

Tokyo Weekender

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FREE



TOKYO'S NEW ERA BEGINS

*Mori Art Museum's director Mami
Kataoka and other Tokyo luminaries
look toward 2021 and beyond*

UNBRIDLED FASHION

Tokyo's international designers
are champing at the bit

WINTER GETAWAYS

The best places to play in Japan
this holiday season

BON VOYAGE JAPAN

Illustrator Jean Freund's latest offering
reinvents the travel book

San'in Hot Springs

The Sanin Region's Winter Charm

The Sanin area in western Japan is a treasure trove of beautiful, mineral-rich onsen that have long only been known to locals and true onsen enthusiasts

Izumo, Shimane

Tachikuekyo Hot Spring

This onsen is located snug to the great valley Tachikuekyo, where 100-meter-tall rock pillars line the breathtaking gorge, which is designated as a National Site of Scenic Beauty. Take a bath with an up-close view of Tachikue Gorge in this dynamic open-air onsen that is held in high regards by all those who test its waters. The onsen water contains abundant amounts of sodium – a result of the geographical history as this location was once the bottom of the sea. The overall effect of the sodium-rich ancient waters means you can feel the water permeating smoothly into your skin.



Tourism Spots Nearby – Tachikue Gorge

The gorge rises for two kilometers along the clear waters of the Kando River, where visitors can see spectacular views of unique rock formations, scapolite, and old pine trees entwined on the surface of the rocks. A new beautiful landscape is revealed from season to season, especially during winter when the blankets of snow paint the entire area white, creating an exceptional scene straight from a Japanese ink brush painting.



Matsue, Shimane

Tamatsukuri Hot Spring



Said to have opened about 1,300 years ago, this is one of the oldest onsen in Japan. The ingredients of the onsen water contains multiple skin-beautifying characteristics, and ancient texts say you will gain beauty after soaking once in the waters of Tamatsukuri Onsen, and any kind of illness would be cured after a second soak. According to a spring quality survey conducted by a pharmaceutical company, Tamatsukuri Onsen's spring water was evaluated as a high-quality, lotion-level water that increases basic moisture by about 165%.



Tourism Spots Nearby

Koizumi Yakumo Former Residence (Photo Left) / The house where Yakumo Koizumi (also known as Lafcadio Hearn), known for his works such as "Hoichi the Earless" and "Snow Woman", lived in the past. It is a samurai styled residence full of emotion, with a library and rooms with a view of the garden on three sides.

Matsue Castle (Photo Right) / It takes about 20 minutes by car from Tamatsukuri Onsen to the central area of the Matsue city. There you can find Matsue Castle and Shiomi Nawate Street, where you can feel the atmosphere of a traditional castle town.



Tourism Spots Nearby

Inasa Beach (Photo Left) is located on the coast within 1km of the west side of Izumo Taisha Grand Shrine. Standing out on the landscape, this unique, round rock formation is known as "Benten-san" by the local people, and was once located far off the coast of Inasa Bay.

Izumo Taisha Grand Shrine (Hai-den) (Photo Right) is a magnificent shrine where Okuninushi-no-Okami, Japan's famous matchmaking god, is enshrined. The Kagura-den's large shimenawa, which has a total length of 13.6m and a weight of 5.2t, is one of the largest shimenawa in Japan.

Izumo, Shimane

Yunokawa Hot Spring

One of the top three beautiful hot springs in Japan, this onsen is located in a cozy, quiet region surrounding by mountains on three sides. You can feel your skin become smoother as you soak in the waters of Yunokawa, which is particularly popular with young women.





Matsue, Shimane Matsue Shinjiko Hot Spring

Famous for its spectacular sunset views, this onsen resort faces the shores of Lake Shinji. Most of the ryokan inns in the area have a traditional Japanese atmosphere, and many of them come with a view of the lake from the bath. The onsen water rises from the depths of the lake, and is transparent-clear with a strong reputation for its skin-beautifying effects.



Tourism Spots Nearby

Sunset from the Shimane Art Museum / The Shimane Art Museum, which stands on the shores of Lake Shinji, is a famous sunset viewing spot that has been selected as one of the "100 Best Sunsets in Japan". You can enjoy the spectacular views of the sunset at the museum while enjoying the waterside art.



Yasugi, Shimane Saginoyu Hot Spring

An onsen which produces huge amounts of spring water of around 600 liters per minute. It is said that the name of the onsen was given because shirasagi, egrets in English, used to heal their wounds here in the olden days. Spring water is well-known for its medicinal effectiveness and is suitable for the "hot spring cure method". There are three ryokan inns that use this spring water where you can enjoy the hot springs that continue to flow 24 hours a day.



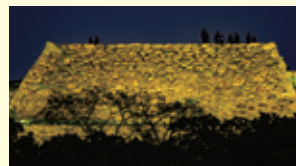
Tourism Spots Nearby

The Adachi Museum of Art and The Yasugi-bushi Entertainment Hall are located directly in front of Saginoyu Onsen. The Adachi Museum of Art's Japanese garden (approximately 43,000m²) is a must-visit, and there is good reason it was selected as best in Japan for four consecutive years by an American magazine.

Yonago, Tottori Kaike Hot Spring

Facing the Sea of Japan, this seaside hot springs resort is representative of the Sanin region. The hot springs water springs from the sea, which is rare in Japan. It is also known as Shionoyu, which means hot salt water. The spring water contains sodium and calcium chloride, and

with plentiful minerals from the sea, the water has a high level of heat retention. With about 40 hotels ranging from historical sukiya-styled ryokan inns to large-scale hotels and communal baths with luxury facilities, this hot springs resort boasts the largest scale in the Sanin region.



Tourism Spots Nearby

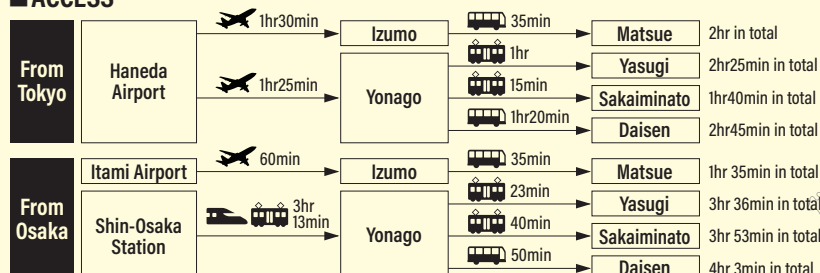
Yonago Castle Ruins (Photo Above) / A spectacular viewpoint where you can overlook the city of Yonago with a 360-degree panoramic view without any obstacles to interfere. Mt. Daisen (Photo Below) is a beautiful national park that was selected as one of the top three in the "Japan Famous Peak Ranking". Misen, the main peak of Mt. Daisen, is the highest peak in the Chugoku region at an altitude of 1,709m. In winter, you will be fascinated by the picturesque snow landscape, and the dazzling sunrise is especially spectacular.



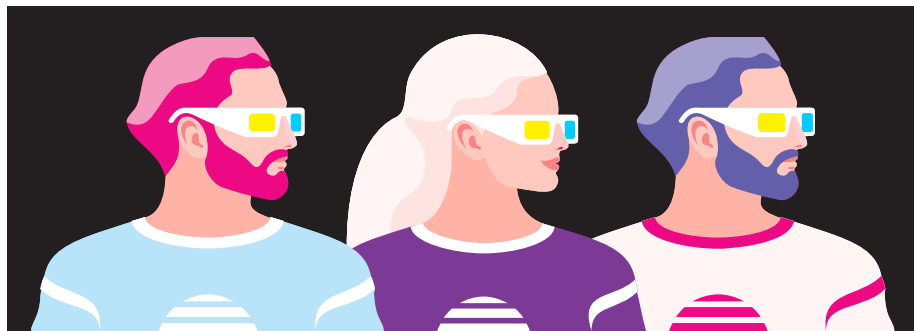
The Tourism Office of Lake Nakaumi, Lake Shinji, and Mt. Daisen Area

WEB : <https://www.nakaumi.jp/sanin-japan/> FACEBOOK : @SaninHeart

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Publisher

ENGAWA Co., Ltd.

President

Takanobu Ushiyama

Editorial Director

Nick Narigon

Creative Director

Liam Ramshaw

Art Directors

Rose Vittayaset

David Jaskiewicz

Senior Editor

Lisa Wallin

Features Writer

Matthew Hernon

Editorial Assistants

Lisandra Moor

Jordan Green

**Chief Digital
Content Manager**

Alexandra Hongo

Contributors

Bunny Bissoux

Stephan Jarvis

David Schneider

Community Strategist

Alex Shapiro

Head of Sales

Hirofumi Ohuchi

Sales Executives

Takaaki Murai

Kahori Terakawa

Seiya Hongo

Serina Doi

Marion Aubert

Shizuka Kimura

Konatsu Satake

Kazuko Ito

Media Producers

Yuchen Ho

Ryoko Ogawa

Cover photo by Allan Abani
at Mori Art Museum

EST. Corky Alexander, 1970

2F OSK Catherina, 1-12-12 Shinjuku,
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-0022
(03) 6432-9948 / (03) 6438-9432 (fax)
info@engawa.global

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info@engawa.global

広告に関するお問い合わせ先
電話: (03) 6432-9948
メール: info@engawa.global

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EDS' CHAT

@liam_ramshaw: I can't help but feel that Eds' Chat is slightly different this month, instead of sitting across the table from a petite, blond South African lady drinking tea I'm greeted with an entirely different visage altogether. So how's your first issue as Editorial Director treated you then Nick?

@nicknarigon: It's like the illuminations at Tokyo Midtown – inviting, exciting and full of distracting lights. Annemarie taught us young bucks a thing or two about how to operate a magazine and now it's on us to do her proud. Taking over the reins of a Tokyo institution from such an accomplished mentor is much like our cover star for this month, Mori Art Museum director Mami Kataoka [page 20].

“
Annemarie taught us young
bucks a thing or two about how
to operate a magazine and now
it's on us to do her proud.
”

@liam_ramshaw: Quite... she truly is a remarkable individual. In the space of less than a year she has taken on one of the most prestigious roles in the Japanese art world, managed to steer the Mori Art Museum through a global pandemic and was able to curate one of the best exhibitions we've seen in Tokyo for a number of years. Not bad going.

@nicknarigon: Absolutely. The comments of Hoshino Resorts CEO Yoshiharu Hoshino [page 26] were also interesting. Not only did his chain of brand hotels survive the pandemic, they expanded. I couldn't help but notice in part because they relied on advertising in local magazines and newspapers.

@liam_ramshaw: It really is inspirational how business and individuals have thrived in such difficult times. I don't know about you, but after the year we've just had I'm in serious need of a break, and after reading our Winter Getaways section [page 41] I can't decide whether to head for the slopes or beaches. How about you?

@nicknarigon: The family and I are heading to Hakuba Valley. The kids aren't big enough for skis but they love the sledding hills and general horseplay. Other than that just staving off cabin fever – though stylist Shoi Sapeta has some great fashion ideas for small holiday get-togethers. How do you manage to stay fresh while staying home?

@liam_ramshaw: All the secrets of my home beauty regime for the working gentleman will be fully revealed in the February issue and if that isn't reason enough to look forward to 2021 then I don't know what is.

@nicknarigon: 2021's already looking better.



Nick Narigon
Editorial Director



Liam Ramshaw
Creative Director

SOMETHING FOR THE WEEKEND

Our round up of what tickled our fancy and ground our gears this month

INTO IT	OVER IT	F*CK IT
Oden	Takeout food	Train commute
Hot sake	Online concerts	Netflix Christmas movies
Kotatsu	TikTokers	Twitter Trends
Heatech	PM Abe	The Government



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RADAR



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Area Guide: Ariake

The future of Tokyo –and four Olympic venues – are embedded on this reclaimed island in Tokyo Bay.

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Shop Japan

Our monthly roundup of artisanal items made by Japanese craftsmen.

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Dress for the Holidays

Stylist Shoi Sapeta shows us how to look good while attending small holiday gatherings this year.

