



ART & THE CITY

アートと都市

The Political Uses of Creativity and Fine Art in Urban Japan Today

今日の日本の都市におけるクリエイティビティと美術の政治的利用

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1F Meeting Room,
Building 55N,
Nishi-waseda Campus
Waseda University, Tokyo

6:00pm - 8:00pm

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早稲田大学

西早稲田キャンパス

55N号館 1階第一会議室

午後6時～8時

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Art and creativity in Japan have taken on ever more political and social relevance in the difficult years since the bursting of the nation's financial bubble in the early 1990s. As contemporary artists have responded in complex ways to the decline, trauma and decadence of this period in Japan, politicians and urban developers have seized on this archetypal global high culture for their own ends. They use it as a means for enacting their urban dreams or their social alternatives, and as a response to the uniquely dramatic polarisation of the country between urban over-development and desperate rural decline. This presentation compares and contrasts three interlinked cases that offer a guide to the uses of art and creativity in urban Japan today. First, it examines the famous philosophy of Minoru Mori that lies behind the Roppongi Hills development and its use of art and the art museum as an icon of a new visionary Tokyo of the future. It then shifts to Yokohama, which has played its part in the failed internationalisation of Japanese contemporary art via the Triennale, but is also a city that has enacted a range of original creative city policies designed to address poverty and inner city degradation. Thirdly, it looks at the anti-urban rural alternative

established by Fram Kitagawa with the Echigo-Tsumari "Big Field" festival, and his attempt to use art to create a different kind of artistic landmark in Japan. The presentation finishes with a reflection on emergent forms of "sustainable art", alive to the constraints and challenges of present-day urban and rural conditions, that are being forged as part of the educational mission of number of leading Japanese artists in cooperation with local authorities in big cities.

Adrian Favell is [Professor of Sociology at UCLA](#), and [Professor of European and International Studies at Aarhus University](#), Denmark. A specialist on migration, cities, and globalisation, he is the author of *Eurostars and Eurocities: Free Movement and Mobility in an Integrating Europe*, and co-editor with urban theorist Michael Peter Smith of *The Human Face of Global Mobility: International High Skilled Migration in North America, Europe and the Asia-Pacific*. An SSRC-Japan Foundation Abe Fellow in 2007, he is currently writing a book about Japanese contemporary art and society since the early 1990s. He also writes a regular "official" art blog for the bi-lingual Japanese art magazine [ART IT](#).