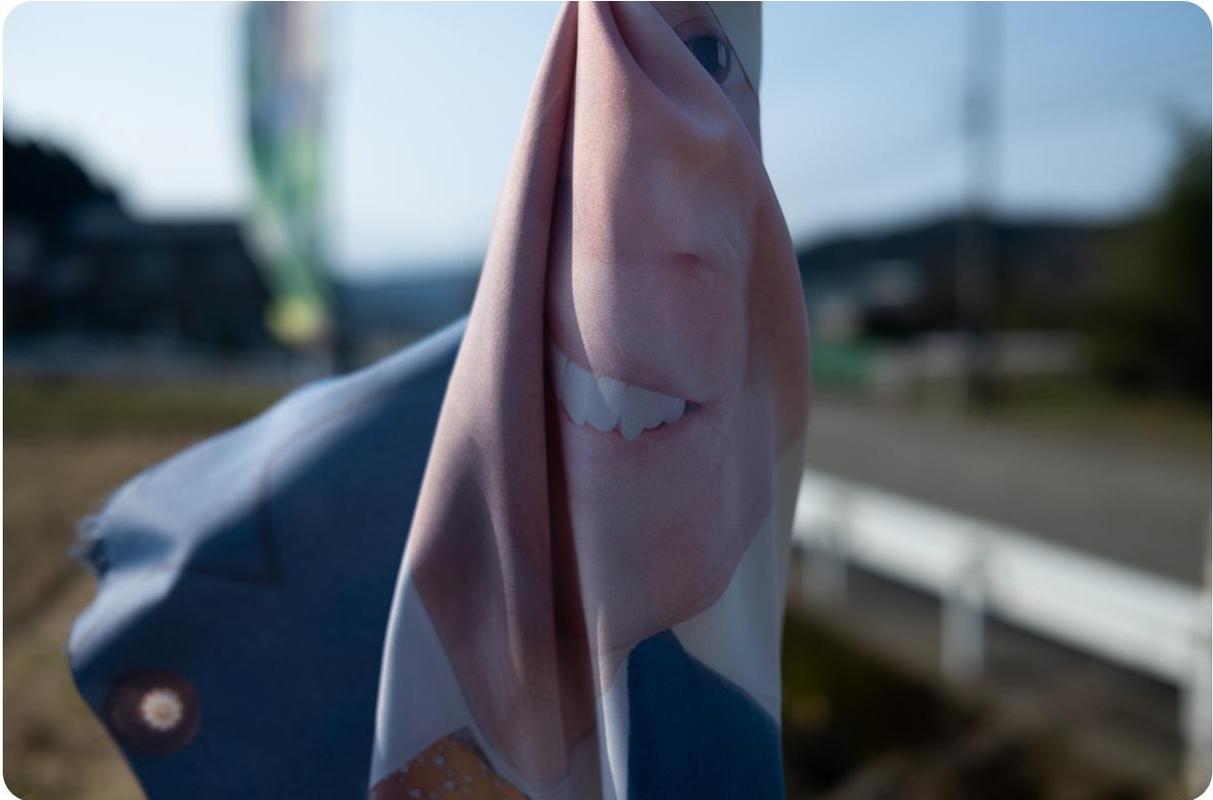


2021 Activity Report James Gibson.

Associate Professor



Waters of March 2022 - Walking Kashiwanomachi - "a bet"

Better Than.

Rejuvenating between one school year and the reset of the next.

Proposing projects, leaning into Regenerative Design.

Learning, sharing, and encouraging a progressive philosophy of what a graduate school is and functions.

Mechanisms of management, curriculum, finance, architecture and mindset.

Change is likely to be slow, old minds resist and young conform.

Your body, like the planet, is a mechanism of natural regeneration.

The health of each intrinsically linked.

Are you living accordingly?

Is your practice one of regeneration or degeneration?

Less what you do, more how you choose to do.

Why are we susceptible to compromise?

What universal force pulls us from the obvious/elusive right path?

Money, power, pleasure, prestige and time...

Intertwining forces working together, tempting our fate.

Endorsed by a social normalcy of doing the wrong thing together.

There are disadvantages to having both not enough and too much.

Too little and we yield to compromise, taking shortcuts on production, labour and ethics...

Too much and we run wild with the prospect of unlimited materialistic, economic and moralistic freedom...

practice our Noes and heed our Egos.

because we Can, doesn't mean we Should.

One question: **Can we together leave things better than how we found them?**

(Better Than - Self-published article, March 2022)

Outline of activities

During this academic year, my focus has been on communication, publication and art projects. Further exploring the subjects of 'do-nothing design', 'well-being' and 'regenerative design'. I was lucky enough to collaborate with Naoki Ishikawa of an [article](#) exploring his creative philosophy, the Oku-Noto Triennale 2020+ (September 4th — October 24th, 2021) and his current publication: Okunoto Peninsula (2021,12,27).



