

Perspectives

The Japan Foundation London Newsletter

Nature Man & Art

Symposium at The British Museum 6-8 September 2001

When Shinto *The Sacred Art of Ancient Japan* opened at the British Museum on 5 September, a special symposium took place to assist in the understanding and appreciation of this unique exhibition. *Nature, Man & Art* was held from 6-8 September to which distinguished speakers from Japan and the UK were invited.

An exhibition presenting the ancient arts of the Japanese religious beliefs known as Shinto, one that examines the arts from the Jomon to the Muromachi periods that were characteristic of these beliefs and one that examines in some detail those ritual beliefs from which Shinto itself developed, is always going to be of great appeal to the specialist. But what about the generalist and those unfamiliar with Japan's rich cultural legacy? The British Museum, as it did so very successfully with *Arts of Buddhism* in 1985 and *Hinduism* in 1992, is exemplary in its use of explanatory panels and in the production of a highly informative and carefully written catalogue. But exploiting the presence in the UK of leading specialists from the Agency for Cultural Affairs (co-organisers along with the Museum itself and Japan Foundation), and have them address an educational symposium, was an opportunity not to be missed.

Thus it was that between 80 and 100 people heard a series of wide ranging lectures from Japanese and British specialists that discussed the Japanese concept of nature man and art, from the archaeological, cultural and spiritual standpoints.

The context and tone was admirably set by the keynote speaker, Professor Takeshi Umehara, distinguished philosopher, academic and recipient of the Order of Cultural Merit in 1999, who opened the symposium. Speaking on the theme *Towards a Definition of Japanese Culture* and illustrating a highly informative and accessible talk with both humour and a number of well chosen slides, he placed the foundation of Japanese culture firmly within the context of Jomon civilisation, "the hunters and gatherers" and within the later Yayoi civilisation, which developed sericulture and rice cultivation. He talked about the origins of

Shinto, how this indigenous religion influenced Buddhism and examined the concept that lies within the Shinto belief of eternal regeneration. He maintained that, despite the heavy influence from modern Western thought from the Meiji period onwards, the possibility of transcending the barriers of these modern attitudes still lies within native Japanese thought. He concluded with a characteristic call to Japan to take a more conservationist lead on the world stage. Not for nothing were the summit talks in Kyoto!

Masayuki Harada, Senior Specialist in Cultural Properties Protection at the Agency for Cultural Affairs (Bunkacho) continued the high standard of scholarship set by Professor Umehara with a lively talk on *Archaeological Insights into the World of the Japanese Myth*. He reminded us that the

discipline of archaeology allowed us to reconstruct historical phenomena missing from textual records, one aspect of this being "religious archaeology" which examined the spirit (kokoro) of ancient peoples. Indeed research was now

being conducted in Japan under the rubric of "Shinto archaeology". One theme within this was research into the world of myths, and archaeological investigations could do much to reclaim lost folk stories. Relics such as *dogu* and *Jomon* vessels showed that there had existed a characteristic indigenous faith in the early, prehistoric age and research, he said, was

now concentrating on the "archaeology of rituals" taking primitive belief as its subject. Thus it was possible to trace the process under which prehistoric beliefs in Japan developed into a more characteristic faith and how they had become integrated into the folk religion known as Shinto.

Gina Barnes, Professor of Japanese Studies at Durham University, continued the archaeological analysis with an illuminating talk on the use of beadstone objects in Kofun society production and ritual. Beadstone included the semi-precious jade as well as jasper, green tuff and talc, and objects from these raw materials had to be viewed, she argued, within the relations of production between the Kinai elite and the outlying villages. There had been a shift from importation from these

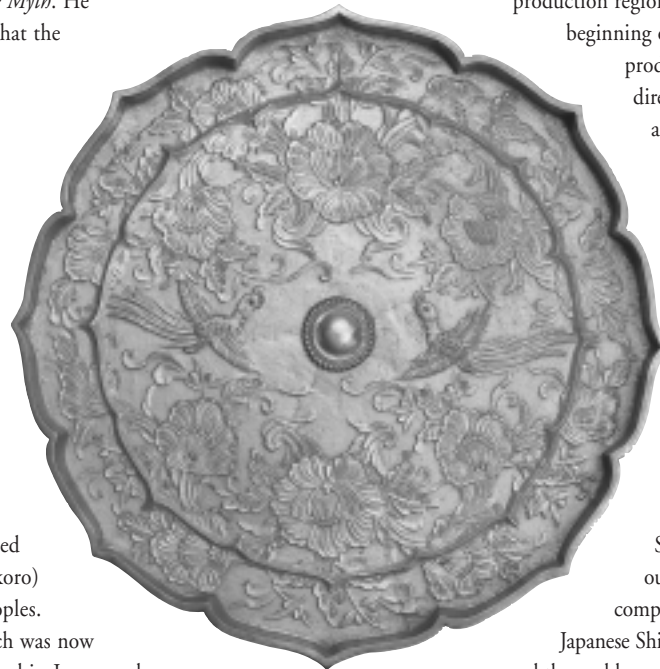
production regions to the beginning of local

production under direct elite control and a parallel shift from beadstone use in funerary ritual to landscape ritual.

Bunkacho Chief Senior Specialist in Cultural Properties Protection, Shiro Ito outlined the complex nature of

Japanese Shinto imagery and the problem of what to regard as a Shinto image. There were both

"temporary abode" types and "worshipped" types, the former type being enshrined when we would not normally regard them as "objects of worship".



