

ISSUE NO. 56 February - March 2011
The Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur



JAPAN FOUNDATION 國際交流基金

Temam Baru



Courtesy of Toho Co., Ltd.

**AKIRA KUROSAWA FILM FESTIVAL
CENTENNIAL RETROSPECTIVE**

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF AKIRA KUROSAWA'S BIRTH

DREAM OF TIME ~ A SANCTUARY OF HARMONY & BEAUTY

The Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur and The Actors Studio proudly present a theatre costume exhibition by renowned Japanese Costume Designer, **Shingo TOKIHIRO**. He will also conduct Costume Making & Styling workshops for theatre practitioners, designers, design & art students or anyone else who is interested in his very simple but unique costume making technique.

Exhibition Details

Date : 20 February – 13 March 2011

Time : 10.00am – 10.00pm daily

Venue : Pentas 2 Foyer, klpac,
Sentul Park,
Jalan Strachan (off Jalan Ipoh),
51100 Kuala Lumpur

Admission : Free

Enquiries : 03-4047 9000 (klpac) or 03-2284 6228 (JFKL)



Photo by Gakuji Tanaka



Photo by Kiyomaro Yakumo



Photo by Masaaki Kawauchi

Shingo Tokihiro

Costume Designer. The costumes and the styling he creates with his creative sensibility are often described as "literary lyric" and have been receiving recognitions from home and abroad. Started out as a fashion writer, he first started his career as a costume designer in 1991 with Mozart's "The Magic Flute". Since then, he has participated in various performances from theatre, contemporary dance to drum concerts and poetry readings as a costume designer. Some of the major productions he has participated in overseas are, "Rashomon" at Istana Budaya, Malaysia in 2004 and International Shakespeare Festival, Romania in 2006. He has also conducted costume making and styling workshops in various cities in Japan as well as in the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia.



Photo by Kiyomaro Yakumo

AKIRA KUROSAWA FILM FESTIVAL ~ CENTENNIAL RETROSPECTIVE

Akira KUROSAWA was a famed Japanese film director, producer, screenwriter and editor, who directed 30 films in his 57-year career. Born in 1910 and deceased in 1998 at the age of 88, the year 2010 marked the 100th anniversary of his birth. The Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur, together with ASWARA (Akademi Seni Budaya dan Warisan Kebangsaan), proudly present Akira Kurosawa Film Festival ~ Centennial Retrospective, featuring 25 of his titles including "Seven Samurai", "Rashomon" and "Ikiru" that have inspired and influenced quite a number of Japanese and foreign filmmakers, such as Takeshi KITANO, Steven Spielberg, Martin Scorsese, George Lucas, John Woo and Zhang Yimou.

Date : 11 – 20 March 2011
 Venue : Dewan Kuliah Utama,
 ASWARA (Akademi Seni Budaya Dan Warisan Kebangsaan),
 464 Jalan Tun Ismail,
 50480 Kuala Lumpur.
 Admission : Free

Titles to be screened:

Title	Year/ Length
Sanshiro Sugata / 姿三四郎	1943/79min./B&W
The Most Beautiful / 一番美しく	1944/85min./B&W
Sanshiro Sugata Part II / 續姿三四郎	1945/82min./B&W
The Men Who Tread on the Tiger's Tail / 虎の尾を踏む男達	1945/58min./B&W
No Regrets for Our Youth / わが青春に悔なし	1946/110min./B&W
One Wonderful Sunday / 素晴らしき日曜日	1947/108min./B&W
Drunken Angel / 酔いどれ天使	1948/98min./B&W
The Quiet Duel / 静かなる決闘	1949/95min./B&W
Stray Dog / 野良犬	1949/122min./B&W
Scandal / 醜聞 (スキヤンダル)	1950/104min./ B&W
Rashomon / 羅生門	1950/88min./ B&W
The Idiot / 白痴	1951/166min./ B&W
Ikiru (To Live) / 生きる	1952/143min./B&W
Seven Samurai / 七人の侍	1954/207min./B&W
I Live in Fear / 生きものの記録	1955/113min./B&W
Throne of Blood / 蜘蛛巣城	1957/110min./B&W
The Lower Depths / どん底	1957/125min./B&W
The Hidden Fortress / 隠し砦の三悪人	1958/139min./B&W
The Bad Sleep Well / 悪い奴ほどよく眠る	1960/151min./B&W
Yojimbo (The Bodyguard) / 用心棒	1961/110min./B&W
Sanjuro / 椿三十郎	1962/96min./B&W
High and Low / 天国と地獄	1963/143min./B&W, Partially Color
Red Beard / 赤ひげ	1965/185min./B&W
Dodesukaden / どですかでん	1970/140min./Color
MADADAYO ("Not Yet") / まあだだよ	1993/134min./Color



