

Winning proposals at CRAWL

Tomonari NAKAYASHIKI × Takayuki MITSUSHIMA

〈The Ones Who See〉

2025.6.4 (WED) — 6.29 (SUN)



Greeting

Tomonari NAKAYASHIKI × Takayuki MITSUSHIMA 〈The Ones Who See〉 opens on Wednesday, June 4, 2025 at BUG, an art center run by Recruit Holdings Co., Ltd. This exhibition proposal was selected from the 2024 CRAWL program for art workers (planners) and has been in development for roughly a year, with continuous support from BUG staff members.

The exhibition focuses on two artists who see the world in unique ways. Tomonari Nakayashiki, who has colorblindness, paints in a world of colors different from most people, and Takayuki Mitsushima, who is fully blind, creates reliefs in a world without light. Nakayashiki observes the relationship between that which sees and that which is seen, aiming to create paintings where the viewer experiences the two as one. Coupled with layers of masking tape, his unique use of colors, which he sees by their brightness value, destabilizes our focal point. Mitsushima, then, sees art as a means of creating a link between that which can be seen and that which cannot be seen, an endeavor that stretches beyond his own art to the interactive audience outreach programs with which he has also long been involved. The aspects of the city that he apprehends through senses other than sight are represented symbolically through materials with distinct tactile qualities and nails of differing heights. These two artists' contrasting approaches invite us to contemplate our senses of "seeing," which we find cannot easily be put into a single box. We hope this will be an opportunity to take another look at how we might all exist as "the ones who see": that is, Nakayashiki and Mitsushima, along with the viewers of the exhibition.

This exhibition would not have been possible without the dedication and support of many individuals. I would like to take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the artists who graciously agreed to show their work, to curator Maaru Hiyama and all of the staff at BUG who supported us along the way, and to everyone else who has been involved in this project.

Planning by Yoko Takauchi



Photography and video shooting is permitted.



Seeing your fingers



Security camera in operation.

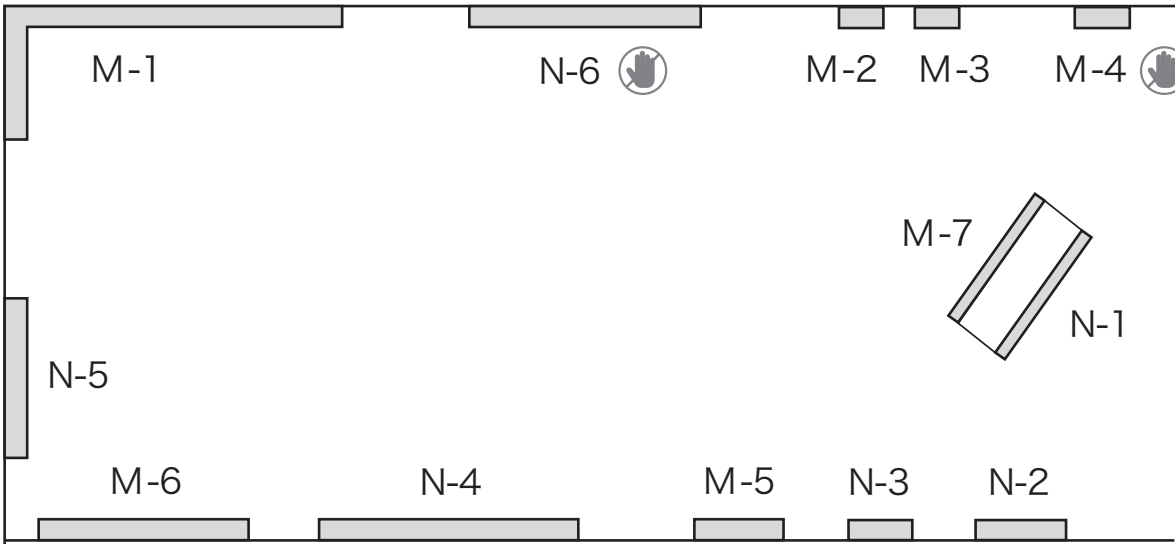
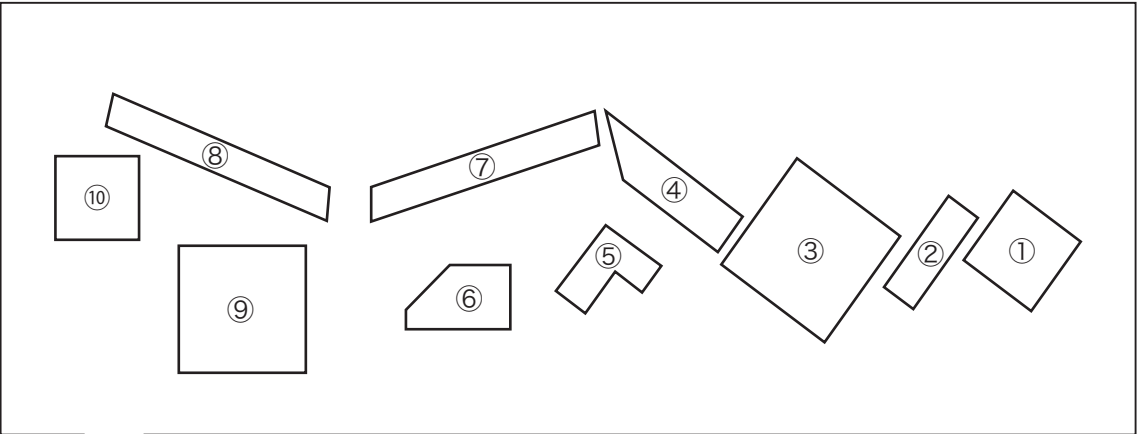
List of Works

