

Teman Baru

ISSUE **77** August - September 2014

JAPAN FOUNDATION KUALA LUMPUR
BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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JAPAN FOUNDATION
国際交流基金

JFKL's Upcoming Programme

Japanese Film Festival 2014

Laughter Of 600 Years – Mansai Nomura Kyogen Performance

Asian Puppet Theatre Exchange

The World Heritage in Japan – History, Nature and Food

The Weekend Japanese Film Show

Nihongo WAIWAI Club

Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) Familiarization Course New Intake

Japanese Film Festival 2014



Japanese Film Festival 2014

The Japan Foundation Kuala Lumpur has pulled the curtains on the full programme for the 11th edition of the Japanese Film Festival to be held at selected Golden Screen Cinemas venues across Malaysia.

Over four weeks in September and October, the event will showcase the best in Japanese motion pictures. Cinephiles can expect a heady mix of titles to whet every appetite, from light-hearted mainstream fare to movies that have made the rounds in film festivals the likes of Cannes, Berlin, Venice, Toronto and New York.

Touching human dramas dominate the 13-strong list, which includes five new releases. Yuki Tanada's exploration of grief and loss in "Mourning Recipe" stars an award-winning cast boasting a Japan Academy Prize and Venice Film Festival Marcello Mastroianni Award to their names. Meanwhile, Mikako Ichikawa, who picked up the prestigious Silver St. George in 2002, plays a kooky woman who rents cats to lonely people in "Rent-a-Cat".

Visitors will also find definite crowd-pleasers in Hirokazu Koreeda's Cannes Jury Prize-winning family drama "Like Father, Like Son", Hayao Miyazaki's swansong biopic "The Wind Rises" and action-comedy "Samurai Hustle", which went straight to number two at the Japan box office in its opening week.

All films are presented in Japanese with English subtitles.



© GAGA Corporation

Like Father, Like Son

d. KOREEDA Hirokazu/2013/121min

Ryota Nonomiya is a successful businessman driven by money. When he learns that his biological son was switched with another child after birth, he must make a life-changing decision and choose his true son or the boy he raised as his own.



© 2013 Nibariki / GNCHDDTK

The Wind Rises

d. MIYAZAKI Hayao/2013/126min

A fictionalized biography of Jiro Horikoshi, designer of the Mitsubishi A5M and its successor, the Mitsubishi A6M Zero; fighter planes that were used by the Empire of Japan during WWII.



© 2012 Rent-A-Cat F.P

Rent-a-Cat

d. OGIGAMI Naoko/2012/110min

An odd woman named Sayoko rents cats to lonely people. Some of the renters include an old woman who lost her husband and her cat, a middle-aged man who moved away from his family for work, a woman at a reception desk who questions her existence and a man who has a connection with Sayoko.



©2012 "Tug of War!" Film Partners

Tug of War!

d. MIZUTA Nobuo/2012/111min

Chiaki Nishikawa works at the public relations department for the city of Oita. The city in the past thrice won the tug-of-war world championship and Chiaki is also an enthusiast for the tug-of-war game. To promote Oita, the mayor instructs Chiaki to form a female tug-of-war team.



© 2011 Oasis Project

Tokyo Oasis

d. MATSUMOTO Kana & KAYO Nakamura/2011/83min

Losing her grip on reality, an actress leaves the filming of her latest project and encounters three kindred spirits. Together, they discover a new lease on life.



© 2012 "Leaving on the 15th Spring" Film Partners

Leaving on the 15th Spring

d. YOSHIDA Yasuhiro/2013/114min

Yuna is a 15-year-old who lives with her father in a secluded island where students are forced to leave upon graduating from junior high. Though she is excited about the prospect of life away from her small community, she feels unease over leaving her father all alone.

KLANG VALLEY

Dates: 11 – 16 September
Venues: GSC Pavilion KL, GSC Mid Valley, GSC One Utama

PENANG

Dates: 18 – 21 September
Venue: GSC Gurney Plaza

KUCHING

Dates: 25 – 28 September
Venue: GSC CityOne Megamall

KOTA KINABALU

Dates: 2 – 5 October
Venue: GSC Suria Sabah Mall

*Tickets can be purchased through GSC box office, GSC e-payment at gsc.com.my or GSC Mobile App for Apple and Android devices.
All movies are subject to change.



Fly, Dakota, Fly!

d. ABURATANI Seiji/2013/109min

Shortly after the end of WWII, a plane carrying British soldier and dignitaries is stranded in Sado Island. Despite their initial hostility, the villagers decide to help their former enemies to return home.



Initial D Legend 1: Awakening

d. HIDAHA Masamitsu/2014/60min

High school student Takumi Fujiwara is a gas station attendant by day and a delivery boy for his father's tofu shop by night. But little does he know his precise driving skills and his father's modified Toyota Sprinter AE86 Trueno will soon pit him against Gunma prefecture's best racing groups.



Saint Seiya: Legend Of Sanctuary

d. SATOU Keiichi/2014/93min

Five young warriors known as Saints wage war against the Sanctuary in an effort to protect Saori Kido, a reincarnation of the goddess Athena.

