

# Serendipity in Japanese Art Projects:

11 Years of Memorial Rebirth Senju by Shinji Ohmaki  
Our project story, participant voices, and project evaluations



Did Memoriba really become the “town’s baton?”



Were we still an annoying “present,” after all?

## 1 Opening with an illustrated story

005 Story: Sumiko Kumakura Illustrations: 目 [mé]

## 2 Hear a voice

030 Introduction: Social sculpture using soap bubbles? Sumiko Kumakura

032 What is “Memorial Rebirth Senju”?

034 Cross Talk “Art? I don’t get it!” Kazuhiro Yoshikawa / Junko Takahashi / Shinji Ohmaki / Tsukasa Mori / Sumiko Kumakura

051 The Voices of Memoriba: Before & After

068 Living flexibly during the coronavirus pandemic:  
A record of activities of the Otomachi Project Office and Ohmaki Denki K.K. Rei Fujieda

073 Shinji Ohmaki and the future of Memorial Rebirth Shinji Ohmaki

## 3 Lessons in Evaluation

088 On the Evaluation of Art Projects Naoya Sano / Saya Makihara

092 What value was created by Memorial Rebirth Senju? Naoya Sano

117 Memorial Rebirth: The Stakeholders of Senju Mina Shinohara

120 The logic model as a “memory backup”: A case study of 10 years of Memorial Rebirth Senju Saya Makihara

Note: In this publication, *shabon-dama* is translated as “soap bubble.”

# 1

## Opening with an illustrated story

Story: Sumiko Kumakura Illustrations: 目[mé]

In the early spring of 2012,

Memorial Rebirth began in the Senju area of Adachi City, Tokyo.

That was about 10 years ago.

Memorial Rebirth, commonly called “Memoriba,” is an art performance that changes the landscape by releasing many soap bubbles.

This is a story of how soap bubble art weaves connections between people.



Our first year was held on Iroha Shopping Street, a quiet street a little ways from the station. Unfortunately, it was rainy. In the cold, fathers from the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) of a nearby elementary school eagerly helped out. The children were delighted by the wondrous landscape of soap bubbles in the rain, brightened by their colorful umbrellas and raincoats.

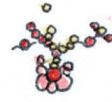
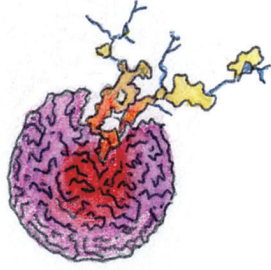
But surely, no one thought of this as “art.” Perhaps they wondered who these curious people were as they released soap bubbles in the rain. Even so, the people of the fruit and vegetable shop, the bookshop, the *konnyaku* (yam cake) shop of the street, who helped passionately prepare for this moment, were all smiles, giving us some courage.



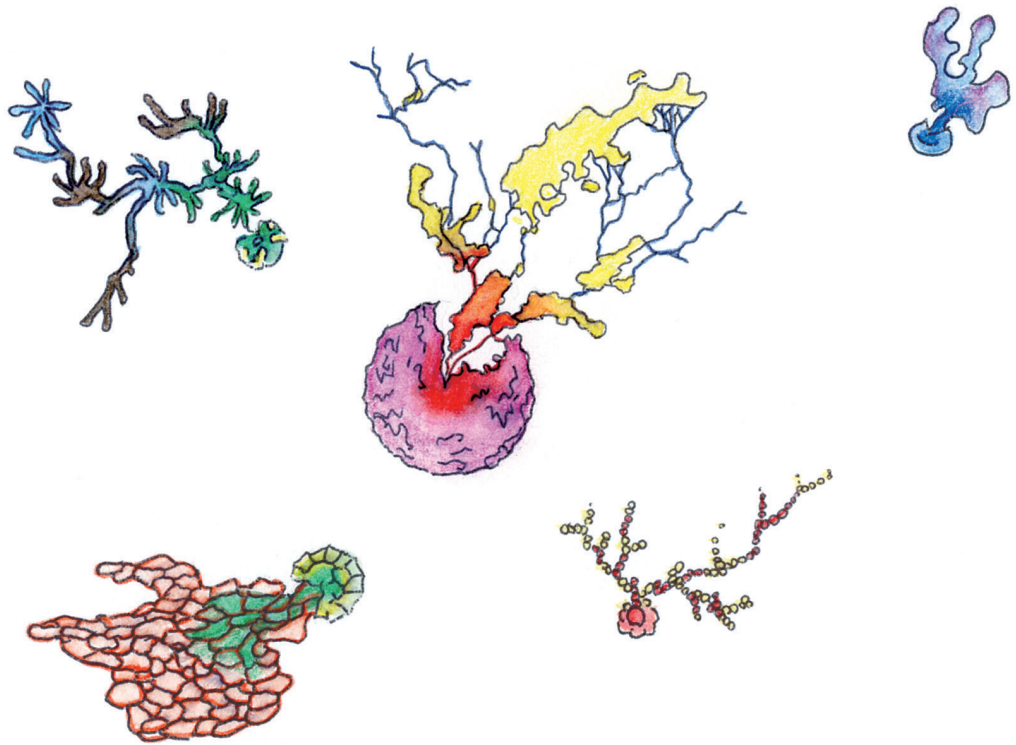
Our second year was held on the grounds of Senju Honchō Elementary School. The principle showed no interest in our endeavor, but kindly lent us the grounds regardless. “The children at our school are busy with after-school cramming, so they might not show up,” they said. With those words, Shinji Ohmaki, the artist who came up with Memoriba, went pale. We started with the hope Memoriba would be handed over from town to town like a baton, but who would pick up that baton?

After hearing that the traditional Bon Odori (a traditional Japanese dance in remembrance of one’s ancestors) was popular in the Senju area, the worried Ohmaki suddenly had an idea: a “Sha-bon Odori” (a play on words using the Japanese word for “soap bubble,” *shabon-dama*). Though it felt like we were moving further and further away from art, we called on an emerging group of graduates from Tokyo University of the Arts to compose music and choreograph dance, and asked the grannies at a local Bon Odori club, led by a local teacher of Japanese dance, to perform. Listening to the guidance of the dance teacher, a lovely dance came to fruition.





Those local grannies told us that back in the day, the Bon Odori festivals held throughout the town in the summer were a place for young men and women to meet. To rebirth the memories of those women, we needed to find some young men! Right around that time, Tokyo Denki University —a university specializing in electrical and mechanical technology— had relocated to the other side of the station, so we paid a visit to their school festival, desperately searching for people who might be interested in Memoriba. At last, we met a young teacher from one of the university’s labs. At the Memoriba performance, blessed with fine autumn weather, the senior women, children, and many young men from Tokyo Denki University gathered for the “Sha-bon Odori,” dancing around a large tree at the center of the school grounds.

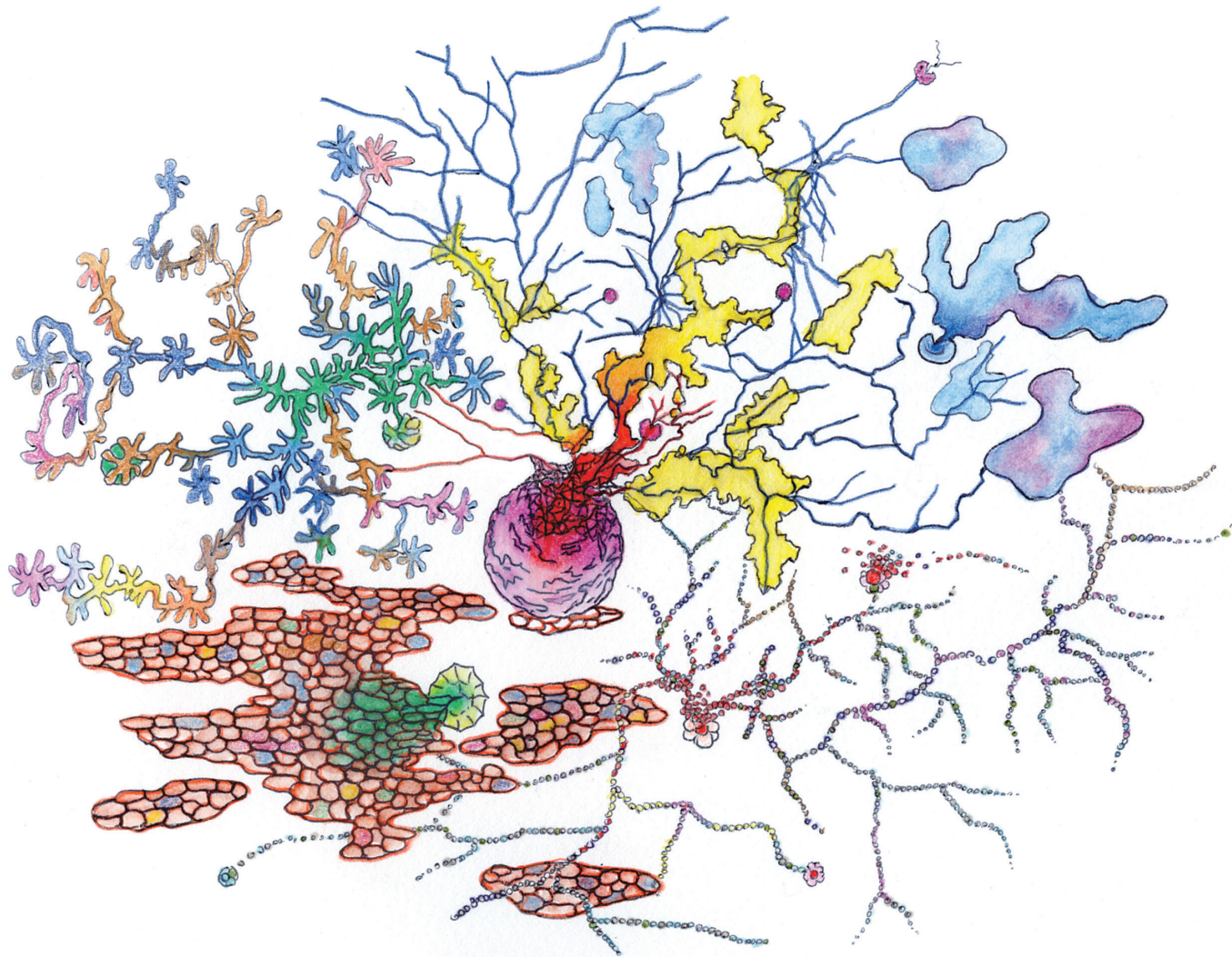




In our third year, we moved to the other side of the station and held a performance on the grounds of Senju Joto Elementary School. The vice-principal showed a lot of interest, and the fathers of the PTA were also passionate! We got instant advice. “Please send a letter from the local government’s Board of Education to request the PTA’s cooperation.” “No one knows about Memoriba, so let’s hold a school photo exhibit!” Our yet inexperienced staff were running around frantically left and right while getting scolded every day. Yet thanks to this, the intensity at the site grew, and Ohmaki proposed adding an evening performance. After holding a photography workshop with the Tokyo Denki University students and school children, we collected colorful photos of the town and projected them onto the school building at twilight.

Meanwhile, students from Tokyo University of the Arts were visiting elementary schools around Senju, running around after class to promote the lesser known “Shabon Odori.” That effort paid off with a lively evening with children who had learned the dance and a live band performance by citizen supporters.

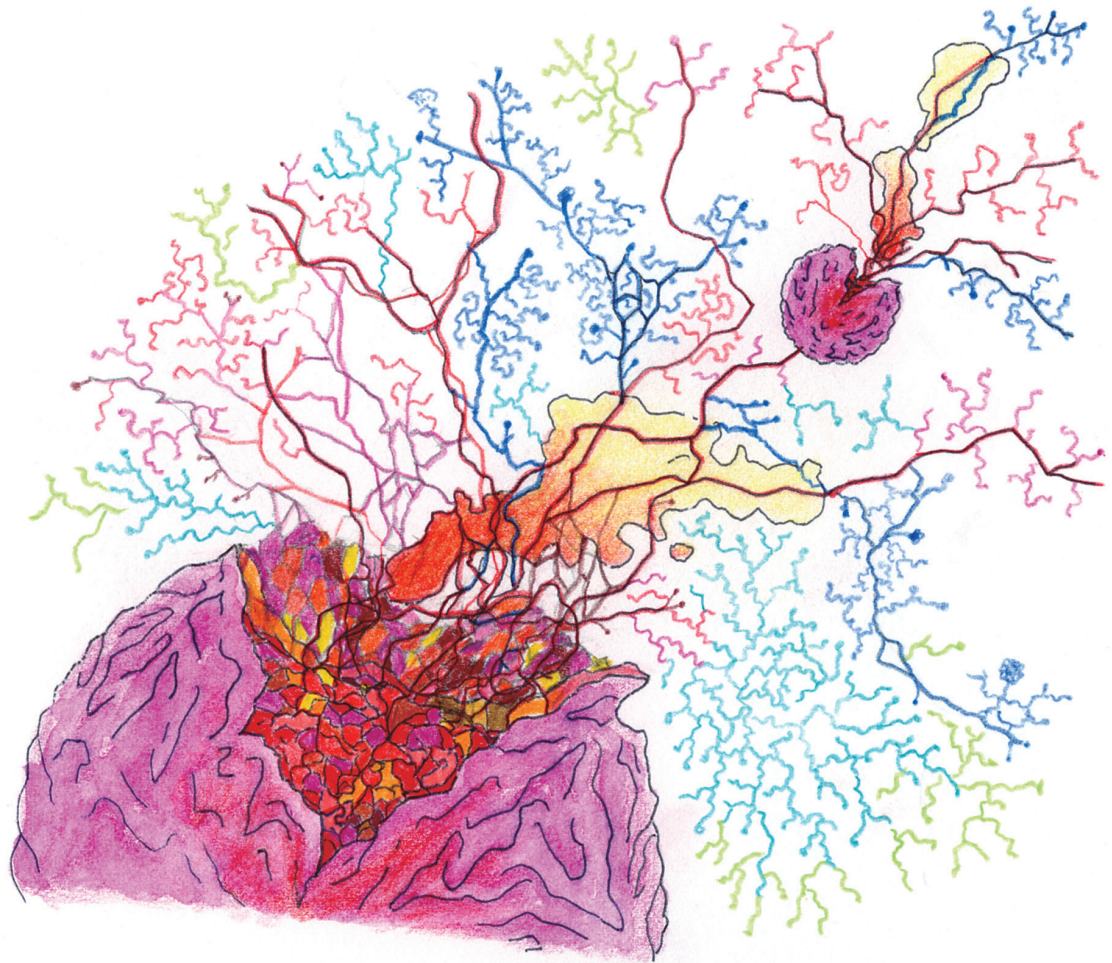
At the afterparty that filled a whole floor of a local *izakaya* pub, an “uncle” from the PTA gave us a heavy scolding in his signature Senju *beranme* slang (a frank way of speaking common amongst older men in downtown Tokyo). “I don’t know anything about art, but you guys don’t know anything about the town.” And as he added, “There’s no option but for me to help you next year,” Memoriba’s continuation was decided. Until that moment, Memoriba had been a meddling and somewhat annoying “present” of art, but the town began to pick it up as their baton.



Our fourth year was the first time we performed in a park. The townspeople chose the site, participating from the planning stage. The park was a place anyone could easily visit, but the person in charge from Adachi City's office had a hard time negotiating with their parks division.

The night performance was so pretty, the townspeople were happy to have it again, so Ohmaki decided to use full-scale LED lighting this time. Raising money for that was a challenge. With the cooperation of the leader of the shopping street, our staff and Tokyo University of the Arts students rushed from door to door, receiving donations from dozens of shops—from supermarkets to small neighborhood bars and bakeries—and citizens.

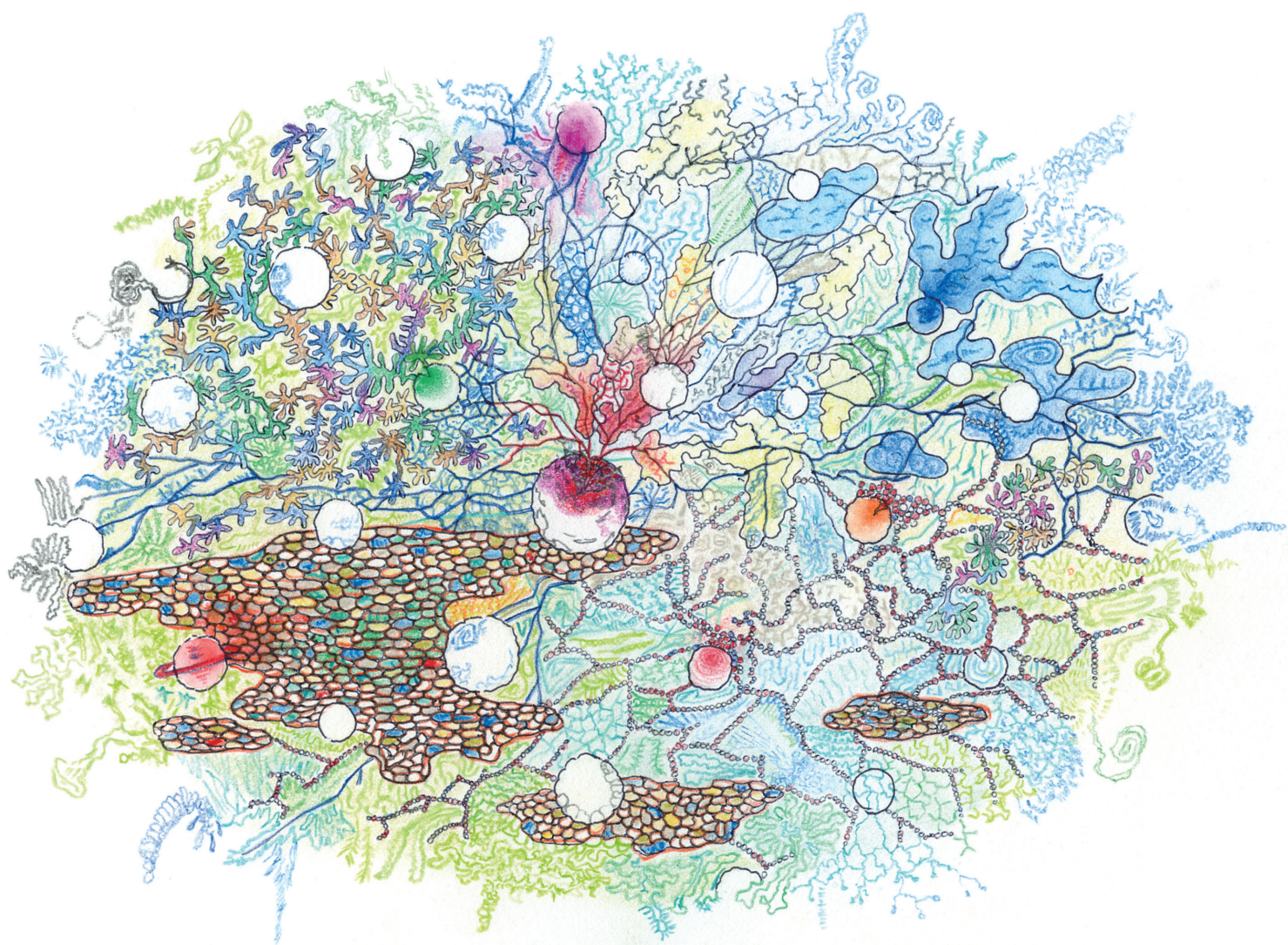




Because of the educational policy of the professor at Tokyo Denki University, saying that “engineers should learn about the city and its people,” the students who participated in meetings listened in silence from start to finish. Even so, they put forth the idea to make a video that, while riding a bicycle, traced how Memoriba had moved through Senju, and to project that video onto an artificial hill in the park. Even though it was completely outside their specialty, they had created an artwork.

With the Tokyo Denki University student film and professional lighting, event production seemed to be becoming elaborate, so we focused on creating a frenzy of soap bubbles and light without doing the “Sha-bon Odori” at night. From there, the pattern of having “Sha-bon Odori” in the daytime and an art-like space at night took root. During the night performance, visitors murmured how fantastical it was, making this the first year Memoriba was being seen as a kind of art. With the cooperation of the town council, food stalls were also set up, adding a festival-like atmosphere during the day.

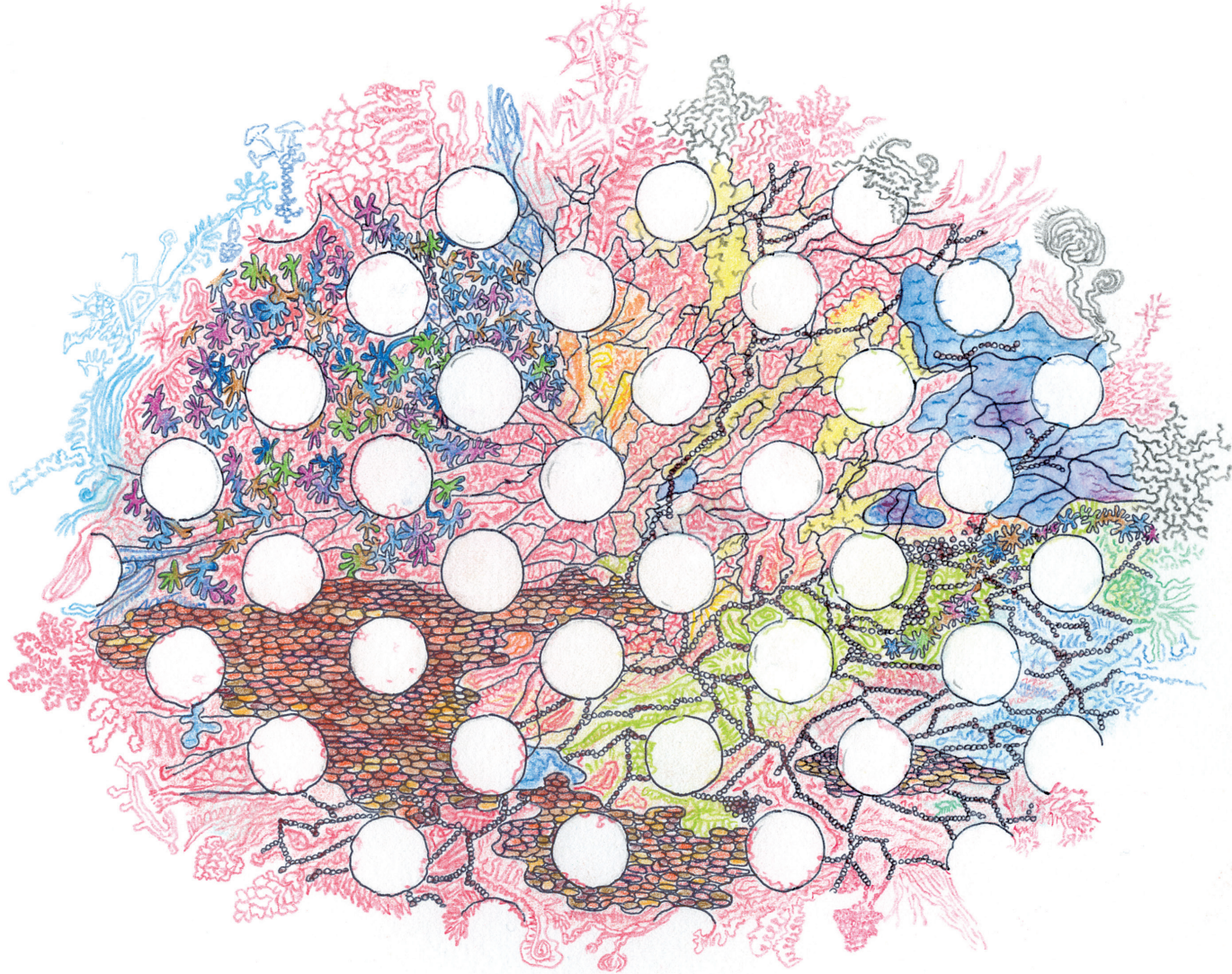




Our fifth year was held in the parking lot of Adachi Fisheries Market. Since the site was large, Ohmaki said, “Please feel free to hold pre-events all around Senju,” lending us about 10 soap bubble machines. We found a way to take independent care of the machines, which were an important part of Ohmaki’s artwork, by joining the fathers of the PTA with the students from Tokyo Denki University. We continued to hold pre-events steadily at places like kindergartens and summer festivals, each time giving “Sha-bon Odori” dance lessons and costume making workshops using remnants from yukata (traditional casual robes).

During the daytime portion of the main event, the market was already bustling with people. Not everyone could fit in the “Sha-bon Odori” dance circle, so mothers who let their children join in would watch over them from the sidelines, dancing along with hand gestures. For the first time, we realized that Memoriba was starting to be loved by the citizens.



