

INFLUENCE OF CREATIVE ACTIVITIES ON THE
RESIDENTS AND CONSERVATION OF CULTURE,
HISTORY, AND LANDSCAPE IN SETOUCHI
ISLANDS, JAPAN

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Abstract: Due to worldwide changes in economic conditions and industrial infrastructures, many coastal industrial areas are now suffering from the outflows of industry and population. In recent years, efforts aimed at halting such declines and revitalizing those areas have often been led by cultural and artistic activities. One such effort is the “Setouchi Art Festival” on islands in Japan’s Seto Inland Sea. On Inujima, one of them, the Inujima Seirenscho Art Museum was built on the ruins of an old copper refinery as a tribute to the island’s industrial heritage. A number of other art projects were created on the island and old houses were renovated as part of the art festival. This paper aims to identify the influence of these creative activities on the island’s residents and learn how they reflect the conservation of culture, history, and the natural landscape of Inujima Island. To accomplish this, we conducted a field survey and interviews with local residents and learned that many of them feel positive about interacting with the young people who visit the art festival, including foreign tourists, while other local residents have developed a sense of separation from the old refinery since it was transformed into an art museum.

Keywords: heritage; artistic activities; Setouchi Art Festival; islands

1. Introduction

In Japan, huge coastal industrial areas were formed along with the rapid development of the heavy chemical industries during the rapid economic growth that began in the 1960s. However, due to the worldwide changes in economic conditions and industrial infrastructure, many of those coastal areas are now experiencing significant outflows of industry and population, which means that local economic conditions are now facing serious problems (Abe, 2017).

In many places, efforts aimed at promoting sustainable development in such declining areas are led by creating and revitalizing industries that focus on cultural and artistic activities (Lee *et al.* 2017). One such effort is the “Setouchi Art Festival”, which has been attracting numerous tourists over the last ten years. Although many of the Setouchi islands, a geographic region in Japan that includes the Seto Inland Sea, prospered during the years when the copper mining and refining industries were influential, many of those



factories have since closed and the islands that hosted them are now facing the related problems of depopulation and aging residents.

In response to those circumstances, Soichiro Fukutake, former Chairman of the Benesse Corporation and Chairman of the Naoshima Fukutake Art Museum Foundation, has led an effort to revitalize these areas. Focusing initially on four islands, he enlisted the aid of famous architects and artists in efforts to build art museums, hotels, and recreational facilities. Through his efforts, and with the assistance of the Kagawa Prefecture and Takamatsu City governments, the Setouchi Art Festival had spread to seven islands by 2010, and had been attended by more than ten million people by 2016.

However, since excessive dependence on government funding for such activities could result in difficulties during times when budgets are lean, it is hoped that those abovementioned activities will eventually become self-sustaining and develop in ways that allow culture, history, and natural landscapes of those islands to be conserved. With that point in mind, this paper aims at identifying the influence of these creative activities on the residents and determining their effectiveness in preserving local culture, history, and landscape. Specifically, we selected Inujima Island from among the seven participating islands of the Setouchi Art Festival and conducted a field survey there along with interviews with local residents.

2. Setouchi Art Festival

The “Setouchi Art Festival” is a modern art festival held on the Setouchi islands once every three years beginning in 2010, so it has been held three times so far. Although the festival’s executive committee is composed of many local organizations, its primary members are regional and local authorities such as Kagawa Prefecture, Takamatsu City, and the Fukutake Foundation. In 2010, the festival was held at Naoshima, Teshima, Megijima, Ogijima, Shodoshima, Oshima, Inujima, and Takamatsu Port. It has since been held on a total of 12 islands and two ports, including Shamijima, Honjima, Takamijima, Awashima, Ibukijima, and Uno Port.