The Snow White Murder Case

d. NAKAMURA Yoshihiro/2014/126min

A mystery about the destructive power of gossip when a young woman who works at a cosmetic company is suspected of murdering her beautiful colleague.

Samurai Hustle

d. MOTOKI Katsunori/2013/119min

Masaatsu Naito is the head of a small and poor clan in Northern Japan who is ordered by the Shogun to travel an incredible distance in an impossibly short time or risk having his land taken away.

The Round Table

d. YUKISADA Isao/2014/113min

Kokko is a third grade elementary school student who is dissatisfied with her life despite having a happy family.

Mourning Recipe

d. TANADA Yuki/2013/129min

A man's life is turned upside down after the death of his wife. Two weeks later, a woman visits him and gives him a recipe which was left by his late wife. Meanwhile, his daughter Yuriko comes to visit him in lieu of her impending divorce.

ASIAN TRADITIONAL THEATRE SERIES

LAUGHTER OF 600 YEARS

– MANSAI NOMURA KYOGEN PERFORMANCE
‘THE OWL’ & ‘TIED TO A STICK’



A vessel of humour and history, the Japanese comedic dramatic form of Kyōgen has touched audiences from all walks of life since the 14th century. In 2001, it was designated as “the oral and intangible heritage of humanity” by UNESCO.

The Mansaku-no-Kai Kyōgen Company, led by one of Japan’s most illustrious Kyōgen performers, Mansaku Nomura, is set to perform two classic tales. In “The Owl”, a man discovers his brother has been possessed by the spirit of the titular bird after a mysterious trip to the mountains. “Tied to a Stick” meanwhile recounts the hilarious exploits of a master in his attempt to punish his two insubordinate servants.

There will be a joint workshop conducted by the Nanning Cantonese Opera Troupe and the Mansaku-no-Kai Kyogen Company a day before the event.



Workshop Details

Date & Time : 22nd August, 7:30pm –
Venue : Sinkeh,
105, Lebuh Melayu,
George Town, 10200 Penang.
Participation :

Performance Details

Date & Time : 23rd August, 8:30pm – 9:30pm
Venue : MPPP Town Hall,
Jalan Padang Kota Lama,
George Town, 10200 Penang
Admission : RM 20 – RM 60

Registration

George Town Festival Secretariat
TEL : +604 261 6308
ADD : 1st Floor, 86 Lebuh Armenian, George Town, 10200 Penang.

Ticket Purchase

1. www.AirAsiaRedtix.com
2. Rock Corner outlets
(The Gardens, KLCC, Subang Parade, The Curve)
3. Victoria Music outlets
(Sungei Wang Plaza, Amcorp Mall, Tropicana City Mall)
4. Tune Store, Low Yat Plaza



