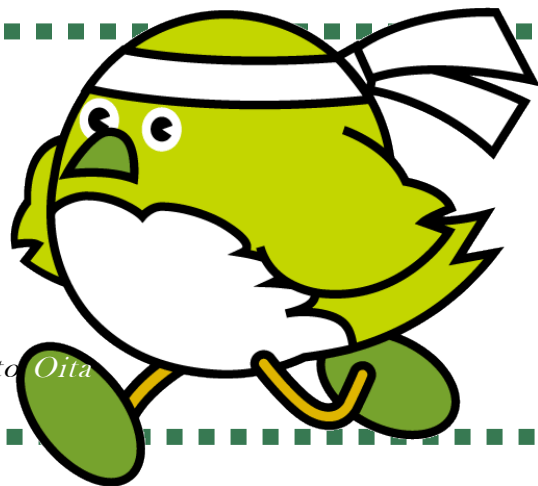


What's up,

OITA! 2019 April No. 35

Bringing the latest from Oita, Japan to all those connected to Oita thriving all across the globe.



The Oita Overseas Initiative 2019 ~ 2021 Has been Formulated

The Oita Overseas Initiative 2015~2018 ('Oita-ken kaigai senryaku (2015~2018)') is entering its final year, and the new initiative, which will be run until 2021, has now been formulated.

The initiative enacts as a compass for the prefecture's directions in its overseas activities. In the upcoming plan, focus will be placed on the realisation of new goals and the expansion of existing ones, mainly the enforcement on the export of agricultural, forestry, fishery, processed products and other items to nations in East Asia as well as ASEAN member states.



Overseas Initiative advisors' meeting, September 2018.

Furthermore, plans to use major events such as the Rugby World Cup 2019 as a gateway to new markets in Europe, America and Oceania are also in action.

Last but not least of all, we plan to make use of the network that our pool of talented individuals, including the local exchange student alumni, to back the prefecture's local industries in areas such as exchange of skills and services with overseas parties. Various adjustments in preparation to rising tourist numbers as well as the foreseeable increase in the presence of foreign residents with the changes in the Immigration Control Act are also in progress.

Read more on the Oita Overseas Initiative on Oita Prefectural Government's official website:

<http://www.pref.oita.jp/soshiki/10140/kaigaisenryaku2019.html>

** Original version in Japanese, English machine translation available.

A few words from the head of the International Division



The new fiscal year has begun. Comparing to the same time last year, the full bloom day for cherry blossoms will arrive a week later, meaning that we should be able to enjoy hanami till early April. Internal personnel transfers will occur in the Oita Prefectural Government at the end of the month, and we will be introducing the International Policy's new administration in next month's issue. With the convention of Rugby World Cup 2019 in Oita in the latter half the year, please expect a large helping of news as the games kick into full action. In addition, we will continue to supply information on our correspondence with various locations around the world, as well as promotions of Oita in East Asia, ASEAN member states and other locales.

Mitsuru Tokuno <tokuno-mitsuru@pref.oita.lg.jp>,
Head of the International Policy Division in the Oita Prefecture Planning Promotion Department

Farewell from a member of our staff

In the year I spent in Oita, I performed a wide range of work which began from translations and interpretations, later expanding to duties such as school visits, international understanding seminars targeted at Prefectural employees and overseas PR work. Working as a foreigner in a Japanese government body has been both challenging and exhilarating, not to mention enriching. Hoping to gain a deeper understanding of Oita, I spent my free time traversing far and wide across the prefecture, savouring its various charms and communicating the appeals of both Oita and Japan through social media to Chinese users. The year that I have spent in Oita, dubbed the Onsen Capital of Japan, shall be treasured as an irreplaceable episode of my life. Even after I return home, I hope to continue to enact as a bridge for China-Japanese friendship and do what little I can for the progress of our nations' relations.



-Yingmei Fang, CIR from China

Ms. Yingmei Fang, who served in the Oita Prefectural Office as a Coordinator for International Relations from April 2018, has successfully completed her term and returned home to China. We will continue to look forward to Ms. Fang's ongoing work as an Overseas Meijiron Supporter in the future as well!