Figure 1. Setouchi Art Festival locations (Setouchi Triennale 2019, 2018)

The festival’s exhibitions consist of modern artworks such as paintings and sculptures, visual media, performances, and architecture in harmony with natural landscapes. A total of 938,246 people visited the first festival in 2010, 1,070,368 people visited in 2013, and 1,040,050 people visited in 2016. The figures in Table 1 show the total income and expenditures for the festival from 2010 to 2016. Here, it can be seen that Kagawa Prefecture, the Fukutake Foundation, and another city paid an almost half of the total expenditures. Furthermore, it can be seen that Kagawa Prefecture and the Fukutake Foundation account for a third of those expenditures, while subsidies and donations account for another fourth. The remaining expenses were met with revenues from the sales of goods or tickets.

The Expenditure table also shows the costs of the art projects. Although the festival has continued to expand, the proportion of revenues obtained from tickets and goods has not changed, even though the

related expenditures increase each time it is held. In the period since 2013, total expenditures have increased by 47%.

source \ period		2010				2013				2016			
		2008	2009	2010	total	2011	2012	2013	total	2014	2015	2016	total
burden charge	Kagawa Prefecture	10	50	91	151	10	95	95	200	10	95	95	200
	other city	7	50	50	107	8	110	110	228	14	107	107	228
	Fukutake Foundation	0	50	50	100	0	95	95	190	0	95	95	190
	subtotal	17	150	191	358	18	300	300	618	24	297	297	618
subsidy		8	9	11	28	10	23	61	94	10	114	114	217
donation		1	64	87	152	30	90	37	157	4	24	24	190
sales of goods etc.		0	0	29	29	0	15	32	47	0	95	197	292
sales of tickets		0	0	222	222	0	63	175	238				
the others		0	3	1	4	15	5	1	21	47	3	21	71
subtotal		26	226	541	793	73	496	303	1175	85	650	653	1338
money carried forward to the next year		0	3	118	121	0	54	162		0	51	239	
total		26	229	659	914	73	550	768		85	701	892	

Table 1. Income of Setouchi Art Festival from 2010 to 2016 (million) (The Setouchi Art Festival Committee, 2010, 2013 and 2016)

cost of purpose \ period		2010				2013				2016			
		2008	2009	2010	total	2011	2012	2013	total	2014	2015	2016	total
art project	production	0	19	262	281	0	170	190	360				
	production management	13	21	58	92	2	49	50	101				
	director	0	10	10	20	0	15	15	30				
	project estimate	0	4	0	4	15	0	0	15				
holding events		1	8	48	57	0	20	49	69	0	28	88	116
subtotal		14	62	378	454	17	254	304	575	20	268	402	690
management	publicity	7	25	49	81	1	57	38	96	2	87	72	161
	traffic measure	0	0	13	13	0	1	24	25	0	2	29	31
	operating site	0	0	28	28	0	4	103	107				
	management of supporters	0	6	35	41	0	9	71	80	0	37	169	206
	management of secretariat	2	7	23	32	1	22	31	54	12	21	32	65
subtotal		9	38	148	195	2	93	267	362	14	147	302	463
production of tickets etc.		0	11	29	40	0	41	37	78	0	47	38	85
subtotal		23	111	555	689	19	388	608	1015	34	462	742	1238
money carried forward to the next year		3	118	0	121	54	162	160		51	239	150	
total		26	229	555	810	73	550	768		85	701	892	

Table 2. Expenditures of Setouchi Art Festival from 2010 to 2016 (million) (The Setouchi Art Festival Committee, 2010, 2013 and 2016)

From Table 1, it can be seen that burden charges account for about half of the income and the proceeds account for less than a quarter of the income in 2014-2016. In addition, it can be seen that the subsidies and donations account for a third of the income in 2014-2016. From Table 2, it can be seen that the art project costs, especially production costs, account for more than half of the expenditures.

From the above, it can be seen the Setouchi Art Festival is heavily dependent on outside funding. This is suboptimal because there are many calls for such outside funds and the festival might not be chosen for support in times when budgets are lean. Hence, increases in self-generated revenues and improvements in the financial cycle of the festival are urgently needed.

