum, Nagano Prefecture
2002 *1980 Problem: Statement + Koan*, Museum Haus Kasuya, Yokosuka
2004 *Vanishment and Future: Works of Yutaka Matsuzawa and Other Works Selected by Him*, Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art
2006 *In Memoriam: Matsuzawa Yutaka*, Museum Haus Kasuya, Yokosuka
2013 *Discourse Transcends Avidyā (Ignorance): Re-Reading Matsuzawa Yutaka*, Museum Haus Kasuya, Yokosuka
2019 *Art as Poetry: Matsuzawa Yutaka's Words*, d-lab gallery, Iruma, Saitama Prefecture
Yutaka Matsuzawa, co-curated by Alan Longino and Reiko Tomii, Yale Union, Portland, Oregon, USA; traveled to Nonaka-Hill, Los Angeles, and Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis; in 2020, traveled under the title *Yutaka Matsuzawa: Towards Quantum Art*, John Young Museum of Art, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, 2000
2021 *Yutaka Matsuzawa*, gallery G, Hiroshima
2022 *Matsuzawa Yutaka: A Centennial*, Nagano Prefectural Art Museum, Nagano
Matsuzawa Yutaka: Centennial Festival, Lake Suwa Museum/Akahiko Memorial Museum, Shimo Suwa Township, venues in Shimo Suwa
2023 *101st Birthday: Matsuzawa Yutaka*, Gallery Art Unlimited, Tokyo
2024 *Matsuzawa Yutaka*, Naruse Bijutsuza, Machida, Tokyo Prefecture
2025 *Matsuzawa Yutaka: 103rd Memorial*, Former Yazaki Shōten, Shimo Suwa
Matsuzawa Yutaka "The Psi Room: Matsuzawa Yutaka's Atelier" Publication Commemoration, Gallery Art Unlimited, Tokyo

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1951 *Avant-Garde Art Display*, Nannichi Kaikan, Suwa
1952 *4th Yomiuri Independent Exhibition*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
12th Bijutsu Bunka Association Exhibition, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
2nd Kusama Yayoi Solo Exhibition with New Works, Matsumoto City First Public Hall, Matsumoto
1953 *5th Yomiuri Independent Exhibition*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
13th Bijutsu Bunka Association Exhibition, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum + Aichi Prefecture Commerce and Industry Hall, Nagoya
1954 *6th Yomiuri Independent Exhibition*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
14th Bijutsu Bunka Association Exhibition, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
1955 *Alpha Art Camp Inaugural Exhibition*, Muramatsu Gallery, Tokyo
1958 *10th Yomiuri Independent Exhibition*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
1959 *11th Yomiuri Independent Exhibition*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
1960 *12th Yomiuri Independent Exhibition*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
Development of Japanese Surrealistic Painting, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
1961 *13th Yomiuri Independent Exhibition*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
Adventure in Today's Art of Japan, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
1962 *14th Yomiuri Independent Exhibition*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
1963 *15th Yomiuri Independent Exhibition*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
1964 *Independent '64*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
Sendai Independent Exhibition, Mitsukoshi Department Store, Sendai
Independent '64 in the Wilderness, Tundra Field, Nanashima Yashima Highland, Nagano Prefecture
1965 *All-Japan Independent Exhibition*, Yokohama Civic Gallery
Independent Art Festival, Civic Center + Kogane Park, Gifu Prefecture
1966 *Tokyo Geijutsu Kaigi*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
Contemporary Art Festival, Sakai City Gymnasium, Osaka Prefecture
1967 *Unfreedom of Expression*, Muramatsu Gallery, Tokyo
1969 *9th Contemporary Art Exhibition of Japan*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
The End of Illusion Called Art, Shinano Art Museum, Nagano
Trends in Contemporary Japanese Art Exhibition, National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto
Outdoor Sculpture '69 [2nd Contemporary Zōkei], Kamo River Park, Kyoto



