

Tokyo International Gallery

Solo Exhibition

Threshold of Emergence

Exhibition Period : 2026. 9. 9. Wed. – 10. 24. Sat.

Opening Reception : 2026. 9. 9. Wed. 18:00 – 21:00



Tokyo International Gallery presents *Threshold of Emergence*, a solo exhibition by Towa Takaya

Tokyo International Gallery (Shinagawa–Tennoz, Tokyo) is pleased to announce *Threshold of Emergence*, a solo exhibition by Towa Takaya, on view from Wednesday, September 9 to Saturday, October 24, 2026.

Exquisite colors, elaborate texture, and a wavering, unique depth—these qualities that characterize Takaya’s paintings are achieved not only through commercial paints and pigments, but also through coloring materials she makes herself from ingredients with distinctive optical properties, such as polarizing pearl, metal, and CO₂-derived polymer, as well as materials derived from specific regions, such as earth, ash, and minerals.

What underlies her practice of layering diverse materials is a perspective that sees the world not as something that exists independently, outside of oneself, but as what emerges as an experience through the mutual interference between body and things. This exhibition, too, can be located in the extension of this perspective.

This perspective has deepened into more specific questions, especially since she began working with diverse materials. In recent years, Takaya’s interest has shifted from expressing color in itself to the behavior of materials that give rise to color. How materials manifest different phases and transform the experience of seeing—in relation to light, environment, viewpoint, and body—has become the central question of her current practice.

Since images are not fixed entities but phenomena that emerge differently each time, the viewer’s body also forms part of the place in which the image-world emerges. Placing one’s body before the artworks, shifting one’s position, and yielding to the surrounding environment—such an experience opens only in this place. We invite you to experience what world emerges through the interplay of body, material, and the light and space of Tokyo International Gallery.

= Exhibition Statement =

Dissipative structures are associated with an entirely different ordering principle, which may be called order through fluctuation. — Ilya Prigogine

A phenomenon is not an object that exists prior to meaning, but a site of interaction constituted each time through its relation to the distribution of intensities, environmental conditions, temporal change, and the perceiving body.

What this exhibition attends to is the process of minute displacement that occurs before this site is absorbed into a stable image or meaning. As one action shifts into another, one order into another, one value into its opposite, phenomenon no longer submits to being grasped through a single property.

There, the familiar takes on uncanny qualities, a gentle atmosphere transforms into an uncontrollable force, and what appears destructive re-emerges as a condition for becoming. Yet this inversion does not occur as a dramatic rupture. Rather, it unfolds at the very periphery of perception—through density, trace, particle, light, and the shifts in perspective.

The threshold in this exhibition is not a mere border. It is a critical site that appears in the moment just before meaning takes hold, or in the passage through which dissolved meaning reconstitutes itself into another order.

This exhibition is an attempt to witness that critical moment.

Towa Takaya



ARTIST PROFILE

Towa Takaya

She was born in Tokyo in 1992 and is based there. Centering her practice on the exploration of optical phenomena and materials, she develops pictorial expression as phenomena arising in light, matter, and space. Using cosmetic ingredients, earth, minerals, and CO₂-derived materials, she creates visual experiences in which the physical properties of materials and the memories of the land are transformed through light, viewpoint, and environment. Since 2022, she has been engaged in collaborative research with Shiseido MIRAI Technology Institute. Her major solo exhibitions include *Or, Like I'm Not Myself* (DESIGN FESTA GALLERY, 2014), *It calls: shades of innocence* (Lurf Gallery, 2024), *Phenomena of the infinite* (Ginza Mitsukoshi Gallery, 2025), *Contours of the Unseen* (Kamakura Gallery, 2025), and *re: materiality* (hakari contemporary, 2025). She has also participated in art fairs in Japan and abroad, including ART FAIR TOKYO, Tokyo Gendai, and the Japan Annual-International Art Festival (Expo 2025).



Official Website: <https://towatakaya.com/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/towatakaya>



<BIOGRAPHY>

- 1992 Born in Tokyo
- 2011–2012 Foundation Diploma for Art and Design, Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, University of the Arts London
- 2012–2015 BA (Hons), Fine Art, Goldsmith College, University of London
- 2017–2019 Cooperative Research Fellow, Center for Spatial Information Science at the University of Tokyo

<EXHIBITIONS>

[Solo Exhibitions] (After 2023)

- 2023 *JOY AFTER ALL* (Lurf Gallery, Tokyo)
- 2023 *Inversing Pictorial Space using Cosmetic Ingredients*
– *A Collaborative Study on Oil Paintings* (Shiseido Global Innovation Center, Kanagawa)
- 2024 *It calls: shades of innocence* (Lurf Gallery, Tokyo)
- 2025 *Phenomena of the infinite* (Ginza Mitsukoshi Gallery, Tokyo)
- 2025 *Until that particle comes and eventually returns to the universe.* (Lurf Gallery, Tokyo)
- 2025 *Being and transfiguration beyond nothingness* (ASTER Curator Museum, Ishikawa)
- 2025 *re: materiality* (hakari contemporary, Kyoto)
- 2025 *Contours of the Unseen* (Kamakura Gallery, Kanagawa)
- 2026 *SAKURADOKI* (Hankyu MEN'S Art Gallery, Osaka)
- 2026 *Within Transience* (Ginza Mitsukoshi Gallery, Tokyo)