3. Art Projects in Inujima

Inujima, which once had a population of about 6,000 people, is one of the islands that prospered during the time when copper quarrying and refining were major industries. However, both of those industries



have since declined, and the average age of an island resident is now about 75 years old. Furthermore, the population has sharply declined to just 50 people. In an effort to revitalize the island while paying homage to its industrial heritage, the Inujima Art Museum was built on the foundations and surviving structures of an old copper refinery. Additionally, a number of art projects were created and old houses were renovated as part of the art festival.

Of a number of art projects launched in Inujima, the most famous three projects are explained as follows.

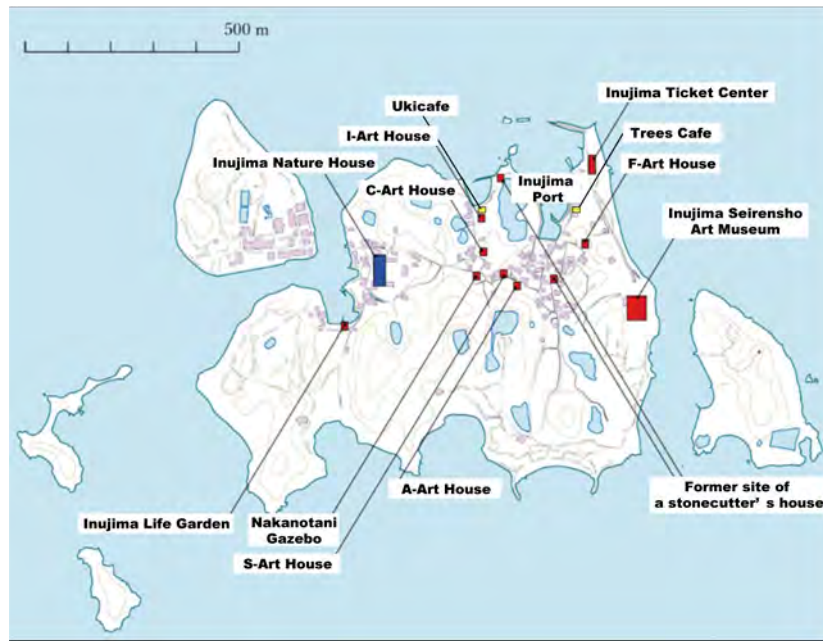


Figure 2. Map of Inujima

3.1 Inujima Seirenscho Art Museum

Based on the concept of “Utilizing existing elements and creating elements that do not exist,” the Inujima Seirenscho Art Museum conserved and restored the ruins of a former copper refinery in Inujima. The present-day facility, which introduced the architecture of Hiroshi Sambuichi, was designed to utilize existing chimneys and Karami bricks and to take advantage of natural energy sources such as sunlight and geothermal heat, thus minimizing the museum’s environmental impact. Artwork by Yukinori Yanagi based on a motif of Yukio Mishima (a famous Japanese author) and a high-efficiency plant-based water purification system were included as well. With careful attention paid to such elements as heritage, architecture, art, and the natural environment, this museum embodies the consciousness of a recycling-oriented society (Benesse Art Site Naoshima, 2018).





Figure 3. Seirenscho Art Museum

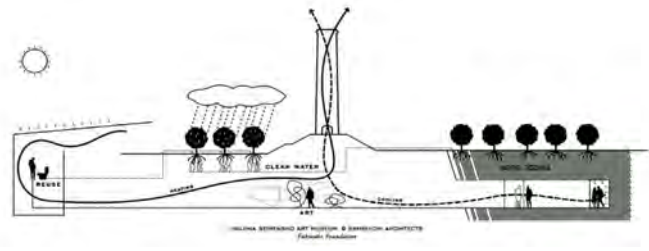


Figure 4. Circulation of Seirenscho Art Museum

(Benesse Art Site Naoshima, 2018)

