

Creative Core Areas Map



CREATIVE CITY YOKOHAMA

文化藝術創造都市横浜



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FORMER DAIICHI BANK YOKOHAMA BRANCH,
STEEP SLOPE STUDIO, ZOU-NO-HANA TERRACE, HATSUKO-HINODECHO AREA,
THE BAYS, ART CENTER NEW, SUBURBS PART ACTION, ACY, ART REAL ESTATE, BUKATSUDO,
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF FILM AND NEW MEDIA, TOKYO UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS,
YOKOHAMA TRIENNALE, YOKOHAMA JAZZ PROMENADE, YPAM,
JAPAN-CHINA-KOREA INTER-CITY CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM, CCNJ

CREATIVE CITY YOKOHAMA

Yokohama's Creative City Measures

Since its port opened in 1859, Yokohama has symbolized Japan's internationalization, attracting diverse influences and fostering vibrant cultural exchanges. People from across the country, driven by a pioneering spirit, merged their hometown traditions with new ideas, shaping Yokohama into a city of openness and innovation.

Despite challenges like the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923, the heavy air raids of 1945 known as the Bombing of Yokohama, and post-war U.S. military requisitions, Yokohama has continually reinvented itself as Japan's gateway to the world.

Overcoming past challenges, Yokohama has shaped its future with major urban projects like Minato Mirai 21, high-speed rail, and the Bay Bridge, growing into one of Japan's largest cities.

Yet, by 2004, as the city neared its port's 150th anniversary, a contrast emerged. While Minato Mirai thrived, the historic Kannai district lost some of its signature charm. Iconic Western and modernist buildings faded, Yokohama's distinctive city space blurred, and rising office vacancies signaled a decline in both economic and cultural energy.

To rejuvenate Yokohama and restore its distinct charm, the city focused on the Creative City concept, integrating arts and culture into urban development to create new value.

Key projects include: Creative Core Areas (since 2004), transforming historic buildings and public spaces into creative hubs; Film Culture City Project (since 2005), nurturing the next generation in the film industry; and Arts Commission Yokohama (since 2007), connecting arts, culture, and citizens to foster collaboration.

Yokohama is home to world-class art programs, including: Yokohama Triennale (since 2001), a prestigious contemporary art exhibition held every three years; Yokohama International Performing Arts Meeting (YPAM), a global platform for stage arts professionals to create, showcase, and connect; and Yokohama Jazz Promenade, one of Japan's leading jazz festivals.

Building on its creative city expertise, Yokohama is now expanding these initiatives beyond the central waterfront, shaping its suburbs with cultural innovation. By engaging with its residents, Yokohama continues to evolve as a city to be chosen, ensuring lasting vibrancy and appeal.

Creative Core Areas

Transforming historic landmarks and public spaces into hubs for creative expression

1 Former Daiichi Bank Yokohama Branch

The Birthplace of Yokohama's Creative City Measures

The former Daiichi Bank Yokohama Branch (1929), a historic landmark, became a testing ground in 2004 for urban revitalization using Yokohama's unique cultural assets. Until 2021, it served as a hub for creativity, community collaboration, and cultural innovation. In 2025, it will reopen as a facility tentatively named BankPark YOKOHAMA, a dynamic space designed to foster connections, learning, and sustainable lifestyles. Features include a craft gallery, cafe, and flower shop, enriching everyday life, a co-working lounge promoting the circular economy, and an SDGs school empowering children through hands-on learning. Blending history with innovation, this new hub will redefine urban culture and creativity in Yokohama.



2 Steep Slope Studio

From Rehearsal Space to Creative Incubator

Originally opened as a municipal wedding hall (1993), Oimatsu Hall transformed into Steep Slope Studio in 2006, offering rehearsal spaces, such as studios and halls, for theater and dance, including Japanese rooms, while retaining its original structure. More than just a rehearsal venue, it nurtures both art and artists, supporting creative projects and strengthening artistic careers. With past residents winning prestigious awards like the Kishida Prize for Drama, Steep Slope Studio continues to be a vital force in shaping Japan's performing arts landscape.



