

PRESS RELEASE



April 2023

Special Exhibition

“Tokyo Ephemera”

The JP Tower Museum INTERMEDIATHEQUE (IMT) presents its new special exhibition “Tokyo Ephemera.”

With the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Tokyo’s identity as the host city has come into question once again, and a new image of the Japanese capital has been elaborated, with an eye to communicating this image outside of Japan. However, the commonly shared image of Tokyo is an aggregation of various signs rather than a fixed, concrete image. In order to capture Tokyo’s complex visual identity, this exhibition presents ephemera (printed materials with a temporary purpose) that have supported the undercurrent of Japan’s unique postwar printing culture. By introducing from a new perspective an extensive range of printed materials related to Tokyo such as maps, city plans, administrative reports, design manuals, various news reports, advertisements, posters, flyers, international pamphlets, tourist guides, and other items that are not part of any library or museum collection, this exhibition attempts to decipher the image of “Tokyo” that has been transmitted through domestic and international means of visual communication.

By including not only official documents that define urban planning and promotion methods, but also rare ephemera produced by individual artists and private organizations, the exhibition contrasts the ideal city of Tokyo with its real face, examining how postwar graphic design has shaped Tokyo up to today, sometimes depicting the city in a stereotyped manner, sometimes beautifying and symbolizing it.

Ephemera, regarded until now as unimportant reference materials unworthy to be housed in museums, have received renewed attention in recent years and are now becoming part of museum collections. Because they express in detail and convey the complex realities of society from multiple perspectives, ephemera are becoming a valuable visual heritage as we move toward a paperless society. By its intent to focus mainly on ephemera, this exhibition is also an attempt to introduce a new methodology in curating exhibitions.

Exhibition Page

<http://www.intermediatheque.jp/en/schedule/view/id/IMT0263>

JP Tower Museum
INTERMEDIATHEQUE

Title: Special Exhibition “Tokyo Ephemera”

Dates: April 29 – September 3, 2023

Opening Hours: 11:00 – 18:00 (open until 20:00 on Fridays and Saturdays) *Opening hours may change.

Closed on: Mondays (or the following Tuesday if Monday is a National Holiday; however the museum is open on May 1, August 14 and August 21), June 25. May close irregularly.

Venue: Intermediatheque 2F [GREY CUBE]

Organizer: The University Museum, the University of Tokyo (UMUT)

Admission: Free of charge

Address: KITTE 2-3F, 2-7-2 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN

Access: JR lines and Tokyo Metro Marunouchi line Tokyo Station (Marunouchi South Exit). Nijubashimae Station (Exit 4) on the Chiyoda Line (about 2 minutes on foot).

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