Work List For each work,
title/year/medium,format/size are noted. All works are in the collection of the artist.

Takayuki MITSUSHIMA (M)

M-1
Walking around Kyoto City, Sakyō Ward during my student days
2025
Mixed media

- ①near the studio
590×600×90
- ②city bus
200×800×80
- ③Kitaōji Station bus terminal
910×910×170
- ④the fun escalator
300×1200×60
- ⑤now, right here
500×590×100
- ⑥the bamboo fountain at Shisen-dō
610×780×145
- ⑦the path by the canal (1)
1790×153×70
- ⑧the path by the canal (2)
1790×153×80
- ⑨the garden of Murin-an
910×910×140
- ⑩ Irish at Wood Note
605×600×90



M-2
New Braille Block:
a Bar Up Ahead
2019
300×300×80
Nails, felt,
pine laminated wood

M-5
Becoming light and wind
2025
803×652
Line tape,
cutting sheets, canvas

M-3
New Braille Block:
Walk Quickly From Here
2019
300×300×80
Nails, tile sheet, EVA sheet,
pine laminated lumber

M-6
At the Mercy of Color and Tactile
2024
155×1820×60
Nails, rivets, rubber sheet,
cutting sheets, OSB plywood

M-4
Drink Canned Coffee
1996
400×315
Line tape, paper



M-7
Happy Ending
(upper left) happiness was
(upper right) all-sweet chocolate
(lower left) I used to think
(lower right) yet, here it is
2025
upper left : 910×905×50
upper right,lower left,lower right :
915×910×55
Mixed media

Tomonari NAKAYASHIKI (N)

N-1
Happy ending
2025
1940×1940
Oil, acrylic,
solid marker,
tape on canvas

N-2
The night I stuffed the blue of the sky
into a plastic bag, I turned off
the lights of the room
and quietly peered inside
2025
805×655
Oil, acrylic,
solid marker, tape on canvas

N-4
What Can Be Touched
Can Be Touched
2023
1940×2610
Oil, aclyric, solid maker,
tape on canvas

N-3
Sedimentation
2025
610×458
Oil, acrylic, solid marker,
tape on canvas

N-5
There is
2024
2610×1940
Oil, aclyric, solid maker,
tape on canvas

N-6
Un/Known
2025
3240×1940
Oil, acrylic, solid marker,
tape on canvas



☆
Tomonari NAKAYASHIKI
×
Takayuki MITSUSHIMA
Artists Documentary
2025
12min



Reception

←Entrance



Tomonari Nakayashiki

We speak of “seeing” a painting. “To see,” however, does not merely amount to perceiving the picture, the object: the object brings us to a matter, that is, in seeing, we undergo a happening or event. The picture exists because of me; I exist because of the picture. It is within this web of relations that we realize our seeing of it.

When we say “A is “B,” we typically zero in on the objects at hand: A, B, or whatever else. For example, when we say, “This is a pen,” it’s easy to get distracted by the potential attributes or definitions of a pen or writing implement—in other words, by the superficial characteristics that compose what we can and cannot “see.”

Yet the truly important thing here is the verb that connects A and B: “is,” to be. I would suggest that this is precisely where reality lies, here, in the “connection” itself. A “gaze” is this is, and the is is the experience that we bring to this space, BUG.

In other words, we have already fallen away from the gaze itself the instant that we begin to consider whether we can or cannot see something, what its colors might be, what it looks like. Of course, some people physically can or cannot see, some do or do not experience color, and even among those who can (for example) see, not everyone will encounter a color or shape in the same way. Nevertheless, explaining it all away with platitudes like “everyone’s different” or “everything’s relative” just allows our thinking to stop there.

The gaze that you are experiencing here, one way or another, in this space—that is what is real. Each of you will have your own experience in your own way here at BUG. You will then step away from this gaze, and later share it with others, together contemplating our gazes, and your own gaze as well—and that, for me, is truly what matters.

