



## Press Release

3 May 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Japanese Artist presents her first UK solo show at Leeds Arts University

Tomoko Konoike: *Fur Story*, Curated by Mayako Murai 11 May - 28 June 2018

*Opening event: Thursday 10 May 2018, 5-7pm*

Leeds Arts University is pleased to present an international exhibition of works by Japanese Artist Tomoko Konoike. Konoike (born Akita, Japan 1960) is an interdisciplinary artist who uses various media such as paintings, installations, animations, picturebooks, handicrafts, performances, and fairy tales. *Fur Story* interweaves Konoike's artwork focusing on animal skin with the narrative texts selected by fairy-tale scholar Mayako Murai.

Konoike takes her inspiration from children's books, and points to "Little Red Riding Hood" as well as classic Japanese stories such as like "The Night of the Ribbon" by Tezuka Osamu as examples. Wolves and other regular motifs are a constant in her work.

Tomoko Konoike will present a special performance on the opening evening.

This exhibition is curated by Mayako Murai (Professor of English at Kanagawa University) based on her long-term research on the artist. Murai is author of *From Dog Bridegroom to Wolf Girl: Contemporary Japanese Fairy-Tale Adaptations in Conversation with the West* (Wayne State University Press, 2015).

-ENDS-

## Editor's Notes

For more information, images or to arrange interviews contact:

Emma Morris, PR & Communications Officer, 0113 202 8044 or [emma.morris@leeds-art.ac.uk](mailto:emma.morris@leeds-art.ac.uk)

Press are invited to Blenheim Walk Gallery to preview the exhibition on **Thursday 10 May, 5 - 7pm**. Refreshments will be served. Please RSVP to [emma.morris@leeds-art.ac.uk](mailto:emma.morris@leeds-art.ac.uk) or 0113 202 8044.

Tomoko Konoike will present a special performance on the opening evening.

The Artist and Curator will be to present at the opening to answer questions.

The exhibition will run from 11 May - 28 June at Leeds Arts University, The Blenheim Walk Gallery, Leeds Arts University, Blenheim Walk, Leeds, LS2 9AQ.

Image: Tomoko Konoike, *mimio-Odyssey*, 2005 Reproduced with kind permission of the artist.

## About Tomoko Konoike

Tomoko Konoike was born in 1960 in Akita Prefecture in northeastern Japan. She lives and works in Tokyo. She graduated from the Department of Painting (Japanese Painting) at Tokyo University of the Arts in 1985. After working as a toy and furniture designer, she returned to fine art in 1998. She uses various media such as painting, sculpture, animation, picture books, handicrafts, and performance to explore energy conversion for human beings as part of the natural environment.

[tomoko-konoike.com](http://tomoko-konoike.com)

## About Leeds Arts University

- Founded in 1846 as the Leeds Government School of Art and Design, Leeds Arts University (formerly Leeds College of Art) has contributed significantly to the development of art education in Britain and across the world.
- In 2016 the University was granted Taught Degree Awarding Powers, and in 2017 was awarded full university status, making it the only specialist arts university in the North of England.
- Leeds Arts University has been previously recognised for its industry-standard facilities at the Whatuni awards (winners in 2014 and 2016, runner up 2017), and is currently the highest ranked specialist arts university in the UK and the highest ranked university in Yorkshire for student satisfaction in the National Student Survey 2017.
- Leeds Arts University has an impressive history of notable past students, including Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth who were students in 1919 and 1920. In later years Damien Hirst, Marcus Harvey, Eric Bainbridge, Clio Barnard and Georgina Starr all studied at the University, known then as the Jacob Kramer College. The University's recent graduates continue to win prestigious international awards year on year and enjoy successful careers in the creative industries.

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