



Shozo Shimamoto

ABC-ARTE
Genoa
Italy
+39.010.8683884
info@abc-arte.com
www.abc-arte.com

Biography

Shimamoto was born in Osaka in 1928. He is one of the founders of Gutai movement together with Jiro Yoshihara, Akira Kanayama, Saburo Murakami and Kazuo Shiraga. The movement developed in the Japanese Kansai region in 1954.

In 1957 the Group created Gutai Stage Exhibition: it was the first time that a stage was used as a living artistic space in which works were shaped through a colors shooting cannon, created by Shimamoto himself, in a performance enriched with sounds, helicopters, cranes and weapons.

Artistic performances were themselves part of art exhibitions and some of Shimamoto's sound works, predicting Cage's Fluxus work, were purchased by Centre Pompidou in Paris and by the City Museum in Ashiya.

During the Sixties Shimamoto attended with his works several exhibitions regarding the Gutai movement in the most important Galleries in the world. Gutai artists were discovered by the art critic Michel Tapi. He described the Group linking it to French Movements of Informal Art and Tachisme.

In 1972 the Group broke up and Shimamoto showed his interests for Mail Art and Networking Art developing a personal and particular idea of the artist and the artwork. The latter is the result of a social and collective work which reflects a precise plan: every time he met an artist he invited him to express himself with brushes, canvases and colors. Shimamoto used to take pictures during the artist's performance.

Shimamoto also used to realize enormous canvases. For example, in 1990, at the Modern Art National Gallery in Rome, he realized the same performance made during the Second Exhibition at Ohara Kaikan in Tokyo but with new meanings and means. Shimamoto asked to his mail artist friends to put in the bottles full of colors some little objects like shells, grains of rice and sand, to use them in his artworks. The result was really peculiar and original.

During the 80s and 90s he realized a lot of performances between Europe and USA.

Selected exhibition and protect

Individualism was a central concern for Gutai artists. During the Second World War, Japan's totalitarian regime had promoted the notion of a national body and stifled any hints of individual expression. Members of the group unashamedly rebelled against this attitude in their writings and artworks, encouraging the public, children, and other artists to "do what no one has done before!"

The word 'gutai' translates as 'concreteness', and it articulates one of the Gutai group's most distinctive traits - their desire to physically engage with an extraordinary range of materials. The name also anticipated their investigations into the reciprocal connection between matter (paint, chemicals, tar, mud, water) and physical action (breaking, exploding, tearing, dripping). They wanted to create a new kind of art that explored the relationship between the human spirit and material, works that luxuriated in "the scream of matter."

Gutai artists were exceptional international networkers who used the media to spread their ideas across the globe. They also collaborated with other artists' groups in Europe and America, including Allan Kaprow's Happenings, the Art Informel group, and the Dutch Nul collective. This drive was not only essential to the movement's long term success, but it also represented their rejection of Japanese isolation during World War II and their desire to be a part of a new, liberal-minded Japan.

Gutai firmly believed in concept over form, thoroughly rejecting representative art. They wanted to move away from the art object towards the invisible world of ideas, and to leave plenty of room for viewers to come up with potential meanings on their own. Two Gutai practices that articulated these ideas were the pared-down, interactive works of Atsuko Tanaka and Saburō Murakami's pieces that aimed to separate art from content with a strong dose of wit.

During the 80s and 90s Shimamoto realized a lot of performances between Europe and USA.

In 1993 the Group was invited to Biennale di Venezia.

In 1994 Alexandra Munroe, curator of the exhibition *The Japanese art after 1945: scream against the sky* at New York Guggenheim Museum, discovered that Shimamoto's holes were performed in 1950 and that Shimamoto preceded Lucio Fontana's famous creations. This discover brought a renewed interest for Shimamoto's works, since then mentioned in artistic manuals and encyclopaedias. In 1996, after his meeting with Bern Porter, creator of the bomb destroying Hiroshima, and because of his constant pacific activity against atomic bombs, he was proposed as candidate for the Peace Nobel Prize.

In 1998 he was chosen among the world four best artists in the afterwar era together with Jackson Pollock, John Cage and Lucio Fontana for an exhibition at MOCA in Los Angeles.