Photograph: Bronze mirror, Heian period (twelfth century) Kasuga Shrine

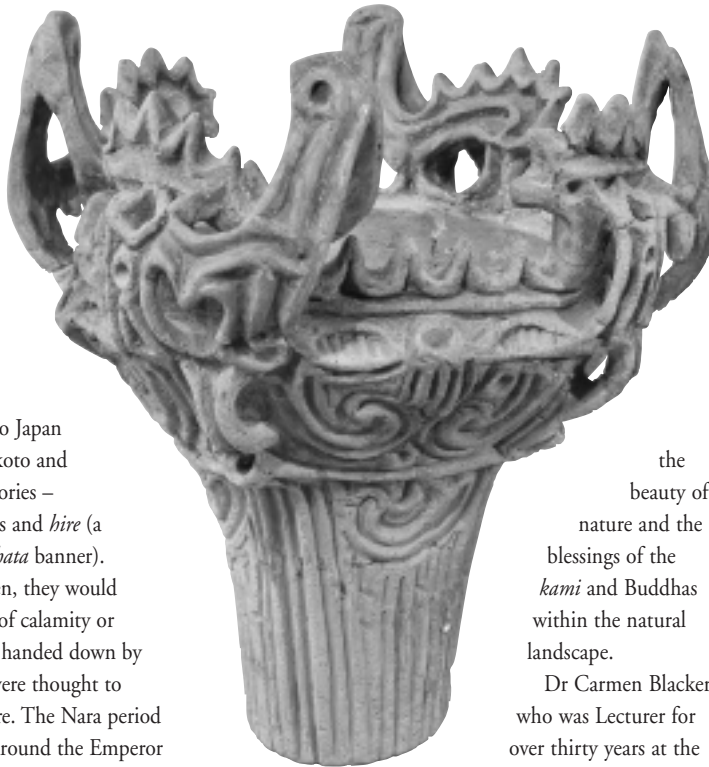
Nature Man & Art continued from page 1

This was because they did not represent the *kami* but rather served as a temporary abode. *Kami* had been thought to enter into the object and only afterwards, under the influence of Buddhism, did they come to be worshipped in the form of images. He showed how the development of Shinto images occurred in several stages from the Nara period where it was assumed that the images had a *kami* nature; to the very early Heian period where the *kami* and Buddhas, or the two types of image, were amalgamated; to the first half of the Heian period where true *kami* images evolved under the influence of Buddhist forms. Finally the fourth stage, from the tenth century showed smaller images, seated with the knees close to the body, a style that was to continue relatively unchanged.

Kazutoshi Harada, Head of the Horyu-ji Treasures Section at the Tokyo National Museum concluded the second day with a visual analysis *Treasures Presented to the Gods*. Objects offered to the *kami* in shrines were designated as national treasures and their origins lay in the Ten Types of Sacred Treasure (*tokusa no kandakara*) brought down from the gods to Japan by Nigihayahi-no-mikoto and falling into four categories – mirrors, swords, jewels and *hire* (a magical object like a *hata* banner). Chanted to and shaken, they would grant a wish in times of calamity or illness. Sacred objects handed down by the Imperial Family were thought to possess a similar nature. The Nara period saw stability centred around the Emperor and the *kami* were worshipped as Imperial ancestors while the later Heian period saw the *kami* as residing in the *shaden* (architectural structures) where they were anthropomorphised in visual form. Items offered to the gods changed from the more shamanistic treasures to objects of contemporary daily life. These objects were seen as resources demonstrating in concrete form the appearance of everyday items. But they were also craft items into which the skills of the time had been poured.

Shin'ichiro Gytoku, Senior Specialist in Cultural Properties Protection at the Bunkacho addressed the

theme *Paintings of Places Sacred to the Kami and Buddhas: The World of Shrine Mandalas*. He showed how during the medieval period, as the theory of *kami* and Buddha developed, various religious paintings were produced, a central genre of these devotional paintings being shrine mandalas (*miya mandara*). Their basic design was a bird's-eye view of the purified precincts inhabited by the *kami* and Buddhas. Whilst the principal focus of devotional paintings was humanised images, shrine mandalas always had as their main theme the landscape of the shrine, itself regarded as a manifestation of the Pure Land. He highlighted here an interesting correspondence with the symbolic landscape paintings in the West and the theme of medieval Christian paintings. These shrine mandalas were the first symbolic landscape paintings in Japan and were a superb legacy of the medieval Japanese world view that actively appreciated



the beauty of nature and the blessings of the *kami* and Buddhas within the natural landscape.

Dr Carmen Blacker, who was Lecturer for over thirty years at the University of Cambridge, and is still as active in

retirement, gave a fascinating presentation entitled *Keshin of Kami in Dreams and Visions*. Peppered with some delightful anecdotes, based on conversations and interviews, she discussed the *keshin* or temporary shapes in which the *kami* choose to appear to the human eyes in dream and vision. The various types of *kami* all shared the common attribute of having no single "form". She gave examples of the guises adopted by Yanankami, Kasuga Myojin and Inari and discussed the practice of incubation, or soliciting a dream for

therapeutic purposes.

The third British speaker, Victor Harris, Keeper of the British Museum's Department of Japanese Antiquities, spoke on *The Japanese Aesthetic Sensibility – the Intrinsic Beauty in Swords and Ceramics*. He argued that a striking aspect of Japanese Art was the persistence of traditions. It was conjectured that this conservatism in Japanese traditions originated from an innate stability in Japanese society and had built itself into the character of the Japanese people during the relatively stable Jomon period. People's attitude and closeness to nature during that period was an underlying component of the early religious beliefs that crystallised in the Nihon Shoki (Nihongi) of 720AD. This sense of gratitude towards nature extended to man-made objects and, in historical times, in the Japanese appreciation of the intrinsic beauty within artefacts such as steel sword blade and ash-glazed ceramics. The arrival of Buddhism introduced a further spiritual element that came to apply to objects as well as religious practices. The sword for example began to be regarded not only in a practical, ritual and aesthetic sense, but further as an instrument of spiritual enlightenment.

Tatsuo Kobayashi, Professor in the Faculty of Literature at Tokyo's Kokugakuin University, gave the closing presentation on the *Cultural Power of the Jomon People* and he discussed what he called the Jomon revolution. It was supported by hunting, gathering and fishing but the dependency on plants and seafood increased. They preserved salmon; they preserved hard fruits and thereby managed to ensure a stable food supply all year that enabled them to build settlements. These settlements, he maintained, both strengthened the objectification of nature and prompted the development of individual consciousness. The Jomon people reached the highest level of culture in a society without legitimate agriculture. They compared with the groups on the north-west coast of North America but they clearly surpassed these owing to evidence that they possessed ceramic and lacquer. The pottery of the Jomon period is the oldest in the world and the depiction of humans and other living beings indicate a concern with the cycle of life and death from which Shinto beliefs evolved.

