TOMA HOUSE
Artist-in-Residence

2027 Sumi Ink Art Residency

The Sumi Ink Art Residency is a four-week program designed for artists and creative practitioners who want to gain a deeper understanding of sumi ink art and build a foundation in its practice. The classes are based on techniques drawn from Japanese calligraphy (*shodo*) and ink painting (*sumi-e*), while incorporating alternative approaches to using the medium. Artists are encouraged to integrate what they learn from the program into their own art practice.

Program Dates:
Spring Session: March 13 – April 9, 2027
Autumn Session: November 20 – December 17, 2027
Instructor: Christine Flint Sato
Class size: 4–6 participants per session
Instruction language: English

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. ELIGIBILITY

The program is open to artists, craftspeople, curators, researchers, designers, and individuals with a keen interest in learning sumi ink art. No prior experience in sumi ink art is required.

Applicants must:

I. Have sufficient English proficiency to participate in lessons and communicate with the instructor and fellow participants.

II. Be able to cover the program fee and all additional expenses necessary to travel to and stay in Japan, including travel, insurance, food, additional materials, shipping costs, and visa fees.

III. Be able to live and work in a shared residential environment. Both Toma House and Toma Beige are two-story buildings without elevators.

IV. Comply with Japan's visa requirements to enter the country and participate in the program. Please refer to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan for details.

V. Be willing to follow the program activities, residential arrangements, and house rules established by Toma House AIR, including our strict non-smoking policy.*

**Residents and visitors are not allowed to smoke or use open flames anywhere on the premises of Toma House AIR - a registered Tangible Cultural Property of Japan. Our 18th-century wooden family house needs care and protection from everyone.*

VI. Communicate respectfully with fellow participants and respect the peaceful atmosphere of the surrounding neighborhood and local community.

2. CANCELLATION POLICY

I. Cancellation due to a pandemic outbreak or border control restrictions in Japan: Participants will be offered either a rescheduled program or a full refund, excluding any refund transfer fees.

II. Cancellation due to personal reasons: No refunds will be issued for cancellations due to personal reasons, including failure to obtain a visa or other travel documents required for entry into Japan.

III. Cancellation due to insufficient enrollment: Participants will be offered either a rescheduled program or a full refund.

3. PROGRAM FEE INCLUSIONS

- Private bedroom accommodation for the duration of the four-week residency.
- Access to shared studio, kitchen, shower, toilet, and laundry facilities.
- A personal work desk in the shared studio.
- 10 days of instruction in sumi ink art.
- 3 field trips, including transportation and scheduled visits and activities.
- A personal seal-carving workshop.
- Basic materials for lessons and studio practice during the residency.
- An English-language copy of Sumi Workbook by Christine Flint Sato.
- Assistance from English- and Mandarin-speaking staff to help participants settle into life at Toma House AIR and in Nara.

Individual Sumi Ink Art Kit

Each participant will receive the following tools and materials, which they may take home after the residency:

- Sumi ink stick
- Inkstone
- Three brushes (small, medium, and large)
- Felt underlay
- Water container
- Two mixing dishes
- A set of paperweights

Shared Studio Tools and Materials

- Practice paper and paper for large-scale works
- Bottled sumi ink; fine brushes
- Materials and tools for wet and dry mounting
- Other basic materials required for lessons and studio practice

Expenses Not Included

- Flight tickets and transportation costs
- Personal expenses for living, food, packing, and shipping
- Travel and medical insurance; Japanese visa fees, if applicable
- Additional tools and materials for personal or future practice

4. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Participants will learn fundamental techniques drawn from sumi ink painting and calligraphy. Rather than following a conventional approach to these art forms, the program focuses on exploring the expressive qualities of sumi ink beyond traditional painting motifs and the formal writing of Chinese characters.

Participants are encouraged to explore the medium itself and develop their own sumi ink artwork, with advice and technical support from the instructor.