In 1999 he attended the 48th Biennale di Venezia together with David Boves and Yoko Ono and in 2003 he came back to the 50th Biennale di Venezia with the initiative *Brain Academy Apartment*. In Venice, in 2004, he realized a performance with an helicopter.

In May 2006 the Morra Foundation hosted a Shimamoto's personal exhibition in Naples; the event began with an opening performance in the renowned Dante Square.

In 2007 Shimamoto participated again at Biennale di Venezia and took part in the *Art Challenged Project* organizing an event in Beijing for disabled artists. 13 November 2008 at the Museo d'Arte Contemporanea at Villa Croce, Genoa. "*Shozo Shimamoto. Samurai, acrobata dello sguardo*", by Achille Bonito Oliva with a performance in Palazzo Ducale organized by ABC-ARTE contemporary art Gallery. In last years he was involved in a teaching project at Kyoto University of Education and he is President of the Tkarazuka University of Art and Design and of the Disabled Artists Japanese Association.

In 2008 the solo exhibition *Shozo Shimamoto Samurai, Avcrobat of the sight* curated by Achille Bonito Oliva with the support of ABC-ARTE, in Villa Croce Contemporary Art Museum Genova, on the occasion of the exhibition it was published a book of ABC-ARTE series.

Solo Exhibitions

2015

Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium
De Buck Gallery, New York, USA
Whitestone Gallery, Tokyo, Japan

2014

Gutai: testi, filmati, foto.
Shimamoto: opere su carta degli anni Cinquanta, l'Elefante Arte Contemporanea, Treviso, Italy
Whitestone Gallery, Tokyo, Japan

2013

Shozo Shimamoto - Memorial Exhibition, Studio Visconti, Milan, Italy
Shozo Shimamoto - Malerei und Geste - Die Materie der Aktionen, Galerie Hofburg, Brixen, Italy
Memorial Event Shozo-ism, Hotel Novotel Koshien, Osaka, Japan

2012

Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium

2011

Basilica di Santo Stefano, Bologna, Italy
Shozo Shimamoto, kamikaze del colore, Nicola Pedana Arte Contemporanea, Caserta, Italy
Shozo Shimamoto: A Volo Radente, Fondazione Morra, Napoli, Italy
Shozo Shimamoto, Opere 1950-2011. Oriente e Occidente. East and West, Palazzo Magnani, Reggio Emilia, Italy

2009

Shozo Shimamoto. La pittura è la durata dell'azione. 1950-2008, Galleria Hofficiana d'Arte, Roma, Italy
Gallery Caso, Osaka, Japan
La danza del colore, Galleria VV8 artecontemporanea, Reggio Emilia, Italy

2008

Performance at the Fondazione Morra, Napoli, Italy
Performance at Punta Campanella, Sorrento, Italy
Performance at Villa Bersani, Capri, Italy
Shozo Shimamoto/Yasuo Sumi - I colori della pace, Museo Magi '900, Pive di Cento, Italy
Shozo Shimamoto. Samurai, acrobata dello sguardo, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea di Villa Croce, Genova, Italy

2007

Shozo Shimamoto: Action Colors 1950-2006, Galleria Carini & Donatini, Arezzo, Italy

2006

Shozo Shimamoto. Opere anni '50-'90, Fondazione Mora, Napoli, Italy
Un'arma per la Pace/A Weapon of Peace, performance at the Piazza Dante, Napoli, Italy
Performance at Chang Xing, Beijing, China

2005

Performance at Flash Art Museum,
Trevi, Italy
L'Atelier 25, Reggio Emilia, Italy

2004

Shozo Shimamoto dal Gutai a Proxima
1955-2004, Galleria Internazionale
d'Arte Moderna Ca'Pesaro, Venice,
Italy

1999

Hiroshima, performance in
Amagasaki, Japan
Shozo Shimamoto Italian Festival,
Fondazione Europea Alberto
Cravanzola, Milan; Museo Ken Damy,
Brescia; Villa Giusti, Verona,
Italy