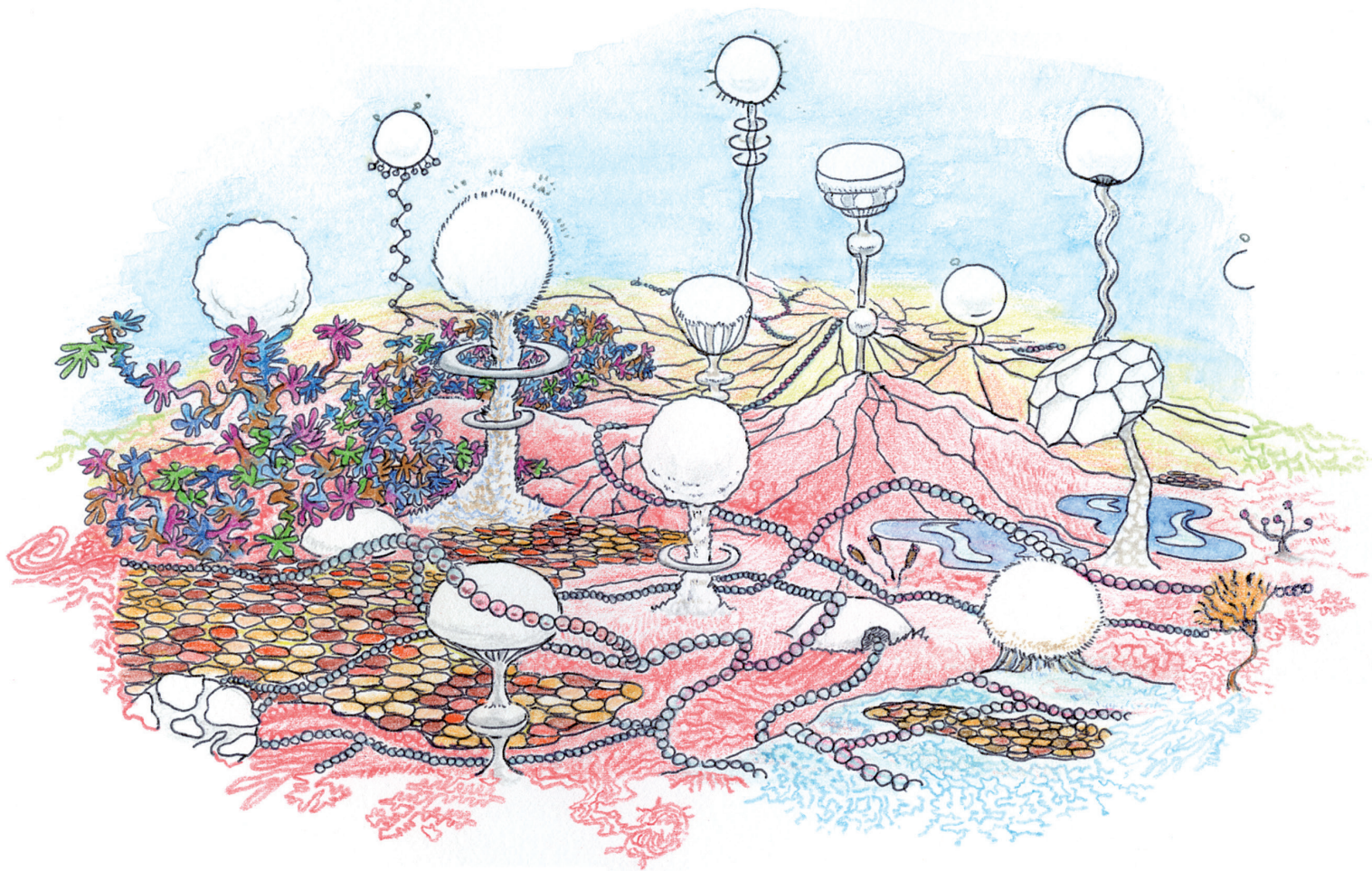


During the night, young dancers performed around a tower of soap bubble machines, stacked in the center of the site, while contrabass and piano players improvised as Ohmaki conducted. An audience of over 5000 fell silent and mesmerized as smoke was added, creating a fantastical and glorious moment.

“Wow! This is art, isn’t it!” The town leader, called the “Father of Memoriba” within the citizen-led team, was also thrilled. We mobilized him from our first year to act as a guardian at the site. We called him Memoriba’s “fixer” “We can’t make a better Memoriba than this, so let’s call it quits!” Was he joking or not...?

Of course, Memoriba forged onwards. But had Memoriba really become the “town’s baton?” We began hearing people here and there saying they’d seen the soap bubbles, but no one was inviting us to hold a performance in their part of town. Were we still an annoying “present,” after all?



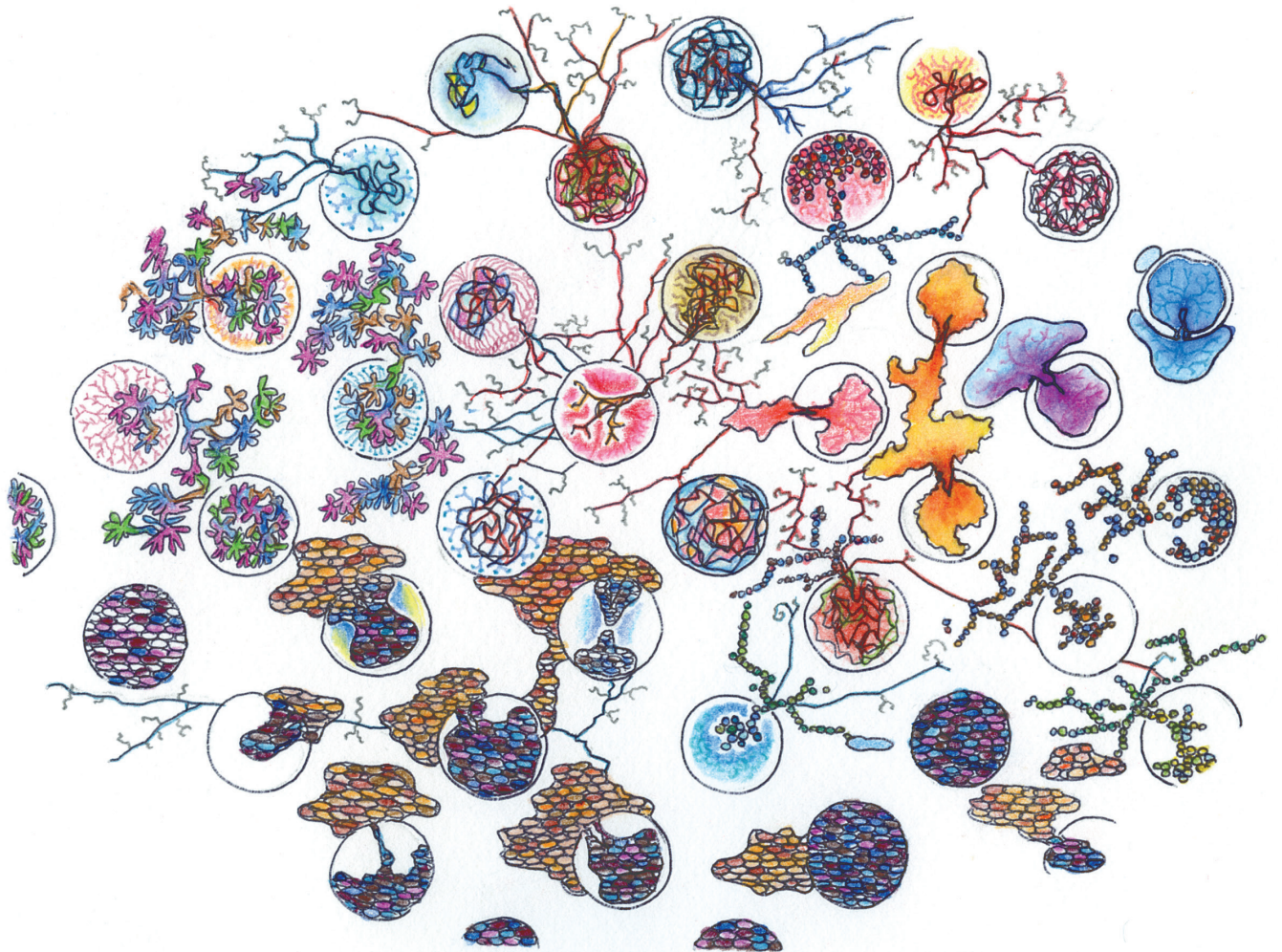


Amidst that uncertainty, we held our sixth year at Senju Aoba Junior High School. We had the cooperation of a school arts club and a school brass band. With the technical skills of everyone in the arts club, we made accessories from *yukata* remnants that really added charm! Though the arts club members were shy at first, the accessory making workshop was a big hit amongst the elementary school students during the main event. With the addition of a brass band from another junior high school and other adults, the live music accompanying the “Sha-bon Odori” really took shape. Our connections were spreading wider and wider.

Our seventh year was held at Sekiya Park. With the park enclosed by condominiums and the wind on our side, the soap bubbles soared like a dragon. Stirred by the cheers of onlookers, the soap bubbles danced in a frenzy.

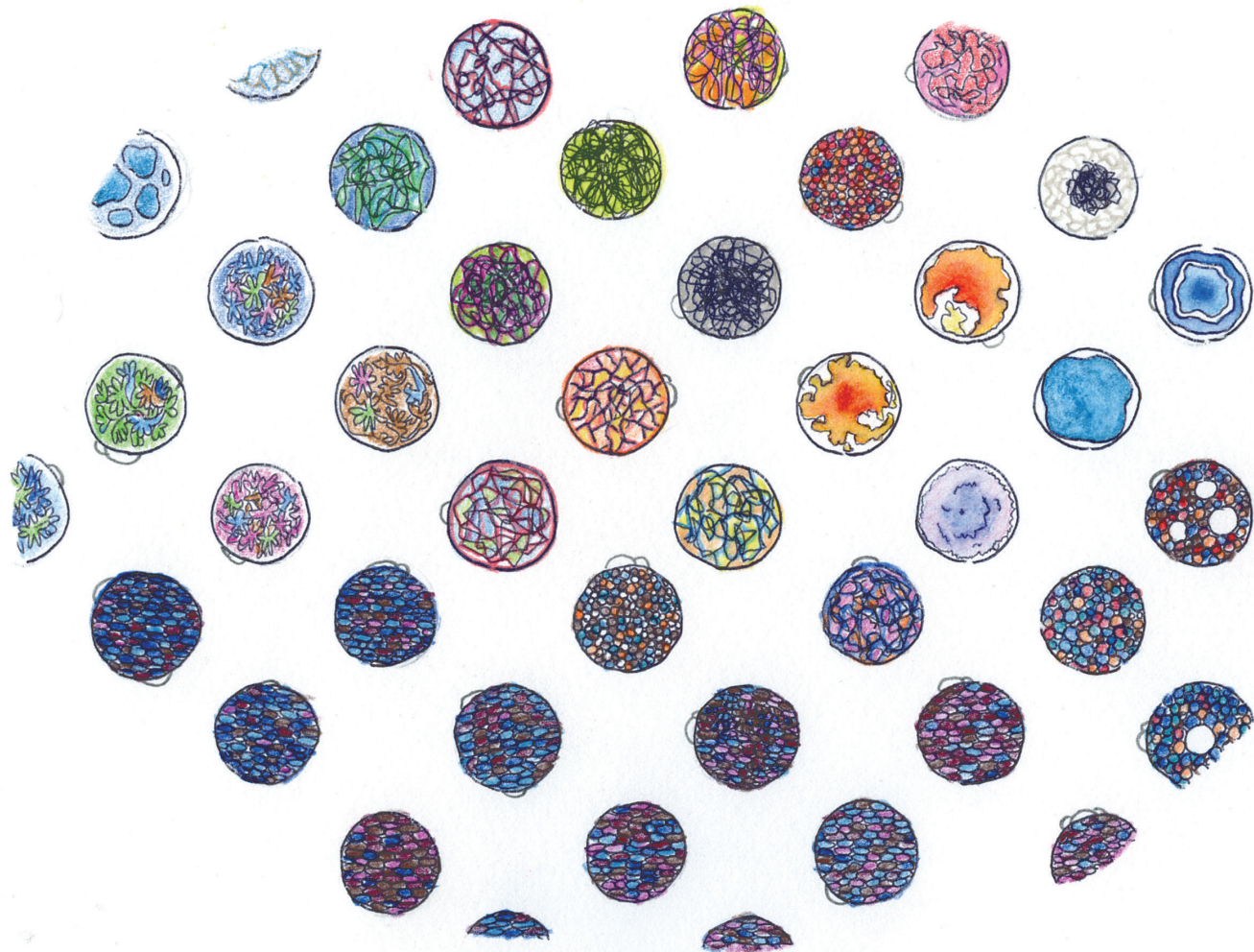
On the day of the main event, a large number of various people gradually came together to help prepare, starting with the soap bubble machines in the early morning. Just before opening, over 200 staff and performers—from adult and children performers, to dancers, guardians, and food stalls—filled the site and backstage.



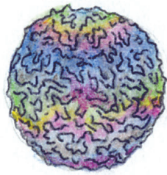


Then came our eighth year. We finally received an invitation, “Come to our part of town!” Jumping out of Senju, we came to the Nishiarai area across the Arakawa river. The married couple from the PTA of Nishiarai 2nd Elementary School who invited us had participated in citizen-led workshops on how to handle the soap bubble machines, and had experience as staff at the previous year’s performance at Sekiya Park. The people in Senju, beginning with the “fixer” were very supportive of the performance visiting Nishiarai as long as the two areas could work together. The “Sha-bon Odori” lyrics were altered to create a Nishiarai version, and the people of Nishiarai shared many memories of the town’s past.

In this way, Senju’s Memorial Rebirth was no longer just for Senju.



In our ninth year of Memoriba, in preparation for large-scale event celebrating our 10th anniversary, we introduced “Sha-bon Odori” all around Adachi City and held a series of “Memoriba School” workshops, which was proposed by the university students. For the first time, we were fully aware of the reach of our connections broadening, and we all worked earnestly. However, before we could reach our 10th anniversary performance scheduled for April 2020 in the largest park in Adachi City, the spread of the coronavirus pandemic caused everything to get canceled.



The town fell silent amidst the pandemic. Still, the activities of the citizen-led team “Ohmaki Denki K.K.” did not cease. We began to explore what we could do from that moment. Until then, we had always been running around for Memoriba’s large events, but Ohmaki Denki K.K. became the main focus as we stayed home. They suggested, “Why don’t we bring a small Memoriba to the kindergartens where there are no more outings or field days, or to elementary school graduation ceremonies?” Inspired by that idea, Ohmaki responded, “Until now, everyone gathered for a large-scale version of Memoriba in a ‘one for all’ approach, but now let’s have a small Memoriba visit each person as an ‘all for one’ action.” With that, the “Memoriba Homestay” program was born.

Soap bubble machines are delivered to host families, and those families can surround themselves with soap bubbles, for example, on the veranda or in their garden. In one instance, those soap bubbles quietly called back family memories in a home that was going to be demolished... Memorial Rebirth is now sparking small memories here and there in Adachi.

When the day comes when we can hold a large Memoriba performance again, the memories of everyone who received those small Memoribas will surely come together and be rebirthed in a “one for all” moment, and an overflowing of connections will blossom. We dream of such a day.

# 2

## Hear a voice

Since 2020, we have been interviewing people who have been involved in Memoriba.

From citizens to students, businesses, public servants and artists...

While our daily lives are changing amidst the coronavirus pandemic, the connection between our art project and the city becomes visible by listening carefully to each of our 65 interviewees.



## Introduction: Social sculpture using soap bubbles?

This book looks back on 11 years of the art project “Memorial Rebirth Senju” (commonly known as “Memoriba”), which began in 2011. What kind of *en* (縁, “connections” or “ties”) did this art project—co-created by the artist Shinji Ohmaki and the citizens of Adachi City—weave, and what have those connections brought forth?

As mentioned in the illustrated story at the beginning of this book, once a year, Memoriba has filled various places throughout Senju—such as school playgrounds and parks—with soap bubbles. Unfortunately, these activities were suspended during the pandemic, forcing the project to a stop. That was when each of us began to wonder, “What exactly is Memoriba?”

With that thought, we gathered together to hold the cross talk with the theme, “Art? I don’t get it!” Further, the arts management students who I supervise interviewed 65 friends of Memoriba.

“What does Memoriba mean to you?” (The Voices of Memoriba: Before & After) This book is based on the testimonials collected through that question. *En* (縁) is a term difficult to translate into English or French, but pulling from the fields of sociology and political science, its nuance might approach that of the term “social capital.” While there is actually extensive research on how art projects generate social capital, in-depth research on how people actually create *en* has only just begun. We hope the stories in this book provide a glimpse of the state of that *en*.

In addition, the second half of this book attempts analyses using scientific “evaluation” methods. We are grateful to the emerging researchers that helped visualize and evaluate 11 years of Memoriba’s various activities. While social impact evaluation is being discussed around the world, what will become visible when one such evaluation method—the logic model—is applied to Memoriba?



Incidentally, this book does not refer to the value of Memoriba as a work of art. Shinji Ohmaki, the artist who conceived of this project, is a sculptor. Sculpting with soap bubbles? It's a bit of an enigma. Yet, soap bubbles fill the venues and dance in the breeze, forming a figure that rises like a dragon that is undoubtedly a sculpture. Ohmaki may be sculpting ephemeral "time" through those floating soap bubbles. However, as Ohmaki remarks in this book, society is "plastic." That plasticity means society can be shaped. Over the course of 11 years, could we be sculpting society through the *en* between people, woven by those soap bubbles?

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone from the Adachi City Promotion Division who originated the idea for "Art Access Adachi: Downtown Senju – Connecting Through Sound Art," which acts as the stage for Memoriba. The Adachi City Promotion Division has been a good partner since the beginning. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Tsukasa Mori and all the staff members at Arts Council Tokyo who have been linked with our project to date, who reached out to my research lab after consulting with Adachi City, and who have become a key co-sponsor these many years.

This book would not have been possible without our editor, Ayaka Konno, who read through and reworked an enormous amount of interview materials into a form accessible to readers who may not know Memoriba or the Senju area; and our designer, Tadao Kawamura, who patiently waited for everyone's manuscripts. Our thanks to the contemporary art team 目[mé] for creating wonderful illustrations for the story at the beginning of this book. I would also like to thank all of those who contributed to the creation of this book from the bottom of my heart.

Sumiko Kumakura  
Tokyo University of the Arts

## What is “Memorial Rebirth Senju”?

Memorial Rebirth (commonly known as “Memoriba”) is an art performance by the contemporary artist Shinji Ohmaki wherein dozens of machines that generate up to 10,000 soap bubbles per minute are installed into familiar townscapes, instantly transforming them into landscapes of light using countless soap bubbles.

In Senju, beginning with Iroha Street in March 2012, Memoriba has been handed down like a baton while changing sites each year, from elementary schools to parks throughout Adachi City. In the process, an original version of the traditional *Bon Odori* dance, called “Sha-bon Odori” (a play on the word for “soap bubble,” *shabon*) was born, lyrics were created, and a night performance, in which soap bubbles are blown into the night sky, began. While changing its form in this way, Memoriba connects diverse memories and people in the town. Even today, when large-scale performances are difficult, new connections are stemming from each person’s memories and past ties.

### [Sites to Date]

Fiscal 2011; March 17, 2012 (Sat.)  
“Memorial Rebirth Senju Iroha Street”  
Iroha Shopping Street

Fiscal 2012; November 24, 2012 (Sat.)  
“Memorial Rebirth 2012 Senju Honchō”  
Senju Honchō Elementary School

Fiscal 2013; October 19, 2013 (Sat.)  
“Memorial Rebirth Senju 2013 Joto”  
Senju Joto Elementary School

Fiscal 2014; November 2, 2014 (Sun.)  
“Memorial Rebirth Senju 2014 Taroyama”  
Senju Asahi Park (Taroyama Park)

Fiscal 2015; October 11, 2015 (Sun.)  
“Memorial Rebirth Senju 2015 Adachi Fisheries Market”  
Adachi Fisheries Market

Fiscal 2016; October 9, 2016 (Sun.)  
“Memorial Rebirth Senju 2016 Aoba”  
Senju Aoba Junior High School

Fiscal 2017; November 26, 2017 (Sun.)  
“Memorial Rebirth Senju 2017 Sekiya”  
Sekiya Park

Fiscal 2018; November 18, 2018 (Sun.)  
“Memorial Rebirth Senju 2018 Nishiarai”  
Nishiarai 2nd Elementary School



# Cross Talk

“Art? I don’t get it!”

In 2020, for the 10th anniversary of Memorial Rebirth Senju, we held a talk event with artist Shinji Ohmaki. How did Memorial Rebirth Senju—which used to be met with the comment “I don’t get it”—eventually take root in Senju and Adachi City? And what is Ohmaki trying to build in Adachi City? Alongside Kazuhiro Yoshikawa and Junko Takahashi, two members of the citizen-led team “Ohmaki Denki K.K.” that has helped grow Memorial Rebirth Senju, we asked about visions for the project’s future that can only be understood from the project’s present.

Kazuhiro Yoshikawa  
Junko Takahashi  
Shinji Ohmaki  
Tsukasa Mori  
Sumiko Kumakura



## Memoriba began with “I don’t get it”

**Mori:** Today’s talk event has the wonderful title, “Art? I don’t get it!” This was the famous first reaction from [Kazuhiro] Yoshikawa, a citizen who participated in Memoriba in Senju. Memoriba started with these words.

**Yoshikawa:** I started getting involved with Memoriba in 2011, when it was first held at Iroha Shopping Street. Three students came to me saying they’d give me tens of thousands of soap bubbles if I helped them. Thinking that the children would be happy with such a sight, I thought I could at least help out—I began with that feeling. Iroha Shopping Street is right in front of Futaba Elementary School, where I was the president of the PTA [parent-teacher association] at the time. So I asked the dads of the elementary school students to gather and help with security and other things.

The day of the event was raining and so cold, so to be honest, I was wondering why we had to hold the event on such a day. I was saying I wasn’t sure if the children would come, or if they would enjoy it. But even so, the children came out to play with their raincoats and um-

brellas, touching the bubbles in the rain and having fun. Because of that, I was glad I did it.

The second time, at Senju Honchō Elementary School, we had a Sha-bon Odori dance, and though I was watching and thinking that the children were having fun, I had no idea what the “art” was—I just took it as an event for children to enjoy.

At Senju Joto Elementary School, the nighttime projection mapping performance began, which is around when I started thinking something was different than ordinary events. But the turning point for me was at the Adachi Market in 2015. There was a performance of music and dance at night. It was a “strange dance” to me (laughing), but when the soap bubbles floated during the performance, myself and the other guardians fell silent, and no one spoke a word. Towards the end, the soap bubbles were rising into the night sky like a dragon, and I was amazed. That was the first time I really felt like, “Maybe this is art.”

Even when it came to the songs, citizens would gather during practice and sing “ahh” and “ooo,” and I was at a loss for what was going

**Kazuhiro Yoshikawa** Member of the citizen team “Ohmaki Denki K.K.” Senju resident. Yoshikawa has been participating in Memoriba since 2011 (site: Senju Iroha Shopping Street).





The performance at Senju Iroha Shopping Street, fiscal 2011. Photo by Kosuke Mori.

on. But in the actual performance, that becomes mysterious music amidst the soap bubbles. I was completely hooked by [Shinji] Ohmaki's artwork, thinking it was wonderful.

Looking back, I then realized that rainy Memoriba in 2011 was art. Children's yellow, red and blue raincoats and umbrellas mixing with soap bubbles in the rain. That particular experience was really art. I still have high expectations for Ohmaki going for-



**Junko Takahashi** Member of the citizen team "Ohmaki Denki K.K." Nishiarai resident. Takahashi has been participating in Memoriba since 2017 (site: Sekiya Park).

ward. We set a high bar with what we ask of Ohmaki—we're counting on you (laughing).

**Mori:** Thank you. Next, I'd love to hear from [Junko] Takahashi, who saw Senju's Memoriba and commented, "Senju's so unfair." What did you think was unfair, and why did you want to bring Memoriba to the Nishiarai area?

**Takahashi:** When I walk around town on Saturdays and Sundays, there's always something interesting going on in the Senju area. People in Nishiarai don't have those kinds of things. When my child was going to junior high in Senju, I told the Senju officials who were working together, "Isn't it unfair it's always Senju?" Adachi City is so big; there's Nishiarai, Hanahata, and Ayase, too. So I really felt that Senju was hogging all the events. Then, a friend of one of the organizing members told me that if I helped out with two of Memoriba's pre-events, I could host an actual performance [in my area]. I was like, "Really? Then the event will come to Nishiarai? I wonder if we can make that happen." Riding that hope, I was motivated to bring Memoriba to Nishiarai. I started showing up at Memoriba get-togethers and sharing my thoughts.

I explained that Nishiarai children that live “on the other side of the river” can’t get to Senju. Not all Nishiarai parents will pay to take the train, so those children who can’t make it to Senju will go their whole lives without ever seeing this wonderful performance. That’s how I pleaded my case.

At the time, I kept participating from the Sekiya neighborhood thinking, “We gotta do this together.” Then, when it was decided that the performance would come to Nishiarai, well, the lyrics to the Sha-bon Odori dance tell of a woman who moved to Senju after marrying, don’t they? I thought that if everyone in Nishiarai heard



The performance at Nishiarai 2nd Elementary School, fiscal 2018. Photo by Ryohei Tamita.

that, they’d be like, “Why Senju?” So I asked if we couldn’t change the lyrics to “Nishiarai,” and Ohmaki replied, “Sure.” So then, I spoke to various people in Nishiarai, and based on those stories, I came up with new lyrics.

