

Genichiro Inokuma: Honolulu

“Second first steps in America”– Inokuma's painting in Hawaii



Genichiro Inokuma, *Words in the Plaza*, 1984
Collection of Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma
Museum of Contemporary Art ©The MIMOCA
Foundation

Exhibition title	Genichiro Inokuma: Honolulu
Date	Saturday, March 23–Sunday June 2, 2024
Closed	Mondays (except April 29 and May 6), April 30 (Tue), and May 7 (Tue)
Hours	10:00–18:00 (last entry 17:30)

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— About the exhibition

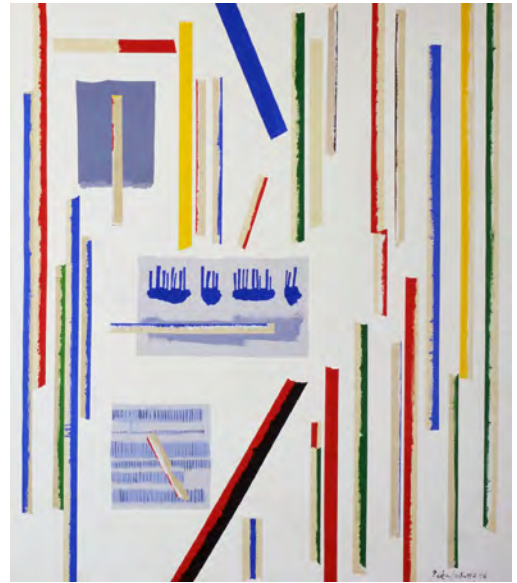
*Arrived in Hawaii, another world, that morning. Unbelievably blue skies. An Eden of an entirely new order.**

After suffering an illness in 1973, Genichiro Inokuma (1902–1993) decided to leave New York, which by then had been his home for 20 years. Landing in Hawaii the following year he was heartened to be greeted by brilliant blue skies, and vowed to make this a new departure, as he took his “*second first steps in America.*”*

Setting up studio in Honolulu, in 1976 Inokuma would complete a painting inspired by a rainbow seen in his new island home. This painting would be the first of a stream of vibrantly colored canvases obviously influenced by the natural environment of Hawaii, and further informed by the artist’s fascination with the cosmos.

From the skyscrapers of New York to Pacific paradise: this exhibition showcases work from Inokuma’s Hawaiian years, in which sustained by new surroundings, he pursued his personal painting path with greater freedom than ever.

*From Inokuma’s diary (July 20, 1974)



Genichiro Inokuma, *Rainbow Z*, 1976
Collection of Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art ©The MIMOCA Foundation

Highlights

Expression born out of the "Rainbow State"

Hawaii is known for its proliferation of rainbows, earning it the nickname of the "Rainbow State," and after moving there, in 1976 Inokuma completed a number of rainbow-inspired paintings. While retaining the geometric composition of his New York years, these paintings also signal developments to come in his expression. This exhibition looks at Inokuma's work from his Hawaiian years, taking as its departure point changes attributable to his new surroundings.

Uplifting painting for a post-Covid-19 world

It is now just on half a century since 1974, when Inokuma, his time in New York brought to an abrupt end by illness, stopped in Hawaii en route back to New York to pack up his studio, and there vowed to take his "second first steps in America." The vast portfolio of vibrant, dynamic paintings produced by a man in his 70s who had overcome a serious health scare to embark on this new life, offers us courage now as we navigate the post-Covid-19 landscape.

Includes photos of Inokuma's studio and more

From the window of the studio in Hawaii where he worked, Inokuma could take in scenery encompassing the streets of Honolulu, the palm trees that thrived in the nearby plaza, and the mountains beyond. To help visitors gain a further insight into Inokuma's art practice, "Genichiro Inokuma: Honolulu" includes his photographs of rainbows, flourishing flora and more.



