



Taka Ishii

Gallery

AAWAA "Ni"

Dates: Aug 30 – Sep 27, 2025

Location: Taka Ishii Gallery Kyobashi

Opening reception: Saturday, Aug 30, 17:00 – 19:00

Taka Ishii Gallery is pleased to present artist AAWAA's solo exhibition from August 30 (Sat) through September 27 (Sat), 2025. This exhibition is based on an ongoing project that the artist has pursued in the Kyotango, Kyoto since 2022, and will introduce a collection of works produced there.

In ancient times, the great Tango Province sat at the center of the Tango Peninsula. Miyama, where I live, sat to the south of Tango as the neighboring Tanba Province.

The character 丹 ("ni") features in many of the place names in this region.

—AAWAA, from *Ni*

Since 2020, the seaside village of Taiza in Kyoto's coastal Kyotango has been the site of the local art project TOMORROW FIELD, where the planning of exhibitions led to encounters with ancient tombs and folklore, and other natural and human activities inherited from the past. These encounters overlapped with the time and experiences AAWAA had cultivated in Miyama, an area in the mountains north of Kyoto where he lives and pursues his creative work. In 2023, these inspirations were channeled into works titled *Ni* that were presented as part of a spatial installation at a local museum in Tango, alongside artifacts from the late Yayoi period nearly 2,000 years ago. Taking their name from a soil known as *ni*, found at the museum and originally excavated from tombs, these works evolved into a project to trace the history of creation that has connected people across the sea and time. What was the beauty discovered by those who once crossed the sea and arrived on these shores? And now, what beauty do we seek in the unknown world beyond the sea? Could these somehow resonate with one another? That question expanded from individual works to the entire space, connecting to the challenge of viewers and visitors to place themselves in the space, and to create the very time they spend there.

Since ancient times, this land wrapped in ni was a beautiful place, where the earth quietly radiated a red glow. The people focused on their spiritual lives and let the light shine gently, until others came from across the sea and the light was swallowed by their immense power.

AAWAA creates a living space as he goes along, making use of materials available near the land where he lives—assembling wood, pasting paper, plastering walls, almost like painting a picture or shaping a vessel. Each of these processes has been part of his practice of daily life, and occupies the position he strives for as an artist where the beauty of methods and thinking intersect. Starting from a place of hope that the most authentic human life is actually a series of small acts of everyday creation, the space he has brought into being

serves as a wellspring of creation, just as nature itself is to humanity, and is also meant to be a place of deep rest. In 2025, this vision took shape as Taiza Residence, intended as a place where artists of the future can pause, contemplate, and face their work.

Through his career, AAWAA has produced highly anonymous works that blur the boundaries between art, architecture, craft, clothing, and other disciplines. His stance, which leaves even the pronunciation of his name up to the viewer, has a strong affinity to the desire of those of us living today to imagine and reach for the beauty and spirit left behind by people whose names we will never know. At the opening reception, we will welcome NPO TOMORROW director Kayo Tokuda from TOMMOROW FIELD, as well as Akaakasha director Nozomi Himeno, who worked with the artist to publish the collection of works accompanying this exhibition, for a talk event alongside the artist. Guided by the land of *ni*, please take this opportunity to experience this collection of works where each piece forms a part of a whole.

AAWAA was born in 1971. He is currently based in a traditional thatched house in the countryside north of Kyoto. Whether through photography, three-dimensional media, or painting, he expresses a spiritual space whose subjects are his personal experiences. He was featured in the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo's 2007 exhibition "Space for Your Future", and in 2009 he held his first solo exhibition "UNIVERSAL LOVE" at Taka Ishii Gallery. He was subsequently featured in the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo's 2010 exhibition "MOT Collection: Plastic Memories – to illuminate now", and Yokohama Museum of Art's 2011 exhibition "Yokohama Triennale 2011: OUR MAGIC HOUR" How Much of the World Can We Know?." He held his second exhibition "ECHOES" at Taka Ishii Gallery in 2011. Recent exhibitions include 2016's "Omizue: Iwamino-kamito-mizu" and "*NONO* a native spirit of *Kami* and Cloth" in 2021 at Iwami Arts Museum held under the banner of Cosmic Wonder & Kogei Punks Sha, and "Kami" at Shiseido Gallery in 2017.

For further information, please contact:

Exhibition: Natsuka Okamoto/ Press: Misa Namai (press@takaishiigallery.com)

Seiya Nakamura 2.24 Inc. Yurie Tanabe (yurie@seyianakamura224.com)

Taka Ishii Gallery Kyobashi: 1-7-1 3F Kyobashi Chuo-ku Tokyo 104-0031

tel: +81 (0) 3 6434 7010 fax: +81 (0) 3 6434 7917 Tue-Sat 11:00 – 19:00 Closed on Sun, Mon, and National Holidays

e-mail: tig@takaishiigallery.com website: www.takaishiigallery.com



AAWAA
"Strand", 2025
8mm film
3'50"

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