Mansai Nomura



Kazunori Takano



Shuichi Nakamura

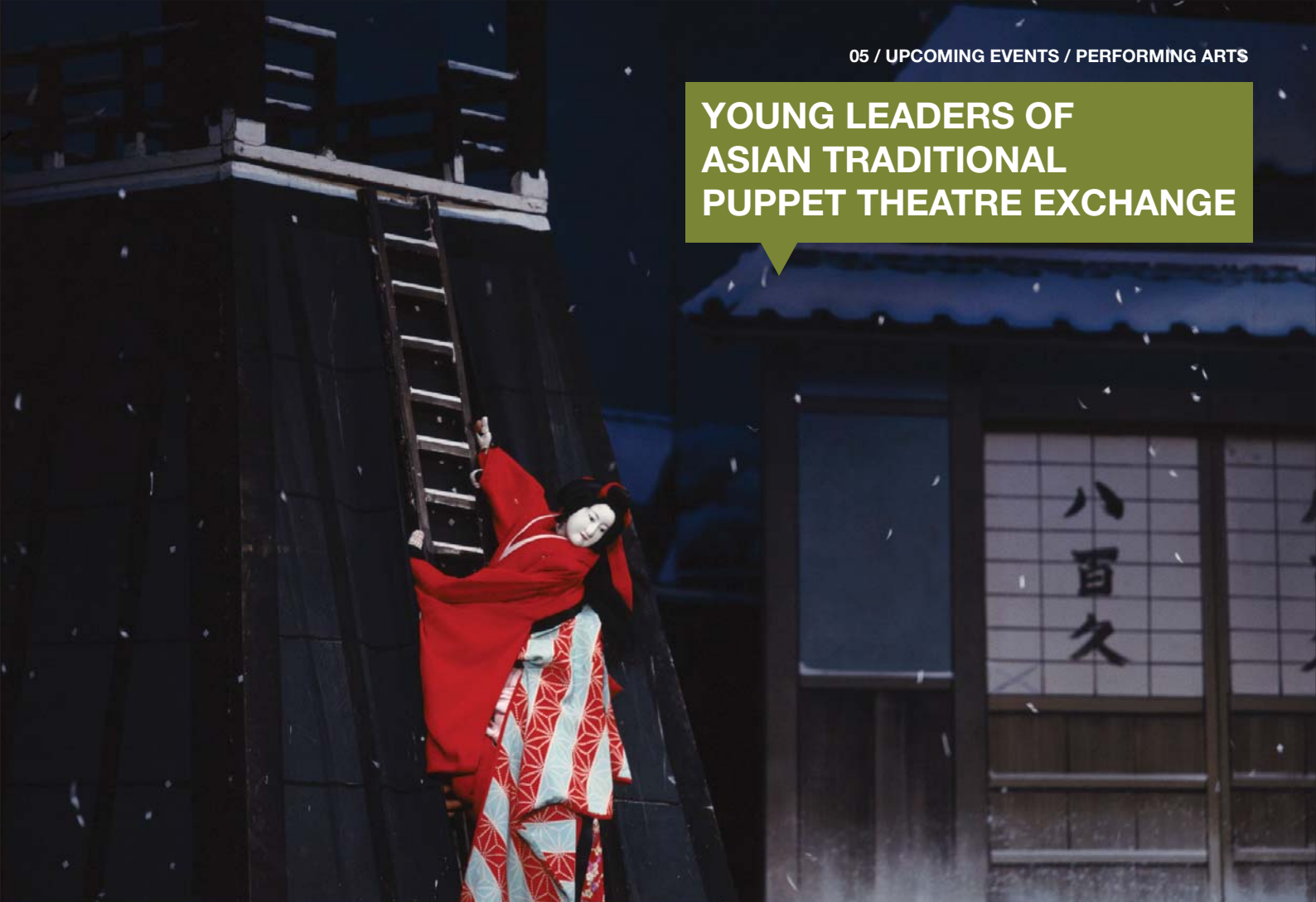


Ren Naito



Go Iida

YOUNG LEADERS OF ASIAN TRADITIONAL PUPPET THEATRE EXCHANGE



Bunraku, a form of traditional Japanese puppet theatre, was staged for the first time in Southeast Asia last year to celebrate the 40th anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. Bunraku Company Minosuke-kai's appearance not only marked a historical first in the region, but also paved the way to a new collaboration between Japan and ASEAN countries through traditional puppets.

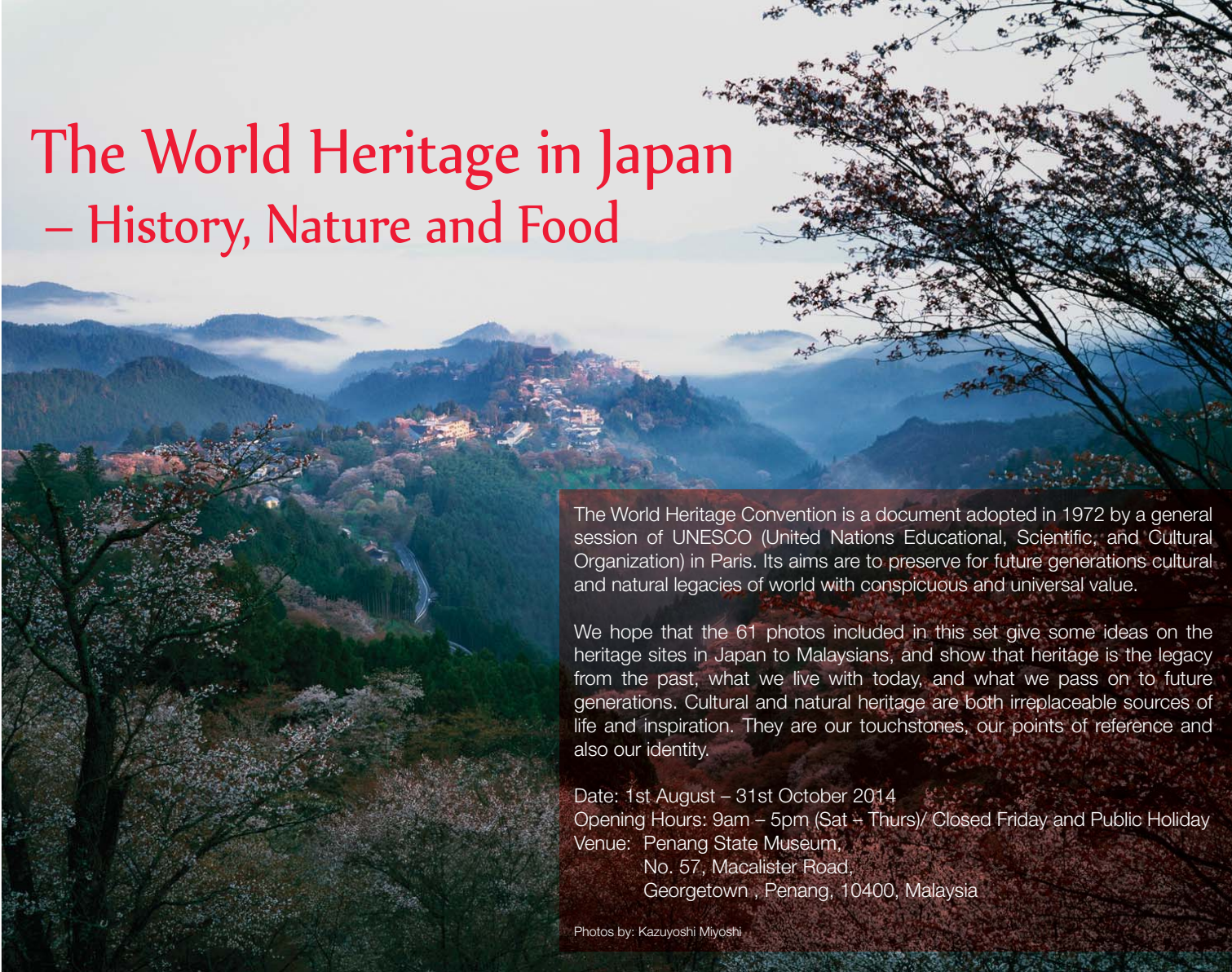
This year, young professionals of the same troupe will return to Southeast Asia to foster more cultural exchange. They will embark on a three-city tour of Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Hanoi to conduct joint-workshops, network and trade skills with their peers.