The symposium was co-organised with the Japan Foundation London office and the exhibition runs until 2 December, closed 22 October.

Editor

Photograph: Earthenware vessel with flame decoration, Middle Jomon period (2500-1500BC) Tokomachi City Museum

Studio Ghibli – the Art of Japanese Animation

Studio Ghibli Festival at the Barbican

As part of Japan 2001, Barbican Screen is currently presenting for the first time in the UK, a major retrospective of the work of Japan's leading animation house, Studio Ghibli. The centrepiece of the season is Hayao Miyazaki's universally acclaimed, record-breaking success *Princess Mononoke*, which received its UK premier at the Gala Opening on 19th October. During the festival, *Princess Mononoke* plays in two versions (English language and Japanese with English subtitles). For those of you who have not yet managed to attend the Festival, there is still time as it continues until 11 November.

For the last two decades, though almost unknown to the West outside animation circles, Studio Ghibli has enjoyed huge domestic success and produced animated movies of a quality to rival the world's best. Its subjects range from historical romances to other world fantasies, from madcap comedies to intimate character studies.

Ghibli's work has been lauded by international critics, directors and animators, from Pixar's John Lasseter to Akira Kurosawa. Many Ghibli films have been national blockbusters, regularly beating Disney imports at the Japanese box-office. The trend reached its zenith in 1997, when Ghibli's *Princess Mononoke* became the biggest-grossing film in Japanese history (subsequently only beaten by *Titanic*). In terms of world box office success, *Mononoke* is also the third most successful non-English language film, behind only *Life is Beautiful* and *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*.

Studio Ghibli grew out of the vision of two men, Hayao Miyazaki (born 1941) and Isao Takahata (born 1935). As the leading Ghibli directors, Miyazaki and Takahata concentrate on separate projects, though they frequently produce each other's films and help out in other capacities. In general, Takahata's films look wistfully back to a 'golden age' defined by their lead characters who try to recreate it, and Miyazaki's works suggest that the time for focussing on yesterday is past, and we have to do the very best we can with the here and now. Both directors are similarly unafraid of fantasy and view it as an essential component of the human spirit. The resulting synergy and continuity is Studio Ghibli's strength.



Characters from *Princess Mononoke* (left) and *Laputa: Castle in the Sky*

Programme:

PRINCESS MONONOKE (Mononoke Hime) (PG)

The most successful film ever at the Japanese box office, Miyazaki's mythic epic about the twilight of the gods in medieval Japan also briefly held the world record now claimed by *Titanic*. With samurai swordfights and a showdown with the gods, *Mononoke* echoes John Ford westerns as much as the work of Kurosawa.

1997 Dir. Hayao Miyazaki 133 min. Japanese dialogue with English sub-titles
 Fri 19 Oct 7.30pm, Sat 20 Oct at 8.30, Sun 21 Oct at 8.30, Wed 24 Oct at 3.00 & Sun 11 Nov at 3.45

KIKI'S DELIVERY SERVICE (Majo no Takyubin) (U)

Based on a children's book by Eiko Kadono, Kiki is a thirteen-year-old witch complete with flying broomstick and talking cat. Plenty of comedy and in some ways the closest Miyazaki gets to Disney.

1989 Dir. Hayao Miyazaki 102 min. Sat 20 Oct 11.00am **Family Film Club screening***,
 Mon 22 Oct at 3.00, Wed 24 Oct at 6.00, Fri 26 Oct at 3.00 & Sat 10 Nov 2.00

NAUSICÄÄ OF THE VALLEY OF THE WIND (Kaze no Tani no Nausica) (PG)

A mesmerising blend of fantasy and science fiction. Set centuries in the future in a world almost swallowed by a polluted forest full of giant insects.

1984 Dir. Hayao Miyazaki 116 min. Sat 20 Oct 2.00pm, Thur 25 Oct at 6.00 & Sun 4 Nov at 3.30

MY NEIGHBOUR TOTORO (Tonari no Totoro) (U)

Explores the beauty and magic of 50s rural Japan through the eyes of two young girls. The atmosphere of gentle fantasy was partly inspired by Japanese storyteller Kenji Miyazawa, one of Miyazaki's favourite writers. The cuddly Totoro are now an icon of Japanese pop-culture.

1988 Dir. Hayao Miyazaki 87 min. Sat 20 Oct 4.30pm, Tue 23 Oct at 3.00, Thur 25 Oct at 3.00,
 Sat 27 Oct at 11.00am **Family Film Club screening*** & Sun 11 Nov at 2.00pm

GRAVE OF THE FIREFLIES (12)

Warning: this is no fairy-tale and has no happy ending. Takahata's first Ghibli feature follows a teenage boy and his infant sister as they struggle to survive in wartime Japan. Based on a semi-autobiographical novel by Akiyuki Nosaka, it played in Japanese cinemas with Miyazaki's *Totoro*.

1988 Dir. Isao Takahata 88 min. Sat 20 Oct 6.30pm, Wed 24 Oct at 8.30 & Sun 28 Oct at 4.15

THE CRIMSON PIG (aka Porco Rosso)(Kurenai no Buta) (12)

In the skies over the Adriatic in the 1920s, the greatest fighter ace is... a pig! Miyazaki's nonchalant hero shuns society and his own courageous past, but still inspires those around him. A stunning fantasy interlude was drawn from Roald Dahl's aviation stories, also echoing Powell and Pressburger's classic *A Matter of Life and Death*.

