

# A Global Celebration of Pixel Art

## Shibuya Pixel Art Contest 2025 Returns!

Submission Period: June 1, 2025 (Sun) 00:00 – July 31, 2025 (Thu) 24:00 [JST]

The Shibuya Pixel Art Committee is pleased to announce the return of the Shibuya Pixel Art Contest, one of the world's largest international competitions dedicated to pixel art. Now in its 8th year, the contest will be held from June 1 to July 31, 2025, and invites submissions from artists across the globe.



Artwork: Shinji Murakami / Sound design: Rei8bit

### Theme: "Everyday Life with Pixel Art"

Pixel art—often referred to as "dot art" in Japan—first emerged from the functional limitations of early 1980s video games. Today, it's experiencing a global resurgence like never before. On social media, hashtags like #pixelart and #ドット絵 are used daily to share new creations. Pixel artists are increasingly being featured in game visuals, music videos, and corporate promotions. Pixel art now appears in TV commercials for major brands, and even covers entire walls in train stations, showing how deeply it has become part of our everyday lives.

More and more young creators are embracing the aesthetic beauty that arises from limitations—similar to the poetic forms of tanka and haiku—by working within low-resolution canvases. On platforms like X (formerly Twitter), knowledge-sharing posts such as "#ドッターのためのテクニック集" ("Techniques for Dotters") are gaining traction, reflecting a thriving culture of open collaboration among creators. Pixel art is evolving into a movement, naturally cultivating a rich ecosystem between creators and audiences.

### A Platform to Celebrate the Diversity of Pixel Art Expression

Since its launch in 2017, the contest has welcomed submissions from artists of all ages, nationalities, and experience levels—whether professional or amateur, individual or group. Because entries are submitted via social media, the artworks can be viewed and appreciated throughout the entry period. Participants can also be inspired by other submissions and revise or resubmit their own works multiple times.

This year's theme is "Everyday Life with Pixel Art." We invite participants to depict scenes from various perspectives using pixel art, and to mutually inspire and elevate one another through the richness of expression. In addition to "Everyday Life", participants may choose from "Shibuya", "Rainbow", "Destiny", and "Water", either individually or in combination, to create and submit their unique interpretations.

## An International Jury of Leading Pixel Artists

The 2025 contest will be judged by eight distinguished artists from around the world:

- **Kazuko Shibuya**, acclaimed as a master of pixel art and known for her work on the Final Fantasy series
- **eBoy**, pioneers of the pixel art movement, known for collaborations with Louis Vuitton and Paul Smith
- **Joo Jaebum**, a leading figure in Korea's pixel art scene, recognized for work with Google, NIKE, and Starbucks
- **waneella**, a Russian artist known for creating nostalgic and mysterious urban pixel landscapes inspired by Japanese culture
- **Pixel Jeff**, the Grand Prize winner of last year's contest, known for cyberpunk and lo-fi aesthetics, based in Taiwan
- **Toyoya**, a Beijing-based animator and pixel artist whose sci-fi works reflect personal interpretations of real-world issues
- **Shinji Murakami**, a Brooklyn-based contemporary artist who has designed pixel tile installations for over 300 Salesforce offices
- **APO+**, a high-resolution landscape pixel artist involved in a wide range of activities, including writing and curating pixel art events

## Grand Prize Winners Will Be Featured on Shibuya's Giant Street Screens

The Grand Prize includes:

- ¥300,000 cash prize
- Wacom One Pen Display (13")
- Original pixel art trophy
- Feature interview on thePIXEL Magazine
- Inclusion in the Shibuya Pixel Art Collection Book 2025
- Screening rights on three major digital billboards in Shibuya

In addition to the Grand Prize, other honors include nine Excellence Awards, Jury Awards, Special Awards, the Audience Award, and the Limited Pixel Art Awards (awarded by canvas size: 16×16, 32×32, 64×64). Details of the Special Awards will be announced at a later date.

The award ceremony will take place at Shibuya Stream Hall on Sunday, September 21, 2025, during the Shibuya Pixel Art showcase. Approximately 50 nominated works that pass the first screening will also be exhibited at the venue.