- 1970 *Tokyo Biennale '70: Between Man and Matter*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
5th Japan Art Festival [Preview], National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
Japan Art Festival, Guggenheim Museum, New York
Nirvana, Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art
Art & Project, Art & Project, Amsterdam
- 1971 *10th Contemporary Art Exhibition of Japan: Man and Nature*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
On'e, Sensuiiri Meditation Platform, Shimo Suwa, Nagano Prefecture
Utopia and Vision, Moderna Museet, Stockholm
- 1972 *Catastrophe Art from the East*, Galleria San Fedele, Milan
documenta 5, Kassel, Germany
- 1973 *Kyoto Biennale*, Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art
- 1974 *Prospettiva '74*, Museum of Contemporary Art, University of São Paulo, Brazil
Towards Nirvana: The Catastrophe Art in Buenos Aires, CAYC, Buenos Aires
- 1975 *Tokyo Exhibition*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
Visual Poetry International, Utrecht + Rotterdam
- 1976 *37th Venice Biennale*
Sydney Biennale: Recent International Forms in Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australia
Sette Italiani e sette Giapponesi: nuovi strumenti di conoscenza nella ricerca artistica attuale, Italian Institute of Culture, Tokyo
- 1977 *São Paulo Biennale Biennale*
- 1978 *Third World and Us*, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
- 1982 *Takiguchi Shūzō and Postwar Art*, Museum of Modern Art, Toyama
- 1984 *Paris-Tokyo: Echange d'art contemporain 8+8*, Galerie Christian Cheneau ABCD, Paris
Furk'Art '84, Furk Pass, Switzerland
Trends of Contemporary Japanese Art 1970-1984: Universality/Individuality, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
- 1985 *Process und Konstruktion*, Kulturreferat der Landeshauptstadt München
Japan Ushimado International Art Festival: First Biennale, Ushimado, Okayama Prefecture (thereafter participating in the biennale)
Reconstructions: Avant-garde Art in Japan 1945-1965, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford and Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh
- 1986 *Japon des avant-gardes 1910-1970*, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris
- 1987 *Zeitgeist Architektur*, Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Germany
- 1989 *Concept Art*, Stalke Galleri, Copenhagen and Brigitte March International Contemporary Art, Stuttgart
- 1990 *Art Meets Science and Spirituality in a Changing Economy*, Museum Fodor, Amsterdam
- 1992 *Avanguardia Giapponesi degli anni settanta*, Galleria Comunale d'Arte Moderna, Bologna, Italy
John Cage Memorial, Kiyosato Museum of Contemporary Art, Yamanashi Prefecture
- 1993 *Avanguardia Giapponesi degli anni 70*, Setagaya Art Museum
- 1995 *Japanese Culture: The Fifty Postwar Years*, Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo [traveling exhibition]
International Sculptors Symposium, Bursa Uludağ University, Bursa, Turkey
- 1996 *1964: A Turning Point in Japanese Art*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo
Bentenkaikō, Sakushima: Opening Party, Sakushima, Isshiki-cho, Aichi Prefecture
- 1999 *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s-1980s*, Queens Museum of Art, New York [traveling exhibition]
- 2001 *Century City: Art and Culture in the Modern Metropolis*, Tate Modern, London
SANGAI: Yoko Mizukami, Yutaka Matsuzawa, Yukihisa Isobe, Sezon Museum of Modern Art, Karuizawa + Sezon Art Program Gallery, Tokyo
- 2002 *Slanting House/Statements by Artists in Japan since 9.11*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo
The Unfinished Century: Legacies of 20th Century Art, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
- 2003 *YUMITSUHO*, Toyota Municipal Museum of Art
- 2004 *In Bed: Images from a Vital Stage*, Toyota Municipal Museum of Art
Yutaka Matsuzawa and Nine Pillars: The Future of Nine Aspects —Towards the Parinirvana, Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art
- 2006 *Labyrinthine Museum: 20th Century Art as Seen by Collector Isahai Tomio*, Museum of Modern Art, Gunma [traveling exhibition]
- 2007 *Uchumiezu*, Toyota Municipal Museum of Art
- 2008 *Performing the City: Kunst aktionismus im Stadt Raum 60er und 70er Jahre*, Städtische Kunsthalle München
- 2009 *Hommage à Yutaka Matsuzawa – Installation / Joseph Kosuth – Installation*, Brigitte March International Contemporary Art, Stuttgart
- 2014 *Yokohama Triennale 2014—Art Fahrenheit 451: Sailing into the Sea of Oblivion*, Yokohama Museum of Art and Shinko Pier Exhibition Hall
- 2016 *The Emergence of the Contemporary: Avant-Garde Art in Japan, 1950-1970*, Paço Imperial, Rio de Janeiro
A Retrospective of Closed Exhibitions, Kunsthalle Friart Fribourg, Switzerland
- 2017 *From Nirvana to Catastrophe: Matsuzawa Yutaka and His "Commune in Imaginary Space"*, Ota Fine Arts, Tokyo
- 2018 *1968: Art in the Turbulent Age*, Chiba City Museum of Art [traveling exhibition]
- 2019 *Radicalism in the Wilderness: Japanese Artists in the Global 1960s*, Japan Society, New York
- 2024 *Our Ecology: Toward a Planetary Living*, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo
- 2025 *Shinshu Artists' Perspectives: Fifty Years of Painting*, Nagano Prefectural Art Museum

Public Collections

Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art
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Toyota Municipal Museum of Art