Date : 28/08/2014
Time : 8:00 pm
Venue : Royal Museum,
 Jalan Istana, Istana Negara
 50460 Kuala Lumpur
 Register at the
**Asian Puppet Theatre Exchange:
 Bunraku and Wayang Kulit Workshop
 page on Eventbrite**



The World Heritage in Japan

– History, Nature and Food



The World Heritage Convention is a document adopted in 1972 by a general session of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) in Paris. Its aims are to preserve for future generations cultural and natural legacies of world with conspicuous and universal value.

We hope that the 61 photos included in this set give some ideas on the heritage sites in Japan to Malaysians, and show that heritage is the legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration. They are our touchstones, our points of reference and also our identity.

Date: 1st August – 31st October 2014

Opening Hours: 9am – 5pm (Sat + Thurs)/ Closed Friday and Public Holiday

Venue: Penang State Museum,
No. 57, Macalister Road,
Georgetown, Penang, 10400, Malaysia

Photos by: Kazuyoshi Miyoshi



THE WEEKEND JAPANESE FILM SHOW



AUGUST 2014



© 2010 MIZUKI production "Gegege no Nyobo" Production Committee

The Wife of Gegege ゲゲゲの女房

(鈴木卓爾 SUZUKI Takuji / 2010 / 119min)

A love story depicting the younger days of Mizuma Shigeru, author of "Gegege no Kitaro," the well-known comic on 'yokai' (supernatural beings), and his wife Mura Nunoe, who supported him through the years. Like the hit TV drama version, the film is based on Nunoe's autobiography, but it focuses mainly on their days as newlyweds when they lived through extreme poverty, and provides a heart-warming account of their struggles as they start a life together. In Shimane prefecture, 1961, 29 year-old Nunoe and Shigeru, a manga artist who lost his left arm in the war, get married, just five days after being introduced at a matchmaking meeting. They move to Tokyo and endure a life of abysmal poverty.

Date : 9th August 2014**Time** : 3pm**Venue** : Pawagam Mini, Tingkat 3,
Fakulti Filem dan Video, ASWARA (Bangunan Baru)

SEPTEMBER 2014



© "BALLAD" Production Committee, TV ASAHI, DREAM, DENTSU, ADK, LESPROS ENTERTAINMENT, SHIN-EI ANIMATION, Futabasha, Shogakukan, SHIROGUMI, ABC, NAGOYA TV

BALLAD 名もなき恋のうた

(山崎貴 YAMAZAKI Takashi / 2009 / 132min)

Of the numerous feature films in the Crayon Shin-chan anime series, Crayon Shinchan Bravo Samurai was particularly well received and honored with many prestigious awards. The world of this anime masterpiece has been reworked here as a live-action, romantic period piece. A timid boy timeslips into the medieval era of the Warring States, where he observes the love between a lowly samurai and the princess of a small feudal domain. Yamazaki Takashi, director of the Always: Sunset on Third Street films, employs his talent for visual effects to give the battle scenes a feeling of grand scale.

By sheer chance, the much-bullied Shinichi (Takei Akashi) is transported back to 1574. His sudden arrival happens to save the life of Ijiri Matabee (Kusanagi Tsuyoshi), a samurai general known as "Demon Ijiri," and he soon realizes that Matabee and Princess Ren (Aragaki Yui), the daughter of his lord and a childhood friend, are in love with each other. But Princess Ren's beauty has become famous throughout the region, and Takatora (Osawa Takao), a fiery-tempered lord of a powerful domain, asks for her hand in marriage. She refuses, touching off a battle between the two domains.

Date : 6th September 2014**Time** : 3pm**Venue** : Pawagam Mini, Tingkat 3,
Fakulti Filem dan Video, ASWARA (Bangunan Baru)

UPCOMING EVENTS / LANGUAGE

Nihongo WAIWAI Club



Not using Japanese as often as you wish?
How about joining our Nihongo WAIWAI Club?
WAIWAI is used to describe the lively atmosphere of people interactions in a gathering, festival or even in a classroom.
The club offers you a chance to meet people and enjoy activities together...entirely in Japanese!

Would you like to talk about *ANIME* or cosplay?
Our second club's activity would be "*AKIBA KAI*".
AKIBA - short for Akihabara, town which is a sanctuary for Japanese *ANIME*!.
Kai stands for meeting or gathering.
Let's gather and share your favourite *ANIME* or one of its character.
Better still, come dressed in the costume of your favourite character, if you love cosplay!

