

Event Report

SDGs & Mécénat vol. 4

Debrief Session of the 2019 Survey of Mécénat Activities

With / After Covid-19 & Social Creation through Corporate Mécénat [Report]

On Wednesday, August 5th, 2020, a debriefing session for the 2019 Survey of Mécénat Activities was held at Hikarie Hall in Shibuya, Tokyo. In addition, a session was established to deepen discussion regarding the fourth symposium on SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) and Mécénat, which has been held since 2018, as well as about the issues with and possibilities of future mécénat activities while focusing on Mid / Post Covid-19. At the symposium, there were also lectures given on the efforts of companies such as Benesse Holdings, Inc., Onizuka Electric Works Co., Ltd., and Tokyu Bunkamura, Inc. The debriefing session was streamed online (via YouTube Live). I watched the archived video and drafted a report.



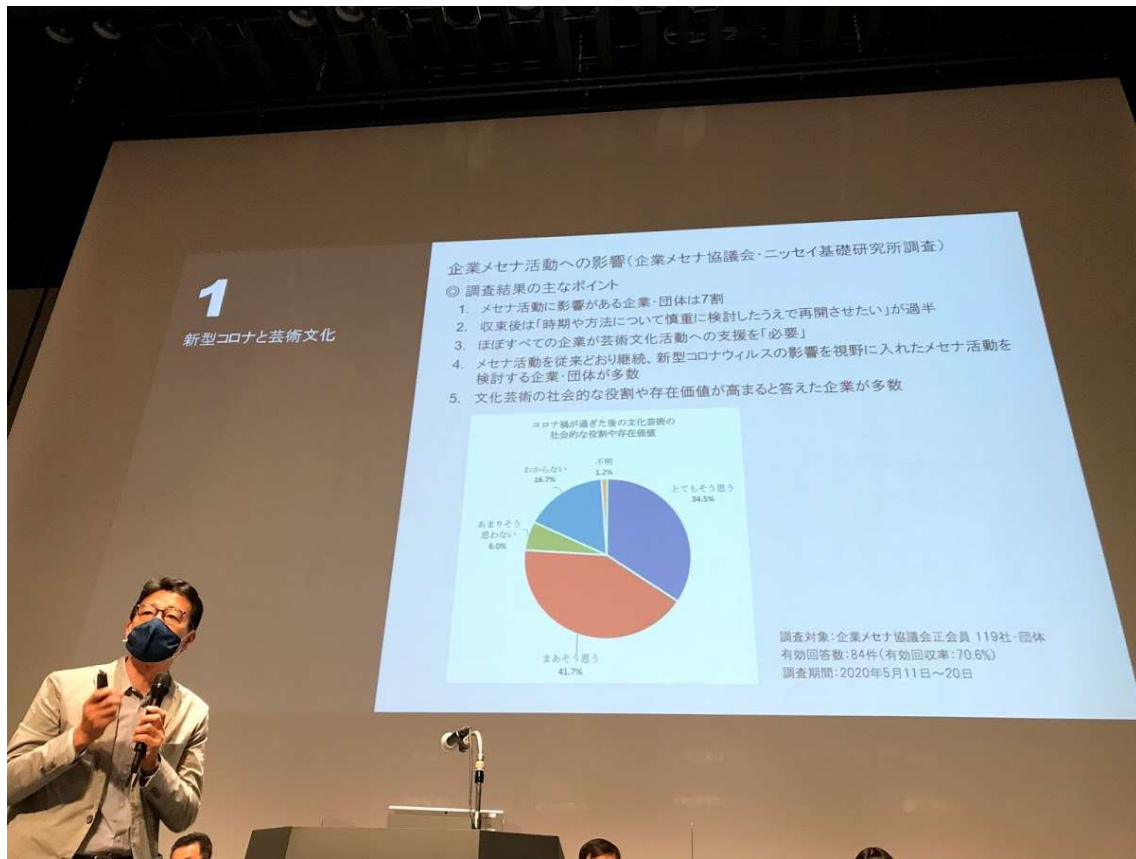
◆ Report on the Results of the 2019 Survey of Mécénat Activities

