





Press release 30 April 2025

Osaka Kaiju by French Artist Jean Jullien to raise awareness on Ocean protection in the France Pavilion at EXPO 2025

The Tara Ocean Foundation, in partnership with AXA and in collaboration with Cofrex and NANZUKA, is pleased to present an exhibition within the France Pavilion from 15 May to 12 June by the artist Jean Jullien: "Osaka Kaiju".

"As far back as I can remember, the Ocean has always had a very strong impact on me." says Jean Jullien. Driven by his passion for the marine environment, Jean Jullien, a renowned French artist, will be offering a sensory and intimate experience at the heart of Ocean life.



Hosted in France the Pavilion and supported by AXA, this exhibition themed as a hymn to love showcases the artistic work of Jean Jullien in a space of over two hundred square meters. His creation offers a surreal encounter with his gentle monster, Kaiju. Halfway Osaka between a ship and a sea creature, this monumental, floating, anthropomorphic figure invites visitors to dive into a little-known marine universe.

Our perception of the Ocean and its resources has been built up over the centuries around stories and myths that have fed the imaginations of communities. Jean Jullien uses his art as a mirror of the contemporary world. His illustrations are humorous visual reflections. His aim is to question the relationship between man and his environment, and our direct link with the Ocean in the face of tomorrow's environmental and societal challenges.

The artist's installation, droll characters and drawings, inspired by contemporary Japanese culture, are all tributes to a world of which we still have only a fragmentary knowledge, and which he invites us to discover in a poetic way. A hymn to the universal and vital love that links us to the Ocean. An invisible link that we cannot ignore.

"Faced with our shared challenge of protecting the Ocean and our planet, the 2025 World Expo will be a chance to bring together diverse cultures to stand up for Life, to protect the Ocean and to honor the cultural richness of the different peoples." shares Myriam Thomas, Director of the Ocean literacy department within the Tara Ocean Foundation.

Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan: An opportunity to make the Ocean a common concern.

The Tara Ocean Foundation will participate in the France Pavilion at EXPO 2025 from May 15 to June 12, 2025, culminating in Ocean Week, which will run in parallel with the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC 2025), held in Nice, France, from June 9 to 13.

Under the co-presidency of France and Costa Rica, UNOC 2025 aims to unite nations around concrete political solutions to the pressing global challenges facing the Ocean. As a UNOC event advisor and thru its UN Special Observer status, the Tara Ocean Foundation will play an active role during the conference, organizing a series of events and activities both leading up to and during the summit.

EXPO 2025 offers a unique platform to raise international awareness—particularly in Japan—about the importance of ocean preservation and to drive collective action. The event will also serve as an opportunity for the Tara Ocean Foundation to announce its upcoming 2026 expedition to Southeast Asia, focused on studying the resilience of coral reefs in the face of global warming.

Key dates:

Exhibit dates: 15 May to 12 June

Opening with the media & guests: 19 May

- 2 to 2:30pm: exhibit tour
- 2:45 to 3:30pm: a conference for the media and partners/guests (not open to the general public) with Romain Troublé, General manager of the Tara Ocean Foundation, and Jean Jullien, artist.
- 3:30pm to 4:pm: interviews with the artist and Tara Ocean Foundation representatives
- 4pm to 5:30pm: cocktail in the *Bistro* room

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About



Jean Jullien: Born in 1983 in France and currently based in Paris, Jean Jullien is a French artist known for his wide-ranging practice that spans illustration, painting, sculpture, installation, photography, video, books, clothing, and design objects. He graduated from Central Saint Martins in 2008 and received his MA from the Royal College of Art in 2010. Jullien has collaborated with numerous global media outlets and brands, including The New York Times, National Geographic, RCA Records, Le Centre Pompidou, Hermès, Petit Bateau, and VOGUE. Alongside his commercial work, he has held solo exhibitions in cities around the world, such as San Francisco, London, Berlin, Singapore, Tokyo, Seoul, and Brussels. His work is celebrated for its unique blend of

humor, warmth, and sharp insight. His visual language is shaped not only by academic art education, but also by a deep connection to diverse cultural influences. These include Japanese manga such as Saint Seiya, Dragon Ball, and City Hunter, as well as French bandes dessinées and the works of artists like Raymond Savignac, Tomi Ungerer, and Jean-Jacques Sempé. His playful, cross-disciplinary creativity moves freely between art, design, and pop culture. In 2011, Jullien co-founded the animation duo Jullien Brothers with his brother Nicolas. In 2016, he launched the lifestyle brand NOUNOU with Jae Huh in Seoul, producing clothing, objects, rugs, and dolls with a distinctively artistic spirit. In 2022, he published his first comprehensive monograph with Phaidon Press. His sculptural series Paper People and Paper Society have been exhibited at institutions including DDP (Seoul), MIMA (Brussels), GINZA SIX (Tokyo), and Le Bon Marché (Paris), receiving international acclaim. In 2025, Jullien is creating a special installation for the Tara Ocean Foundation at Expo 2025 Osaka. He will also present a solo exhibition titled *JUJU'S CASTLE* at NANZUKA ART INSTITUTE in Shanghai in July of the same year. He is currently temporarily based in Tokyo to work on these upcoming projects.

Tara Ocean Foundation: The Tara Ocean Foundation is the first public interest foundation in France dedicated to the Ocean. For over 20 years, it has been striving for a revolution to preserve Life, convinced that the Ocean is essential to the equilibrium of our planet. Exploring the Ocean and sharing scientific discoveries to raise collective awareness is at the heart of the foundation's mission. It leads scientific expeditions, in partnership with leading international research laboratories, to study marine biodiversity and understand the impacts of climate change and pollution. It raises public awareness. from the younger generation to political decision-makers. Thanks to its UN Special Observer Status, the foundation plays an active role in international Ocean governance. Exploring, sharing and protecting this living Ocean is more vital than ever. Together, let's protect Ocean. Discover defend Life. Let's the the foundation at https://fondationtaraocean.org/ and on video.

AXA has been supporting the Tara Ocean Foundation since the launch of the Tara Europa scientific expedition (April 2023 - July 2024). This partnership is fully aligned with AXA's purpose: "Acting for human

Tara Ocean Japan is the Japanese sister organization of the Tara Ocean Foundation, with Étienne Bourgois as President and Yumiko Patouillet as Secretary General. It was founded at the end of 2016, just before the *Tara* schooner's multiple stopovers in Japan during the *Tara Pacific expedition (2016-2018)*, and since then focuses on global marine issues through research conducted along the coastal areas of Japan, such as plastic pollution studied during the Tara JAMBIO Microplastic mission (2020 - 2023) and carbon sequestration mechanisms through marine ecosystems explored in the ongoing Tara JAMBIO Blue Carbon mission (2024 - present).

progress by protecting what matters."

The AXA Group: The AXA Group is a worldwide leader in insurance and asset management, with 154,000 employees serving 95 million clients in 50 countries. In 2024, IFRS17 revenues amounted to Euro 110.3 billion and IFRS17 underlying earnings to Euro 8.1 billion. AXA had Euro 983 billion in assets under management, including assets managed on behalf of third parties, as of December 31, 2024.

This project was developed in collaboration with



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