Submission Period:

June 1, 2025 (Sun) 00:00 – July 31, 2025 (Thu) 24:00 [JST]

To participate, choose one or more of the following themes—Everyday Life, Shibuya, Rainbow, Destiny, or Water—and express your interpretation through your original pixel art. Then, follow the official Shibuya Pixel Art account on X or Instagram, and post your digital work (such as an illustration, animation, video, game, sculpture, or photograph) with all of the following:

- Hashtag: #shibuyapixelart2025
- Title of your work
- Canvas size (e.g., 512 × 512px)
- Mention the official account (X: [@ShibuyaPixelArt](#) / Instagram: [@shibuya pixel art](#))

For full details, please visit the official website: <https://pixel-art.jp/contest2025/en/>  
or follow us on X: <https://twitter.com/ShibuyaPixelArt/>



## How to Apply

During the submission period, follow the official Shibuya Pixel Art account on X (formerly Twitter) or Instagram, and post your work including the following information:

- Hashtag: #shibuyapixelart2025
- Title of your work
- Canvas size (e.g., 512 × 512px)
- Mention the official account (X: [@ShibuyaPixelArt](#) / Instagram: [@shibuya pixel art](#))

## Submission Requirements

- The submission must be a digital artwork.
  - The canvas size must be 512 × 512 pixels or smaller.
  - You must follow the official Shibuya Pixel Art account on X ([@ShibuyaPixelArt](#)) or Instagram ([@shibuya pixel art](#)).
  - Your submission must be posted on X or Instagram and include all of the following:
    - Hashtag: #shibuyapixelart2025
    - Title of the work
    - Canvas size
    - Mention the official account (X: [@ShibuyaPixelArt](#) / Instagram: [@shibuya pixel art](#))
  - You must comply with the contest terms and conditions.
- \* Please do not remove the hashtag #shibuyapixelart2025 from your post until the results are announced.

## Eligibility

No restrictions on nationality, age, gender, student or professional status, or whether you apply as an individual or a group.

## Judging Criteria

Judges will evaluate entries based on the following three criteria:

- **Originality:** whether the work is unique and expresses individuality
- **Sociality:** whether the work expresses its relationship with or poses a question to society
- **Story-telling:** how well the work reflects the theme(s), and the way it is expressed

## Results Announcement

Results will be announced during the award ceremony held at the 6th floor special stage of Shibuya Stream Hall on September 21, 2025. Award nominees will be contacted directly via DM on X (formerly Twitter) or Instagram. Awarded works may be featured in the "Shibuya Pixel Art Collection Book 2025." Participation in supplementary rewards is optional.

## Schedule

First Screening: August 8 (Thu) – August 18 (Sun), 2025

Final Judging: Early September 2025

Award Nominee Exhibition: September 21 (Sun), 2025 at Shibuya Stream Hall

\* Works that pass the first screening will be exhibited as award nominees. Nominees will be contacted in advance.

Award Announcement & Ceremony: September 21 (Sun), 2025 at Shibuya Stream Hall

## Jury Members and Comments for "Shibuya Pixel Art Contest 2025"



**Kazuko Shibuya**

Art Director, Square Enix  
Japan

### Special Judges: Kazuko Shibuya

Art Director, Square Enix Japan

I'm really looking forward to seeing how each of you will interpret this year's diverse themes and bring them to life through pixel art.

A graphic designer who has been responsible for character sprite work and design since the days of the original Square, continuing through to the present-day Square Enix. Known for iconic visuals in series such as Final Fantasy and Romancing SaGa, he worked on numerous graphics that remain deeply etched in players' memories—such as the opening scene of Final Fantasy I. Admired by fans as a true "pixel master," he continues to inspire with his craft. In 2021, he drew renewed attention for redrawing the player character sprites for Final Fantasy I through VI in the FINAL FANTASY PIXEL REMASTER series, revisiting his past work with fresh detail and care.

<https://twitter.com/Skazuko>



**eBoy**

(Kai, Steffen and Svend)

CEO, Creative Director,  
Artist, Software  
Developer

### Special Judges: eBoy(Kai, Steffen and Svend)

CEO, Creative Director, Artist, Software Developer

Excited to see the incredible creativity in this year's pixel art contest! As jury members since 2020, it's inspiring to witness the evolution and passion of all the talented artists. Good luck!

eBoy, founded in 1997 by Kai Vermehr, Steffen Sauerteig, and Svend Smital, creates pixel-based art for top brands like Adidas, Google, Nike, and more. Based in LA and Berlin, featured globally.