Chasing Olympic Dreams in Ariake

Home to four Olympic venues, Tokyo Bay's reclaimed island of Ariake is worth a visit whether or not the Games take place

Words and photographs
by Stephan Jarvis

2020 should have been a celebratory year for Ariake, one of the islands of reclaimed land that lay within Tokyo Bay. Alas, the global Covid-19 situation and subsequent cancellation-postponement of the Olympics and numerous other events have left the area a relative ghost town. While the convention center **Tokyo Big Sight** is the most recognizable landmark, now might be a good time to wander around without the crowds and get familiar with some other notable attractions.

Olympic Hopefuls

With four venues within close proximity of each other, it's easy to see why Ariake is set to become a popular destination when (and if) the Olympics roll around. In addition to **Ariake Tennis Park** (the mecca of Japanese tennis and home to the Ariake Coliseum), the newly built **Ariake Arena**, **Ariake Gymnastics Center** and the temporary **Ariake Urban Sports Park** are set to host tennis, volleyball, gymnastics, BMX freestyle/racing and skateboarding respectively.

Situated right on the bayfront, and with the Tokyo skyline as a backdrop, Ariake Urban Sports Park is particularly appealing due to the more youth-



driven, carnival-like atmosphere that organizers have planned for the area — not to mention the fact that the open, airy location will hopefully prove effective in dissipating the high levels of humidity that a Tokyo summer typically brings.

Waterside Wanderings

In fact, it's the openness of Ariake that has made the area a surprisingly pleasant place, especially in this day and age of pandemic-induced social distancing. It's possible to navigate much of the island's perimeter via a peaceful stretch of shoreline promenades and clean, well-cultivated micro-parks away from the crowds and the stifling inner-city environment.

Of particular note is **Ariake-Kita Canal Park**, which offers a sweeping view across Rainbow Bridge, Toyosu and the Tokyo cityscape along the horizon. Follow the route down toward the twin-towered **Hotel Trusty Tokyo Bayside** and nearby **Mizu no Hiroba Port Park** to enjoy a packed lunch on the steps of a red-bricked amphitheatre before





screens, and the **Tokyo Sewerage Museum “Rainbow.”** Here you can find answers to questions you didn’t think you had about Japan’s sewerage system and experience first-hand the role of a sewerage worker. If you’re thirsty for more knowledge visit the (mostly) free **Panasonic Center Tokyo** and its **RiSuPia** museum. Kids can enjoy learning about science and math in nature, while adults can check out the company’s latest products and technology.

Fans of miniatures and dioramas will find themselves occupied over at **Small Worlds Tokyo** — the world’s largest indoor miniature amusement park. There are intricate and offbeat details to spot amongst the interactive exhibits that include day-night

cycles, Cape Kennedy rocket launches and Evangelion Angel attacks on Tokyo-3. Backstage tours can be booked for a glimpse of how the exhibits come together and, if you’re willing to stump up a fairly high price, an opportunity to be 3D scanned, miniaturized and temporarily become part of an exhibit.



continuing around to the more lush, tree-lined section of the park that leads all the way to Tokyo Big Sight and **Ariake West Terminal Park**.

If you fancy something more expansive, The **Tokyo Rinkai Disaster Prevention Park** will surely suffice. As the name suggests, the sprawling park is the base of operations for Tokyo’s disaster strategy response unit and features a free-to-enter visitor center where you can gain first-hand experience



of a large-scale-quake and, naturally, some all-important safety advice. Calm your nerves afterwards by grilling up something good at the adjacent **Sona Area Tokyo Barbecue Garden**. If you need to burn off some extra calories, the park conveniently leads into **Symbol Promenade Park**, a lengthy pedestrian walkway that threads all the way through Ariake and the neighbouring Daiba and Aomi areas. There are more green areas and plant life along the route for horticulturalists to enjoy, plus the 60-meter wide **Dream Bridge** for another opportunity to take in a scenic view across the bay.

Interactive Education

There are plenty of things to do indoors too, particularly if you’re looking to educate and entertain young minds. Ariake is an apt location for both the **Tokyo Water Science Museum**, which aims to teach visitors about the wonders of water through fun, interactive games and big

Mallrats

Another recent addition to the ever-developing area is **Ariake Garden**, a large-scale shopping and entertainment complex. The 200-plus outlets within the mall run the gamut of what you’d expect, with a particular emphasis on sports and fashion across the second and third floor. There are also nearly 50 dining options. Furthermore, each of the five floors has an outdoor terrace to enjoy, with slight twists in their designs.

The mall is one of five buildings that make up Ariake Garden, which overlook an entertainment plaza and park. The others are home to a hotel, spa, event hall and theatre (home of the *Lion King* production from 2021). It’s a place you might find worth stopping by if you’re looking to wind down and get some retail therapy, or simply a half-decent bite to eat, after spending time in or around Ariake’s other main attractions.



KANAMO BY CHROMES CORP.

This art object and flower vase was created by Chromes, a company specializing in production of made-to-order ornamental metals. Inspired by the shimmering water and waves of light, this product incorporates its long-cultivated techniques to express fluctuation in its design. Every item is unique, made only for each specific customer. ¥160,000, chromes-2016.com.

DECOBRANCHE KYOUKA SERIES BY MARUFUKU SHOTEN CO.,LTD.

This series of bags and wallets is made by dyeing leather with kyo-yuzen dyeing techniques. By leveraging a manufacturing technique accumulated over 70 years since the company's founding, all processes from design to production are carried out at the company's factory in Osaka. ¥14,000-¥43,000, www.decobranche.co.jp/



SHOP JAPAN

Looking for something quintessentially Japanese for that perfect gift or souvenir? Each month, we round up some of our favorite artisanal items made by local craftsmen and designers



SECRET CONVERSATION BY MARUKANOU MURATA CO., LTD.

This unique stick of incense brings pleasure to everyday life. Write a message using special ink on this uniquely developed incense. Watch as it burns and the message is revealed. Enjoy this fascinating product in a multitude of ways, such as writing a message to yourself or gifting it to someone special. ¥1,500, www.marukanou.com/item/250239/

NO TIE SHOELACE COOLKNOT BY COOLKNOT JAPAN CO.,LTD.

This product was developed over two years with the idea to save everybody a little bit of time. The innovative inner rubber core offers enough stretch for you to slip the shoes on and off easily while still holding your feet firm. No need to adjust your laces or worry about tying them again! ¥908, www.coolknot.co.jp.





TSUKARESHIRAZU SOCKS (ANTI-FATIGUE SOCKS) BY ECONOLEG CO., LTD.

These thin socks suit casual and formal shoes, offering comfort through moisture prevention and foot support. The socks' innovative structure solves typical sock problems while doubling as an insole that reduces fatigue. Meant for those who spend their days on their feet and those who need comfort for daily activities. ¥1,600-¥1,900, www.nishikutu.co.jp/lp/tsukareshirazu/



LONG WALLET BY MAEKAWA LEATHER CRAFTSCO.,LTD.

These leather wallets are made using a traditional Japanese craft called inden, in which deerskin leather is decorated with lacquer patterns using stencils. Skilled artisans carefully select the leather before applying lacquer for a durable and beautiful finish. ¥27,000, ja-jp.facebook.com/indenmaekawa/



THE BLOSSO BY MYU-TECH 35 INC.

Using the company's processing methods, this lineup of lustrous items is made out of high-quality stainless steel that is resistant to corrosion. All products are handmade by craftsmen and use strong magnets so the wearers don't have to worry about ruining expensive fabrics or clothing. ¥10,000-¥50,000, www.blosso.tokyo

OMOSHIROI BLOCK BY TRIAD INC.

What looks like a memo paper cube at first actually reveals intricate paper art as the pages get used. Each sheet, which is uniquely and intricately designed, is stacked up manually with special attention paid to the texture of the paper. The products are inspired by beautiful designs, including famous architectural landmarks of Japan. ¥1,980-¥10,000, www.triad-japan.com/en/omoshiroi_block



SPRING SPRING BY ENSHU SPRING CO.,LTD.

The Spring Spring series was made with the idea of delivering products that make users' hearts leap. Enshu Spring, a spring manufacturer, initiated the series to highlight the value of coil springs, not just as a functional component, but also as accessories for our daily lives. ¥1,000-¥18,000, spring-spring.jp



KOUKIN FUJI BY SANKO-SEISAKU.CO., LTD.

Inspired by Japanese cultural icon, Mount Fuji, this product series includes a bookmark, bottle opener and chopsticks rests, among others. Developed through a collaboration of two local companies in Shizuoka Prefecture, each item is meticulously handmade by craftspeople and, of course, infused with passion. ¥420-¥4,200, koukinfuji.com/en/index.html



Local STYLE PROFILES

Get to know Tokyo-based designers and trendsetters – find out what inspires their style and where they love to shop in the city



AKIHIKO KIMURA

Founder and designer of LOKITHO

MY CLOTHING BRAND IS...

The LOKITHO brand was established in 2010, introducing an elegant

collection that makes full use of Japanese technology under the concept, “clothes for self-assured women.” Regardless of age or fashion style, we want independent women to wear the brand. To this end we strive for high-quality sewing using only high-quality materials. We are always proposing fresh designs while staying in touch with the current trends. Currently, as the concept suggests, LOKITHO is patronized by customers of all ages, from their 20s to 60s.

TOKYO FASHION IS... Tokyo is a blend of all types of genres. New styles with a high degree of freedom are born every day, even from a global perspective. I think it's a wonderful culture that deserves attention.

MY TOP PLACES TO SHOP AND EAT IN TOKYO ARE...

BRACKETS: A secondhand clothing store in Shoto, Shibuya-ku, where you can find rare secondhand clothing from various genres, so you can study design while you shop. brackets-shibuya.com

CHATEL HATOU: An authentic coffee shop in the center of Shibuya, Hatou is a shop with beautiful interiors and cups, as well as coffee with nice taste. crea.bunshun.jp/articles/-/12862

DIVKA: This is a new Divka atelier in Gotanda that opened in a vintage, 50-year-old building. The owner collects pottery, antique furniture, miscellaneous goods, etc. It's like being in Paris. www.instagram.com/divkanet/

ROBE-INSPIRED DRESS

Wear this fan favorite with jeans, a long cardigan or match with a long dress if romance is in the air. Cover and dress by LOTHIKO

How To: DRESS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Comfortable yet stylish is the name of the game this season as holiday parties become small affairs

Compiled by Shoi Sapeta

As we will be staying close to Tokyo this winter season, most of us will celebrate the end of 2020 only with family and close friends, or at gatherings with small groups at open spaces such as parks. There is always room for fashion, and these powerful dresses will set the mood.

MIMOSA DRESS

Embrace the elegance of the season with this lace dress accentuated with yellow mimosa flowers.

Dress by LOTHIKO, earrings by LARICA



LACE DRESS

An embroidered dress can make any precious occasion feel special.

Dress by LOTHIKO



MEET OUR STYLE EXPERT

Shoi Sapeta is the founder and chief stylist of XYI Style Creation as well as an influencer working with Japanese fashion brands. XYI collaborates with different stylists and Japanese brands to offer efficient and effective styling services for daily life or special occasions. More info at www.xyi-style.com

Softcream Fashionistas

With so many flavors – and colors – of softcream you can coordinate your treat together with any Tokyo fashion style

Words by Zoria Petkoska, Illustrations by Bunny Bissoux

The variety of softcream flavors – and the myriad colors and shapes – are so vast that every fashionista in Tokyo can pair their softcream flavor with their daily outfit. Perfect for the 'gram, here are some winning combos of softcream and Tokyo fashion style to consider:

Harajuku Cute

Harajuku fashion crosses between styles – from the cupcake-shaped Lolitas to the over-saturated “more is more” Decoras. The new fashion subculture Menhera contrasts the kawaii with the darker elements. Pairing your kawaii outfit with cute food is what Harajuku fashion tribes have always done – rainbow toast, pastel cotton candy, tapioca bubble tea and of course softcream. To channel that Harajuku spirit, you need a cheeky flavor to match. Before you reach for usual pastel suspects like strawberry, try ramune softcream, preferably sprinkled with multi-colored candy.



Modern Kimono Fashion

Street fashion icons are shelving the kimono rulebook and playing with new textures and accessories, wearing kimono with button-up shirts and army boots. We've seen the classic kimono outfit matched with a cup of matcha, and the summer yukata look completed with a yakitori stick. We now suggest a combination of vintage kimono and the new Japan-inspired softcream introduced by Nissei in 2020. Aiming for that perfect blend of traditional 'wa' and modern 'wow', we recommend the new Hokkaido azuki bean flavor for a Japan-inspired softcream experience, preferably in the decorative cone sleeve expressing beautiful Japanese scenes and patterns.