From Genichiro Inokuma's photographs, *Rainbow over Honolulu*, 1987
Collection of Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art ©The MIMOCA Foundation



Genichiro Inokuma, *Letter from the Star (Love) No. 1*, 1983
Collection of Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art ©The MIMOCA Foundation

— About Genichiro Inokuma

Born in Takamatsu, Kagawa in 1902, graduated from Marugame Middle School (now Kagawa Prefectural Marugame Senior High School). Moved to Tokyo and enrolled in the Tokyo Fine Arts School (now Tokyo University of the Arts), where he studied under Takeji Fukushima. Spent the years 1938-40 in Paris, where he received instruction from Henri Matisse. Post-war projects included designing the Mitsukoshi Department Store's signature "Hana-hiraku" wrapping paper, and painting the mural *Freedom* at Ueno Station. In 1955 Inokuma traveled to New York, and ended up making it his home for the next 20 years. From 1975 he divided his time between Tokyo and Hawaii. 1991 saw the opening of the Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art. Inokuma died in 1993 at the age of ninety.



Photo by Akira Takahashi

Exhibition content and composition

Here is a sample of the content and works that will be on display in the exhibition.

*Please note works and exhibition layout are subject to change.

From New York to Hawaii

From two decades of urban living, to the natural wonderland of Hawaii: the exhibition will focus on changes in Inokuma's expression following this relocation to very different surroundings.



From Genichiro Inokuma's photographs, *Honolulu studio*, 1985
Collection of Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art ©The MIMOCA Foundation

Rainbows – A new start in Hawaii

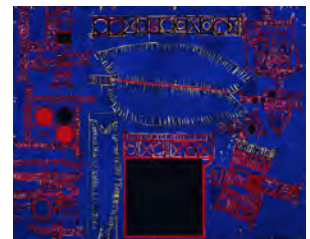
Inokuma's 1976 works inspired by rainbows he saw in Hawaii, teamed with photos taken of local scenes, his studio etc.



Genichiro Inokuma, *Rainbow Z1*, 1976
Collection of Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art ©The MIMOCA Foundation

Cosmic concerns

In Hawaii Inokuma produced paintings that spoke of his strong interest in space: works characterized by buoyant, gravity-defying composition, and titles that included words like "star" and "constellation."



Genichiro Inokuma, *Space is a Playground for Machines No.2*, 1981
Collection of Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art ©The MIMOCA Foundation

Arizona and Kachina Dolls

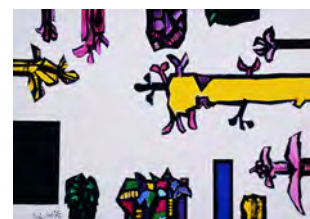
Arizona and Kachina Dolls (Kyuryudo) published in 1982 is a collection of sketches by Inokuma recalling his first trip to the Arizona desert on arriving in the US in 1955. This exhibition includes a number of originals from the book, plus kachina dolls that belonged to Inokuma.



From the collection of Genichiro Inokuma, *Kachina Dolls*
Collection of Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art
Photo by : Akira Takahashi

Organic forms

In the mid-1980s, motifs resembling the silhouettes of palm trees and buds of plants began to appear on Inokuma's canvases. Their clear, bold contour lines helped to give his paintings of this era their intense vitality.



Genichiro Inokuma, *Genichiro Inokuma, Germination Age*, 1985
Collection of Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art ©The MIMOCA Foundation

Exhibition title	Genichiro Inokuma: Honolulu
Organized by	Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art, The MIMOCA Foundation
Supported by	Hawai'i Tourism Japan
Venue	3F Gallery C, 1F Entrance Hall
Date	Saturday March 23– Sunday June 2, 2024
Closed	Mondays (except April 29 and May 6), April 30 (Tue), and May 7 (Tue)
Hours	10:00–18:00 (last entry 17:30)
Admission	Adults ¥950, Students (college, university) ¥650, Children (0 years to highschool) free *Ticket valid for admission to the permanent collection.

Concurrent Exhibition

Permanent exhibition 「Genichiro Inokuma: Films and Paintings」

【Admission】Adults ¥300 (¥240), Students (college, university) ¥200 (¥160),

Children (0 years to highschool) free

*Separate admission fee for special exhibitions

Advance ticket information

Rakuten Ticket: <https://leisure.tstar.jp/event/rlikggm/>

ARTLAND Gallery: 0877-24-0927

OKURA HOTEL MARUGAME: 0877-23-2222

Omiyage Shop MIU: 0877-22-2400

— Related Events

Curator Talk

A guided tour of the galleries courtesy of exhibition curator Mizuki Takezaki.

