

Tokyo International Gallery

Solo Exhibition

“And Still, I Call it Love”

Exhibition Period : 2026. 3. 7. Sat. – 4. 18. Sat

Opening Reception : 2026. 3. 7. Sat. 17:00 ~ 20:00



Tokyo International Gallery presents “And Still, I Call it Love,” a solo exhibition by Ayaka Shirota

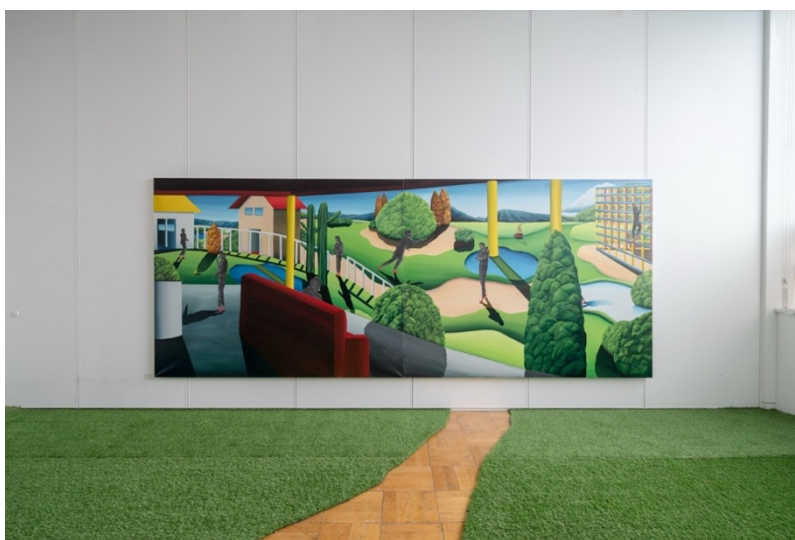
Tokyo International Gallery (Shinagawa–Tennoz, Tokyo) is pleased to announce, “And Still, I Call it Love”, a solo exhibition by Ayaka Shirota, on view from Saturday, March 7 to Saturday, April 18, 2026.

Shirota’s artistic practice centers on the inner world of emotions and memory. Drawing from emotional fluctuations, moments of vulnerability, and experiences of trauma encountered in everyday life, Shirota creates vividly colored psychological landscapes that feel bright yet subtly unsettling. Scattered throughout these scenes are figures rendered in charcoal, appearing as soul-like or conceptual presences without physical substance.

For the artist, depicting experiences that include negative emotions is an act of sublimation. Alongside the act of drawing itself, this process of sublimation forms the core of Shirota’s practice.

From this perspective, the exhibition’s theme of “Love” does not emerge abruptly. Rather, it can be read as an affirmation articulated in the present tense—one that has been reached beyond experiences imbued with negativity. In this exhibition, alongside works created on the rectangular canvases the artist has consistently used, Shirota presents new works on roll canvas and plasterboard, marking a significant new direction in their practice.

Through a body of work that approaches “Love” via a diverse range of materials and methods, the exhibition offers a space in which viewers are invited to rediscover the forms of love that surround them and to engage in an intimate, internal dialogue.



= Exhibition Statement =

When everything has fallen apart, I wonder what is left in the end.

Just as each person has their own hell, each person also has their own love.

Love takes different forms as it is directed toward a lover, a friend, a family member, or oneself.

At the moment when I felt I might break, I came to know the instant in which love called me back.

Whether life has love or not is not something that can be divided by words.

Both living and dying are possible only because love exists.

In becoming aware of that love shared by all, I have chosen in this exhibition to depict a nameless love that exists within everyone.