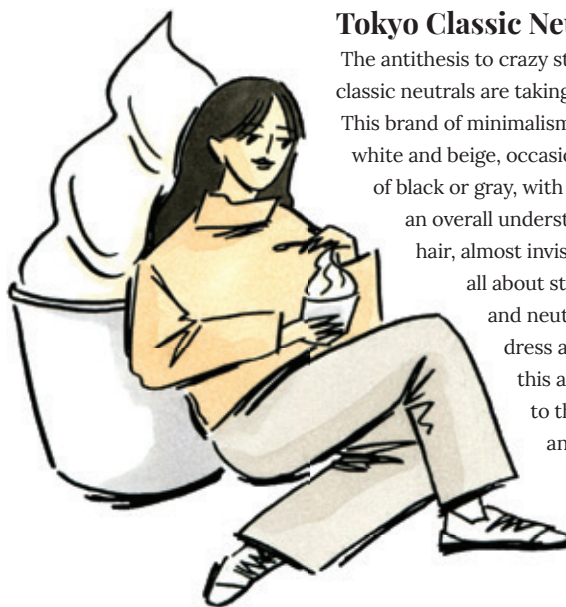
Shibuya Cyberpunk

All colorful neon aside, Shibuya regulars favor black when it comes to fashion. Long, pointy, asymmetric jackets and big black boots or chunky sneakers, paired with leather and metal and above all – attitude. Three words for them: squid ink softcream. This rare Fukui Prefecture flavor can be found in the home of seafood, and this treat is nearly as black as squid ink. But don't worry, the flavor is neither overpowering nor fishy. The runner-up is black sesame softcream.



Tokyo Classic Neutrals

The antithesis to crazy street fashion – classic neutrals are taking over Tokyo. This brand of minimalism loves all things white and beige, occasionally an accent of black or gray, with simple cuts and an overall understated look. Natural hair, almost invisible makeup, it's all about staying as natural and neutral as possible. To dress and decorate like this all you need is a visit to the nearest MUJI, and find a cone of vanilla softcream that is available everywhere.



Paraboot & Filmelangé: The Perfect Pair



A marriage of fashion: French and Japanese designers unite to create a versatile shoe for any season

Words by Lisa Wallin



Filmelangé is collaborating with long-standing French shoemaker Paraboot for the second year running. Both brands prize the balance of traditional craftsmanship with the spirit of innovation, so each time they come together they create something new and exciting.

The Paraboot Difference

In the heart of the French Alps, over 200 artisans are absorbed in their task of making 350,000 pairs of high quality shoes annually. Here Paraboot is on a quest for balance and simplicity, making shoes that don't sacrifice style for comfort or vice versa. This family-run business is in its fourth generation and still maintains the core values of dedication to quality and attention to detail that founder Rémy-Alexis Richard-Pontvert instilled more than 100 years ago. Case in point: the manufacturing process hasn't changed since the early 1900s and includes over 150 meticulous steps to complete each shoe. Even now, Paraboot is the only manufacturer in the world that makes its own soles for its shoes.

Paraboot X Filmelangé

For this year's collaboration, Paraboot and Filmelangé have produced designs for both men and women. The men's shoe is based on Paraboot's Chimey model, taken from this year's autumn/winter collection. It's an

elegant boat shoe with soft curves and thick quilting inside.

The women's model is based on the Nano, a shoe that is characterized by its plump and round form. Originally designed as a work boot in France, it's a slip-on shoe that is reminiscent of Japanese safety shoes. Its simple design and structure make it a perfect match for any casual outfit. Paraboot usually makes both styles in smooth leather, but for its Filmelangé collaboration, both shoes come in brown suede, giving the shoes a softer and more casual look.

House Filmelangé in Hiroo

House Filmelangé's shop in Jingumae closed its doors on December 6, but fear not: it's

temporary. Filmelangé's brick-and-mortar store will reopen in a quiet residential part of Motoazabu, near Hiroo. Similar to its Jingumae location, the new shop will be a bit far from the station, but therein lies its appeal — it's a destination, not somewhere you just happen to stop by. House Filmelangé will



reopen on January 15, 2021, where the unique charms of the brand and their expertise with fabrics will be on full display.

Essential Info

HOUSE FILMELANGÉ

Tour Blanche 1F, Moto-Azabu 3-4-39
Minato-ku, Tokyo

OPENING HOURS: 11am-7pm

TEL: 03-6447-1107

EMAIL: housefilmelange@b-b-a.co.jp

ONLINE STORE: housefilmelange.com

IN-DEPTH



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A Quiet Challenge

When the pandemic started she didn't panic: meet Mori Art Museum Director Mami Kataoka.

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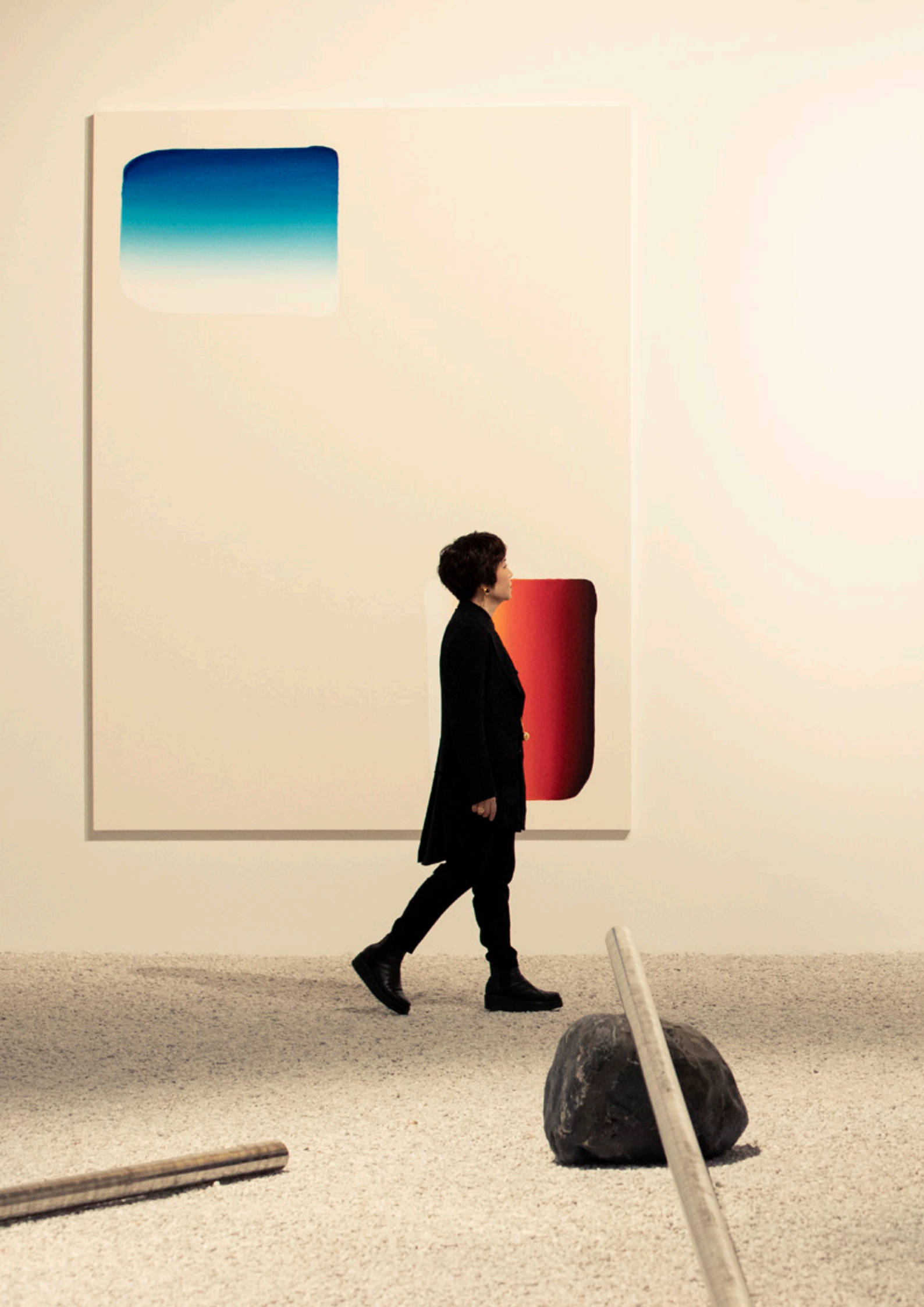
Bon Voyage Japan

French illustrator Jean Freund's cross-cultural project redefines the Japan travel book.

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What's Next for Tokyo's Hotels?

Yoshiharu Hoshino introduces micro-tourism, and possibly the answers to Japan's hotel vacancy problems.





A QUIET CHALLENGE

Poised, learned and slyly coy, new Mori Art Museum Director Mami Kataoka talks about taking charge of one of Tokyo's most prominent institutions amid a pandemic

Words by Alexandra Hongo, photographs by Allan Abani



In September 2019, just months before assuming her role as the new director of Mori Art Museum (MAM), Mami Kataoka sat with 4,000 professionals at the International Council of Museums annual conference in Kyoto to discuss the future of museums. The theme was “redefining the museum.” Kataoka had gone to the conference prepped with two questions that had long been on her mind: “Why are we doing this?” and “Do we still need museums?” Despite hosting constructive ideas, the conference ended without offering a concrete formula for change. Kataoka returned to Tokyo somewhat uneasy — “In my mind,” she recalls, “this [museums] could end anytime if we continue to have these questions.”

In January 2020, Kataoka, who worked in various positions at MAM for the past 18 years, became the new director, a post she succeeded from Fumio Nanjo upon his retirement. Two months later, the museum closed its doors for the first time in its nearly two decades of history. The world was in the midst of an unprecedented pandemic that would forever change the fundamental way of how we live and function in society.

By then, it wasn't only Kataoka asking it; it was the whole world: “Do we still need museums?”

An emotional rollercoaster

“What a year!” Kataoka exhales deeply as she greets me at her office at Mori Art Museum one morning in early October. This is her first interview for the day. She has another one in a few hours, a script deadline later in the day and more meetings than she can fit in her schedule. “We have started task management to keep deadlines of all deadlines,” she jokes, the museum publicist nodding.

Mori Art Museum closed almost immediately after Covid-19 began spreading in Japan. It was a necessary

safety precaution, but it wasn't an easy decision to make. At the time, the museum was just about to launch its exhibition *STARS: Six Contemporary Artists from Japan to the World*, the blockbuster featuring some of the biggest names in Japan's contemporary art scene, including Takashi Murakami and Yayoi Kusama. For Kataoka, who had been involved with its planning since 2017, it was to be one of the greatest moments for the museum. We all know what happened next.

“We had to change all exhibition programs, postpone STARS and the fall exhibition too, call all artists and lenders and ... it was a roller coaster.” Once that was handled, there was no time to rest — the museum had to focus on its next crisis management task: staying connected to people. It launched its first “digital museum” MAM Digital, only to become painfully aware that they weren't ready. “We had almost nothing to include,” Kataoka shrugs her shoulders.

The team uploaded online talks and film screenings to their website, built up their archives, launched virtual walks inside the museum, added subtitles in different languages and recorded exclusive interviews and curators' reviews. They increased their social media presence and launched their first Instagram live streamings in Japanese and English. “We had people watching from Mexico, Tel Aviv and other places,” Kataoka recalls, “thanking us for our content. [We realized that] we have to use the Internet well to stay connected with our international audience.”

Life in quarantine also sped up projects that Kataoka was secretly planning. Among them was the “Artist Cookbook,” a project the museum introduced on social media during the early stages of the pandemic. Inspired by Allan Kaprow's “Happenings” from the 1960s, “Artist Cookbook” was a visual diary that introduced “mundane things we do as art” in the form of comfort dishes cooked by artists from around the world.

“
Do we
still need
museums?
”

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STARS and the
fall exhibition too,
call all artists and
lenders and ... it was
a roller coaster.
”

Dane Mitchell submitted “Fire Steamed Mussels” from New Zealand. Navin Rawanchaikul had “Navin’s Stay Home, Stay OK Lassi” from Thailand. Lee Mingwei pitched in a mouthwatering “Jean Gooch’s English Apple Cake” from New York.