Japanese Proficiency Level	A2.2- Level* (You are advised to have the proficiency of JLPT level N4 or its equivalent to participate.) * Based on JF Standard Level (http://www.jfstandard.jp)
Date	18th Sep (Thu) and 20th Sep (Sat)
Maximum	15 person per session
Fee	Free
How to apply	Details available on our website from 12th Aug 2014. Check it out! http://www.jfkl.org.my

UPCOMING EVENTS / LANGUAGE

Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) Familiarization Course JLPT 1 day trial New Intake 2014

Sign up for this course, if you would like to...

- determine your level of Japanese
- pinpoint your areas of weakness



JLPT 1 day trial

Course Date	06-Sep
Day	Saturday
Details available on our website from....	25-Jul

JAPANESE BOOKS



Japanese Language for Learners

「みんなの日本語 初級Ⅱ 第2版 本冊 / CD付」スリーエー・ネットワーク【編著】スリーエー・ネットワーク
A 「中・上級者のための速読の日本語 第2版 / CD付」岡 まゆみ【著】ジャパン・タイムズ
 「漢字たまご 初中級 / CD付」嶋田和子【監修】凡人社

2013年 Library Call No.810.78
 2013年 Library Call No.817.5 T
 2013年 Library Call No.811.2 T

Japanese Language for Teachers

「ている / ていた / ていない のアスペクト」江田すみれ【著】くろしお出版
 「プロジェクト学習の基本と手法」鈴木敏恵【著】教育出版
 「作文授業の作り方 編—日本語教師の7つ道具シリーズ③」大森雅子、鴻野豊子【著】アルク

2013年 Library Call No.815.5
 2013年 Library Call No.810.728
 2013年 Library Call No.810.72

Fiction

「母の遺産 — 新聞小説」<第39回大佛次郎賞> 水村美苗【著】中央公論新社
 「真夏の方程式」東野圭吾【著】文藝春秋
 「世界から猫が消えたなら」川村元気【著】マガジンハウス

2012年 Library Call No.913.6MIZ
 2011年 Library Call No.913.6HIG
 2010年 Library Call No.913.6KAW

Architecture

「京の左官親方が語る 楽しき土壁」佐藤嘉一郎【著】矢崎善次郎【聞き手】学芸出版社

2012年 Library Call No.525.58

Culture

B 「おみやげと鉄道」鈴木勇一郎【著】講談社
 「和の美をめぐる50の言葉 新装版」(with English) 木村 孝【著】ハースト婦人画報社

2013年 Library Call No.602.1
 2012年 Library Call No.386.1

Arts

「われた魯山人」(with English) 前田義子【著】フォクシー
 「十八代 勘三郎」中村勘三郎【著】小学館

2012年 Library Call No.750.21
 2013年 Library Call No.774.28

Cooking

C 「石巻ボランティアハウスの橋本ごはん」(with English) 橋本信子 / INJM【著】セブン&アイ出版

2013年 Library Call No.596

Picture Books

D 「風立ちぬ 徳間アニメ絵本33」宮崎 駿【原作・脚本・監督】徳間書店
 「きょうのごはん」加藤休三【さく】偕成社

2013年 Library Call No.778.77
 2012年 Library Call No.726.6

< Recommended Books >

「中・上級者のための速読の日本語 第2版」

広告、目次、メニュー、新聞記事、小説など、ふだん日本人が日常で眼にする多彩な生教材を使って、情報の読み取り(スキミング)と大意の把握(スキミング)を練習しながら、すばやく正確に日本語を読み取る力を養うテキストの改訂版です。100を超える段階的なトレーニングで素早く正確に読む力を養います。

「おみやげと鉄道」

『日本各地の駅を訪れると、饅頭や羊羹、弁当などの食品が、その土地の名物として売られている。私たちにとって当たり前のこの光景は、実は他の国ではほとんど見られない。』日本各地に無数に存在する「おみやげ」は、日本近代が生んだ独特の文化であり、鉄道をはじめとした「近代の装置」が、土地の歴史や産物とむすびついて「名物」が生み出されてきたという近代おみやげの誕生と発展を具体的に論じています。

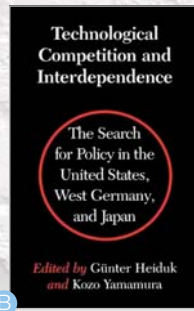
「石巻ボランティアハウスの橋本ごはん」

自称「ボランティアの追っかけ」という著者、橋本信子さん。3.11東日本大震災の被災者でありながら、世界中から石巻にきてくれるボランティアのためにごはんを作り続けています。彼女はなぜ作り続けるのか?元気の出るごはんレシピと橋本ママへのインタビューそして、ボランティアたちの声を紹介しています。

ENGLISH BOOKS



A



B



C



D

Fiction

- A [Meeting Luciano]**/ by Anne Esaki Smith. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 1999. Library Call No. 813.13 ESA
[The air of Tokyo]/ by Wendy Ella Wright. Briar Hill. Tokyo: Victoria Indra Publishing, 2002. Library Call No.823.4 WRI