3 Zou-no-Hana Terrace

A Hub Where People and Cultures Meet, Connect, and Create

Located in Zou-no-Hana Area, the historic gateway of Yokohama's port, Zou-no-Hana Terrace is a free cultural and tourism hub where people and culture connect. Opened in 2009 as part of Yokohama's 150th port anniversary project, it continues the area's legacy as a meeting point of diverse traditions. Through art, performance, and music programs, the terrace fosters new cultural expressions, creating a dynamic space for creativity. The Zou-no-Hana Cafe further enriches this experience with event-inspired menus, seamlessly blending food, art, and community.



Photo:DAICI ANO

4 Urban Renewal (Hatsuko-Hinodecho Area)

Public-Private Initiative for Art-Driven Urban Renewal

Once plagued by red-light businesses, the Hatsuko-Hinodecho Area transformed through a public-private initiative uniting the community, police, and local government. Following a 2005 police crackdown, the area was reimagined through art and creativity. Led by the Certified NPO Koganecho Area Management Center, former storefronts and railway underpasses became art studios and exhibition spaces, while the Koganecho Bazaar brought cultural vibrancy and community engagement. Recognized both domestically and internationally, this initiative won the Prime Minister's Award (2009) for Urban Safety and the Japan Foundation's Global Citizenship Award (2017).



Photo: Ryuta Abe



Speak Cryptic (From Our Hands To Our Many Mouths) (2018), Photo: Yasuyuki Kasaki



5 THE BAYS (Former Kanto Local Finance Bureau Yokohama Local Finance Office Building)

A Platform for Industrial Innovation: Merging Sports & Creativity

The Former Kanto Local Finance Bureau Yokohama Local Finance Office Building (1928), a designated cultural property, was first utilized as ZAIM, a temporary creative hub for young artists. In 2017, it was transformed into THE BAYS, a flagship facility designed to foster creative industries, economic revitalization, and urban vibrancy. Operated by Yokohama DeNA BayStars, this dynamic space champions the theme of Sports x Creativity. THE BAYS integrates baseball culture into daily life, enriching the community through a craft beer dining space and lifestyle shop, deepening connections through shared experiences, a studio for creative living, shaping new lifestyle trends, and a co-working and shared office space, featuring a business school that leverages the expertise of operating a professional baseball team to foster local entrepreneurship.

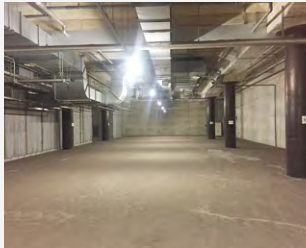


@YDB

6 Shin-Takashima Station Basement Exhibition Space

A Dynamic Hub for Contemporary Art and Cultural Innovation

Once an underground storage area, BankART Station, opened in 2018, transformed Shin-Takashima Station into a hub for contemporary art and cultural exchange. By maximizing its expansive underground space, including adjacent roads, it has served as a platform for creative networking, artist residencies, and interdisciplinary projects. In 2025, it will be reborn as Art Center NEW, led by the General Incorporated Association Ongoing. Dedicated to leading-edge contemporary art, this space will host exhibitions, artist studios, symposiums, and workshops. Under the theme of "NEW," the center aims to introduce fresh perspectives and innovative approaches to art and culture.



*Conceptual diagram

Suburbs Part Action

(Onocho in Tsurumi Ward, Hoshikawa in Hodogaya Ward, Nobacho in Konan Ward, and Beyond)

Bringing Creative Urban Development to Suburban Yokohama

Once centered on Yokohama's waterfront, the Creative City initiative is now revitalizing suburban districts through arts and culture. In Onocho, Tsurumi, Tsurumi Public Art Project encourages local residents to take the lead in a community-led mural exhibition transforming Tsurumi's streetscape in collaboration with Zou-no-Hana Terrace. In Minami, Asahi, Kohoku, Midori, and Totsuka Wards, the ACY Artist Fellowship Grant supports artists in residence at local community hubs, providing them with the space and opportunity to develop their creative work while engaging with the local community. In 2024, new suburban revitalization model projects were launched as pilot public-private projects to repurpose underused spaces, including railway underpasses at Hoshikawa Station in Hodogaya Ward and public housing areas in Nobacho in Konan Ward.



