

Report from CCCA Workshop No. 2

CCCA Workshop in Tōkamachi, August 24-25, 2018.

Workshop sites:

- Tokamachi Community hall (Tōkamachi kōminkan Danjurō)
〒948-0083 Niigata-ken, Tōkamachi-shi, Honchō, 1 Chōmekami 508-2
- Fieldwork study at the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale 2018.

The workshop is the second of four workshops in the INP network supported by the Danish Agency for Science and Higher Education through the ninth International Network Programme. The aim of the CCCA network is to develop a platform for scholars, artists, activists, curators, educators, and cultural managers to exchange the experiences and outcomes of socially engaged art movements across borders.

Workshop No. 2 focused on two main issues: fieldwork methods for socially-engaged art at the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale 2018, and case examples of international relationships through art projects in Japan and Hong Kong.



The workshop was organized by Associate Professor Gunhild Borggreen (University of Copenhagen) and Associate Professor Anemone Platz (Aarhus University) in collaboration with Professor Mōri Yoshitaka, Graduate School of Global Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts, and practical support by Kano Ai, Tokyo University of the Arts.

Pre-seminar announcements

The workshop was announced on a blog at University of Copenhagen: <https://ccca.sites.ku.dk/>

Collaboration and Community-Building in Contemporary Art



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Modes of Participation: Workshop No. 2 in Tokamachi, August 24-25, 2018

Posted on 20 April 2018 by [gunhild](#)

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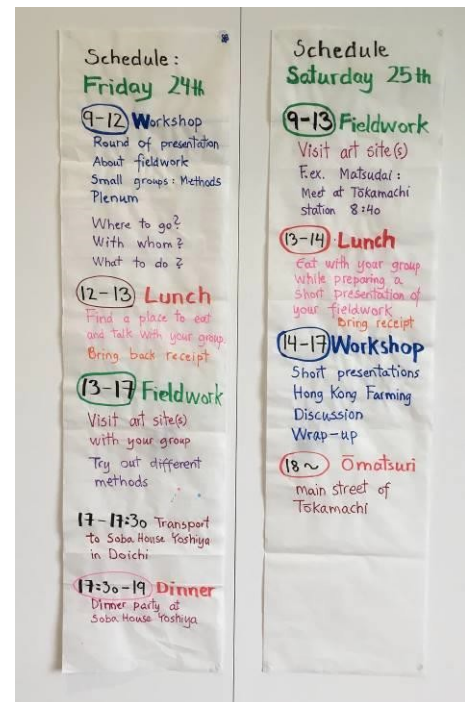
Workshop announced on CCCA blog.

The workshop was announced by Professor Mōri to a limited number of scholars and graduate students at Tokyo University of the Arts in order to keep the number of workshop participants around 20 persons. Scholars and graduate students from Rikkyo University participated in the workshop, as well as invited speakers related to Hong Kong House and Gift from Land farming project.

The seminar event

The seminar took place in the space of Tōkamachi Community Hall in the city of Tokamachi in Niigata Prefecture. Tōkamachi is also one of the hubs for the large international art festival Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale, and the CCCA network partners Anemone Platz, Gunhild Borggreen and Mōri Yoshitaka have been doing art-related research in the area before and after the workshop. The programme for the workshop (Appendix A) was announced on the website and written on a post pasted to the wall in the seminar space (see photo to the right). Refreshments were served during breaks.

In total, 27 people attended. The list of participants (Appendix B) includes scholars and students in art research as well as artists, curators and independent art critics. The tables in the seminar room were organised to make a square that allowed for informal conversation.



Day 1: August 24

On the first day of the workshop, the morning session focused on various types of fieldwork methods. The Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale is an art festival that takes place over 50 days in the summer months every third year. Most of the artworks are located in small villages or in the landscapes of a large area in Niigata Prefecture, and many of the art projects are conceived and produced as a means to engage with the local residents or create interaction between art visitors and the local community. The workshop focused on different ethnographic and visual methods for studying the specific form of socially-engaged art of Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale.

The workshop participants formed smaller groups and each group would discuss and write down different methods or practices when engaging with site-specific and socially-engaged art projects on a poster. The various ideas were presented in plenum, and could be used as inspiration for the afternoon fieldwork trips.



Image from workshop: production of posters with various fieldwork methods



Presentation of posters with fieldwork methods

Smaller groups were formed and each group decided for one or several art sites to visit. Each group could go to a café or restaurant, some of them as a part of the art site, and continue discussions of research methods.

In the evening, everyone in the workshop met at a famous local soba restaurant and enjoyed dinner together.



Dinner party at Soba House Yoshiya, Doichi

Day 2: August 25

The groups formed yesterday continued their fieldwork in the morning. During lunch, the groups could prepare a short and informal presentation of their experience of the fieldwork practice.

Fieldwork presentations

All groups met again at the Tōkamachi Community Hall after lunch and presented their experience from the fieldwork sessions. One group emphasised the ways in which some artworks, such as *The Last Class Room*, engages all the senses of the visitor when entering the art space. Such sound scapes can be a reference to the local working conditions. Conversations with local volunteers at the art site spoke about conflicts between the artist's intention (an aesthetics approach) and the local people's concern about safety in the artwork (a social approach). Issues of exploitation of volunteers (both local people and young Kohebi volunteers from abroad) also came up. Another groups presented their experience of how visitors perform in front of the camera, or how many visitors seem to perceive the artwork mainly through the monitor of an i-phone or i-pad (f.ex the work *Light Cave*). Some reported how people felt united through the experience of the artwork, while others mentioned the way in which local people put up small stands to sell fresh vegetables next to the artwork.



Presentations of fieldwork experience and discussion

Discussions included how the corporeal visit to the art festival and the many specific sites are important for the way in which the festival is conceived and transmitted by art critics. Art critics do not have a social science or ethnographic methodology and they do in general not spend long time at the festival.