Not long after it was launched, the “Artist Cookbook” became one of MAM’s most engaging content on its social media accounts, winning the museum not only praise from international fans but also a new potential business: a publishing firm in Japan approached Kataoka to discuss publishing the book.

A light ahead of the tunnel was beginning to take shape.

A time for change

After a five-month hiatus, Mori Art Museum reopened at the end of July, and finally launched STARS. To mark the occasion, the museum held a press conference inviting all six participating artists – five of whom attended – all standing two meters apart from each other.

“After we opened STARS, it became obvious that people really enjoyed experiencing art physically,” Kataoka says. The limited number of visitors to the museum, which MAM immediately introduced as a policy after its reopening, provided for a more intimate experience, a rare experience for Tokyoites used to city crowds. “Many people said it’s important to have less people at the museum to fully enjoy the experience. They said that they’d really like us to continue doing this (even after the pandemic).”

As a leader of a private institution, Kataoka must find a way to simultaneously please visitors and ensure that the museum makes a profit. “It’s still a struggle,” Kataoka admits. “We’ll have to find a way to coexist with digital and physical sustainability of the museum. But there will surely be an





Yet, 2020 taught Kataoka that “digital will never replace physical museums.” Kataoka believes the solution is a hybrid system of sustainability — one that is built on fundamental beliefs and values. “Diversity is the central part of my ideas,” she says. It’s something that goes back to her roots of being raised as a daughter of a Christian priest in central Japan, a rather extraordinary childhood in a country with less than 2 million Christians. “(As a child) I was always going between the ideal world where people should be equal, and the reality in our society where they were not. I want to make my time here at the museum reflect on how contemporary art can be part of the global discussion. It’s a big challenge. It’s a quiet challenge.”

The next exhibition on Kataoka’s agenda, set for launch in April 2021, is *Another Energy: Power to Continue Challenging – 16 Women Artists from around the World*, showcasing the works of female artists aged 71-105. “Art history, which paved the way for the international art world, was predominant by white men. We wanted to focus on non-white, non-male (artists) and more from the non-Western world. Overlooked artists have now been undiscovered. Once you start looking, there are so many of them,” Kataoka smiles.

Which is why we need museums perhaps now more than ever.

For more information on Mori Art Museum, STARS and upcoming exhibitions, visit www.mori.art.museum/en/index.html



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“
Diversity is the central
part of my ideas
”

area where digital will play the stronger role.” To test their grounds, the museum launched MAM Digital Premium, a paid program that delivers high-quality, exclusive content. With documentary-style video interviews with Nara Yoshimoto and Lee Ufan, two of the shining stars from STARS, and extensive gallery talks by museum curators, MAM Digital Premium is already going bold in the digital realm, with more to come in December 2020 onwards.

THE STORIES THAT GRIPPED THE NATION: 1980s

With Tokyo Weekender turning 50 this year, we continue our roundup of news from the last 50 years, here we look back at the 1980s, a decade of economic prosperity in Japan that ended with the Nikkei Stock Average hitting a record high of 38,916

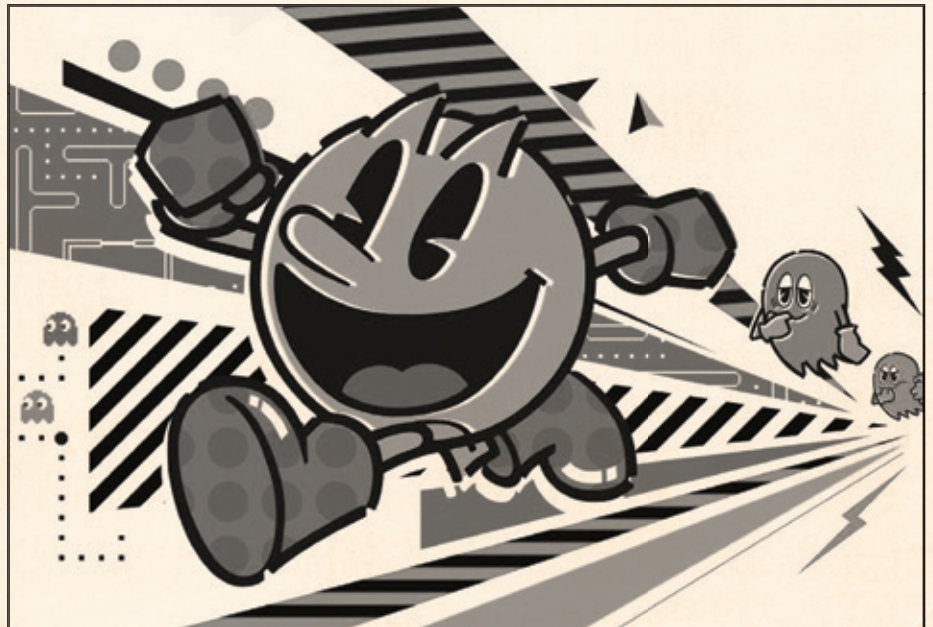
Words by Matthew Hernon

The Birth of Pac-Man

Describing arcades as “gloomy places where only boys went to hang out,” 25-year-old Namco employee Toru Iwatani decided to create a game with women in mind. Feeling inspired while looking at his pizza with a slice taken out, he came up with the cute yellow character Puc-Man which debuted at a cinema in Shibuya on May 22, 1980 to favorable reviews. When the game was exported to America the name changed to Pac-Man as the distributors were worried about kids replacing the “P” with an “F.” A massive success in the States, it overtook Asteroids as the best-selling game in the country and now ranks as the highest grossing arcade game of all time.

Changing of the Guard

“A small man knocking over a giant is sumo’s greatest thrill,” said stablemaster Kitanofuji after seeing his protegee, the 127kg wrestler



Chiyonofuji defeat Yokozuna Kitanoumi in a play-off at Tokyo’s Grand Tournament in January 1981, earning promotion to Ozeki. Watched by 65 percent of the country’s TV audience, the vast majority tuned in hoping to see an upset. Kitanoumi, around 40kg heavier, had dominated the sport in the seventies but wasn’t popular due to his stern demeanor. The lightweight hero Chiyonofuji also slayed Goliath in Nagoya six months later, becoming the 58th Yokozuna. He went on to set the record for most top division wins (Hakuho now leads the way) and in 1989 was presented with a People’s Honour Award.

Disneyland Opens

On a rainy Friday morning, April 15, 1983, Oriental Land president Masatomo Takahashi and Walt Disney chairman E. Cardon Walker cut the ribbon to signal the opening of the first

Disney park to be built outside the United States. With the park occupying 114 acres, the centerpiece of Tokyo Disneyland was the Cinderella Castle. Around 3,000 guests were in attendance on the first morning, paying 3,900 yen for a one-day pass. Within a year, sales had exceeded 10 million and numbers continued to grow in 1985 with the introduction of the nighttime “Tokyo Disneyland Electrical Parade.” The final cost of the park was \$1.4 billion, which the Oriental Land Company paid off in three years.

The Monster With 21 Faces

A mysterious set of crimes began with the kidnapping of Glico president Katsuhisa Ezaki on March 18, 1984. Though he escaped, three of the famous snack-maker’s vans were then set ablaze. Shelves had to be cleared when a letter arrived signed by “Kaijin Nijuichi Menso” (the Monster with 21 Faces) claiming cyanide-laced

READ THE HEADLINES FROM TW'S VERY FIRST ISSUE!

On February 13, 1970, editors and publishers Susan Scully and Millard (Corky) Alexander delivered the first issue of Tokyo Weekender with the announcement, "That's us, folks—a spanking, new weekly publication." To see our roundup of the topics and issues that made headlines 50 years ago in Tokyo in that very first issue, go to tinyurl.com/TWheadlines

candy had been distributed to their stores. The next targets included Marudai Ham, House Foods Corporation, and most notably Japan's largest confectioner Morinaga. Cyanide was discovered in 21 of their candy bars. The culprit(s) mocked the police while continuing to evade capture. The reign of terror ended following the suicide of Shiga Prefecture's police superintendent Shoji Yamamoto. No arrests were ever made.

The Rise of Studio Ghibli

Following the success of the 1984 animated feature *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*, Hayao Miyazaki, Isao Takahata, Toshio Suzuki and Yasuyoshi Tokuma launched Studio Ghibli (meaning a hot dust-carrying wind in Arabic) on June 15, 1985. The studio's first official film was *Laputa: Castle in the Sky*, partly inspired by Miyazaki's visit to Wales where he witnessed the miners' strike. In 1988, Takahata's war movie *Grave of the Fireflies* and Miyazaki's lighthearted fantasy flick *My Neighbor Totoro* were released as a double feature. The latter amassed a worldwide cult following. The company's biggest box office success of the decade was *Kiki's Delivery Service*, Japan's highest grossing film in 1989.

The Deadliest Single Air Disaster in History

On a sweltering day on the eve of the Obon holidays in 1985, many passengers were flying home to visit their families and pay respect to their ancestors. JAL 123 was one of several flights close to capacity. Including crew members, 524 people were on board. Tragically, only four survived. Twelve minutes in, the rear pressure bulkhead failed due to a faulty repair. The tail of the plane was torn off, crippling the aircraft. Captain Masami Takahama and co-pilot Yutaka Sasaki gallantly kept it airborne for 32 minutes before crashing into Mount Osutaka. The most famous casualty was Kyu Sakamoto, the only Asian recording artist to top the American Billboard chart.

The Recruit Scandal

It was a stocks-for-favors scandal by Tokyo-based human resources company Recruit in the mid-late eighties that led to the resignation of many prominent figures including prime minister Noboru Takeshita as well as the suicide of his secretary. Chairman Hiromasa Ezoe offered business leaders and senior politicians shares in the organization's subsidiary Cosmos shortly before it went public in 1986. Recipients received huge profits when their shares debuted on the stock market, almost doubling the initial asking price. After the truth came out in 1988, criminal charges were filed against several businessmen and bureaucrats, however, leading political figures escaped indictment. Ezoe, the last defendant to face trial, was given a suspended three-year sentence.

The Yama-Ichi War

A conflict born out of jealousy that lasted four years ended with several arrests and many gang members seeking police protection. Following the natural deaths of "The Japanese Godfather" Kazuo Taoka and his wakagashira (underboss) Kenichi Yamamoto, Masahisa Takenaka was elected kumicho (boss) of the Yamaguchi-gumi. Hiroshi Yamamoto felt he should've been chosen for the role and formed his own group, the Ichiwa-kai. He ordered a team of hitmen to kill Takenaka and two other members. New leader of the Yamaguchi-gumi Kazuo Nakanishi vowed to avenge the murders by annihilating the Ichiwa-kai. Over the next four years, 36 gangsters were murdered and many seriously injured as the war escalated. A peace accord was brokered in 1989.

The Little Girl Murderer

Between August 1988 and June 1989 Tsutomu Miyazaki kidnapped and killed Mari Konno (4), Masami Yoshizawa (7), Erika Namba (4) and Ayako Nomoto (5). A necrophile who cannibalized and drank the blood of one of his victims, he was called the "Little Girl Murderer" and the "Otaku Murderer" due to his

obsession with anime. He tried to blame his crimes on an alter-ego named "Rat-Man" that lived inside him, yet despite being diagnosed with one or more personality disorders, psychologists concluded that he was sane enough to know what he was doing. Sentenced to death in 1997, he was hanged on June 17, 2008. The timing of the execution was suspected to be a reaction to the Akihabara Massacre which occurred nine days earlier.

End of an Era

At 6:33 am on January 7, 1989, Emperor Hirohito passed away in his sleep after suffering from intestinal cancer. It signaled the end of the 62-year Showa Era. A diary entry dated April 7, 1987 revealed that the man formerly known as a god in Japan didn't want to live much longer as it would only lead to more anguish due to sad personal events and ruminations about his role in WWII. Three weeks later, he fell ill at his 85th birthday party. Emissaries from 163 countries and 27 international organizations attended his funeral while 200,000 people lined the site of the procession. The Heisei Era began on January 8, 1989.

IN THE CHARTS

Best-selling Single:

Christmas Eve (Tatsuro Yamashita)

Best-selling Album:

Reflections (Akira Terao)

Popular Films:

Kagemusha, Ran (Akira Kurosawa), Black Rain (Shohei Imamura), The Funeral, Tampopo (Juzo Itami), My Neighbor Totoro, Kiki's Delivery Service (Hayao Miyazaki).