1997

Shozo Shimamoto. Gutai works,
Hundertmark Gallery, Cologne,
Germany

1991

Galerie Sander, Darmstadt, Germany

1987

Performance on the occasion of
Marcel Duchamp's birth, Dallas, USA

1984

Performance at Hundertmark Gallery,
Cologne, Germany

1981

Center Contemporary Art, Osaka,
Japan

1973

Performance at Imai Gallery, Osaka,
Japan

Performance at Shunju-kan Gallery,
Osaka, Japan

Performance at Shinibashi Gallery,
Osaka, Japan

Performance at Modern Craft
Gallery, Osaka, Japan

1972

Performance at Galeria Sobrad, Sao
Paulo, Brazil

Performance at Muramatsu Gallery,
Tokyo, Japan

1971

Performance at Club Arrow, Osaka,
Japan

Sony Building, Tokyo, Japan

1962

Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan

1961

Performance at the Gutai
Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan

Group Exhibitions

2014

Gutai - Scream of Matter,
WeGallery, Berlin, Germany
Leap into the Void, Axel Vervoordt
Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium

2013

Jim Hodges: Give More Than You
Take, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas,
USA

Gutai: Splendid Playground,
Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA

Gutai & Shozo Shimamoto, Ever Gold
Gallery, San Francisco, USA

Gutai: Experimental Exhibition of
Modern Art to Challenge the Mid-
Winter Burning Sun, Gutai
Historical Survey and Contemporary
Response, Walter and McBean
Galleries, San Francisco Art
Institute USA

Destroy the Picture: Painting the
Void, 1949-1962, Museum of
Contemporary Art Chicago, Chicago,
USA

New Neon: Light, Paint and
Photography, Bedford Gallery,
Leshar Center for the Arts, Walnut
Creek, California, USA

2012

Painting the Void, MoCA Museum of
Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, USA

Gutai: The Spirit of an Era,
National Art Center, Tokyo, Japan

A Visual Essay on Gutai, Hauser &
Wirth, New York, USA

Explosion: Painting as Action,
Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden

2011

An Experimental Conference on Art
and Science to Challenge the Mid-
Summer Sun, Moderna Museet,
Stockholm, Sweden

2010

Gutai : dipingere con il tempo e
Parco Civico/Painting with Time and
Space, Museo Cantonale d'Arte e
Parco Civico, Lugano, Italy

2009

Cose mai viste II, Palazzo
Barberini, Rome, Italy

53. Esposizione Internazionale
d'Arte, Venice Biennial, Venice,
Italy

In-Finitum, Palazzo Fortuny,
Venice, Italy

Madre Coraggio: l'Arte, Villa
Rufolo, Ravello, Italy

2008

Vento d'Oriente, Certosa di San
Giacomo, Capri, Italy

2007

Felissimo White Project, Fashion
Museum, Kobe, Japan

Felissimo, Hyogo Prefectural
Diplomatic Establishment, Hyogo,
Japan

Art, Anti-Art, Non-Art:
Experimentations in the Public
Sphere in Postwar Japan, The Getty
Research Institute, Los Angeles,
USA

Chiostro di San Nicolò, Venice
Biennial, Venice, Italy (Bottle
Crash performance)

Art Challenged Project, Beijing,
China

Artempo: Where Time Becomes Art,
Palazzo Fortuny, Venice, Italy

Intramoenia Extra Art, Lecce, Italy

2006

ZERO. Internationale Künstler-Avant-garde der 50er/60er Jahre, Museum Kunst Palast, Düsseldorf, Germany; Musée d'Art Moderne, Saint-Etienne, France

2005

Senza Confine, Galleria Continua, San Gimignano, Italy

Un cuscino per rognare, Palazzo Casotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy

Gutai e AU in Italia, Galleria Spazio Fiscio, Modena, Italy

2004

Gutai 1954-1972, Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art, Kobe, Japan

Traces. Body and Idea in Contemporary Art, The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Japan

2003

50. Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte, Venice Biennial, Venice, Italy

Skin Deep. Il corpo come luogo del segno artistico, Museo di Arte Contemporanea - MART, Trento, Italy

2002

Who's Norma Jeane?, Galleria Primrose, London, UK

Artists of Gutai Association, The Miyagi Museum of Art, Sendai, Miyagi, Japan

2001

Japan Year, London (performance)

1999

Gutai, Galerie Nationale de Jeu de Paume, Paris, France

XLVIII Mostra Internazionale d'Arte, Venice Biennial, Venice, Italy (Japanese pavilion with David Bowie and Yoko Ono)