TSURUMI PUBLIC ART PROJECT

Grant and Assistance



KATO Ryu (2023 ACY Artist Fellow), Abstract Face (ongoing), 2023 September, at Co-coya (Midori ward)

Art Real Estate · BUKATSUDO

Revitalizing Vacant Spaces through the Fusion of Real Estate and Creativity

Since 2007, Yokohama has been turning underutilized real estate in and out of the Kannai areas into creative hubs for artists and creators. The Art Real Estate Project has preserved and revitalized key postwar architectural landmarks, such as the Taisei Building and Sumiyoshicho Arai Building, which hold historical significance as firebreak architecture unique to Yokohama. In 2021, the Yokohama Art Real Estate Promotion Organization was launched to connect property owners with artists in need of space. Another innovative project, launched in 2014, has creatively repurposed part of the DOCKYARD GARDEN, a nationally designated Important Cultural Property. This space now operates as BUKATSUDO, a shared community hub in Minato Mirai where office workers, residents, and visitors gather, engage, and bring their creative passions to life.



Sumiyoshicho Arai Building



BUKATSUDO

Arts Commission Yokohama (ACY)

Connecting Creators to Foster Collaboration

Since 2007, operated by the Yokohama Arts Foundation, Arts Commission Yokohama (ACY) has connected artists, businesses, and citizens through funding, consultation, and public initiatives. It provides a one-stop consultation service for art and design projects, supports artists through the ACY Artist Fellowship Grant, and promotes collaboration across the cultural sector. In addition to its support programs, ACY activates urban spaces through cultural events. "Kannaigai OPEN!" transforms the city into an open-air gallery, where creatives showcase their work in public spaces. "Minato no Art" brings artistic expression into everyday life, making art more accessible while expanding opportunities for artists.



KANNAIGAI OPEN!1, Park Festival on the road, Photo: MORIMOTO Sou (Color Coordination Inc)

City to create the visual culture

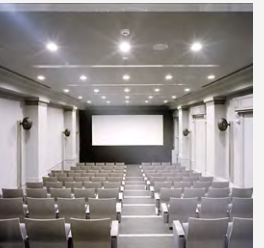
★ Graduate School of Film and New Media, Tokyo University of the Arts

Fostering the Next-Generation Filmmakers and Visual Creators

The Former Fuji Bank Yokohama Branch (1929) was reborn in 2004 as BankART1929 Bashamichi, pioneering the transformation of historic buildings into creative spaces. In 2005, Yokohama strengthened its vision as the City to create the visual culture by welcoming the Graduate School of Film and New Media at Tokyo University of the Arts. The Bashamichi Campus now serves as the Film Production Department, with the New Media Department in Motomachi-Chukagai and the Animation Department in Bankokubashi. Together, they cultivate the next generation of visual creators. Beyond academic training, the school enriches the local community through public lectures and exhibitions, making film and media arts more accessible to all.



Graduate School of Film and New Media, Tokyo University of the Arts - Bashamichi Campus



Yokohama Triennale

Engaging with the World through Contemporary Art Every Three Years

Held every three years in Yokohama, the Yokohama Triennale is an international contemporary art exhibition. Launched in 2001 by the Japan Foundation and the City of Yokohama, it was established aligning with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' vision to promote cultural exchange worldwide through contemporary art. Since 2011, the exhibition has been operated by Yokohama City and the Yokohama Museum of Art (Yokohama Arts Foundation) based on the following three core principles: to open new channels through art, to engage with the world, and to engage with the community. It has played a leading role in shaping Yokohama as a Culture, Art, and Creative City, fostering inclusiveness and artistic dialogue. Every edition introduces new themes and directors, featuring both established international artists and emerging talents. It reflects on global contemporary art trends while reexamining the evolving relationship between Japan and the world, society and the individual, and exploring social role of art from a variety of perspectives in a world in turmoil. The 9th edition set for 2027 aims to reach a wider audiences, deliver new cultural perspectives from Yokohama, and strengthen its role as a bridge between Japan and the world.