New Releases:

Washlet (1980), Donkey Kong (1981), Compact Discs (1982), Akira (1982), Nintendo Entertainment System (1983), Dragon Ball (1984), Super Mario Bros. (1985), Nintendo Gameboy (1989).

THE STORIES THAT GRIPPED THE NATION: 1990S



Known as the Lost Decade, the 1990s saw a period of economic stagnation in Japan due to the asset bubble collapse. Successive catastrophes in 1995 then added to the sense of unease amongst its citizens.

Words by Matthew Hernon

The J-League Begins

A crowd of nearly 60,000 flocked into the National Stadium on the evening of May 15, 1993 to witness Yokohama Marinos defeat eventual champions Verdy Kawasaki in the J-league's first-ever game. Kazuyoshi Miura, that season's MVP, was in the starting lineup for the losing side that night and 28 years later, the 53-year-old is still going strong. The highlight of the opening weekend was a brilliant hat-trick by 40-year-old Brazilian playmaker Zico in Kashima Antlers' 5-0 victory over Gary

Lineker's Nagoya Grampus Eight. The England striker was one of three World Cup Golden Boot winners to ply his trade in Japan in the nineties along with Italy's Salvatore Schillaci and Bulgaria's Hristo Stoichkov.

A Royal Wedding

On June 9, 1993, Crown Prince Naruhito and Masako Owada tied the knot at the Kashikodokoro, a palace sanctuary said to enshrine Sun Goddess Amaterasu-omikami. 812 invited guests waited in the Imperial Garden while the 15-minute ceremony took place as they weren't allowed inside. Naruhito's parents, Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko stayed

in their Imperial sitting until the afternoon waiting for the couple to announce their marriage to them. Masako, whose 30-pound silk junihitoe (12-layered formal court dress) took three hours to put on, was initially reluctant to wed the Crown Prince as she didn't want to sacrifice her budding career as a diplomat for the constrained life of a princess. She relented after his third proposal.

The LDP Voted Out (Briefly)

Following its foundation in 1955, the Liberal Democratic Party held on to power for 38 consecutive years. This long era of one-party dominance came to an end in 1993 with the Japan New Party, an eight-party coalition headed by Morihiro Hosokawa, becoming the new government. Hosokawa only formed the JNP a year earlier in protest to the corruption scandals that blighted the LDP in the previous two decades. However, revelations about a 100-million-yen loan from a trucking company linked to organized crime ended his tenure as prime minister within nine months. The coalition government then collapsed two months later as the Socialist Party and New Party Sakigake left to form a Grand Coalition government with the LDP.





The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake

At 5:46am on January 17, 1995 the first major temblor to occur below an urban area in postwar Japan struck, killing close to 6,500 people and injuring around 40,000. The Great Hanshin-Awaji earthquake lasted for roughly 20 seconds followed by several aftershocks. Kobe was by far the worst hit with over 70 percent of the total deaths recorded in the port city. As the government struggled to cope with the sheer scale of the tragedy, volunteer groups and organizations stepped in to fill in the void leading to a shimin shakai (civil society) boom. Calls for a legal system to promote civil society activities at a wider level intensified and in 1998 the NPO Law was established.

Sarin Gas Attack

In 1992 religious sect Aum Shinrikyo sent a medical group to Zaire to ostensibly provide aid to Ebola victims. The real purpose was to obtain the virus to use as a biological weapon. When that failed they turned to sarin gas which they released at an apartment block in Matsumoto in June 1994, killing eight people. Nine months later, five Aum members simultaneously entered different lines of Tokyo Underground during rush hour carrying the toxic nerve agent in plastic bags. Twelve people died. Fatalities would have been in the thousands had the gas been pure. Leader Shoko Asahara, who hoped to start WWIII, was arrested on May 16, 1995. The following month, Fujio Kutsumi hijacked an ANA flight demanding his release.

Pokémon's Release

It was Satoshi Tajiri's childhood infatuation with collecting insects followed by his love of arcade and video games that lead to the creation of Pokémon. The idea he pitched in the early '90s revolved around bug-like creatures being traded by kids using the Game Boy link cable. "I imagined an insect moving back and forth

along the cable," he told *Time* magazine. Though staff members at Nintendo weren't initially convinced, Mario creator Shigeru Miyamoto took Tajiri under his wing and Pokémon, through its red and blue version role-playing video games, was eventually launched on February 27, 1996. It is now the highest-grossing media franchise of all time with more than \$100 billion in total franchise revenue.

Boy A

On May 27, 1997 the severed head of special education student Jun Hase was discovered in front of a secondary school in Kobe. Inside the mouth of the 11-year-old was a note that read: "This is the beginning of the game... Try to stop me if you can stupid police... I desperately want to see people die." The killer, who gave himself the alias Sakakibara, later sent taunting letters to newspapers before his arrested. Referred to as "Boy A", the 14-year-old offender also confessed to murdering 10-year-old Ayaka Yamashita on March 16 and admitted to attacking three other girls around the same date. He spent less than eight years in a medical reformatory for juveniles.

Fuji Rock Debuts

It was a howling evening that's gone down in music history, yet for the organizers of Fuji Rock it was a nightmare. Red Hot Chili Peppers were the festival's first headliners in the summer of 1997 at the Fuji Tenjinyama ski resort. A typhoon threatened to put a halt to proceedings yet the band, for whom lead singer Anthony Kiedis had a broken arm, continued to play through the storm. The following day, set to feature Green Day, Beck and The Prodigy, was then canceled. A move to Tokyo in 1998 went without major incident but proved uncomfortably humid, so in 1999 the event found its home in the cooler mountains of Naeba in Niigata where it's remained ever since.

Nagano Olympics

26 years after the Sapporo Games, the Winter Olympics returned to Japan in 1998 with Nagano hosting the event having previously failed with two bids. The highlight for the home crowd came in the men's team ski jumping competition. Four years earlier in Lillehammer Masahiko Harada cost his country victory with a disastrous final jump of 97.5 meters. His first attempt in Nagano was even

worse at 79.5 meters, knocking Japan down from first to fourth. He then redeemed himself, equalling the Olympic record of 137 meters. Harada wept as Kazuyoshi Funaki, who'd already won the individual large hill event, secured the triumph. Hiroyasu Shimizu (speed skating), Takafumi Nishitani (short track speed skating) and Tae Satoya (moguls) were Japan's other gold medallists.

The Wakayama Curry

Incident A summer village festival in Sonobe, Wakayama in 1998 was the setting for one of Japan's most notorious and bizarre crimes of the 20th century. Four people died and 63 suffered from acute poisoning after the communal curry pot was laced with 1,000 grams of arsenic. Masumi Hayashi, an outsider in the community, was allegedly seen acting suspiciously near the pot while preparing for the event. Traces of the crystalline metalloid product, which her husband used for his pest extermination business, were detected in her hair. Prosecutors, who also accused her of previously attempting to murder her husband and an acquaintance, only presented circumstantial evidence yet Hayashi was still sentenced to death. She's never confessed to the crime and continues to appeal the decision.

IN THE CHARTS

Best-selling Single:

Dango 3 Kyodai (Kentaro Hayami, Ayumi Shigemori, Himawari Kids and Dango Gasshodan)

Best-selling Album:

First Love (Hikaru Utada)

Popular Films:

Sonatine (Takeshi Kitano), Swallowtail Butterfly (Shunji Iwai), Princess Mononoke (Hayao Miyazaki), Shall We Dance? (Masayuki Suo), Ring (Hideo Nakata), Audition (Takashi Miike).

New Releases:

Slam Dunk (1990), Sonic the Hedgehog (1991), PlayStation (1994), Pokémon (1996), One Piece (1997), Naruto (1997), Toyota Prius (1997).

Bon Voyage

Japan

— Words by Bunny Bissoux

A French native's cross-cultural travel illustration book takes readers on a journey blending his striking visual memories with classic Japanese iconography.

French-born Tokyo resident Jean Freund has turned a personal illustration project into a charming travel book mixing stylistic inspiration from the East and West. *Bon Voyage Japan* is an anthology of Freund's illustrated travel posters inspired by his personal adventures alongside calligraphic works based on the goshuin (hand-written seals) collected at temples. The book, which contains both English and French text, was successfully crowdfunded in less than a week, eventually reaching over three times its original goal. As the current era keeps our global travel plans uncertain, returning to the legacy of exploring unknown lands through art and literature could indeed be the next best thing.

We caught up with Freund to hear more about the book and his life and voyages in Japan.

What brought you to Japan?

I grew up in Alsace, France, in a German-French bilingual culture, which gave me a passion for foreign languages very early on. What started as a recreational thing in high school soon turned into a serious practice and after a degree from university I moved here. That was 11 years ago. My initial goal was to become fluent in Japanese, after I reached it I decided I wanted to illustrate my life, my experiences, my memories and try to make a living out of it.

How important is creating art to you?

Holding a pen has always felt natural for me. My grandfather, who I inherited my drawing skills from, invited me to have my first illustration published in one of his book of poems when I was 10, that was my first commission. I also play various instruments, and drawing, as much as music, is like a tool to translate feelings and emotions. This is why I often see my artworks as souvenirs and memories of my own life. It's also a form of personal meditation. The fun part about making art is that I do not always know what the result will be and I discover it as I am creating. A basic idea can take me far away, like a small journey. I feel blessed to be able to illustrate or compose the soundtrack of my life.





How did the Bon Voyage Japan project begin?

The initial purpose of my posters was to keep memories of my travels or my everyday life. When I understood there was an interest in them from foreigners visiting Japan I decided to release them as postcards and posters. I knew at some point I should make a book that could act as a tribute to Japan. I wanted people to (re) discover Japan in a different way through my own interpretations. I've heard people say that my visuals reminded them of their travels, it's interesting to see how my own memories can actually become someone else's.

Can you tell us more about choosing to include your calligraphy in the book?

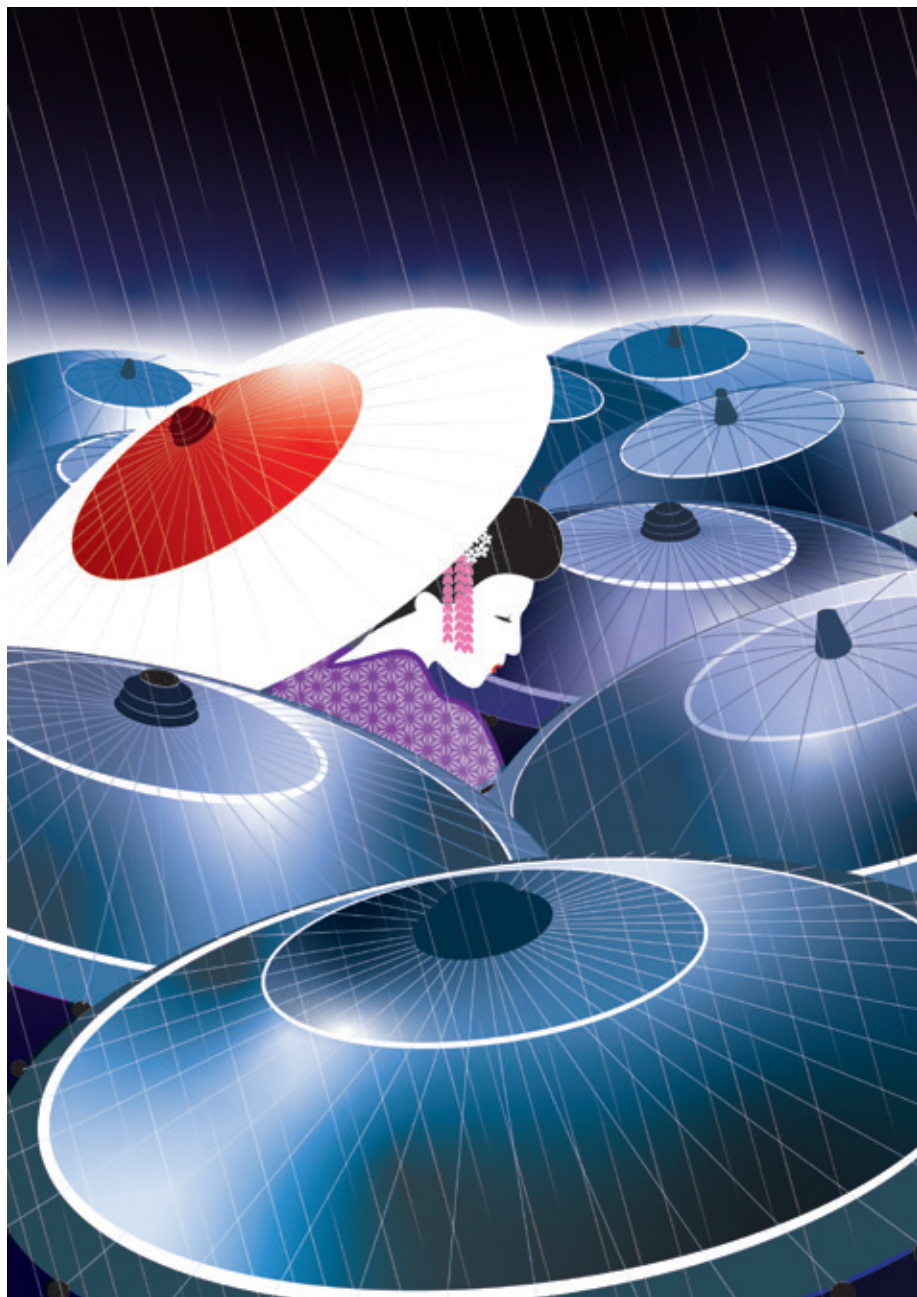
A few years ago I did the Shikoku pilgrimage where each day is about walking hours from one temple to another and collect these beautiful goshuin in a dedicated book. Because I am a foreigner living and drawing in Japan, I wanted my book to be intercultural too. When you discover this book, page after page you are actually on a journey, the goshuin let you do that in a very Japanese way. I can write kanji but when it comes to drawing with a brush it is a whole different level. I eventually decided to do all the calligraphy myself. They don't need to be perfect, they have to respect the brush stroke order and be done with a certain style, that's what matters I think.