Participants may also bring their own water-based paints, tools, and materials to combine with sumi ink in their personal projects.

Instruction days alternate with independent studio practice and free days, allowing participants to develop their own projects and explore Nara, the surrounding countryside, and nearby cities such as Kyoto and Osaka.

The program also includes field trips to traditional craft workshops and an art gallery, offering participants opportunities to learn about the production of sumi ink, brushes, and Japanese paper (washi), as well as the presentation of sumi ink artwork.

Program Structure

- 10 days of instruction
- 3 full-day field trips
- A personal seal-carving workshop
- Independent studio practice and personal project development
- Instruction hours: 9:30 AM – 4:00 PM, including a 1.5-hour lunch break.

Week 1 – Three Days of Instruction

- Course introduction
- Introduction to tools and materials
- Techniques to be covered: basic line drawing, lines with varying brush pressure, dots, gradation, multi-tonal strokes, washes, and dry-brush work
- Field trip (full day)
    - Visit to a family-run sumi ink maker (AM)
    - Visit to an antique dealer/gallery in Kyoto (PM)

Week 2 – Three Days of Instruction

- Design and composition
- Practice using Japanese design elements
- Learn from the sumi ink painting tradition through *The Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting*
- Introduction to Japanese calligraphy (shodo)
- Work with script forms for designs
- Field trip (full day)
    - Visit to a brush maker (AM)
    - Visit to a sumi ink maker (PM), with an opportunity to try out many different sumi inks

Week 3 – Two Days of Instruction

- Experiment with different tools and materials
- Prepare and execute a large work
- Field trip (full day)
    - Visit to a washi maker in Higashiyoshino and a washi-making experience

Week 4 – Two Days of Instruction

- Compare different ways of presenting artwork
- Practice wet mounting and simple dry mounting
- Ways to combine sumi ink art with Western materials
- Finish project work, followed by feedback and sharing
- Seal-carving workshop

The schedule and instruction hours are subject to change depending on participants' progress and other circumstances.

5. REGISTRATION PROCESS & PAYMENTS

I. STEP 1: Submit the Online Application Form

- Early application is encouraged, as applications are reviewed and places are offered on a rolling basis.
- A confirmation email will be sent after your application is submitted.
- **Application Deadlines:**
  - Spring Session: **January 31, 2027**
  - Autumn Session: **June 30, 2027**
  - The program requires a minimum of four participants per session.
    Applications may close earlier if a session becomes fully booked before its official deadline.

II. STEP 2: Sign the Invitation Agreement

- Once you are selected, an official Invitation Agreement will be sent to you.
- Please sign the Invitation Agreement and email the signed document back to us at your earliest convenience.
  - This signed Invitation Agreement is necessary to hold your place until the Enrollment Deposit is paid.
  - If multiple applicants request the same room, priority will be given to those who return their signed Invitation Agreements first.
  - If the preferred room has already been reserved by another applicant who completed the enrollment process earlier, an alternative accommodation option will be offered.

III. STEP 3: Program Invoice

- Once the AIR team receives your signed Invitation Agreement, you will receive an official Program Invoice together with a PayPal payment link.

IV. STEP 4: Pay the Enrollment Deposit (25%)

- To secure your place, the enrollment deposit is 25% of the total program fee and must be received within 14 days of the issue date of the Program Invoice.
- If payment is not received within this period, your reservation may be released to another applicant.

V. STEP 5: Receive the Official Program Confirmation

- Please wait until an Official Program Confirmation is emailed to you to start booking flights or making non-refundable travel arrangements.

VI. STEP 6: Pay the Balance Due (75%)

- The remaining 75% of the program fee must be settled one month before the program begins.
- A PayPal payment link for the second payment will be sent to you.

6. PAYMENT METHODS

- PayPal — PayPal transaction fees are covered by Toma House AIR.
- Bank Transfer — International bank transfer fees may vary depending on your bank and must be covered by the participant. Please contact the AIR team for our bank details.

