

Kei Imazu Tanah Air



1. *Memories of the Land/Body*, 2020, oil on canvas, 300x600cm, Taguchi Art Collection, photo: Keizo Kioku, courtesy of The Artist and ANOMALY

Kei Imazu's first large-scale solo exhibition presents the artist's weaving of personal, historical, and mythological narratives, as an expansive reflection on Japan, where she has her roots, and her present situation in Indonesia.

Kei Imazu (b. 1980) uses computer applications to process and compose images taken from various media such as the internet and digital archives, producing oil paintings on canvas based on these initial sketches.

In 2017, Imazu moved to Bandung, Indonesia to live and work. In recent years, her works have shifted to represent her research into contemporary issues of urban development and environmental pollution in Indonesia, all of which capture the reality of the artist's immediate surroundings. These issues are never directly expressed in Imazu's works, but are rather woven and linked between a diverse range of archival images, juxtaposing multiple temporalities pertaining to Indonesian history, mythology, and ecosystems related to biological evolution and extinction, thereby extending her work in a more expansive direction. Imazu's paintings, in which elements of global environmental issues, eco-feminism, mythology, history, and politics are juxtaposed on the same plane, are dynamic forms of artistic expression created by the vast amount of images and information passing through her body.

This is Imazu's first large-scale solo exhibition, who has garnered much attention in recent years both in Japan and abroad. The title, "Tanah Air," is made up of the Indonesian words *tanah* (earth) and *air* (water). Together, these two words mean "homeland." Imazu's works—based on her thoughts and experiences while living in both Indonesia, where she currently lives, and Japan, where she has her roots—invite audiences into a contemplative return to one's sense of place and belonging.

Kei Imazu: Tanah Air

Period: Saturday, 11 January – Sunday, 23 March, 2025 *61 days

Venue: Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery (Gallery 1, 2)

Open hours: 11:00 - 19:00 (Last admission at 18:30)

Closing day: Mondays (Tuesday if the Monday is a public holiday), 9 February (maintenance)

Admission: adults 1400 [1200] yen / university and high school students 800 [600] yen / free for junior high and under

*Rates include admission to *From the Terada Collection 082 Art on Paper* and *project N 97 Fukumoto Kenichiro*.

*Rates in brackets indicate discount. Free for person with a disability certificate along with an attendant.

*Only one concession or discount can be applied at a time.

*Nonrefundable.

Organiser: Tokyo Opera City Cultural Foundation

Sponsor: Nippon Life Insurance Company

Cooperation: ANOMALY, ROH

Grants: The Obayashi Foundation

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Keywords for the exhibition

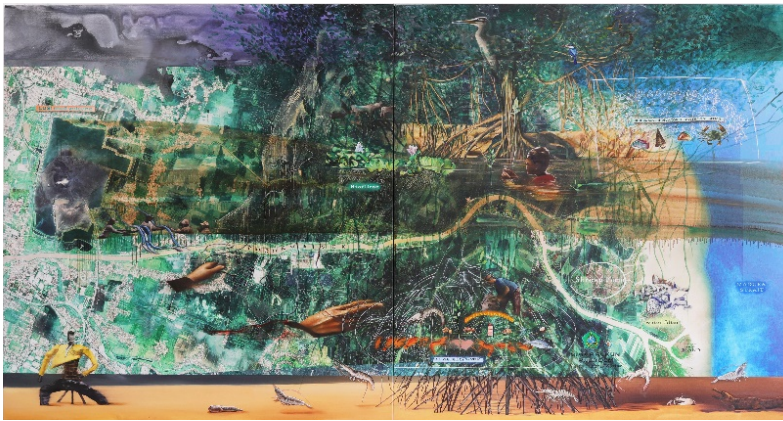
Imazu's works employ images taken from a variety of media as their motifs. Since moving to Indonesia, her pictorial surfaces have come to reflect various personal experiences, Indonesian history and mythology, urban development, and environmental issues. These are some of the keywords that will help viewers to decipher Imazu's work.

The myth of *Hainuwele*

The subject of a myth from the island of Seram, Indonesia, *Hainuwele* is the name of a woman born from a coconut who had the power to create exotic treasures from her own excrement. She was buried alive by men who feared her mystical power, but when her body was cut up and buried, various kinds of tuberous crops grew out of the land, helping to support the islanders. Imazu interprets this myth from various angles, including feminism and colonial history, connecting it to her own personal experience as a mother.



