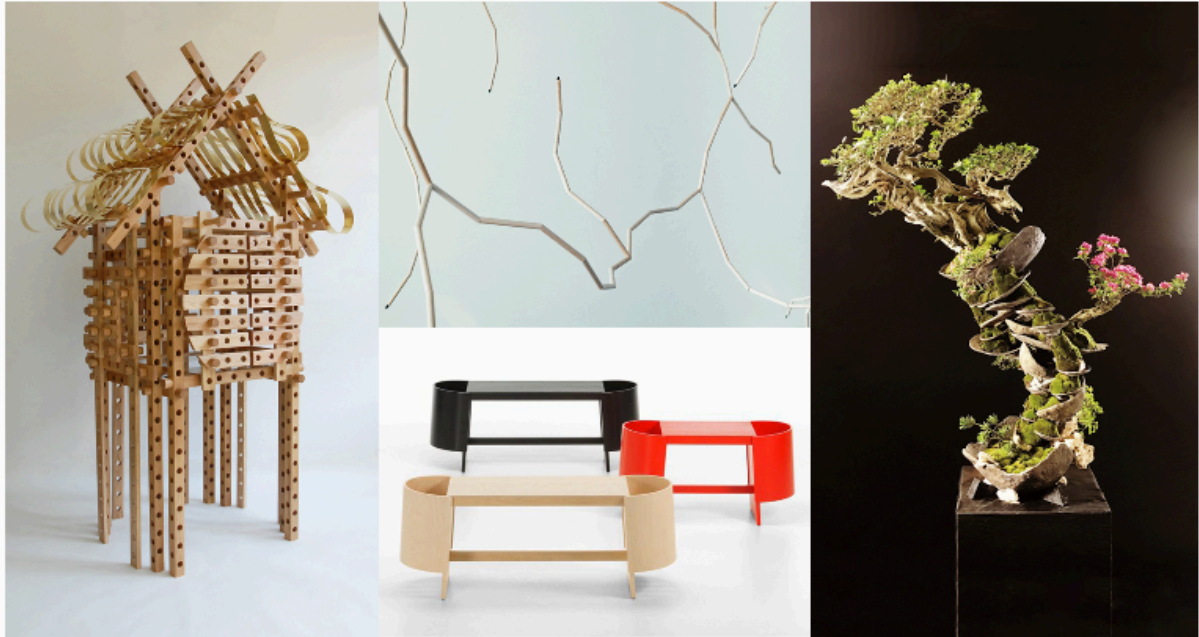


Designart Tokyo 2019 takes art and design to a new level in Japan



Clockwise from left: Works by Designart Tokyo 2019 participants Shigeki Yamamoto, Jun Murakoshi, Masashi Hirao and Koichi Futatsumata.

BY MIO YAMADA

SHARE Oct 19, 2019

It's the third year for Designart Tokyo, the city-wide series of art and design related exhibitions and events — and it began with quite the fanfare. This time it drew the attention of Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike, who officially opened the festivities at the event's hub, the World Kita-Aoyama Bldg. on Aoyama-dori.

Now showcasing an impressive 300 designers and brands in over 100 locations, it has also branched out to include two new areas to its venues list — Shinjuku and Ginza.

“Designart is not only showcasing more of the incredible design talent in Japan,” said co-founder Mark Dytham of Klein Dytham architecture, “but it is also becoming more international at the highest level with participants like Ivy Ross, vice president of Hardware Design at Google, arriving fresh from the launch event of the latest Google products on Oct. 16.”



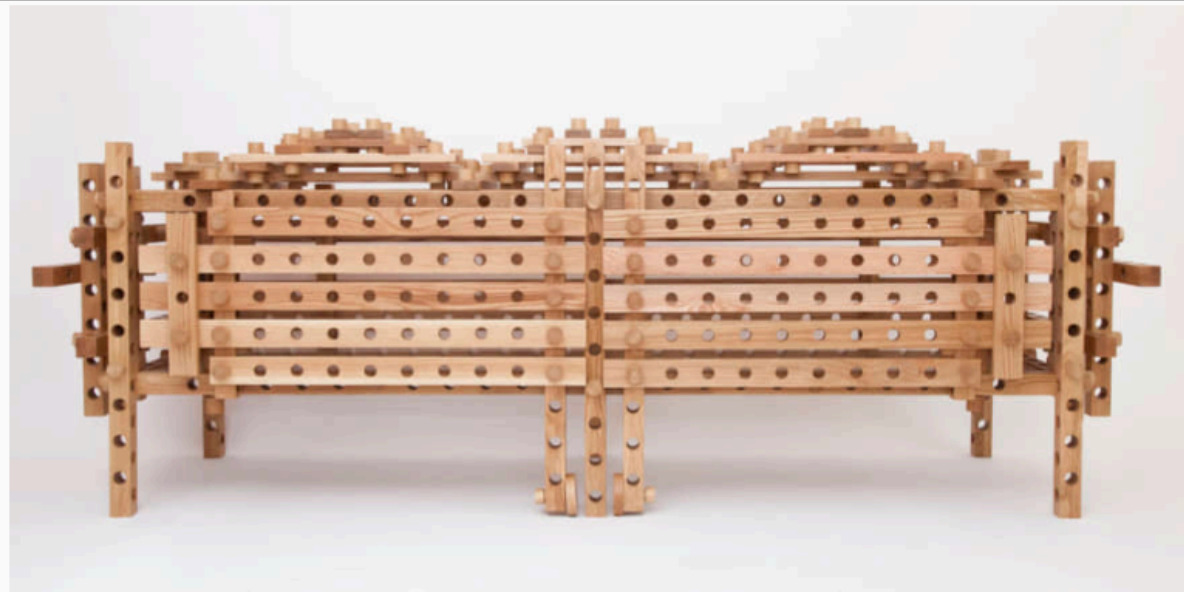
Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike joins Designart Tokyo 2019 at the World Kita-Aoyama Bldg with (from top row, left to right) Shun Kawakami, Mark Dytham, Akio Aoki, Okisato Nagata, Hiroshi Koike, Arie Rosen, Zsafia Illosvai, Ivy Ross, Yaffa Ben-Ari and Astrid Klein. | © BRIAN SCOTT PETERSON

For Akio Aoki of Miru Design, the co-founder and overall director of Designart, Koike's appearance was a milestone. "It really is the best endorsement possible for everyone's hard work over the last three years," he says. "And it allows us to start building toward an even more creative Designart in 2020."

Before we get ahead of ourselves, On: Design looks at a few picks from the vast 2019 list for a mini tour of the festival's main areas of Omotesando and Jingumae, plus a few recommendations in other districts worth a visit.

Omotesando, Jingumae

World Kita-Aoyama Bldg.: "1% for Art Exhibition"



A work by Shigeki Yamamoto, whose pieces are on display at the World Kita-Aoyama Bldg. '1% for Art Exhibition.'

This year's main Designart event at its hub in the World Kita-Aoyama Bldg. joins the 1% for Art program, an initiative that encourages governments across the world to put aside 1 percent of the nation's construction budget toward public art projects. Curated by Hong Kong-based exhibition organizers Design Pier, the showcase looks at changes in international design with a focus on Asia, bringing together 18 exhibitors for a range of furniture, including some created by Western and Asian designer collaborations.

There are truly inspirational pieces featured here, such as Apiwat Chitapanya's Rakk side table, with tree-like roots for legs; Nissa Kinzhalina's lamps that appear like asymmetric containers of fluorescent liquid; and a cupboard and sideboard by Shigeki Yamamoto, whose unconventional use of wooden bars, bamboo and pegs create playfully odd but functional works.

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