

The Development of Kawaguchi Tatsuo’s Seeds Series

Kawaguchi Tatsuo (1940–) is one of the prominent figures of postwar art in Japan, and has continuously produced works on the theme of “relations” since the 1970s. Kawaguchi’s works has the characteristics of embodying imperceptible phenomena and the very nature of relation itself into his works, calling on the fundamental questions such as “what is life?” or “how does time pass?” using various materials such as metal, plants, minerals, light, temperature, and seeds.

One of his representative series of works is *Relation—Seed*. This series of works started with his work of *Relation—Seed, Copper 4*, which was an attempt to discover Kawaguchi’s pursuit of imperceptible relations through seeds which symbolizes the foundation of life. From his early works, Kawaguchi attempted to visualize the existence of forces which cannot be seen with the naked eye by producing works related to physical energies such as temperature and electricity, but shifted his focus later on towards the potential of life since the 1980s. Though it seems small and quiet, seeds contain energy which circulates the cycle of life through sprouting and blooming. Kawaguchi found astronomical levels of time and power in the tiny organism, and questioned its relations with humans.

In these series of works, the work on view, *Relation—Seed, Heliotropism* (1999) is a significant work from the latter part of his series. In the late 1980s, Kawaguchi shifted his usage of materials from copper to lead from the incident of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident. Along with its nature of blocking radioactivity, lead was used as a symbol of protecting life. Later on, after the 1990s, Kawaguchi’s interest transitions from “protection” to “perception.” His usage of the material of beeswax symbolized this transition. Compared to the heavy, sealed texture of lead, beeswax is soft, and allows light to pass through. In contrast to his past works which blocked connections by sealing the seeds from the outside, *Relation—Seed, Heliotropism* is open towards viewers with light and air as its intermediary.

Furthermore, beeswax is not man-made material, but created by honey bees as organic materials through the process of nature. Kawaguchi have stated that, while humanity’s technology destroys nature, the beeswax and honey created by honey bees are harmless towards nature and functions within the cycle of life. In that respect, beeswax, along with seeds, are materials which connects life, and symbolizes the harmony and cycle of nature.

The theme of “relations” which Kawaguchi pursued for many years, developed towards a more intuitive and poetic realm. *Relation—Seed, Heliotropism* expresses universal themes of life, time, and reproduction through light, bearing certain energy in its quiet appearance. Just as unsprouted seeds carries within the possibility of pursuing light towards the future, this work will also continue to live on through time. It can be said that, Kawaguchi’s notion of “relations” were not merely just physical connections, but an act of connecting towards the world through imagination by perceiving what cannot be seen.

Assistant Curator — Koh Muen

[Exhibition planner]
Mori Mitsuhiko (Curator)
Koh Muen (Assistant Curator)
Fukuda Satowa (Assistant Curator)
Ichiyanagi Yuki

Collection Room Fall

A Gaze Towards Children

Oct. 24 (Fri.) – Dec. 14 (Sun.), 2025

Main Building (North Wing) 1F



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*🔊: audio guide

*Due to various reasons, exhibited items may change.

*List order and exhibit order are not intended to match.