*For screening times, please log on to www.jfkl.org.my after 1 March 2011.
 Inquiries: email to jpcc@jfkl.org.my or call 03-2284 6228

Public Lecture Series on Japanese Studies

The Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur (JFKL) and the Malaysian Association of Japanese Studies (MAJAS) will organize a series of public lectures on Japanese studies in March 2011. The aim of this program is to create further understanding towards Japanese politics, economics and social affairs, and it is a part of JFKL's efforts to develop Japanese studies in Malaysia. This year, in collaboration with University of Malaya (UM), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), and Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), we are inviting Professor WATANABE Yorizumi, Professor of International Political Economy, Faculty of Policy Management, Keio University, Japan, as the guest speaker. The theme of the public lecture series this year will be **"The Possibility of FTA in North East Asia and Implications for ASEAN"**. Admission is free and everybody is welcome!



KUALA LUMPUR

Date : 14 March 2011 (Monday)

Time : 10.00am – 12.00noon

Venue : Dewan Kuliah A, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences,
University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur

PENANG

Date : 15 March 2011 (Tuesday)

Time : 10.00am – 12.00noon

Venue : Dewan Persidangan Universiti, School of Social Sciences,
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang

SABAH

Date : 18 March 2011 (Friday)

Time : 8.30am – 10.30am

Venue : School of Business and Economics,
Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Sabah

About the Guest Speaker

Professor WATANABE Yorizumi is a Professor of International Political Economy in the Faculty of Policy Management of Keio University, Japan. He was born on 21 November 1953 in Osaka, Japan. Professor Watanabe received his B.A. from Sophia University, Japan in 1976, Certificate of Advanced European Studies from College of Europe, Bruges, Belgium in 1978, M.A. in International Relations in 1981 and Candidate for Ph. D in 1982, both from Sophia University, Japan.

Professor Watanabe specializes in trade policy studies based on the WTO trade laws and rules. With his background in the European Studies coupled with his trade policy experiences during the Uruguay Round Negotiation, Professor Watanabe has been working on the economic integration in East Asia. Professor Watanabe has also quite extensive work on WTO-related issues such as trade and environment, as well as trade and competition. When he was appointed as Deputy Director-General for Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he was responsible for Russia's accession to the WTO. He was also chief negotiator for the Japan-Mexico Economic Partnership Agreement negotiations. He is currently a member of the task force on the Japan-India EPA and the Japan-EU Economic Integration Agreement, and he is also a member of the International Committee, Tokyo Chamber of Commerce in Tokyo, Japan.

He has published and edited a number of books on international economics issues and he is also an author and co-author of numerous articles in professional journals. His publications include:

- *Perspectives of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in East Asia and the WTO System*, Journal of International Economic Laws, October 2001
- *WTO Handbook: Issues and Perspectives of the Doha Development Agenda*, JETRO PRESS, October 2003
- *The GATT/WTO System and Japan*, Hokuju Publications, October 2007

Organized by:



MAJAS



Co-organized by:



Japanese Traditional Music Tour in Borneo (Shigeri Kitsu)

The Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur (JFKL) will organize “*Japanese Traditional Music Tour in Borneo by Shigeri Kitsu*” in Kota Kinabalu, Kuching, and Brunei from 20 to 24 March 2011.