3.2 Inujima Art House Project

This Inujima village project was developed by artistic director Yuko Hasegawa and architect Kazuyo Sejima. Artworks are exhibited in refurbished “art house” galleries scattered around the island so that visitors can also experience the beauty of the natural landscape as they meander from house-to-house while interacting with each other and villagers engaged in their usual everyday lives. The galleries dotting the village were constructed from various material such as the roof tiles and beams of old houses. In some places, transparent acrylic and aluminum panels have been installed to showcase the surrounding natural landscape. This provides visitors with opportunities to walk in places where they can appreciate the beauty of Inujima while also enjoying the exhibitions (Benesse Art Site Naoshima, 2018).



Figure 5. F-Art House, “Biota (Fauna/Flora)”



Figure 6. F-Art House, “Self-loop”



Figure 7. S-Art House, “Contact lens”



Figure 8. A-Art House, “Yellow Flower Dream”



Figure 9. C-Art House, “Ether”



Figure 10. “Former site of a stonecutter’s house”

(Benesse Art Site Naoshima, 2018)

3.3 Inujima Life Garden

The Inujima Life Garden is another Inujima Landscape Project created by Sejima. For this permanent facility, she revived a long-abandoned glass-paneled greenhouse and developed a small park and botanical

garden around it that are rooted in the island’s climate and culture. She envisions the garden as a space in which it is possible to design a new lifestyle by experiencing self-sufficient living within the island’s rich natural environment (Benesse Art Site Naoshima, 2018).

4. Interviews with local residents and management representatives of the Setouchi Art Festival

We conducted interviews with nine people, including local residents and the management representatives of the Setouchi Art Festival, on the following five points:

- (1) Changes of the attachment to Inujima and lifestyles before and after the festival
- (2) Artworks
- (3) Advantages and disadvantages of the festival
- (4) Relationships with tourists
- (5) Issues and future perspectives

	gender	age	occupation	When live in Inujima?	How long live?	Who live with?	Where go shopping?
A	male	70's	pension	before the festival	more than 5 years	couple	out of the island
B	female	30's	Ukicafe	after the festival	4 years	couple	out of the island
C	male	20's	Trees café	-	-	-	out of the island
D	female	60's	Arimoto's store	before the festival	more than 5 years	family	out of the island
E	male	30's	Ukicafe	after the festival	more than 5 years	couple	out of the island
F	male	70's	part-time job of Benesse	before the festival	more than 5 years	alone	out of the island
G	male	60's	Nature House in Inujima	-	-	-	-
H	female	20's	Benesse	-	-	-	-
I	male	20's	Benesse	-	-	-	-

Table 3. Local Resident Data

Interviewee A is a pensioner, as well as a leader of the Inujima Community Association. He lives on the island with his wife and provides leadership to the festival. Although originally from one of the Setouchi Islands belonging to Hiroshima Prefecture, he came to Inujima because it is where his wife lives.

Neither my attachment with this island nor my lifestyle has changed because the tourists only stay for two or three hours during the day and the island becomes as quiet as usual at night. Besides, there are no workplaces, nursery schools, elementary schools, or junior high schools here, so even if you wanted to move here, you could not stay on the island full-time.

When Mr. Fukutake asked me to cooperate with the neighborhood association for the Setouchi Art Festival, I told him I'd give him as much help as I could. He created employment opportunities for islanders up to three hours a day doing such chores as planting flowers, but we do not sell things made from Inujima resources, so the festival economically influences the island.

Regarding the art, it may be impressive to some, but there are many artworks I simply cannot understand. But that's natural because priorities between the aged and young are different, as are their understandings. One issue about the Setouchi Art Festival that needs improvement is that we do not have good verbal communication with foreign visitors because of a lack of interpreters.