1992 Dir. Hayao Miyazaki 102 min. Sun 21 Oct 3.30pm, Sat 27 Oct at 4.15

WHISPER OF THE HEART (Mimi wo Sumaseba) (PG)

A classic girl-meets-boy tale, the romance of this Miyazaki-scripted, Kondo-directed film is enhanced by the all-pervading sense of magic underlying the real world. Based on a manga by Aoi Hiiragi, *Whisper of the Heart* was the sole Ghibli film directed by Yoshifumi Kondo, who had worked with Miyazaki and Takahata as an animator since the 1970s.

1995 Dir. Yoshifumi Kondo 119 min.

plus ON YOUR MARK (PG)

A six-minute animated music promotion film which accompanied *Whisper of the Heart* in cinemas. The song is by Japanese rock duo Chage and Aska.

1995 Dir. Hayao Miyazaki 6 min. *Whisper Of The Heart & On Your Mark.* Sun 21 Oct 6.00pm,
 Sat 3 Nov at 2.00

DEFENDERS OF THE FOREST (aka Pom Poko)

(Heisei Tanuki Gassen Pompoko) (PG)

Defenders of the Forest is an expansive account of the war between shape-changing racoon dogs (tanuki) and human developers threatening their home.

1993 Dir. Isao Takahata 119 min. Mon 22 Oct 6.00pm, Sat 27 Oct at 2.00

LAPUTA: CASTLE IN THE SKY (Tenku no Shiro Laputa) (PG)

An aerial shoot-out and a girl floating from the sky form the starting point for this rollovercoaster adventure in a 19th century fantasy world. The mining community in the early scenes was modelled on a Welsh village visited by Miyazaki during the 1984 miners' strike.

1985 Dir. Hayao Miyazaki 124 min. Mon 22 Oct 8.30pm, Thur 25 Oct at 8.30 &
 Sat 10 Nov at 4.00

ONLY YESTERDAY (Omoide Poroporo) (PG)

This decade-crossing character study depicts the rapid changes in modern Japan through the eyes of twenty-something Taeko.

1991 Dir. Isao Takahata 119 min. Tue 23 Oct 6.00pm, Sun 28 Oct at 2.00

MY NEIGHBOURS THE YAMADAS (PG)

Described by Ghibli president Toshio Suzuki as a film "showing what it's like to live as a Japanese," *Yamadas* is a radical break from the usual Studio look. Completely digital, the film resembles a moving watercolour, with simple sketches and outrageous cartoony designs.

1999 Dir. Isao Takahata 104 min. Tue 23 Oct 8.30pm, Sat 3 Nov at 4.15

The Studio Ghibli Festival has been awarded a grant under the Japan Foundation Film Festivals Abroad Support Programme.

For further details, contact the Barbican Cinema: Tel 020 7638 8891
 Barbican Screen, Silk Street,
 London EC2Y 8DS

* **Family Film Club screening** - Adults must be accompanied by a child

Japan Foundation Grant Programmes 2002-03

The following programmes for the 2002/2003 financial year are now available for application. All of them are for UK organisations except for the Fellowship Programme which is open to individuals who meet the criteria, and the Film Production Support Programme which is open to individuals as well as organisations. Further details and application forms are available from this office except those for the Support Programmes for the Japanese Language. These are available from our London Language Centre (Nihongo Centre). The deadline for all applications is 3 December 2001. Results will be notified during April 2002:

Support Programmes for Invitations to Japan

Fellowship Programme

Our Fellowship Programme gives the opportunity to academics, arts and other professionals to visit Japan to pursue research in their field. As a rule a named affiliate in Japan is required at the time of application. The Fellowship comprises airfare, stipend to cover living expenses and other allowances. There are a number of categories within the Programme:

1. *Scholars and Researchers Category*

For academics working in the field of Japanese studies, the humanities and the social sciences. Duration of Fellowship: from (no less than) 2 to (no longer than) 12 months.

2. *Doctoral Candidates Category*

For candidates who are in the closing stages of their Ph.D. and who need to undertake field-work in Japan in order to complete their dissertation/thesis. Proof at the time of application that all other necessary requirements, bar completion of the thesis, have been fulfilled for the award of the Ph.D is needed from the candidate's supervisor. Duration of Fellowship: from (no less than) 4 to (no longer than) 14 months.

3. *Artists Category*

Artists means arts professionals in the widest sense e.g. writers, performing and visual artists, as well as arts administrators and academics. The category is for those wishing to pursue a particular creative project in Japan. Duration of Fellowship: from (no less than) 2 to (no longer than) 6 months.

Support Programmes for Japanese Studies

Visiting Professorship Programme for Japanese Studies

This programme is designed to support institutions of higher education, research and cultural organisations planning to invite scholars from abroad (including Japan) from between one and six months to give courses related to Japan in the subject areas of the humanities and the social sciences. The grant covers the return airfare and a proportion of the direct project expenses.

Staff Expansion Grant Programme for Japanese Studies

For UK institutions of higher education, research and cultural organisations in order to enable them to expand faculty or library staffing in Japan-related areas in the humanities, the social sciences and the arts. Financial assistance is given for an initial three-year period and covers two thirds of the gross salary cost.

Research/Conference/Seminar Grant Programme

Grant assistance is provided towards joint research projects, conferences, seminars, workshops and intensive courses that are Japan-related (**to include study tours to Japan**) of up to 12 months duration. Comparative research projects, including

those within a global context are also considered. Higher education institutions, research and cultural organisations are eligible to apply and the project should not be the work of a single individual.

Library Support Programme

This programme is designed to promote and encourage research on Japan through the donation of Japan-related books and materials to the libraries of institutions of higher education, research organisations and to large public libraries that support departments and faculties of Japanese studies. Applications from individuals and from the commercial sector are not accepted. Applicants (libraries) should apply to a particular category within the programme depending upon the extent to which Japanese studies are conducted within the organisation.

Visual Arts Exchange Programmes

Exhibitions Abroad Support Programme

Under this programme financial support is provided to museums and galleries in Japan and abroad that introduce Japanese art and culture overseas. Assistance is given in the form of subsidies on a cost-sharing basis towards the direct costs of holding the exhibition, but not for preliminary research and development.