Shigeri Kitsu, a *minyo* (Japanese folk song) singer and taiko drummer, started performing *minyo* since her childhood, and has participated in collaboration performances with artistes from a variety of music genres including pop, jazz and world music. She has also put efforts to introduce and spread *minyo* & *minyo* drum to people, and has been actively involved in lectures in universities and workshops for pupils in schools. She has performed overseas, including tours to Los Angeles in 2002, Indonesia and Singapore in 2003, New York in 2004, Italy and Germany in 2008, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan in 2009 and Shanghai in 2010.

Date & Venue (Free Admission)

Kota Kinabalu

Date : 20 March 2011 (Sunday)
Time : 5.00pm ~
Venue : Recital Hall,
Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS)

Kuching

Date : 21 March 2011 (Monday)
Time : 7.00pm ~
Venue : Experiment Theatre,
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas)

Brunei (Participation in “Japan Week”)

Date : 23 March 2011 (Wednesday)
Time : 2.30pm ~
Venue : Brunei University

Date : 24 March 2011 (Thursday)
Time : To be confirmed
Venue : Brunei University



National Sudoku Seminar



Great news for Sudoku fans in Malaysia! Here's your chance to catch the Godfather of Sudoku, **Mr. Maki Kaji**, at the National Sudoku Seminar in Kuala Lumpur, organized by the Malaysia Sudoku Society and supported by the Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur. All Sudoku fans are invited to the seminar:

Date : 19 March 2011 (Saturday)
Time : 2.00pm – 5.00pm (registration: 1.30pm – 2.00pm)
Venue : Auditorium, UTAR Petaling Jaya Campus,
No. 9 Jalan Bersatu 13/4,
46200 Petaling Jaya

Admission : Free (pre-registration via e-mail)

Grab this opportunity to get up close and personal with your Sudoku Idol now!

For reservation and pre-registration, please email your **name, IC no.** and **mobile phone no.** to mysudokusociety@gmail.com



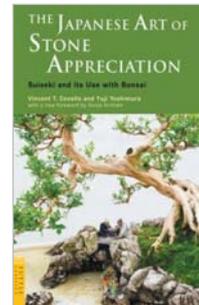
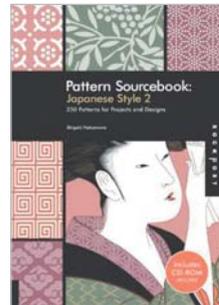
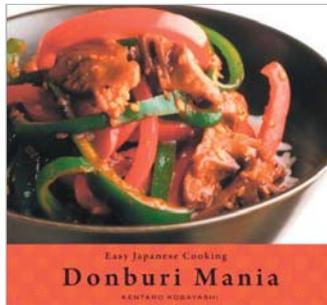
BIODATA OF KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Mr. Maki Kaji is the founder of Japanese-based logic puzzle company, Nikoli Co. Ltd. Mr. Kaji created the puzzle *Sudoku*, which literally translates to “*bachelor numbers*”, with a little sense of humor: “the single-digit number should be kept bachelor and unmarried.” *He is known as The Godfather of Sudoku.*

Mr. Kaji was born in 1951 on the northern island of Japan, Hokkaido. In high school, he played tennis and made it to the top eight at the national championship. He continued his education at Keio University but decided to drop out. Mr. Kaji has worked in dozens of different jobs, from road construction, welding operations and sleeper-train dismantlement, to German-Japanese patent document translation for pharmaceutical companies and running errands for musicians. For the past 25 years, Mr. Kaji has built an open subculture by getting his readers and fans involved in the process of puzzle creation and invention.



English Books



Art

[Japanese plays: Noh, Kyogen, Kabuki] / translated by A.L. Sadler; with a new foreword by Paul Atkins. Tokyo; Rutland, Vt.: Tuttle Pub., 2010. Library Call No. 895.620822 SAD

[The Noh plays of Japan] / by Arthur Waley. Tokyo; Rutland, Vt.: Tuttle, 2009. Library Call No. 895.62 WAL

[The Japanese art of stone appreciation: Suiseki and its use with bonsai] / by Vincent T. Covello and Yuji Yoshimura; with a new foreword by Sonja Arntzen. North Clarendon, Vt.: Tuttle Pub., 2009. Library Call No. 745.58 COV