Dates Time: Sundays, April 4, May 5, June 2 from 14:00.

Free of charge (with a same-day ticket to the exhibition)

No booking necessary. Meet at the entrance to the 3rd-floor gallery.

MIMOCA Family Days

Free entry for up to two accompanying adults for each student up to and including high school or other visitor under 18 years of age.

Dates Time: Saturday, April 20 and Sunday, April 21, 10:00–18:00

*Information regarding other programs will be posted on the MIMOCA website as it becomes available.

— Images for Press Use

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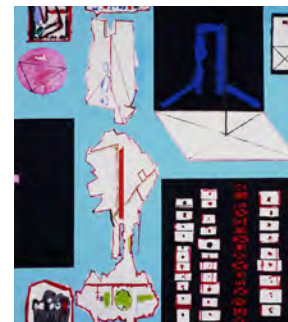
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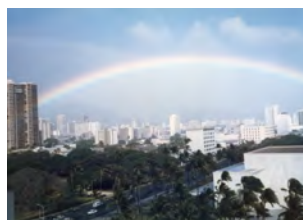
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1 Genichiro Inokuma, *Rainbow Z1*, 1976

2 Genichiro Inokuma, *Rainbow Z*, 1976

3 Genichiro Inokuma, *Blue Square*, 1977

4 Genichiro Inokuma, *Space is a Playground for Machines No.2*, 1981

5 Genichiro Inokuma, *Letter from the Star (Love) No.1*, 1983

6 Genichiro Inokuma, *Answer from the Constellation*, 1983

7 Genichiro Inokuma, *Words in the Plaza*, 1984

8 Genichiro Inokuma, *Correspondence from Arizona*, 1984

9 Genichiro Inokuma, *Germination Age*, 1985

10 From the collection of Genichiro Inokuma, Kachina Dolls

11 From Genichiro Inokuma's photographs, *Rainbow over Honolulu*, 1987

12 From Genichiro Inokuma's photographs, *Honolulu studio*, 1985

Credits All: Collection of Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art ©The MIMOCA Foundation
10:Photo by : Akira Takahashi

— About MIMOCA

Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art

The Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art (MIMOCA) was opened November 23, 1991 as a project commemorating the 90th anniversary of the city of Marugame, Kagawa Prefecture and with the full cooperation of the artist Genichiro Inokuma, who spent his youth in and around Marugame. The beautiful station-front museum designed by architect Yoshio Taniguchi has a permanent collection introducing some 20,000 works personally donated by Inokuma and holds special exhibitions focusing primarily on contemporary art. A diverse program of lectures, concerts, and other events, including workshops to foster sensitivity and creativity among children, are part of the Museum's dedication to education.

These features of the Museum are the result of discussions held by Inokuma with the city of Marugame. It was Inokuma's fervent wish that MIMOCA be a facility for contemporary art that would actively introduce new art. The sunlight-filled and spacious spaces of the building fulfill the aspiration architect Taniguchi shared with Inokuma for beautiful spaces in an art museum. Inokuma also wanted to encourage opportunities to expose children to art, advocating free admittance to the Museum for children and proposing the establishment of the "Creative Studio" space for children.

Inokuma wanted the Museum to be a place people would visit frequently. The experience of beautiful spaces and the sight of quality works of art are the source, he believed, of the fresh and exhilarating stimuli that is healthy and energizing. He even thought of MIMOCA as a kind of "health resort for the spirit." We hope everyone will think of MIMOCA, which embodies the ideals Inokuma held dear, as that kind of "resort" for mind and spirit.



Photo by Yoshiro Masuda



Photo by Akira Takahashi

On the founding of the Museum

I am delighted that the Museum has been built in Marugame, the place that is associated with many vivid memories of my youth. Specializing in contemporary art, the Museum is unique in Japan and has been realized with the support of all the citizens of Marugame. I hope the Museum will help the city as a whole to become a rich cultural environment.

Genichiro Inokuma 1991