Gem by the foot of Mt. Yufu

COMICO ART MUSEUM YUFUIN

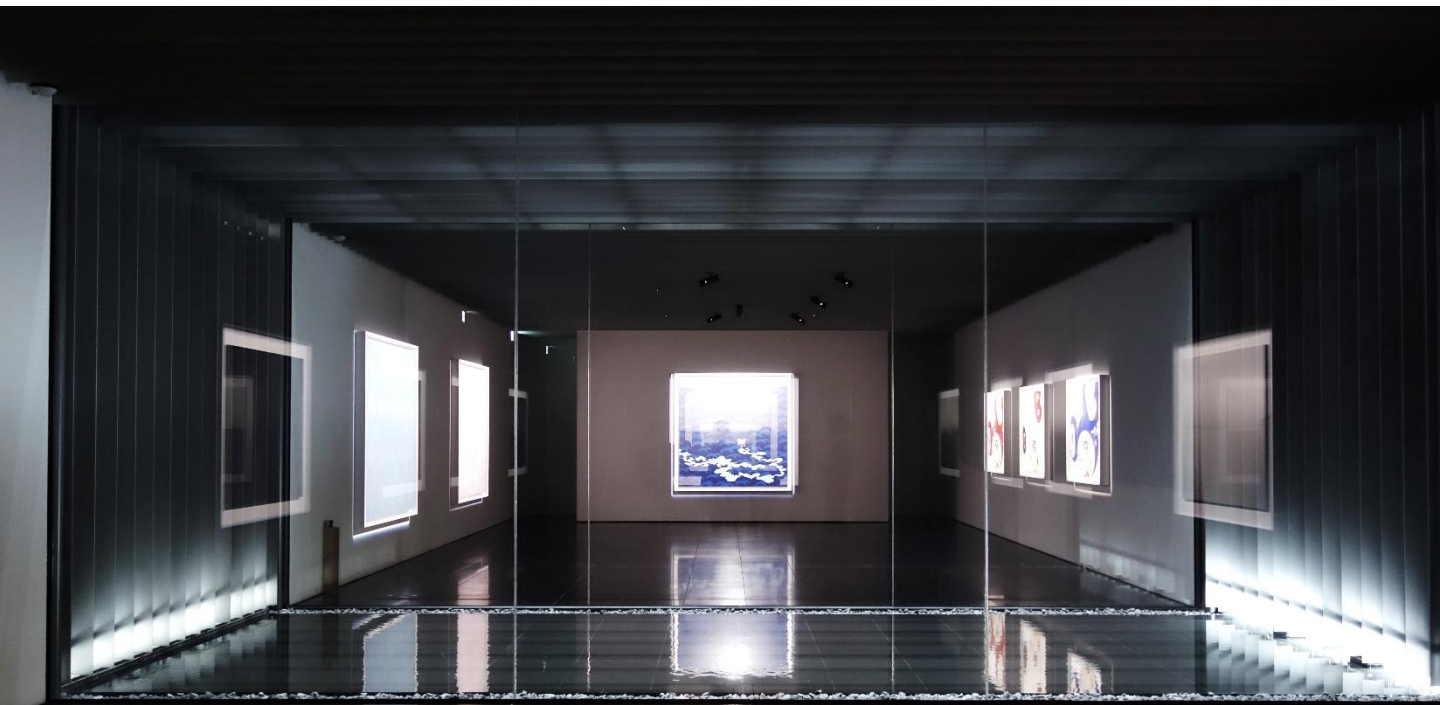
What's up, OITA! 2019 April, No. 35

It was almost March, but Mt. Yufu remains shrouded in mist, its peak speckled with snow. Sitting inconspicuously in the crisp local landscape by the foot of the mountain is the COMICO ART MUSEUM YUFUIN, a hub for art and culture established by NHN Japan.

The museum melds harmoniously with the local scenery with its black outer walls of burnt Metasequoia, and is architecturally designed by Kengo Kuma. New buds yawned on young branches and swayed in the early spring breeze, their images reflecting serenely in the dark pond outside of the entrance. The theme of black and white continues even as one enters the building, bringing the outer and inner spaces into one.

Visitors who participate in the linear one-hour tour within the museum are first brought to the two gallery exhibitions featuring Takashi Murakami and Hiroshi Sugimoto respectively. The gallery spaces are divided by a body of water that connects to the aforementioned outdoor pond. This little water pathway is one with many faces, its expressions animated by Yufuin's changing weather – the weather interacts with its surface through the semi-open roof, rippling the surface of the water or decorating it with sunlight.

In addition, enthusiasts of design may be pleased to know that all logos and fonts on site, including the museum's signboard, are works by graphic designer Kenya Hara, who is widely known for his involvement in MUJI as an art director. Hara's works are ubiquitous throughout the building without standing out sharply against the background.





One immediately feels a divergence in space upon entering the second floor, with its walls made of washi paper (Japanese traditional paper), lightly coloured timbered flooring and bright ceiling that contrast with the more darkly themed first floor. Visitors are greeted with a picturesque view of Mt. Yufu as soon as they enter the airy lounge, which is complemented by *Yama Kore Yama*, a Japanese rock garden constructed in the image of Mt. Yufu. Aside from books that provide further insight to establishment's featured artists, the lounge bookshelves are lined with manga and other popular work published by NHN COMICO. Visitors typically spend the last part of their tour in the lounge, where they can flip through the books and enjoy the views of Mt. Yufu.

Those who would like to appreciate the beauty of Mt. Yufu from a unique perspective may do well to pay the COMICO ART MUSEUM YUFUIN a visit.

COMICO ART MUSEUM YUFUIN

2995-1 Yufuincho Kawakami, Yufu City, Oita Prefecture
Postal Code: 879-5102

<https://camy.oita.jp/>

9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Tours: 9:40 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Closed every other Monday * Please refer to calendar on the official website for further details.

Admissions

Promotions in progress until the end of September

Adults: ~~¥1,500(JPY)~~ ¥1,200(JPY)

Students: ~~¥1,000(JPY)~~ ¥700(JPY)

Tours run for 1 hour and are by reservations only. Available languages include Japanese and Korean, English pamphlets are provided upon request.

Words from the editor

Cherry blossoms are blooming at full blast lately and I spent almost everyday enjoying hanami. April is both a time farewell and new beginnings, an appropriate time to show gratitude towards those dear to you.

- Xin Lan Xie, CIR from Australia

