

# Aliens From New York

Aozora Art Project  
promoted by  
Aomori Art Museum, Japan



## What Is It?

60 Peek-a-Boo Boards, Acrylic on Wood Board positioned at 12 stations and platforms of Tsugaru Railway, Aomori, North Region of Japan. 15,000 viewers attended November 6-20, 2010

## Events

### WORKSHOPS

#### The Sweets Train- Transformed with Candy!

- Chartered Round Trip Train (Tugaru-Naksato, Nakasato-Tugaru), November 13 , 12:15 - 3:10.
- 2 hours, Bishamon Elementary School, November 16 .

### DOCUMENTARY ART EXHIBIT

Aomori Museum of Art, April 23 - May 29, 2011

4 Peek-a Boo Boards, 24 art pieces from the workshops, photo slide show, and short film.

Visitors enjoyed seeing Peek-a-Boo Boards and scenery from the train window as it passed by different stations. They also enjoyed putting their faces through the hole on each board and taking photos freely.

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## The Concept



The Concept of *Aliens from New York* is that New Yorkers with varying ethnic backgrounds came to Tsugaru, Japan and stood on the platform, gazing out at the scenery.

This Tugaru region is very far away from the nearest city, with no movie theaters and museums and big halls. The stations and platforms are located in forests and rice fields. Therefore, Peek-a-Boo Boards were very dramatic in these natural settings.

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## • Workshops: The Sweets Train- Transformed with Candy!

I gathered from New York rare sweets originating in various countries around the world. (28 countries)  
Tasting the flavors of an unknown country, participants created the letter-sized mini Peek-a Boo Boards and transform into a foreigner and take commemorative photographs. The photographs are made into a special album as a memory of the trip and given as a present at the workshop.



1) Chartered train



2) Choose a bag!



3) Open it! What's inside?



4) The sweets were passed out in bags, and the passengers were not told which country they came from.

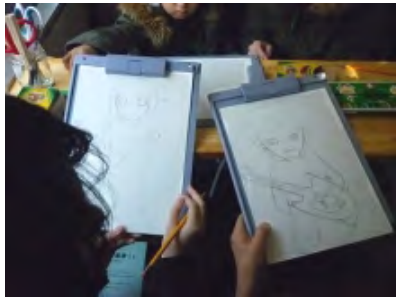


5) Tasting time!

Can you imagine people from foreign countries from the taste of the candy, color, package or shape?

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6) Transforming time! Create your letter-sized mini Peek-a-Boo board!

Smile! Take A Photo With a Mini Peek-a-Boo Board



I Am From Poland



I Am From Germany



I Am From Libya

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I Am From Vietnam



I Am From Saudi Arabia



I Am From Mexico



I Am From Greece.



I Am From Korea.



I Am From Germany.

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## Certificate



### An Art Album From the Workshop

*My name is Hide.*

*I live in New York.*

*My father came to America from England.*

*My name sounds Japanese because my grandmother loved Japan so much.*

*This is the first time I visited Tugaru, it is very beautiful.*

*The things that stand out the most to me is a Tugaru beauty.*

*I love Tugaru!*

November 16, 2010

Digital photo print, and Paper 8 1/2 X 11 Inch

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## Documentary Slide Exhibit at Aomori Art Museum

24 art pieces from the workshops

Short film (2min), 2011: New Yorkers went to  
and transformed into Peek-a-Boo Boards. They got  
in the Tsugaru railway and enjoyed traveling.

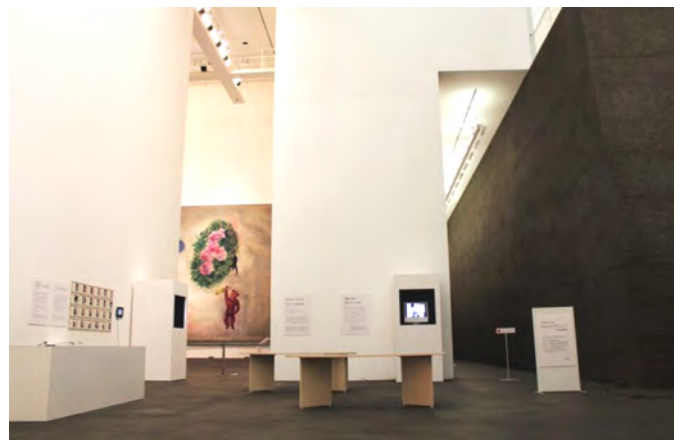


Photo slide show



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## Art Installation



4 Peek-a Boo Boards: Senora, Senor, Nacho, and Ms. Kenya



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*Rika Takashima's "Peek-a-Boo Boards" Exhibits at Tsugaru Railway,*