Nevertheless, we are grateful to the festival just for increasing the number of people that know about Inujima. I think the festival will continue in the future. Of course, the continuation of the festival depends on the commitment of Mr. Fukutake, but I think his son will follow his example.

Interviewee C is a man working at the Trees Café who stays on Inujima most of the week, but has not yet completely moved to the island.

I originally came here to participate in Inujima events, but I came to know the owner of this café who asked me to help here. This island is a quiet and calm place.



Interviewee D was born in Inujima and worked in other locations in Okayama Prefecture, but came back to Inujima to provide care for his aged father.

I think the Inujima Seirenscho Museum is very good, but the location does not have the same connection to the residents it had before. Regarding interactions with visitors, I sometimes inform tourists about how to find the art houses and give them some basic explanations regarding them because there is not any posted information or explanations. For example, sometimes it is necessary to let tourists know that they can enter the galleries freely because there are no signs indicating that they can go inside. Sometimes I also tell them how to view the artworks, but I am often troubled providing explanations to foreigners.

Since the Setouchi Art Festival is centered in Kagawa Prefecture, Okayama Prefecture does not provide financial help to Inujima and Okayama Prefecture residents on Inujima feel somewhat abandoned. We want Okayama Prefecture to help Inujima, too, and I want the festival to continue as long as possible. However, since we do not have the resources to operate the festival by ourselves, it depends on Mr. Fukutake's generosity.

Interviewee E was originally a staff member for an event held on Inujima who decided he wanted to live on the island and moved to Inujima with his wife B four years so. Now, they run Ukicafé.

We love Inujima because of its charms such as its quiet and relaxing atmosphere – not because of its artworks. However, the festival influences people whether they are running their own café or working at the museum.

Interviewee F is a pensioner who was born in Inujima, left to find work, and returned 30 years ago. He currently works part time.

Since the start of the festival, Inujima has recovered more energy than it had before, but my attachment with this island has never changed. I feel it is a little noisy during the day, but usually quiet and relaxed at night. My part-time job for Benesse Corp. is mainly mowing. The festival has never influenced us. Besides, it is very questionable whether the old refinery should have been renovated into the Seirenscho Art Museum.

The former refinery was sufficiently beautiful, but now we cannot enter the facility site freely because it was purchased by Mr. Fukutake. I think the buildings are good, but I cannot understand the artworks. Regarding interactions with visitors, I talk sometimes to the tourists because I can understand English if it is spoken slowly, but cannot speak Korean or Chinese.

Interviewee G is an employee of a lodging company in Inujima. A number of the employees work in shifts so they can always respond to guests.

Members of the theatrical groups and the architects usually stay here. Sometimes foreigners do too. There are also a few guests that are here to enjoy astronomy. However, almost all of the guests want to see the artworks or participate in events for children.

Interviewees H and I are employed by the Seirenscho Art Museum and commute to work without living in the island.

Okayama City is not very much involved in the Setouchi Art Festival. In Inujima, new houses cannot be built because of strong resistance from Okayama City, so the number of immigrants does not increase.

Summary of interviews with local residents and the festival's managers

- The festival has not changed local residents' lifestyles and attachments for Inujima significantly.
- The festival has attracted several migrants to Inujima, but they live on the island because of its intrinsic charms, not because of the artworks.
- The refinery's relationship with the local residents has become more distant since it became a museum.
- Okayama City does not provide much support to Inujima.
- The local residents are grateful to the festival for providing interactions with young people and foreigners. They hope the festival will continue.