Non Fiction and General Reading

- [The cult at the end of the world]**/ by David E. Kaplan and Andrew Marshall. New York: Crown Publisher, 1996. Library Call No. 364.1 KAP
[Dogs and Demons: tales from the dark side of Japan]/ Alex Kerr. New York: Hill and Wang, 2002. Library Call No.302.1 KER
C Japanamerica: how Japanese pop culture has invaded the U.S./ by Roland Kelts. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006. Library Call No.303.4827305209045 KEL
B [Technological competition and interdependence: the search for policy in the United states, West Germany and Japan]/ by Günter Heiduk. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990. Library Call No.338.97306 TEC
[Planning for change: industrial policy and Japanese economic development, 1945-1990]/ by James E. Vestal. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993. Library Call No.338.952 VES

Arts

- [Hidden faces: the art of Japanese masks]**/ by Asian Civilization Museum. Singapore: Asian Civilizations Museum, 2006. Library Call No.306.0952 HID

Cooking

- D [Japanese hot pots: comforting one-pot meals]**/ by Tadashi Ono and Harris Salat. Berkeley, California: Ten Speed Press, 2009. Library Call No. 641.820952 ONO
[D.K.'s sushi chronicles from Hawaii: recipes from Sansei Seafood Restaurant & Sushi Bar]/ by Dave Kodama and Bonnie Friedman. Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 2003. Library Call No.641.5952 KOD

<Recommended books for reading>

[Meeting Luciano]

Synopsis

Emily, with no real career plan, has gone back after college to work at her old summer job - waiting tables at the local Japanese steakhouse. Even worse than wearing a fake kimono and obi is that she's living at home with her mother. At first, her mom seems pretty much her old self - still reliving her Japanese childhood; still affecting the airs of a European sophisticate; still brewing espresso, cooking Italian, and singing arias from Rigoletto while she cleans; still idolizing Luciano Pavarotti.

But when Hanako hires Alex, a handsome Greek, to renovate the kitchen, Emily begins to worry. And when Alex, who seems to be getting very cozy with her mother, spills the secret that the renovation is in preparation for a visit from Pavarotti, Emily is thrown into a wonderfully familiar quandary: how to deal with a parent who might be losing it.

Ryuz: Music of Japan and Malaysia

– Towards A New Sphere of Tradition and Contemporary

Written by: Sulatan Ibrahim (JFKL) / 16th to 22nd June 2014



KL Show © James Quah

The Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur organised *Ryuz - Music of Japan and Malaysia - Towards A New Sphere of Tradition and Contemporary in Malaysia* from the 16th to the 22nd of June. Ryuz is a group that explores music transcending borders, and consists of three exciting Japanese musicians. Ryuz held their opening Malaysian performance in Kuala Lumpur at the ASWARA Orchestra Hall on the 16th before moving onto the Centre for Arts & Design (CAD) in Kota Kinabalu on the 18th and Kuching for the Rainforest World Music Festival from the 20th to the 22nd.

The tour was also intended as a new collaborative project between Japanese and Malaysian musicians. Through this programme, local music aficionados were introduced to Ryuz, which comprises folk singer/drummer Shigeri Kitsu, tsugaru-shamisen player Nobuto Yamanaka and vocalist Kazuki Kunihiro. The project marked the first partnership between ASEAN and Japanese artistes under the new Asia Centre which was established by the Japan Foundation in April this year to further enhance communication and collaboration within the region.

The KL performance started at 8:30 pm and was attended by 120 people. Japanese expatriates, university lecturers, students of Japan-related tertiary courses, ASWARA students and ASWARA rector Prof. Dr. Mohamad Hatta Azad Khan were among the audience members. Ryuz worked together with UiTM's Mohd Kamrulbahri Hussin known @ Wak Long on four songs, which enjoyed widespread acclaim. The audience gave the performers a standing ovation at the end of the show.



Collaboration in KL © James Quah

Sabahans, Japanese Consular staff, journalists and Sabah Tourism Board General Manager YBhg. Datuk Irene Benggon Charuruks packed CAD to the rafters for the 8 pm show. Ryuz this time partnered Mohammad Hazrul Ain and Azman M. Taip, whose gong and flute complemented well with the Japanese trio's traditional instruments in their rendition of "Sayang Kinabalu".

The group then headed to RWMF. On the 20th, a workshop entitled "Plucked, Strummed & Struck: The many different techniques on stringed instruments" was held at Iban Longhouse. Nobuto was one of the invited artistes and demonstrated the tsugaru-shamisen to the 100-strong crowd. Shigeri and Kazuki also displayed their musical prowess to an audience of 20 at the "The Voice: Beautiful vocals" workshop at Malay House. Shigeri pulled double duty at the Beatboxers" workshop as well. Ryuz concluded their Malaysian tour with a performance on the 22nd to a full house audience of 400 people.



Rehearsal in KK



Workshop at Rainforest World Music Festival



Conference was held for 2 days



Panelist from Malaysia, Thailand and Japan

Butoh Season: International Performance and Conference Report

Written by: Nagisa Nair (6th June – 8th June 2014)

Butoh Season: International Butoh Conference and Performance was organized in collaboration with Soubi Sha and Tunku Abdul Rahman University College (TAR UC), Faculty of Social Science, Arts & Humanities.