TSUBAKI Noboru + MUROI Hisashi, *The Insect World / Locust*, 2001, Installation view of YOKOHAMA 2001: International Triennale of Contemporary Art, Photo: KUROKAWA Mikio, Photo courtesy of Organizing Committee for Yokohama Triennale



8th Yokohama Triennale installation view, Photo: TOMITA Ryohei, Photo courtesy of Organizing Committee for Yokohama Triennale



Nick CAVE, *Kinetic Spinner Forest*, 2016 (recreated in 2020), ©Nick Cave, Installation view of Yokohama Triennale 2020, Photo: OTSUKA Keita, Photo courtesy of Organizing Committee for Yokohama Triennale

COLUMN Bridging Yokohama with International Art Fairs Tokyo Gendai

Tokyo Gendai is a world-class international art fair where top contemporary galleries from around the globe including Japan gather to exhibit and sell artworks. The inaugural edition took place in July 2023 at PACIFICO Yokohama, attracting art professionals and collectors worldwide. To seize this opportunity, Yokohama has launched collaborative programs that introduce visitors to the city's thriving art scene. Through exhibitions, guided tours, and cultural events at major creative hubs, the city offers art lovers an immersive experience that connects Yokohama's creativity with the world.



Tokyo Gendai, 2024

Yokohama JAZZ Promenade



The City Becomes a Stage: Yokohama, the Timeless Home of Jazz

The Yokohama Jazz Promenade has been one of Japan's leading jazz festivals, transforming the city into a giant stage every autumn since 1993. Welcoming both professional and amateur musicians, the event draws tens of thousands of jazz lovers each year. As a city with a deep-rooted jazz tradition, Yokohama celebrates this cultural heritage through concept hall performances, jazz club sessions, and outdoor gigs in parks and public spaces. The festival breathes life into the city, making jazz a driving force of urban vibrancy. Supported by businesses, organizations, and the volunteer-powered Yokohama Jazz Crew, this festival is a true collaboration between the city and citizens, uniting the community through the universal language of jazz.

Yokohama International Performing Arts Meeting (YPAM)



Asia's Leading Platform for Performing Arts

Held every winter, the Yokohama International Performing Arts Meeting (YPAM) is a key platform where performing arts professionals connect through performances, discussions, and networking opportunities. It serves as a hub for creative exchange and innovation, driving the growth of performing arts worldwide. Founded in 1995 as the Tokyo Performing Arts Market (TPAM), the event moved to Yokohama in 2011 to align with the city's Creative City initiative, holding a diverse program of performances, meetings, symposia, and roundtable discussions. In 2022, YPAM launched the YPAM Fringe Center, a year-round hub to make performing arts even more accessible as a permanent exchange hub, providing resources, consultations, and industry support for performing arts professionals.

A Network Reaching Across Borders

Japan-China-Korea Inter-City Cultural Exchange Program

Culture City of East Asia 2014 Yokohama Legacy Project

Yokohama became Japan's first Culture City of East Asia in 2014, joining Quanzhou (China) and Gwangju (South Korea). To sustain this cultural bond, the cities signed a Friendship and Cooperation Agreement, continuing exchanges beyond 2015. Since then, they have fostered cultural connections by sharing artistic delegations in visual arts, music, performing arts, and traditional culture, strengthening international ties through the power of art.



Photo: Ray Thoma

Creative City Network of Japan

Founded in January 2013, Creative City Network of Japan supports local governments in promoting creative city initiatives while strengthening collaboration between cities. The network regularly holds seminars and meetings to further develop creative city strategies and initiatives, with Yokohama serving as a key organizing member.

CREATIVE CITY YOKOHAMA