

arts

Children and inner-children invited

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With the stress of daily life, many of us have forgotten how to play. The simple joys children experience often are replaced by anxiety, tension and irritation.

Fortunately, there is a way to find that lost happiness. The rule is to simply intrigue your inner child. Play board games, swing on a swing set, get a really good water gun, or attend the Sawaguzo! Festival.

Sawaguzo! is Japanese for "we make noise," which children obviously love to do. This weeklong festival is about celebration of all that is noisy, fun and fantastical. It allows attendees the chance to experience the liveliness of contemporary Japanese art and at the same time provides an occasion for the inner child to play. The delightful works of artists in the mediums of painting, illustration, multi-media and installation work will captivate audiences of all ages.

The artwork is 'cute and powerful,' as described by visiting artists Fumiha Tanaka and Aya Kakeda, who have collaborated to transform Redux Contemporary Art Center's main gallery into an artificial environment called Pao Pao Land. Pao Pao Land contains soft sculptures, video installations, murals, and more than 40 paintings created specifically for this installation," says Kevin Hanley, Director of Redux.

Also included in the exhibit is Miwa Koizumi, whose sculpture and "food-art" allow for uncomplicated pleasures of the soul.

"My interests are varied, and the materials I use to express my ideas run the full gamut of contemporary artistic practice. My main themes are of memory and disappearance, which I express by using natural phenomena to reveal simple facts about our everyday existence. I enjoy bringing your attention to those simple wonders, which are easy to forget in an everyday life. I use sound, image, smell and taste as materials," says Koizumi.

The festival and accompanying exhibition was curated by Hanley and is sponsored in part by the City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs and Chord and



Asian art, including the painting "Katte" (seen here) will be part of the "Sawaguzo!" Asian arts festival to be held at Redux Studios this week. An opening reception takes place today.

United States and Japan over the last two-decades.

The artwork in the exhibition is a direct reflection on anime (or Japanimation), which defines Japanese animation and its stylized, colorful characters with big eyes and smaller bodies. These pieces tend to focus on each artist's personal perceptions and feelings, as well as revealing their own personalities through a more cartoon-like and surreal style.

"Miwa Koizumi's sculpture will greet visitors upon entrance. To say she transforms ordinary objects into fantastical ones would be an understatement. Koizumi will also create and distribute her mysterious 'food-art' the night of

Yucca. It features "an interactive video installation that takes place on Redux's Print Factory stage at 9 p.m. This very fun piece puts a spotlight, literally at times, on Yucca's existence somewhere between the East and the West," he says

Additional planned events include performances by five Japanese, Asian-American, and Asian-inspired musical acts such as DMBQ, Green Milk from the Planet Orange, Maniquinn, Shinji Masuko, Shellshag and Genrevolta at Redux and other sponsoring local venues. Also included is a two-night mini-film festival of Japanese horror films at Redux on Halloween and the following night.

tion to the opening reception, a free lecture given by the three visiting Japanese artists takes place at 6 p.m. in Room 309 in the College of Charleston's Simons Center on Saint Philip Street

The artists will attend the reception after the lecture.

The festival runs through Nov. 4. The artist exhibition will remain at Redux until Nov. 25, and can be seen during normal gallery hours of noon - 5 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday. For more information, call Redux Contemporary Art Center at 722-0697 or visit www.sawaguzo.com for a full schedule of events. Nearly all events are free and open to the public.