Butoh Season featured conferences, workshops, showcases as well as talks to better help the understanding of the art as well as the influence it had on the Malaysian performing arts.

It was held from the 6th to the 8th of June, 10 am to 8 pm daily. The following week on the 13th and 14th of June was a performance by our co-organizer, Soubi Sha held at the Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Center at 8:30 pm both days called *Reminiscence: The World of the Strange Tales Dance Performance*.

What is Butoh? It is an avant-garde art movement started by Tatsumi Hijikata (1928 – 1986) in Japan, which is known to be one of the most important movements in arts history. The more the conference dwelled into what Butoh is, the more difficult it became to define Butoh. The discussion sessions showed differing opinions between the original Hijikata Tatsumi disciple Mr. Waguri Yukio and Mr. Morishita Takahashi with the panelists and speakers from Thailand, Malaysia and Italy, in fact almost every speaker had a different view on Butoh was.

An enlightening point in the conference was when Mr. Lee Swee Keong of Nyoba Kan, known as the second Butoh group in Malaysia, shared on how Butoh had found its way to Malaysia.

The workshops by both Mr. Takao Kawaguchi and Mr. Taketeru Kudo on the 7th and 8th of June from 10 am – 12pm were attended by about 20 observers and 20 participants including Butoh dancers as well as non-dancers.

The special showcase on the 7th of June featured Mr. Kudo who performed first, Nyob Kan who performed second with an excerpt from “Catan Kulit” and Mr. Kawaguchi who performed last with his 2008 piece, “Good Luck”.

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to TAR UC as well as Soubi Sha for making this event possible.



Showcase Performance by Taketeru Kudo



Special Lecture by Mr. Morishita and Mr. Waguri



Workshop by Takao Kawaguchi



Curatorial Workshop & Curator Talk by Mami Kataoka, Chief Curator of Mori Art Museum

By Ong Jo-Lene

Workshop participants with Mami Kataoka, Yap Sau Bin, Shoichi Toyoda, Kyoko Kugata and Kazunori Matsunaga.

When the Japan Foundation announced the open-call for the Curators Workshop on their Facebook page, I remember seeing it shared fervently within minutes. It called for curatorial proposals under the broad theme of *Future Curation Now*. 12 applicants will be selected to attend a 3-day workshop led by Mami Kataoka - Chief Curator of Mori Art Museum, Tokyo since 2003, with a practice spanning prominent international projects including *9th Gwangju Biennale* (2012) as the Joint Artistic Director, *Phantoms of Asia: Contemporary Awakens the Past* (2012) at Asian Art Museum in San Francisco as guest curator, *Ai Weiwei: According to What?* (2012), and Yap Sau Bin - a Malaysian artist and curator who is progressive thinker and mentor figure in the local contemporary art scene. The workshop doubles as a competition, where 3 winners would be awarded a study-trip in Tokyo together with the winners from Indonesia, Philippines, and Thailand, plus a production grant to realise their proposals.

The announcement was cause for excitement because programmes on curatorship have been far and a few in Malaysia and on a much smaller scale. The openness of the format of the workshop - from the selection via open-call to the freedom afforded by the broad theme - was also much welcomed. 10 Malaysians and 2 curators from Japan were selected for the workshop: Azzad Diah, Chuah Eeyan, Grey Yeoh, Harold R. Easwar, Intan Rafiza, Kazuhiko Yoshizaki, Krystie Ng, Lee Cheah Ni, Mahendran Balasupramaniam, Tan Hui Koon, Yosuke Takahashi and myself. I had anticipated that I would know all the Malaysian participants because the scene is small, but was pleasantly surprised by power of an open-call to include new talent and those from outside of the "fine art" affinity groups.



L: sharing a light moment at the workshop. R: Talk by Mami Kataoka at NVAG, Q&A moderated by Yap Sau Bin.



The workshop took place from 16 - 18 June at the Japan Foundation Kuala Lumpur office. We were welcomed by Shoichi Toyoda, Director of the Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur. As Kataoka took over the floor, she suggested that we introduce ourselves and share our understanding of "What is curating?" This very basic question helped us re-examine our visions and responsibilities before we took on "the future"; as the practice has shifted from its traditional "keeper of collections" (the Latin word "curare" means "take care") of cultural heritage institutions, to include more recent concern of curators as makers and authors of exhibitions. Our answers were earnest and honest, but telling that curatorship is nascent here.

We then presented our proposals within 30 minutes each, including time for discussion with the panelist and fellow participants to help develop our ideas. On the second day, three lectures were presented: *Art Exchange in Asia* by Yasuko Furuichi, *Necessities and Visions in Curating* by Mami Kataoka, and *Mapping, and then some* by Yap Sau Bin.



On the last day of the workshop - it was show time - final presentation of our proposals. I initially had reservations on how much we could improve our proposals over 2 nights. My doubts were allayed by the concise leading questions from Kataoka and Yap were able to extricate us from difficulties in connecting theory to practical, identifying and speaking with our audience, and negotiating possible restrictions.