[Pattern sourcebook: Japanese style 2: 250 patterns for projects and designs] / by Shigeki Nakamura. Beverly, Mass. : Rockport Publishers, 2009. Library Call No.745.4 NAK

Culture

[Matsuri: World of Japanese festivals] / [photographed by] Gorazd Vilhar; [written by] Charlotte Anderson. Tokyo, Japan: Shufunotomo Co., 1994. Library Call No. 386.1 VIL

[Japanese mythology: Hermeneutics on Scripture] / by Jun' Ichi Isomae; translated by Mukund Subramanian. Tokyo, KyJapan; International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken), 2009. Library Call No. 299.56133 ISO

[At home in Japan: A foreign woman's journey of discovery] / by Rebecca Otowa. Tokyo; North Clarendon, Vt.: Tuttle Pub., 2010. Library Call No. 305.813 OTO

[Population and family in early modern central Japan] / by Hayami Akira. Kyoto: The International Research Center for Japanese Studies, 2010. Library Call No. 306.80952 HAY

Cooking

[Noodle comfort] / by Kentaro Kobayashi. New York: Vertical, 2009. Library Call No. 641.5952 KOB

[Donburi mania] / by Kentaro Kobayashi; photography by Hideo Sawai; [translation, Patricia Kawasaki]. New York: Vertical, 2009. Library Call No. 641.5952 KOB

[Japanese kitchen knives: Essential techniques and recipes] / by Hiromitsu Nozaki with Kate Klippensteen; photographs by Yasuo Konishi. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2009. Library Call No. 641.5952 NOZ



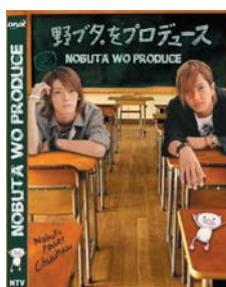
New DVD List In The Library



Title: Tiger & Dragon (タイガー & ドラゴン) Vol. 1 – 5
Directed by: Kaneko Fuminori, Katayama Osamu, Tsuboi Toshio

Synopsis: The tale of Tiger & Dragon revolves around Rakugo, a traditional form of Japanese comedy that can look back on an impressive 400 year long history. Nagase portrays the Yakuza follower Toraji who goes to a Rakugo performer to collect debts, while Okada plays Ryuji a talented Rakugo player who wants to leave behind the old fashioned world of Rakugo for good. Shortly afterwards these two very different characters happen to cross paths through a girl named Megumi and that's when all the real trouble starts igniting...

Subtitle: Japanese Only



Title: Produce to NOBUTA (野ブタ。をプロデュース) Vol. 1 – 4
Directed by: Iwamoto Hitoshi, Sakuma Noriyoshi

Synopsis: Kiritani Shuji is the popular guy who gets along with everyone, from the jerks to the nerds to the just plain weird. The one person Shuji cannot stand is Kusano Akira. To Shuji, Akira is just plain annoying. He laughs, talks and acts funny. Things heat up when a new student comes to school. Her name is Kotani Nobuko, a girl who has no self confidence at all and is content at being made fun of and bullied in school. Shuji and Akira come to an accord that in order to make use of their "youth" they will "produce" Nobuko as the next popular girl.

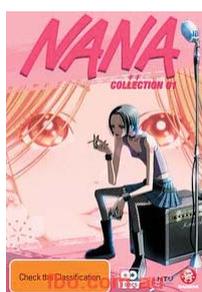
Subtitle: Japanese Only



Title: One Piece movie 2 (collection of One Piece series)
Directed by: Konosuke Uda

Synopsis: The series begins with a boy named Monkey D. Luffy, inspired by his childhood hero the "Red-Haired" Shanks, going on a journey to find the One Piece. Along the way, he organizes and leads a crew named the Straw Hat Pirates. The crew consists of a swordsman named Roronoa Zoro; the navigator and thief Nami; the sharpshooter Usopp; the chef Sanji; the doctor Tony Tony Chopper; the archaeologist Nico Robin; the shipwright Franky; and a musician named Brook.

Subtitle: Japanese Only



Title: NANA 3 (collection of NANA series)
Directed by: Asaka Morio

Synopsis: Ren, Nana's boyfriend, had quit BLACK STONES, and made his debut as a member of TRAPNEST. Two years later, Nana left for Tokyo with only her guitar and cigarettes, wishing to make her own singing debut.