List of Works

No.	Inv.no.	Artist	Birth and Death	Title	Date	Material; Shape	Size (cm)	First exhibition	Audio guide
A Gaze Towards Children									
Gallery105 west									
1	N – 1210	SHIOKAWA, Bunrin	1808-1877	Landscape with a Pavilion, Chinese Children with a Vase of Flowers	1860	Color screen (two sides), and gold dust on paper	134.5 × 143.0cm		
2	N – 1204	KUBOTA, Beisen	1852-1906	Taking Shelter from the Rain	1888	Color on silk, hanging scroll	144.5 × 50.8cm		🔊 162
3	N – 391	TOMIOKA, Tessai	1836-1924	Confrontation Between Fishermen and Wood Cutters	1900	Color on paper, pair of six-panel folding screens	155.6 × 361.0cm each		🔊 3
4	N – 791	KAMISAKA, Sekka	1866-1942	Samurai Retainers	Late Meiji period – Early Showa period	Color on paper, hanging scroll	126.0 × 42.0cm		
5	N – 155	IKAI, Shokoku	1881-1939	Fishing by Water Wheels	Late Meiji period	Color on silk, pair of two-panel folding screen	167.0 × 185.0cm each		
6	N – 832	MORI, Shumei	1892-1951	After the Rain	1927	Color on silk, two-panel folding screen	189.0 × 204.0cm	8th Teiten (Special Award)	
Gallery101									
7	N – 576	Konoshima, Okoku	1877-1938	Peace and Harmony	1909	Color on silk, pair of six-panel folding screens	152.5 × 360.0cm each	3rd Bunten	
8	Y – 246	ASAI, Chu	1856-1907	Girl from a Fishing Village	c.1897	Oil on canvas, framed	45.3 × 33.5cm		
9	Y – 752	ITO, Yasuhiko	1867-1942	[Fallen Doll]	c.1901	Oil on gelatin silver print and photographic paper, framed	18.6 × 13.5cm		
10	Y – 777	ITO, Yasuhiko	1867-1942	[Young Fishermen]	1890	Oil on canvas, framed	88.5 × 65.8cm		
11	N – 835	KITAGAWA, Reimei	1900-1940	Summer in the Backyard	1934	Color on silk, framed	172.0 × 154.0cm		
12	N – 012	MIYAKE, Kohaku	1893-1957	Autumnal Forest Scene	1934	Color on paper, framed	168.0 × 124.0cm	Inaugural Exhibition	
13	N – 654	GOTO, Teinosuke	1905-1958	The Mountain Behind Kodai-ji Temple	1933	Color on silk, two-panel folding screen	158.4 × 186.2cm	14th Teiten	
14	N – 087	ISHIJIMA, Yoshinori	1903-1939	Bringing Offerings	1935	Color on paper, framed	195.0 × 200.0cm	1st Shiten (awarded Midori Prize)	
15	N – 045	NISHIMURA, Takuzo	1908-1955	Entering the Buddhist Priesthood	1936	Color on silk, framed	237.0 × 183.0cm	Bunten Kansaten	
16	N – 624	KAJIWARA, Hisako	1896-1988	Sisters	c.1916	Color on silk, framed	112.0 × 65.0cm		
17	N – 005	MATSUMOTO, Ichiyo	1893-1952	Farewell to Spring	1928	Color on silk, two-panel folding screen	185.2 × 162.8cm	9th Teiten	🔊 27
18	N – 058	TAMAKI, Suekazu	1897-1943	Girl Leaning on a Rattan Chair	1934	Color on paper, framed	141.0 × 62.0cm	Inaugural Exhibition	🔊 133
19	Y – 255	SHIMOTORI, Yukihiko (Shozaburo)	1884-1982	Girl Relaxing	1926	Oil on canvas, framed	72.7 × 100.0cm	7th Teiten	
20	Y – 144	KURODA, Jutaro	1887-1970	Cool Morning	1935	Oil on canvas, framed	141.5 × 130.0cm	22nd Nika Group Exhibition	
21	Y – 046	KONDO, Mitsunori	1901-1948	Portrait of a Girl	1941	Oil on canvas, framed	79.0 × 64.0cm	4th Shin Bunten	
22	Y – 262	YURI, Akira	1912-1984	Child	1948	Oil on canvas, framed	145.5 × 97.0cm	4th Nitten	
23	Y – 048	IDANI, Kenzo	1902-1970	Under the Light	1935	Oil on canvas, framed	144.0 × 110.5cm	22nd Nika Group Exhibition	
24	Y – 306	TSUDA, Shuhei	1909-1990	In Front of the Stairs	1940	Oil on canvas, framed	162.1 × 130.3cm	27th Nika Group Exhibition	
25	Y – 135	MORIWAKI, Tadashi	1888-1949	Playing Cards	1937	Oil on canvas, framed	151.0 × 181.0cm	1st Shin Bunten	