For this exhibition, I invite you to fully immerse yourself in your own gaze before engaging in analysis or interpretation.

Takayuki Mitsushima

I was asked to participate in an exhibition called “The Ones Who See.” Many may wonder why someone who became fully blind at the age of ten would show their work under this title. I felt that my task with this project was to create artworks that make visible the invisible world that I see. My hope is that viewers will be able to experience tactile, acoustic, or other ways of seeing.

In Kyoto Machi Aruki [Walking around Kyoto City], I’ve created pieces about my hometown, where I have lived since I was born. I was a bit unsure about where to look for a sense of excitement or awe. Ultimately, I decided on a walking route in Sakyō ward, where I lived as a university student in the late seventies, along with other nostalgic places I’ve explored with friends. I then took a stroll around these areas once more. You might say it was a tour of locations where I could still feel the Showa era of my youth.

I also created portraits of other parts of the city, including Murin-an Garden, which I visited recently, as well as the area around my studio and the bus terminal at Kitaōji station, where I walk around by myself every day. At Kitaōji station, there is a spot where you have an amazing acoustic vantage point. When you stand there, you can hear the announcements coming from the escalators pretty far away, the sounds of footsteps, all kinds of noises. So I included colored braille that reads “acoustic vantage point.”

For Happy Ending, my half of the works Nakayashiki and I created according to a shared theme, I used lots of the colored braille that I developed with my synesthesia. I thought the meaning of these lines was important, so I decided to record them here:

I used to think
happiness was
all-sweet chocolate—
yet, here it is

The last work I made, Hikari to Kaze ni Naru [Becoming light and wind], depicts how I see trees. Even if I touch a tree, I can’t comprehend it in its entirety. I feel the movements of the trees through the rustle of the wind and the warmth of the light that filters in through the forest. In this piece, I wanted to express how my understanding of these surroundings becomes a means of perceiving the tree itself.

Artists profile

Tomonari NAKAYASHIKI

Tomonari Nakayashiki was born in Osaka in 1977 and currently lives in Kyoto City. graduated from Kyoto Seika University' s Oil Painting Course in the Faculty of Fine Art in 2000, and in 2007 won the Jury Prize at the Toyota Art Exhibition '07 (Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi). He has participated in numerous group exhibitions and art fairs in Japan, as well as in Korea, Taiwan, the UK, and France. In recent years he has incorporated masking tape as a medium alongside paint, creating paintings with unique collage-like layers and textures.

Takayuki MITSUSHIMA

Takayuki Mitsushima was born in Kyoto in 1954. At the age of ten lost his sight. After graduating from the Department of Philosophy in the Faculty of Letters at Otani University, he opened an acupuncture clinic. While continuing his work as an acupuncturist, in 1992 he began creating clay sculptures, and in 1995 began creating “palpable paintings” using drafting tape and adhesive vinyl. He won the Grand Prize and Silver Prize at the ' 98 Art Paralympic in Nagano. In recent years he has been exhibiting relief artworks that express the shape of the city through a series of nails hammered into panels at different angles and elevations.

Curator profile

Yoko TAKAUCHI

Yoko Takauchi was born in Hyogo prefecture and currently lives in Kyoto. She completed her coursework in the Graduate School of Humanities at Kwansei Gakuin University before obtaining a PhD in Philosophy. While working with disabled people, including at facilities for children with severe physical and mental disabilities, group homes, and as a domestic caregiver, since 2012 Takauchi has also worked as a personal studio assistant for Takayuki Mitsushima, a fully blind artist. Since 2020, she has served as the manager for the Atelier Mitsushima art gallery and studio where she is responsible for overseeing the facilities and planning exhibitions and workshops. Major exhibition projects include Is That a Gaze? (Atelier Mitsushima Sawa-Tadori, 2021), Beside the Gaze (Atelier Mitsushima Sawa-Tadori, 2023), and Ryosuke Imamura and Takayuki Mitsushima—Research Project on the Senses: Any Point “P” in the Domain of Sensations (Tokyo Shibuya Koen-dori Gallery, 2025), while major workshops include Person with Visual Disability Meets Art (since 2021) and GYUGYUTTO Dialogue Through Art (since 2023). She enjoys disentanglement puzzles.

Interview



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Date : 2025 . 6.4 (WED) – 6.29 (SUN)

Organized by BUG

Curated by Yoko TAKAUCHI

Artists : Tomonari NAKAYASHIKI, Takayuki MITSUSHIMA
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Production : Yuka HOTTA (BUG)

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Translation (Braille) : Yumiko ADACHI

Translation : Haruka UEDA、Keith SPENCER、Lilian CANRIGHT

Shooting : Tatsuki KATAYAMA

Venue Installation : Takeru ODAKI、Yurika SUNADA (square4)、
Mizuki ASHIKAWA、Tatsuru HATAYAMA、Tomomi KAMEI