Grants Available for Participation in International Conferences

International Conferences outside Japan

We are able to provide funds to Japanese specialists in the humanities, the social sciences and the arts who have been invited to chair, to give a paper or to give a keynote address, at an international conference or symposium outside Japan.

Assistance comprises the round trip economy-class airfare from Japan and help towards accommodation/living expenses for up to 7 days.

Applications need to be made by the Japanese invitee direct to our Head Office in Tokyo by 20 December of the year preceding the financial year into which the conference/symposium falls. Applications are accepted after 20 December, subject to budget, and should be made 3 months before the conference.

International Conferences in Japan

If you have been invited to chair, present a paper or give a keynote address at an international conference/symposium (including academic meetings, workshops or lectures etc) in Japan it is possible for the conference organiser (university, academic society, arts group etc) to apply on your behalf to the Japan Foundation Head Office for grant assistance. The deadline is 20 December preceding the financial year in which the conference is due to be held but for conferences taking place in the latter half of the financial year (October to the following March) additional applications are accepted up to 30 June. Assistance takes the form of round-trip economy class airfare and a grant towards accommodation/living expenses up to 7 days.

International Conference Programmes

Japan Europe Support Programme for Conferences and Symposiums

Financial support is provided to institutions of higher education, research centres, think tanks and cultural organisations wishing to hold international conferences, symposiums or seminars that will promote a better understanding between Japan and Europe on common issues in the political, economic, social or cultural fields.

Publication Exchange Programmes

Publication Assistance Programme

Financial support is given to publishers only towards the publication of books on Japan written in languages other than Japanese. Fields covered include the humanities, the social sciences and the arts but exclude the natural sciences. The publication must take place within the 2002/2003 financial year and the grant awarded is a percentage of the direct publication costs.

Translation Assistance Programme

For publishers only and to encourage and support the translation and publication of quality works from the Japanese language. They must be translations of works on or about Japan in the humanities, the social sciences and the arts (excluding the social sciences). The programme offers financial support for part of the fees paid by the publisher to the translator.

Audio-Visual Exchange Programmes

Film Production Support Programme

Financial support is provided towards the production of films, TV programmes and other audio-visual materials that promote a deeper understanding of Japan and Japanese culture abroad. The programme is open to individuals as well as organisations with film making knowledge and experience and grant assistance takes the form of subsidies towards the production costs.

Support Programmes for Japanese Education Overseas

Support Programme for Japanese Language Courses Abroad

This programme is designed to help the creation of full-time teaching positions at universities, colleges or other higher educational institutions that run Japanese language courses and provides salary assistance for up to an initial three-year period.

Japanese Speech Contest Support Programme

A grant towards the cost of prizes is given to those organisations planning to hold a Japanese language speech contest.

Support Programme for Developing Networks of Japanese Language Teachers and Institutions

Designed to help overseas teachers' associations, academic societies, higher education and research institutions to develop networks of Japanese language teachers and institutions abroad through seminars, academic meetings, workshops and training courses.

Training Programmes for Teachers of the Japanese Language

These programmes are designed to provide teachers of the Japanese language both native as well as non-native speakers with the opportunity to improve their Japanese language skills and teaching methods by following a course at the Japan Foundation Japanese Language Institute, Urawa. Applications have to be made by the institution where the applicant teaches. There are three types of programme: The long term training programme (6 months) for teachers with less than five years Japanese language teaching experience: three short term training programmes (2 months) for those with at least two years Japanese language teaching experience: and a one-month training programme in Japanese language teaching methods for Japanese nationals living abroad who have at least three years experience.

Japanese Language Programmes for Specialists

These programmes are offered at the Japan Foundation Japanese Language Institute, Kansai and are designed for those who need to improve their Japanese language ability for vocational and academic purposes. The courses are specifically constructed for each different vocational or academic speciality.

1. Japanese Language Programmes for Librarians

A six-month intensive training course in the Japanese language for librarians in educational and research institutions. A prescribed level of Japanese ability is required before application (equal to level three of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test). Priority is given to applications from developing countries but applicants from other countries are welcome to apply.

2. Japanese Language Programme for Researchers

A six or nine-month intensive training course for scholars and researchers in the social sciences and the humanities who need to improve their Japanese language ability for research purposes. A prescribed level of Japanese ability is required before application (equal to level three of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test).

3. Japanese Language Programme for Postgraduate Students

A two, six, or nine-month intensive training course for postgraduate students in the social sciences or the humanities who wish to improve their Japanese language ability and already have a basic level of Japanese.

Japanese Language Education Fellowship Programme

For educational institutions and publishers wishing to send Japanese language specialists to carry out surveys or research in Japan for the development of Japanese language teaching materials, teaching methodology and for Japanese curriculum development.

Assistance Programme for Japanese Language Teaching Materials

For publishers and educational institutions that wish to produce and market resource materials for Japanese language instruction in the form of textbooks, dictionaries, a/v and computer assisted materials.

Japanese Language Teaching Materials Donation Programme

Under this programme educational institutions that offer regular courses in Japanese language may apply for a donation of a variety of teaching materials published and distributed in Japan. These can take the form of books, tapes, a/v materials etc.

Grants available for the Performing Arts

Should you wish to invite a Japanese performing arts group to this country, the Japanese group may apply direct to our Head Office in Tokyo for possible financial assistance. There are two programmes available depending on the size of the group.

For both programmes applications need to be made by 20 December 2001 but it is advisable to seek advice and more information about the programmes from this office before initiating application procedures.

The Ripple Effect of Cultural Exchange

One of the most successful exchange programmes that the Japan Foundation has run continuously since its establishment in the early 1970s has been the annual two-week secondary School Teachers' Study Tour to Japan. It aims to deepen knowledge of Japan, its culture and way of life among those who teach about Japan at secondary level. The teachers return with enthusiasm, they return with new resources and they return better equipped to give the successor generation a better understanding of today's Japan. But does it need to stop there? Is there a wider value? The Foundation in Tokyo sees its exchange of persons activities as helping to increase understanding "between people of the world and the promotion of long-term world peace". But how easily can we measure and evaluate these benefits?