Quick Guide to our Survey

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No.	Inv.no.	Artist	Birth and Death	Title	Date	Material; Shape	Size (cm)	First exhibition	Audio guide
26	N – 772	HADA, Teruo	1887-1945	Mother and Child	Late Taisho	Color on canvas, framed	65.2 × 53.4cm		
27	N – 1021	NIWA, Akiko	1900-1988	Musical Performance	1936	Color on silk, framed	198.5 × 209.6cm	1st Kaiso Teiten	
28	N – 1027	NIWA, Akiko	1900-1988	Street Scene with Girls	1932	Color on silk, framed	224.0 × 120.0cm	9th Shoukousha Group Exhibition	
29	N – 148	KIKUCHI, Keigetsu	1879-1955	Sons of Kusunoki Masashige	1943	Color on paper, framed	172.0 × 113.0cm	8th Shiten	
30	N – 845	KIKUCHI, Keigetsu	1879-1955	Looking at Pictures	1943	Color on silk, hanging scroll	60.1 × 72.6cm	9th Sansankai Group Exhibition	
31	N – 588	TASHIRO, Masako	1913-1995	Evening at the Street Corner	1949	Color on paper, framed	195.0 × 136.0cm	5th Nitten	
32	N – 292	DOMOTO, Mototsugu	1923-2010	Boys Waiting for Returning Ships	1974	Color on paper, framed	196.5 × 181.0cm	6th Kaiso Nitten	

Gallery102

33	N – 043	MITANI, Toshiko	1904-1992	Morning	1937	Color on paper, framed	193.0 × 241.5cm	1st Shin Bunten	
34	N – 570	MITANI, Toshiko	1904-1992	Ants	1938	Color on paper, two-panel folding screen	217.5 × 203.6cm	2nd Shin Bunten	
35	N – 084	MITANI, Toshiko	1904-1992	Ring Around the Moon	1939	Color on silk, framed	291.0 × 181.0cm	3rd Shin Bunten	
36	N – 568	MITANI, Toshiko	1904-1992	Spinning Top	1930	Color on silk, two-panel folding screen	166.5 × 167.4cm	11th Teiten	
37	N – 571	MITANI, Toshiko	1904-1992	Arrival of Spring (Thoughts of Spring)	1947	Color on paper, framed	192.0 × 66.5cm	3rd Kyoten	
38	N – 572	MITANI, Toshiko	1904-1992	Three Female Nudes	1956	Color on paper, framed	205.0 × 137.0cm	12th Nitten	
39	N – 573	MITANI, Toshiko	1904-1992	Path through Hemp Palm Grass	1978	Color on paper, framed	213.5 × 144.5cm	10th Kaiso Nitten	
40	N – 574	MITANI, Toshiko	1904-1992	Waiting for the Moon	1982	Color on paper, framed	179.0 × 180.0cm	14th Kaiso Nitten	
41	N – 892	KAWABATA, Takeo	1944-1995	Village of Ayaori in Tono, Iwate	1976	Color on paper, framed	162.1 × 260.6cm	3rd Sogakai Group Exhibition (awarded Sogakai Prize)	
42	N – 890	YAMAMOTO, Toshio	1959-	Paradise	2004	Color on paper, framed	182.5 × 368.0cm	2004 Kyoten (awarded Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art Prize)	
43	Y – 688	TOJINBARA, Nozomi	1984-	STAR	2012	Oil on canvas	162 × 262cm	2012 Kyoten (awarded Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art Prize)	

Fruit Designs Expressed in Craftwork

Former North Hall

44	K – 888	KUROI, Komin	1891-1975	Cigar Case	1932	Iron, glass	13.5 × 21.0 × 21.0cm		 153
45	K – 1064	KUROI, Komin	1891-1975	A Branch of Persimmon	Early Showa period	Gold, copper	12.6 × 25.5 × 14.0cm		
46	K – 012	KIYOMIZU, Rokube VI	1901-1980	Decorative Platter with Fruits Design	1935	Stoneware with overglaze	H 8.5 Diam 45.0 (mouth) cm		 82
47	K – 350	KIYOMIZU, Rokube VI	1901-1980	Preparatory drawing for Decorative Platter with Fruits Design	1935	Ink and light color on paper	27.5 × 40.0cm	Drawing for a piece submitted to 1st Shiten	