Activities.

In conversation with...

A zoom series where hosts Akitsugu Maebayashi & James Gibson invite you to join them in conversation with a series of special guests.

Under our present circumstances brought to the forefront due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we have an opportunity to take advantage of this situation and turn things around. A chance to learn by sharing thoughts & experiences about the present and hints & expectations of the future, through reviewing & discussing our guest speakers past activities.

The act of casual 'conversation' is commonly overlooked in everyday life, but in our present disconnected - connected online community we have the platform to re-evaluate & emphasise the importance of conversation.

Conversations 2021

#04: Lucas B.B.

#03: 八嶋有司 Yashima Yushi 具志堅裕 Gushiken Yusuke 湯澤大樹 Yuzawa Taiki

#02: 石川 直樹 Naoki Ishikawa

#01: 川瀬 慈 Itsushi Kawase

In Conversation with... [archive](#)

Waters of March

Since 2018 I have attempted to complete my annual art project: Waters of March. Within this academic year I made an archive of March 2021's attempt as well as completing March 2022's initial photography collection. This entailed taking daily walks through the neighbourhood of Kashiwanomachi, Kaga, Ishikawa for 24 days straight while documenting the local landscape through photography and words. I aim to complete this years piece for public viewing during IAMAS Open House 2022.



Waters of March 2022 - Walking Kashiwanomachi - "It's the end of the strain"

Waters of March - A Creative Proposal.

Art Resulting from the Experience of a Journey.

Human Powered — Human Speed — Human Interaction.

During March of any given year while in the act of human powered travel, document your personal interpretation and experience of 'the journey' through photography¹. Each photograph to be taken in succession following the lyrics of "Waters of March" (Águas de Março) by Antônio Carlos Jobim.²

For example; the second verse.

*It's a sliver of glass
It is life, it's the sun
It is night, it is death
It's a trap, it's a gun*

Equivalent to seven photographs taken in the order of: 1; It's a sliver of glass, 2; It is life, 3; it's the sun, 4; It is night, 5; it is death, 6; It's a trap, 7; it's a gun.

Attempt to complete all 24 verses, a total of 135 photographs³. Interpreting the lyrics as you see fit, don't skip, don't fake, do play and find joy in your heart. Present⁴ the resulting

photographs⁵ in a media of choice, remembering to be responsible and that the journey experience is the purpose.

Noted:

¹ Interpretation of 'photography' is left to the discretion of the individual artist.

² Version and language left to the discretion of the individual artist.

³ Equivalent total in a language other than English.

⁴ Share with me.

⁵ However many photographs completed within the journey.



Waters of March 2022 - Walking Kashiwanomachi

Self Published Articles & Books

Do-Nothing Design — A Protest?

Psychedelic Soup!

Was the answer to a question a student and I arrived at; following a profound experience beyond the five senses taught in schools. A month living on a remote inland island can have that effect on habitual city dwellers.

“Let’s say there are such things as gods... then how would she perceive me?” — “If we presume that she was able to perceive all living organisms... what would that look like?”

Psychedelic soup?

A couple of weeks ago I finished reading *Four Fifths a Grizzly: A New Perspective on Nature That Just Might Save Us All*, by author Douglas H. Chadwick — hence the psychedelic soup conversation. This and several other books combined (over years) have brought together a growing number of discombobulated thoughts around the subject of teaching art & design (living, working & being) from a perspective of regeneration or more precisely: less degeneration.