1998

Out of Actions: Between Performance and the Objects: 1949-1979, Museum of Contemporary Art MoCA, Los Angeles, USA; Osterreichisches Museum fur angewandte Kunst, Vienna, Austria; Museu d'Art Contemporani, Barcelona, Spain; City Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan

1997

Torino Parigi New York Osaka. Tapié. Un Art Autre, Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna, Torino, Italy ; Espace d'Arte Moderne et Contemporaine de Toudoule et Midi-Pyrenénées, Toulouse, France

1994

Japanese Art after 1945: Scream against the Sky, Yokohama Museum of Art, Yokohama, Japan; Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA

1993

Gutai II: 1959-1965, Ashiya City Museum of Art and History, Ashiya, Japan

Gutai III: 1965-1972, Ashiya City Museum of Art and History, Ashiya, Japan

Passaggio a Oriente, XLV Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte, Venice Biennial, Venice, Italy

Challenge of Art after the War : Jiro Yoshihara and the Gutai Group, Museum of Art, Ehime, Japan

Gutai 1955-1956: A Restarting Point in Japanese Contemporary Art, Penrose Institute, Tokyo, Japan

1992

Artists of Gutai Art Association, The Miyagi Museum of Art, Sendai, Miyagi, Japan

Gutai I: 1954-1958, Ashiya City Museum of Art and History, Ashiya, Japan

Outdoor Exhibition 1955, 1956, Ashiya City Museum of Art and History, Ashiya, Japan

1991

Gutai Japanische Avantgarde
1954-1965, Institute Mathildenhöhe,
Darmstadt, Germany

Adventures of Paintings Gutai,
Fukuoka Art Museum, Fukuoka, Japan
Gutai Group Show, Galerie Sander,
Darmstadt, Germany

1990

Gutai : The Avant-Garde Group
Unfinished, Shoto Museum of Art,
Tokyo, Japan

Giappone all'avanguardia. Il Gruppo
Gutai negli anni cinquanta,
Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna,
Rome, Italy

1986

Japon des Avant-Gardes 1910-1970,
Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris,
France

1985

Jiro Yoshihara and Gutai 1954-1972,
Ashiya Civic Center, Ashiya, Japan
Action and Emotion, Paintings of
the 1950's, Informel, Gutai, Cobra,
National Museum of Art, Osaka

Reconstruction: Avant-Garde Art in
Japan 1945-1965, Museum of Modern
Art, Oxford, UK

Grupo Gutai: Pintura y Accion,
Museo de Arte Contemporaneo
Español, Madrid, Spain

1982

Toward the Museum of Tomorrow -
Live Art Theatre, Hyogo Prefectural
Museum of Art, Kobe, Japan

6 Artists of Gutai, Municipal Art
Gallery, Itami, Japan

1981

Directions in Post-War I - The
1950's - Gloom and Shafts in Light,
Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo,
Japan

1979

World Symposium Invitation Show,
Alberta, Canada

Jiro Yoshihara and Today's Aspects
of Gutai, Hyogo Prefectural Museum
of Art, Kobe, Japan

Hansetouchi Modern Art Exhibition,
Okayama, Japan

Hiroshima Renaissance, Hiroshima,
Japan

1978

File & Life, Tokyo Museum, Tokyo,
Japan

Today's Art, Kitakiushu Museum,
Kitakiushu, Japan

Art 78 Stouchi Exhibition, Ehime
prefecture, Ehime, Japan

1977

What are you doing now?, Tokyo
Museum, Tokyo, Japan

1976

Today's Notion of Space, Municipal
Gallery of Art, Yokohama, Japan

Japan Now, Kaplikon Gallery,
Embassy Gallery, San Francisco, USA

Eighteen Years of Gutai Art,
Prefectural Gallery, Osaka, Japan

1975

Artists' Union Group, Tokyo and Osaka, Japan; San Francisco, USA

1972

Seventeen Years of Gutai Art, Gutai Mini Pinacotheca, Nakanoshima, Osaka, Japan

1970

Japan Expo '70-Garden on Garden, Expo Museum, Osaka, Japan

An Exhibition of Prints by Eight Artists, Iteza Gallery, Kyoto, Japan

1969

IX Contemporary Japanese Art Exhibition, Museum of the City, Tokyo, Japan

1968

Shimbun Peace Price Art Exhibition, Department Store Daimaru, Kobe, Japan

The 20th Gutai Art Exhibition, Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan

The 21st Gutai Art Exhibition, Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan

Contemporary Art Exhibition Only in the Night, Miyazaki Kanko Hotel, Miyazaki, Japan

1967

Gutai Art Exhibition in Austria, Heide Hildebrand Gallery, Klagenfurt, Austria

The 18th Gutai Art Exhibition, Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan

The 4th Summer Festival, Festival Hall, Osaka, Japan

The 19th Gutai Art Exhibition, Central Museum, Tokyo; Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan

1966

NUL 66. Nul Negentienhonderd Zes en Zestig, Galerij Olez, The Hague, The Netherlands

II Salon International des Galeries Pilotes Lausanne, Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Palais de Rumine, Lausanne, Switzerland

The 17th Gutai Art Exhibition, Department Store Takashimaya, Yokohama, Japan

1965

NUL 65. Nul Negentienhonderd Vijf en Zestig, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

The 15th Gutai Art Exhibition, Gutai Pinacotheca, Osaka, Japan

The 16th Gutai Art Exhibition, Department Store Keio, Tokyo, Japan

Groupe Gutai-Gutai Art Exhibition in Paris, Galerie Stadler, Paris, France

1964

The 14th Gutai Art Exhibition, Department Store Takashimaya, Osaka, Japan

1963

The 12th Gutai Art Exhibition, Department Store Takashimaya, Osaka, Japan

The 13th Gutai Art Exhibition, Department Store Takashimaya, Osaka, Japan

1962

The 11th Gutai Art Exhibition, Department Store Takashimaya, Osaka, Japan

Don't Worry, the Moon Won't Fall Down: Gutai art and Moderita modern dance, Sankei Hall, Osaka, Japan

1961

Continuité et avant-garde au Japon,
International Center of Aesthetic
Research, Torino, Italy
The 10th Gutai Art Exhibition,
Department Store Takashimaya, Osaka,
Japan

1960

International Sky Festival (The 9th
Gutai Art Exhibition), Department
Store Takashimaya, Osaka, Japan

1959

Arte Nuova: Esposizione
Internazionale di Pittura Nuova,
Palazzo Graneri della Rocca,
Torino, Italy

The 7th Gutai Art Exhibition,
Galleria Arti Figurative, Torino,
Italy

The 8th Gutai Art Exhibition,
Municipal Museum of Art, Kyoto,
Japan

Fifteen Japanese Contemporary
Artists recommended by Tapié, Gendai
Gallery, Tokyo, Japan

1958

Gutai Art on Stage, Asahi Hall,
Osaka, Japan

The International Art of a New Era:
Informel and Gutai, Department Store
Takashimaya, Osaka, Japan (travels
to Nagasaki, Hiroshima, Tokyo,
Kyoto)

1957

The 3rd Gutai Art Exhibition,
Municipal Museum of Art, Kyoto,
Japan

Gutai Art on the Stage, Sankei Hall,
Osaka and Tokyo, Japan

The 4th Gutai Art Exhibition, Ohara
Hall, Tokyo, Japan

International Contemporary Art
Exhibition of the World, Bridgestone
Museum of Art, Tokyo; Department
Store Daimaru, Osaka, Japan

1956

Performance of the Gutai group,
Refinery Yoshihara Oil Mill,
Nishinomija, Japan

One-Day-Only-Outdoor Exhibition,
Mukogawa River, Amagasaki, Japan

Outdoor Gutai Art Exhibition, Ashiya
Park, Ashiya, Japan

The 2nd Gutai Art Exhibition, Ohara
Hall, Tokyo, Japan

1955

Seventh Exhibition of the
Independent Yomiuri, Metropolitan
Museum, Tokyo, Japan

Experimental Outdoor Exhibition of
Modern Art to Challenge the Mid-
Summer Sun, Ashiya Park, Ashiya,
Japan

The 1st Gutai Exhibition, Ohara
Hall, Tokyo, Japan

1954

Modan Aato / Modern Art Exhibition,
Japan

1953

Kansai Art Exhibition, Kansai,
Japan

The 1st Genbi Exhibition, Asahi
Biru Gallery, Kobe, Japan

1948

Seven Avant-Garde Artists, Kinetsu
Department Store, Osaka, Japan