Kawaguchi Tatsuo: Relation-Seed, Heliotropism

Gallery103

48	T – 064	KAWAGUCHI, Tatsuo	1940-	Relation-Seed, Heliotropism	1999	Iron, beeswax, sunflower seeds, lead, Japanese paper, cadmium chloride and copper, set of 21 pieces	H 55.0-200.0, Diam 40.0cm each	Kawaguchi Tatsuo : Relation - Kyoto (Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art, 1999)	
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Painters of the Kansai Bijutsuin

Gallery104

49	Y – 565	SAWABE, Seigoro	1884-1964	Infront of the Door	1913	Oil on canvas, framed	80.4 × 65.0cm	Return from Abroad Solo exhibition (Mitsukoshi Department Store, Osaka, 1914)	
50	Y – 254	SHIMOTORI, Yukihiko (Shozaburo)	1884-1982	Woman in Black Hat	1923	Oil on canvas, framed	53.0 × 40.9cm		
51	Y – 011	SHIMOTORI, Yukihiko (Shozaburo)	1884-1982	Fishes	1935	Oil on canvas, framed	71.5 × 89.5cm	1st Shiten (purchased by Kyoto City)	
52	Y – 090	OTA, Kijiro	1883-1951	Under the Tree Shade	1911	Oil on canvas, framed	89.0 × 115.0cm	Produced in Europe	 59
53	Y – 094	OTA, Kijiro	1883-1951	Fresh Greenery at a Riverside Village	1942	Oil on canvas, framed	99.5 × 112.0cm		
54	Y – 145	KURODA, Jutaro	1887-1970	Blooming Silk Tree in a Ravine	1936	Oil on canvas, framed	97.0 × 145.0cm	23rd Nika Group Exhibition	

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55	Y – 462	KURODA, Jutaro	1887-1970	Lotus Pond	1948	Oil on canvas, framed	73.0 × 90.0cm	2nd Niki Group Exhibition	
56	Y – 143	IKEDA, Jisaburo	1888-1966	Archer	1941	Oil on canvas, framed	181.0 × 126.5cm	4th Shin Bunten	
57	Y – 528	SUDA, Kunitaro	1891-1961	Self-Portrait	c.1914	Oil on canvas, framed	38.5 × 46.0cm		
58	Y – 191	SUDA, Kunitaro	1891-1961	Reproduction of Titian's Venus and the Lute Player	1919	Oil on canvas, framed	134.5 × 218.0cm	Produced in Europe	
59	Y – 098	SUDA, Kunitaro	1891-1961	Early Spring	1934	Oil on canvas, framed	165.0 × 230.0cm	Inaugural Exhibition	
60	Y – 025	SUDA, Kunitaro	1891-1961	Village	1937	Oil on canvas, framed	94.0 × 128.0cm	2nd Shiten	 115
61	Y – 416	KAWABATA, Yanosuke	1893-1981	Man with a Pipe	1923-25	Oil on canvas, framed	72.8 × 60.4cm	Produced in Europe	
62	Y – 421	KAWABATA, Yanosuke	1893-1981	View from a Window	1932	Oil on canvas, framed	79.8 × 60.5cm	10th Shunyokai Group Exhibition	
63	Y – 224	SATOMI, Katsuzo	1895-1981	Dancer	1921	Oil on canvas, framed	60.6 × 50.0cm		
64	Y – 225	SATOMI, Katsuzo	1895-1981	Woman	1928	Oil on canvas, framed	53.7 × 73.5 cm	3rd 1930 Group Exhibition	
65	Y – 063	KUNIMORI, Yoshiatsu	1897-1951	Persimmons and Chestnuts in a Basket	1945	Oil on canvas, framed	48.5 × 59.5cm	1st Kyoten	
66	Y – 065	NISHIKI, Giichiro	1898-1962	Stream	1946	Oil on canvas, framed	64.0 × 89.5cm	31st Nika Group Exhibition	
67	Y – 012	IBA, Denjiro	1901-1967	Valley in May	1935	Oil on canvas, framed	72.0 × 99.0cm	1st Shiten (purchased by Kyoto City)	
68	Y – 880	IBA, Denjiro	1901-1967	Early Spring	1949	Oil on canvas, framed	86.0 × 111.5cm		
69	Y – 003	IDANI, Kenzo	1902-1970	Woman in a Room	1934	Oil on canvas, framed	145.0 × 111.0cm	Inaugural Exhibition	
70	Y – 176	IDANI, Kenzo	1902-1970	Children Playing Under the Trees	1950	Oil on canvas, framed	145.5 × 97.0cm	5th Kodo Group Exhibition	