<https://twitter.com/eBoyArts/> <https://www.instagram.com/eboyarts/>

<https://www.threads.net/@eboyarts>

<https://bsky.app/profile/eboy.bsky.social>

<https://www.eboy.com/>



**Joo Jaebum**

Pixelist

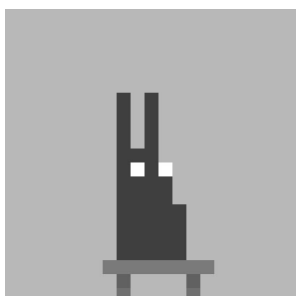
### Special Judges: oo Jaebum

Pixelist

Congratulations on the Pixel Art Contest! I'm excited to see the creativity and passion in each piece. Keep exploring your unique pixel world—your small dots can create powerful stories. Good luck!

The pixel art I create offers a fresh perspective on the familiar world, making it more engaging and fun. It's my unique way of expressing everyday life through a personal language of art.

<https://joojaebum.com/>



**waneella**

Pixel Artist

### Special Judges: waneella

Pixel Artist

Pixel art is an amazing art form that originated in ancient times and continues to evolve and transform today. It is exciting to see how the contestants will use it this time!

Was born in 1993 in Moscow, Russia. Studied in Gerasimov institute of Cinematography and got a Specialist degree in computer graphics art and animation. Making pixel art since 2013.

Since 2017 works as a background artist in game development and animation (Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network, Valve, WayForward, Marvel, Soyuzmultfilm etc.)

<https://waneella.com/>



**Pixel Jeff**  
Pixel Artist

### Special Judges: Pixel Jeff

Pixel Artist

Pixel art has evolved from early digital technology into a timeless artistic style. Within the constraints of limited pixels, it can still create captivating and story-rich visuals — this has always been the unique charm of pixel art! I'm looking forward to seeing stunning and innovative entries in this competition!

Pixel Jeff is a pixel artist based in Taipei, Taiwan. His work seamlessly blends retro elements with futuristic vibes — drawing inspiration from the cyberpunk universe and lo-fi aesthetics. His art not only evokes a strong sense of nostalgia, but also sparks limitless imagination.

<https://x.com/pixelieff1995>

[https://www.instagram.com/pixelieff\\_design/](https://www.instagram.com/pixelieff_design/)



**Toyoya Li**  
Animator/Pixel Artist

### Special Judges: Toyoya Li

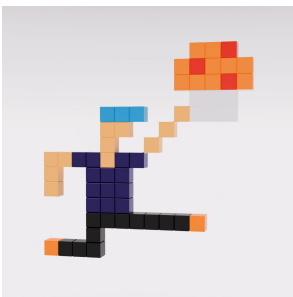
Animator/Pixel Artist

I hope the pixel art contest will become a happy carnival for pixel artists from all over the world, where they can create happily and have fun! And I can make more friends through pixel art here, and I look forward to seeing them every year:D

Mainly creating illustrations, animations and gifs in pixel form. Most of the works are influenced by early retro 8-bit games and electronic culture of the 80s and 90s.

Using continuous graphics and unrestrained imagination, they create pixel art works that are both meaningful and nostalgic.

<https://www.instagram.com/toyoyali/>



**Shinji Murakami**  
Contemporary artist

### Special Judges: Shinji Murakami

Contemporary artist

I look forward to seeing how the free expression made possible through the collective power of pixels—the smallest unit of the digital image—resonates with the urban landscape of Shibuya, while offering fresh perspectives through themes like everyday life, Rainbow, fate, and water.

As I take on the role of jury member, I'm excited to witness the passion and technical skill brought together from around the world, and to feel the sense of solidarity within a community that grows through mutual inspiration.

I'm especially eager to see how the very constraints of pixel art will spark creativity and open up new possibilities for aesthetic expression.

A contemporary artist based in New York. In 2011, they were selected as one of Modern Painters' "Top 100 Artists to Watch." In 2019, they led the final collaboration with Henri Bendel, the iconic New York luxury department store. Since 2016, they have been designing pixel tile artworks for over 300 Salesforce office walls worldwide. They are currently represented by Catinca Tabacaru Gallery, based in Romania.

<https://murakamishinji.com/>

[https://www.instagram.com/kid\\_snz/](https://www.instagram.com/kid_snz/)



**APO+**  
Pixel artist

### Special Judges: APO+

Pixel artist

Pixel art has continued to evolve over time. While today's pixel art builds on the techniques of earlier generations, it also embraces new forms of expression and celebrates a growing diversity.

I'm very much looking forward to seeing the wide range of creative pixel art works you will share.

Pixel artist born in 1991. While creating original works, they also contribute artwork to advertisements and music videos. Through publishing books and engaging with various media, they actively promote the development and broader recognition of a new pixel art culture.

[https://x.com/APO\\_PLUS](https://x.com/APO_PLUS)