Subtitle: Japanese Only



Title: Appleseed saga: ex machina
Directed by: Shinji Aramaki

Synopsis: Deunan, a young female warrior, and Briareos, a veteran cyborg-soldier, are both partners and lovers. As members of E.S.W.A.T., the elite Special Forces serving Olympus, they are deployed whenever trouble strikes. The two fighters find their partnership tested in a new way by the arrival of a new member to their ranks – an experimental Bioroid named Tereus.

Subtitle: Japanese Only

JAPANESE LANGUAGE COURSES AT JFKL

I have been attending Japanese classes at The Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur (JFKL) for around 2 years. Throughout the course, not only did I learn the language better but I think the most precious experience for me was having the chance to interact with various Japanese people who live in Malaysia.

Last year's semester was exceptionally memorable when we were given the task of interviewing several respective Japanese guests and were required to find out their points-of-view regarding a few selected topics. After the interview, we were then required to summarize our findings and present them in class.

Our class was divided into groups according to the topics that we have selected earlier. Afterwards, we took turns to interview the respective guest based on our prepared questions. With the assistance and advice from our *Senseis* (Japanese teachers), the interview and presentation went really great.

During the interview, we were not only able to develop the skills to interact with the Japanese, but we also had the chance to know and understand the Japanese's thoughts and opinions on the selected topics.

At JFKL, learning Japanese is not only limited to the textbook – the courses are designed to be interactive and entertaining. And since all the students are encouraged to take part in the class, it is no wonder that we are able to gain much more knowledge and exposure from the experience. And I'm sure that future students alike will be able to benefit from the experiences as well.

**Article written by Advanced Japanese course student, Mah Hwee Fong.*

The next intake for the Intermediate to Advanced courses will begin from **18 May 2011**. We will be accepting applications from **7 – 31 March 2011**. Please refer to our website, www.jfkl.org.my for complete details and updates.



The 8th Japanese Speech Contest for Secondary Schools

Talk your way to Japan!

The 8th Japanese Speech Contest for Secondary Schools

Calling all Secondary School Students!
Do you know Japanese? Got a story to tell?

Speak your mind
and stand to win a trip to Japan!
Submit your script for the Contest
through your Sensei today!

Closing date for Applications: 31 March 2011, Thursday

Theme : Free

Length : Between 800 and 1000 words
(Speech should not exceed 5 minutes)

Speech contest date and time: 2 May 2011, Monday (1.00pm)

Venue : The Japan Club of Kuala Lumpur

For complete rules & regulations and contest form go to:

www.jfkl.org.my

For further information please contact

Ms. Yamakawa or **Mr. Amery** at
03-2284 7228 or visit www.jfkl.org.my

Organized by:



Japan Foundation Japanese Studies Fellowship Program 2010-2011

Every year, through the Annual Grant Program, the Japan Foundation offers the Japanese Studies Fellowship Program to individual researchers in the fields of social sciences and humanities. One successful applicant from Malaysia, **Dr. Yong Chen Chen**, has completed her research entitled *The Indices in Measuring the Domestic Market Penetration of Japanese Affiliates in ASEAN and China*. Dr. Yong is currently a lecturer in the Faculty of Economics and Administration, University of Malaya, and went to Kyoto, Japan from 2 September – 30 October 2010 under the Japanese Studies Fellowship Program 2010-2011 to complete her research. This report is about her experiences in Kyoto, Japan.

My Appreciation and Unforgettable Experiences

First and foremost, I would like to express my deep appreciation to the Japan Foundation for giving me the opportunity to carry out my research work at the Center of Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS), Kyoto University. Besides concentrating on my research work, I am glad to have the opportunity to learn about Japanese culture and experience the Japanese lifestyle. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following organizations and persons, and share some of my wonderful experiences during my stay in Kyoto, Japan.

CSEAS

My sincere appreciation goes to Professor Shimizu Hiromu, the Director of CSEAS, Professor Mizuno Kosuke, my co-researcher, and all of the staff at CSEAS. The monthly gatherings have strengthened the relationships among the international fellows and the CSEAS staff.