Following opening remarks by Sumiko Sawada, Executive Director of the Association for Corporate Support of the Arts, Naoko Morizane, Chief of the Survey & Research Working group (NEC Corporation), reported on the 2019 Survey of Mécénat Activities. This survey has continued since 1991, and the FY2019 survey report details the results of activities from FY2018. The number of companies which responded to the survey was 319, and the number of responding foundations was 163. What was interesting about the contents of the report was the mécénat activity's goals stated by the companies. The proportion of "to create value as a company, in relationship with company business" had increased year by year. Although mécénat activities were based on artistic and cultural support, there has been a growing tendency to be conscious of the utilization of company resources as well as connections with management. It is also worth noting that companies who had responded "to solve social issues, especially SDGs, through art and culture" as the purpose of their mécénat activities had increased. This association has continuously held symposiums and study meetings on SDGs, and one could really feel the relevance to such initiatives.



◆ Covid-19 & Future of Mécénat (Including Questionnaire Survey Results Report)

Next, Mr. Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto (NLI Research Institute) reported on the results of a joint survey conducted by the Association for Corporate Support of the Arts and the NLI Research Institute in May 2020. The questionnaire was conducted for 119 members of the Association for Corporate Support of the Arts, and the number of valid responses was 84. Many of the results were positive, and while 70% of companies stated that Covid-19 would affect their mécénat activities, the majority also stated that after circumstances return to normal, they would like to resume activities after carefully considering the timing and method. Nearly every company answered that they consider support for art and cultural activities to be necessary. Many companies also believed that the social roles and value of the existence of culture and art would increase in future.