When in Tokyo UK teacher Lynne Symonds met Karimu Nachina from North Ghana on the 1993 Tour it changed her life and those of many others. Lynne was teaching science, and had a particular interest in the relationship between science and society. Karimu was headmaster of a new secondary school with scant resources in a remote area of Northern Ghana. They met, they talked, and they talked again. Their meetings soon led to a pen-friend scheme between their schools. This should happen, one might say. But the scheme led in turn to an increase in the stay-on rate of girls in Karimu's school (in a region where girls' education is relatively new) and to a significant increase in interest among the British girls in many educational areas, particularly science.

The friendship blossomed. On her return Lynne sent him books. Regularly. He was delighted. They needed somewhere to house them and a library, named after Lynne, was built with the help of British donors. A host of linking schemes between schools and universities grew up.

Funds were raised for a boarding house for girls. A primary school was built. Desks, books, computers, sports wear and laboratory equipment were supplied.

Lynne went on to launch 'Science Links for the Millennium' with the help of the International Council for Associations of Science Education. They linked 600 schools and colleges across the world enabling young people to gain a better understanding of a very different culture. And it naturally increased their understanding of their own.

Back in Ghana Lynne was honoured in 1996 with the position of Chief of Enlightenment and Education of the Mamprusi Tribe in Ghana, a tribal honour never before bestowed upon a foreigner. There was a formal ceremony. Pictures and articles adorned the UK national press. In 1997 for her work in tackling racism, the World Interfaith Group gave her the Gordon Wilson Award for World Peace. And a further award for her contribution to International Science – the first award of this kind – came from the Association for Science Education: 2001 at their Centenary Meeting.

Her role continued to widen to include other countries particularly with reference to effective science, maths and technology education, often the key to defeating poverty in less-developed countries. She founded a charity, 'The Wulugu Project', which assists education in West Africa, particularly with reference to girls and women. She worked with primary science teachers in west African countries to improve HIV/AIDS education. Currently she

is introducing microscale science world-wide. This is an enormously simple, effective and very cheap system of practical science. Lynne has used it to teach chemistry in Britain from primary level to advanced and has watched how this new philosophy has improved learning.

She soon recognised its potential to help in many countries, particularly where there is a shortage of laboratories and equipment and, as part of the British Association for Science Education, she is now actively promoting links between science teachers associations to allow them to learn from each other.

Meanwhile, in Ghana, a vocational training centre

for girls is about to be opened, thanks to further collaboration between Lynne and Karimu.

Lynne wants one day to return to Japan and re-visit the country that changed her life and led to increased life



chances for thousands in West Africa. She is characteristically modest about her accomplishments. "None of this would have happened without the initial contacts between Britain and Ghana fostered by the Japan Foundation". This may be true. But for people to people exchange to be successful and to reap results, it relies on putting the right people in contact with each other and on accurate targeting. With Lynne we got it right.

Editor

Award for William Beasley

Professor William Beasley, one of Britain's most distinguished scholars of East Asian history and Emeritus Professor of History of the Far East at the University of London, has been awarded the prestigious Japan Foundation Award.

Since 1973 the Japan Foundation has conferred the Award annually on individuals and organisations both in Japan and abroad for their substantial contribution to mutual understanding between Japan and the rest of the world. Nominations are sought from scholars, from statesmen and from leaders in the business and public sectors. The Japan Foundation Special Prize was established one year later, in 1974, and is aimed at younger recipients who are expected to continue and build on their achievements in the future. This is the first time that the UK has received the Award since Dr Ian Nish, Emeritus Professor at the London School of Economics, received it in 1991 and since Dr Peter Kornicki, Lecturer in Japanese at the University of Cambridge, was

awarded the Special Prize in 1992.

Professor Beasley has devoted himself for more than fifty years to an in-depth study of Japan's culture and history, as well as to the nurturing of young scholars to solidify the foundation of Japanese studies in the UK. His *Modern History of Japan* (1963), published in numerous countries across the world, has become the definitive text for modern Japanese history.

Professor Beasley taught Japanese history to students and postgraduates in the University of London for 35 years and throughout his long career – but especially since his retirement in 1983 – has produced many monographs on nineteenth century Japanese history. He has made a distinguished contribution to the understanding of the Meiji Restoration and the travels of Meiji statesmen to Europe and to America. In 1980 he was made a CBE and in 1983 received the Order of the Rising Sun, Third Class, from the Japanese Government. As recently as 1996 he was

given the Japan Festival Award for promoting a deeper understanding of Japanese culture in the UK.

As Professor Beasley was unable to travel to Japan to receive the award, Professor Nish attended the ceremony in Tokyo on 4 October on his behalf. In a prepared acceptance speech read by Professor Nish, Professor Beasley acknowledged with typical modesty his dependence on the support of organisations and individuals in Japan who had so greatly assisted him in his early research at a time when books were scarce and works on Japan hard to find. "There were no useful guides to them, no computer catalogues..." Introductions were invaluable and contacts all-important. "Work became a treasure hunt. What you could do depended on what you could find... Even so, I thoroughly enjoyed it, just as I have enjoyed the study of Japanese history ever since... I am being rewarded, after all, for doing the things I have enjoyed for the greater part of my career."

Editor

Photograph: Lynne Symonds in Chief's outfit with children from her school seeing off another container of books

The Yokohama Triennale

Young and exciting talent from Japan and abroad

The Japan Foundation organised a press trip for international journalists to the opening of the first Yokohama Triennale on 2 September. The Triennale runs until 11 November and is the biggest international art exhibition ever to be held in Japan. Lynne MacRitchie is a regular contributor to the *Financial Times* on contemporary art and was the UK's participant.

