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## Smiling women to cheer up Tokyo

Large photographs of the smiling faces of thousands of young women, accompanied by written messages, are appearing at various locations across Tokyo through Aug. 31 as part of "Merry in Tokyo," an art project designed to help energize Tokyoites.

The project, which involves 8,000 photographs, is the work of Koji Mizutani, who carried out similar projects in Kobe after the devastating earthquake in 1995, and in New York after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

After speaking with the women and taking their photographs, Mizutani said he has changed his impression that everyone in Tokyo seems to lack energy as they toil away amid the prolonged economic slump.

"I have found that young people these days are full of vitality and originality," he says.

The smiling faces can be encountered at Dcross on the first floor of Mitsubishi Electric Corp. in Marunouchi (9 a.m.-9 p.m. weekdays and 11 a.m.-9 p.m. weekends, through July 27), Roppongi Hills Metro Hat (accessible 24-hours, July 25-Aug. 3), Caretta Shiodome (8 a.m.-midnight, July 25-Aug. 31) and Hibiya Festa (GTF2003) in front of the small concert hall in Hibiya Park (6-10 p.m., Aug. 6, 7 and 8).

The faces can also be seen on giant viewing screens in Shibuya, Ginza, Akihabara and other places through Aug. 31.

As part of the project, volunteers are being sought to pick up garbage around Roppongi between 9 a.m. and noon on Aug. 2. Anyone interested should come to Roppongi Hills Metro Hat before 9 a.m. that day.

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See the Merry Project home page at [www.21merry.net](http://www.21merry.net)

