

Forrest, Nicholas, "Japanese Artist Tabaimo's "Mekurumeku" Moment at Sydney's MCA," *Artinfo*, June 26, 2014. Accessed online:

<http://au.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/1042158/japanese-artist-tabaimos-mekurumeku-moment-at-sydneys-mca>

Japanese Artist Tabaimo's "Mekurumeku" Moment at Sydney's MCA

by [Nicholas Forrest](#)



Tabaimo "dolefullhouse 2007" video installation 6:21 minute loop Installation view, Philagrafika, Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2010 Image courtesy the artist and Philadelphia Museum of Art © the artist Photograph: Jason Wierzbicki (Photograph: Jason Wierzbicki)

Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) will continue its commitment to presenting ground-breaking exhibitions with the July 3 launch of "[TABAIMO: MEKURUMEKU](#)" – the largest solo exhibition to date of leading Japanese artist **Tabaimo**.

Museum of Contemporary Art Director, **Elizabeth Ann Macgregor OBE**, said that "for many viewers, Tabaimo's appeal is her unusual aesthetic: a combination of surreal happenings, delicate line drawings and the softly modulated coloration of woodblock prints transformed by their animation."

Curated by MCA Chief Curator **Rachel Kent**, the comprehensive survey exhibition will feature six video installations from the early 2000s to the present, including two amazing

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new installations which respond to the Museum's architecture, "peeling back the walls to reveal the ocean outside," says Kent.

The exhibition will also feature a series of drawings that illustrate the artist's creative process – a process that begins with hand-drawn images which are then animated on a computer, positioning the works between the classic and the contemporary.

Tabaimo is renowned for her ambitious video installations which have no single message to convey nor one single narrative trajectory. Situated within purpose-built architectural channels, her works depict "everyday people, cityscapes, objects, and events that unfold with often surprising outcomes," according to the MCA.

Drawing inspiration from a wide variety of sources including manga, anime, and traditional Japanese *ukiyo-e* woodcuts, Tabaimo creates multilayered animated videos that expose the hidden truths that lie at the periphery of existence, while at the same time explore the dichotomies of human experience within the context of contemporary Japanese society.

The six video installations in *TABAIMO: MEKURUMEKU* comprise the six screen work "Japanese Commuter Train (2001)," the circular projection "Haunted House (2003)," the single screen "dolefullhouse (2007)," the tunnel-like installation "BLOW (2009)," as well as two new works commissioned for the MCA entitled "mekuru meku ru" and "TOZEN"

According to the MCA, "mekuru meku ru" and "TOZEN" "imagine parallel worlds in micro and macrocosm, travelling through the human body to the vastness of the ocean beyond."

Commenting on "mekuru meku ru," Tabaimo says that the title of this work sounds almost identical to the title of the exhibition itself. "It comprises "*mekuru-meku*," the Japanese word used to name the exhibition, meaning "dazzling" or "dizzy," combined with "*mekuru-mekuru*," a word whose sound represents the pages of a book turning and thus the idea of development," the artist explains.

The work begins with the image of being enclosed in a box which only becomes apparent to the viewer when information enters from the outside. "If your body is then flipped inside-out, your internal organs fly away while your eyes turn to gaze inwards," she explains. "Here again I had in mind the contrast between 'inner and outer' or 'up and down,' and the way in which these are sometimes reversed."

["TABAIMO: MEKURUMEKU"](#) opens at the MCA Sydney on July 3.