On the day of the performance, many people gathered at Nishiarai 2nd Elementary School, even without a station nearby. Some came by bicycle from Ayase and Takenotsuka area, and some even came in wheelchairs. I think about 2000 people came out. Everyone said they didn’t think they’d ever see something so beautiful, and those words alone made me so happy.

In the daytime, everyone got all excited, dancing the Nishiarai version of the Sha-bon Odori, and at night, we sang the lyrics “*tako tako tako*” [meaning “octopus”]... Nishiarai is home to Japan’s first “octopus mountain” (playground equipment shaped like an octopus), so we added that to the lyrics. The lyrics “*tako tako tako*” come together with “*ario ario ario*” at the end of the song, and the music was so beautiful I got goosebumps. The song finishes with an “ahh,” and the illuminated soap bubbles float up into the sky—I was really moved. I thought, “So this is art.” Not that I know art (laughing).

**Yoshikawa:** So you came to understand that “Ohmaki’s work” is art, didn’t you.

**Mori:** It's an odd way of putting it, but Senju's Memorial Rebirth wasn't complete from the beginning. The work was first created by Ohmaki for the Yokohama Triennale, so it had the theme of place and memory, but the work has been steadily transforming while being held in Senju each year. Both the artwork and Ohmaki himself have changed, just like the people surrounding the project, and the elements involved have multiplied. I think that is a very important point. In particular, I think that a relay of activities were kicked off in Senju and Adachi City once Ohmaki lent out the artwork we call Memoriba.

**Ohmaki:** The artwork *Memorial Rebirth*, which began at the Yokohama Triennale, created a connection with place and included my own performance. But I myself didn't want to think of the artwork as just an artwork, and I thought I'd like to turn Adachi City into an experimental site through Memoriba.

I've been invited to various places to give various performances, but there are few experiments one can do in such places.



Pic by paul barbera / where they create

**Shinji Ohmaki** Contemporary Artist; Director, Memorial Rebirth Senju. Since 2011, Ohmaki has been holding Memorial Rebirth in the Senju area of Adachi City, following its first presentation at the Yokohama Triennale in 2008. Using an old private home in Senju, he has also contributed the installation works *Idola* (2012) and *The Black House* (2016, 18).

For example, someone might say they'd like me to hold a Memoriba performance, but I would end up just blowing soap bubbles for a limited time in a limited location. However, in Adachi City, I decided to set Memorial Rebirth free from myself so it could exist as something belonging to the city. Memorial Rebirth is something that exists beyond myself, creating new echoes and opening up new possibilities. I thought that "being" might become a spokesperson for things I couldn't see or say until now. Since soap bubbles are something that everyone takes for granted, I thought they could become a being that opens up possibilities and connects them, rather than just acting as a metaphor.

I began preparations with [Sumiko] Kumakura about a year in advance, and at first, we held a briefing session in Adachi City, but we received comments like, "What are you talking about? Art? Fine art? What is that?" That was our real start. Yet, in a place like that, I had never mentioned anything about doing "art." I never used the word "art" from the start. I would say, "Let's do something through this thing called 'Memorial Rebirth.'" We



talked about the possibility of creating some kind of collaboration or educational activity over 10, 20, or 30 years through Memoriba. To cooperate, to educate, to teach in a way similar to aboriginal songlines. Such roles used to be taken on by *matsuri* festivals in the community, but nowadays, festival culture itself is collapsing. There are many people who've come from outside Adachi City, and condominiums are being built one after another. This is a historical place, (but because festivals and such don't function like they used to) it's not possible to become involved in that place any more. Amidst all of that, small communities, such as those of kindergartens and elementary schools, do a good job of making connections whether you're from inside or outside [Adachi City]. So the first thing I asked Yoshikawa was how to get the parents, not the children, to come out. I think children enjoy soap bubbles, but even if parents don't understand what we were doing, I wanted them to come out and see us working our hardest, and to have them feel happy they participated. At first, I spoke about wanting to create such a chain reaction in a way similar to a festival. To be frank, it's a troublesome endeavor. How can we plant or nurture such troublesome things in our lives? I thought that something might happen by inserting that being we call Memoriba as a foreign substance into our lives. Because I lived in Senju, I knew that people living there are

actually active in various places, but that's hard to see from the outside. For example, a woman running a local bar was actually a *chanson* singer, so I thought it would be nice to have her sing the *Bon Odori* songs; the aunts in my neighborhood were dancing the *Bon Odori* all by themselves, so I thought they should become teachers. It's interesting if everyone gets involved. In this way, I wanted to create a bundle of energy rather than art. In other words, what I wanted to do was to make Adachi into a mecca. I wanted to create an opportunity for Adachi to become the center of the world and become an experimental site. That idea was the starting point. That's



The performance at Senju Joto Elementary School, fiscal 2013. Photo by Yukitaka Aramiya.

why I never said a word about “art.” Even so, Yoshikawa and Takahashi started calling it art on their own.

**Yoshikawa:** You got me there (laughing). I never thought there was such a backstory. When I first heard the phrase “Memorial Rebirth” from Ohmaki, what amazed me was the idea of “rebirthing” memories. I was struck when I heard that, “When children grow into adults, it’s good for them to see soap bubbles and remember how amazing they used to seem.” I thought nothing could be happier than if Memoriba remained in the children’s memories so that even when they grow up, they’ll remember things like Senju’s shopping streets and schools. That’s why I called on other adults to join in, telling them it’s enough just to see the children’s joy. I didn’t think about the background [of the project.] Ohmaki says he doesn’t call this art, but in my mind, looking back now, I think the Memoriba held at Iroha Shopping Street was art.

**Takahashi:** Like Yoshikawa, I used to be the president of an elementary school PTA, so I was always thinking of the children. After all, there are various disparities in Adachi City, and there are children who eat meals at home alone or cannot attend school. I felt that such children should have an equal chance to see things like Memoriba. If everyone has a chance to see the same thing,

some children may decide to pursue art when they grow up, for example, after seeing Memoriba. I’ve always thought that even children who couldn’t attend school would have more options.

So I called on people for Memoriba while saying, “Let’s raise the children of Adachi City together.” But when we held the performance at Nishiarai 2nd Elementary School, there were many elderly people. There are also many facilities for the elderly in Adachi City. I was really hearstruck when elderly people were happy, saying they couldn’t believe they could see something like this at last.

### Both people and society are like clay

**Mori:** Ohmaki, you’ve been wanting more and more out of Memoriba, haven’t you? Even though at first you’d lightly say it would be nice to have songs, that turned into wanting to create a *Bon Odori* dance, then into involving people from Tokyo University of the Arts who could compose music and perform, and since then, various performances and workshops have stemmed from the annual Sha-bon Odori. You’ve been boldly gulping up talent like water.

**Ohmaki:** I think it’s important for students from Tokyo

University of the Arts to get involved. The fact that their Department of Musical Creativity and the Environment is located in Adachi City has become a characteristic of the area. There are treasures in the area, but the people of Adachi City didn't know how to make use of them. They had no idea what was going on behind the closed doors of the university. I think of people as having a clay-like plasticity. I think of interesting ways to knead various types of clay and give them shape. So if there are people who stand out in the university, I'll pull from their strong points and try to connect them with the people of Adachi City. I think it's interesting to play in that way.



A Memoriba Christmas party held at the Senju Campus of Tokyo University of the Arts.

I also knew of the educational disparity in the area on the other side of Senju's river. That's because a former assistant of mine became a teacher in that area, and she said that even if she went every day to the children's homes, they wouldn't come to school. So I'd been thinking about crossing the river for a long time. Once Professor Kumakura, [Tsukasa] Mori and I had first worked out the concept for Memoriba, I said I wanted to lend the performance to various communities, borrowing each other's people and mixing them together. I was saying that it would be nice if the world would become a place where you could coexist with others and borrow from each other instead of saying, "they're different from me." If something close to social sculpture could be achieved through Memoriba, then "differences in elasticity" would emerge in Adachi City, rather than disparity. I thought if that became a characteristic of Adachi City, it could be possible to create a society that is truly fluid, rather than one that only speaks of diversity.

One interesting part of this project, which Tokyo University of the Arts is involved in, is how artists and local people mingle. My suggestion to include a Bon Odori dance relates to that. Things kept expanding; I used to say, "It's *Bon Odori* with the 'bon' from 'sha-bon' [soap bubble]." Then I'd say, "We should write lyrics." Then, "Let's mix in Senju's *chanson* singer and [the artist] Kurukuru

Charmy." Then, "Let's call on some children to form a choir group." And, "We should do this in music class." Through this expansion, I wanted to make Adachi City a place where everyone could talk about art and fine art as a matter of course. There aren't many places in Japan where people can talk about those things normally. I wanted to make this a place where art is spoken about in the same way as local festivals, with people saying things like, "You haven't heard of it?" Or, "This is what I'm doing." I hope Adachi City will become such a place by activating social plasticity through Memoriba.

**Mori:** Listening to you know, I understand, but is that how you thought from the start?

**Ohmaki:** I thought that from the start. But even if I put those things into words at the beginning, it wouldn't have been taken well and there'd be a storm of criticism. So rather than presenting those ideas, there was no

choice but to drop it like a bomb at first. There's no option but to try something out once, then ask if they like it or not.

Holding Memoriba in the rain was

our first "bomb." I had told everyone beforehand that we'd cancel in case of rain. So when it started raining on the day, everyone unwound thinking we'd cancel, and when the mood shifted downwards, I said, "We're doing it." Everyone was surprised like, "In this rain? Will the bubbles float?" I think art is about finding ways to change those kinds of common sense reactions.

Pretty soap bubbles floating around are visually beautiful, so capturing that with a photo is sufficient. But I think that art is what happens in the time and space there, where everyone is mixing together. That's why I think Yoshikawa and Takahashi also began saying they felt "art" through their experiences.

**Mori:** Yoshikawa, it was when you started looking back at several years of your experience with Memoriba that you realized that the Memoriba held on Iroha Street in the rain was art, right?

**Yoshikawa:** That's right. After seeing the performance at Adachi Market and feeling that it might be art, I looked back at photos and videos from the performance at Iroha Street and realized it was indeed art. At the time it was rainy and cold, so I couldn't see it as a



**Tsukasa Mori** Director, Arts Council Tokyo/Tokyo Artpoint Project

whole, but looking at the video and photos later, I could see how glorious it was. When I started to understand art, I saw the red and blue umbrellas overlapping with the soap bubbles in the rain as a very beautiful artwork. Even I was surprised. That's why that first year of Memoriba is my favorite. The other years were wonderful, but it was that rainy Memoriba that I really like because it's the one that made me begin to think, "This is art."

**Mori:** Once you had the experience of thinking "this is art," you were able to take another look at things from the past that used to have no particular meaning and reconsider them as "art." I think the idea of revisiting experiences from 4 years ago in the present really illustrates our conversation about place and memory. Just as I thought! (Laughing)

**Ohmaki:** The reason performers and artists participate in Memoriba is because if the level of art that people first come into contact with is high, then their educational standard also becomes high. It's like setting a standard high enough that you can see it, but can't reach it. Based on that (professional performance), I hope that one day, as they take the next step, they are able to feel whether an artwork is as good as previously, and wonder why they are able to sense that. So, the people of Adachi City be-

come aware of professional standards without realizing it, and end up as people who understand taste. As Takahashi said earlier, it would be nice if children could know such standards and aim to surpass them on their own. They can land on the other side of that standard.

**Mori:** Takahashi, you were saying that when there are environmental disparities between children, their future can be determined by whether or not they get to experience something like Memoriba. Many programs for citizen participation are surprisingly easy to digest, soft and harmless, aren't they? In contrast, listening to what Ohmaki is saying, doesn't [Memoriba] sound like it's tainted with ideas?



A "Memoriba School" workshop (science).

**Takahashi:** Maybe I've been drinking that poison, too. For example, I can make an electrical machine even though I never went to an electrical school. I've had the students from Tokyo Denki University teach me many times already. They started making [soap bubble] machines, then children started making smaller ones, and as everyone goes through the workshops and such, they gradually become immersed in various parts of the project. With machines, you can start off by looking at what's in front of you—how the machine runs or how the bubbles come out—and little by little, you deepen participation.

### Creating a place where new “realizations” are born

**Yoshikawa:** For example, “blowing soap bubbles,” “singing songs,” “playing strange sounds from shopping street speakers”.... Every single thing we do makes me really scratch my head. But when it all comes together, I get goosebumps and think, “Wow, that's amazing.” Ohmaki puts each piece in place and when it's complete, you think, “that's wonderful.” I think it's amazing I've learned to feel that way (laughing). It's fun to learn new things about yourself. That's why we were all so excited while joining workshops in preparation for the Memoriba that was supposed to be held in the Toneri area in 2020, won-

dering how the artwork would turn out.

**Takahashi:** Yoshikawa, since you've been involved in Memoriba for a long time, you used to think you could never let it leave Senju, didn't you (laughing). I think it's close to the feeling of not wanting to marry off your own daughter.

**Yoshikawa:** I was proud of “Senju's Memoriba,” so I felt the need to complete it inside Senju. But Takahashi wanted to show it to the children in Nishiarai, the elderly and many others. Like me, Takahashi was also a former PTA president that I could trust, and I was really struck by how passionate she was about the children, so I could say, “I understand. Let's do it together.” Not that the decision is up to me (laughing). The Memoriba held in Nishiarai was also wonderful, and I was happy we did it after all.

**Takahashi:** I think you married off your daughter well.

**Mori:** When Memoriba was brought from Senju to Nishiarai, did you feel resistant at all?

**Yoshikawa:** I did feel like Memoriba belonged to Senju. After all, I'm from Senju, so I have love for Memoriba and felt like I didn't want to send it anywhere else. I grew up

in Senju, so I wanted to complete the project there. But now I feel like showing it in a variety of places.

**Ohmaki:** As for me, I thought I couldn't bring Memoriba beyond Senju until the love and other feelings of the people there were surely in place. I thought it was very important for Memoriba to be able to stand on its own. By cooperating with large numbers of people, such as through Ohmaki Denki K.K. or with the students at Tokyo Denki University, I think Memoriba became something that can be taken beyond Senju, and "Senju's Memoriba" became something we can look at objectively. It came to be seen as something that is "ours but not ours." Artwork has that quality. You make it yourself, put a lot of love into it, and make it while all sorts of messy things happen. But when you actually put that work on display, it's very important for us artists to look at that work objectively.

That's why it's so important to feel like the distance between Memoriba and yourself gets closer and further, that it feels like yours and not yours at the same time. By becoming independent, it's possible for Memoriba itself to find new headings within a place. Creating that possibility was the kind of back-and-forth I wanted for Memoriba. I really like what Yoshikawa was saying earlier. I'm happy to hear he's hooked. As an artist, I myself am full of

insecurities. I always think things went well in the moment, but then immediately start thinking about what to do next or what will happen afterwards. So when the students created "Memoriba School," I thought things were finally coming around. I was so happy to hear they took it upon themselves to start the school. When they told me they made the school, I was like, "Yes!" I think that Adachi City should become a place of learning. In his book, [Junya] Yamaide writes that art helps us "realize" how we see and think about things (*BEPPU PROJECT 2005-2018*, NPO BEPPU PROJECT, 2018). Lately, I've been thinking it's so important to create places where those "realizations" can occur.



A "Memoriba School" workshop (music/physical education).

**Mori:** Even listening to what Ohmaki is saying, I think that when Memoriba circles around the Senju area year after year, it is not wandering but taking its necessary course. When Memoriba was nurtured in Senju and became something important and dear to everyone, it was natural that Nishiarai would also voice its desire for it. Kumakura, as a kind of mother who raised Memoriba, was this “just as you thought?”

**Kumakura:** No way, of course not. Since the people of Senju ask that it be called “Memorial Rebirth Senju” no matter where in Adachi City it moves to, for now we say that, “Senju’s Memorial Rebirth is going to Nishiarai; or going to Toneri.” Earlier, Yoshikawa said that the decision isn’t up to him. Because a lot of people have a sense of ownership over Memoriba and kindly say so in various ways, as a producer, I’m just directing traffic. But of course, the decisions aren’t up to me or the city or Ohmaki. When everyone’s thoughts fit together like a mosaic, you can achieve a mutual understanding—like, “this is how it is”—without anyone having to say anything.



**Sumiko Kumakura** Professor, Graduate School of Global Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts; Producer, “Art Access Adachi: Downtown Senju –Connecting Through Sound Art.”

In any case, Ohmaki has gained traction worldwide, so the situation has changed from how things started. In the early days, when I was walking around Senju, I often bumped into Ohmaki and Elena, who was in charge of our first round of students, but that doesn’t happen anymore. Ohmaki is also entrusting Memoriba bit by bit to groups like Ohmaki Denki K.K. and the students at Tokyo Denki University. For example, when it came to the lyrics for the Sha-bon Odori dance that were written for Nishiarai, we left that up to the citizens and students to the point I was worried we might not have even passed the decision by Ohmaki first. Also, it was a student who was a second-year at Tokyo University of the Arts at the time who came up with “Memoriba school,” and another student who thought of its catchphrase “Why stop at watching?” [Literally, “just watching is a waste.”] I hadn’t said a word. Listening to Ohmaki talk today, I learned that the word “plasticity” is key for Memoriba. In sculptural terms, it can be molded—in other words, it means it’s possible to shape it into something. People and society are like clay that can take many shapes. While education usually fits people into one mold, Memoriba cannot work with just one mold. So participants think for themselves about



what shape they'd like to take and do their best to shape themselves, like a butterfly emerging from a cocoon. I think that what Memoriba has done is to return that kind of power to each person and into the communal society.

**Ohmaki:** Clay is one of the most workable materials for sculpting. You can get it anywhere, and I think everyone has touched it before. But you can't make use of the material without a vision. Without the creator's intentions, its shape will not keep and it will keep shifting. If everyone's thoughts don't stand together, nothing will take shape.

So I think whether you can or can't see that vision is a big deal. When Memoriba was starting out, there were citi-

zens who didn't share that vision so they said they didn't "get it." I think it was intimidating because you can't understand something that you can't imagine visually and have never experienced. But as Memoriba continued, everyone came to associate it with things familiar to them. I think it was like flipping a switch that allowed people to see. That kind of switch used to exist in our social system, but since it's been lost, it's important to find ways to regenerate it. To reimagine, and know there's a switch there. I think that's the "realization" that art offers. Art's "realizations" aren't something you need to be taught; it's about coming to know what should be inherent to your experience and reconnecting. Society is something that separates the human spirit from the body and makes us perceive them as different things. By placing the weight of something like Memoriba onto that situation, the power of human nature to overcome emerges, and connects us with the process of "realization." I think that's also the threshold between whether something becomes art or not.

### Co-creativity led by citizens

**Mori:** We began today's talk with the words, "Art? I don't get it!" But there's also the question of what art means to Ohmaki, which brings us back to the starting point.



A visit to the graduation ceremony of a local elementary school to blow soap bubbles.

**Ohmaki:** That's a tough question. Artwork is an ongoing challenge, so there is no answer. I think it's an act of embodying what you yourself think and see. So it's not something anyone has ever seen, and can take 5 or even 10 years to create. It's an act of endlessly grasping at clouds, and it can be mentally strenuous. But I think it comes down to giving shape to what you'd like to see, or what you want to be the first to experience. It's like really wanting to see something, know something, or place something somewhere before telling people this or that.

When my hometown was going to be redeveloped, I was mulling over what to do. Within that, I had always placed heavy importance on the question of how we can regain the lost past or time. So rather than always wanting to do something for others, I'm thinking about what to do about the unresolved issues within myself. I think of Adachi City as my second hometown, but Senju's Memoriba also stems from wanting something to help myself, and has led to connections with society and many other things. The question of how we can regain lost things—such as the past, time, memory and place—is very important to me. I'd also like to continue the act of discovering something while the work is ongoing. If you were to quit, you could do so immediately and things would end in an instant. All things, including

artwork, don't end as long as everyone is consciously connecting them. I'd like to contemplate together with everyone, through my body, as if I'm drawing.

**Kumakura:** Ohmaki doesn't say much about the parts of Memoriba that Ohmaki Denki K.K. and others involved in the project shape on their own. But he would never give an OK without even looking at something, and he always makes sure to give things a final brush-up, from our annual participation badges to our t-shirts. He is also very serious up until the night portion of the performance is over, and doesn't accept compromises. When we decided to hold a performance at the Adachi Market in 2015, Ohmaki asked us to hold a pre-event to gather people, lent us a [bubble] machine and told us to go ahead as much as we wanted. Perhaps because that pre-event was successful, we had over 5000 people gather that year. Ohmaki doesn't compromise at all in the final week leading up to the main event, and doesn't give us any OKs. Ohmaki, maybe you feel it's your responsibility to the people of Adachi.

Memorial Rebirth is becoming such a co-creative project, but after all, by calling the project Memorial Rebirth Senju "by Shinji Ohmaki," all sorts of people who want to try being shaped into something different find Memoriba and come. But on the other hand, Yoshikawa sent a

message the other day about the Memoriba scheduled to be held at Toneri Park, asking Ohmaki to “Please give us an artwork we’ve never seen before.” There was some back-and-forth with him saying, “Make sure it’s a form we’ve never seen.” In that sense, just because it has the title of Memorial Rebirth Senju “by Shinji Ohmaki,” I don’t think that citizens, including us, feel at all exploited by his artwork. Rather, Takahashi and Yoshikawa put pressure on Ohmaki, which is why he works without sleep until the morning of the main event.

**Mori:** It may seem selfish when artists don’t compromise when making artwork, but the truth is they don’t mean to be selfish, they just have something to say through that artwork. They become desperate because of what the work wants to say. So the capacity to keep up with that is important. While listening to this talk, I was thinking the reason everyone in Senju is inspired by Memoriba is because they’ve begun to realize the magical power surrounding such artwork.

**Takahashi:** Since getting involved in Memoriba, I’m able to enjoy more and more things. At first, I thought art was something to look at in museums, but the way I see art has changed after being involved in Memoriba and discerning art in what’s before my eyes. I want to work

together with the people of Adachi City more and more, so I hope more people will join Ohmaki Denki K.K.

**Yoshikawa:** It took me 10 years to finally understand art. When the things that we were creating one by one unified as Ohmaki’s artwork, I came to understand those things as art and I think it made me grow as a person. If people like me, who used to say, “Art? I don’t get it,” can understand this, I think others will surely understand more than I do. I hope you all can participate in and be moved by Memoriba.

**Ohmaki:** Since Memoriba is a project that really puts a lot of pressure on me, it’s both fun and scary to imagine how far it can go in the future, or how far it will spread. After all, this project isn’t the kind that finishes in a year or two. It’s great the project was able to see its 10th anniversary, and I think the next benchmark will be continuing for 30 or 50 years, as was my initial goal. Education is when parents teach their children, and when those children become parents and are able to connect the memories of what they were taught with various things once again. I hope that through Memoriba, Adachi City will become a place where that kind of time can be put into practice. I think that, for example, even if the place [where Memoriba is held] disappears,

Memoriba will become a metaphor for weaving memories, and be something that can be summoned in various places around the world. I hope we can continue thinking together and create new actions.

**Mori:** I think it's a big deal that Adachi City is becoming an experimental site for artists. If Ohmaki just wanted to present his artwork, he has his choice of places as someone in-demand around the world. But Adachi City is a place where you can conduct new experiments, and on an ongoing basis at that. Through practice over time, Memoriba is achieving a heritage that transcends generations in changing forms, like a *matsuri* festival. Listen-



The performance at Nishiirai 2nd Elementary School, fiscal 2018. Photo by Ryohei Tamita.

ing to today's talk reaffirmed this for me.

**Kumakura:** I think a big takeaway from today is that, besides Ohmaki, a being called “Memorial Rebirth Senju” also exists. Unfortunately, that being's 10th birthday—the Memorial Rebirth Senju that was planned for Toneri Park—couldn't be held. While it may take until 2021 or 2022, I would definitely like to celebrate that 10th birthday. That's not a statement as the project's producer, but rather a strong desire as a faculty of Tokyo University of the Arts. To those who've agreed to appear in the performance—Min Tanaka, Yoshihide Otomo, and Mako-to Nomura—thank you for your patience. To everyone in Adachi, please feel welcome to join us.

This transcript was edited from the talk event “Shinji Ohmaki x Community Art? ‘Art? I don't get it!’” (大巻伸嗣×地域アート?「アートなんてわかんねえ!」), held online on October 18, 2020. The full-length archival video, including talks by guests Junya Yamaide and Rie Ishimatsu, can be viewed at the link below (in Japanese only).

