



### <Profile>

Tokyo Picnic Club (TPC) was founded in 2002 by Hiroshi OTA (architect), Kaori ITO (urban designer) and Tomoharu MATSUDA (Chief Planner of Wacoal Art Center) to celebrate the bicentennial anniversary of picnic, which became popular by the activities of “Pic-Nic Club” founded in London, March 1802. TPC members are now over 80 people from various fields like architect, urban designer, landscape designer, graphic designer, illustrator, photographer, food coordinator, editor, curator etc.. They are to dedicate their talents of creativity for re-defining the activities of picnic in the modern context of urban circumstance of Tokyo, from developing food menu of sandwiches and tea flavors, to renovating the park management systems and its landscape qualities. And also, TPC is researching the 200-years-old history of picnic itself, which is not fully studied by historians, and collect over 100 antique picnic sets to invent modern and original picnic set.

In 2003, TPC started the field survey picnic in Tokyo with the participation of Hajime ISHIKAWA (landscape architect), to evaluate park management and its potential for urban regeneration. TPC had conclude after the survey on over 30 public park and urban plazas, that Tokyo is not only lacking the green space (comparing to London or New York, Tokyo’s park area per one person is one-fifth), but also parks are not fully open to the public. For example, Shinjuku Gyoen Park closed at 16:00 for its bureaucratic customs, while Hibiya Park prohibit people to enter its large lawn/grass area (it exists just to “see”). The result is, any social activities are excluded from public spaces of Tokyo, and the chances to participate the urban activities are taken away. So TPC started to insist the “PICNIC RIGHT” to do picnic in Tokyo as the basic human right of urban dwellers, which should be given as the trade-off of dense and collective urban life of modern cities.

In 2004, TPC participated the exhibition named “Roppongi Crossing” held in Mori Modern Art Museum as one of the 57 contemporary artist of Japan, and presented “Portable Lawn” which has the natural lawn on 1.7m x 1.7m movable pallet. The idea is to invent a private park by carrying out the lawn dressed up with fake fur and leather, with similarly dressed-up picnic sets to do completely coordinated picnic. TPC actually executed the picnic workshop on the 6 pallets of Portable Lawn, and discussed about the know-how to do picnic in Tokyo.

Beside the artistic approach to criticize the urban situation of Tokyo, TPC is trying to spread the idea of picnic as a mode of social activity, and invented the “15 Picnic Rules” with the illustration of Kenji KITAMURA (illustrator). As the example of “Rule #7: FOOD CAN BE SIMPLE, BUT NEVER BE TOO EASY” with its humor and aphorism, TPC expressed do-and don’ts in the modern picnic style. Proposal approach to the public became gradually broadened, and TPC produced its original tea-bags set named “Picnic Tea” which has 2 flavors as Greenfield Tea (for parks and green spaces) and Brownfiled Tea (for bad places like abandoned dockyard or industrial sites) by the dedication of Nami FUKUTOME (Food Coordinator) and Wataru NORITAKE (Graphic Designer). FUKUTOME also produced “Picnic Cake” and “Picnic Sandwiches” by referring the recipe of early 20<sup>th</sup> century. With 15 rules and original recipes, TPC is conveying the message of “THINK YOUR OWN PICNIC” to urge the citizens to do picnic everywhere in TOKYO.

In 2005, TPC started to focus its activities more to urban proposals, with the keyword of “FIGHT FOR THE PICNIC”, and presented the concept movie of “6 suggestions for the PICNIC CITY” with Hitoshi KUWATA (urban planning researcher). It is the translation of urban regeneration methodology into picnic vocabulary, to express how the network of public spaces and integrated management of them is important in the segmented urban development in Tokyo. In November of 2005, TPC is to produce “PIKINIKIOSK” in the actual site of Showa Park in the suburbs of Tokyo, which

will serve as the base station for the picnic lovers in Tokyo. And also in Anyang Public Art Project 2005 held in the suburbs of Seoul, South Korea, TPC presented "Grass on Vacation". The works are to cut out the unused grass-field of Central Park of Anyang, and move it by a truck to the site of the crowded area of Anyang Resort. It is a serious criticism how planned modern parks are not made for the citizens, but as always, the work is fully humorous with its airplane-shape just landed on the riverside of the river.

TPC activity was at first received as a joke or tiny trivial action, but it is now known among public through magazines, radios, and TVs. Citizens of Tokyo is basically have complaints about their urban circumstances, so that many agree to criticize the situation with humorous presentation in the manner of picnic. TPC is continuing to show its curious enthusiasm through various approach for the goal to change Tokyo into more humanistic city.

(text written in Jan. 2006)

Text: Hiroshi OTA (Architect, Representative of Tokyo Picnic Club)

### <Picnic Right>

Park area per person in Tokyo is only 5.2m<sup>2</sup>, while 29.1m<sup>2</sup> in New York, 26.9m<sup>2</sup> in London and 14.9m<sup>2</sup> in Seoul. Additionally, the parks in Tokyo don't work sufficiently, for their too many plants, "keep off the grass" areas, fixed benches and such early closing times. Tokyo doesn't have enough open spaces to provide amenity, in its highly densed urban circumstances.

