

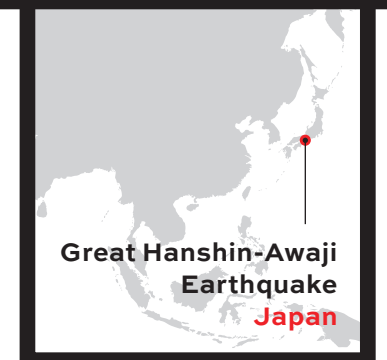


Mr. Hirokazu Nagata (right) giving a tour at the opening of the EMP exhibition.

Disaster drills that people line up for.

**Emergency!
Kaeru Caravan!**

Hiroshi Fuji
Artist
Plus Arts



Emergency! Kaeru Caravan!



Hiroshi Fuji / Plus Arts

Hiroshi Fuji received his graduate degree from the Kyoto City University of Arts. After serving as a lecturer at Papua New Guinea National University's Art Department, he worked at an urban planning office. In 1992, he established the Hiroshi Fuji Planning and Production Room. He seeks to encourage discussions about resources and recycling by creating opportunities for dialogue through art. His major works include Walking of the Skinny Dogs, The Story of Rice Ball Frogs, Vinyl Plastics Connection, Kaekko, and Fujishima Hachijuro wo Tsukuru.

Plus Arts is a non-profit organization that aims to incorporate artistic ideas and creativity in existing social fields such as education, urban development, disaster preparedness and international cooperation, in order to contribute to resolving some of the challenges and issues in these fields. Hirokazu Nagata, Vice Director of Design and Creative Center Kobe, serves as President of Plus Arts.

1 A toy exchange event attracted an unprecedented number of people to participate in disaster drills

Emergency! Kaeru Caravan! is a disaster drill program in which participants can obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for disaster preparedness. It was first conducted in 2005 as part of the Message from Kobe-Ten Years after the Earthquake project commemorating the recovery from the 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake.

Whereas previous emergency drill programs struggled with low participation rates, especially among the younger generation, the Emergency! Kaeru Caravan! was able to solve this problem by incorporating itself into an established toy exchange program, Kaekko Bazaar (Exchange Bazaar).

Artist Hiroshi Fuji developed the Kaekko Bazaar, an event where children trade used toys for "Kaeru" points (Kaeru means both exchange and frog in Japanese). These points can then be exchanged for other toys. After incorporating Emergency! Kaeru Caravan!, children could also earn points by playing games that taught them disaster survival skills, such as how to use fire extinguishers. The first event successfully attracted more than 3,000 children and adults.



Fig. 1 An array of toys that children brought to the event. Children can exchange their "Kaeru" points for toys.



Fig. 2 Children who participate in the disaster drill program can earn "Kaeru" points



Fig. 3 Children look forward to the toy auction, where they can bid on popular toys with their "Kaeru" points.

2 A survey of disaster survivors to create new disaster drills

When creating the program, Fuji and Hirokazu Nagata, President of Plus Arts placed great emphasis on surveying disaster survivors because they believed that these survivors had the knowledge, skills, and firsthand information that would be truly helpful at the time of a disaster. With the help of volunteers, they conducted interviews with over 50 survivors of the 1995 earthquake, who shared how they felt and what was helpful during, and immediately after, the disaster. Based on the survey results the disaster drill program Emergency! Kaeru Caravan! took shape. This emphasis on interviewing the very people who were involved in disasters is still one of the core operating principles of Plus Arts.



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Expanding activities in Japan and beyond, upholding a philosophy that the local community is and will always be the main actor

As of March 2018, the Emergency! Kaeru Caravan! has been conducted more than 452 times in 34 of 47 prefectures in Japan, as well as in 19 other countries. Emergency! Kaeru Caravan! consists of 22 different possible activities, and local partners can choose the programs that are most pertinent to their regions and needs.

The main purpose of the Emergency! Kaeru Caravan! program is to provide emergency drill programming, but it also aims to train communities so that the program will run sustainably, independent of Plus Arts. Volunteers from local communities are invited to participate in carrying out the program. This allows local communities to develop their own programs based on issues specific to their areas.



Earthquake survivors are the true earthquake specialists.

Jishin ITSUMO Project

Bumpei Yorifuji
Art Director
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