Art Access Adachi: Downtown Senju – Connecting through Sound Art  
YouTube Channel

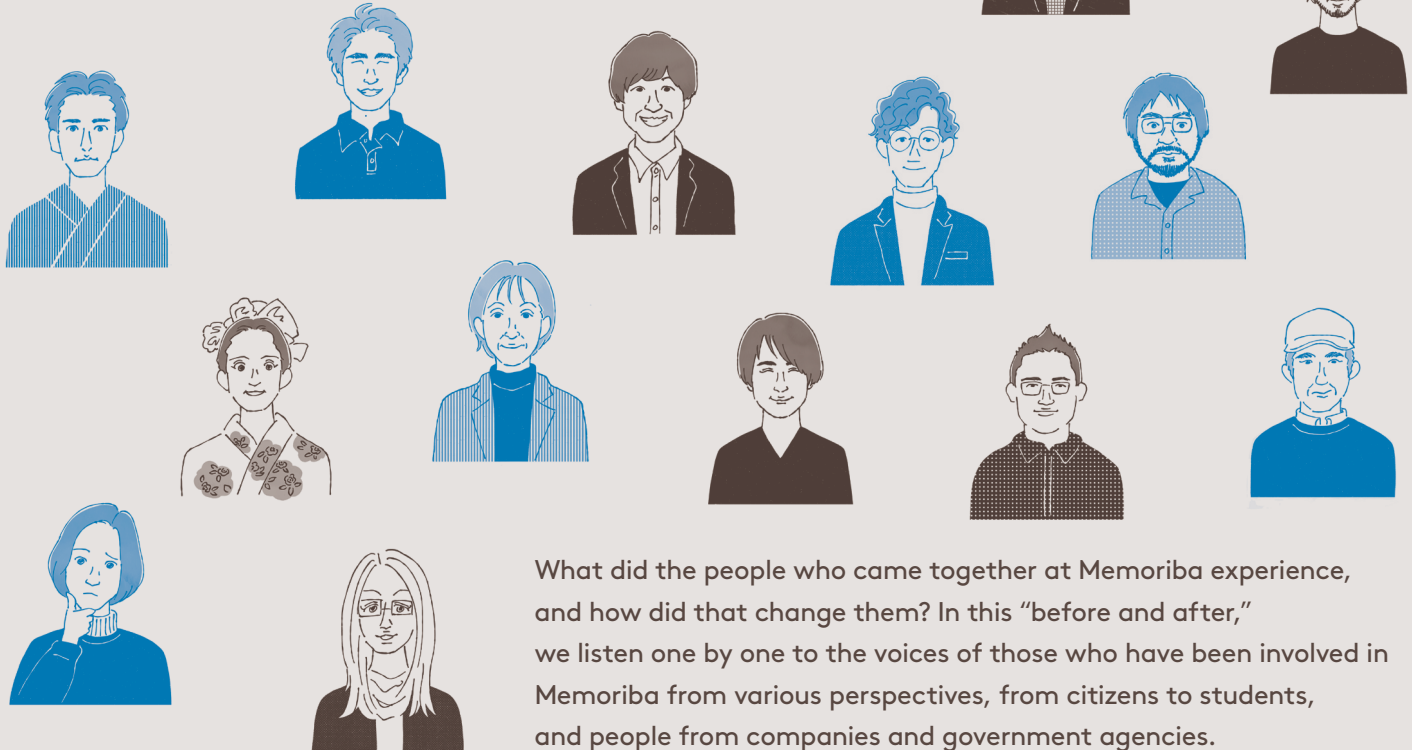
「大巻伸嗣×地域アート?「アートなんてわかんねえ!」」

(Shinji Ohmaki x Community Art? “Art? I don't get it!”)

Artist Crosstalk #2 (10th Anniversary Special Project)

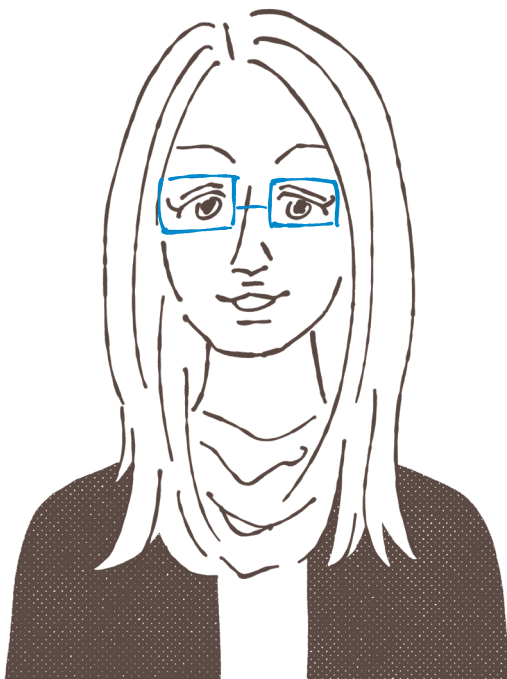


# The Voices of Memoriba: Before & After



What did the people who came together at Memoriba experience, and how did that change them? In this “before and after,” we listen one by one to the voices of those who have been involved in Memoriba from various perspectives, from citizens to students, and people from companies and government agencies.

illustration: mutsumi



“Memoriba is all about ‘people’”

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Alumnus of the Tokyo University of the Arts Graduate School

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### Elena Bzhola

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Elena is an alumnus of the Graduate School at Tokyo University of the Arts and she was also in the first generation of students in charge of Memoriba. Elena, who was working to share Japanese culture in the Ukraine, knocked on the doors of Kumakura’s research lab with a desire to learn more about art and culture in Japan. With that, she was entrusted with the Memoriba project, which was preparing to launch.



# Before

In 2011, in the new world of Senju, Elena began her challenge of becoming involved in contemporary art for the first time. While learning about Japan's unique approach to community activity through her many encounters, she built relations with local people from scratch. While she enjoyed communicating with people in the downtown area, she was brought to tears after being told, "You don't understand us because you're a foreigner."

"I took time visiting various places to build relationships. Ukraine doesn't have things like local festivals or town activities, so everything was new to me. I was surprised at how locals cared so much about district boundaries. Those districts are divided by the railroad tracks and there isn't much interaction. Since it was all part of the same Senju, I thought it shouldn't be an issue."

"There were difficult moments, but becoming popular in Senju was something that made me happy. Wherever I went, I'd hear someone say, 'There's Elena!' I also loved the downtown atmosphere; it was fun."

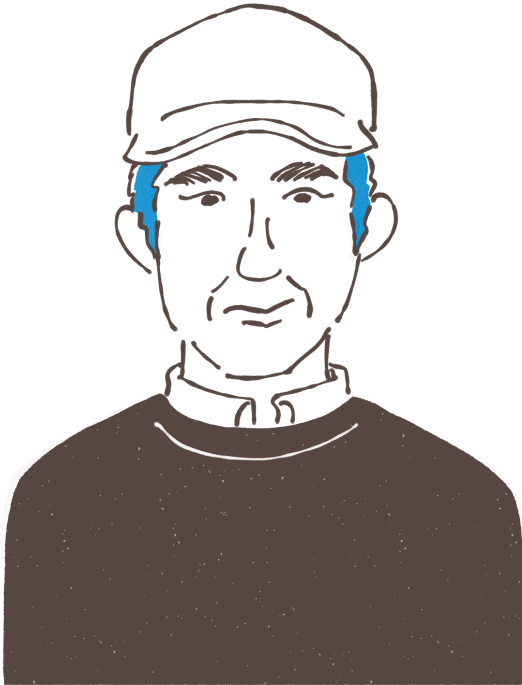


# After

Between 2011 and 2015, Elena was involved in Memoriba's operations, and felt that Senju had become more energetic in a way that overcame districts. After completing graduate school, she left Memoriba and began working as a leader in regional revitalization projects through a company. Elena was so indispensable to Memoriba that even now, people here and there in Senju ask students in charge of Memoriba how Elena is doing. Elena says, "Memoriba is all about 'people.' If I hadn't been a part of it, the project might have taken a different shape. I think the project has grown in this direction thanks to each and every person involved."

"I expect Memoriba will bring new energy to the community and restore its vitality. By introducing new activity into ordinary life, I think life in the town will become more enjoyable. I hope Memoriba can tour all of Adachi City and return to Senju one day."

“I want to find key people who think,  
‘I want this in my community’”



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Citizen and Leader of Ohmaki Denki K.K.

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### Masanori Terasawa

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Masanori Terasawa is a man in his 50s who began participating in Memoriba in 2012. He also participates with other fathers from six different elementary schools in the “Senju League” for softball, and the community patrol group Guardianship Kita-Senju. When Memoriba was held at Senju Aoba Junior High School in 2016, Terasawa worked hard at helping achieve the event as a former PTA board member at the same school. Since 2015, Terasawa has been leading Ohmaki Denki K.K., a citizen’s group supporting Memoriba.

# Before

Masanori Terasawa says he started participating in Memoriba out of curiosity, even though he didn't know Shinji Ohmaki at first. The citizen's group was trained on how to use the soap bubble machines by staff from Ohmaki's studio, and Terasawa was entrusted with managing a technical team. When that responsibility grew, the technical team was renamed "Ohmaki Denki K.K." in 2015 and, at the same time, Terasawa was nominated as the group's leader by another citizen, Kazuhiro Yoshikawa.

"From around the third year, the management of the soap bubble machines was essentially left to us. The people from Ohmaki's studio gave us lessons, and the students from Tokyo Denki University were checking the machines lined up in the school gymnasium."

"The year we made t-shirts for Ohmaki Denki K.K., Ohmaki drew on my t-shirt after the event. He quickly drew me holding a bucket (soap bubble machine) with all sorts of animals holding buckets in the background. This left a deep impression on me."



# After

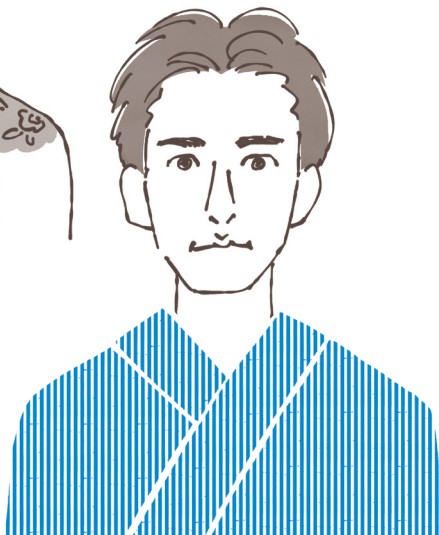
In 2016, Terasawa made possible a Memoriba performance at Senju Aoba Junior High School, which his child attended. He was disappointed when the performance at Toneri Park was canceled due to the pandemic, but he wanted to make use of those thoughts in expanding Memoriba's reach. In particular, after his experience interacting with the people of the Toneri community while creating new lyrics for the "Sha-bon Odori" dance, he hopes that Memoriba will be realized in various areas in Adachi City, even if it's at a smaller scale.

"By interacting with Toneri, I learned there are still many things I don't know about Adachi City. I want to find key people like Junko Takahashi from the Nishiarai area who think, 'I want this in my community.' For instance, even if your idea can't be realized right away, I think you can convey those feelings if given the chance."

"I would like to keep moving towards the next 10 years through trial and error. Even if the other fathers who joined in the past have drifted away, I think there are those who will come back if I call on them. It would be awesome if Memoriba grew like a local festival and took root as part of the culture, wouldn't it."



“I want people to meld with the dance circle  
and experience becoming one with the space.”



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Artist Unit “Kurukuru Charmy”

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Emi Tomizuka (left) and Kentaro Ohnishi (right)

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Kurukuru Charmy is an emerging artist unit that graduated from Tokyo University of the Arts. The unit specializes in writing lyrics, composing music and choreography. Since producing the “Sha-bon Odori” dance (based on the traditional Bon Odori dance), the unit has been involved in dance, performance and workshops, and have taken on various roles in Memoriba each year.

# Before

In the second year of Memoriba, Kurukuru Charmy was asked to create a Bon Odori dance involving citizens. Emi Tomizuka and Kentaro Ohnishi came up with the choreography while Miyako Matsuoka composed the music. Their wires got crossed with Shinji Ohmaki and the management side, and they underwent many conversations. In their first performance, the lyrics were different and the music wasn't live.

**Tomizuka** "The choreography of the 'Sha-bon Odori' dance incorporates various elements like traditional Bon Odori movements and a sense of space from Japanese dance. We choreographed the dance so that even those unfamiliar with dance could participate, and those with dance skills could deepen their choreography."

**Ohnishi** "In the first version of the dance, there was talk of creating a Bon Odori dance where everyone could join the circle and blend in with dancers, rather than simply watching skilled dancers. Thinking of how to involve the people watching, we talked about things like having the dancers, along with local *nihon-buyō* (Japanese dance) teachers, dance at a distance where it's easy to call people into the circle, or things like how to call out to onlookers."

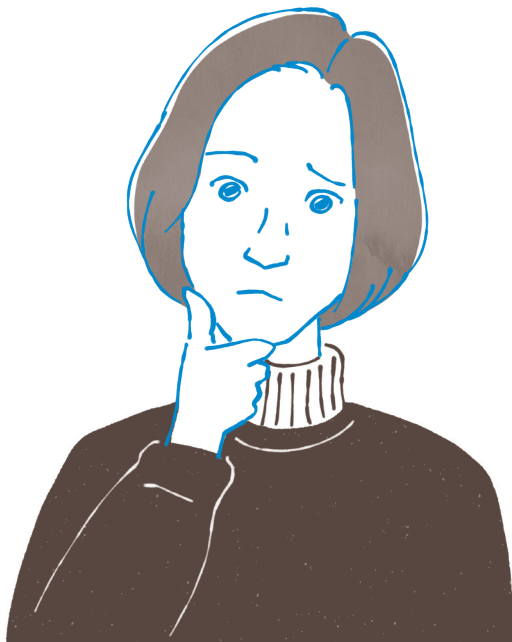


# After

In 2013, the lyrics reflecting the Senju area were completed, and the "Sha-bon Odori" dance took form with live music. Kurukuru Charmy, who have gradually become a team with Ohmaki, carry out new initiatives every year while also serving as interpreters between Ohmaki and the citizens. In 2015, the nighttime performance featured improvisational live music and contemporary dance. Since then, they have expanded their citizen-led activities to include dressing workshops, a teen band, and chorus work in the Nishiarae area.

**Ohnishi** "I wanted people to feel that it's okay for unnecessary and excessive energy to exist, so we held a dressing workshop using lots of decorative materials. In a space where soap bubbles shine and touch your face, it feels as if the boundary between yourself and others becomes blurred, and before you know it, everyone is in the dance circle. I want people to meld with the dance circle without worrying about the correct steps, and have the extravagant experience of becoming one with the space."

**Tomizuka** "It's important for emerging artists to gain experience through Memoriba, and the members of Kurukuru Charmy are also expanding their range of activities. I would like to support the people through things like workshops with the hope that this will be a place where not only creatives but also collaborators from various perspectives can go beyond a sense of obligation and, before long, this will become a place for taking on exciting challenges."



“I always wondered,  
‘what is this about?’”

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Citizen and former member of Ohmaki Team

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### Participant A

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Between 2011 and 2012, Participant A was part of the citizen-led group “Ohmaki Team.” After leaving the NPO Otomachi, they expanded their range of activities by actively working to create community networks on their own, participating in new community art projects, and other activities.



## Before

At the time, Participant A was working with the community. They participated in Otomachi because they wanted to experience community activities they could leverage for their work, but each time they participated in Memoriba meetings as a member of the Ohmaki Team, they found more and more things that made them uncomfortable.

"I thought there's a limit to what you can learn from books, and many things can only be understood by participating in community activities. Otomachi was a new movement, and the idea of collaborating between NPOs and universities also suited me at the time, so I joined an information session thinking it might lead to something."

"There was a time when the role of the Ohmaki Team was much less clear. At the recruitment stage, there was talk of planning and making things together, but even if we were asked to come up with ideas during meetings, they rarely came to fruition. I thought, 'If they just need extra hands for events, they should have said so from the start!' At that time, the Ohmaki Team would go home complaining amongst each other every time."

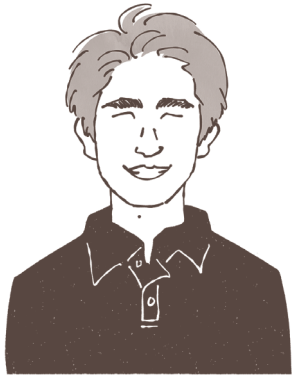


## After

After about 2 years, Participant A lost interest in Memoriba. But, they were approached by someone involved in Otomachi at the time, and they are now involved in art projects in other communities. They say that their activities thereafter were influenced by their experience with Memoriba's operations, when they used to wonder, "what is this about?"

"Though it's quite difficult for citizens to get involved in art projects, neither the staff nor the citizen participants knew that at the time. Everyone was learning as they went, especially in the first year, so now I think the fact that things didn't go smoothly couldn't be helped."

"Since I could get involved in community activities through Otomachi, a big part of me wanted to be active by making my own organization. The various experiences I had as part of the Ohmaki Team have been helpful on the flip side in a teaching sense, such as when I coordinate volunteers. I think Memoriba should duly review what they're doing by asking themselves, "What happens if we do this?" Reports always seem flattering when they come out, but I'm skeptical."



“First off, it’s unbelievable for people in technical fields to gather in the field of community development like this.”

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School of Science and Technology for Future Life, Tokyo Denki University Graduates of the Department of Robotics and Mechatronics

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Keichi Onodera (left), Yuuki Kiyomiya (middle), Ken Ogiwara (right)

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From 2013 to now, the students of the Department of Robotics and Mechatronics at the School of Science and Technology for Future Life, Tokyo Denki University, have been indispensable to Memoriba. These students have been involved in Otomachi activities under Professor Masaki Izutsu, a former instructor at Tokyo Denki University and a current member of Ohmaki Denki K.K. Their activities at Memoriba include directing projection mapping for our performances and creating mini soap bubble machines (called “Dendai Machines,” after the university’s abbreviated name).

# Before

Before they knew what they were getting into, the motivations of the students of Tokyo Denki University who participated in Memoriba as part of their laboratory activities varied with each person: because they were invited by a senior student; as a break from research; to help with job hunting; because they were lured by the idea of partying with students from Tokyo University of the Arts...

**Ogiwara** "I didn't know anything about art, so when I was approached and went to see for myself, I was seeing that world for the first time. At first I just tagged along, but started to gain interest as I did things. It was refreshing to be in an environment totally different from the lab, and the locals were really invested in their discussions on how to revitalize their community, so it was a good experience."

**Onodera** "Since it's rare for universities to lead activities with communities, Memoriba was refreshing. Local people have told me they want students from our university to get more involved in their hometowns and in the Senju area, and that they want the university to open up."



# After

The students would do things like stay up late before performances to maintain the soap bubble machines or ride around Senju on their bicycles taking photos. These students, who would have never gotten involved in the community had they not been invited to join, each found interesting and rewarding feelings by connecting with the community and art. A light thread still connects the students with Memoriba as they remain active even after graduation, or come back after leaving.

**Onodera** "I guess I still participate in Memoriba even after graduating and becoming a working member of society because I've come to think of the activities as fun. It's purely fun to meet people and do things together. Even if I became uninvolved, I daydream about one day wandering into town and showing Memoriba to my own child."

**Kiyomiya** "First off, it's unbelievable for front-line people totally immersed in technical fields to gather in a field like community development like this. Art and technology should be thought of as the same in that they use output to express ideas. So I'd like to see art students experiencing technology more and for us to find more ways to work together."



“I think it’s not just about beauty;  
in this era, things don’t get conveyed  
if there is no relatable story.”

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Marui Group Co., Ltd. (Customer Communication Division, Sales Planning Department)

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**Toshiyuki Ezaki** (left)

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Marui Home Service Co., Ltd. (Toclus Division, Business Planning Department)

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**Yuta Watanabe** (right)

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Ezaki and Watanabe were in their 20s and were with their companies for two years when they helped plan a collaborative event with Memoriba as part of “Senju Festa,” held at the Kita-Senju Marui department store. They organized various cultural events under the concept of *karaaju* (mixing the phonetics of “color,” “collage,” and “college”), with the theme of “enlivening Senju with the power of youth.”

# Before

Watanabe and Ezaki, who were both youngsters in their company, say they wanted to do a project that wasn't limited to sales. The store manager advised them to create a project that people in the community could enjoy, and while they were researching Adachi City's promotional activities, they came across Memoriba.

**Watanabe** "When we consulted with the Adachi City Promotion Division, it was suggested it might be possible to collaborate with Tokyo University of the Arts as many of its students were also involved in Otomachi."

**Ezaki** "When I was looking for a project that would stand out and be enjoyed by children, Memoriba was very pretty and I could relate to its thinking, so it felt right."



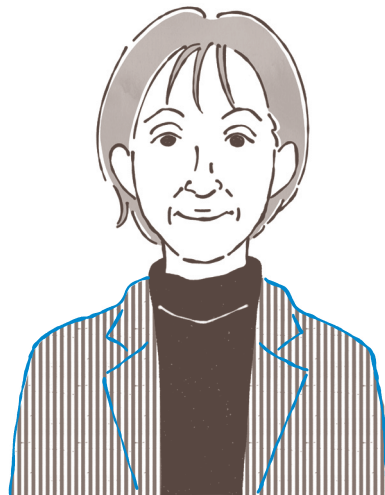
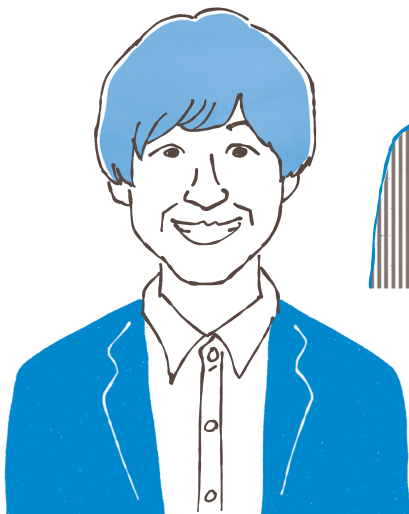
# After

Within the day-to-day work of sales, it was a big achievement to be able to genuinely bring a smile to customers' faces and come up with a plan focused on creating a fanbase who would like to visit the stores. They were able to build community relations, and as young company employees, the project gave them a sense of accomplishment.

**Ezaki** "I wanted local people to know that there are people expressing their feelings for the community, and that by connecting with the Marui department store, you can come to like both the shops and the community. I think that Memoriba was an ideal partner for our win-win relationship with the community."

**Watanabe** "I feel that pure beauty is something that can turn a lot of heads. Even if you have something on your mind, not many people can express that in words and reflect. I myself could experience that sphere of empathy through witnessing Memoriba's work."

“I experienced the townspeople’s passion directly through Memoriba for the first time.”



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Adachi City Promotion Division

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**Takuya Kamiyama** (left), **Nozomi Kuriki**  
**Satoko Funahashi** (right), **Hiroshi Hosoya**

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The Adachi City Promotion Division was established in 2010 as the first in all of Tokyo’s 23 wards with the purpose of improving Adachi City’s image. This division also sponsors the mother organization of Memoriba, Art Access Adachi: Downtown Senju—Connecting through Sound Art. The division continues to work on revitalizing resident interrelations and improving the town’s image through other activities, such as improving the city’s public outreach and a variety of collaborations with universities.



# Before

Otomachi's starting point was when city representatives paid a visit to Shinji Ohmaki's atelier in Hinodechō, which was also in Adachi City. While no one in the city promotion division had experience with art projects, they began the challenge of creating connections through art with Adachi City. In the fiscal year 2011, they seemed to be running around every day in preparation for the Memoriba project, which would mark the beginning of Otomachi as an NPO. Liaising with the city's administrative sections, paying visits to local town councils, and trying to coordinate with the police station...they worked feverishly until the opening performance, when children's cheers could be heard throughout the rainy Iroha Street.

**Hosoya** "Currently, the section in charge of cultural administration is mainly supporting and collaborating with cultural groups active in the city, so Otomachi was a special case as it was made from scratch. We had discussed wanting to create a project relating to the town, rather than a fixed-point event like a biennale, and came up with the idea for Otomachi. From the start, we thought we wanted to do this for 10 years."

**Funahashi** "The people who have lived here for a long time were touched by the crowds of people returning to the deserted Iroha Shopping Street. I think seeing that scene became a driving motivator for the townspeople to get involved in Memoriba."



# After

With each Memoriba event, more people than the city promotion division expected became involved. This showed how the ties that local people originally had with the community were still alive. Today, the Senju area is becoming tied with the image of soap bubbles and art projects, and thanks to Memoriba, Otomachi has also realized new developments. The city promotion division continues to operate alongside Otomachi, hoping that art will become a community hub, and that the circle of residents will expand.

**Kamiyama** "Sweating away while working hard together with Ohmaki Denki K.K., it became possible to share worries and problems. I was also impressed by how the youth involved in 'Teens Orchestra' changed in a positive direction. I experienced the passion of the townspeople directly through Memoriba for the first time."

**Kuriki** "I think the connection the students at Tokyo University of the Arts have with the town is an asset to both. I think their student life has been enriched by the solid relationship they have with the townspeople, at times being scolded or praised."

**Funahashi** "I think various things have happened with Otomachi at the core, changing the town of Senju. I hope such interesting things that everyday people don't think of will continue happening forever."



“It’s ‘hard’ artwork,  
so each year is a one-shot opportunity  
you can’t afford to fail.”