Picnic is the act of social intercourse. It was started by 'Pic-Nic Club' in London in 1802, when the city became densed and the environment was degraded. It grew popular with the invention of parks in the middle of 19th century.

Picnic is a wisdom of using open spaces, which makes up for the deficiencies of our city. We hardly invite friends to our small houses comfortably. Therefore, we expect open spaces to be the place for gathering. We hardly own a private garden with delightful flowers and trees. Therefore, we want to cherish the urban nature as our common gift.

So Tokyo Picnic Club insists on the "Picnic Right". We want places to have a picnic. We need neither benches nor worthless fountains. We simply want the extensive lawn. If the "green-fields" such as parks are fully open to us, picnic becomes the interpretation of urban space as the place for social intercourse. If the "brown-fields" such as abandoned industrial sites are open to us, we enjoy meals and conversations to find the new value of contemporary cityscape.

We want to pursue the possibility of picnic, 200 years after its birth, here in Tokyo. We seek the frontier of cityscapes, the richness of modern feast and the splendid encounter with others.

(text written in Dec. 2002)

Text: Hiroshi OTA (Architect, Representative of Tokyo Picnic Club)



---

<Tokyo Picnic Members>

Hiroshi OTA (Architect, University of Tokyo, Center for Sustainable Urban Regeneration)

Kaori ITO (Urban Designer, Tokyo Science University)

Tomoharu MATSUDA (Planner, Wacoal Art Center)

Nami FUKUTOME (Food Coordinator)

Wataru NORITAKE (Graphic Designer, Paperback Inc.)

Toshiya Yoshikai (Nippon Slow Food Association)

Nobuko SHIMUTA (Editor, Nippon Design Center)

Hajime ISHIKAWA (Landscape Designer, Landscape Design Inc.)

Yutaka Suzuki (Photographer)

Kenji KITAMURA (Illustrator)

Hitoshi KUWATA (Urban Studies, Shibaura University of Engineering)

...and more 70 members to develop modern style of picnic.

<Works>

2002:WHAT IS A PICNIC?

Presentation “What is a Picnic”, @ Wacoal Art Center

“RV Picnic Set”, Rendevous Project, @ Wacoal Art Center

2003:PICNIC RIGHT

“RV Picnic Set 2”, @ Exhibition “My Sweet Home”, Wacoal Art Center

“Picnic Papers”, as a self-produce artist book, Shinpusha Publishers

“Picnic Fieldwork”, as a research project on ‘10+1’ magazine, #32

2004: THINK YOUR OWN PICNIC

“Portable Lawn”, @Exhibition “Roppongi Crossing”, Mori Art Museum

“Tokyo Picnic Club Exhibition”, @ Gallery Door, Shimokitazawa

“15 Picnic Rules”, as a small brochure

“Picnic Tea”, “Picnic Cake” and “Picnic Sandwich”

“Picnic Right Posters/Flags” as a graphic work

“Picno-Sound Soundtrack” as pseudo-compilation album best for picnic scenes

2005:FIGHT FOR THE PICNIC

“6 Suggestions for Picnic City”, @ Exhibition “We are our city”, @ Wacoal Art Center

“Fight For The Picnic” tote bag,

“Piknikiosk”, @ Exhibition “Parks of Tomorrow”, @ Showa Park

“Grass On Vacation”, @ Exhibition “Anyang Public Art Project 2005”, South Korea

2006: TRY A PICNIC TALK

“PicniKiosk on Ice”, @ Ono-Lake, Akagi Mountain, March

“Portable Lawn on the Street”, Kanda Shusse-Fudo, Tokyo, September

“Portable Lawn in Neighborhood Park”, Kanda Ojima Park, September

2007: PICNICA ACTIVA

“Grass On Vacation 2007”, @ Kashiwa-no-ha, Chiba

“Picnic Beer – Greenfield/Brownfield”, as originally brew ale beers.

“Picnic Pack” package design for the shopping centers picnic fair.

<Printed Materials>

“Picnic Papers #0”, Tokyo Picnic Club, Shinpusha Publishers, 2003

“Roppongi Crossing –New Visions in Contemporary Japanese Art 2004), Mori Art Museum, 2004

“Tokyo Picnic Manifesto!”, ‘Hills Life Magazine 2005 April’, Mori Building Company

## <Related URL>

Tokyo Picnic Club Official HP ([www.picnicclub.org](http://www.picnicclub.org))

Tokyo Weekender (<http://www.weekender.co.jp/new/040206/5-artists.html>)

Tactical Museum ([http://rogermc.blogs.com/tactical/2005/02/public\\_spaces\\_t.html](http://rogermc.blogs.com/tactical/2005/02/public_spaces_t.html))

## <15 Picnic Rules>

01 Picnic is a social activity. Regard picnic as an informal opportunity for encounter.

02 Make the most of the weather. A stuffy day is the chance for a night picnic with fresh breeze. A freezing day is the good for basking picnic. Find the right time and right place for your own picnic.