Where do you find your inspiration?

Traveling and intersections of culture are a big source of inspiration. When drawing elements from a foreign culture I end up learning a lot. Sometimes I will see an action on the street that will inspire me ... or when eating a dish I ask myself how I would draw it. I often ask myself, "What will the viewer see?" Written Japanese is a great influence because of kanji, which are themselves drawings with a meaning. I really enjoy taking a brush and practicing. In terms of artists, I admire the work of Kawase Hasui for his series on Japan, Laurent Durieux for his state-of-the-art movie posters and Tomi Ungerer for his various styles, simple in appearance but actually holding very powerful messages.

Where are some of your favorite places from your travels in Japan?

The Kiso Valley really was a memorable experience. You can do great hikes from one village to another following the Nakasendo. The Ohenro pilgrimage on Shikoku island is also a recommendation if you like walking. Along the road you will go through forests, mountains, orchards, cliffs, beaches, ... you just need to



be ready to walk five hours a day. I also traveled several times by ferry. The journey from Osaka to Shanghai through the Setonaikai sea was absolutely fantastic, I definitely recommend it.

Do you have any advice for people traveling in Japan for the first time?

When visiting Tokyo for example, try and discover the city without the metro, by bicycle or on foot to see what is behind the main attractions and tourist spots. It's amazing how suddenly you can go from super busy and crowded places to quiet neighborhoods almost similar to a village. If you like to draw, try some Japanese items such as fude pen (brush pen) and washi paper, and maybe try to copy some Japanese language—you will immediately understand both the complexity and the beauty of it. If you carry a notebook, many train or metro stations have their own logo that you can stamp yourself and collect. If you want to get your own goshuin, there are many temples who offer this service, you can actually watch the person drawing it in front of you.

What are your thoughts on the future of international travel?

With the pandemic, I think many people were forced to reschedule their travels but it is not necessarily a bad thing. If we are forced to travel less it means we will have to carefully select where we want to go. Taking a plane and going somewhere has become so easy that you lose this 'voyage' dimension. If you must stay local you can have plenty of great experiences even close to your home. So if you are grounded, now is the time to reinvent the way you travel. And of course books will take you to far away countries and imaginary places too.



What are you working on at the moment?

I am now working on a collaborative project that I think a lot of people will enjoy. The Bon Voyage series is also expected to expand to other destinations. China is already in the making and my trip on the Trans-Siberian railway should also turn into a book at some point. In a few years I want my collection to offer a large choice of destinations and be a reference for anyone who wants to discover the world through my pen and brushstrokes.



Bon Voyage Japan by Jean Freund
is available online at www.lestudiobon.com for ¥2,500 plus tax.

Visit tokyoweekender.com to find out how to win a signed poster from Jean Freund or a signed copy of *Bon Voyage Japan*

The Race for 100% Zero Waste

Kamikatsu in East Tokushima made headlines across the world for its zero waste goals. We went to the mountain town's Zero Waste Center to get to the bottom of things

Words by Lisa Wallin, photos by Ryoko Ogawa



From a bird's-eye view, Why, Kamikatsu's famed recycling facility and zero waste center, looks like a question mark. The recycling center and related facilities curl into a semi-circle with a tail, while the newly constructed Hotel Why serves as the question mark's dot. This place serves as a gathering point where townspeople drop off recyclables, leave things in the swap shop and occasionally use the laundromat and café. But this project has never been just about the locals: from the very start Kamikatsu's vision has been to raise awareness across Japan and the world about creating more sustainable living practices.

A Zero Waste Society Almost 20 Years in the Making

Kamikatsu was the first town to introduce a nine-category separation system in 1997, which rapidly increased to 35 categories by 2001. In 2003, the town declared its goal to become a zero waste town — with 100% of its waste recycled — by 2020. Changes to the system in 2016 created a total of 45 categories, and a zero waste accreditation program for local businesses was initiated.

As of fiscal year 2019, Kamikatsu recycles 80.7% of its waste — any more is impossible at this point, says Zero Waste Center operation member Hiroki Tamura. He says, "At this



point, we've reached a stage where our efforts aren't enough. Some things, like zippers, can't be completely separated, and thus can't be recycled. The next step — which we've already taken — is to educate manufacturers of the benefits of sustainable practices, and cooperate with them and universities to create more sustainable practices for the future. We can't reach our goals if the industry as a whole doesn't change as well."



Recycling — A Way of Life

Tamura is a so-called u-turnee, who returned to Kamikatsu after a stint in Aichi, where he became familiar with a company that started charging for plastic bags from 2009 — more than 10 years ahead of the rest of the country. For him, that aspect of more sustainable living was already in

place when he joined Big Eye Company, Ltd, the company that runs the recycling facility. When asked how he and other townspeople had adjusted to the strict recycling rules, Tamura says, “People’s habits have changed a lot since the system began. They used to — like a lot of places in rural Japan — burn their trash in their garden or dumped it in an area nearby.”

“Personally, it has made me more aware of my consumption habits. I don’t buy anything

with complicated packaging if I can help it. For example, I prefer the taste of Pringles but I have to separate the packaging into four different parts when I recycle it. Chipstar only takes two, so I buy that instead,” he continues.

Though Kamikatsu and its 1,500 residents are only a small portion of Japan’s population — and an even smaller portion of the world at large — the town believes its proactive approach will continue to inspire people around the world to think about their daily practices and how they affect the environment around them.

The Kamikatsu Life for Visitors

Only Kamikatsu residents are allowed to use the waste station, but visitors can take study tours to see how it works. They can also pick up items to take home at the Kuru Kuru Shop, a swap shop at the center where residents drop off household goods and appliances that can still be used. Items must be registered and weighed before they can be taken home, as the center records everything. Kuru Kuru moves about 500–1,500 kilos of goods every month, totaling an approximate of 10 tons annually.



Study and Stay

Hotel Why, opened in May 2020, is the latest effort to encourage outsiders to learn about recycling through experience. The octagonal building, as with the main recycling facility, is constructed using mostly leftover lumber and reclaimed waste like spades and bicycle wheels. There are no disposable toiletries — guests bring their own toothbrushes and amenities — or nightwear available. There is a study tour on check-in and guests can test the town’s strict recycle separation for themselves at checkout.

While You’re Here...

Check out these zero waste accredited facilities in Kamikatsu

RISE & WIN BREWING CO. BBQ & GENERAL STORE

Craft beer, barbecue and accommodation. kamikatz.jp/en/

CAFÉ POLESTAR

Café and, after hours, co-working space. cafepolestar.com

INOW KAMIKATSU

A 14-day homestay experience to learn zero-waste and organic farming practices. inowkamikatsu.com

Learn more about Kamikatsu and other destinations in East Tokushima here: east-tokushima.jp/en/

A man with glasses and a dark quilted jacket stands in a modern interior. He is surrounded by red and blue armchairs and bookshelves filled with books. The lighting is warm and ambient.

What's Next for Tokyo's Hotels?

Has Hoshino Resorts CEO Yoshiharu Hoshino drawn the blueprint for the hotel industry's survival in Japan?

Words by Nick Narigon

Yoshiharu Hoshino says Covid-19's impact on the hotel ecosystem was the same as that rogue asteroid from 60 million years ago. The dinosaurs went extinct. Species that evolved survived – and thrived.

Approximately 300 hotels opened throughout Japan within the last three years, including 11 new luxury hotels in Tokyo, in preparation for the Tokyo Olympics that didn't happen and the 40 million international tourists that didn't arrive. Where some see disaster, Hoshino sees opportunity. By embracing micro-tourism, a term he coined, and building collaborations with local businesses, among other measures, Hoshino Resorts weathered the initial impact and is now moving forward with further expansion. As part of TW's Future of Tokyo series, we talked with Hoshino, the hospitable business innovator and fourth-generation CEO of Hoshino Onsen Ryokan, about the future of Tokyo's hotels.

When the calendar turned from 2019 to 2020, what did you expect for Hoshino Resorts in the upcoming year?

With the Olympics coming, we were expecting a major increase in the global market. Also, we were planning to open several new properties such as HOSHINOYA Okinawa and OMO3 Tokyo Kawasaki. HOSHINOYA Okinawa successfully opened this July to the domestic market, however OMO3 Tokyo Kawasaki is still postponing the grand opening.

In what ways have you seen hotel owners in Tokyo successfully manage the pandemic? In what ways have you seen hotel owners fail?

During the pandemic of Covid-19, the Japanese government's main focus was to retain employment of Japanese citizens. The subsidy for employment adjustment provided companies an access to maintain employees to prepare for a major come-back expected in the future. Owners of hotels that were capable to apply the subsidy immediately are showing successful results at capturing the demand that is supported by the Go To Travel (GTT) campaign. They will be ready to capture revenue once the pandemic comes to an end as well.

On the other hand, for those who did not adjust to the situation using this subsidy, I assume their recovery will require much time without experienced employees when demand comes back. You could always borrow money but not employees.

Last March, Japan's hotel occupancy rates fell to 30.5%, at which time Hoshino Resorts pivoted to focus on domestic travel – or micro-tourism. Can you explain that concept?

We can infer from past experiences of disasters that the demand for travel recovered for trips to neighboring areas, and this trend was taking precedence at our Taiwan property, HOSHINOYA Guguan... In times of concern for the spread of infection, micro-tourism is an effective means to travel safely and securely, and I think it is an important market not only in with-corona but also in post-corona.

Two major initiatives were undertaken to strengthen the micro-tourism visitors. One was to create opportunities for new discoveries because the locals know them well. For example, KAI, a hot spring ryokan brand, has devised a cooking method that uses local ingredients in all of its facilities...

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You could always
borrow money but
not employees
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Another point is to change the way information is transmitted. Before the pandemic, measures for travelers from faraway places and foreign countries naturally increased. OTA (online travel agency) is one example. Few people use OTA to find a hotel close to their home, and it is a weak means of attracting customers for micro-tourism. We used this opportunity to discover booking channels to reach the local area, such as town magazines and local newspapers.

What effect will the Go To Travel campaign have on Japan's tourism industry?

Travel and tourism markets in Japan are about 28 trillion yen, of which 85% is spent by Japanese travelers visiting domestic destinations. GTT campaign was intended to target this huge market to support the travel and tourism industry, which in fact had positive effects.

