



ARTECHOUSE
1238 Maryland Ave SW
Washington, DC 20024
press@artechouse.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS CONTACT: press@artechouse.com

HANAMI: BEYOND THE BLOOMS **Debuts at ARTECHOUSE DC March 13**

ARTECHOUSE partners with illustrator Yuko Shimizu for its 3rd annual celebration of the cherry blossom season. On view March 13 - May 25 in Washington, D.C.



WASHINGTON, DC - ARTECHOUSE, the nation's first innovative digital art space with locations in Washington, DC, New York, and Miami, continues its 2020 season with its annual cherry blossom-inspired installation in the nation's capital that celebrates springtime and women in the arts and tech. *Hanami: Beyond the Blooms* pushes the limits of the cherry blossom experience, inviting visitors to enter an immersive world of spring re-imagined. A centuries-old Japanese tradition of blossom viewing, takes on a whole new abstract interpretive meaning as hand-made ink illustrations by Yuko Shimizu are transformed digitally to follow vibrant cherry blossom flowers on an exciting and interactive journey through land, sea, and air. Open to all ages, the seasonal installation is on view March 13 to May 25, 2020 at ARTECHOUSE DC (1238 Maryland Avenue, SW).

The digital installation is an official part of the National Cherry Blossom Festival for the third year in a row. “We’re excited for our attendees to explore another spectacular exhibit at ARTECHOUSE for the third year, spreading the joy of the blossoms beyond the Tidal Basin,” said Diana Mayhew, president of the National Cherry Blossom Festival. “Our partnership with ARTECHOUSE will once again delight both DC residents and visitors alike with innovative programming that is unique, engaging, and inspiring.”

This installation continues with the 2020 ARTECHOUSE theme of exploring the intersection of creativity in science and art. *Hanami: Beyond the Blooms* shows us how technology and code can bring illustration and nature to life in new and unexpected ways, allowing the guests to enjoy the thrills and beauty of a seasonal phenomenon beyond its limited organic time-span.

In the four gallery segments, inspiration is drawn from centuries-old Japanese traditions such as the taiko drums that are historically used to bring Kami, the divine beings that ward away evil spirits and pests from crops, and the long, often surreal walks under the cherry blossom trees.

One element they all have in common: Shimizu’s expressive motion that flows from her mind, to ink, through software, to paper — creating bold whimsical worlds that collide the past and present together in entirely contemporary ways.

The installation is a result of a meticulous process where Shimizu’s expressive handmade drawings are digitized, split into thousands of fragments, almost like petals of a blossoming tree, and brought to life by ARTECHOUSE creative team through digital animation and boundary-pushing interactive techniques. Massive-scale animated scenes are composed of illustrated elements that create worlds for visitors to explore along with unique interactive features for each. At times, illustrated flowers gravitate towards visitors and then explode upon contact into a vibrant burst of petals. Custom-coded particle systems bring life to illustrated birds, filling the skies, following them as they wander the space.

Lidar technology adds to the interactivity — visitors are sensed within the gallery, turned into 3D point clouds and portrayed real-time on the gigantic walls in the main gallery, providing visitors with a corresponding mirrored form that follows their movement and interacts with the imagery. Powerful winds sweep flowers upward across the sky with the wave of a hand, waves swell, birds take flight, explosions of vibrant color propell flowers forward, covering the gallery before gently falling into moments of rest.

The immersiveness is rounded out with the sound of rhythmic Japanese taiko drums flooding the gallery, adding to the excitement, while cherry tree fragrances throughout conjure an aura of new life - the fresh scent of spring.

+++++

Hanami: Beyond The Blooms will open for a press and media preview on March 12 (with behind-the-scenes time slots and interview opportunities with the artist and the ARTECHOUSE creative team available in the days earlier that week), and will open to the public starting March 13th, 2020.

TIMES & HOURS:

Hanami: Beyond The Blooms is on view to the public March 13-May 25, 2020

All Ages Daytime (10 a.m. - 6 p.m.) admissions and evening 21+ (6 p.m.- 10:30 p.m./11:30 p.m.) admissions.

- Evening and weekend admissions include access to our Augmented Reality bar with ARTECHOUSE's AR drinks, which extends the artistic experience beyond the visual and will feature a special cherry blossom-inspired menu.

TICKETS:

Single and group tickets ranging from \$8-16 can be reserved in advance at artechouse.com. Groups of 10 or more save 10%. Email groups@artechouse.com for more information.

LOCATION:

ARTECHOUSE is located between the Smithsonian and L'Enfant Plaza Metro stations at 1238 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC just next door to the Mandarin Oriental hotel.

###

ABOUT YUKO SHIMIZU (清水裕子):

Yuko Shimizu is a Japanese illustrator based in New York City, and an instructor at the [School of Visual Arts](#). *Newsweek Japan* chose Yuko as one of "100 Japanese People The World Respects (世界が尊敬する日本人 100)" in 2009. Her [first self-titled monograph](#) came out in 2011 (Gestalten), and her second monograph *Living with Yuko Shimizu* was released from ROADS Publishing of Ireland in 2016. Other books include: *A Wild Swan* (collaboration with author Michael Cunningham, FSG, 2015) and the multi-award-winning children's book *Barbed Wire Baseball* (written by Marissa Moss, Abrams, 2013). She works at her studio in midtown Manhattan and fulfills her passion for travel by giving lectures and workshops around the world and in various cities in the US. yukoart.com \\ @yukoart

ABOUT ARTECHOUSE:

ARTECHOUSE, founded in Washington, DC, and now with outposts in Miami and NYC, is the nation's first innovative digital art space dedicated to showcasing experiential and technology-driven works by artists who are forerunners of the new age in the arts and technology. With a mission to inspire, educate, and empower the creation of new, experiential and exploratory art form, ARTECHOUSE connects audiences to the arts, and stimulates interest in the limitless possibilities of technology, science and creativity. ARTECHOUSE also houses the first in the U.S. Augmented Reality bar serving drinks activated with its free AR mobile app available on app store and google play.

artechouse.com \\ @artechouse \\ [#artechouse](#)

ABOUT NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL:

The [National Cherry Blossom Festival](#), March 20 – April 12, includes four weeks of events featuring diverse and creative programming promoting traditional and contemporary arts and culture, natural beauty, and community spirit. The Festival welcomes more than 1.5 million people to the region in celebration of the 1912 gift of trees from Tokyo to Washington, DC.