03 Everyday is a picnic day.

04 No uniformity should be sought in picnic. It is a frank gathering to share the day.

05 No hosts and guests in picnic. In principle, everybody should offer food and drink equally.



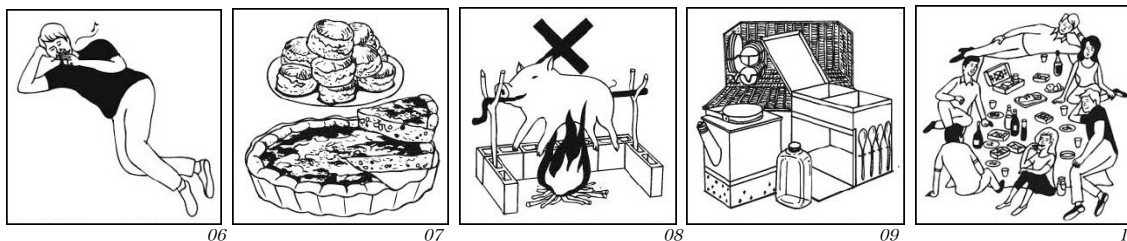
06 No labour should be imposed on participants. Industriousness of camping are nothing to do with picnic.

07 Food can be simple but should never be too easy.

08 No cooking during picnic (Preparing hot water for tea is an exception).

09 Be fussy on items. For picnic is an expression of your lifestyle.

10 Rug is the symbol of picnic. Do not step on the rug but surround it.



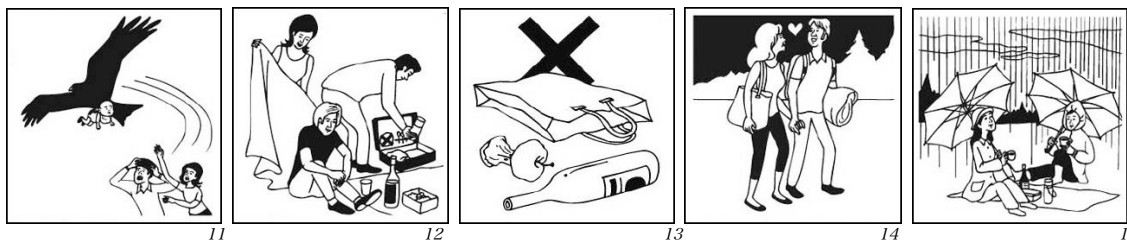
11 Accidents are a part of picnic. Happenings such as a sudden storm, falling into a pond, a bird carrying off your meal, are not good reasons for being upset.

12 You can come and go as you like during picnic. Should not detain anyone who intends to leave.

13 Do not leave your rubbish behind.

14 Never camp. Discord or love cannot be a reason to stay.

15 Raining is not a bad luck. A form of pleasure is not limited.



Text: Kaori ITO (Urban Planner/Researcher, Co-Representative of Tokyo Picnic Club)

Illustration: Kenji KITAMURA (Illustrator)



<Artworks>

1. Poster “Picnic Rights”, 2004, by Wataru NORITAKE
2. Tote Bag “Fight For The Picnic”, 2004, by Wataru NORITAKE
3. Original Blend Tea “Picnic Tea –Greenfield/Brownfield”, 2004, by Fukutome Nami, Wataru NORITAKE, Kenji KITAMURA
4. Movie “6 Suggestions for creating Picnic City)”, 2005, by Hiroshi OTA+Kaori ITO+Hitoshi KUWATA, Kenso FUKUDA



1



2

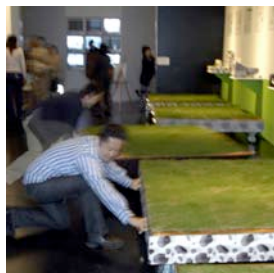


3



4

5. “Portable Lawn”, 2004, by Hiroshi OTA+Kaori ITO+Hajime ISHIKAWA
6. “Picnic Cake”, 2004, by Nami FUKUTOME
7. “Picnic Sandwich”, by Nami FUKUTOME

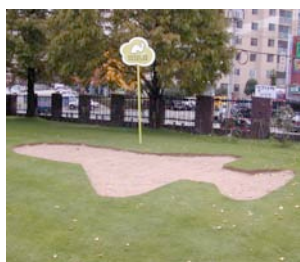


5

6

7

8. “Grass On Vacation”, 2005, by Hiroshi OTA+Kaori ITO+Toru KASHIHARA+Wataru NORITAKE+Kenji KITAMURA
9. “PicniKIOSK”, 2005, by Kaori ITO, ITO Laboratory @ Tokyo University of Science+design neuob



8

9

10. “Picnic Rug”, 2005, by Tomoko MITSUMA + Tomoharu MATSUDA
11. “Grass On Vacation”, 2005, by Hiroshi OTA + Kaori ITO + Toru KASHIHARA + Wataru NORITAKE
12. “Picnic Beer – Greenfield/Brownfield”, by Nami FUKUTOME, Wataru NORITAKE



9

10

11