The next step required is to disperse the demand year-round. If the campaign is extended for a certain amount of time, the government should consider targeting

weekdays where demand is quite low compared to weekends or holidays. It will be easier to avoid viral infections at hotels and travel destinations if demands do not concentrate on certain dates, weekends or holidays. An increase in profitability could also be expected. The government should support hotels' profit, and not their revenue.

Hoshino Resorts was awarded the Nihon Service Award in part by assuming a year-and-eight-months-ahead plan. What do you see happening for Japan's tourism industry in the next year and eight months?

The year-and-a-half plan calls for a full recovery, including inbound, until vaccines and drugs are available. Specifically, assuming that it will take one to one and a half years, we are calculating all the things we need to do in order to survive during this period. It is based on what we do each month. To do so, it is important to predict what will happen and how demand will change. Once the vaccine is in place, there will be a return to first micro-tourism, then domestic travel including remote travel, and lastly overseas travel demand.

PM Suga recently said Japan still plans to reach the original target of 60 million international tourists by 2030. Is this 60 million target still attainable?

International travelers' interest in Japan is still quite high, and the goal of 60 million should be achievable. Travel demand has been increasing in Southeast Asia, especially from the population of middle-class earnings. Once the world overcomes the pandemic, a huge volume of travel demand will choose Japan as their destination. We have no clue whether the target will be achieved by 2030 though.

In your message on the Hoshino Resorts website, you say “I boldly predict that travel and tourism will be a leading industry in maintaining world peace in the next century.” What has the travel and tourism industry's role been this year?

People tend to stay at home and feel “Covid-19 fatigue.” We are always fighting with an invisible enemy and cannot relax. This situation is very stressful. The tourism industry can help alleviate this challenge by encouraging people to fight the virus by offering relaxation, and a place where we can rest our mind and feel extraordinary.

BUTTONED UP

Tokyo's growing fashion industry is large enough to fit all, yet international entrepreneurs are finding it difficult to enter the mainstream

Words by Serah Alabi

Tokyo – a collision of neon futurism, traditional roots and enigmatic citizens. A powerful melting pot of ancient rituals and pioneering designers with no regards to universal fashion trends. In the early '80s the big three – Rei Kawakubo, Yohji Yamamoto and Issey Miyake – helped Tokyo become a center of youth culture and fashion, defining the judgment on wearability or practicality.

The modern fashion market is moving at an astonishing pace, and fashion hubs like London and New York are flourishing with promising talents from across all backgrounds. A new collection of foreign fashion entrepreneurs have chosen Tokyo as their center for creative expression, where the duality of culture offers opportunities for innovation, as well as walls to inclusion. Breaking through the noise of the industry, there is a burgeoning scene of bright minds offering fresh perspectives to Tokyo's always-evolving fashion scene.

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People who never met me
before showed up and spoke
light into the journey

”

The Yin and the Yang

“I never lived in a city before, so to be able to live in this cybernetic, futuristic, historical city where fashion dwellers and creators exist in harmony, was an invigorating step for me,” says Miles Davis, a 26-year-old fashion entrepreneur from Baltimore. “I especially wanted to move to Tokyo to be immersed in a world of fashion, to see various styles and trends, and how they are activated by this intense city.”

In the months before the pandemic hit the global fashion industry, Davis showcased his clothing line, The Superiors, at Tokyo LoveHotel, a creative network event connecting international creators. “People who never met me before showed up and spoke light into the journey,” says Davis.



Room to Grow

Bunka Gakuen University, the most prestigious fashion college in the country – ranked by some as one of the best fashion schools in the world – enrolls approximately a quarter of international students yearly. “Most students come from China and Korea, but the international student body is quite diverse,” says Saskia Thoelen, assistant professor of the GFC Master's course at Bunka Gakuen University.

Thoelen mentions the challenges international students face when entering the Japanese

While more numbers of international creatives working in Tokyo have increased, the difficulty of tapping into the Japanese fashion formula has not decreased. “There are many challenges entering the Japanese fashion scene,” says Davis. “From language barriers, to connecting with shop owners and other brand designers, to garnering the customer base from Japanese youth, which I find the most challenging.”

fashion industry. One of them is the lack of understanding Japanese. Leslie Arango, a recent graduate from Bunka says, “Finding a full-time job as a fashion designer in post-corona Japan is especially hard for a foreigner. Most established fashion studios require personnel with at least a JLPT N2 proficiency level.”

Japanese Fashion Market by the Numbers

For international fashion creatives, Japan is a tantalizingly big market with unexplored opportunities to provide avenues for growth and investments. “There are a small number of foreign designers who fall in love with Japanese textiles and whose activities are based in Japan. For example, Edwina Hoerl, who used to be a member of Yohji Yamamoto,” says Kumiko Takano, editor-in-chief of Parco’s fashion and culture magazine Across.

The purchasing power of the small

island country is astonglishly high and the demand for fashion is growing each year. Takano says that Japanese manufacturers are currently enamored with Japanese fast fashion. Fast fashion retailer GU, which is owned by the same parent company as Uniqlo, achieved an operating profit in nine months of about \$242 million.

In the global revenue ranking in the fashion industry, Japan ranks at 4 and is expected to show an annual growth rate of 4.1%, resulting in a projected market volume of \$29 billion by 2025. Still, this market can seem unattainable to foreign fashion entrepreneurs.

According to Business of Fashion (BOF), Japanese companies’ tendency to promote from within hinders foreigners from breaking into the industry.

“Connections and deals are still done the old traditional way, for example exchanging business cards. A successful market is not built on money, but on trust,” says Arango.

The Future of Foreign influences in Japanese Fashion

In the age of sharing, Tokyo creatives embrace collaborations with guest designers and creators. This year, Nigo, the Japanese streetwear pioneer and founder

of Human Made, released his second collaboration with Louis Vuitton menswear artistic director Virgil Abloh.

“Two cultures coming together to create a capsule collection of shoes, and accessories – that in itself is unique,” says Seiko Mbako, fashion stylist and co-founder of AwaTori, which is focused on developing a fashion exchange between Japan and an African country.

For starry-eyed international students who have their sights set

on high-fashion in Japan, platforms like AwaTori are bringing a more diverse landscape to the industry and are opening the borders to a cultural exchange. “Tokyo’s fashion scene can definitely be described as diverse as it is constantly metamorphosing and setting new trends,” says Mbako.

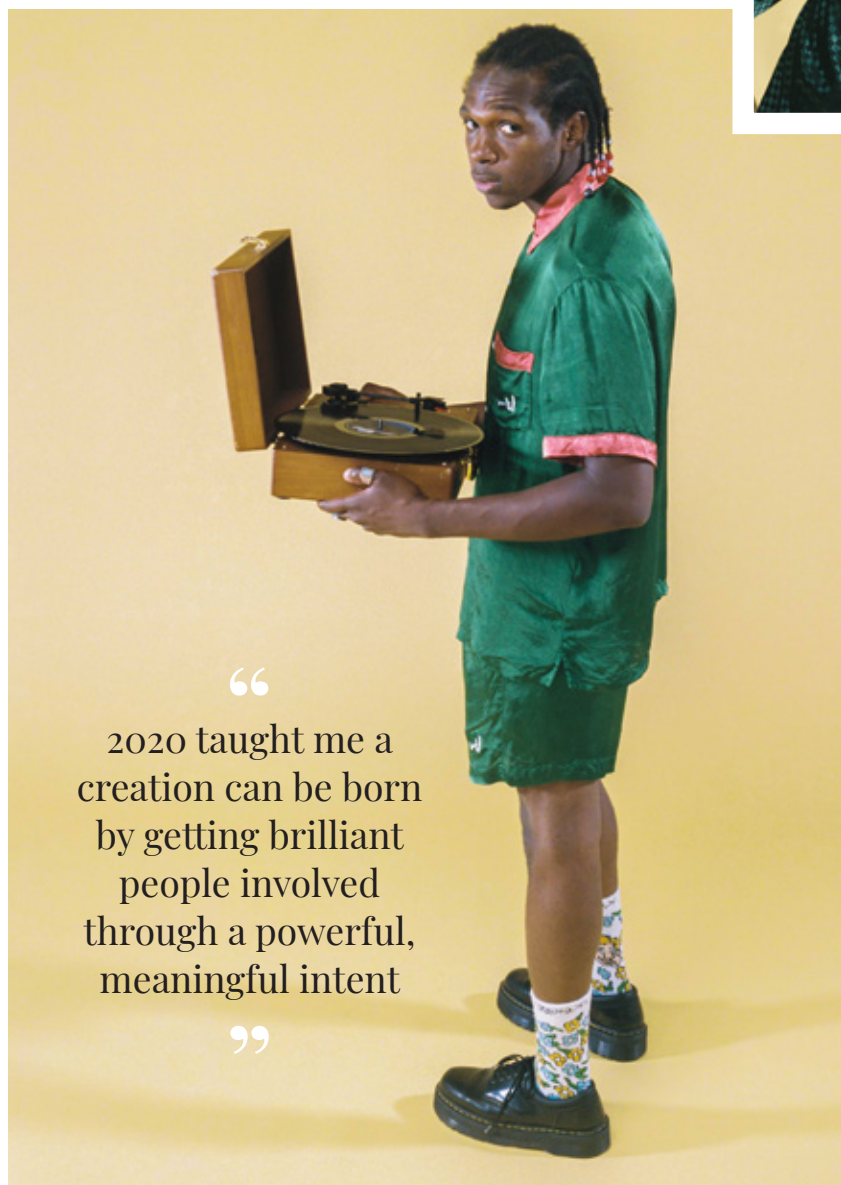
A Mix of New with More New

Tokyo is a prime city for subculture-infused streetwear and over the last two decades it has blossomed into an undeniable movement in modern fashion. Unas is a Tokyo-based streetwear brand created by three young Saudi Arabia creatives Yazeed, Basil and Yusef.

“It is important to be aware that building a streetwear brand in Tokyo means you are among hundreds of other brands such as yours. That alone encourages us to work harder and add diversity to the industry,” says co-founder Yazeed.

By highlighting the importance of self-expression and diversity in the industry, foreign fashion entrepreneurs are challenging the Japanese fashion formula and creatives who understand the industry and its power for aesthetics and cultural consciousness are gaining influence. Since living in Tokyo, Davis has collaborated with creators, artists and brands from across the board. He is currently working on his winter release.

“2020 taught me a creation can be born by getting brilliant people involved through a powerful, meaningful intent,” says Davis. “I see myself in the future building an intersection between the fashion industry and sustainable development, and make 2021 a year for collaborations, and a ‘Superior’ mindset.”



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2020 taught me a
creation can be born
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meaningful intent
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Preserving a Legacy

The proprietors of Kamakura Hanko are impassioned about sharing the cultural and historical significance of the hanko with the world

Words and photos by Jordan Green

The majestic heights of Mount Fuji. Geisha walking the streets of Gion in Kyoto. Cherry blossoms. Only the hanko seal captures all of these iconic images, as well as the essence of Japanese culture itself, within one gorgeous – and easily portable – wooden tool. This is the mission that Mitsuhiro Tsukino, third-generation owner of Kamakura Hanko, shares passionately with international guests at his studio workshop.

The Hanko

Hanko, a handmade Japanese seal used in lieu of signatures, has been used in Japan for just under 2,000 years. Hanko is used for everything from accepting letters at your front door to opening a bank account. Just as a signature is an extension of yourself, so too is the hanko an extension of the holder. Handcrafted and infinitely customizable, these personalized stamps are not only, when registered, binding seals, but also make a beautiful gift.



has been a shift from offline to online work in Japan. In his short time in office, Prime Minister Suga removed the use of hanko from 800 administrative processes. Tsukino says the hanko industry is supportive of this evolution. “There should be no useless stamps,” he says.

The treasured tradition of hanko should of course still be protected, says Tsukino. The seal, which serves the same purpose as a notary public in the US, continues to provide important functions in Japan, and is used to engrave turning points in life such as marriage, childbirth, home purchases, company establishments, etc. And to

some, the hanko is seen as a safer, unhackable option to the digital seal.

As an extension of self, there are some administrative tasks where a simple digital transaction doesn't convey the significance of the occasion, and, while convenient, the humble signature does



not hold the same cultural weight as the time-honored hanko.