The Seven Flowers of Autumn

Gallery105 west

71	N – 055	OCHIAI, Rofu	1896-1937	Harvesting Wheat at Umegahata Village, Kyoto	1927	Color on paper, framed	182.0 × 209.0cm	8th Teiten	 132
72	Y – 028	TSUJI, Hisashi	1884-1974	Shiga Highlands in Autumn	1937	Oil on canvas, framed	71.5 × 90.0cm	1st Shin Bunten	
73	N – 119	MUTO, Akira	1913-2006	Autumn in Northern Kyoto	1945	Color on paper, framed	122.0 × 155.0cm	1st Kyoten (awarded Second Mayor's Prize)	
74	N – 275	YAMAGUCHI, Kayo	1899-1984	Garden with Cockscombs	1977	Color on paper, framed	161.5 × 115.0cm		 51
75	Y – 842	KUNIMORI, Yoshiatsu	1897-1951	Late Autumn	1929	Oil on canvas, framed	61.5 × 73.0cm	8th Shunyokai Group Exhibition	
76	N – 1082	SAKAKIBARA, Uson	1885-1963	[Mountain Stream in Early Autumn]	Taisho period – Showa period	Color on silk, two-panel folding screen	136.0 × 135.0cm		
77	K – 056	KAWAI, Unosuke	1889-1969	Vase with Ivy Pattern in Overglaze Enamel and Underglaze Black	c.1937	Porcelain in sake bottle shape	H 28.0, Diam 12.0 (body), 2.5 (mouth) cm		
78	K – 405	KAWAI, Unosuke	1889-1969	Bowl with Fresh Bush Clovers in Overglaze Enamels	c.1958	Porcelain	H 9.9, Diam 22.5 (mouth) cm		
79	K – 344	KATO, Tadao	1939-	Late Autumn in Sagano, Kyoto	1979	Metalwork on copper	18.0 × 45.0 × 45.0cm	11th Kaiso Nitten	
80	K – 215	MORINO, Kako	1899-1987	Vase with Pinks	c.1939	Stoneware	H 16.9, Diam 30.0 (body) cm		
81	N – 1360	KONO, Bairei	1844-1895	Golden Lace	Meiji period	Color on silk, hanging scroll	28.0 × 21.5cm		
82	K – 396	KAWAI, Unosuke	1889-1969	Drinking Set with Thoroughwort Flowers in Overglaze Enamels	c.1936	Stoneware (basin, 2 sake bottles, 6 sake cups, 6 sake cup saucers)	sake cup washer: H 8.3, Diam 13.6 cm sake bottles: H 11.5, 7.2 × 7.2 cm each sake cups: H 3.7, Diam 5.5 (mouth) cm each saucers: H 1.6, Diam 8.9 cm sake bottles: H 11.5, 7.2 × 7.2 cm each sake cups: H 3.7, Diam 5.5 (mouth) cm each saucers: H 1.6, Diam 8.9 cm		
83	K – 107	KIYOMIZU, Rokube VI	1901-1980	Vase with Autumnal Mood Motif, Kokisai Type	1976	Stoneware	H 49.5, Diam 21.6 (body), 18.0 (mouth) cm		
84	K – 770	EIRAKU, Zengoro XVI	1917-1998	Openwork Bowls with Autumn Flowers, Kenzan Style	Showa period	Stoneware, set of 10 pieces	H 7.5, Diam 11.5 (mouth) cm each		

Outdoor Permanent Exhibit

South West Corner of the Museum

85	T – 047	TOGASHI, Minoru	1931-2019	Stairs of Śūnyatā '88- II	1988	Granite	1200.0 × 107.0 × 107.0, 1113.0 × 107.0 × 107.0cm		 173
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