*To-o Nippo Press, November 14, 2010*

The Aomori Museum of Art is organizing an exhibition, "Aozora Art", held on the Tsugaru Railway line that connects Goshogawara City to the town of Nakadomari. Using plywood boards painted with people and with a hole for your face, the art installation "Peek-a boo boards" is being exhibited at each railway station for the enjoyment of railway patrons. On the 13th, a special chartered train named "The Sweets Train" also held an event in association with the "Peek-a boo boards" exhibit.



"Peek-a boo board" was created by Rika Takashima, an artist based in New York. "What if New York residents from different countries came to Tsugaru Railway?"—this thought was the basis for the installation's theme, and was transformed into 60 art pieces placed at all 12 stations that featured people from differing countries wearing their ethnic dress.

Remove the face from each of the paintings to reveal a hole into which you can put your face and take a souvenir photograph. The exhibit ends on the 20th.

On the 13th, 35 local residents and their families boarded a specially chartered Sweets Train. They ate sweets from various different countries that Takashima-san and her staff

brought from New York, and based on the impressions of the countries they received from the taste of the sweets, the participants created miniature Peek-a boo boards.

While the participants ate rarely seen foreign sweets, they created mini Peek-a boo boards using the packaging and taste of the sweets as reference. "I ate a waffle so I imagined Belgium. I wonder what kind of clothes Belgian people wear?" wondered Ryota Narayama, a 5th grade student from Toho Elementary in Goshogawara City, as his pencil raced across the drawing paper.

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Flier

FRONT

Aomori Museum of Art “Field Project” #2

Autumn of Art, the Final Season—Artistic Relaxation on a Chartered Train

Don't miss it! “The Sweets Train—Transformed with Candy!”

New York artist Rika Takashima's Aozora Art comes to Tsugaru Railway  
A symphony of bliss performed by taste and sight, imagination and crayons!

Along with “Peek-a-Boo boards”, the art exhibition that will be held at each Tsugaru Railway station, a chartered train will run on a special schedule on the anniversary of the Railway's founding, November 13th, with an art workshop held inside. The cultural heritage of Tsugaru Railway has developed throughout the prefecture and beyond over the decades, and on November 13th we will attempt to rediscover its charm through art.

As the train rocks back and forth, participants will taste sweets and transform into travelers from foreign countries!

The artist has gathered from New York rare sweets originating in various countries around the world. Tasting the flavors of an unknown country, participants will transform into a foreigner and take commemorative photographs. The photographs will be made into a special album as a memory of the trip and given as a present at the workshop. Won't you transform into a traveler from an unknown country and journey to Tsugaru Peninsula as autumn ends?

Flier

BACK

Hello dear friends!

My name is Rika Takashima, an artist living in New York. This fall, my artwork will be displayed in the stations and platforms of Tsugaru Railway from November 6 – 20.

Really?

Why?

What kind of artwork?

You Say.

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Well, now that I have your attention, let me tell you a bit about it.

Actually, this summer, I was in Aomori and got to ride the Tsugaru Railway for the first time. As the train rolled along leisurely through the fields and forests, I simply fell in love with the landscape that stretch out beyond the train's windows. Suddenly, an idea popped into my head.

“Wouldn't it be fun if New Yorkers came to Tsugaru, and stood on the platform, gazing out at the scenery?”

Bringing New York residents to Tsugaru is a bit difficult though, so instead, my artwork has become the ones standing on the platforms. This signboard sculpture art has a name—“Peek-a-Boo Board”. What if these Peek-a-Boo Boards standing at the stations and on the train platforms were visitors from New York?

Just imagine...interesting, isn't it?

You can remove the faces on these Peek-a-Boo boards by hand. (Just like the ones you often see at tourist spots.) Stick your face through these Peek-a-Boo boards and take a look at the scenery you see so often every day. Stick your face through, and you transform into a traveler from New York! You just may discover a scene slightly different from the one you usually see. And, of course, don't forget to take a photo!

On Saturday, November 13th, we'll be chartering a train and holding a fun workshop.  
Whether you're a family, a couple, friends, old, young, men, women, we welcome everyone!  
Don't miss it. I can't wait to meet you!

Let's have fun!  
Rica Takashima

## Staff

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