— With love

Ayaka Shirota

ARTIST PROFILE

Ayaka Shirota

<BIOGRAPHY>

- 2001 Born in Mie, Japan
- 2021 Entered the Oil Painting Department,
Tokyo University of the Arts
- 2025 Graduated from the Oil Painting Department,
Tokyo University of the Arts
- 2025 Entered the Mural Painting Studio, Tokyo University of the Arts
- Present Currently enrolled in the Mural Painting Studio, Tokyo University of the Arts



<PROFILE>

Born in 2001. Currently enrolled in the Mural Painting Studio at Tokyo University of the Arts.

Their practice centers on visualizing emotions, memories, and inner landscapes, and transforming them through the act of creation. Drawing inspiration from emotions that arise through relationships with others and subtle inner fluctuations that emerge in everyday life, their works aim to evoke the viewer's own memories and feelings. Through this process, they seek to create a space where internal dialogue can unfold. Major solo exhibitions include "I am..." at GALLERY ROOM・A (Tokyo).

<EXHIBITIONS>

- 2022 Self-organized group exhibition, *haco gallery* (Tokyo)
- 2023 *WHAT CAFE EXHIBITION vol.24*, WHAT CAFÉ (Tokyo)
- 2023 *Ayaka Shirota / Koji Masuyama Two-Person Exhibition*,
organized by ALPHA ET OMEGA, Onda Gallery (Tokyo)
- 2023 *conversation*, haku kyoto (Kyoto)
- 2023 *gather*, Yokohama Marine Tower, 2F Art Gallery (Kanagawa)
- 2024 *INTRO 1. — 3rd-Year Exhibition*,
Department of Oil Painting, Faculty of Fine Arts,
Tokyo University of the Arts, Daikanyama Hillside Terrace (Tokyo)

- 2025 *Tokyo University of the Arts Oil Painting Graduation Works*
Internal Review Exhibition 2025,
Painting Building, Faculty of Fine Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts (Tokyo)
- 2025 *I am...*, GALLERY ROOM ・ A (Tokyo)
- 2025 *SOJI — Soko to Kokoto*, Tsukide Kōsha (Chiba)

<Other>

- 2022 *3331 ART FAIR 2022*
- 2024 *ASYAAF*, presented by Gallery LVS
- 2024 *Break Before Dawn* (television program)

■ Interactive Art Appreciation Session

As part of the opening events, we will host a **dialogue-based viewing session**.

Dialogue-based viewing is a way of deepening one's understanding of an artwork through conversation in a small group. By putting into words what we see and what comes to mind, participants share how they and others perceive the artwork, as well as what they feel and think about it. No specialized knowledge of art is required. By spending time together carefully looking at a single artwork, this 30-minute session offers an opportunity to reflect more deeply on ourselves, on others, and on the exhibition's theme, "Love."

The session will be facilitated by a gallerist from Tokyo International Gallery.

- Interactive Art Appreciation Session : Saturday, March 7, 2026
(Limited to 5 participants per session)
Advance reservation required
Session 1: 5:00 PM–
Session 2: 5:30 PM–
 - Reservation Method : Please make your reservation through the website listed below.
Your reservation will be considered complete upon receipt of a confirmation email from us.
 - Reservation Website : <https://forms.gle/jZzaco7j4em7N6KSA>
(Please note that registration will close once capacity is reached.)
 - Reservation Period : Tuesday, February 10 ~ Friday, March 6, 2026
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■ Exhibition Overview

- Title : “And Still, I Call it Love”
- Artist : Ayaka Shirota
- Venue : Tokyo International Gallery
- Address : 2F TERRADA ART COMPLEX II, 1-32-8 Higashi-Shinagawa, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo
- Dates : March 7 (Sat) – April 18 (Sat), 2026
- Hours : 12:00 – 18:00
- Closed : Sundays, Mondays and Holidays (Tuesdays by appointment only)

■ Opening Reception

- Date : Saturday, March 7, 2026, 17:00–20:00
- Venue : Tokyo International Gallery
- Gallery Tour : Saturday, March 7, 2026, 18:30~

【 Contact 】

Tokyo International Gallery, Inc.

Kousuke Shimamura, Director

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