

RIKEN Art & Science Exhibition

October 12, 2005 – This year's RIKEN public lecture was marked by an experiment unlike any conducted by RIKEN in the past. It did not, however, involve the use of microscopes, cultured cells or DNA sequencing. Rather, this experiment involved bringing together graphic designers and visual artists to exhibit their interpretations of images and phenomena from the world of science. The exhibition, titled RIKEN Art & Science, was held on October 11th in conjunction with the yearly public lectures held by the institute to encourage public awareness and understanding of science.



Many of the works on display were created by members of a creative project named Arsnote Lab, who rendered microscopic images of cells and tissues into a vivid array of mosaics, panoramas and studies in color. Faculty from the Kobe Design University also contributed arrangements of biological structures and organisms curiously arrayed around figures from Hindu mythology. Several pieces featured images provided by CDB labs, from *Drosophila* germ line cells visualized in a fancifully colored negative space,

to mouse olfactory tissue made almost three-dimensional through the subtle interplay of neon glows against a darkened field.

The day's lectures complemented the visual feast, providing glimpses into the cutting edge of research intended for non-specialists. Mitinori Saitou (Team Leader; Laboratory for Mammalian Germ Cell Biology) introduced germ cells, the conveyors of genetic information across generations, highlighting their interesting sidelights such as the advent of individual mortality and the role of epigenetic modifications, which do not alter genetic sequence but are nonetheless heritable across generations. Researchers from the RIKEN Harima Institute contributed talks as well, describing the use of synchrotron and free electron laser technology in applications as diverse as protein structural analysis and the dating of archaeological samples.