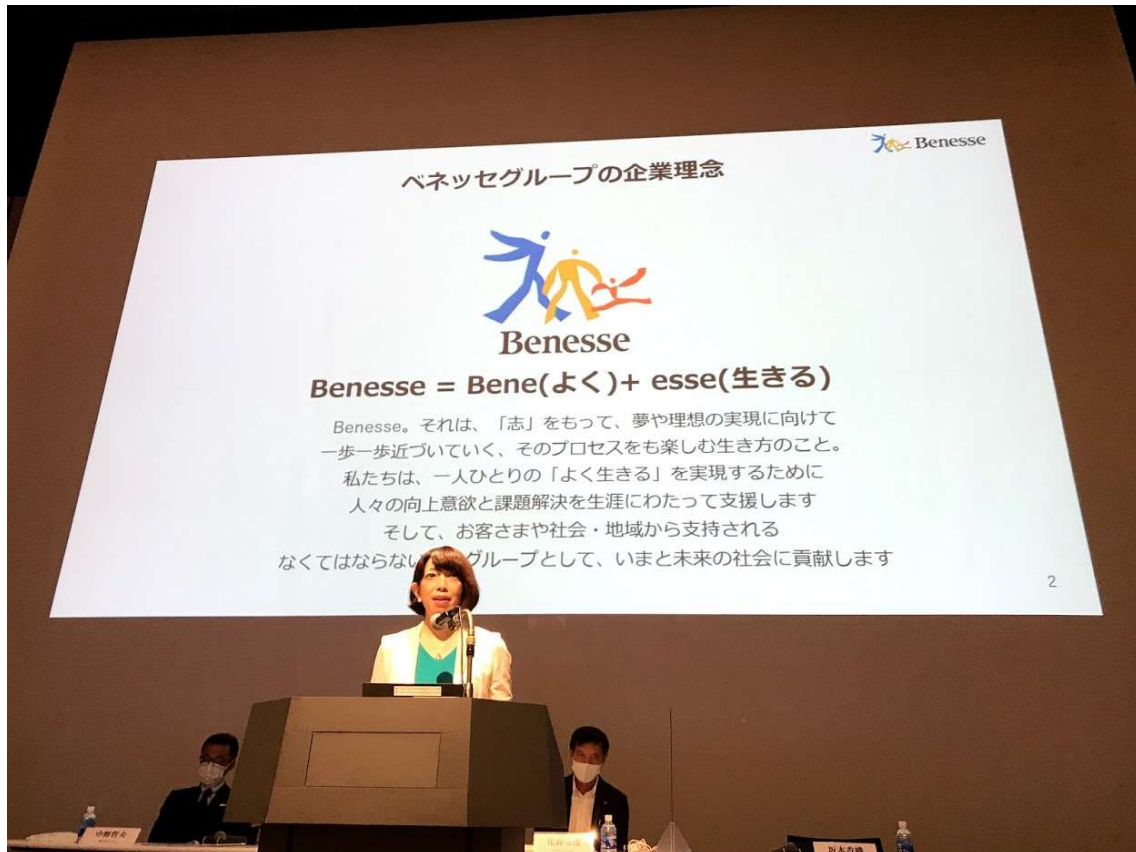


Mr. Yoshimoto also made a proposal regarding the future of mécénat. He provided timely information which captured global trends concerning the various movements in art and culture in the face of Covid-19. Here, he discussed the ideal state of artistic support required by the pandemic, divided into three phases. The first was emergency support for losses. The second was support for resumption of activities. The third was support for seeking out the ideal state and expression of art Post-Covid-19. He stated that it would be important to support the state of art in facing the social challenges of Covid-19 from now on, such as the artists' response to Covid-19. In addition, he presented the concept of "social impact mécénat", in which companies and artists become partners to face social issues in a society in which Covid-19 has forced us to change our values, by turning their attention to domestic mécénat activities. Social impact mécénat involves mécénat activities carried out with the intention of producing social and environmental impact, in parallel with artistic achievement. There are companies which have already taken the initiative and put this proposal into practice. This has been prepared as the next section to be held. This is the ingenuity and appeal of

the way this event is structured.

◆ **Lecture 1: Benesse's Sustainability Management & 30 Years of Naoshima**

Kaori Sakamoto, General Manager of the CEO Office at Benesse Holdings Inc., gave an introduction for Benesse Art Site Naoshima.



Benesse Art Site Naoshima is the general name for art activities which Benesse has been developing since 1987 alongside the Fukutake Foundation, under the company's corporate philosophy ingrained in its own name—"Benesse" being the combination of "Bene" ("well") and "esse" ("to live"). The island's population of 3,000 is visited by 500,000 visitors each year (rising to 700,000 in years in which the Setouchi Triennale is held). Their message is strong: "Through encounters with artwork on each island, the scenery of Setouchi which evokes the original vistas of Japan, and contact with the local people, we hope that visitors will give thought to what our corporate philosophy of "live well" means." In recent years, sustainability has come to

be expressed by the term “SDGs”. However, Benesse has been practicing it for more than 30 years. I believe the company has a major presence in the history of Japanese mécénat activities. The idea of desiring to continue mécénat activities to promote sustainable community development in all aspects of the local environment, culture, and economy, as well as build relationships that will continue to grow with the local community, is in itself the very concept of social impact mécénat as mentioned earlier. As for Art Site Naoshima, there is a comprehensive website for the project, so please take a look.

