

NEWS

ASIAN ART MUSEUM
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Asian
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Transformed Asian Art Museum Unveils New Pavilion with teamLab: Continuity

Immersive Digital Experience from Tokyo-Based International Art
Collective Makes Major U.S. Museum Debut in 2020



San Francisco, March 24, 2020 — Swirls of butterflies and sunflowers, crisscrossing crows in flight, streams of luminous ink, rooms alive with light and feeling. Exclusively at the Asian Art Museum, *teamLab: Continuity* brings the immersive digital marvels of teamLab — an international art collective based in Tokyo — to a major U.S. museum for its debut solo exhibition. *teamLab: Continuity* is also the inaugural event in the brand-new Akiko Yamazaki and Jerry Yang Pavilion, the multimillion-dollar centerpiece of the museum's five-year transformation project and San Francisco's largest new art exhibition space.

Forest of Flowers and People: Lost, Immersed and Reborn 2017/2020. By teamLab (Japanese, est. 2001).
Sound by Hideaki Takahashi (b. 1967). Interactive digital installation © teamLab

Opening in 2020 at the Asian Art Museum, *teamLab: Continuity* presents a series of interactive digital installations spread across the 8,500 square feet of the museum's newly constructed pavilion. Immersed in teeming wonderlands, visitors are encouraged to roam freely through projected environments of vibrant color and sound that dissolve into one another. The touch-sensitive artworks are hyper-responsive to human activity, transforming visitors into participants: rather than a series of preprogrammed movies, the digital animation is derived from dynamic algorithms that react to visitors' locations and movements within the exhibition space. The result is an exhibition where the artworks are never exactly the same, and an experience that changes from moment to moment.

To ensure the highest-quality experience for every visitor, this dynamic exhibition will require timed-entry tickets, which will be available via the redesigned museum website. Priority reservation for museum members will go on sale first, and tickets for the public will be available beginning the following day. Advance reservations for *teamLab* are required for the museum's free opening weekend and throughout the run of the exhibition.

Due to COVID-19, the Asian Art Museum is currently closed to the public. Updates regarding opening dates and times will be made to the museum's website when we can celebrate with our community in a safe, healthy, fun, and meaningful way.

teamLab Pushes Boundaries to Transcend Traditional Museum Experience

With an aesthetic that is clearly 21st-century, *teamLab*'s imagery evocatively echoes centuries of premodern and East Asian painting, calligraphy, and mythology. Audiences are invited to draw connections between artworks on view in the Asian Art Museum's 31 refurbished collection galleries and *teamLab*'s dazzling worlds.



“With its blend of jaw-dropping aesthetics, technological sophistication, and moments of pure delight, *teamLab: Continuity* is the perfect way for us reintroduce ourselves to our community, our city, and the wider world as a destination for inspiration and connection.” says Dr. Jay Xu, Barbara Bass Bakar Director and CEO of the Asian Art Museum. “What is so exciting about *Continuity* is that the installations presented here are stitched together so that elements from one piece will be seen flying or swimming into another. This creates the ‘continuity’ of the exhibition’s title: a seamless experience influenced by visitors’ self-defined pathways and limited only by their imaginations — a wonderful reflection of the museum’s own transformed experience across our reimagined galleries, our new dedicated contemporary art spaces, and our expansive, light-filled campus.”

While there are currently several hundred programmers and designers who comprise the teamLab collective, as a practice they work together behind the scenes, collaboratively creating artworks that explore the relationship between the self and the world.

“In 2015, the Asian Art Museum was the first museum in North America to collect an artwork from teamLab, and *Continuity* underscores teamLab’s commitment to the advancement of art that pushes boundaries, as well as its remarkable ability to nurture innovation and curiosity through technology,” explains exhibition organizer Dr. Karin G. Oen, deputy director at NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore and former associate curator of contemporary art at the Asian Art Museum. “At the same time, with its visitor-determined rhythms, life cycles, and dissolving borders, *Continuity* prompts us to consider our own impact on the environment and relationship to technology as a force for social evolution. It’s a subtle yet potent reminder that the art and experiences we most enjoy can also be revolutionary.”



While the specific artworks featured at the Asian Art Museum have been presented separately in the past, in *Continuity* they will be experienced together as a single overlapping, porous ecosystem. This feat required deep dives into the underlying structures of teamLab’s previous work and the development of new projecting and computing systems like those featured in *Borderless*, their dedicated Tokyo experience. The

scale is enormous, involving hundreds of pieces of equipment. “In fact, the exhibition could not have been presented at the museum prior to the construction of the new Akiko Yamazaki and Jerry Yang Pavilion, which was designed to accommodate the technical and spatial demands of contemporary art installations like *Continuity*,” says Abby Chen, head of contemporary art at the Asian Art Museum.”

In Tokyo, where the collective oversees a number of exhibition spaces, *teamLab Borderless* is now the most visited single-artist destination in the world, having welcomed 2.3 million visitors from 160 countries and regions in the year since its opening in 2018.

teamLab: Continuity will be open at the Asian Art Museum through 2021.

New Experiential Learning Opportunities Bubble Up with teamLab’s *Sketch Aquarium* and *Sketch Ocean*

The Asian Art Museum’s Shriram Experiential Learning Center plays host to schools of glowing sea creatures brought to life through the power of visitors’ creativity. Introduced to the public in February as *teamLab: Sketch Aquarium* and transitioning into *teamLab: Sketch Ocean* with the opening of *teamLab: Continuity* in May, this “submersive” experience allows visitors to see

their own colorful artworks swim off the page and join an ocean teeming with fish of all shapes and sizes.