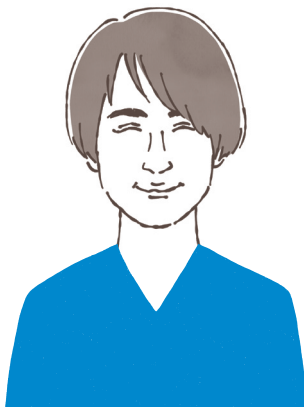
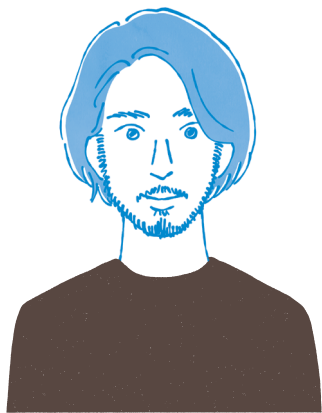
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Shinji Ohmaki Studio

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Yasura Takeshi (left), Shuhei Miyagawa (center),  
Yukako Tanaka (former staff / right)

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Everyone in the studio, which supports the production of Shinji Ohmaki’s work, has been consistently involved in *Memorial Rebirth*, which has been shown throughout Japan and abroad since its first presentation at the 2008 Yokohama Triennale. Yasura, Miyagawa and Tanaka have seen up close how *Memoriba* has evolved from its inception to now.

# Before

When Memoriba started in Senju, everyone at Ohmaki Studio nervously watched, wondering how the work would change as it continued to deepen involvement with the local community. It was to be a new version of Memoriba that Ohmaki would not only create, but also become hands-off in part to collaborate with the community. There were many parts different from ordinary artwork, such as the shared handling of soap bubble machines with citizens, so the studio searched for creative paths in a place where art could not act as a common language.

**Yasura** "Ohmaki is skilled at creating collaborative artwork, so I was convinced that if he kept going in Senju, the number of participants would increase. In the process, without knowing everything, everyone from children to adults always gets wrapped up in activities like taking care of simple tasks and joining dances."

**Miyagawa** "While the soap bubble machine is delicate, more than that, its inheritance is part of the *Memorial Rebirth* artwork concept itself. Even the way the machine is held is like a ritual, with the need to be careful, and it was difficult to convey that to the public."



# After

Through annual events, those at Ohmaki Studio accumulated know-how of how to collaborate with citizens. They held many meetings with Ohmaki Denki K.K., devising ways to convey to each individual how to handle the soap bubble machines. Now that the number of large-scale events has increased, directing the project's entirety while paying attention to participant safety has become a very high-pressure job.

**Miyagawa** "I delegate while sensing the feelings, motivations and frustrations of the citizens. Like Ohmaki, I put out feelers within the space of the site and keep an eye out for encounters that could lead to new opportunities."

**Yasura** "Memoriba is 'hard' artwork, so each year is a one-shot opportunity you can't afford to fail. Meeting the expectations of the town year after year is like sharpening a pencil, but if the contents of the work gets sharpened in that way, it will break with the slightest touch. I have difficulty with the fact that, as the people involved change, that aspect doesn't get understood."

**Tanaka** "I was surprised at the willingness of the townspeople to continue being involved in Memoriba, but now, with the addition of many people, music and dance, you can sense the unique evolution of Senju's Memoriba. The theme of the artwork is 'rebirthing memory,' but I think what everyone is making now will become a memory of the future Memoriba."

## Living flexibly during the coronavirus pandemic: A record of activities of the Otomachi Project Office and Ohmaki Denki K.K.

Rei Fujieda (Doctoral Student, Graduate School of Global Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts; Memorial Rebirth Student Staff)

In 2020, due to the unprecedented spread of the novel coronavirus pandemic, the need for self-restraint fell across Japan. The same was true in Adachi City: the city's annual fireworks display, which was crowded with tourists every year, was quickly canceled; and both Senju Shrine and Senju Motohikawa Shrine were also forced to let go of their grand festivals, which are held only once every five years.

This situation also swallowed up our activities at Art Access Adachi: Downtown Senju—Connecting through Sound Art (“Otomachi”). Our organization's heated face-to-face meetings all moved to online videoconferences, and further, we were forced to make decisions such as changing the final form of our main events, which were supposed to be the culmination of the hard work of each project within our organization. Of course, the project Memorial Rebirth Senju (“Memoriba”) was no exception, and the festive performance being planned for April 2020 to mark the 10th anniversary of the project was also canceled. It is not difficult to imagine how all those

involved in the project, who were looking forward to that performance, would have felt. It was as if our big goals flew off somewhere far away, leaving us to start again with the question, “What should we do from here on?”

Yet, in the end, things were not all bad. Rather, some interesting things began to emerge that would not have happened in normal times. Here, through two notable events over two years, I would like to introduce various explorations made in 2020 alongside the citizen-led team “Ohmaki Denki K.K.”—an indispensable companion team to our project office—and how those explorative efforts gradually came to fruition in 2021.

**“Ohmaki Denki K.K. has so many different people!” From everyday chats with friends to “Memoriba School Middy Break”**

The first interesting thing I would like to point out is how the coronavirus pandemic caused us to lose our default path

between our pre-events to our main events. This forced us to literally get a new hold of the Memoriba project from the beginning, giving us time to listen carefully to the voices of each citizen project member.

Taking this story back in time to 2019, on the verge of the pandemic, we were working on a serial project called “Memoriba School” with the aim of creating an atmosphere for an upcoming performance in Toneri Park. This was a program where citizens—beginning with members of Ohmaki Denki K.K., who have worked together to make Memoriba happen—take on teaching roles, and newly recruited participants join as students. In this program, students could learn while enjoying activities based on the school subjects of “Japanese language,” “music/physical education,” and “home economics,” such as coming up with new lyrics for the

performance’s “Sha-bon Odori Song” and making costumes. Unfortunately, due to preventions to stop the spread of the pandemic, the last class of the program could not go forward.

While licking our wounds under self-isolation during the spring of 2020, we created an opportunity for our project office and Ohmaki Denki K.K. to chat using a video conferencing tool (Zoom) in order to kick things back off. Normally, this would have been a time for walking around Adachi City and scouting our next performance site. But what were we to talk about now? We couldn’t just lower the temperature on the Memoriba project... We came together while wondering about such things.

Incidentally, Ohmaki Denki K.K. is characterized by a rich variety of members, including parents with children who attend (or used to attend) schools in Adachi City, graduates of the nearby Tokyo Denki University, and corporate researchers. So, the latest situation of each member varied widely. Kindergartens could no longer provide extended-hours childcare, children’s cafeterias offering free or low-priced meals were closed, and business trips between prefectures were completely canceled...

Then, we suddenly had a realization. Until then, Memoriba did not have the time to listen to each and every person’s story like this.

For better or worse, if you continue a project for 10



A chatroom held on Zoom with Ohmaki Denki K.K.

years, the routine of activities throughout the year comes through. In Memoriba's case, the routine went as follows: the project office and Ohmaki Denki K.K. would work together to find a site for the main performance and find people who could help out; to gain publicity, we would hold 3 or 4 small-scale soap bubble events (called "pre-events"); meanwhile, we would deepen our relationship with those living in the area around the performance site leading up to the main event. However, we found ourselves burned out from just going through these motions, and there were times when we could not think about what individual people within Ohmaki Denki K.K. were feeling.

Thus, our conversations with members of Ohmaki Denki K.K. became oddly refreshing, as if meeting for the first time even though we had been working together these many years. Through these conversations, key words that seemed to hint at potential activities gradually emerged, such as "time at home," "pastimes," and "learning." Could Memoriba as we know it connect itself to this situation? We decided to start with what we could.

With that, we moved the activity site of "Memoriba School" to YouTube and began the "Memoriba School Midday Break." This "midday break"—what we call *hiruyasumi* in Japanese—is a title that focuses on how schools play a role in the community, and conveys that members of Ohmaki Denki K.K. need not act as teachers, but as classmates who can

suggest playful activities. We recorded and released a total of 10 videos of members playing with soap bubbles starting from that July. The contents of the videos were rich with a variety of topics that made use of each member's interests and knowledge areas, such as recipes for hard-to-pop soap bubbles easily made with household materials; making resin accessories shaped like soap bubbles; and making soap bubble stamps with erasers.

### Shinji Ohmaki's "All for one" approach and "Memoriba Homestay"

The second interesting thing that emerged during the pandemic is how listening to individual stories became something tangible by realizing the "Memoriba Homestay" program.

Once "Memoriba School Midday Break" had put out a number of episodes, and we were wondering what to do next in October 2020, we held a talk event looking back on the Memoriba project with its creator Shinji Ohmaki, titled "Shinji Ohmaki x Community Art? 'Art? I don't get it!'" (pp. 34-50) We also held a meeting with Shinji Ohmaki and the members of Ohmaki Denki K.K. on a later date. As we were showered with Ohmaki's advice, we began to feel that we could overcome the coronavirus disaster.

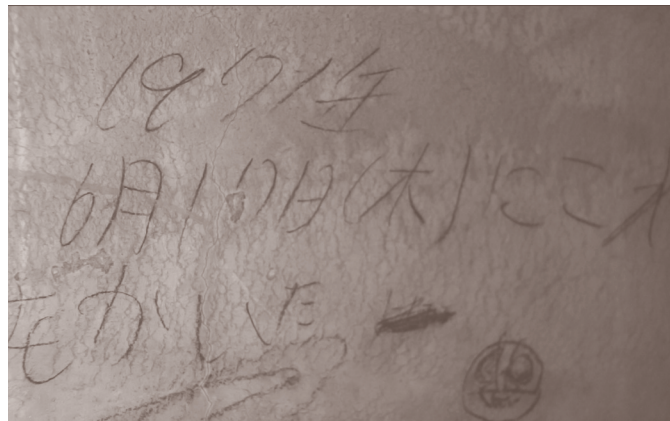
Here, I would like to introduce the key phrase “all for one,” which Ohmaki shared with us. If the way Memoriba worked thus far, gathering everyone’s strength for a one-day festival, could be called “one for all,” then it would be meaningful to create a chance for each and every individual to share their past and future memories, especially since now many people cannot gather together. With the advice from Otomachi producer Sumiko Kumakura came the idea for “Memoriba Homestay,” wherein just one soap bubble machine is kept with each home, creating a place for humble yet extraordinary dialogue amidst soap bubbles.

We immediately put out a call within Ohmaki Denki K.K.

for homes to trial the experimental program before reaching out to the general public for host families. Then, Masanori Terasawa, who is the leader of Ohmaki Denki K.K. and runs a confectionary factory and sales company in Adachi City, kindly volunteered (pp. 54-55). Terasawa’s childhood home had a workplace on the first floor and a private residence on the second and, for the young Terasawa and his siblings, it also seemed like an ideal place to play together. As the home had deteriorated over the years, it was decided to finally have it demolished. Terasawa wanted to release the soap bubbles at the very last moment, just a few days before demolition began. When us staff visited this home in January 2021, there



Memoriba School Midday Break



Scribbles left at Terasawa’s home



were pencil marks on the home's pillars that kept record of the childrens' heights, and the walls were covered with scribbles and stickers. The home was filled with the scent of that old life. Terasawa looked at things one by one lovingly. Before long, Terasawa's older brother joined in, and when we finally started releasing soap bubbles, the many memories that slept in that home slowly awoke, being spoken from the mouths of those two brothers. "I made a secret base in the attic, where I played with fire and got in so much trouble." "My dad was often away on business trips and didn't get mad at me for scribbling on the walls. There aren't many households like that, huh?" "We siblings used to compete to see who could jump the highest. Look, there are the handprints." ...

On that day, we were able to witness a moment too wonderful to be labeled a trial experiment. Our feelings that this program could turn out interesting turned into certainty. With this, we began accepting applications for "Memoriba Homestay" in July 2021 as a program by Memoriba amidst the coronavirus disaster and, to date, we have sent our humble soap bubbles to 10 homes and other facilities, including our trial experiments. As of February 2022 when I write this, the omicron variant is spreading wildly. In Tokyo alone, well over 10,000 newly infected people are reported daily, and arts and cultural events, not limited to here at Otomachi, are facing the headwinds of cancellations and

downsizing. Even so, Memoriba was able to achieve a positive impact thanks to our dialogue with Ohmaki Denki K.K.

We are still uncertain when our next event will be. Until then, we will carefully continue our "Memoriba Homestay" program and look forward to the days when we can raise up a big "One for all" stage like never before, together with Ohmaki Denki K.K. and the townspeople we have yet to meet.



"Memoriba Homestay" held at Terasawa's home



An archive of other "Memoriba Homestay" activities is available at the official website of Memorial Rebirth Senju.



Videos from "Memoriba School Midday Break" are available here.

### Adachi's Memoriba "isn't art"

I used to have an atelier in Senju, but in truth, I never intended to be active in Adachi. Staying separate from the town allows you to see the space and people objectively. I wanted to work in quiet solitude, drifting amidst the town and slipping into everyday chats with various people.

That is what I was like when representatives from the Adachi City office visited me in 2008, before Art Access Adachi: Downtown Senju-Connecting through Sound Art ("Otomachi") began. It was the same year I had presented *Memorial Rebirth* at the Yokohama Triennale, so I was really busy, but I remember our 10 minute appointment turned into a two hour conversation.

When they told me they wanted to do an art project in Adachi City, I first asked if they had a budget and people. That was because if you really want to do an art project, it's difficult without commitment. Yet, they said they hadn't yet decided on a purpose. So, I advised them to consult with Professor Kumakura, who researches art projects at the Senju Campus of Tokyo University of the

Arts, and the Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture.

Then, in 2011, when Otomachi was launched, Professor Kumakura approached me. "Otomachi began with your words," she told me. Hearing that, I replied, "Understood, I'll take responsibility." That is how my relationship with Adachi started.

When I decided to do this project in Adachi City, I thought that just tossing in some artwork would end up as something fleeting and unclear. More than that, I thought it would be interesting to carry out an experiment that deepens understanding and encourages development through repetition like, for instance, children's education. With the thought of doing something that would not be the same even if repeated, I felt that if I put forth a version of Memorial Rebirth ("Memoriba"), I could create something interesting within the space of the town.

Once "Adachi City's Memoriba" was decided on, I went out to many places within the city and spoke with many people. At that time, I often said I'd stop using the word "art."

Of course, *Memorial Rebirth* is an artwork that I've continued to perform in various places since 2008. However, I wanted to make the Memoriba in Adachi City into something that transcends the framework of an artwork by an artist.

I wanted to turn Memoriba into a place where people could gather, work together, and recognize each other's faces. To that end, it was important that Memoriba did not belong to anyone in particular. For example, the gods worshiped during festivals belong to everyone, not any one person. People gather, talk, and create things that don't belong to anyone. Through the act of making soap bubbles, I wanted to create a project where the town and people move more like a festival.

In the first year, a student named Elena and the project director went into the town to connect with people. Elena, who is Ukrainian, suddenly reached out to me in Japanese, pointing out that when townspeople are told it's a "festival" or that there's "soap bubbles," they don't understand what we are talking about. Bringing those things into town as foreign objects and forming relationships with them was the mission of Memoriba.

Memoriba has many goals. Its first goal is to be recognized by the townspeople, and once that goal is achieved, the next goal is to find collaborators, then to release soap bubbles. Beyond those goals, there's the issue

of deciding what goals to set in the near future. The soap bubbles are no more than one part of this process; what's important is creating relationships that move towards a common goal and making discoveries about the town.

## Creatives are born from the town

I don't think there are many art projects that have



Event at Adachi Market, fiscal 2015. Photo by Ujin Matsuo.

continued within their town like Memoriba has. That's exactly why it's important for us to think about community issues. Though things have gotten better recently, Adachi City has long dealt with area and social problems, and there were issues surrounding nuclear families, unattended deaths, and families with roots abroad disconnected from the local community. Memoriba was also an effort to take on and become involved in such issues.

In our first year, a lot of things at the Iroha Shopping Street also became visible to me. As a result of changes in the area, there existed spaces that people were no longer aware of. Even though there were so many old shops still running on that shopping street, they weren't visible to those who weren't interested in them. Everyone gathers at convenient supermarkets, and people inevitably drift away. That's why I asked the shops on Iroha Street to dare open up and let the soap bubbles fly.

After our first performance, through student research, I learned there were many aunties and grannies taking local dance classes. So, I proposed we create a Bon Odori dance with the local people. I also explained that there was an auntie who used to be a *chanson* singer working a local bar that could join us as a singer, and that it would be nice if we could teach the dance to the children who were waiting to be picked up at the children's center. I thought that if we could connect with the skills of

local people and make things together, Adachi City would become more interesting.

While continuing Memoriba for two or three more performances, I realized it was more important for townspeople to think for themselves rather than simply holding our events. Rather than simply receiving these activities, they could build an awareness for imagining their town as a facilitator. Little by little, the townspeople started wanting to do things themselves as we did things like annual workshops, creating a "Sha-bon Odori" dance, getting a band to join in, and setting up performances using projections and sound in the night.

With these developments, we decided to show the townspeople creative expressions by professionals as part of the night performance at Adachi Market in 2015. I wanted to create an opportunity for the townspeople to become aware of the quality and richness of creative expression. I invited artists like Chori from Kurukuru Charmy (Emi Tomizuka) and other professional musicians, asking them to perform in a way that made clear their quality as creatives. Even if that sets a bar the townspeople cannot yet reach, I wanted to convey my wish that someday all of them could become creatives that could take the place of such professionals.

It was around this time that we established Ohmaki Denki K.K., a citizen-led group. These members set up their

own Memoriba formations and work with an awareness of performance. We hope to create a cycle in which someday, artists or creatives can emerge from Adachi to lead at the ship's helm.

## Creating a society that believes in the future

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the 10th year performance planned to be held at Toneri Park was canceled. We had been having many discussions and had planned a performance that invited some top-notch people, so the cancellation was truly disappointing, and there was also a sense of crisis that the light of Memoriba could be snuffed out. At that time, before I could offer my hand, I got a call from the project office saying everyone in Otomachi' was working on it.

That's why I put forth the saying "All for one." Until then, everyone would come together to make Memoriba, but then become individuals again. This time, we could create Memoriba for one person in a way that would connect with everyone. It's a counterintuitive idea that supposes a group will become stronger by treating the individuals we value as condensation points. With that idea, we made 5 new soap bubble machines and asked everyone in town to do as they like with them.

I think the reason these people are running Memoriba now might be because, while looking back on our activities thus far, they have become conscious of entering another dimension. I think this direction began in 2019, when the students from Tokyo University of the Arts came up with "Memoriba School." Everyone widens their perception of Memoriba, disseminates it on their own, and creates a place for themselves. I've realized that Memoriba has entered a new stage.

I don't know what Memoriba will become after the coronavirus pandemic. That answer is up to the townspeople. I think that when those people trying to overcome the pandemic can think of their next goals, "Adachi's Memoriba" will be born in a post-pandemic era.

It's important to believe in something you've never seen before, isn't it. You can't create a future for those who don't believe in the future, or those who believe they can't bring forth something. But what if you could realize what you thought you "can't do" through Memoriba? What if the children saw their parents believing in something like that? I think it's important to realize a social structure that can believe in such a future. As an area with severe educational and income disparities, I believe Adachi City could become a unique place in the world if it can overcome its divisions and share thoughts.

Adachi is another hometown to me. Yet, stores

have disappeared during the pandemic, and the faces that make up the town have changed. The town loses more and more memory. Wouldn't it be awful if Adachi lost its humanity and became a cold city where the wind blows between buildings? I hope the town continues to be a place where people can cherish small connections and enjoy things without particular purpose.

Once the corona pandemic is over, I want to hold a big Memoriba performance that will stay in everyone's memory. I want to make a place full of light and people that can't be put into words. That doesn't need to be called "art." I'd like everyone to experience an unforgettable space filled with indescribable energy.



Event at Sekiya Park, fiscal 2017. Photo by Ryohei Tamita.









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"Memorial Rebirth Senju Ichoa Street," March 2012. Photo by Ayumi Otsuka.





"Memorial Rebirth Senju Iroha Street," March 2012. Photo by Ayumi Otsuka.





"Memorial Rebirth 2012 Senju Honchō," November 2012.  
Photo by Yukitaka Amemiya.





"Memorial Rebirth Senju 2013 Joto," October 2013. Photo by Yukitaka Amemiya.





"Memorial Rebirth 2012 Senju Honchō," November 2012.  
Photo by Yukitaka Amemiya.



"Memorial Rebirth 2012 Senju Honchō," November 2012.  
Photo by Yukitaka Amemiya.



"Memorial Rebirth Senju 2013 Joto," October 2013. Photo by Kosuke Mari.





"Memorial Rebirth Senju 2014 Taroyama," November 2014. Photo by Hajime Kato.





"Memorial Rebirth Senju 2015 Adachi Fisheries Market," October 2015. Photo by Ujin Matsuo.





"Memorial Rebirth Senju 2015 Adachi Fisheries Market," October 2015. Photo by Ujin Matsuo.

# 3

## Lessons in Evaluation

How is the value of an art project determined?

We asked specialists to consider the case of Memorial Rebirth and, while compiling these objective evaluations, shine a light on the project's often unseen value to both the town and its people.

# On the Evaluation of Art Projects

Naoya Sano (Associate Professor, Faculty of Music, Ueno Gakuen University)

Saya Makihara (Specially Appointed Lecture, Arts and Cultural Management Course, Faculty of Humanities, Seikei University)

## Introduction

When hearing the word “evaluation,” what might come to mind for most people is something like a report card from a perspective above oneself. The purpose of an evaluation that immediately comes to mind is that of “accountability.” In other words, when using public funding, a project is accountable for demonstrating its effects and explaining how public investment was worthwhile. To this end, evaluation specialists and consultants, who act as third parties, are generally called on to measure a project’s effectiveness.

Firstly, evaluation is essentially an act of uncovering value “sprouting” from a project, taking its measure and presenting that value to project stakeholders (who, in the case of public funding, include citizens). In addition, evaluations can ascertain where a project is on its journey,

or identify improvements in processes for nurturing the “seedlings” of a project’s value. Evaluation is also essential for capturing those seedlings as they bloom and form new seeds that scatter to other places. Evaluation is useful for reflecting on and articulating how a project has progressed as it produces something of value; for capturing the shape of that value and collecting supporting evidence; for strategically considering future project developments; and furthermore, for conveying information to those who may not know the project in-depth. Put another way, evaluation is a health checkup that reveals the current state of a project objectively, and acts as a common language shared with those outside of the project. Thinking of evaluation in this way shows the concept’s usefulness beyond accountability purposes.

## Evaluation of Artistic and Cultural Projects

“Art projects” and other artistic and cultural projects that come face-to-face with society have a reputation for the unpredictability of their production of effects and outcomes. The question of how to practically evaluate a project with such unpredictability is a challenge that those in the field always face. The “logic model”<sup>•1</sup> often used for evaluations is defined as a tool that first clarifies what a project is aiming for, then helps identify what kinds of activities will effectively develop the project towards that aim, and visualizes the causal relationships between the means and ends of those activities.<sup>•2</sup> The idea that many arts workers are averse to setting clear objectives in advance during the planning stage<sup>•3</sup> may be because they feel uncomfortable following a plan as promised. However, even if an unexpected innovation emerges that deviates from a set logic model, it’s good to think flexibly in light of one’s project aims. New paths can emerge as a result of reflecting on those innovations, articulating the value they create and analyzing supporting evidence. Evaluation can be an effective tool for deciding how much of the finite funds and resources a project has at-hand to invest in those paths.

## Case Studies of Evaluation

This section introduces various approaches that attempt to capture the value of artistic and cultural projects.

For instance, the Setouchi Triennale is one representative of the many regional arts festivals that have been held extensively since 2000. What kind of metrics does the 2019 report for this festival use? The report uses text-based records that describe the contents of resident-led activities to account for the festival’s impact on and collaboration with the community. These records also describe local resident evaluations by sourcing, compiling and introducing actual opinions. Meanwhile, visitor questionnaires in the report mainly record results-oriented data, such as visitor satisfaction and the intention to revisit. The public relations section of the report uses indicators such as the number of website visits or the number of social media followers. In addition, many other sections of the report rely on the number of visitors and participants, and the report measures an economic ripple as an effect of holding the festival. In this way, in addition to introducing the actual opinions of residents and others, the report describes analytic results mainly based on qualitative data, such as the number of visitors, webpage visits, or economic ripple effects.

In the 2018 evaluative report for Roppongi Art

Night (RAN)<sup>•4</sup>, ten years of festival activity were divided into people at the receiving end (visitors) and those creating the festival (stakeholders, including sponsors and artists). The report refers to methods for evaluating social impact to make clear the changes the festival brings to society. To consider the behaviors of those at the receiving end of RAN's activities, the extent of visitation was analyzed through time spent at the festival and the number of programs engaged with, while the value these people attributed to RAN was based on the degree of satisfaction and intention to revisit. Meanwhile, the report elucidated visitor trends, inclinations and issues by analyzing interest and behavior related to art based on the frequency of visits to RAN or art museums. As a result, the report demonstrates there are variations in trends over time, and that curation can change how people behave in or evaluate the festival. Further, an evaluative analysis was conducted from the perspective of whether the basic philosophy of RAN came through in actual festival experiences. Through a survey of those creating the festival, the report attempts to identify areas for improvement for the festival's continued implementation.