Another group reported from *Ubusuna House*, where the food produced by the local women and the way in which it is served to visitors in an old farmhouse, is an art project in which art and food are integrated and serve as a means for local pride among the village residents. The group had recorded a video with a local dance performed by the women in Ubusuna House, and all participants at the workshop joined in a reconstruction of the dance movements from the video.



All workshop participants in dance practice

Hong Kong and Echigo-Tsumari relations

After a short break, the afternoon workshop session continued with three presentations from Hong Kong. There seems to be increasing collaboration between Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale and art festivals in Asian countries, and this year, about 80 % of the Kohebi volunteers come from abroad.



The first presentation by **G. Yeung Tin Shui**, journalist and co-author of the book *Farmer's Horizon. Urban x Rural, Japan x Hong Kong connect. Echigo-Tsumari art Triennale* (Hong Kong: C.C. Wu Cultural and Education Foundation Fund, 2018) focused on some of the “national” houses at Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale, such as the Australia House, the China House and the new Hong Kong House. For the Art Promotion Office, who is behind the Hong Kong House, the three-year project of Hong Kong House is a means for which

they can experience and try out how to run a large-scale art festival with the goal of creating a similar type of festival in Hong Kong.

Sampson Wong, a Hong Kong-based academic, artist and independent curator, presented a number of critical art projects in Hong Kong and how they are related to the civic society and Occupy movements in Hong Kong. Comparing specifically the art projects Emptyscape Art Festival in 2013 with Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale, it is clear the notion of “empty space” is very different in rural Japan compared to the small parts of Hong Kong that are still “rural” but in danger of becoming gentrified soon. The presentation gave way to a lively discussion about the concepts of “politics”, and how both the notion and the practice of “being political” are very different in the two places.



James Lam, the artistic manager of the Gift from Land project at Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale, presented the project of perma-culture farming in a rice paddy close to Matsudai, and how such a project qualifies as “land art” because the production of food to local restaurants, the volunteer participation, and how both rural and urban areas need each other. In terms of Hong Kong, there is a sense of urgency, and this makes the exchange between young urban and inexperienced Hong Kong farmers and the elderly experience farmers in Matsudai valuable and timely.

After a few more remarks, the workshop ended at 17:00 by Gunhild Borggreen thanking everyone for contributing to the fieldwork, the presentations, and the discussion. The two perspectives of “local” and “global” were addressed in different ways, and provided a frame for understanding not only the relationship between Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale and art festivals in Hong Kong, but also the actual and concrete artistic exchange that takes place between individual artists, curators, scholars, and activists. The fruitful insights and discussions as well as the network of participants provide a good stepping-stone for the next workshops of CCCA.



From left: G. Yeung Tin Shui, Line Marie Thorsen, and James Lam



Group photo at the workshop

Appendix A:
Programme

Pre-workshop dinner: Dinner party for participants at Restaurant Fumiyoishi, Tōkamachi, 19:00-22:00.

Day 1: August 24

9:00-12:00	Workshop part 1: Round of self-introduction Short about fieldwork in socially engaged art Small groups: fieldwork methods Plenum Where to go? With whom? What to do?
12:00-13:00	Lunch: Eat and Talk in small groups: plan fieldwork trip to art sites in ETAT
13:00-17:00	Fieldwork part 1: Visit at art sites in smaller groups. Carry out some of the methods discussed in the workshop.
17:00-17:30	Transport to Soba House Yoshiya in Doichi
17:30-19:00	Dinner Party at Soba House Yoshiya

Day 2: August 25

9:00-13:00	Fieldwork part 2: Visit art sites in small groups. Carry out some of the methods discussed yesterday
13:00-14:00	Lunch: Eat and Talk in small groups: prepare short presentation
14:00-15:00	Presentations of fieldwork experience
15:00-15:20	Coffee break
15:20-16:30	ETAT and Hong Kong: Presentations by G. Yeung Tin Shui, Tokyo University of the Arts Sampson Wong, Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts James Lam, <i>Gift of Land</i> Project Manager
16:30-17:00	Discussion and wrap-up
18:30-	<i>Oo-matsuri</i> in Tōkamachi city

Appendix B:

List of workshop participants, Tōkamachi, August 24-25, 2018

Participants	Affiliation	Role
Gunhild Borggreen	University of Copenhagen	Organizer
Anemone Platz	Aarhus University	Organizer
Yoshitaka Mori	Tokyo Univeristy of the Arts	Organizer
Ai Kano	Tokyo University of the Arts	Organizer
G. Yeung Tin Shui	Tokyo University of the Arts	Speaker
Sampson Wong	Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts	Speaker
James Lam	Gift from land project manager	Speaker
Line Marie Thorsen	Aarhus University	
Motohiro Koizumi	Rikkyo University	
Justin Jesty	University of Washington	
Terin Jesty	(minor)	
Jou Odoru	Musashino Art University	
Nina Poulsen	Independent art critic	
Liliana Granja Morais	Tokyo Metropolitan University	
Josefine Præstekjær	University of Copenhagen	
Alexander Artiles Jerrik	IT University of Copenhagen	
Shoko Imai	Tokyo University of the Arts	
Nanami Suzuki	Tokyo University of the Arts	
Yuka Ikawa	Tokyo University of the Arts	
Iroha Goda	Tokyo University of the Arts	
Ayuko Hori	Tokyo University of the Arts	
Lee Rinko	Tokyo University of the Arts	
Yasuko Harada	Tokyo University of the Arts	
Moeka Takahashi	Rikkyo University	
Kaho Sato	Rikkyo University	
Reiji Sawaguchi	Rikkyo University	
Yuudai Matsuyama	Sophia University	