Built using much of the same interactive projection technology as teamLab's larger installations, *Sketch Aquarium* and *Sketch Ocean* offer an exciting way for audiences to see their own drawings float and swirl across a museum wall.

Visitors are welcome to stop in, grab a template, and color away. When ready, hand the drawing to a museum volunteer who will scan the paper and add the newest creature to the artwork.

Sketch Aquarium and *Sketch Ocean* are free with museum admission. Visitors are encouraged to wander the museum's collection galleries on the second and third floors for some aquatic inspiration from across the traditions and cultures of Asia.

Asian Art Museum Transformation Project Overview

We've grown! The expanded museum offers more to see and do than ever before. Visitors can experience groundbreaking exhibitions in the new 8,500-square-foot Akiko Yamazaki and Jerry Yang Pavilion, view sculptures and live performances — or simply take a break — on the 7,500-square-foot rooftop East West Bank Art Terrace, learn more about our masterpieces in the collection galleries, and engage with contemporary art and local artists on every visit.

Overseen by the award-winning architect Kulapat Yantrasast of wHY, based in Los Angeles, California, the design of the museum's transformation is focused on deepening engagement through:

- Exceptional new spaces for displaying contemporary art, including acquisitions and commissions;
- Reimagined approaches to displaying masterpieces across the museum's 31 refreshed collections galleries;
- Expansive upgrades to education classrooms, including the Koret Foundation Education Center and the Shriram Experiential Learning Center;
- Innovative digital capabilities and wayfinding to foster high-impact learning throughout;
- New circulation, lounge, and lobby spaces to enhance internal flow, allowing audiences to connect past to present in real time.

About teamLab

teamLab (est. 2001) is an international art collective, an interdisciplinary group of various specialists such as artists, programmers, engineers, CG animators, mathematicians, and architects whose collaborative practice seeks to navigate the confluence of art, science, technology, and the natural world.

teamLab aims to explore the relationship between the self and the world and new perceptions through art. In order to understand the world around them, people separate it into independent

entities with perceived boundaries between them. teamLab seeks to transcend these boundaries in our perception of the world, of the relationship between the self and the world, and of the continuity of time. Everything exists in a long, fragile yet miraculous, borderless continuity of life.

teamLab has been the subject of numerous exhibitions at venues worldwide, including New York, London, Paris, Singapore, Silicon Valley, Beijing, Taipei, and Melbourne, among others. The permanent museums *teamLab Borderless* opened in Odaiba, Tokyo, in June 2018, and *teamLab Borderless Shanghai* in Huangpu District, Shanghai, in November 2019. The massive body immersive space *teamLab Planets* in Toyosu, Tokyo, is on view until fall 2020. The latest permanent museum, *teamLab SuperNature* in Macao, is scheduled to launch soon.

teamLab's works are in the permanent collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide; Asian Art Museum, San Francisco; Asia Society Museum, New York; Borusan Contemporary Art Collection, Istanbul; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; and Amos Rex, Helsinki.

teamLab is represented by Pace Gallery, Martin Browne Contemporary, and Ikkan Art International.

Exhibition Publication

Perfect for art lovers, technophiles, and Japanophiles alike, *teamLab: Continuity* brings a new understanding to an art collective with a growing international audience. It inspires readers to consider the people and the history that helped to form this twenty-first-century art. Interviews with teamLab members — an art director, an interactive system engineer, an architect, a visual director, and the collective's founder— give insight to the individual contributions that create the collaborative works. Essays explore the connections between teamLab and technology in the history of art, the premodern Japanese spatial awareness of teamLab's "ultrasubjective space," and teamLab's expression of the nature of Japanese architecture. *teamLab: Continuity* will be published on March 17, 2020. Hardcover, 160 pages, 10 x 12 in., 122 color images, \$39.95. Available at the Asian Art Museum boutique: store.asianart.org or 415.581.3600 or shop@asianart.org.

Exhibition Organization

teamLab: Continuity is organized by the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco. Presentation is made possible with the generous support of Bank of America; Karla Jurvetson, M.D.; Puja and Samir Kaul; Nion McEvoy and Leslie Berriman; Rosina and Anthony Sun; Diane B. Wilsey; and an anonymous donor. Additional support is provided by Ann and Paul Chen, Sakurako and William Fisher, Beverly Galloway and Chris Curtis, and the W.L.S. Spencer Foundation. This exhibition is a part of *Today's Asian Voices*, which is made possible with the generous support of Salle E. Yoo and Jeffrey P. Gray.

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About the Asian Art Museum

Information: 415.581.3500 or www.asianart.org

Location: 200 Larkin Street, San Francisco, CA 94102

Hours: The museum is open Wednesdays through Mondays from 10 AM to 5 PM (closed Tuesdays). Hours are extended on Thursdays and Fridays until 9 PM, February through September. Closed Tuesdays, as well as New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

Museum Admission: Free for museum members and children (12 & under). \$15 for adults and \$10 for ages 65 & over, ages 13 to 17), and college students (with ID). Please check website for updates.

Access: The Asian Art Museum is wheelchair accessible. For more information regarding access: 415.581.3598; TDD: 415.861.2035.

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