It is integral to ensure objectivity in evaluation. To that end, there is a method called "peer review" that seeks out and verifies objectivity by relying on other art project professionals working in the same field. The Advanced

Program for Arts and Culture Shizuoka (currently, "Arts Council Shizuoka") adopted a hybrid approach to evaluating their community-based program<sup>•5</sup> by combining so-called "external" evaluation—a conventional evaluation method conducted independently of project organizers by an external evaluator—with the benefits of peer review, which incorporates mutual understandings unique to fellow project professionals, colleagues and experts. A "program coordinator"—an art project professional that generally accompanies and supports its operations—supports the formation of ideas and related decision-making at every step of the evaluation, taking on a facilitative role in the form of a "participatory evaluation." The precision of a project can be increased through a reiterative process: repeatedly discussing the values that are important to a given community-based program and the changes the program wants to make in its community; allocating sufficient time to create a "ruler" (evaluation criteria) for measuring the effects of the project; and practicing trial and error. Participatory evaluation not only helps organizers clearly identify improvement areas for future project plans, but also builds the evaluative capacity of program coordinators. As a yardstick, both quantitative and qualitative evidence is collected on various indicators such as the degree to which a project responds to regional resources and social issues, the ripple effects of the project, the

inclusivity of its framework, the diversity of those involved, the project's self-sustainability and its metabolism. These aspects are discussed with project organizers to come to an evaluative decision.

In this way, evaluation does not only reflect the evaluative indicators themselves according to the project's basic philosophy, but allows for the faithful management of quantitative evidence while also being flexible enough to include participatory and cooperative dialogue with stakeholders in light of the project's aims. However, the most important takeaway is the thoughtful communication of what kind of value these quantitative and qualitative data demonstrate regarding a project's aim.

1 | A "logic model" is defined by the Social Impact Management Initiative as a systematic illustration of the elements necessary for a project to achieve results. [https://simi.or.jp/tool/logic\\_model](https://simi.or.jp/tool/logic_model) (Accessed November 23, 2021)

2 | Sumiko Kumakura, *アートプロジェクトのピアレビュー A-to purojyekuto no piarebyu-* (Suiyosha, 2020), 109.

3 | *Ibid.*, 117.

4 | [https://www.roppongiartnight.com/2018/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/ran\\_evaluation\\_report\\_2018.pdf](https://www.roppongiartnight.com/2018/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/ran_evaluation_report_2018.pdf) (Accessed December 1, 2021)

5 | This community-based program supports art projects carried out by various organizations throughout Shizuoka Prefecture. Aiming to uncover cultural resources in Shizuoka Prefecture, to nurture leaders, and to promote self-sustained and diverse creative activities in the future, the program is characterized by (i) its cooperation with diverse fields in society and (ii) the support of program coordinators.

# What value was created by Memorial Rebirth Senju?

Naoya Sano

## 1. Focusing on the audience

This study attempts an evaluative analysis focusing on “visitor engagement” in Memorial Rebirth Senju (hereafter, “Memoriba”). I will shed light on what visitors took away from their experience with Memoriba, and how those experiences connect with changes in the community. I focus on visitors because they are the direct beneficiaries of Memoriba and, by describing how they perceived this project, visitors can illustrate the project’s value. As seen in the report produced by the Setouchi Triennale mentioned in the previous section, “On the Evaluation of Art Projects,” criteria for visitor-based evaluations are often measured quantitatively, such as by the number of visitors, their degree of satisfaction, their intent to revisit, the number of webpage visits or social media followers. At first glance, the theme that Setouchi Triennale wants to convey<sup>1</sup>—in essence, how the basic philosophy of the project and the visitor-based evaluation criteria are related or connected—remains unclear. The meaning of these numbers may be better communicated by considering whether the project’s aims and basic philosophy were conveyed to visitors, focusing on and analyzing the “reception” and “permeation” of these concepts in visitor experiences. In the following, I attempt to capture the degree to which the project’s aims were received by visitors and permeated their experience (henceforth, the “reception and permeation degree”) in order to connect quantitative data with the achievement of project aims.

1 | The 2019 Setouchi Triennale had seven concepts based on the annual theme, “Restoration of the Sea”: art and architecture; celebrating local identity; revitalizing local communities; connecting Setouchi to the world; incorporating the world’s wisdom; shaping the future; and local sustainability.



## 2. Evaluation methodology

Generally, evaluation methods can be divided into two types. First, “outcome evaluation” (or summative evaluation) measures whether the project purpose as a whole has been achieved, ensures accountability and calculates scientific evidence. Second, “process evaluation” (or formative evaluation) serves to improve project management.<sup>•2</sup> Drawing from my positionality as a specialist who researches art projects from a marketing perspective, this paper illustrates the value of Memoriba as it is experienced by its visitors by converting free-form questionnaire responses into data and conducting outcome and process evaluation on arts and cultural practices. This study is an “independent evaluation” in which I perform these analyses as an external evaluator.

## 3. Methods

In order to find out how visitors perceived the value of this project, I carefully read each and every comment written in the questionnaire’s free-form section (free-response method or pure recollection). I then analyzed, classified and compared this information with the project’s activity history to date, allowing me to elicit a number of trends. However, this analysis becomes difficult to complete manually when working with huge amounts of information. In this case, I processed the text as data and performed quantitative analysis using “text mining” to decipher trends. Text mining is a method for the quantitative analysis of sentences that can be applied to information such as free-form questionnaire responses, the content of inquiries made to call centers, and word-of-mouth statements made on Twitter and other social media platforms.

2 | Sumiko Kumakura, アートプロジェクトのピアレビュー *A-to purojekuto no piarebyu-* (Suiyosha, 2020), 104. (This data has been translated into English for this publication.)

Text mining is useful in the following two instances:

1. **Grasping the big picture:** Offering a loose understanding of what kinds of topics are common overall when there is a large amount of text
2. **Extracting key characteristics:** Searching for “signs” of patterns, such as increasing dissatisfaction or perspective differences between age groups<sup>•3</sup> (though currently, the number of cases are small)

#### 4. Outcome evaluation of artistic and cultural projects

Figure 1 shows a proposed framework for outcome evaluations of artistic and cultural projects.<sup>•4</sup> As the unit and scope of project involvement expands from individuals to stakeholders involved in the project, and further to local communities and society, the range of time needed for change also extends from the short term to the long term.

Fig 01. Outcome evaluation of artistic and cultural projects

	Immediate Changes have already occurred	Medium Term Changes begin to appear	Long Term Changes are logically expected in the future
<b>Individual participants</b> Behaviours, awareness, attitudes, understanding, interests, skills, life situations, etc.	1	1 / 2	
<b>Stakeholders involved in the project</b> How the organization should be, operation method, relationships, etc.		2	2 / 3
<b>Local communities and society as a whole</b> Awareness, interests, social structure, social situations, etc.			3

3 | The official website for Nikkei Research Inc. <https://www.nikkei-r.co.jp/glossary/id=1602> (Accessed August 20, 2021)

4 | The Agency for Cultural Affairs (Government of Japan) and Kyushu University Joint Research Team, *文化事業の評価ハンドブック Bunka jigyō no hyōka handobukku* (Suiyosha, 2021), 79. (This data has been translated into English for this publication.)

In this study, I position the following data within each frame to conduct my analysis.

1. Questionnaires conducted on general visitors annually from 2012 to 2017<sup>5</sup>
2. Questionnaires conducted on support staff from 2017 and 2018<sup>6</sup>
3. 14 individual interviews with citizens, civic organizations/companies, artists, project office/student staff (conducted between December 2020 and February 2021)

There are 6 years of questionnaires targeting general visitors from which I gather free-form responses to the following prompt as data in my analysis: "Please tell us your thoughts on today's event." From these responses, a visitor's "awareness," "understanding," and "interests" can be analyzed. In addition, as Memoriba's programs have changed and developed year by year, with new elements being added over the project's six years, responses related to these new participatory programs can be expected as those programs emerge in the data. However, as the strength of text mining analysis lies in its ability to "grasp the big picture" and "extract key characteristics," rather than extracting findings from each year and integrating them together, I analyze the responses from general visitors accumulated over all six years as a single data pool to discern the big picture, key characteristics and trends.

I use findings from the 2017-2018 staff questionnaire to consider medium and long-term changes for "stakeholders involved in the project." In the case of this project, many staff and volunteers begin as general visitors, but for various reasons, they gradually deepen their engagement with the project and take on more involved roles. In other words, as these people are both visitors and stakeholders involved in the project, I treat their responses as data for measuring medium-term changes in visitors overall. Therefore, the questions used in my analysis do not reflect management indicators (how the organization should be, operation method, relationships, etc.) as in figure 1. Instead, I focus my inquiry on free-form responses from visitors and those who fall under the "visitor" umbrella while reflecting on their experiences of Memoriba and individual relationships, summarized with the question: "What is Memoriba to you?"

5 | 90 participants in 2012; 94 participants in 2013; 110 participants in 2014; 138 participants in 2015; 100 participants in 2016; and 147 participants in 2017.

6 | In 2017, 117 of 189 staff responded to the questionnaire (62% response rate). In 2018, 109 of 187 staff responded to the questionnaire (58% response rate).

7 | “Value creation” refers to the act of newly creating or newly discovering something of value. This means that by creating new artwork, and while respecting differences in individual values, that artwork can be considered “good,” and a “new sense of value” for evaluating that artwork is born.

The Agency for Cultural Affairs (Government of Japan) and Kyushu University Joint Research Team, *文化事業の評価ハンドブック Bunka jigyo no hyoka handobukku* (Suiyosha, 2021), 26.

8 | In other words, when people feel that what they voluntarily do contributes to something, they can feel “glad to be alive” and that they have “a place to belong.” These feelings bring about value creation within social inclusion. As a ripple effect, people belonging to local and social communities become empowered, allowing value creation to permeate their consciousness and interests, and approaching a state that can be considered long-term change. Ibid, 26-7.

In addition, for the 2020 individual interviews with stakeholders who are closely related to the community and deeply involved with the project, I analyze mainly their comments on their future expectations for Memoriba in order to explore anticipated long-term changes in the community. In other words, when evaluating the reception and permeation degree, I consider general visitors, staff/volunteers and stakeholders under the umbrella of “visitors,” and I seek to elucidate trends in the data with the assumption that there is a difference in the reception and permeation degree based on their number of years of experience and means of involvement in the project.

## 5. Process evaluation in artistic and cultural projects

What long-term changes in the community and wider society do arts and cultural projects aim for? Of course, the answer varies greatly with each project, but what is advocated for in the process evaluation of artistic and cultural projects in the context of social inclusion is a community or society that is “revitalized and empowered by value creation.”<sup>7</sup> As shown in figure 2, key elements for facilitating value creation include:

- Play (creating space and wiggle-room, incorporating playful elements)
- Equality (for artists and non-artists alike)
- Dialogue (including non-verbal communication)

Meanwhile, necessary elements for empowerment include:

Ensuring a safe and secure environment

A situation wherein participants can express themselves at their own pace

Creating something new through open exchange<sup>8</sup>

9 | I use a text mining tool freely available from User Local, Inc. This technology venture company, born from research at Waseda University, specializes in artificial intelligence and big data analysis. <https://textmining.userlocal.jp/>

10 | According to User Local's explanation, a word's "appearance frequency" is its number of occurrences, while its "score" is an evaluation value representing its degree of importance, wherein a larger numeric value suggests a higher importance. There is no maximum value or minimum unit. A score is a value representing the "importance" of a word. In general documents, extremely common words—such as "today," "think," or "have"—appear many times. However, as such words can appear regardless of the type of document, even if its appearance frequency is high, its meaning is weak and the word can be considered of little importance. By simply ranking appearance frequencies, common

Fig 02. A framework for the process evaluation of artistic and cultural projects

		Theory (Corresponding project aims and content)	Management (operation method)
Value creation (serendipity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Play</li> <li>2. Equality</li> <li>3. Dialogue</li> </ul>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;"> <p>Can these elements be found in the questionnaire responses?</p> </div>	
Problem solving (empowerment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Safe and secure environment</li> <li>2. Individual pace</li> <li>3. Open exchange</li> </ul>		

In this framework, the project is divided into theory and management, and one can discern whether the elements of each are evident. This evaluation focuses on theory, and whether these elements can be found in the questionnaire responses will dictate whether either the value created by the project or the circumstances for value creation were offered to visitors.

## 6. Text mining analysis

What follows is a text mining analysis<sup>9</sup> of the free-form responses to the questionnaires conducted on general visitors.

### 6.1 Analysis of general visitor questionnaires (2012-17)

I analyzed free-form responses to the question: "Please tell us your thoughts on today's event." (Figure 3)







The first things that stand out are expressions related to descriptions and impressions of the project's events, such as "soap bubbles," "fun," and "like a fantasy," while other terms like "Adachi City," "Senju," and "Ohmaki" also appear relatively large. Next, looking at the appearance frequency of each noun in order of their importance score, the following stand out: "soap bubble," "beauty," "like a fantasy," followed by "Senju," "children," and "Ohmaki." Meanwhile, the following verbs appear infrequently but are shown to be characteristic of responses: "dance," "can enjoy," followed by "envelop," "be happy," "wrap," and "spread out." (Figure 4)

The adjectives "fun," "good," and "wonderful" are frequent, which can be expected for this kind of event. It is also notable that the importance score of "easy to remember" is high compared to its frequency. A characteristic interjection in the responses is "thank you."

A subsequent co-occurrence analysis shows that other words are connected around three main words (word groups associated with frequent words are circled with a red line). Groups circled in blue have thick connecting lines and other features that I will discuss later.

Putting information from these three red groups together suggests the following:

**(1) Words connected to "soap bubbles" describe what could be seen.**

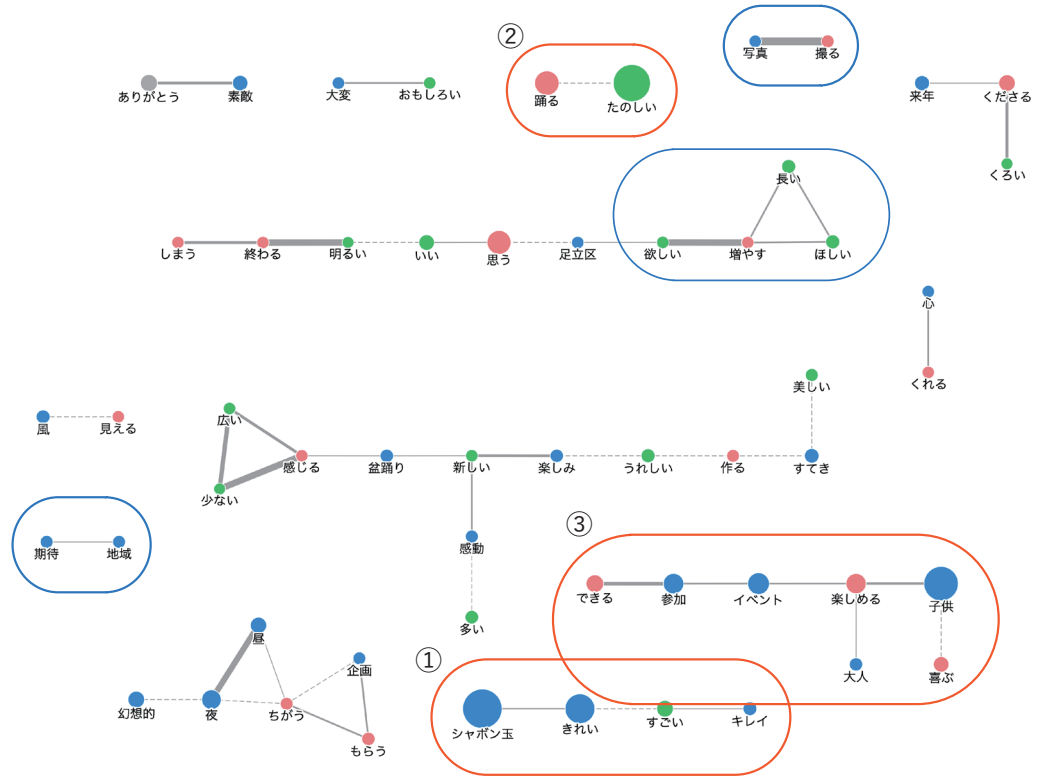
This finding becomes more specific and understandable when further combined with the results of dependency parsing in figure 6-1 (noun-adjective dependency) and figure 6-2 (noun-verb dependency).

**(2) The experience of "dancing" and "fun."**

**(3) The events were tailored so that both "children" and "adults" could "participate" and "enjoy."**

The information can be organized similarly using the findings in figure 5 or the noun-verb dependency analysis in figure 6-2.

Fig 05. Co-occurring word analysis



The word groups circled in blue reveal some characteristics of the project. First, the fact that the connecting line (indicating a co-occurrence) between “photo” and “take” is thick can be interpreted to emphasize that one is able to take photos that are “photogenic” or even “Instagrammable” (attracting attention on social media). Similarly, the thick line indicating a strong co-occurrence between “want” and “increase” suggests a desired increase in the number of events (like those of Memoriba). Among all of the responses, I would like to draw attention to words relating to “community” and “expectations,” though the co-occurrence is not emphasized and appears infrequently. Although faint, general visitors appear to be aware of “community.”

Similarly, hierarchical clustering helps classify the data into three different groups of keywords (figure 7). Hierarchical clustering is visualized as a tree diagram showing words with

Fig 06-1. Dependency parsing ■ Noun ■ Adjective

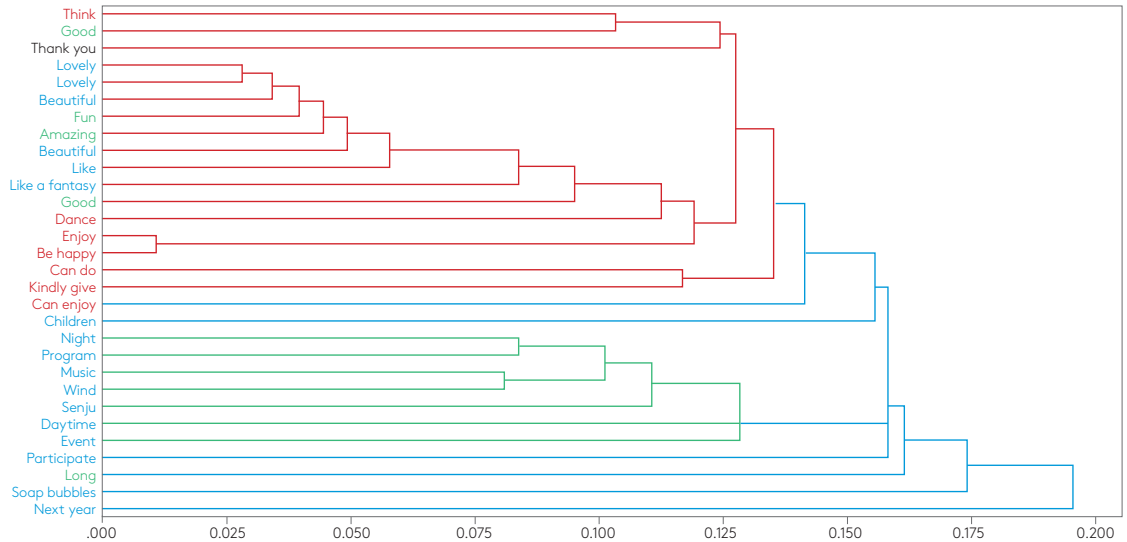
Noun <span style="color: blue;">■</span> <span style="color: green;">■</span> Adjective	Negative / Positive	Score	Appearance frequency
Soap bubbles - Beautiful	Positive	1.20	2
Soap bubbles - Many/lots	Neutral	1.00	2
Soap bubbles - Bitter	Negative	1.00	1
Soap bubbles - Bittersweet	Negative	1.00	1
Atmosphere - Comfortable	Neutral	1.00	1
Children - Easy to understand	Neutral	1.00	1
Song - Scary	Negative	1.00	1
Everyone - Good	Positive	1.00	1
Bonodori (traditional dance) - Good	Positive	1.00	1
Wind - Strong	Neutral	1.00	1
Airflow - Weak	Neutral	1.00	1
Negima (onion and chicken skewer) - Delicious	Positive	1.00	1
Nabe (hotpot) - Delicious	Positive	1.00	1
Arrival - Slow	Negative	1.00	1
Method - Noisy	Negative	1.00	1

Fig 06-2. Dependency parsing ■ Noun ■ Verb

Noun <span style="color: blue;">■</span> <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Verb	Score	Appearance frequency
Children - Be happy	5.60	7
Children - Can enjoy	4.74	9
Children - Enjoy	3.00	5
Children - Play	2.00	2
Soap bubbles - Come out	1.50	2
Photo - Take	1.20	2
Smile - Can see	1.00	2
Soap bubbles - Shine	1.00	1
Soap bubbles - Surround	1.00	1
Soap bubbles - Blow violently	1.00	1
Soap bubbles - Shout	1.00	1
Soap bubbles - Touch	1.00	1
Soap bubbles - Wait	1.00	1
Soap bubbles - Fly	1.00	1
Soap bubbles - Increase	1.00	1

similar appearance trends within a sentence as a group. Groups are represented by different colored lines, while larger categories appear further to the right of the diagram. All keyword groups are bound together with those highest in the hierarchy: “next year,” “soap bubble,” and “long.” Notice the keywords classified lower in the hierarchy.

Fig 07. Hierarchical cluster analysis



On the vertical axis, red indicates verbs, green indicates adjectives, and blue indicates nouns.

Red cluster: **Direct sensory expressions such as visual descriptions (e.g. “beautiful,” “like a fantasy”) and experiences (“dance”)**

Blue cluster: **Events that children can participate in and enjoy**

Green cluster: **Senju day and night music programs**

Figure 8 shows similarities when comparing the findings from the co-occurrence parsing from figure 5 with the hierarchical cluster analysis.

**Fig 08. A comparison of keyword groups between hierarchical cluster analysis results and co-occurrence parsing**

Hierarchical cluster analysis	Co-occurrence parsing
Green cluster: <b>Senju day and night music programs</b>	"community" "expectations"
Red cluster: <b>Direct sensory expressions such as visual descriptions and experiences</b>	1. Express what is seen with a focus on "soap bubbles" 2. The experience of "dancing" being "fun"
Blue cluster: <b>Events that children can participate in and enjoy</b>	3. Events tailored so both "children" and "adults" can "participate" and "enjoy"

In summary, after analyzing free-form questionnaire responses from general visitors between 2012-2017, the results can be broadly sorted into two categories based on the direct evaluations of visitors.

Category 1: Visual and experiential evaluation of "soap bubbles" and "dancing"

Category 2: Evaluations of the participation of both "children" and "adults"

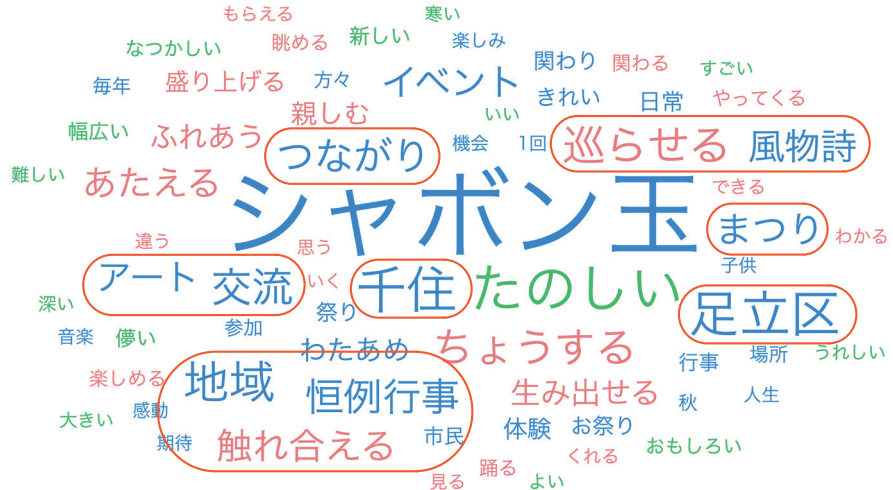
Though infrequent and buried in the data, when observed quantitatively, the first word cloud revealed that "Senju" and "Adachi Ward" appear with relatively high importance, while co-occurrence parsing uncovered an interest in "community" and a desire for an increased number of events like Memoriba in that community. What is interesting is that, according to the visual and experiential evaluation of "soap bubbles" and "dancing" (category 1) and evaluations of the participation of both "children" and "adults" (category 2), one can expect that the elements of value creation in process evaluation (shown in figure 2)—specifically, play (visual and experiential evaluation), equality, and dialogue (evaluation of collaborative participation)—are expressed in visitor experiences.



## 6.2 Analysis of staff questionnaires (2017-18)

Next, I attempt to make connections with the “value” of Memoriba while comparing the analytic results of questionnaire responses from staff and supporters (hereafter referred to as “staff”)—those who have been involved with Memoriba longer and more deeply than general visitors—with the analytic results of general visitors. I will analyze the free-form responses from staff, gathered over two years in 2017 and 2018, to the question, “What is Memoriba to you?” (Figure 9) Some words that can be considered unique and different from the responses of general visitors, who use many words related to the description and impressions of the events, are

Fig 09. A word cloud analysis of staff questionnaires (Importance score)



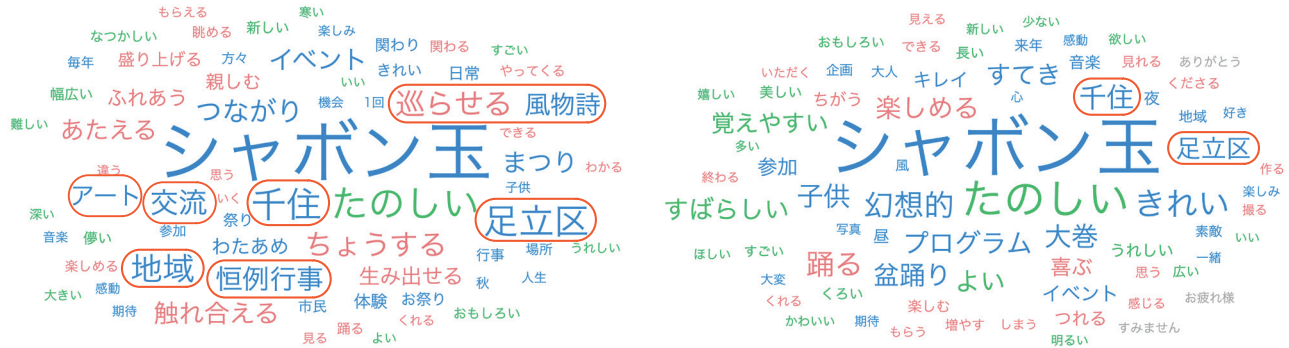
circled in red as examples.