Ms. Kyoko Hirose

A special thanks to Ms. Kyoko Hirose from Kyushu Sangyo University, Fukuoka, Japan. I am glad to have the opportunity to meet up with Ms. Kyoko Hirose after our last meeting at China in 2009. We had a fruitful discussion. After knowing the difficulties in accessing the micro data from the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry at Tokyo, Japan, she tried all means to find alternatives to get information for me. Although we failed to get the permission to access the data in the end, I am happy that we could at least have the opportunity to work together.

The Librarians of CSEAS

A pool of data was needed for my research analysis. I still remember that I was facing some difficulties in downloading the data. The Librarians in CSEAS immediately solved the problems for me at their fingertips.



Monthly gathering for international fellows and the CSEAS staff. From left: Mr. Dao Minh Truong (Vietnam), Prof. Herman Hidayat (Indonesia), Prof. Nicanor G. Tiongson (Philippines), myself and Prof. Shimizu (Director of CSEAS).



Ms. Kyoko Hirose (left) and I.



Maiko performance at the Kyoto Museum of Traditional Crafts.

The things that impressed me the most in Japan

a. The transportation system

At first, I was worried whether I could get to the correct destination once I reached Kansai Airport. Surprisingly, I reached Kyoto safely. I thought that the language barrier might give me some problems. The well-designed transportation system with clear instructions and directions has made my way easier. Besides the well-designed transportation system, their punctuality has cleared my worries to reach my desired destinations.

b. The culture, people and lives in Kyoto

It is well known that Kyoto has many old shrines, temples and historical places. Besides enjoying doing research at the Center of Southeast Asian Studies, I had many wonderful weekends during my stay in Kyoto. Kyoto is a good place for relaxing the mind. Life in Kyoto is so lively. Besides visiting old temples and shrines, it was exciting to explore Kyoto on a bicycle. Cycling alongside the Kamo-gawa river, you may see people relaxing on the bank, wading in the river, having picnics and individual or group performances.

The Pontocho district is a great place to spot Geisha and Maiko. I enjoyed the Maiko Dance at the Kyoto Museum of Traditional Crafts on Sunday. There were three performances by real Maiko. Besides the Maiko Dance, there were also traditional craft demonstrations which allowed visitors to watch and learn the work of Kyoto craftsmen.

My working environment

The work spirit of the international research fellows had inspired and motivated me to achieve my research targets. Although we are from different fields of study, the exchange of ideas has led to fruitful and endless discussions. The facilities provided by CSEAS have made my work more comfortable and relaxing.

Visits

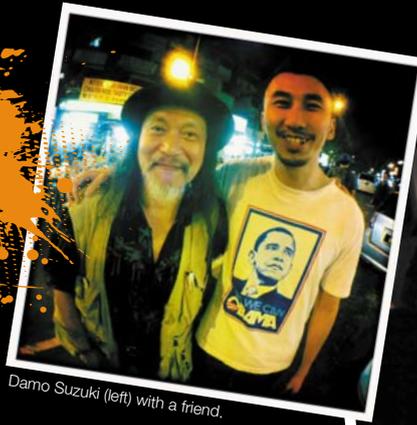
I visited a Japanese family (Ms. Inowa) to learn about the Japanese social status and culture. Besides that, I also visited Tokyo and Osaka to know more about Japanese social economics.

My research output

A seminar has been conducted at the Faculty of Economics, University of Malaya to present my research findings after returning to Malaysia. A paper has been accepted for the International Conference on Economics and Finance Research on 26-28 February 2011 at Singapore. Besides that, a paper has been submitted for possible publication of the Journal of Economics letters.

Last but not least, the support given by my family, the Japan Foundation and CSEAS have motivated me to achieve my desired research target. The short stay in Japan has given me a wonderful memory.

DAMO SUZUKI LIVE IN KL



Damo Suzuki (left) with a friend.