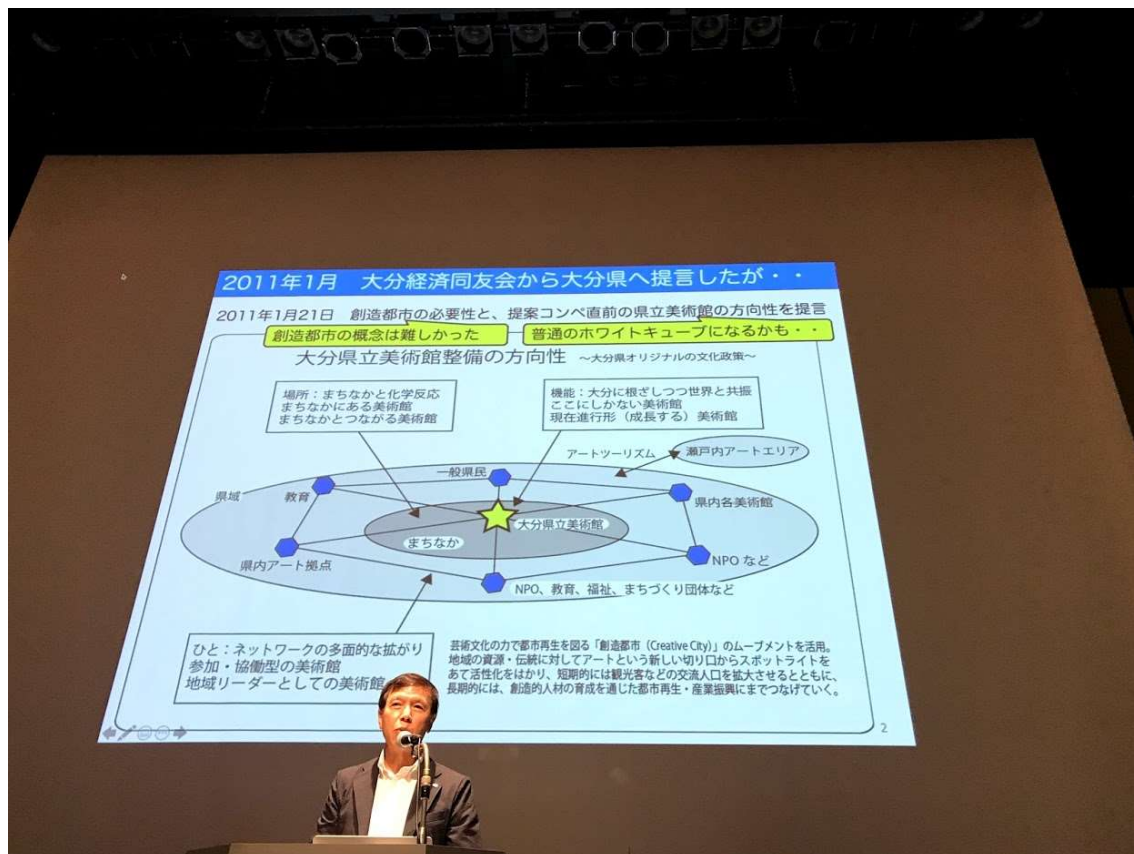
Benesse Art Site Naoshima: <https://benesse-artsite.jp/>



◆ Lecture 2: A Project Aiming to Solve Regional Issues with Art: ONICO

Onizuka Electric Works, headquartered in Oita City, Kyushu, presented an example of the partnering of companies and art to face social issues. To begin, President Fumitoshi Ono gave a background explanation about the drawing up of creative city planning prompted by the relocation and new construction of the Prefectural Art Museum, as well as the formation and operation of

Creative Platform Oita (a project to solve issues with corporate management by matching creators with companies), which was later established.



Next, Mr. Toshiaki Nakagami, General Manager of Sales, explained the ONICO project, which utilized Creative Platform. In this part, Masaaki Oho, Associate Professor of the Oita Prefectural College of Arts, and Creative Director Shinya Kiyokawa joined by online. Mr. Kiyokawa is the creative talent who had been matched with Onizuka Electric Works through the project. Mr. Kiyokawa proposed a plan which would solve a global issue and lead to corporate branding by making the best use of the characteristics of the company, which has been involved in the electrical business in the area for many years: a free charging station to help people charge their smartphones, named ONICO. After a large-scale blackouts caused by the Hokkaido Eastern Iburi earthquake in September 2018, ONICO would evolve (or deepen) into a project conscious of disaster prevention. Due to the widespread power outage, long lines of people looking to charge their mobile phones were reported. This charging of mobile devices in the event of a disaster had become a social

problem. As a result, ONICO contributes to the town as a charging station in normal times, and in the event of a disaster, it is set up with a generator, contributing to the local area as a charging service. The service is highly praised, not only by local residents but also by others within and outside the prefecture. This project, which contributes to solving a social issue, has changed employee awareness, and has deepened the love for the region which the company has cultivated over many years.