5. Interviews with visitors to Inujima

We conducted interviews on the following three points with six visitors:

- (1) Inujima art projects
- (2) The Setouchi islands they have visited and will visit, and their trip routes
- (3) Opinions about the Setouchi Art Festival

	gender	age	occupation	address	transit port	companion	Where stay at?
J	male	20's	student	Kinki	Houden Port	friends	no
K	femae	30's	employee	Kantou	Naoshima/Teshima	alone	no
L	male	70's	retirement	Kinki	Houden Port	friends	no
M	male	30's	employee	Cyugoku	Houden Port	alone	no
N	femae	60's	part-time job	Cyugoku	Houden Port	family	no
O	male	20's	employee	Cyugoku	Naoshima/Teshima	friends	no

Table 4. Visitor Data

Visitor J said,

I want to come here again, but I would not want to move here, because this island is difficult to visit and does not have any convenience stores. I wish it was more accessible. The Seirenscho Art Museum is good and within my expectations. The museum educated me on historical contexts through the renovation of the refinery.

The Art House Project was normal, but Inujima Life Garden was very good. I talked with an elderly man that owns a colored carp. He was very friendly. However, I thought Inujima was an island that does not have a lived-in feel because there are so few residents.

Visitor K said,

I want to come here again and would like to live here for a limited period. I think it is good that the museum is made using an existing building. I get a sense that history has continued without destroying the past. I could understand the F-Art House, but I could not understand the others.

Visitor O said,

I think I want to come here again in several years in order to find how Inujima has changed. I hope to live on an island in the future, so I think moving to Inujima would be a good choice.

Summary of interviews with the visitors

- There are many who would like to move to Inujima if the island had better facilities. This is related to the point that it is currently too difficult to increase the number of immigrants.
- Inujima's attractions are not limited to the artworks; they also include the enhancement of atmosphere and scenic nature of the island, as well as the local residents' behavior towards visitors.

6. Conclusions

In this paper, we aimed at identifying the influence of creative activities such as Setouchi Art Festival and the creation of the Seirenscho Art Museum on the island's residents in an effort to learn how they reflect the conservation of culture, history, and the natural landscape of Inujima Island, and how they are perceived by both the residents and visitors to Inujima.

The paper results can be summarized as follows:



1. It was revealed that there were few changes in resident lifestyles and their attachments to the island as a result of the Setouchi Art Festival.
2. It was revealed that the number of people who have come to know about Inujima has increased because of the festival, but it is currently too difficult to increase the number of immigrants. Improvements to the basis of the island's livelihood and facilities will be needed in order to increase the number of immigrants.
3. It was revealed that the people who live in Inujima, or want to move there, like the island regardless of the artworks. Furthermore, it has become clear that one reason the number of immigrants will not increase easily is there is a strong policy of Okayama City to restrict new housing construction.
4. Most local residents have somewhat comfortable lives due to their pensions and wages resulting from Benesse Corp. employment opportunities, but they do not think there have been any significant economic effects as a result of the festival.
5. It was revealed the many visitors are satisfied by seeing the things that have long existed on the island that they would not have had a chance to learn about without the festival. It was further revealed there many people like the atmosphere of the island, which means that one of the purposes of the Setouchi Art Festival, helping others to discover the attractive characteristic of the islands, has been achieved, even though some of the residents regret losing familiarity with the refinery since it was converted into a museum.
6. The local residents appreciate the increased opportunities to communicate and interact with young people and foreigners that resulted from the festival, which has brightened up their lives, even though improvements need to be made to the ways in which they communicate with foreigners.
7. It was revealed Okayama City does not provide significant support for the festival compared to Kagawa Prefecture. The local residents of Inujima, which is the only island that belongs to Okayama Prefecture, feel alienated because the festival is managed primarily by Kagawa Prefecture.
8. Local resident support for the festival is more passive than active. However, they are generally of the opinion that the festival should continue and understand that it is necessary to Inujima's continued existence as an inhabited island.

We found almost no disadvantages to the Setouchi Art Festival and that the local residents enjoy interactions with the young people and foreigners. The festival has not changed Inujima excessively, but we have learned that there are some things that would not have happened without it, and those things have added cheer to the lives of the elderly people that live on the island. As a result, it can be said that the festival has been successful up to now.

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