

Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] Exhibition

The Flavour of Power

Food is seen through conflict, politics, ethics and history

Saturday, 11, March – Saturday, 3, Jun 2023

Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] 2F Gallery & Studio B

The first exhibition in Japan by Bakudapan Food Study Group, an artist collective based in Indonesia

The Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] announces the opening of "The Flavour of Power — Food is seen through conflict, politics, ethics", an exhibition showcasing the results of the YCAM's own research and development project "Food and Ethics Research."

In the course of the project, the YCAM staff investigated various ethical aspects related to food together with the Bakudapan Food Study Group, a collective of eight artists based in Indonesia. With a focus on food in Japan and Indonesia during the Pacific War, the project mainly revolved around issues of genetic modification of farm products and dependence on monoculture. This exhibition presents the results of these research activities in the form of video installations, card games, and displays of related materials. The exhibition will also offer an edible weed collecting workshop and a card game trial session.

Food, as something that concerns us directly, is at once a matter involving various political aspects. The displays at the exhibition are designed to make visitors aware of how such implications affect our ethical perspective on food.

We hope you will take this opportunity to join us.



Bakudapan Food Study Group, "Please Eat Wildly"
Photo credit: Bakudapan Food Study Group

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Food and Ethics Research – A project to rethink the various aspects of food



"Food and Ethics Research Showcase" (2021)
Photo credits: Kazuma Yoshiga

Since its opening, YCAM has been exploring new forms of artistic expression utilising media technologies and creating and exhibiting numerous original fine and performing art works. Next to the production of works, we also engage in various research activities such as the "YCAM Bio Research" project, a platform for investigating biotechnology application possibilities as a discipline rapidly developed and universalised in recent years. These activities aim to shape and propose new values revolving around the possible application of technologies for creative purposes.

One of YCAM's research and development programs, the "Food and Ethics Research" project, was launched in 2021. The worldwide spread of Covid-19 and the recent war and energy crisis are significantly impacting the production and distribution of all kinds of products, including foods. Against this backdrop, the project examines what effects wars and political, social and scientific aspects, which may not seem immediately related to our daily diet, have on the production and consumption of food and what kinds of moral values can play a role.

The YCAM staff previously conducted research with the Bakudapan Food Study Group members, a collective artist focusing on food politic issues based in Indonesia. It exhibited various related materials over six months from January 2022. Bakudapan Food Study Group now returns for their first dedicated exhibition in Japan, including video installations, workshops and other events to showcase the results of the group's research activities.

■ Bakudapan Food Study Group



Photo credit: Bakudapan Food Study Group

Bakudapan Food Study Group is a collective of eight female artists who got together with the aim of discussing aspects of food politics. They consider food not only something that people fill their stomachs with but as a possible tool for discussing a wide range of topics, including political, social, ecological, philosophical, cultural and gender issues. The group's artworks take shape through processes of cross-reference between their investigations into "food" and diverse activities in the realms of art, ethnography, research and practical work. Their research activities are informed by the members' interest in experimenting and exploring appropriate methods and formats, ranging from creative (performances, installations, exhibitions, etc.) to everyday activities (cooking, gardening, reading, etc.).

Unveiling a new work that addresses ethical aspects of “food.”

In their research, inspired by the relationship between Japan and Indonesia regarding food during the Pacific War, the Bakudapan Food Study Group has been focusing on issues of genetic modification of farm products and dependence on monoculture. In the process, they have encountered various concrete examples of how a state's policy affects people's dietary life. The title of this exhibition suggests such relationships between political power struggles and food. In the exhibition, the group presented the fruits of their research in the form of a video installation, a card game, displays of related materials, and a workshop.

INSTALLATION

The food policy implemented in Indonesia under the Japanese occupation during the Pacific War has affected the Indonesian food system. This is also the general theme of the video installation set up inside Studio B this time. Based on quotes from articles in the propaganda magazine *Djawa Baroe* published in Indonesia under the Japanese military administration, the work illustrates food-related stories from daily life during wartime. Also on display are various food policy materials, focusing on the group's research related to “Horaimai (Formosan rice),” a type of rice produced in Taiwan under Japanese rule before the war.



"Food and Ethics Research" in Yamaguchi (2022)



"Hanger Tales" Courtesy of Bakudapan Food Study Group

CARD GAME

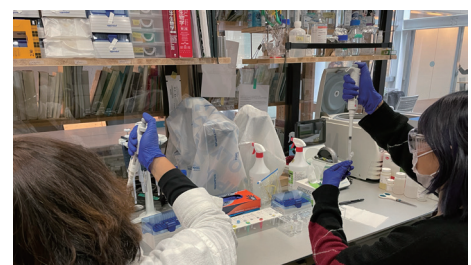
“Hunger Tales”

This board game simulates the sensation of being directly involved in a journey of food crises. The artists and YCAM developed a Japanese language version for this exhibition.

WORKSHOP

“Please Eat Wildly + YCAM Bio Research”

Participants in this workshop conduct fieldwork in hills and fields, gather wild plants and learn about edible plants that grow in our environment. After that, with the YCAM Bioresearch team's support, participants will conduct DNA analyses to gain a deeper understanding of wild plants.



"Food and Ethics Research" in YCAM BioLab (2022)

General Information

The Flavour of Power

Food is seen through conflict, politics,

Saturday, 11, March - Saturday, 3, June, 2023

10:00-19:00

Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] 2F Gallery & StudioB

Free admission

Closed on Tuesdays

Organiser: Yamaguchi City, Yamaguchi City Foundation for Cultural Promotion

Cooperation: Yamaguchi City Board of Education

Support: Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan, Fiscal Year 2022

Technical support: YCAM InterLab

Planning & production: Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM]

How to apply

Please fill out the application form on the website below and submit it to us.

www.ycam.jp/en

Exhibition Events

TALK SESSION

11 March 2023

13:00-15:00

Venue: YCAM Foyer

Free admission, reservation required

Speakers at this talk event introduce exhibition highlights and tell stories from the respective works' creation processes. It will be an opportunity to discuss issues related to food and ethics with artists. (with consecutive English interpretation)

Please Eat Wildly + YCAM Bio Research

18, 19 March and 10, 11 June 2023

10:00-16:00

Gathering point: YCAM Foyer

Participant: Anyone aged 15 or above

Free admission, reservation required

This workshop explores the potential of edible weeds as ingredients through biotechnology. Participants collect wild plants with artists and YCAM staff members under the guidance of special instructor Daisuke Iwamitsu from wccworks/plain.

Gallery Tour

11 March, 15:30-16:30 / 12 March, 14:00-15:00

25 March, 14:00-15:00 / 18 June, 16:30-17:30

Participants in these events tour around the exhibition venue together with YCAM staff.

Hunger Tales Game Session

Every Saturday and Sunday in April-May

Participants can try playing a card game that is featured in the exhibition. (for registration and further information, please check the YCAM website.)

Related Screening Program

YCAM Open Lab 2021

4-21 March 2023 Place: Studio C

"Wisdom of Small Farmers in Japan" (Japan, 2022 / 130 min. / Director: Shohei Shibata)

[For screening schedules, ticket prices, etc., please see the YCAM website. Other special screenings TBA.]