Kataoka in her closing remarks stated that while the proposals were interesting and made good use of the discussion feedback, not enough dealt with contemporary art. With that she proceeded to announce the winners: Lee Cheah Ni - for the relevance in local context of connecting local communities in Penang with and through contemporary art, Ong Jo-Lene - for demonstrating a basic understanding of contemporary art and tackling issues pertinent to Malaysian contemporary art, and a pairing of Harold R. Easwar with Kazuhiko Yoshizaki - combining an exhibition on MAPHILINDO from a Malaysian Borneo perspective with an oral history archive of art worker project as an alternative portrait of the locale.

The learning continued the next day with Kataoka's public lecture on *Contemporary Art and Social Changes in Japan* at the National Visual Art Gallery. Her presentation shows that art, particularly contemporary art is affected by and self-conscious of its environment and context. Kataoka also stressed on the importance of having a dedicated contemporary art museum, a place where the public can consistently experience contemporary art will lead to growth. It is also a platform for local practitioners who are otherwise finding an audience abroad, to work locally too, foster young professionals, and find support outside of market influence and demands. Perchance, the scramble to locate contemporaneity in art and art in contemporary times that resounded from the floor will find tools at this provisioned Malaysian MOCA.

Dipping into Hot Waters in Kinosaki

[Conference of Asian Women and Theatre Trip to Japan]

By: June Tan and Sharon Chin (13th – 15th June 2014)



Two Malaysian art practitioners, June Tan (Five Arts Centre) and Sharon Chin were invited by Shirotama Hitsujiya and Mikuni Yanaihara to the Japan Playwright Association's Congress 2014 in Kinosaki city, in the northern Hyogo Prefecture from 12 to 15 June 2014. We arrived by air in the morning of the 12th in the Kansai International Airport. Our journey continued with a memorable train ride passing first the modern skyscrapers of Osaka, before a scenery change to green idyllic rice fields nestled snugly in valleys encased by beautiful mountains. We were on our way to Kinosaki, a small town with a population of 5,000, famed for its hot springs and baths. A central canal runs through this town, lined with sweeping weeping willows. This, along with the tatami mats we slept on in our hotel and the daily kimono and clogs for the public hot baths, provided a backdrop of a traditional charm that gave us an interesting context for the conference we were about to attend.

On 13 June, we each presented at the "Conference of Asian Women and Theatre". Both of us, as an entry point for the audience, presented our work and also spoke about the state of the performing arts in Malaysia. This was followed by an hour discussion with the audience. The discussion was dominated by opinions whether a conference for Asian women in theatre is still relevant. We heard practitioners pointing out that their art is not defined by their gender.

On the other spectrum, we heard how the need for representation is still relevant. Asian women may have made strides in theatre since the last conference was held (in 2005), however female representation in the direction and policies that shape theatre is still nowhere near the representation by men.

On 14 June we participated in the creativity workshop organized by Shirotama Hitsujiya, which involved going to the beach. The sea and the beach will always be beautiful for most of us. What struck us most about this workshop was how we were encouraged to be curious again. Our curiosity was piqued with edible seaweed, edible shore plants, nature hikes and the unique experience of cooking rice outside over a wooden fire. This workshop, in transporting us to our childhood, allowed us to engage again with the natural world and reminded us of a way of seeing that was perhaps overshadowed by our hectic and busy schedules in the city.

On 15 June, we both travelled back to Kuala Lumpur, refreshed. And not just from the delectable hot springs. We felt engaged with female practitioners on issues that still need to be addressed and how Asian women in theatre can still be a discussion point. Most of all, we felt renewed in meeting and keeping the lines of communication and exchange open with our Japanese peers.



SHARON CHIN 2014

Sharon Chin
"Door in the Mountains" 2014
Ink on paper

Japanese Culture Session-Let's wear Yukata and try Bon Dance.

Written by: Naito Sakiko / 21st Jun 2014

"Japanese KIMONO let's wear YUKATA and try BON DANCE" was conducted recently as part of the effort to enhance JFKL students' appreciation, and understanding towards the Japanese culture while learning the language.

We started off with quiz onYukata. Besides learning the types of KIMONO the Japanese wear for different occasions, the participants were also very curious about how much a KIMONO would cost.

The participants then had fun attempting to wear one themselves as well as helping each other out. Towards the last 30 minutes we formed a big circle and danced BON DANCE together.



Japanese Language Regional Seminar for Secondary School Teacher (RESESS)

Written by: Naito Sakiko / Apr – July, 2014

The seminar is organized jointly with the Teacher Education Division, Ministry of Education Malaysia and held in 4 regions. The objective of these seminars is to enhance teaching methodology skills and language proficiency among teachers as well as promoting sharing of their experiences and networking.

"Teaching Effective Speech" is the theme for this year. The seminar hope to enhance the knowledge and skills among teachers in developing concrete ideas on how to train their students to deliver a good speech based on their respective proficiency.



So far teachers from the northern region and east coastal region have met in Ipoh and Kuala Terengganu respectively recently. The remaining two seminars are scheduled to be held in Johor Bharu and Kuala Lumpur.



JFKL Holiday Notice

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

31 August 2014 National Day

16 September 2014 Malaysia Day



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