Damo Suzuki's Network show on Saturday night, 27 November 2010 at the Annexe Gallery, Kuala Lumpur was brought by the Herbal Project and supported by the Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur. A longhaired Japanese man born in 1950, with a black wispy moustache, Damo Suzuki was the singer of the German avant-rock band Can from 1971 to 1973. His current band is a world wide collective called *Damo Suzuki's Network*. On that particular night, Damo Suzuki spontaneously hooked up with the KL Network Musicians featuring Goh Lee Kwang, Yong Yandsen, members of CIPLAK and members of The Abang Guard on his trip to Malaysia for Switch On Mini Fest 2010.

Damo Suzuki and the KL Network Musicians were impressive, firing up the audience with enthusiasm, passion and charisma without missing a beat vocally for an almost two-hour show. One of the best parts about the show was how small it was, giving the audience a chance to feel connected to the band, and by the end, there wasn't a single person there who wasn't feeling their vibe. After the show, Damo Suzuki was happy to chat with the audience, sign autographs and take photos with his fans.

MAPFest 2010

The Melaka Art and Performance Festival (MAPFest) 2010 was successfully organized from 26-28 November 2010 at St. Paul's Hill in Malacca by E-Plus Entertainment Productions Sdn. Bhd., with support from the Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur and many other sponsors. This three-day festival featured world-renowned artistes from Malaysia, Australia, Spain, Ireland, Japan and all over Asia, and was officiated by the Honourable Chief Minister of Malacca, Y.A.B. Dato' Seri Haji Mohd Ali Bin. Mohd. Rustam.

The opening ceremony was well-attended by invited guests and the highlights of the opening included an interactive lighting-based installation, and a special booth for anyone to write messages on young coconut leaves to express fears, wishes and secrets. The opening performances for the night featured **Mr. Ikko Suzuki** and **Ms. Yumi Umiumare** from Japan and other artists from Indonesia and Australia. This unique annual festival included site-specific performances by the artistes, art installations, short stories, a film festival and workshops running at different locations at St. Paul's Hill, attracting more than 10, 000 people from all over the country.

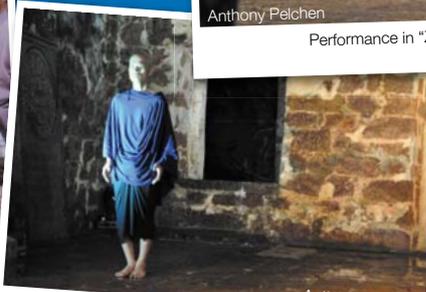


The VIPs of the event.



Anthony Pelchen

Performance in "Zero Zero" by Tony Yap (left) and Yumi Umiumare.



Performance by Ikko Suzuki.

Anthony Pelchen

YOSHIDA BROTHERS, Live in KL



The Yoshida Brothers, masters of the shamisen – a traditional Japanese three-stringed musical instrument – came all the way from Japan to perform for three intimate sessions at the Actors Studio @ Lot 10. From 21 until 23 January 2011, roughly 560 lucky audience members were witnesses to the extent of the shamisen's (and the brothers') raw prowess in expressing a whole range of different sounds and emotions – all without any help from a backing band.

The brothers appeared on stage clad in matching kimonos with bright, earthy color tones and patterns, which seems to be their trademark costume for their performances. After taking their seats on stage as well as preparing themselves and their instruments, the brothers started to unleash a flurry of string-plucking with their nimble fingers – setting the stage (pun intended) for what's in store for the session, with their first song, "Hishou".

In between songs, the brothers would introduce themselves and divulge little nuggets of information about their songs and such, not to mention crack a joke or two. However, when it came to delivering their songs to the audience, their facial expressions clearly showed that they were feeling and emoting the very core, or essence of their songs – as their fingers moved gracefully and naturally across the strings of the shamisen, while other parts of their bodies seemed to be enraptured by the spirit of the songs they so skillfully performed – with eyes wide shut even. It really seemed like they have transcended into a different state of mind and being – like a musically-induced trance of sorts (no references to any famous musicians here).

Sometime during the first half of the concert, the brothers exhibited some playful sibling rivalry by taking turns to perform solo, and asking the audience to decide for themselves who the better shamisen player is. According to the brothers, shamisen musicians usually perform by themselves in a band. Therefore, the union of the two brothers to perform together in sync is something very special indeed. It was simply amazing to watch them play off each other's individual styles while complementing one another harmoniously – all with impeccable timing, no less.