The reason why I selected this question is because, unlike other questions—such as, “What do you expect from Memoriba?”—I thought it would be possible to see immediate and medium-term changes in the category of “stakeholders involved in the project” in the outcome evaluation by exploring respondent’s impressions of Memoriba in the present, rather than the past or future.

I posit that responses to the question of what staff expect from Memoriba would correspond with the category of “long-term changes logically expected in the future”—a category of information that I will analyze later using individual interview responses from project stakeholders.

Comparing staff responses with the word cloud made from general visitor responses (right), words related to “community,” such as “Senju” and “Adachi City,” appear in both types of re-

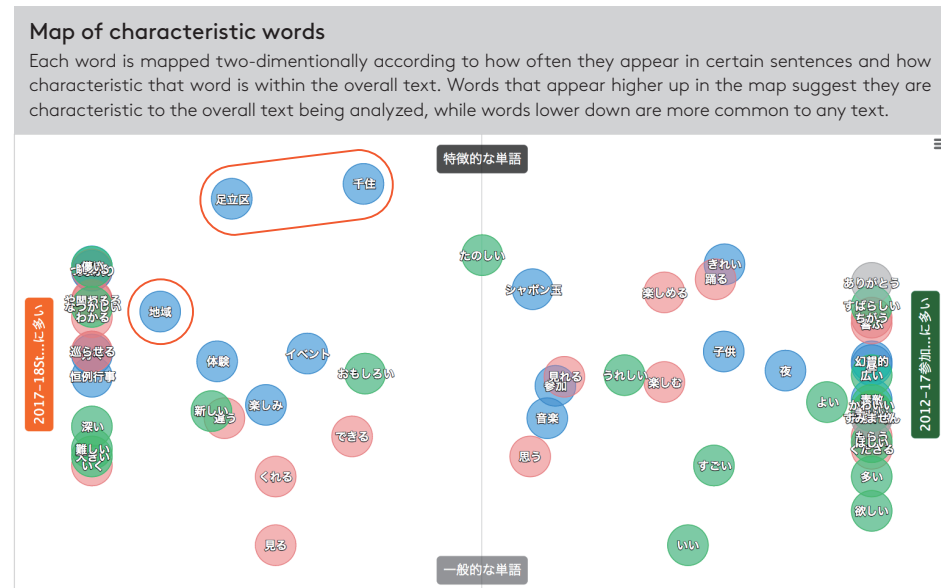
Fig 10. A word cloud comparison between general visitors (right) and staff (left)



sponses, but the importance of these words to staff is shown to be higher overall. In addition, the phrases “regular event” and “seasonal tradition,” which indicate that Memoriba’s events are regular and indispensable, and the words “exchange” and “interact,” which can express interactions between people, appear with high importance in the word cloud of staff responses. Further, the word “art” does not appear in the world cloud of general visitor responses.

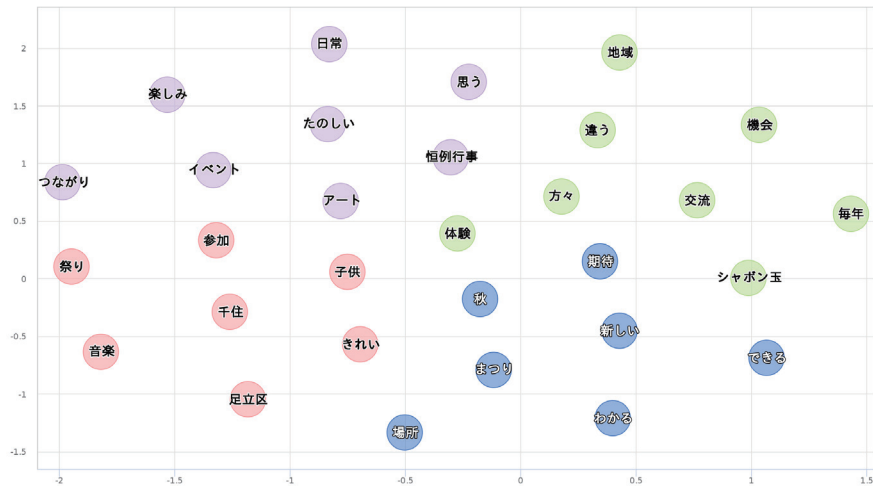
Next, when comparing characteristic word maps, it becomes clear that staff have a higher awareness of “community.” (Figure 11)

Fig 11. A comparison of characteristic word maps for general visitors (right) and staff (left)



Next, I present the data mapped two-dimensionally, where words that tend to appear similarly in sentences are placed closer together, and words that appear dissimilarly are placed further away. Words that are closer together are grouped and color coded. Mapped in this way, four classifications appear (figure 12). A hierarchical cluster analysis (figure 13) was able to group the data into two classifications.

Fig 12. A two-dimensional map of staff questionnaire responses



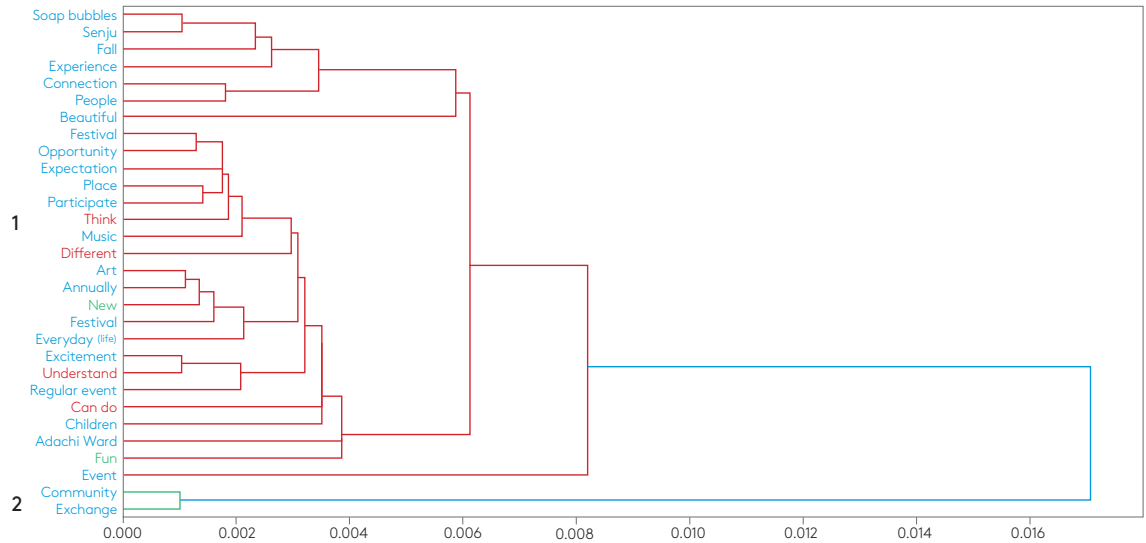
Blue group: New expectations / Autumn festival

Purple group: Fun art events and connections that have become part of everyday life / regular occurrences

Green group: Opportunities for locals to interact through experiencing the soap bubble events annually

Red group : A music festival in which children from Senju, Adachi Ward participate

Fig 13. Hierarchical cluster analysis of staff questionnaire responses



1. A new kind of festival of art and music that provides an opportunity to connect and participate in the soap bubble event in Senju in autumn / A fun regular event in Adachi Ward that children can enjoy and learn from
2. Community exchange

From the above, together with the three keywords from the world cloud (“community,” “regularity of events,” and “interaction”) that I pointed out earlier, the characteristic word map, two-dimensional map, and the results of the hierarchical cluster analysis can be organized into three keywords: “community,” “becoming everyday life,” and “place of interaction.”



Comparing responses from general visitors with those of staff through word classification, it appears that words like “soap bubbles,” “fun,” “participate,” and “music” are shared, suggesting that an immediate change produced by these events is an enjoyable feeling. In addition to the words “dance” and “children,” the relatively large number of adjectives (in green) that appear in the general visitor responses capture what it intuitively feels like to directly participate in the events. The staff see these events from a more bird’s-eye perspective, which is reflected in the words “community,” “art,” “everyday life,” and “festival” that commonly appear in staff responses. Further, the number of verbs (action words) shown in red that only appear in staff responses demonstrate active involvement—for example, “enliven,” “get involved,” “connect,” “encounter,” “meet,” and “reside.”

Fig 14. Word classification comparison between questionnaire responses (general visitors versus staff)

Only appears in staff responses	Appears often in staff responses	Appears in both responses	Appears often in general visitor responses	Only appears in general visitor responses
Know Exchange How much received Come (soon) Make go around View Get involved Connection Festival Regular event People Can meet Give Become set Feel Disappear Care for Make Connect Link Get started Interact Go Split Break Entrust Meet Reside Can encounter	Can do Event Community Give Different Fun New Adachi Ward See Senju Enliven Experience Place Art Everyday (life) Festival Opportunity Cold Broad	Fun Soap bubbles Think Participate Can see Music Lovely Emotional Expectation Interesting	Dance Children Good Can enjoy Beautiful Enjoy Night Amazing Program Good Next year Happy	Thank you Kindly give Be happy Like a fantasy Daytime Nice Different Receive Make Take (a photo) Want Long Like Wonderful Adult Bonodori (traditional dance) Beautiful Good work Sorry Wide Want Cute Dark Cute Happy Not enough Bright Easy to remember Warm

In section 6.1, I pointed out that in the evaluation of category 1 (visual and experiential evaluation of “soap bubbles” and “dancing”) and category 2 (evaluations of the participation of both “children” and “adults”), it can be expected that the following elements of value

creation in process evaluation are being expressed: play (visual and experiential evaluation), equality, and dialogue (evaluation of collaborative participation). However, under the contexts of “equality” and “dialogue,” staff find that in the locality of Senju, Adachi City, lies the potential for Memoriba to become a place where people, from children to adults, can connect and interact as part of everyday life.

To summarize thus far, general visitors evaluate the value of Memoriba as “participating” with a sense of “play” and feeling enjoyment, and connecting and participating together with everyone from children to adults. Based on my analysis of staff questionnaire responses, staff relate the value of Memoriba with the fact that the project has become a “place for interaction” between people in the “community” as part of everyday life. Further, the large number of action words in staff responses confirms a development towards more active involvement.

11 | As of December 2021, Rei Fujieda is a doctoral student at the Graduate School of Global Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts.

12 | An algorithm called LexRank was used to extract important sentences. This algorithm extracts sentences that contain many important words and have a high similarity to other sentences. The summarization algorithm uses a method called “integer linear programming” that selects important parts that cover more information. (According to a press release by User Local, Inc., “無料で利用できる文章自動要約ツールを公開 Muryō de riyō dekiru bunshō jidō yōyaku tsu-ru o kōkai,” July 24, 2018.)

### 6.3. Analysis of individual interviews with stakeholders (2020)

In this final analysis, I use data from interviews with 14 individual stakeholders to consider medium and long-term changes. In my analyses thus far, I used data from the free-form responses surrounding the “event impressions” of general visitors and “what Memoriba means” to staff. Here, however, I focus on responses to the question, “What do you expect from Memoriba?” I saw this question as related to “long-term changes logically expected in the future.” This analysis uses transcripts of applicable responses, organized by Rei Fujieda.<sup>11</sup> When I extracted text data that had a higher degree of importance using User Local’s automatic summary tool<sup>12</sup>, I was able to identify the following 10 sentences:

- That’s why I don’t mind being behind the scenes, and I think that’s interesting.
- Children who grow up seeing Memoriba will become involved in Memoriba.

- I've been thinking for a while that I want to [hold this event] near the Hanahata housing complex.
- I think it would be good if we could create more spectacles that each of us truly think are beautiful from the bottom of our hearts.
- I would like to work together more with people who have varied interests in such areas.
- The pandemic started when Mr. Shirayama came on board as our teacher.
- It would be great if we could expand our thinking to next year and beyond, and broaden our reach.
- I've started feeling it would be nice if we broadened opportunities to be honestly moved.
- Then, if the time comes [for children who grow up] to leave [Senju] on their own, so be it.
- You can come through on your own when the time is right.
- Something like delivering "Shabon-Odori" (soap bubble dance) and the whole of Memorial Rebirth onto an unfamiliar land or creating a [dedicated] space for Memorial Rebirth.

**13** | As defined by the Social Impact Management Initiative, an "outcome" is the change or effect that a project or organization intends to produce. [https://simi.or.jp/tool/logic\\_model](https://simi.or.jp/tool/logic_model) (Accessed November 23, 2021.)

**14** | This is thought to be due to the fact that the questionnaire targeting general visitors and staff did not include questions aimed at measuring medium to long-term changes, while the unstructured and explorative approach to individual interviews, which asked interviewees to speak freely, facilitated the more accurate unearthing of medium and long-term changes.

After checking the meaning and context of the sentences before and after these statements, I attempted to classify them by medium and long-term changes while referencing the definitions of medium-term outcomes<sup>•13</sup> and final outcomes from the logic model for arts and culture developed by the Social Impact Management Initiative (for "soft-type" community projects). In the following table, detailed outcomes are shown as specific behavioral examples, followed by outcome categories in parentheses. Detailed outcomes are not forcibly applied to responses to which they do not apply; in those cases, only corresponding outcome categories are shown.

Extracting statements judged to be of high importance from the transcripts of individual responses, as in the above, many cases that fit the definition of medium term and final outcomes according to the logic model become apparent.<sup>•14</sup> As a result, my analysis confirms to some extent that changes in the final outcome category—"increased community inclusivity" and "increased degree of community culture"—did occur. Further, the three keywords derived from the analytic results of the staff questionnaire responses—"community,"

2020-21 Individual Interviews	Medium to Long-Term Changes
I don't mind being behind the scenes (if citizens can connect)	(Medium term) Increased behaviour considering others <b>("More people with imaginative sympathy")</b> (Long term) Increased thirdplace and places of belonging <b>("Community inclusivity will increase")</b>
Children who grow up seeing this will become involved in Memoriba	(Medium term) More people wanting to get involved in community and society <b>("More people who bring forth their own creative activities")</b> And more people involved in creative activities <b>("More people living a culturally enriching life")</b> (Long term) More citizens understand the importance of arts and culture <b>("Degree of community culture increases")</b>
I want to do this near the Hanahata housing complex	(Medium term) More new citizen-led activities and bases <b>("More people who bring forth their own creative activities")</b> And behaviour considering others <b>("More people with imaginative sympathy")</b> (Long term) Increased tolerance for socially vulnerable groups and minorities <b>("Community inclusivity will increase")</b>
If we could create more spectacles that we think are beautiful from the bottom of our hearts	(Medium term) More people involved in creative activities <b>("More people living a culturally enriching life")</b> (Long term) More citizens understand the importance of arts and culture <b>("Degree of community culture increases")</b>
I would like to work together more (between the technical departments in Tokyo Denki University and Tokyo University of the Arts)	(Medium term) More people consider things from various points of view <b>("More people with imaginative sympathy")</b> (Long term) Increase in the creative class <b>("Degree of community culture increases")</b>
The pandemic started	N/A
If we could expand our thinking to next year and beyond, and broaden our reach	(Medium term) More new citizen-led activities and bases <b>("More people who bring forth their own creative activities")</b> (Long term) Establishing a support system for creative activities <b>("Degree of community culture increases")</b>
If we broadened opportunities to be honestly moved	(Medium term) Increased behaviour considering others <b>("More people with imaginative sympathy")</b> (Long term) More citizens understand the importance of arts and culture <b>("Degree of community culture increases")</b>
(If the children who grow up see something good and have the power to leave Senju) then, if the time comes to leave on their own, so be it	(Long term) <b>"Community inclusivity will increase"</b> (Long term) <b>"Progress in resolving social issues through arts and culture"</b>
Delivering "Shabon-Odori" (soap bubble dance) and the whole of Memorial Rebirth onto an unfamiliar land or creating a [dedicated] space for Memorial Rebirth	(Medium term) More people wanting to get involved in community and society <b>("More people who bring forth their own creative activities")</b> (Long term) Creating an image as a cultural community <b>("Degree of community culture increases")</b>

“becoming everyday life,” and “place of interaction”—appear in each interview response, though not without differences in their nuance.

## 7. Conclusion

In this study, I used text mining analysis and automatic data processing tools, while referencing frameworks for outcome evaluation and process evaluation, in an attempt to evaluate responses from visitor and staff questionnaires and the interview responses of 14 individual project stakeholders.

The results show that general visitors valued Memoriba based on the sight and experience of “soap bubbles” and “dancing,” as well as the participation of both “children” and “adults.” Further, the three elements necessary for an environment facilitative of “value creation” for revitalizing communities and society, according to the framework for process evaluation—namely, “play,” “equality,” and “dialogue”—were found in general visitor responses through my text mining analysis.

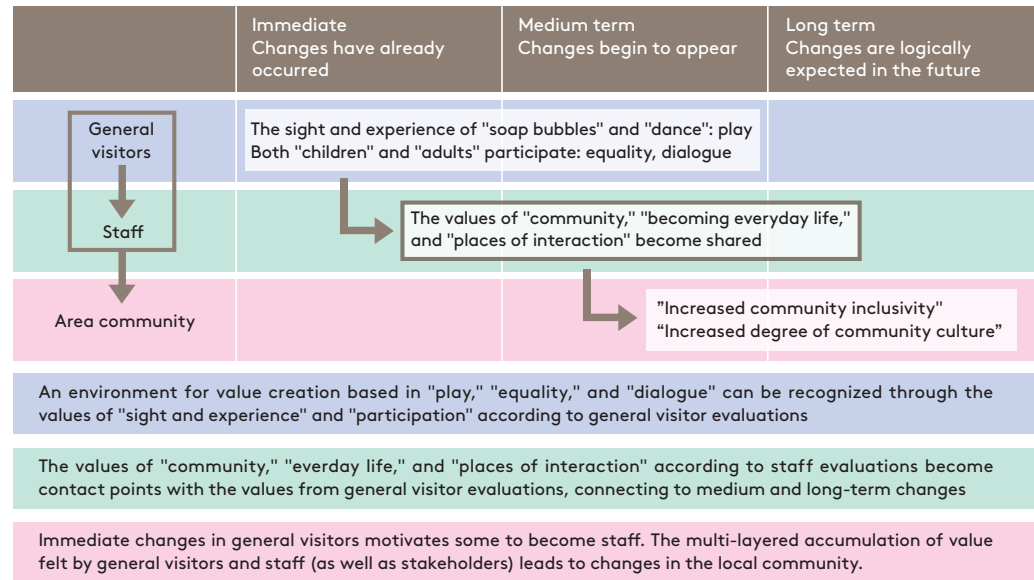
Looking at staff responses, text mining analysis allowed for the value of Memoriba to be captured in three keywords—“community,” “becoming everyday life,” and “place of interaction”—and draw attention to the more active involvement of staff. In addition, based on individual interviews with stakeholders, I was able to extract actual feelings in the form of interviewee remarks that connect with long-term changes in the community, which I describe as the following outcome categories: “increased community inclusivity” and “increased degree of community culture.” I noted that this group of responses contained at least three keywords: “community,” “becoming everyday life,” and “place of interaction.”

The first changes happen when general visitors participate in Memoriba and, among them, those who wish to participate further as staff begin to emerge. Those people partic-

ipate in project activities with an awareness of “community,” “places of interaction,” and that these activities become part of “everyday life.” The accumulation of these things lead to changes in the locality and its community. Based on my text mining analysis, it appears as though Memoriba functions as a kind of ecosystem. In other words, with regards to the reception and permeation of the values of Memoriba, the outcome evaluation framework (figure 1) helps sort through the 10 year history of Memoriba and reveals that the value felt by general visitors and staff connects to long-term changes in the community, while Memoriba acts as an ecosystem that leads to changes in everything from general visitors to the wider community. These findings are illustrated in figure 15. Put another way, rather than being values in themselves, “community,” “everyday life,” and “places of interaction” become contact points through which general visitors, staff and stakeholders can create value in multilayered ways. The true substance of that value creation is the reception and permeation of Memoriba.



Fig 15. A configuration of the reception and permeation of Memoriba's value



## Memorial Rebirth: The Stakeholders of Senju

**Mina Shinohara** (1st Year Master's Student, Graduate School of Global Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts; "Memoriba" Student Staff)

As of February 2022, Memorial Rebirth Senju ("Memoriba"), which is carried out as part of "Art Access Adachi: Downtown Senju - Connecting through Sound Art," is co-sponsored by five different bodies: the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Arts Council Tokyo (the Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture), Tokyo University of the Arts (Faculty of Music and the Graduate School of Global Arts), the non-profit organization Otomachi Project, and Adachi Ward. The project's foundational operating expenses are provided by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government through Adachi Ward and Tokyo Arts Council.\*1 In addition, the NPO Otomachi Project and the Sumiko Kumakura Research Lab at Tokyo University of the Arts carries the responsibility for practical project operations.

Shinji Ohmaki, an artist and director who conceptualized Memoriba, presents the project's artistic concepts and objectives to the organizers responsible for planning and operations. Many other artists, including Kurukuru Charmy, contribute to performances such as "Shabon-Odori" (soap

bubble dance) and to content production and provision, making the project a place for expressive activities.

Together with these artists, "Ohmaki Denki K.K.," a group of citizen volunteers, are currently major contributors to the planning and operation of Memoriba. From the project's first year to 2013, the "Ohmaki Team," consisting of citizens gathered through open call, was in charge of planning and operations. However, a "technical team," wherein the citizens themselves handle the bubble machines, was formed in 2014. The main members were members of the "Senju League" —a softball league organized by fathers in the Parent-Teacher Associations of each elementary school in Senju— and students at Tokyo Denki University. Even today, alumni of Tokyo Denki University continue to volunteer in Ohmaki Denki K.K. In addition, there are teams such as the "Otomachi Big Band" and the "Teens Orchestra and Choir" that musically animate performances (on the day of the actual events), and there have been years when groups such as the "Nishini Kids Bon Dancers," "Yacchai-tai

Team,” and the “Sha-bon Odori Cheer Team” have participated in events and workshops. Citizen volunteers have acquired a place for self-actualization, expression and exchange through Memoriba.

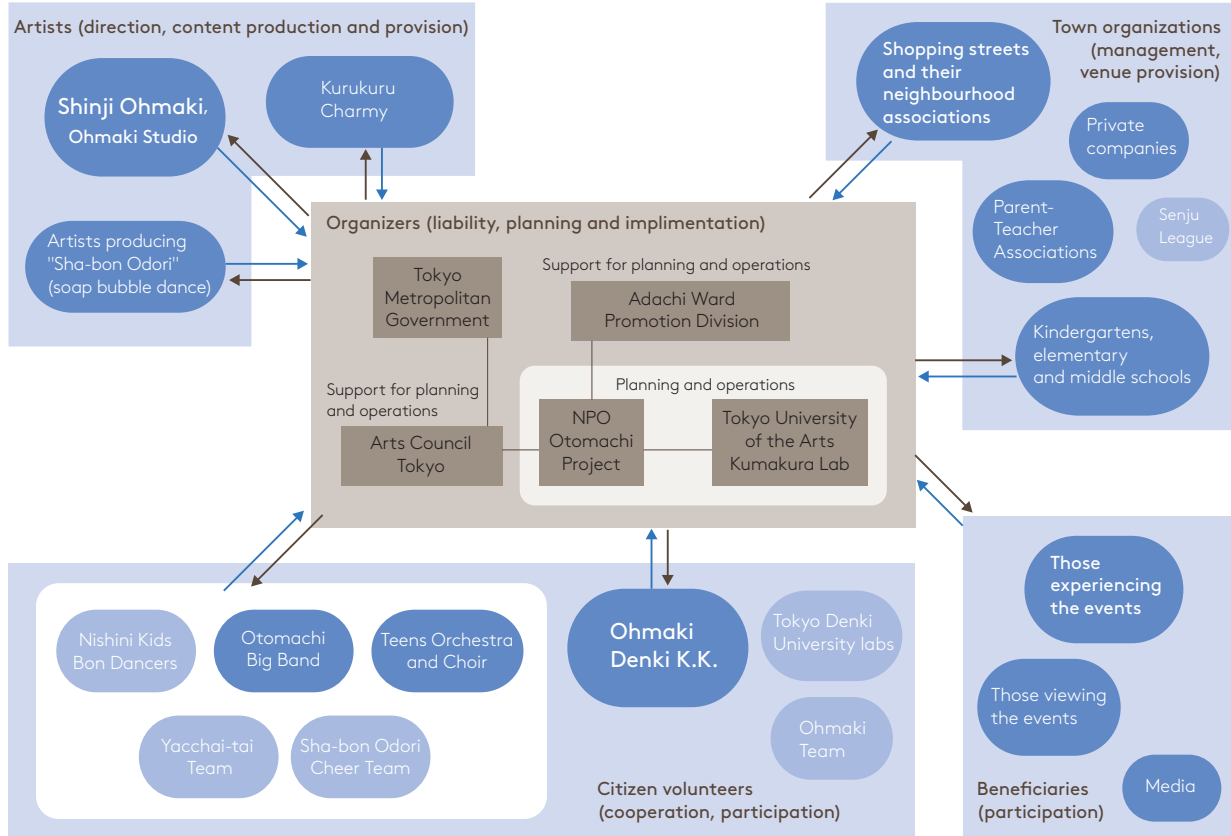
The cooperation of local organizations are indispensable for realizing actual events. The shopping streets, neighborhood associations, and private companies that cooperate in providing and managing venues expect that Memoriba will lead to community development and promotion. Meanwhile, educational institutions such as kindergartens, elementary schools, and junior high schools, in addition to organizations such as the Parent-Teacher Associations and the “Senju League,” cooperate in

providing and managing venues with the expectation that local children will have an opportunity to encounter art and find a place for expression and exchange.