2. *Hainuwele*, 2023, oil on jute, 350x800 cm, Collection of Tumurun Museum, Indonesia, courtesy of The Artist and ROH



3. *When Facing the Mud (Response of Shrimp Farmers in Sidoarjo)*, 2022, oil, acrylic, mud, UV print on canvas, 194x388 cm, Private Collection, courtesy of The Artist and ROH

Development and Environmental Pollution

For Imazu, who lives in Indonesia, the repeated plundering of resources by developed countries and the resulting environmental issues are a daily reality. The local subjects depicted in her work include the Citarum River, called "the most polluted river in the world," the eruption of a mud volcano at a natural gas mining site in Sidoarjo, and the lives of their inhabitants.



Japan and Indonesia

Indonesia was a Dutch colony in the modern era and was occupied by Japan during World War II. Imazu quotes images from various historical sources on her canvases in order to think critically about the relationship between the Indonesia where she lives today, and Japan, where she has her roots, creating paintings in a bid to verify her own place in this world.

4. *Anda Disini (You are here)*, 2024, oil on canvas, 300x200 cm, Collection of the Artist, courtesy of The Artist and ROH

5. *Curiosity cabinet from Ambon*, 2022, oil on canvas, 194x194 cm, TAKEUCHI COLLECTION, courtesy of The Artist, ANOMALY, and ROH

From Plane to Space

In recent years, Imazu's creations have not been limited to paintings. They have expanded to works with a more spatial presence, such as large sculptures created with a 3D printer, as well as installations. For this exhibition, Imazu will present a new installation about the cultivation of cinchona, a special remedy for malaria, which was once practiced in Bandung. Also showcased here are skeletal specimens, earthenware, and other large-scale sculptures scattered throughout the venue. Audiences will be able to enjoy the world of Imazu's works throughout the entire venue.

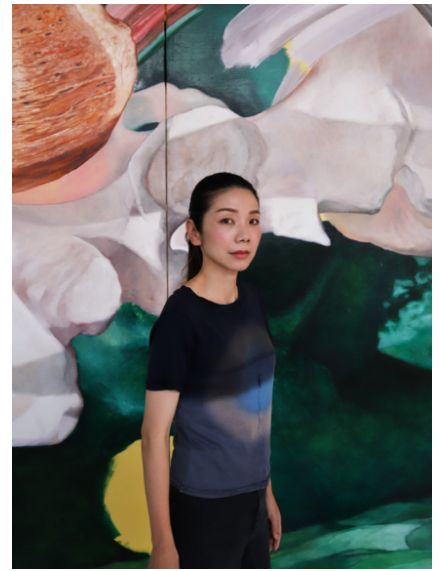
6. *Bandoengsche Kininefabriek*, 2024, mixed media, size variable, Collection of the Artist, courtesy of The Artist and ROH



Kei Imazu: Biography

Born 1980 in Yamaguchi Prefecture, Japan, and currently lives and works in Bandung, Indonesia. Graduated from the Graduate School of Fine Arts, Tama Art University in 2007. She received the Prize for Excellence at VOCA in 2009 and the Encouragement Award at the 5th Kinutani Koji Award in 2013.

In Japan, Imazu has participated in exhibitions such as *Roppongi Crossing 2019: Connexions* and the *Aichi Triennale 2019*. In 2020, the *Prix Jean François Prat* in France nominated her as a finalist, and she participated in *documenta fifteen* in 2022. In 2024, she participated in the *Changwon Sculpture Biennale* in South Korea and the *Bangkok Art Biennale* in Thailand, continuing to gain significant recognition and exhibit actively both in Japan and abroad.



Images



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7. Installation view of *Anda disini / You are here*, MUSEUM HAUS KASUYA, 2019, photo: Akira Okada, courtesy of MUSEUM HAUS KASUYA

8. Installation view of *unearth*, ROH, Indonesia, 2023, courtesy of The Artist and ROH

9. *Decoupling*, oil on canvas, 2016, 116x80 cm, Private Collection, photo: Keizo Kioku, courtesy of The Artist and ANOMALY

10. *RIB*, 2021, oil on canvas, 200x300 cm, Finck Collection, photo: Keizo Kioku, courtesy of The Artist and ANOMALY

11. *Last Universal Common Ancestor*, 2022, oil on canvas, 201x135.5 cm, Obayashi Collection, photo: Ichiro Mishima, courtesy of The Artist and ANOMALY

■ Inquiries

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