

# eat your guest

## Japanese Knotweed Festival

Friday 14 April – Sunday 7 May 2023

Opening Symposium Friday 14 and Saturday 15 April 2023

[Website Japanese Knotweed Festival](#)



Photo: Willem Velthoven

*Mediamatic* is hosting an immersive 3-week festival around Japanese knotweed, which will recur the coming 3 years. The Japanese knotweed is a fast-growing plant which, in Europe, is known for its destructive and intrusive characteristics. Under European regulations, invasive exotic species are allowed to be radically eradicated. The City of Amsterdam, for example, is allocating 8 million euros to destroy Japanese knotweed, hoping to prevent further damage to building foundations, pavements and the vegetation. However, what many do not know is that this species has a multitude of positive attributes ranging from its delicious taste and medicinal properties to its potential for being the base of biomaterials. The *Japanese Knotweed Festival*

investigates how, in collaboration with various creators, we can contribute to a way of living together in harmony with this contested plant.

We raise awareness of the positive aspects of Japanese Knotweed and promote its cultivation as a sustainable and valuable resource. Through exhibitions, workshops and tastings attendees will discover the unique textures, flavours, and possibilities of this remarkable plant. Also, we will focus on the importance of safe harvesting and processing of the plant.

### *Symposium*

For the opening weekend of the festival, *Mediamatic* has arranged a 2-day symposium in which experts and creatives from multiple disciplinary fields will discuss all things Japanese knotweed.



Photo: Anisa Xhomaqi

In this symposium on the 14th and 15th of April Raphael Ediphier, Niek Kosten & Kristof Vrancken, Sebastjan Kovač & Danica Sretenović, Yoshinari Nishiki, Gaja Mežnarić Osole, Norbert Peeter and Debra Solomon among others will be sharing their knowledge and ideas with us.

### *Exhibitions*

The *Japanese Knotweed Festival* holds a series of exhibitions dissecting the aesthetic qualities of the plant and displaying its possible value in society. We would like to introduce you to the world of Japanese knotweed through photographic storytelling, various installations and interactive exhibitions.

*Not In My Backyard!* is an (incomplete) visual, physical and societal dissection of the (invasive alien) plant species by photographer Kristof Vrancken and graphic designer Niek Kosten. In this exhibition they investigate and dissect the position of the plant in its environment.



Photo: Kristof Vrancken and Niek Kosten

In the *Invasive Energy Harvesting: EROI Drink* exhibition, you can witness artifacts left behind by Japanese artist Yoshinari Nishiki who uses the Japanese Knotweed by turning it into EROI Drink (エロイドリンク). Nishiki has prepared ingredients for the Amsterdam edition of EROI Drink, allowing the audience to bottle their own energy drinks within the exhibition space.



Photo: Jakob van Vliet



Image: Yoshinari Nishiki

*The Dog Chased its Tail To Bite it Off* is a mural exhibit by artist Alaa Abu Asad where he draws parallels between the violent, xenophobic speech used to describe the Japanese knotweed and the language often used to describe human migrants—a language that reveals the current human condition.



## *Workshops*

*Mediamatic* is hosting various workshops in which you can learn to identify and integrate this plant into your everyday life. The Japanese knotweed is an extraordinary plant, not only due to its aesthetic value but also for its functional uses. A myriad of hues can be extracted from its pigments and it can be used to make paper, musical instruments as well as delicious dishes.

In the *Observational Drawing of Japanese Knotweed* workshop, artist and trained biologist Annemarie Verschoor, will spotlight the Japanese knotweed. By observing and drawing the plant with a scientific overview, participants learn to recognise its physical properties.



Photo: Amber van de Ven

Together with Lucie Havel, participants of the *Foliage-* and *Rhizome Dye Workshop* are able to dye the wool of Dutch sheep with different parts of the Japanese knotweed, a plant on which they graze. Several techniques will be scrutinised and used. With these you will develop a colour palette of five to fifteen colours during the workshops.