These connections and forms of cooperation are what make Memoriba possible. During the actual events, you can feel free to enjoy the scenery full of soap bubbles and people gathering, or join in the singing and dancing. Those who have experienced these events become new participants, and those connections broaden with every year.

1 | Depending on the year, project costs were also covered with external funds from the Agency for Cultural Affairs (Government of Japan) and other cultural organizations.

## A diagram of stakeholder relations in Memorial Rebirth Senju



Reference | Harah Han, "The Dilemmas and Roles of Public Officials Involved in Art Projects: A Case Study of Adachi City Promotion Division and "Art Access Adachi: Downtown Senju - Connecting through Sound Art" (Master's thesis, Tokyo University of the Arts, 2020). (This data has been translated into English for this publication.)

# The logic model as a “memory backup”: A case study of 10 years of Memorial Rebirth Senju

Saya Makihara (Specially Appointed Lecture, Arts and Cultural Management Course, Faculty of Humanities, Seikei University)

This publication features a pull-out appendix of a logic model diagram. However, it is important to note that this “logic model” differs from the common logic model. In the following, I describe the differences in the nature of “Memorial Rebirth Senju’s Logic Model,” attached to this publication, and explain its use.

Before beginning to explain “Memorial Rebirth Senju’s Logic Model,” I would first like to briefly summarize what a “logic model” is in the first place. A logic model is a “theoretical framework for evaluating the results of a business or project,” (Yoshizawa 2019, 17) and is “a framework showing pathways to results (Wakabayashi 2019, 33) used mainly to evaluate administration and international cooperation in a wide range of fields. These models are essentially created before the start of a project or in its early stages to provide a tentative pathway to achieving project goals, following the logic “if A, then perhaps B.” That tentative pathway is structured as follows: input (resources

input into businesses and projects); activity (actual activities in businesses or projects); output (things brought forth by implementing a business or project); outcome (results brought about by outputs); and impact (brought about by implementing a business or project). This structure “will only function as an evaluative tool by comparing expected results with actual results, considering the causes of any discrepancies and actually assessing outcomes and social impacts.” (Wakabayashi 2019, 33)

The major difference between the “Memorial Rebirth Senju Logic Model” and generic logic models lies in when it was created. In other words, what should have been created in the early stages of Memorial Rebirth Senju is being created now, after the project has continued for 10 years in Adachi Ward. While some may not consider this a logic model, please give me the benefit of the doubt. Consider that when Memorial Rebirth Senju began in Adachi Ward in 2011, there were almost no staff in the orga-

nization implementing the project with knowledge of or experience in the “art project” field. Further, “art projects” were not as popular throughout Japan as they are today, means for verifying and evaluating the effects of such projects were underdeveloped, and the term “logic model” had not yet taken root in the field. At the time, those involved in Memorial Rebirth Senju had no idea where the project was headed, much less what it would bring to the community and society. What lay before them was a foggy road.

So, why did we choose to use a logic model this time? As a model for illustrating pathways that can be reflected on, it was an apt tool for the 10-year “retrospection” of Memorial Rebirth Senju. As shown throughout this publication, the 10 years of Memorial Rebirth Senju are filled with many people involved in varied ways, weaving a tapestry of colorful stories. However, because those stories are infinitely different and diverse, it was difficult to express the achievements of the project’s 10 years in one word or with one glance. Therefore, based on the stories gathered through the project, I simplified the results of the project’s 10 years and framed them with a logic model in an attempt to provide a bird’s-eye perspective.

First, I looked at the current situation of Memorial Rebirth Senju in terms of outcomes and impacts before working backwards to trace the paths that led to them.

Doing so revealed that, in addition to general impacts (final outcomes)—such as “the population relating to Senju increases” and “attachment to the community is born”—there were also impacts unique to the project, such as “various forms of Memoriba are born.” Next, I not only reviewed the project as a whole, but I also used the logic model to look back at the stakeholders involved in the project, such as “student staff” and “townspeople.” Like a Game of Life, the logic model for townspeople shows varied pathways for individuals that may begin with “visitors view Memoriba events” and end with the impact (final outcome) of “become independent from organizers and become the director of a locally-led Memoriba.” Meanwhile, there are other cases where the input begins with “key people connected with Memoriba’s community.” Further, the townspeople that were “personnel deeply involved in Memoriba operations from the preparation stage” were input as “personnel helping with MR events” in later years. In this way, it was as if the involvement of some people mirrored a Game of Life, where there are multiple starting points. Such a multilayered nature of involvement became apparent through individual stories, but were not generalizable across the larger, retrospective picture of townspeople overall. Put another way, when townspeople become involved in Memorial Rebirth Senju, there are multiple layers to their entry point into the project (their “input”), but this infor-



mation could be visualized from a bird’s-eye view for the first time thanks to the logic model.

Lastly, by looking back on 10 years of Memorial Rebirth Senju through a logic model, I could definitely trace a path that the project had steadily walked, step by step, despite the fact that the project has been known to fall into confusing episodes. In addition, the model outlines visions for the future that have yet to be realized, such as “becoming a Memoriba of/for Senju, independent from artists.”<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, when we interviewed people involved in Memorial Rebirth Senju to create the logic model, we found that few people had been involved in the project continuously for the past 10 years, and almost no one was able to look back on the entire project due to personnel turnover. This kind of turnover can often occur in long-running projects. That transitionality is not only a major hurdle to evaluations using logic models, which need to be backtracked and validated; it can also become a large issue when passing down the memory of the project, like a baton, to the next decade, or the next generation, or the

next organizing body. In order to prevent those memories from fading— and in the spirit of the project’s name, “Memorial Rebirth”—the work of visualizing and reflecting on the project’s path thus far, using a logic model, has great significance as a “memory backup” as the project continues for a certain period of time, or even when the project comes to an end.

I hope the logic model in the appendix will serve as a reference for those wanting to look back on the long, long journeys of their projects; for those communities that will or hope to hold their own Memorial Rebirth; and for those embarking on the creation of new art projects.

I should note that the logic model presented here is merely a “simplification.” In other words, there were numerous outcomes and impacts that could not be outlined in this logic model, and cannot be expressed with a unidirectional arrow. Some pathways go back and forth, some take one step forward and two steps back, some take detours, while others practically teleport—such occurrences are the nature of art projects.

1 | or further details, please refer to the following chapters of this publication:  
the talk event “Shinji Ohmaki x Community Art? ‘Art? I don’t get it!’” and “Shinji  
Ohmaki and the future of Memorial Rebirth”

**References** | ARTS NPO DATABANK 2018-19「実践編! アートの現場からうまれた  
評 価」Arts NPO DATABANK 2018-19: *Jissenhen! A-to no genba kara umareta  
hyōka*, Arts NPO Link, 2019.

Yayoi Yoshizawa, “「評価」の用語集 ‘Hyōka’ no yōgoshū.” In *ARTS NPO DATABANK  
2018-19*.

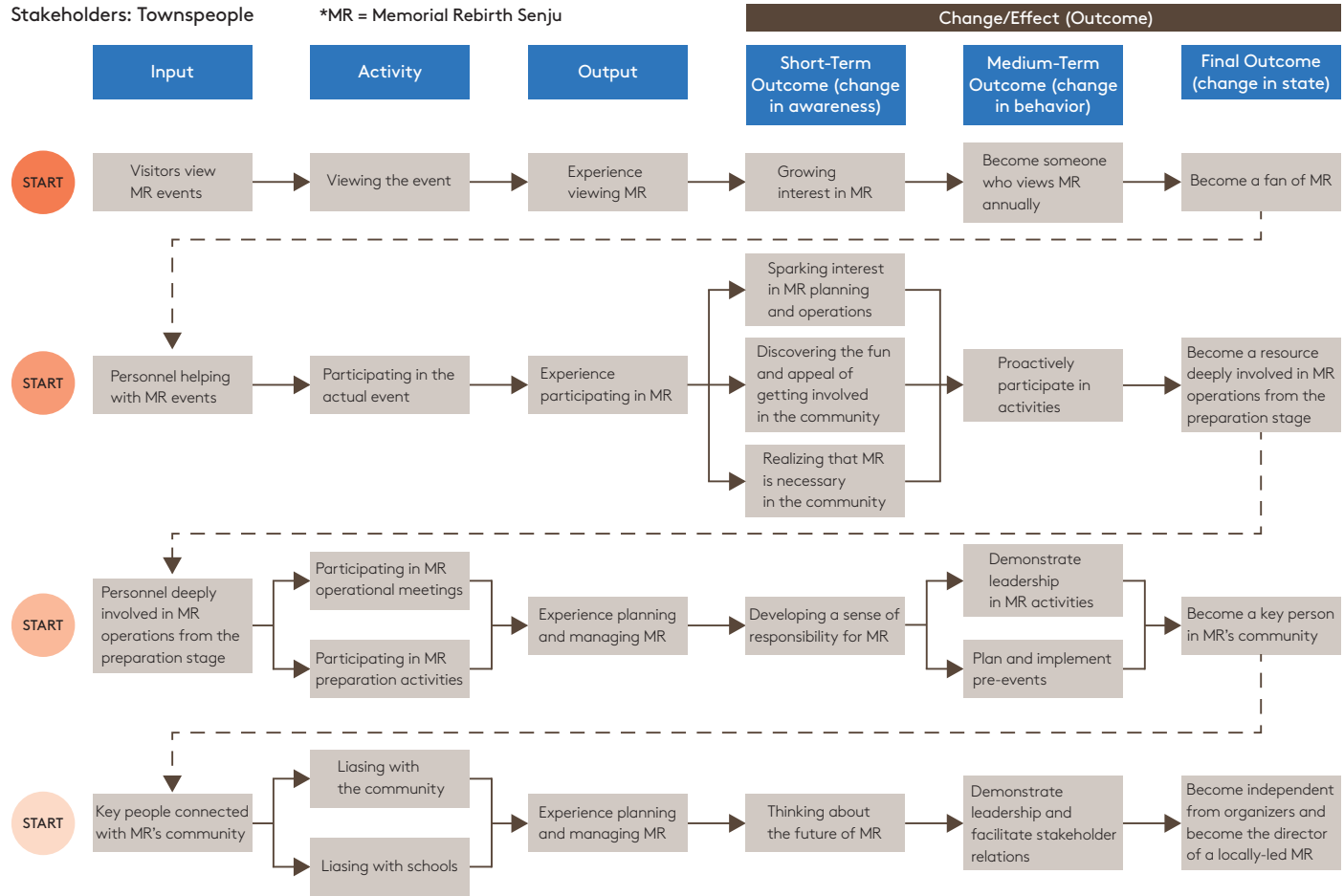
Tomoko Wakabayashi, “再考:芸術・文化領域における評価 Saikō: Geijutsu, bunka  
ryōiki niokeru hyōka.” In *ARTS NPO DATABANK 2018-19*.

(This data has been translated into English for this publication.)

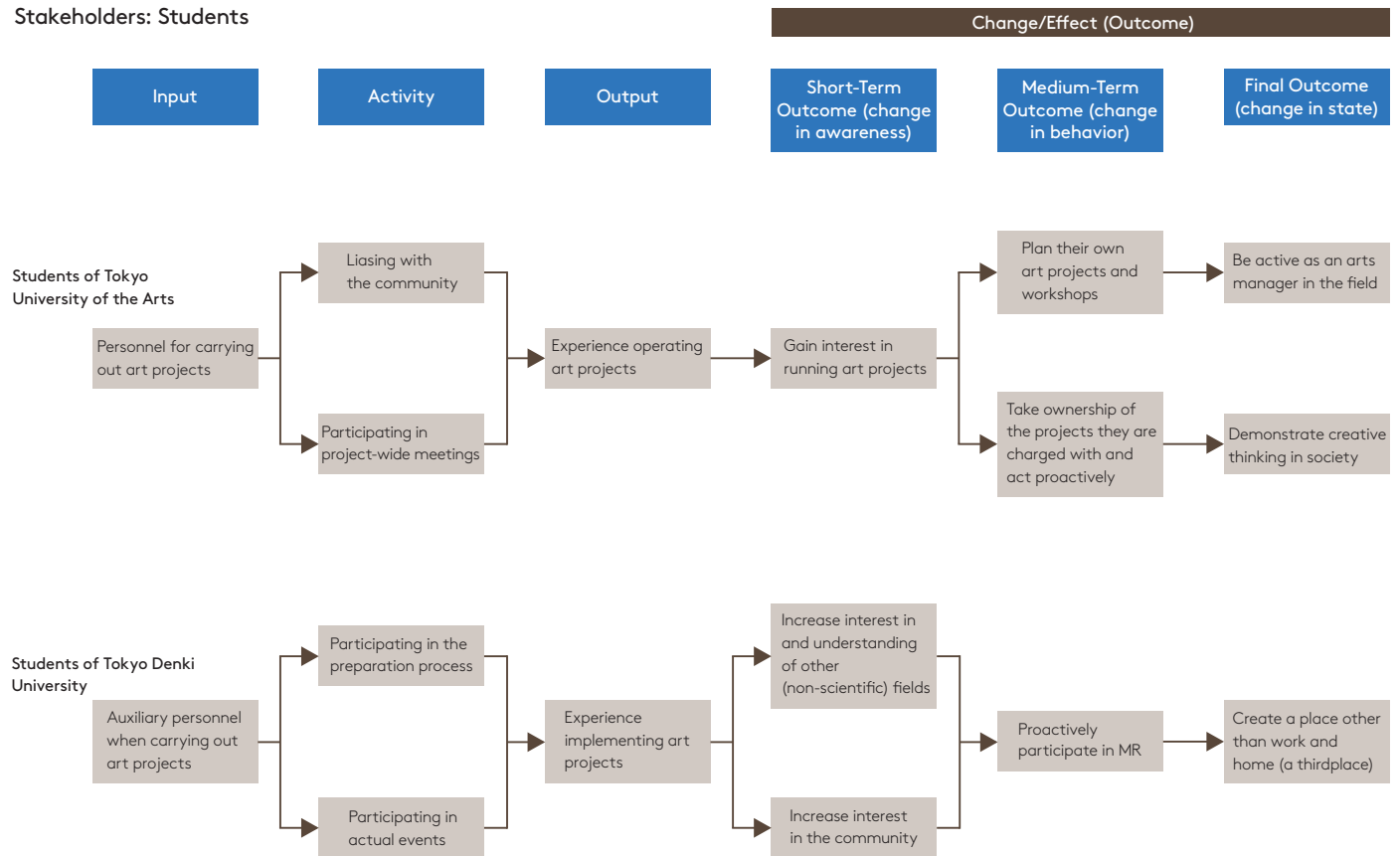
This diagram was created by Saya Makihara (Specially Appointed Lecture, Arts  
and Cultural Management Course, Faculty of Humanities, Seikei University)  
and the staff of “Memorial Rebirth Senju” (Art Access Adachi: Downtown Senju  
- Connecting through Sound Art).

Stakeholders: Townspeople

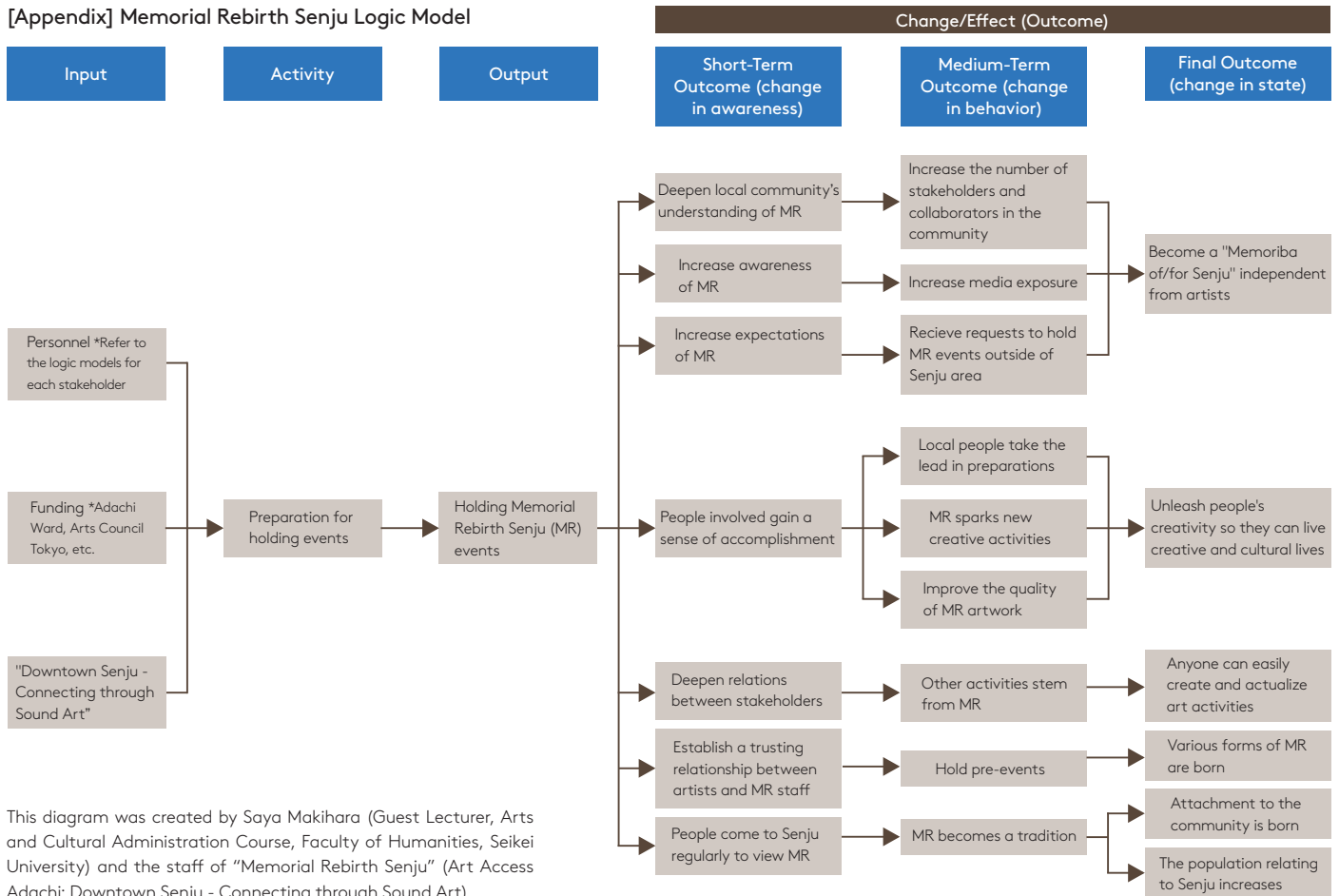
\*MR = Memorial Rebirth Senju



## Stakeholders: Students



## [Appendix] Memorial Rebirth Senju Logic Model



This diagram was created by Saya Makihara (Guest Lecturer, Arts and Cultural Administration Course, Faculty of Humanities, Seikei University) and the staff of "Memorial Rebirth Senju" (Art Access Adachi: Downtown Senju - Connecting through Sound Art).



"Memorial Rebirth Senju 2016 Aoba," October 2016. Photo by Yazo Takada.



"Memorial Rebirth Senju 2017 Sekiya," November 2017. Photo by Ryohei Tomita.



"Memorial Rebirth Senju 2017 Sekiya," November 2017. Photo by Ryohei Tomita.



"Memorial Rebirth Senju 2018 Nishiarai," November 2018. Photo by Ryohei Tomita.





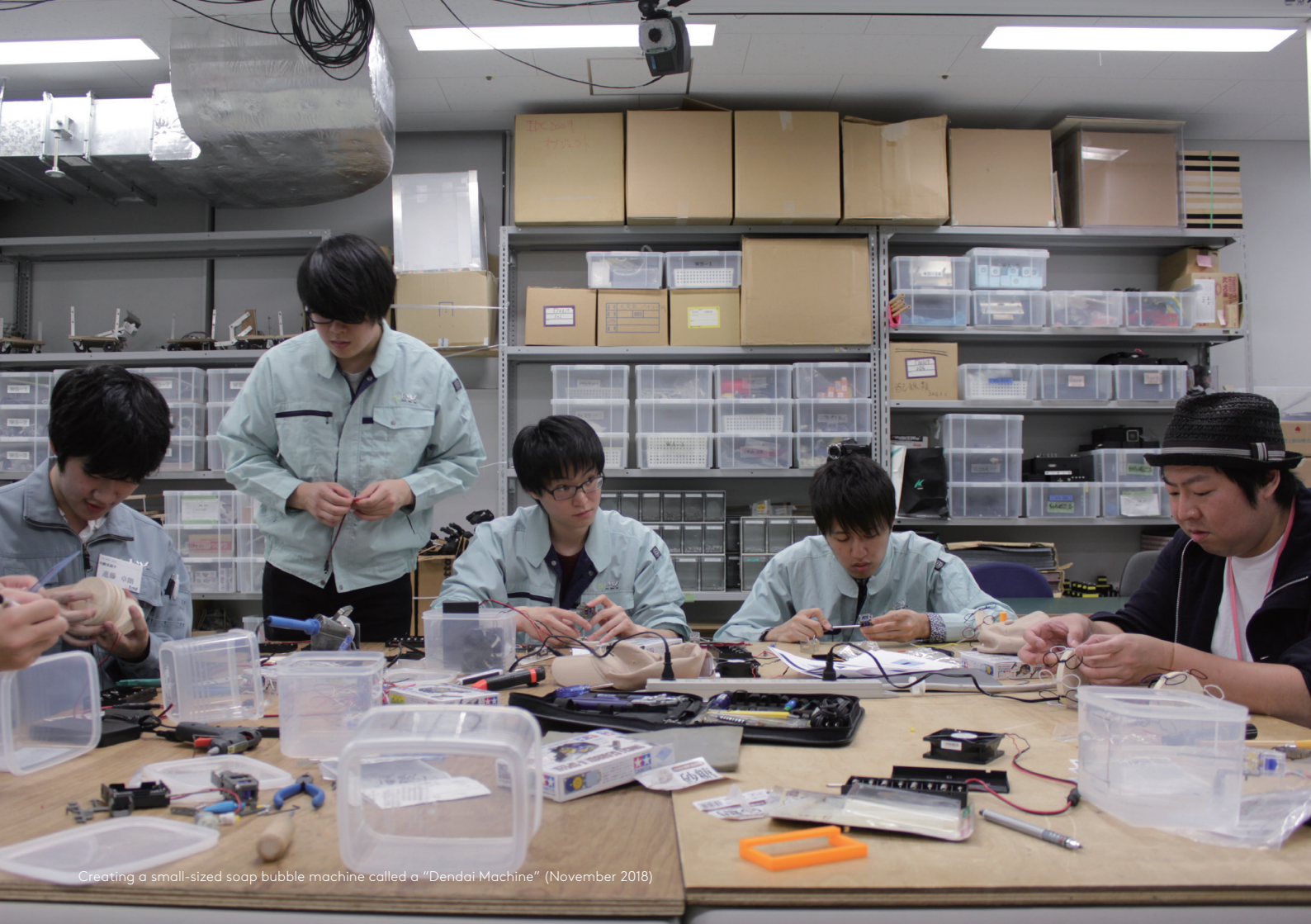
"Memorial Rebirth Senju 2017 Sekiya," November 2017. Photo by Ryohel Tomita.





"Memorial Rebirth Senju 2018 Nishiarai," November 2018. Photo by Ryohei Tomita.





Creating a small-sized soap bubble machine called a "Dendai Machine" (November 2018)





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Ohmaki Denki K.K. presents "Gentle©Bubbles @Kitasenju Marui" (November 2019)





Making bubbles with bicycles as part of "Memoriba Studio" (March 2021)



"Memoriba Homestay" at a participant's home (October 2021)



Installation view of "Memorial Rebirth Senju" at Nakacho House (September 2020)



Ohmaki Denki K.K. during Memorial Rebirth Senju's "Memoriba Petit" as part of the festival "1 DAY Performance 'Hyogengai' Expression Street" (October 2021). Photo by Ryohei Tomita.



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