[Group Exhibitions]

- 2016 *On the Threshold II: Formal Presence* (Oriental Museum, Durham, UK)
- 2022 *diverse paintings* (Seibu Shibuya, Tokyo)
- 2023 *Chroma Distance* (POLA MUSEUM ANNEX, Tokyo)
- 2024 *Redcar Summer Exhibition 2024* (Redcar Contemporary Art Gallery, Redcar, UK)
- 2024 *Summer 2024* (Kamakura Gallery, Kanagawa)
- 2026 *Winter 2026* (Kamakura Gallery, Kanagawa)

<OTHERS>

- 2019 Art Fair Tokyo 2019 (Tokyo International Forum, Tokyo)
- 2022– Collaborative research with Shiseido MIRAI Technology Institute
(research on optical expression by cosmetic ingredients)

- 2023 Research exhibition with Shiseido MIRAI Technology Institute, *Inversing Pictorial Space using Cosmetic Ingredients – A Collaborative Study on Oil Paintings* (Yokohama S/PARK, Kanagawa)
- 2024 Tokyo Gendai (PACIFICO Yokohama, Kanagawa)
- 2024 Kiaf SEOUL (COEX, Seoul)
- 2024 Art Fair Beppu 2024 (Beppu International Tourist Port, Oita)
- 2024 U-35 in the 2nd Japan Annual-International Art Festival (Sennyu-ji Temple Shariden, Kyoto)
- 2024 Exhibition of *Kashinфу* under the curation of Art Place Inc. (a certain government office meeting room)
- 2025 Takeo Yamawaki and Towa Takaya, “Classification of Painting Techniques across Painting Types,” *The Journal of Society for Art and Science*
- 2025 Art Fair Tokyo 2025 (Tokyo International Forum, Tokyo)
- 2025 *Transience and Infinite* in the 3rd Japan Annual-International Art Festival (Expo 2025, Osaka)
- 2025 Tokyo Gendai (PACIFICO Yokohama, Kanagawa)
- 2025 Art Fair Beppu 2025 (B-Con Plaza, Oita)
- 2026 Cover artwork for *New Selected Works: Modern Japanese Language [Shin-seisen: Gendai no Kokugo]* and *New Selected Works: Language and Culture [Shin-seisen: Gengo-bunka]* (Meiji-shoin, high school Japanese language textbooks)

Collections: Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University and numerous corporate collections

Collaboration with Companies and Research Institutes

She has been engaged in collaborative research with Shiseido MIRAI Technology Institute since 2022, developing pictorial expressions that apply the optical properties of cosmetic ingredients, and presenting the research exhibition *Inversing Pictorial Space using Cosmetic Ingredients – A Collaborative Study on Oil Paintings* at Shiseido Global Innovation Center (S/PARK). She is also researching and creating new environmental art expressions using CO₂-derived polymer. In her new series, *Morphology of Breath*, she visualizes the circulation between humans and the environment as the optical behavior of materials.

In 2025, in collaboration with MINASE, a Japanese watch brand, she created the “Yūsei” watch dial, whose colors shift depending on viewing angle and ambient light.

She continues to research and create environmental art that visualizes the circulation between humans and the environment, using environmentally considerate materials such as CO₂-derived polymer and earth indigenous to specific regions of Japan, sourced through artist-in-residence programs in Beppu, Oita Prefecture, and Suzu, Ishikawa Prefecture.

<AWARD>

- 2009 Selected, the 83rd Kokuten Exhibition (The National Art Center, Tokyo)

= Artist Statement =

I understand painting not as an expression of a fixed image, but as a site where perception is generated within the relationships among light, material, body, and environment. Rather than presenting a single image, my works constantly shift in appearance depending on perspective, distance, and states of light, emerging as a different phenomenon each time. Particles interfere with light, and images keep wavering without being fixed. There, the very act of “seeing” is quietly called into question.

Recently, I have been creating works by superimposing materials with specific optical properties—such as polarizing pearl and metal—with materials bearing the time of the land, such as earth and sand collected in Noto, ash from Suzu ware, and minerals. The surface undergoes subtle changes in response to humidity and light; the image dissolves up close and reconstitutes itself at a distance. My interest is not in a structure in which “the subject recognizes and represents the world,” but in quietly tuning the conditions under which the world appears and repositioning the subject within the environment.

My works exist not to present a single answer but to serve as a site where the relationship between humans and the world remains open and unsettled. I am exploring the new potential to renew perception itself, moving beyond a fixed vision.



■ Exhibition Overview

- Title : Threshold of Emergence
- Artist : Towa Takaya
- Venue : Tokyo International Gallery
- Address : TERRADA ART COMPLEX II 2F, 1-32-8 Higashi-Shinagawa, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo
- Dates : Wednesday, September 9 – Saturday, October 24, 2026
- Hours : 10:00 – 19:00
- Closed : Sundays, Mondays, and Holidays (Tuesdays by appointment)

■ Opening Reception

- Date : Wednesday, September 9, 2026
- Time : 18:00 – 21:00
- Venue : Tokyo International Gallery
- Admission : Free/ No reservation required

【 Contact 】

Tokyo International Gallery Co., Ltd.

Kousuke Shimamura, Director

info@tokyointernationalgallery.co.jp