



Agenda for Visual Arts Working Group

The mission of this working group is to exploit various new methods to help deepen a cooperative relationship between Japanese and American curators and utilize that relationship to cultivate a framework for creating a concept for a new type of exhibition that is better tailored to our current circumstances and social environments.

The Working Group's mission is to search for mutual benefits and work cooperatively to devise creative methods for reducing the economic burden of exhibition loans. It will seek to cultivate a framework for creating a concept for exhibitions of modern and contemporary art that increase quality while reducing risk. The Working Group will also consider ways of improving the quality and conditions of exhibitions of traditional Japanese art to the United States.

A. Enhance exchange in the field of modern and contemporary art

1. Interest in contemporary art in the United States remains strong, and the importance of contemporary art exchanges is likely to increase further in the future in respect to not only artwork-based exchanges, but anticipation for artist-based human exchanges as well.
2. While mutual exchanges related to contemporary art are advancing on a wide scale, there is a sense that the introduction of modern Japanese art was slow to start. This is a highly important issue that must be addressed in the future. Many Japanese modern and contemporary art exhibits held in the United States in the past were able to produce such magnificent content due to long-term stays by United States curators in Japan. Working to further enhance Japan-US curator exchanges will lead to rich modern and contemporary exchanges for both countries.
3. The exhibition system that focuses on a single country is becoming outdated under the "borderless" system of contemporary art today. In the future, exchanges that utilize multifaceted methods should be promoted, including joint exhibits between the United States and Japan with further refined themes, three-country exhibits that incorporate the perspective of Asia as well, and support for Japanese artists invited to art museums and

other venues in the United States.

B. Framework for mutually beneficial curatorial collaboration

1. Efforts should be made to construct a network among Japanese and United States museum groups and academic meetings.
2. Equal curatorial collaboration between our two countries would help nurture greater mutual professional enthusiasm for new loan exhibitions of Japanese art in the United States. CULCON therefore recommends that Japanese and American curators work closely together to develop cogent exhibition themes that meet the criteria of (1) strong audience appeal, (2) academic significance, (3) feasibility of exhibition (4) high quality and (5) cost efficiency.
3. Japanese curators interested in the awareness of United States curators regarding rigorous cost containment and in learning about differences between Japanese and United States art museum operations should be provided a chance to learn about United States museum management within the United States.
4. Catalogs, graphics, and online programs for major loan exhibitions should be developed in an equal partnership between Japanese and American curators. Both sides could gain much from a better understanding of each other's strategies for communicating with their respective publics. The guarantee of an equal role would also encourage a greater mutual sense of shared ownership in each exhibition project.
5. The creation of an introductory handbook of Japanese art by US specialists will help stimulate the US public's interest in Japanese art.
6. Japanese and US curators should work together to make use of the thus far untapped high quality cultural properties in Japan, Extended stays and researches by US curators in Japan would be helpful in this regard.
7. To encourage fresh thinking in the United States ways should be found of enabling promising young American curators from non-Japanese-art backgrounds to experience Japanese art in Japan. These future leaders could then work with their colleagues specializing in Japanese art to develop imaginative ways of showing selected works of art from Japan in the context of art from other cultures, which could be realized at a fraction of the cost of full-scale exhibitions.

C. Future cooperation in the field of conservation

The Working Group will explore ways to promote cooperation between Japanese and US experts on the conservation of Japanese art objects in the US, including restoration techniques and conservation science.