Art critics can be a jaded bunch, especially these days when the artist participants on the international exhibition circuit can seem as familiar as sports stars or supermodels. But an invitation to Japan was intriguing enough to attract art journalists from all over the world to accept the Japan Foundation's invitation to Yokohama for the opening of the first Yokohama Triennale. A lot was riding on the exhibition. It was Japan's first attempt at the sort of international art extravaganza which has become familiar in cities throughout the globe. It was important for Yokohama, keen to establish itself – and especially its newly redeveloped docklands district – as a worthy rival to Tokyo. And it was important for Japanese contemporary art, anxious to find its own place on the world stage.

And the verdict? The Triennale was a success. It was beautifully installed in both the main venues, the gleaming Pacifico Exhibition Hall successfully accommodating both the enormous – Shiota Chiharu's giant dresses soaked with mud – and

the intimate – Alicia Framis' area for children. The renovation of the second venue, the Red Brick Warehouse, had been done with care, and the technical quality of the mostly high tech installations was outstanding. Seminars gave opportunities to meet the curators – Shinji Kohmoto, Senior Curator at the National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Nobuo Nakamura, Director of the Centre for Contemporary Art in Kitakyushu, Fumio Nanjo, independent curator and Akira Tatehata, Professor of Art at Tama Art University and the artists. And the continuing attempts by artists Tsubaki Noboru and Muroi Hisashi to hoist a giant grasshopper on the outside of the Yokohama Grand hotel provided a pleasant frisson of nail biting tension!

The Triennale succeeded as an illuminating whole rather than an exhausting array of disparate parts. It was fascinating to see photographs by senior American artist Allan Sekula next to the stunning animation of the Tokyo subway by the Japanese artist Tabaimo. It was fun to chase Orimoto Tatsumi, the Bread Man, and his followers, all with French loaves tied over their faces, through the crowds of

shoppers in Queens Square. It was moving to see the Yokohama crowds sliding over Marina Abramovic's magnetised floor and losing themselves in Yayoi Kusama's maze of mirror balls. Taken seriously by its organisers, sponsors and public, the exhibition succeeded in connecting with all of them.

And for those of the group who remained in Japan, it was just the beginning of a journey of discovery of contemporary Japanese art. Visits included the Isamu Noguchi museum and the contemporary art museums of Naoshima,

Hiroshima, Kyoto, Mito, Hara and Tokyo. Exhibitions seen included "The Standard", presented throughout Naoshima Island, "Cute" at the Shiseido Gallery and Art Tower Mito and Takashi Murakami at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo. The kindness, warmth and seriousness with which the group was received everywhere were truly impressive. And the value of seeing Japanese contemporary

art in Japan itself cannot be overestimated, especially for those who will be writing about it as it takes its place on the world stage.

Lynne MacRitchie



Photograph: Yayoi Kusama *Narcissus Garden Silver balls*. Collection of the artist

Mind the Gap: 2001 Symposium on Japanese Language Education

The 2001 Symposium on Japanese Language Education, which incorporated the 6th European Symposium on Japanese Language Education and the 4th Annual Conference of the British Association for Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language (BATJ) took place at the Kaetsu Centre in New Hall College Cambridge from 7 to 9 September and was attended by over 160 teachers of Japanese from 21 countries.

The focus of the event was the question of how to bridge a perceived gap between the secondary and tertiary sectors in Japanese language education and at the Opening Ceremony, Senior Vice President of the Japan Foundation, Masaki Konishi, stressed the importance of greater communication between these sectors.

The keynote speaker was Professor Tazuko

Ueno of Tokyo Woman's Christian University who described significant changes in the approach to teaching Japanese as a foreign language, both in Japan and overseas noting that it was essential to take the particular circumstances of each country into account when considering how best to improve communication between sectors. It was necessary to consider a range of options and she felt that efforts needed to be made by each sector to raise mutual awareness of each other's situation, if the knowledge gained by pupils in schools was not to go to waste.

There followed a presentation by Robyn Spence-Brown of Monash University. Australia had the second highest number of learners of Japanese in the world, 96% of whom were studying in the primary and secondary sectors. The majority of students taking Japanese

courses in higher education had therefore already studied the language for between 5 and 7 years at school and Australian universities have had to change their perspective to cater for students with existing knowledge.

A panel discussion on the theme *Opening the Dialogue: What can the secondary and tertiary sectors learn from each other?* enabled delegates to discuss how best to move forward in order to bridge the sectoral divide. Members of the audience put forward suggestions for action, including the creation of a Europe-wide framework for standards in Japanese language teaching and the setting up of a joint working group with teachers from both sectors, with the possible mediation of the Japan Foundation.

Editor

Dates for your Diary

All events are part of Japan 2001 and are either funded and/or coorganised by the Japan Foundation

