

NEWS

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WALKER ART CENTER TO PRESENT *TETSUYA YAMADA: LISTENING*, THE FIRST COMPREHENSIVE MUSEUM EXHIBITION OF THE TWIN CITIES–BASED ARTIST

**Presentation Will Feature a Broad Range of Media,
Including More than 65 New and Previous Works**

On View January 18–July 7, 2024

MINNEAPOLIS, DECEMBER 20, 2023— On January 18, the Walker Art Center will present *Tetsuya Yamada: Listening*, a solo exhibition of work from Twin Cities–based artist Tetsuya Yamada (b. Japan, 1968, lives and works in Minneapolis). The Walker presentation encompasses more than 20 years of work, foregrounding Yamada’s commitment to what he refers to as “the truth of material,” a concept that guides his interdisciplinary practice. *Listening* is the **first comprehensive US museum exhibition to survey the artist’s expansive practice**, featuring a range of more than 65 new and previous works.

Trained in ceramics—still the core of Yamada’s practice—the artist has expanded into a broad range of media including sculpture, video, drawing, painting, and installation. Yamada has designed the gallery environment at the Walker as a garden path along which one can explore the range of materials and influences. Some works are made from ordinary, human items (bits of machinery, sawhorses, newspaper, plywood) or forms found in nature (branches, rocks, sand, living plants). The artist places these materials in dialogue with his hand-built and thrown ceramic objects, delicate drawings, video works, and paintings drawn from mathematical systems.

“Tetsuya Yamada’s work shows how art can illuminate the poetry found in the everyday,” notes Walker senior curator Siri Engberg, who has organized the exhibition. “His sensibility comes from his innovative and intuitive use of materials and space, making him one of the most rigorous and interesting artists working in the Twin Cities right now.”

“Sometimes the behavior of materials, objects, space, and light becomes a metaphor or a voice speaking to me,” the artist notes. “The idea of *Listening* is well adapted to the creative

process—listening to the process. The process might take me to places I didn't imagine initially—this is the fundamental of studio practice for me.”

Exploring the shifting boundaries between art and life, Yamada draws inspiration from the ancient Japanese forms of Noh theater and the traditional tea ceremony; the modernism of Constantin Brancusi and Isamu Noguchi; the democracy to the found object espoused by Marcel Duchamp; and the commitment to the use of simple, elemental materials seen in the work of the artists of the Japanese Mono-ha and Italian Arte Povera movements of the 1960s. Within this is a sensibility that considers the urban environment as backdrop—the artist spent his youth as a skateboarder exploring the streets of Tokyo, listening to punk rock, and thinking about the landscape of the city as a site for artistic expression.

Works in the exhibition show Yamada’s consideration of ordinary objects or daily rituals as building blocks for larger expressions. His monumental sculpture *Everyday City* (2005), a work in the Walker’s collection, gathers over 800 hand-thrown stoneware plates, cups, bowls, and other objects to form an imagined urban skyline. *9435E3628094*, a video work from 2016, is named for the Twin Cities highways traveled in a circular route around the artist’s studio.

Yamada, who has been a professor in the department of art at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis since 2003, is also a 2023 recipient of the prestigious John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship. In conjunction with the exhibition, the artist has worked with the Walker’s department of Public Engagement, Learning, and Impact to develop a range of programs that speak to his practice of working with community and public spaces.

Curators: Siri Engberg, senior curator and director, Visual Arts; with Laurel Rand-Lewis, curatorial fellow, Visual Arts

RELATED EVENTS

Community Opening: Tetsuya Yamada

Thursday, January 18, 2024

Free

To celebrate the opening of *Tetsuya Yamada: Listening*, join us for a dynamic conversation between the artist and a panel of fellow creatives as they discuss the connections between life and art through their respective practices. Following the artist talk, move to the Cargill Lounge for conversation, libations, and small bites and drinks from the Shui Project, developed by Chef Kenji Yee.

Cup Exchange

Thursday, February 15, 2024

Free

Museums are normally strict about keeping the art on the walls, but that’s not entirely the case this winter at the Walker! Tetsuya Yamada reprises his *Cup Exchange* project for one evening at the Walker. Held in conjunction with the artist’s solo exhibition *Tetsuya Yamada* and the Walker Art Center Teen Arts Council, dozens of the artist’s ceramic cups will be exchanged among visitors.

Participants should bring the most ordinary cup they can find to exchange with one of Yamada’s originals. The traded cups then become part of the exhibition. No prior registration required, but Yamada’s cups are limited. Open to all ages.

An Evening of Poetry and Music

Thursday, February 22, 2024

Free

Join local artist Tetsuya Yamada for a cozy evening of poetry readings and live music. Open to all ages. No prior registration required.

EXHIBITION SPONSORS

Tetsuya Yamada: Listening is made possible with generous support from Deborah and John Christakos, Michael J. Peterman and David A. Wilson, and RBC Wealth Management. The exhibition catalogue is supported by the Japan Foundation, New York.

Free Thursday Nights are sponsored by

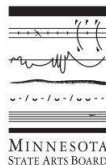


ABOUT THE WALKER ART CENTER

The Walker Art Center is a renowned multidisciplinary arts institution that presents, collects, and supports the creation of groundbreaking work across the visual and performing arts, moving image, and design. Guided by the belief that art has the power to bring joy and solace and the ability to unite people through dialogue and shared experiences, the Walker engages communities through a dynamic array of exhibitions, performances, events, and initiatives. Its multi-acre campus includes 65,000 sq. ft. of exhibition space, the state-of-the-art McGuire Theater and Walker Cinema, and ample green space that connects with the adjoining Minneapolis Sculpture Garden. The Garden, a partnership with the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, is one of the first urban sculpture parks of its kind in the United States and home to the beloved Twin Cities landmark *Spoonbridge and Cherry* by Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen. Recognized for its ambitious program and growing collection of more than 15,500 works, the Walker embraces emerging art forms and amplifies the work of artists from the Twin Cities and from across the country and the globe. Its broad spectrum of offerings makes it a lively and welcoming hub for artistic expression, creative innovation, and community connection.

Visit walkerart.org for more information about upcoming presentations, programs, and opportunities to experience the art of our time.

Technology Partner



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Thank you, Walker members, for your generous support.