

August 13, 2021
Benesse Art Site Naoshima

【To the press】

Notice of Damage to the Outdoor Sculpture "Pumpkin"
at Benesse House Museum due to the Proximity of Typhoon No. 9
and Suspension of the Exhibition

We would like to inform the public that the outdoor sculpture "Pumpkin" at Benesse House Museum was damaged by typhoon No. 9 on August 9, 2021. The artwork has been removed from display and is currently being stored on the museum premises. We would like to express our deepest apologies to the artist, Yayoi Kusama, and also apologize for the worry and inconvenience this may have caused to her fans and the local community, who have watched over the work with great affection. We would also like to ask for your understanding in our suspending the exhibition of this work for the time being.

Background of the Damage Incident

Benesse Art Site Naoshima has been exhibiting Yayoi Kusama's "Pumpkin" as an outdoor sculpture at Benesse House Museum on a pier in Gotanji, Naoshima Town, Kagawa Prefecture. Although the museum, which exhibits many outdoor artworks, discusses countermeasures to protect the artworks and remove them whenever a typhoon is approaching, in the case of Typhoon No. 9 on August 9, 2021, the forecast itself changed rapidly and there was no official warning on that day. So, the decision to remove the artworks was delayed and we were unable to respond to the sudden waves. Some of the artworks and facilities were damaged, and "Pumpkin," the symbol of Benesse Art Site Naoshima and Naoshima, was severely damaged.

Collection and Storage of Artworks and Future Plans

The artwork has been safely collected by the facility management staff and is being stored on the Benesse House premises. We are currently assessing the condition of the damaged artwork and will discuss how to repair it and reexhibit it in the future, in close consultation with all parties concerned. In addition, we will re-evaluate the accident and strive to prevent its recurrence and further strengthen measures for the management of all artworks.

【Appendix】

Reference About the Artworks and Exhibition

Yayoi Kusama's "Pumpkin" was first exhibited at the exhibition jointly organized by Fukutake Publishing Co., Ltd. (now Benesse Holdings, Inc.) and Nanjo & Associates (now N&A Inc.), with the cooperation of Ota Fine Arts and Roentgen Institute of the Arts. (now Röntgenwerke AG) Since its opening in 1992, Benesse House has been holding the contemporary art exhibition, "Out of Bounds" under the theme of "people, nature, and art." We aim to encourage visitors to become familiar with art in the Setouchi region's natural environment and inspire them to live true to their own unique way of life. In "Seascape," the outdoor works were displayed with the intention of harmonizing or competing with the surrounding nature to create a new exhibition space. Yayoi Kusama's "Pumpkin," which has a particularly strong connection with the theme of "Seascape," continued to be exhibited.

Artwork details

Collection: Benesse Holdings, Inc.

Material: fiber-reinforced plastic

Dimensions: 2 meters high, 2.5 meters wide

About Benesse Art Site Naoshima

Benesse Art Site Naoshima is the collective name for all art-related activities conducted by Benesse Holdings, Inc. and Fukutake Foundation on the islands of Naoshima and Teshima in Kagawa Prefecture and on Inujima island in Okayama Prefecture. Our fundamental aim is to create significant spaces by bringing contemporary art and architecture in resonance with the pristine nature of the Seto Inland Sea, a landscape with a rich cultural and historical fabric. Through contacts with art and nature, sceneries and inhabitants of the Seto Inland Sea region, we seek to inspire visitors to reflect on the meaning of Benesse's motto, *Well-Being*. In all our ongoing activities, we are committed to fostering a relationship of mutual growth between art and the region, aiming to make a positive contribution to the local communities. To learn more, visit <http://www.benesse-artsite.jp/en/>

About Benesse Holdings, Inc.

Guided by the corporate philosophy, "Benesse = Well-Being", the Benesse Group conducts business in the fields of education, language/global leadership training, lifestyles, and senior/nursing care, helping every customer to nurture their desire to learn and to solve problems throughout their lives. Group companies include Benesse Corporation which runs Shinkenzeni: correspondence courses for children from preschool to high-school ages, Shinken Simulated Exams and student pocketbooks; Benesse Style Care Co., Ltd., Japan's leading operator of senior and nursing homes; and Berlitz, the world's largest language school. Benesse Holdings, Inc. has been working on community development utilizing art for more than 30 years at Benesse Art Site Naoshima, together with Fukutake Foundation. To learn more, visit <https://www.benesse-hd.co.jp/en/>

About Fukutake Foundation

Fukutake Foundation engages in art initiatives based on three main projects: museum projects centered on Naoshima, Teshima, and Inujima; subsidies for regional development activities through culture and art in various parts of Japan; and independent and co-sponsored projects to support the Setouchi Triennale and other events. Our goal is to create better communities where the elderly are full of smiles by encouraging each individual to think that "Benesse = Well-Being" through these art initiatives. To learn more, visit <https://fukutake-foundation.jp/> (in Japanese)

For inquiries regarding this matter

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