

Press Release

For immediate Release

Baltic Island: The Art of Restraint Arrives in Tokyo



June 1 – 14, 2026

Spiral Gallery, Tokyo

baltic-island.com

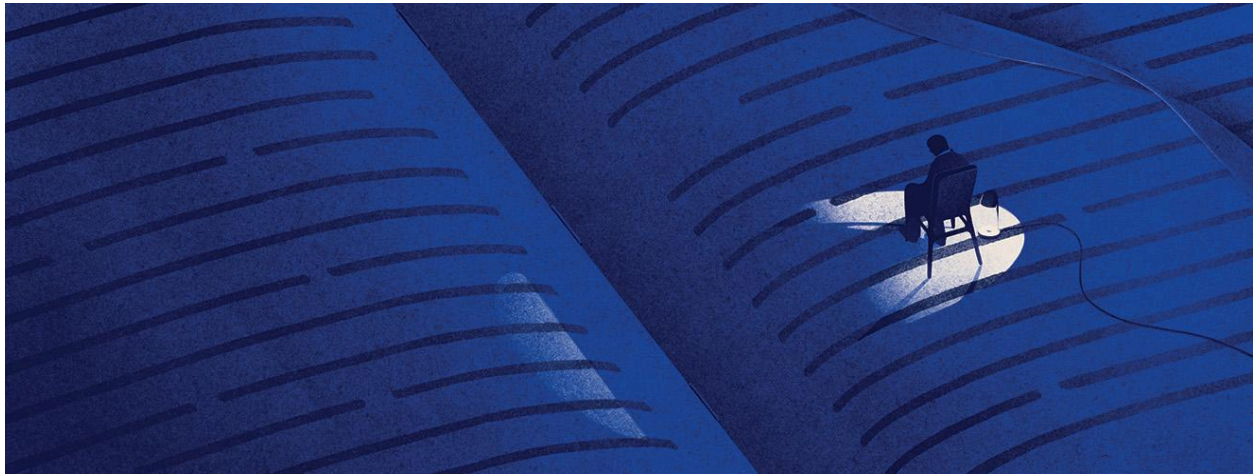
Baltic Island

From June 1 to 14, 2026, Tokyo's Spiral Gallery hosts *Baltic Island*, an unprecedented showcase bringing the quiet, intricate visual cultures of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania directly to Japan.

The showcase arrives as Baltic visual culture reaches a new level of resonance within the Japan. This momentum is anchored by the historic Oscar win for the animated feature *Flow*—the first such accolade for the region—and a concurrent major retrospective for the Lithuanian visionary M.K. Čiurlionis. Despite these tentpole moments, the region's broader visual traditions remain

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largely undiscovered. Baltic illustration and animation prioritize atmosphere over spectacle and suggestion over explanation, a sensibility born from a shared history of silence that finds a natural home here. *Baltic Island* gives Tokyoites a rare glimpse to the Baltic mindset that is as deeply rooted in its history as it is responsive to the present day.



Karolis Strautniekas *_Blue Pages_* (2017)

The Richness of Illustration

The showcase rests on three distinct pillars: a comprehensive illustration exhibition, an animation film program, and a series of events. The exhibition presents more than 150 works by 30 authors - both renown masters and contemporary voices. Curators Bianka Soe (Estonia) and Ieva Babilaitė (Lithuania) created rich visual landscape, where folklore and domestic memory meet urgent contemporary reflections on digital identity and ecological fragility.



Birutė Zilytė Laumiukas 1970

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Eiko Ojala _James Joyce_ (2022)

Animation Delights

Running parallel is an extensive animation program spanning over 50 handpicked animation titles. Program director Anna Zaca (Latvia) bypasses conventional narratives and presents us with thematic screenings—moving fluidly from sharp, ironic humor and surreal, avant-garde experimentation to grounded, family-focused narratives—ensuring any audience some Baltic delight.

Meet the Artists

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Beyond observation, *Baltic Island* serves as a platform for creative exchange. The two-week agenda includes industry panels, networking sessions, and hands-on workshops designed to connect Baltic creators with Japanese studios and publishers. The programming also features a charity art auction dedicated to supporting Ukrainian refugees in Japan—a clear demonstration of art functioning as actionable soft power.



Roberts Rurans _Cranes_ (2020)

Infamous Baltic Ambassador Barabi-chan

Returning to Japan to spearhead this cultural dialogue is Barabi-chan, the porcini-mushroom mascot of the Baltic States. Following a successful six-month diplomatic deployment at the 2025 Osaka Expo, the beloved ambassador is back on Japanese soil to champion Baltic artistry, bringing a touch of the region's forest magic to Tokyo.

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All info can be found at www.baltic-island.com

Exhibition Overview

Title: Baltic Island

Dates: Monday, June 1 – Sunday, June 14, 2026

Venue: Spiral Garden

Address: 5-6-23 Minami-Aoyama, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-0062, Japan

Official Website: www.baltic-island.com

Organized and Produced by: KOI NIPPON

Program: Illustration exhibition, animation screening program, related events, charity art auction, and more

About KOI NIPPON

The event is produced by KOI Nippon, a Japan-Lithuania creative studio specializing in cross-cultural diplomacy. KOI Nippon brings reliable momentum to Tokyo, having previously delivered the inaugural *Human Baltic* exhibition in 2024 and Tokyo's *SEEEU* European Photography Month in 2025.

Press release materials and images are available at the URL below:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-5OdzBbVDDTcmbTn-n_-m29VZ5eOEjo7?usp=sharing

Press Contact

Akihiro Ono (GALLERY ETHER)



Email : aki.jopseph.ono@galleryether.com

Tel : +81 80-4147-3825

Official Website : www.baltic-island.com

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