20 July to 18 Nov	Isamu Noguchi: Exhibition on the acclaimed sculptor, stage designer and landscape architect at the Design Museum. Tel: 020 7940 8790
Sept to Nov	Kabuki Story 2001: A series of practical workshops based at venues around the country in conjunction with the Kabuki actor Nakamura Matazo, musicians and UK based arts organisations. www.creative-arts.net/kabukistoryinfo.htm
5 Sept to 2 Dec	Shinto: The Sacred Art of Ancient Japan: Shinto art treasures from shrines, temples and museums and the first exhibition of its kind to be held in Europe. The British Museum. Tel: 020 7323 8832
8 Sept to 4 Nov	Made in Japan-Nihonsei: Exhibition of contemporary Japanese artworks on paper. Two and three-dimensional paperwork together with original prints, decorative uses of paper and ukiyo-e woodcuts. Bristol City Art Museum and Art Gallery. Tel: 0117 922 3591
15 Sept to 10 Nov	Painting for Joy: New Japanese Paintings in the 1990s: A Japan Foundation Travelling Exhibition 37 works by 9 Japanese young artists. Storey Gallery Lancaster. Also Ormeau Baths Gallery, Belfast 8 Dec-5 Jan 2002; Mac, Foyle Gallery, Birmingham 12 Jan-3 Mar 2002 Tel: 020 7499 4726 Junko Takekawa
19 Sept to 3 Mar 2002	The Japanese Sword: The Soul of the Samurai: Exhibition of blades from the 14th to 20th centuries at the Victoria & Albert Museum. Study day 9th Feb 2002. Tel: 020 7942 2197
3 Oct to 10 Nov	Rashomon: by Philippe Cherbonnier; presented by the Yellow Earth Theatre exploring the deceptive nature of truth, and inspired by Kurosawa's film after Akutagawa's original story Yabu no Naka. Riverside studios London W6: Tel: 020 8237 1111
4 Oct to 9 Dec	Facts of Life: Contemporary Japanese Art at the Hayward Gallery Co organised with the Japan Foundation. See front page for details.
3 Oct to 21 Dec	The Japanese Craft Tradition: Kokten Kogei: Exhibition by the Great Masters of Japanese craft alongside works of over 50 contemporary Japanese makers. Includes textiles, furniture, pottery, glass and wood. Also seminar and textile workshops. Blackwell The Arts & Crafts House, Bowness on Windermere. Tel: 01539 722464
20, 28 Oct, 3,4,10,11 Nov	Studio Ghibli: The Art of Animation: A number of Studio Ghibli's theatrical films including those by Takahata and Miyazaki at the Barbican Cinema. Tel: 020 7638 8891. See page 3.
3 Nov to 8 Dec	New Space: Concepts of culture investigated by four contemporary Japanese artists: with globalisation overtaking traditional cultural boundaries each explores ideas of a new space. Oriol Mostyn Gallery Llandudno Tel: 01492 879201. Also at the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Swansea 9 Feb to 24 Mar 2002
7 Nov 22 Dec	Japanese Manga: A Japan Foundation Travelling Exhibition: Takes us back to the roots of Japan's manga culture with a magnificent display of drawings by leading Japanese manga artists. University of Brighton Art Gallery. Also at The London Institute Gallery 9 Jan-8 Feb 2002 Tel: 020 7499 4726 Junko Takekawa
15 Nov to 13 Jan 2002	Contemporary Japanese Jewellery: Exhibition showing the work of 50 of Japan's finest jewellers working in precious and non precious metals at the Crafts Council Gallery. Tel: 020 7278 7700. Then touring to Leicester City Gallery mid Jan to mid Mar 2002.
Dec to Jan 2002	Re Design: Daily Products of the 20th Century. 32 unique talents from the fields of architecture, graphic design, product design, lighting design, photography, writing and fashion design. A fascinating insight into the inventiveness of Japanese design. The Lighthouse, Glasgow. Tel: 0141 225 8403
16 Jan to 28 Feb 2002	A Garden Bequest: Plants from Japan: An exhibition celebrating the richness of the floral legacy from Japan and the East at the Brunei Gallery, SOAS. Organised by the Japan Society. Tel: 020 7636 3029. Showing first late Nov/early Dec 2001 to mid Jan 2002 at The City Art Gallery Edinburgh.
18 Feb to 16 Mar 2002	Work 1991-95: A photographic Exhibition by George Hashiguchi: A Japan Foundation Travelling Exhibition. Collection of photographs in which Japanese are photographed and interviewed from the perspective of the differing occupations that make up the rich myriad of Japanese society. Yeovil Community Arts Centre. Tel: 020 7499 4726 Stephen McEnally

Rakugo in English at the Nihongo Centre

Rakugo is the Japanese art of talk. Professionally trained Rakugo artists will describe the life of Japanese people with wit and humour, words and gestures at the Japan Foundation London Language Centre on 11 December.

The Rakugo group is based in Osaka with one female British performer. This is a performance not to be missed, as Rakugo, which relies heavily on the syntax and structure of the Japanese language, has rarely before been performed in a foreign language.

For more details contact Stephen McEnally
Tel: 020 7499 4726

Manga Seminar and Symposium

Following the success of the Japan Foundation Travelling exhibition "Manga" that will have toured five venues in the UK, including the London Institute Gallery 9 January to 8 February, the Japan Foundation with the London Institute is planning to hold a one day seminar and symposium in February 2002 at the Conference Centre of the London College of Fashion. The theme will be *Art as Manga, Manga as Art: Comics and Contemporary Art in Japan*. Speakers will come from Japan and abroad and further details will follow in the next issue.

The Way We Are The Lives of Japanese High School Students: A Photographic Exhibition

If you were asked to take five photographs to show your life, could you do it? Similarly, could you describe a friend in pictures? This is the challenge

Japanese high school students were set in a competition run by the Japan Forum, Tokyo. The results can be seen in an exhibition, *The Way We Are*, currently touring the UK.

What strikes you most about these pictures is that they do show teenagers precisely 'as they are'. Taken by young people of their friends, the photographs have no over-riding didactic aim. The situations may be banal – no highbrow visits to the Kabuki-za



Naoki: "The times I feel most relaxed are when I'm with my girlfriend" says Naoki. He's one of many high school students preparing for the tough university entrance exams.

here, and while many will strike a chord with teenagers anywhere, others are specific to Japan. The images, of a boy peering into the mirror looking for signs of acne, a girl dreaming of becoming a fashion designer, a teenage couple at the games arcade and a boy frying an egg for breakfast because his mum's still asleep, are those most people can relate to.

What is remarkable is how frequently the five photographs succeed in bringing alive the character of the individual subject. These pictures are fresh, lively and natural; giving insights into real people. The exhibition, consisting of 25 photo panels (A1 size, portrait

orientation) is available on free loan for periods of two weeks during Japan 2001.

The idea has also now been extended to the UK, where teenagers aged 14-18 are invited to present the life of a British young person in a series of 5 photographs. The deadline for entries is 17 December 2001 and the winner will be announced at a ceremony in London on 28 February 2002. First prize is two flights to Japan courtesy of British Airways, with £400 spending money provided by KPMG.

Heidi Potter, Executive Director,
The Japan Festival Education Trust

For more information about both the exhibition and competition, please contact JFET, Swire House, 59 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6AJ
tel: 020 7630 8696 email: jfet@jfet.org.uk