

About the Drafting of the Aichi Protocol

It was pronounced by Governor Ohmura Hideaki of Aichi Prefecture that the Aichi Declaration/Protocol would be an appeal for freedom of expression to all the nations of the world.

He also stated this in a letter addressed to the participating artists of Aichi Triennale 2019 on August 20, 2019. Apologizing for the disruption caused by the suspension of the Triennale's "After 'Freedom of Expression?'" exhibit, Governor Ohmura wrote that he would in turn "propose the Aichi Declaration/Protocol as an appeal for freedom of expression to the nations and people of the world," adding that he hoped to do so with the cooperation of the Triennale artists and curators.

The Aichi Declaration/Protocol began with a suggestion by Pedro Reyes, one of the Triennale curators, which Governor Ohmura then backed. Taking up the challenge, we were among a group of Triennale artists who felt it was important for the drafting of the Aichi Declaration/Protocol to be an artist-led initiative, and not left to government officials. And we wanted the process to be open to the public.

Behind this was the strong conviction that, undeterred by the Aichi incident, a site had to be established for balanced discussion about art and society, and also that the Aichi Protocol should above all not be turned into a "political event." This is why we were determined not to stop at making an abstract declaration but to establish a protocol addressing concrete points.

Led by the volunteer artists, a team of diverse experts including curators, members of an artist association, art managers, an art critic, a gallerist, and a lawyer specializing in art and law worked on the text together. This was followed by a discussion of the protocol contents with international visitors in conjunction with the Aichi Triennale 2019 International Forum, held October 5 at the Aichi Arts Center. The next day, October 6, open "audience meetings" with art and legal experts were convened simultaneously in Nagoya and Tokyo, where we listened to the frank comments of the public—starting with the people of Aichi Prefecture—and integrated them into the document.

It was at this time that Fujii Hikaru, Murayama Goro, and Odawara Nodoka were appointed as artist representatives to the Protocol Drafting Working Group (hereafter, Drafting WG). The other members of the Drafting WG included the Triennale artistic director and curators, members of the Aichi Triennale Next Step Committee, the Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art, and an outside advisor.

On October 9, the artist draft of the Aichi Declaration/Protocol was published on the Triennale website, and feedback solicited from the general public. The final draft was subsequently completed over the course of several negotiations between the Aichi Triennale and the Drafting WG.

The Aichi Declaration/Protocol is not a political performance. It is a concrete protocol for implementing art and cultural projects. It was drawn up with great care by artists for the sake of realizing art and cultural projects with autonomy from all power structures. And in the process of its finalization it has incorporated contributions from experts, ordinary citizens including the people of Aichi Prefecture, and the diverse viewpoints of the general public.

The Aichi Declaration/Protocol was created so that we could learn from the

experience of Aichi Triennale 2019 and pass it on to posterity as an event that will contribute to the future of art and society. In order for art to never again be suppressed by hatred and exclusion, and for the protection of freedom of expression and the public's right to appreciate art in all its diversity, we hope that the Aichi Declaration/Protocol will be widely approved and endorsed by art festivals and exhibitions starting with the next Aichi Triennale, and instituted across all societies.

Fujii Hikaru, Murayama Goro, Odawara Nodoka
Aichi Declaration/Protocol Drafting Working Group
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