

## Press Release

**Pola Museum of Art Announces Change of Director**  
 Advancing to a New Stage along with the Local Community  
 through Inspirational Hospitality

The Pola Museum of Art (Hakone-cho, Kanagawa) would like to announce that as of July 1, 2023, current museum director Kijima Shunsuke will step down from his position, and that Noguchi Hiroko, a pioneering figure as a female general manager in the Japanese hotel industry, will assume the role of director.

Kijima Shunsuke has led the Pola Museum of Art for nine years, since July 2014. During his tenure, he applied his international professional network and wealth of knowledge as an art critic to activities such as new art acquisition initiatives and planning of exhibitions, including Picasso and Chagall and Monet and Matisse, that further elevate the appeal of the museum's collection. He took the post of director soon after the 10th anniversary of the museum's opening, when its activities were broadening in scope, and greatly contributed to its further development.

Noguchi Hiroko, who will succeed Kijima, has an extraordinary track record and has made a global impact as a hospitality professional. For 11 years, beginning in 2006, she served as the first Japanese female general manager of a globally renowned luxury hotel here in Hakone. With her leadership skills informed by an international perspective, we fully expect that as the museum's new director, she will strengthen ties with the local Hakone community and heighten the experiential value of museum visits through a fundamental reassessment of hospitality.

At a time when international travel is recovering and Hakone is once again drawing attention, the Pola Museum of Art is entering a new stage under this new leadership. The museum has set forth a vision for 2032 of being "an inspirational museum," and we aim to be an institution open to and rooted in the community as we work towards its realization.

■ **Noguchi Hiroko Profile**



Noguchi Hiroko was born in Nagasaki Prefecture. After being involved in the opening of Nagasaki Huis Ten Bosch and a hotel reconstruction project at The Windsor Hotel TOYA Resort & Spa, she worked in hotel consulting in the hospitality division of Arthur Andersen GMD. In 2002 she became the Director of Marketing Communications at Park Hyatt Tokyo, and later Director of Sales & Marketing. In 2006, she was named General Manager at Hyatt Regency Hakone Resort and Spa, becoming the first Japanese woman to head an internationally prestigious luxury hotel. She led the hotel for 11 years, from the opening preparations onward.

In 2017, Noguchi became the GM of Hyatt Regency Seragaki Island, Okinawa. In 2020 she returned to Hakone, and has been involved in hotel operations, development, management consulting, and coaching. She also contributes to fostering of future hotel general managers through the GM GYM program.

## New Director's Statement

I am deeply honored to take on the role of director of the Pola Museum of Art from July 2023. Nestled in the forests of Hakone, the Pola Museum of Art has consistently applied distinctive curatorial vision to the exhibition of its extensive collection so as to deliver special and enriching encounters with art.

Suzuki Tsuneshi, second-generation head of the family that established Pola Cosmetics, Inc., had a vision for the museum of "symbiosis between Hakone's natural beauty and art." Guided by this vision, and building on the museum's unique appeal cultivated through subsequent expansion of activities such as development and enhancement of the Nature Trail and an intensified focus on contemporary art exhibitions and acquisitions, I aim to explore new directions for the Pola Museum of Art that align with the demands of today. In addition, I intend to build on the foundations laid by previous directors with the goal of further advancing their achievements.

I would like to outline three key goals for our path forward. First, we will further strengthen our ties with the local Hakone community. Having resided in Hakone for 11 years, from 2006 onward, and developed a deep love for the area, I consider it vital for us to cultivate even closer relationships with local residents. By doing so, I believe we can raise the profile of the Pola Museum of Art and contribute to the vitality of the region.

Second, we will place a strong emphasis on hospitality across all museum activities. I intend to draw on my experience in hotel management not only in terms of customer service and hospitality, but also by incorporating the philosophy of creating a welcoming environment for visitors. We will respect diverse values and strive to boost the satisfaction of all stakeholders, including visitors, employees, and members of the community. Through these efforts, I believe we can expand the potential of the museum as a unique and unparalleled institution.

The third goal is to maximize experiential value. As a museum surrounded by the lush natural environment of Hakone, we aim to be a destination that provides escape from the everyday, cherished memories, comfort, and a sense of refreshment and renewal that cannot be obtained at urban art museums. We will always strive to empathize with our visitors, who come seeking a special time in which they open their hearts and engage with art amid nature, and continue to explore ways of further enhancing their experience.

With these three goals in mind, I aspire for the museum to build close partnerships with diverse stakeholders, focusing on the Hakone region, and to contribute to the vitality and growth of the local community through the power of art.

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of its opening, the Pola Museum of Art unveiled a new vision: "An Inspirational Museum." Here where art, nature, architecture, and people resonate with one another, my aim is to effectively deliver the joy and inspiration of encounters with beauty by adding human touch and hospitality, and will make the utmost effort to create a place for rich and fulfilling experiences.

I sincerely appreciate your guidance and support as I embark on this exciting journey.

Noguchi Hiroko