Photo: Kristof Vrancken and Niek Kosten



Photo: Lucie Havel

In the *Paper Making Workshop* by Lucie Havel and Marieke de Hoop, participants will make paper in different colours and textures made from the stems of Japanese knotweed.



Photo: Thijs Adriaans

During the *Pan Flute Making Workshop* you will learn to make your own instrument from dried knotweed stems. Guided by Marc Lemonnier, musician and forager specialised in natural percussion, you will craft a pan flute together and learn to play a song. Children and family members are encouraged to participate together in this family-oriented workshop.

### *Gastronomic experiences*

The *Mediamatic* biotope houses *Mediamatic ETEN*, a plant-based restaurant and waterside bar. The restaurant is inspired by seasonal vegetables and local, sometimes homegrown ingredients, where research and conceptualising play an important role to create sensory experiences. With this underlying culinary basis, it is no surprise that knotweed will also find its way to our plates and glasses during the festival.

The Japanese knotweed can be a delicious ingredient to diversify your meals. Follow the *Knotweed Cooking Show*, hosted by Pauline Wiersema, and explore how you can collect ingredients and prepare dishes with this plant. The recipes will be shared on our website.



Photo: Andrea Valdivia

Japanese knotweed can't be sold for consumption in the European Union. Only the extract from its roots in its purest form, resveratrol, is traded on the international market. In collaboration with Krater, the festival's *Knotweed Burek Exchange* doesn't trade with money but with knowledge. Plant one of our Japanese Knotweed plant-signs in your local patch, share a photo and receive a Japanese knotweed burek in exchange.



Photo: Maxim Dampier



Photo: Roze Bunker

Curated by Emile Corre, experimental brewer and innovative explorer of sustainable solutions, *Brouwersberaad* focuses on brewing as constructive system change. This first edition will look into the challenges of the drink industries by inviting some of its most radical local innovators. From brewing with invasive species like Japanese knotweed to removing water from drinks all together, we will look into some out of the box ideas to kick off this new series at *Mediamatic*.



Photo: Willem Velthoven

Through combining elements like art, food, sound, a unique head spa experience and aromatic atmosphere, using Japanese knotweed essences, the *EatArt Experience* by Takako Hamano and Uno Fujisawa stimulates the five senses – seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, and smelling – in the serene setting of the greenhouses at *Mediamatic*.

During the 5th of May liberation celebration, Mediamatic will host a *Liberation Day Lunch and Dinner* developed by chefs Uno Fujisawa, Aslı Hatipoğlu and artist Alaa Abu Asad. It will use locally foraged Japanese knotweed as the key ingredient. Our freedom meal will be composed of an array of dishes that will be set on a communal dining table and initiate dialogue between the participants. The event will also include a performance from Alaa Abu Asad to moderate the dialogue of the meal.



*Mediamatic* would love for you to join us for this year's Japanese Knotweed Festival. Please contact us for limited press tickets for the opening symposium or the festival program. For more information, check out our full program [here](#).

You are welcome to come by the biotope at Dijkgracht 6 in Amsterdam to speak to Willem Velthoven, *Mediamatic's* director, or the artists, and talk about what we have planned for the festival. Please make an appointment via: [pers@mediamatic.nl](mailto:pers@mediamatic.nl) or 020 638 9901.

### *Symposium Ticket Prices*

Full symposium (2 Days)

Full price: €39,50

Discounted price: €22,50\*

Friday or Saturday (1 Day)

Full price: €22,00

Discounted price: €12,00\*

\* we offer a discount to artists, students and visitors with a Stadspas.

This festival can take place thanks to the contribution of our wonderful sponsors. Your sponsorship has given us the chance to make our vision to redefine Japanese knotweed come alive!

The Japanese Knotweed Festival is made possible with support from:

*Amsterdam Fund for the Arts, Creative Industries Fund NL, Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds, Gemeente Amsterdam and Oedipus Brewing.*

You can download and use all photos from our [Website](#).

Please do not forget to credit the maker when sharing.

In case you have any questions regarding photos, promotion or our program please contact Marcel Sturing (Marketing & Communication) at [pers@mediamatic.nl](mailto:pers@mediamatic.nl).

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