◆ Lecture 3: Spreading Culture Through Urban Development

President Tetsuo Nakano of Tokyu Bunkamura gave a thought-provoking lecture from a perspective unique to business owners. Bunkamura, which celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2019, is a complex facility which has inherited the DNA of the Tokyu Group's spread of culture. Opened in 1989, the facility consists of Orchard Hall, Theatre Cocoon, a cinema, museum, and more. In 1999, its 10th year, it was awarded the Grand Mécénat Award. After that, Tokyu Bunkamura took charge of the operation of the Cerulean Tower

Noh Theatre, as well as the opening and operation of Tokyu Theatre Orb in 2012, leading to today.



To start, President Nakano made use of an analogy. “Cultural and artistic activities are like water which spills from one’s hands. The value created does not remain in your hands; it is used to enrich the soil surrounding it.” With this, he described his theory that cultural and artistic activities are difficult to evaluate with financial indicators. He also stated that it is difficult to describe their value and achievements in ordinary business terms, and so his explanation was based on the concept of time and space—the long time it takes for assessments to be made, whether in 10, 20, or 30 years, and the vast space of the areas beyond the facility to which value is brought. I think that with this, I was able to catch a glimpse of his accountability as a manager. Next, in regards to Bunkamura’s attitude toward art and culture, he said that compared to Ueno, Ginza, and Roppongi, Shibuya is regarded as a “frontier”, and “Since it is the frontier of art, we are blazing the trail one half-step ahead.” To spread art and culture, “they are aiming for scramble crossing of art and

culture”. For people to come into contact and be familiarized with them, they “are leaping forward into cities and localities without being too precious about their own facilities”. Finally, the significance of Bunkamura’s existence was described by the word “contribution”. Contribution to open minds that can be touched emotionally. Contribution to urban development centered on art. Contribution to community development by creative industries. Then, in anticipation of a new era brought on by the coronavirus pandemic, contribution to the utilization of new technology—a pledge to use technology to create a new global culture.



◆ Q&A / Discussion

A question about how to utilize art and creative power in the local area came from Mr. Miura of the Oita Association of Corporate Executives. A common answer came from the speakers that it is important to take the time necessary to resolve issues with partnered communities, touching on the differences between the timelines of companies (short-term) and localities

(long-term). In addition, everyone felt mutually that the timelines had shifted from short to long-term due to the pandemic, and this trend has brought on new possibilities for mécénat activities.

Mr. Yamaide of the Beppu Project, the NPO which plans for and operates Creative Platform Oita, who had participated in coverage for the event, spoke about the need for companies and regions to have power to imagine the future, and that in the practice of social impact mécénat, the presence of people who act as catalysts (“initiators”) is particularly important.



Finally, in summary from Professor Natsuko Hagiwara (Rikkyo University), who served as moderator, the increasing importance of “knotworking” in an age of creativity, imagination, and human technology was addressed. She expressed that the existence of those who can “tie knots” between people, to flexibly create forms of cooperation and collaboration, will be important.



[Report] Mécénat Writer: Taisuke Wada Art Manager

Born in Kobe in 1977. Graduated from Hyogo Prefectural Kobe High School, and Doshisha University's Department of Letters, majoring in Aesthetics and Art Theory. After working at Isetan, he made a career change to work with the Japan Philharmonic Orchestra, heading public relations, sales, planning and production. Returned home in 2012. At the Kyoto City Music Art and Cultural Promoting Foundation, headed redevelopment of Kyoto Kaikan and independent work at the Kyoto Concert Hall. Has worked for the Minoh City Foundation of Culture since 2015, and has worked as its Art Creation Section Manager since April 2020.