After playing a medley of songs old and new from their repertoire, the Yoshida Brothers finally performed "Tsugaru Jongara-Bushi", which they claimed is the best example to showcase all of the

shamisen's abilities and ranges. After the brothers left the stage, a continuous round of applause prompted them to return for an encore performance – their final song for the concert: "Hujin".

All in all, the Yoshida Brothers concert enlightened audience members on the many 'characters' of the shamisen – one is an intense, unbridled force which brings out the raw passion in its listeners, and another is a softer, romantic storyteller which soothes its listeners with gentle whispers from a distant era. However, no matter what mood the shamisen evokes, it has the inherent ability to reel the listener in and spearhead a musical journey like no other.

Leave it to a pair of young brothers to carry on the heritage of this traditional Japanese musical instrument, while keeping it relevant and contemporary in this age of digital and electronic music. With their expertise and ability to bring out the charisma of the shamisen, the Yoshida Brothers are sure to expand their foothold in more parts of the world, with Malaysia already secured on those three days.

"Yoshida Brothers, Live in KL" was presented by The Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur and The Actors Studio, in cooperation with the Embassy of Japan and with the support of JT International Berhad.



Passage to the Future: Art from a New Generation in Japan



Opening ceremony at Galeri Shah Alam, officiated by Dato' Raja Zahabuddin Raja Yaacob



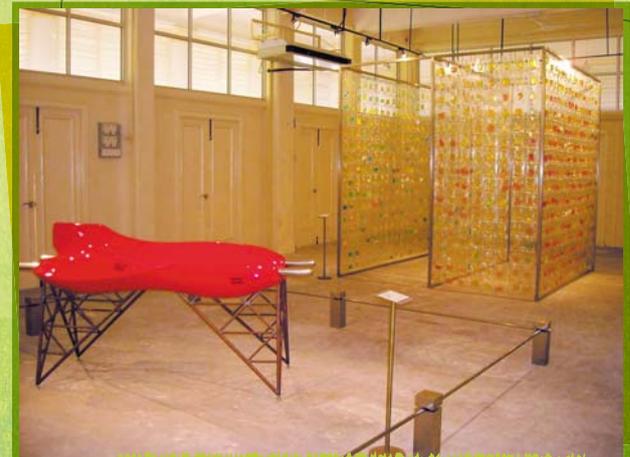
"Japanese Little Kitchen" by Tabaimo, being admired by visitors at Galeri Shah Alam

As one of the Japan Foundation's touring exhibitions, "Passage to the Future: Art from a New Generation in Japan" toured Malaysia in December 2010 and January 2011. The exhibition was first held at Galeri Shah Alam from 8 – 24 December 2010. At the opening ceremony on 10 December, the exhibition was officiated by Dato' Raja Zahabuddin Raja Yaacob, the members of the Board of Trustee, Galeri Shah Alam, followed by a performance by Space Gambus Experiment.

After the successful exhibition in Shah Alam, the set toured to Penang and was exhibited at No. 57 on Macalister Road. There, this collection of Japanese contemporary artwork was housed in one of Penang's heritage buildings, creating a very unique atmosphere. The opening ceremony was held on 8 January 2011, and was officiated by Ar. Cik. Hajah Patahiyah Bt Ismail, President of the Penang City Council.



Seated on the left is a robot from the future, who took interest in our Passage to the Future exhibition in Penang (Just kidding, he's just a cosplayer from USM)



"Lightning" by Tetsuya Nakamura (left), and "Please Wash Away" by Miyuki Yokomizo (right), exhibited in No. 57, Macalister Road

JFKL Holiday Notices

Please be informed that JFKL will be closed on the following days:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Feb (Tue) | Federal Territory Day |
| 3 Feb (Thu) & 4 Feb (Fri) | Chinese New Year |
| 15 Feb (Tue) | Prophet Muhammad's Birthday |



JAPAN FOUNDATION 國際交流基金

"TEMAN BARU" is distributed to JFKL members.
JFKL membership is available upon application. Membership fee is RM10 per year.

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