Program Fees with Accommodation Details

Program fees vary depending on the building and room selected.

For the 2027 Spring Session, we are offering a special discount of 100,000 JPY to celebrate the opening session of the Sumi Ink Art Residency.

2027 Program Fee Table

Room	Building	Spring **Opening Special Rate**	Autumn **Standard Rate**
A	Toma House	**545,000 JPY**	645,000 JPY
B	Toma House	**523,000 JPY**	623,000 JPY
C	Toma Beige	**468,000 JPY**	568,000 JPY
D	Toma Beige	**457,000 JPY**	557,000 JPY
E	Toma Beige	**435,000 JPY**	535,000 JPY
F	Toma Beige	**446,000 JPY**	546,000 JPY

- All fees are in Japanese yen and include consumption tax and PayPal transaction fees.
- All bedrooms are private, and the residency accommodates artists of all genders.

TOMA HOUSE

The main building and former 18th-century residence of a Shinto priest's family.

- **Room A**



2027 Spring Session – Opening Special Rate: **545,000 JPY**

2027 Autumn Session: 645,000 JPY

- Approx. size: 19.2 m²
- The largest bedroom in the residency, with a semi-double bed, a high ceiling, and a garden view.
- One partner may stay in this room for an additional fee. Please contact us for details.

TOMA HOUSE

- **Room B**




2027 Spring Session – Opening Special Rate: **523,000 JPY**

2027 Autumn Session: 623,000 JPY

- Approx. size: 6.5 m²
- A small attic-style bedroom for single occupancy, with a sloped ceiling and a garden view.

Notes

- All bedrooms in Toma House are upstairs, with shared studio, kitchen, toilet, shower, and laundry facilities downstairs.
- Due to renovation restrictions on the historic building, the bedrooms do not have door locks.

TOMA BEIGE

An annex with four bedrooms, renovated in 2025.

- **Room C**



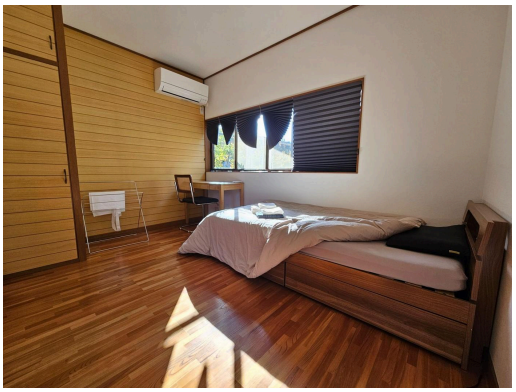

2027 Spring Session – Opening Special Rate: **468,000 JPY**

2027 Autumn Session: 568,000 JPY

- Approx. size: 7.19 m²
- A bedroom upstairs with a semi-double bed and a small balcony.

TOMA BEIGE

- **Room D**

2027 Spring Session – Opening Special Rate: **457,000 JPY**

2027 Autumn Session: 557,000 JPY

- Approx. size: 8.9 m²
- A bedroom upstairs with a single bed.

- **Room E**



2027 Spring Session – Opening Special Rate: **435,000 JPY**

2027 Autumn Session: 535,000 JPY

- Approx. size: 6.59 m²
- A small bedroom upstairs with a single bed and a garden view.

TOMA BEIGE

- **Room F**




2027 Spring Session – Opening Special Rate: **446,000 JPY**

2027 Autumn Session: 546,000 JPY

- Approx. size: 14.5 m²
- The only bedroom downstairs with a single bed and windows overlooking the garden.
- Wooden sliding doors separate the bedroom from the shared spaces.
- Please note that this room is located next to shared facilities, and ambient sounds from the shared space and residents may be audible.

Notes

- Toma Beige shares the same garden with the main building.
- Toilets are available on both floors, with the kitchen, shower, and laundry facilities downstairs.
- All bedrooms in Toma Beige are lockable, and each resident will be provided with a room key.

CONTACT

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