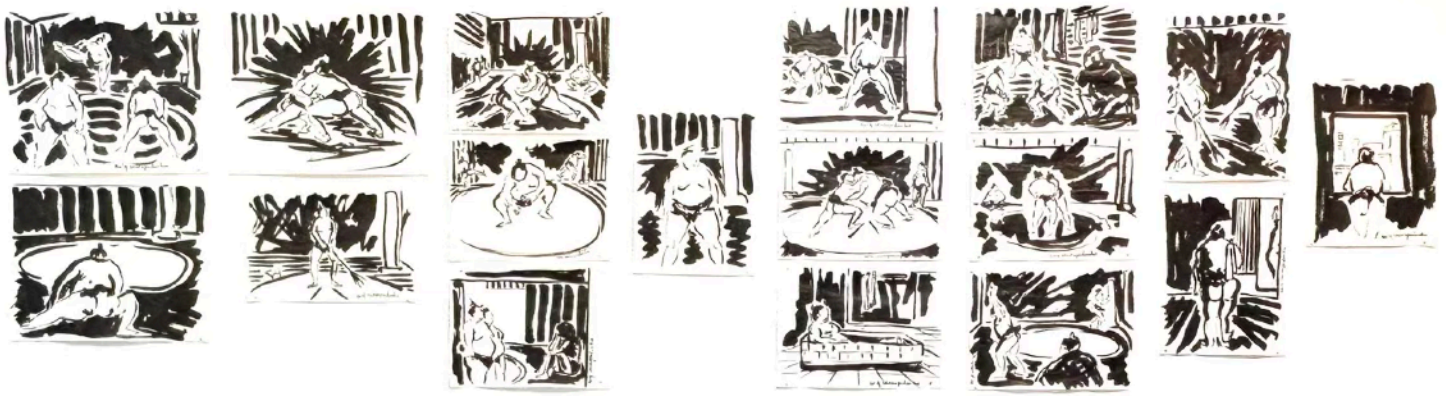




FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contemporary Art Meets the Living Heritage of Sumo in a Major Tokyo Exhibition by Zoia Skoropadenko

*Presented at Annex
into dialogue with*



*26 exhibition brings contemporary artworks
including artefacts from Edo and Meiji eras*

TOKYO, JAPAN — *Zoia Skoropadenko*, a 1990-born, Monaco-based contemporary artist will present a special exhibition at Annex Aoyama Gallery supported by Pasona Corporation in Tokyo from 12 to 18 October 2026.

Bringing together Skoropadenko's contemporary artworks and a selection of historical objects associated with Japanese sumo culture, the exhibition creates a distinctive encounter between present-day artistic interpretation and the material heritage of one of Japan's most emblematic traditions.

The exhibition opens to the public at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, 12 October 2026. An official vernissage will take place on Thursday, 15 October at 18.00, and press reception will take place on Thursday, 15 October at 12.00 with the exhibition continuing through Sunday, 18 October.

Exhibition highlights

The presentation will feature:

- Contemporary artworks by Zoia Skoropadenko exploring sacred culture inside sumo tradition, as a part of discipline, ceremonies and the everyday life;
- Historical gunbai—ceremonial fans used by sumo referees, or gyōji—including examples described by the organisers as dating from Edo and Meiji eras;
- A richly embroidered historical kesho-mawashi from the early twentieth century;
- Additional sumo-related objects, archival materials and works selected to illuminate the visual language, ritual and cultural memory of the sport;
- Opportunities for interviews with the artist and, subject to confirmation, the exhibition's organisers, lenders and sumo specialists.

Rather than treating the historical objects simply as decorative accompaniments, the exhibition places them in conversation with contemporary art. The juxtaposition draws attention to the forms, colours, gestures and symbols through which sumo communicates authority, ceremony, endurance and identity.

“Sumo is far more than a contest of strength. It is a complete visual and ceremonial world, shaped by discipline, history and extraordinary human presence,” says Zoia Skoropadenko. “This exhibition is my tribute to that world and to the people and objects that carry its tradition and sacred knowledge forward.”

A long-standing artistic relationship with Japan

Skoropadenko has maintained a sustained creative connection with Japan through exhibitions, live art projects and cultural initiatives. Her work has been shown in Tokyo and elsewhere in Japan, and her projects have addressed subjects including Fukushima, Japanese landscapes, everyday urban life and sumo culture.

Her earlier Japan-related projects include exhibitions in Tokyo, participation in the Tokyo Midtown Koinobori Festival and the presentation of works from her sumo-focused series, *Life of the Champion*. Her sculpture *The Hope* was inaugurated in Soma, Fukushima Prefecture, in 2016; another version forms part of the collection of the National Chernobyl Museum in Kyiv. Her exhibition “*Life of the champion*” was running for a year at Sumo Taiho Memorial Museum in Hokkaido in 2025-2026. In 2019 Skoropadenko was invited as a special guest to exhibition at Tokyo Art Fair in 2019 and in 2025 she was invited to Osaka Art Fair to represent Monaco.

The October exhibition extends this relationship through a concentrated exploration of sumo—not only as a sport, but as a living cultural tradition with its own material history and compelling visual vocabulary.

About Zoia Skoropadenko

Zoia Skoropadenko is a Ukrainian-born contemporary multidisciplinary artist, curator and cultural organiser who lives and works in Monaco and maintains close professional connections with Paris and Tokyo.

Working across painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture and ceramics, she is known for bodies of work including *TORSO*, *Intellectual Landscapes*, *Coffee Drinkers* and *Life of the Champion*. Her practice frequently begins with close observation of people, places and everyday objects, transforming them through a direct, economical visual language.

Skoropadenko received her early artistic education in Kryvyi Rih, Ukraine, and studied at the Franko National University in Lviv. In 2011, she was granted by Prince’s government an official professional artist-painter status in Monaco. She is also the founder of *La Vitrine Contemporaine de Monaco*, an independent exhibition space supporting artists and experimental presentations.

Her work has been presented internationally, including projects at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg and exhibitions in Monaco, Paris, London, Brussels, New York, California, China and Japan. She has curated Ukrainian art at the European Parliament in Strasbourg in 2012 and had a solo exhibition in Council of Europe in 2013 and London Stock Exchange in 2015 and has participated in cultural and charitable initiatives connected with Fukushima and Chernobyl.

Exhibition information

Exhibition title: SUMO: The sacred spirit

Japanese title: 相撲:神聖なる魂

Artist: Zoia Skoropadenko

Venue: Annex Aoyama, Pasona

Address: PASONA SQUARE 3-1-30 Minami-Aoyama Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-8351 Japan

Japanese address: パソナグループ アネックス青山 〒107-8351 東京都港区南青山3-1-30

Exhibition dates: Monday, 12 October – Sunday, 18 October 2026

Public opening: Monday, 12 October 2026, from 11:00 a.m. JST

Official vernissage: Thursday, 15 October 2026, 18.00-20.00 JST

Daily opening hours: 11.00 - 18.00

Admission: Free

Access: Nearest stations: Gaienmae Station, Exit 1a — approximately 5 minutes on foot.

Omotesando Station, Exit A4 — approximately 5 minutes on foot

Languages: [JAPANESE / ENGLISH / Ukrainian]

Hosted by: Pasona Corporation

Supported by: Ukrainian Embassy in Japan, Ukrainian Sumo Federation

Website: <https://www.zoiaskoropadenko.com/sumobyzoia>

Visitor enquiries: cc@themeloy.art

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Notes to editors

1. Downloadable press materials: [PRESS KIT LINK]