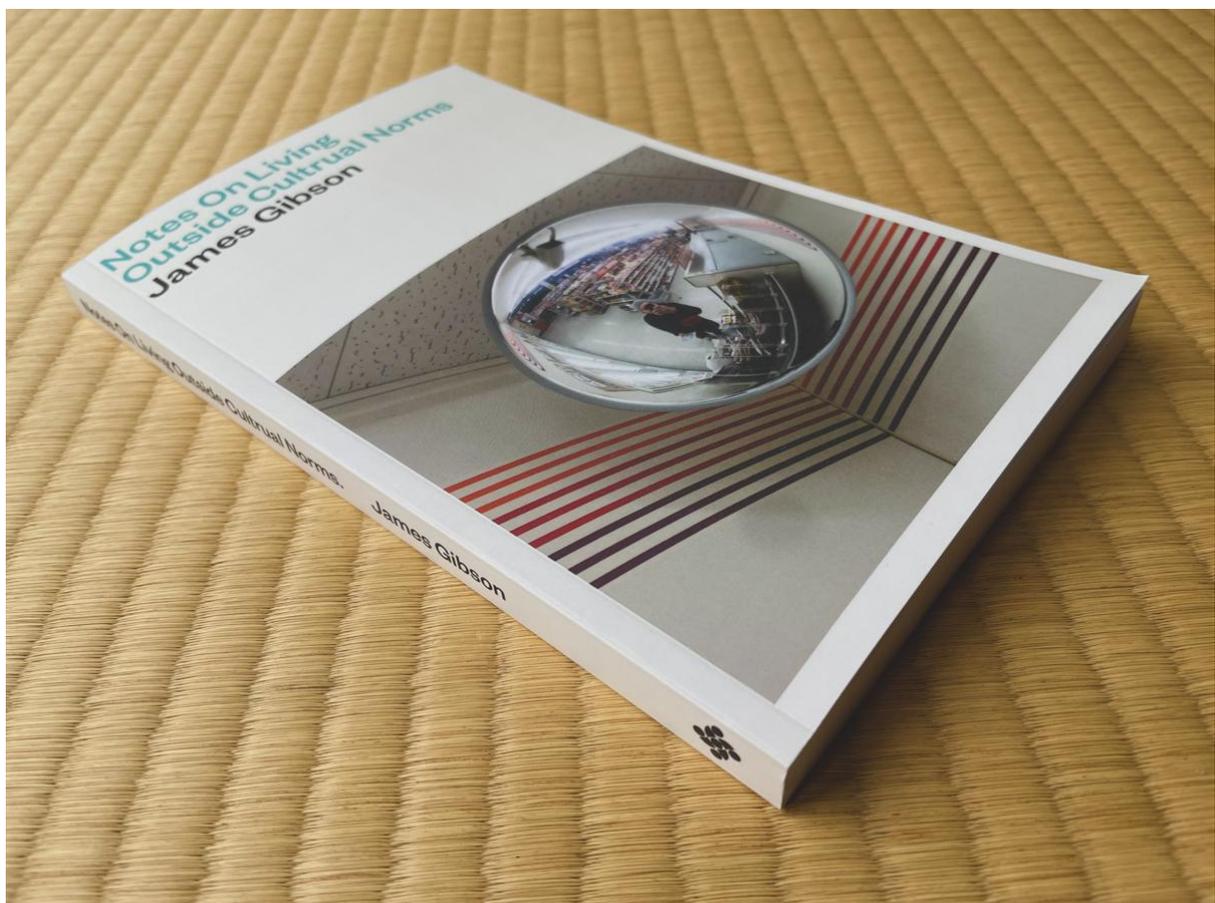
Do-nothing Design or a Do-nothing Creative Philosophy, a Protest?

Tentatively written, as I have little idea how to actually do this, so I'm setting myself a few rules to force the function of thinking by writing a postcard every day for the next 9 days — each postcard: one photograph & approximately 100-200 words (roughly the amount you can write on the back of a physical postcard... if you write small... and squeeze it in).

I will archive them here: [P009](#)

Notes on Living Outside Cultural Norms.

A book of photographs and journal entries written while experimenting with social normalities from 2014 to 2015. This project is ongoing, where during this academic year I produced an ePub version and a POD test edition of the book. At present I'm in the process of re-editing the chapters and refining the print version of the book before publishing in 2022.





Notes on Living Outside Cultural Norms - POD test edition #1

Introduction Excerpt

This book does not go into the details of why and what the circumstances (and choices) were which led me to put pen to paper, yet it is a —slightly edited— collection of writing and photographs from my journal at that time. The confused mind of someone letting go to understand what was important to hold on to. A process of exploration, understanding, discovery, and renegotiation. A process of designing life, which is still ongoing, and I expect never to end. Yet without taking that leap, opening that door as it were, I would never have set out asking the questions, but blindly —ignorantly— let life happen around me, too me. A passive audience to my own story somebody else was writing.

Closing my university office, leaving my apartment and moving into my car, I set out on a journey of self exploration.

Published Articles

Papersky - Outdoors & Design





Naoki Ishikawa - *Discovering Something More "Yamabusiyama"* (Top: photographed by Naoki Ishikawa / Bottom: photographed by James Gibson.)

A series of articles exploring the broad subject of Outdoor & Design. The articles are published by Papersky Stories Japan in both English and Japanese.

"James Gibson, an outdoor enthusiast and designer - bring his two passions 'OUTDOORS & DESIGN' together to shed sunshine on Japanese: projects, art, creative endeavours and brands that are enlightening our natural world."

Excerpt from Naoki Ishikawa - *Discovering Something More*

The Purpose Is.

People often talk of having a purpose. Had I reached my purpose by climbing this mountain? I couldn't say. But I like the way Naoki summed up purpose in our conversation.

He expressed that having a purpose was important, yet that he also liked to deviate from it given the chance. "Of course having a purpose before taking a trip is essential, but it's often more interesting to encounter things that are outside of it."

The purpose is to not follow a purpose too closely... I love that.

Articles in 2021

#04 **Isamu Noguchi** - [A Space of Life](#)

#03 **Naoki Ishikawa** - [Discovering Something More](#)

#02 **Mikikurota Architects** - [Mountain Gear Project](#)

#01 **Rickey Gates** - [Running Towards Happiness](#)

The end.