Kamakura Hanko

At Kamakura Hanko, international guests are invited to dive into the history of hanko, as well as watch how these extensions of self are intricately created, during welcoming workshops led by Tsukino and his wife Chieko. When it comes to making your own hanko, everything is customizable, from the local materials used in the hand-carved tool, to the elegantly designed case.

The seal itself is also reflection of you, with special markings placed on the hanko purporting to good fortune in money, love, life, etc., though Tsukino prefers to impart upon his guests the hanko's social influence and cultural significance.

Other than these approved markings, official hanko will only contain the name of the wielder. More fun-filled, personalized hanko, called mitomein, are endlessly customizable with anything from cat paws to your favorite food.

While the digital world has advanced, the hanko stamp has evolved with it, and Tsukino says venture companies are exploring ways to combine the traditional hanko with technological gadgets. Like Japanese culture, the hanko represents the careful and graceful progression through time. Witness for yourself at Kamakura Hanko.

More Info

www.kamakurahanko.com/japanesesealhanko

To book a workshop:

www.kamakurahanko.com/bookings-checkout/workshop-booking/book



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SPECIAL



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A Tropical Winter

Don't like snow? There's always Okinawa



Northern Luxury

Lifestyle real estate experts at H2 Group can craft the perfect Niseko escape this winter

Words by Lisandra Moor

Imagine ending a smooth run down the slopes of Mount Annupuri where a butler waits at the bottom of the mountain to provide a ride to your private villa where music is set and delightful après-ski sweets and tea await by the warm fireplace. This is the reality that the lifestyle professionals of the H2 Group can curate for your next Hokkaido holiday.

Ski and snowboard enthusiasts know Niseko as the home to waist-high powder snow and spectacular backcountry. While the international guests are currently away, residents staying in Tokyo this season can take advantage

of the world-class resort town with the elevated level of service provided by the H2 Group.

Hokkaido Tracks and HakuLife merged to rethink the way guests stay in properties, resulting in the formation of the H2 Group. The lifestyle real estate experts are dedicated to creating unparalleled international experiences in Niseko, providing travelers with the best accommodation and services available in the area. They are so sure of their level of service that a sensational experience is guaranteed or you receive a 10% discount on your next booking.

The Ultimate Luxury Villa Experience

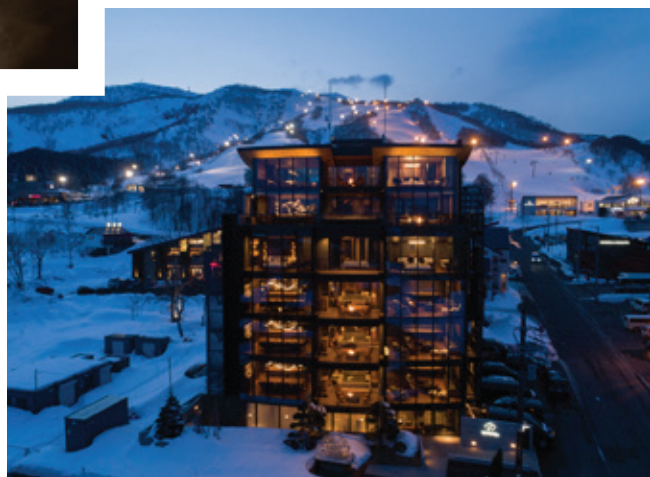
H2 Life, a unit under the H2 Group, offers elevated winter experiences to holiday seekers. The impressive portfolio of properties falls into various tiers – the HakuLife Collection, the Luxury Series and the Signature Series.

Each elegant venue comes with interior decor designed to

complement the pristine views, as well as a team of private butlers who will take care of everything from tidying up to providing transportation. A personal chef is also at the ready, serving breakfast as soon as you rise and preparing a warm, delicious, après-ski meal

At the exquisite Hakuchozan chalet at Grand Hirafu Village, for example, classic European alpine architecture houses an outdoor jacuzzi deck, a media and game room, a man cave complete with a well-stocked bar, and much more.

Take in grandstanding views of Mount Yotei at HakuVillas in Upper Hirafu Village, located a walk away from the Hirafu gondolas. Choose from an array of extravagant accommodations at this luxury condominium that includes a decadent spa, a fully equipped gymnasium and the uber-exclusive HakuSteak restaurant.



Live Your Best Life in Niseko

The H2 Group can curate an itinerary where everything is reserved and prepared for you in advance. While the Niseko All Mountain Pass gives visitors access to the all four of Niseko's resorts, the experts at the H2 Group can recommend other passes to help plan the perfect outdoor itinerary.

For your next Niseko excursion, the H2 Group can ensure every one of your guests is well-cared for, and returns home with sensational, life-long memories. All you have to do is ski, relax and enjoy the best life has to offer.

Special Offer

For TW readers, H2 Group is offering an exclusive deal to book four nights at the Luxury or Signature Series for the price of three. Just mention Tokyo Weekender when making your reservation.

Browse available accommodations and services for your next trip to Niseko at www.H2Life.com





Winter Enchantment

Hoshino Resorts Tomamu in Hokkaido crafts an inspired and enduring winter getaway

Words by Jordan Green

With a long reputation for developing Japanese resorts and hotels that make the most of local culture and customs, Hoshino Resorts takes pride that its Tomamu Ski Resort embodies the luxurious Hokkaido winter experience.

With five lifts, one gondola and 29 accessible high-quality runs straddling two mountains, Hoshino Resorts Tomamu is one of the largest ski resorts in Hokkaido. The season runs from December 1 through early April, and every level of skier will enjoy a day in the fresh powder.

Providing Something for Everyone

Parents and kids can bond over skis on Hoshino Resorts Tomamu's family slope, while the Nipo Town snow park is like a winter carnival for kids.

The expert-only powder areas on both mountains offer advanced limited release areas where skiers can enjoy exclusive, non-compacted snow. Furthermore, thrill-seekers can take the CAT tour along with a professional guide to navigate the off-piste slopes of Mount Karifuri. With below-freezing temperatures and fresh powder falling almost daily, these back-country ventures allow skiers (advanced only) to tackle pristine runs touched by no one else.

Full of Fun Off the Slopes

Every minute at Hoshino Resorts Tomamu is spent in refined, endearing luxury – and won-

der. Take the gondola 1,088 meters up Mount Tomamu, and gaze upon the Terrace of Frost Tree, where ice clings to the tree branches creating an icy paradise above the clouds. Warm up at the terrace with an original Rime Cocktail, which combines fresh Hokkaido Tomamu milk with a white chocolate liquor creating an adult white hot chocolate. For a romantic night view, the Rime Ice Illumination brightens the night sky. This year a specially curated light event will be held from December 1 through 25.



Alluring Winter Hideaways

Open from December 10 through March 14, the fantastical Tomamu Ice Village features 10 cozy iced domes spread out over 3.2 hectares. There you will find everything, including the new Ice Fruit Shop and even the Ice Milk Cafe, where specialties are created from milk provided by cows raised there at the resort.

The fun doesn't end there as this Ice Village is equipped with everything from ice skating to



ice crafts. There is even the Ice Chapel where one can renew their vows among the crisp white snow.

Hungry from all that adventuring? Take a walk down the Hotalu Street – Japan's first ski-in, ski-out village. Ski or snowboard to the front door of any of the nine restaurants or shops connected by the wooden deck.

At Hotalu Street's Overflow Seafood Festival held through March 31, 2021, high-quality cuts



of Hokkaido salmon, crab, tuna and sea urchin will have your mouth watering. With a bingo card game to boost, you have the chance to win an extra helping of sushi or sake.

World-Class Accommodations with Family in Mind

For accommodations, Risonare Tomamu and Tomamu The Tower allow for total comfort. Each room at Risonare Tomamu is equipped with a private sauna and jet bath. The Tower is a landmark of Hoshino Resorts Tomamu, and is designed to meet the needs of couples and families. All that is left to do is relax and look out over the coniferous forest below.

Opening dates are subject to change due to weather or snowfall conditions.

More information: snowtomamu.jp

WORKATION WONDERLAND

Hakuba Valley in Nagano Prefecture is home to 10 world-class snow resorts – and can also be your home away from the office this winter

Words by Nick Narigon



All 10 resorts can be conveniently accessed using the Hakuba Valley Ticket – one lift ticket for all 10 resorts. This is perfect for long-stay visitors – or those who plan to stick around and get some work done in between runs on the pristine slopes.

The New Snow Peak Land Station Hakuba

To accommodate workationers, there are several new upscale facilities – with WiFi and internet



The year 2020 taught us that we can work from anywhere in the world. Thanks to advances in digital technology we can work from the beach, the mountains, and even the ski slopes. To adapt an expression from Hemingway to the parlance of our times – our workplace is a moveable office.

For Tokyo residents, what better place to scroll through reports and respond to emails this winter than Hakuba Valley in Nagano Prefecture.

Take a Workation in Hakuba Valley

Japan's largest snow resort, Hakuba Valley consists of 10 major snow resorts, and famously hosted the 1998 Winter Olympics. Located just 2.5 hours from Tokyo, it has become a prime destination for international skiers and snowboarders.

The snow resorts offer everything from welcoming beginners' slopes to off-piste adventure, plus English-language ski instruction.

connection – that provide quiet sanctuaries for concentrated effort. Hakuba Valley and Japanese outdoor lifestyle manufacturer Snow Peak have collaborated over the years to provide luxurious venues for guests, and this year's newest addition – Snow Peak Land Station Hakuba, opened in July 2020 – is in a class of its own.

Designed by Kengo Kuma, architect of the New National Stadium in Tokyo among many other prominent landmarks, the multi-purpose facility is home to a flagship store, restaurant, café, accommodations, and an outdoor event space. The aesthetics make use of natural materials to harmonize with the mountainous natural surroundings, while the interior ceiling is designed to resemble snowflakes. Take in the

magnificence of Japan's Northern Alps from the outdoor terrace, all while plugging away at work.

World-Class Dining & Accommodations

While making your new home away from the office in Hakuba Valley, stay overnight at a place that will ease the stress of the daily grind. Hatago Maruhachi in the Hakuba Iwatake area is an integrated resort that preserves the atmosphere of an Edo-era Japanese village, and places importance on comfort and relaxation.



On the interior, luxurious, modern suites are kitted with high-end technology and appliances, while the shared kitchen is clean and convenient, perfect to accommodate workation guests.

Once the work is done, it is time to unwind. The glamping-style Field Suite Hakuba produced by Snow Peak offers an Après & Dining Tour – a fine dining experience on the slopes of Happo-one. Reward your full day's work with a full-course meal prepared by a highly skilled private chef, paired with select local Nagano wines.

Looking towards 2021, with more and more office workers in search of new locations to complete their work in safe and clean environments away from the crowds, Hakuba Valley is ahead of the curve in providing state-of-the-art facilities where guests can stay connected to the world while reconnecting with nature.

Discover the new meaning of work-life balance at the snow resorts of Hakuba Valley.

Find out more

Hakuba Valley

hakubavalley.com

Snow Peak Land Station Hakuba

snowpeak.co.jp/landstation/hakuba

Hatago Maruhachi

hatagomaruhati.jp

Field Suite Hakuba

fieldsuite-hakuba.com/en

Stellar Powder at Hakuba 47

Founded in 1990, Hakuba 47 Winter Sports Park boasts the longest winter season at Hakuba Valley, a collective of 10 major ski resorts that serves as international powderhounds' favorite winter getaway in Nagano Prefecture.

Most of Hakuba 47's runs are north facing, allowing the resort to offer skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling and even snow picnics all the way from December until the beginning of May.

Find something for everyone with a convenient beginners park as well as wide, consistent intermediate slopes. The more adventurous skiers can hit up the naturally formed mogul course, the exhilarating Tree Riding Zone or the best terrain park in the Hakuba Valley.

Explore the natural surroundings and you may see the kamoshika (a Japanese serow), making Hakuba 47 the perfect winter getaway destination.

www.hakuba47.co.jp/winter/en/



REASONS WE LOVE WINTER IN NAGANO PREFECTURE

TW readers named Nagano Prefecture the Best Japan Holiday Destination in our first Readers' Choice Awards. This is why.



Unthaw at Soothing Hot Springs Resorts

During any winter getaway to Nagano Prefecture, an escape from the cold is appreciated. Every Nagano destination offers traditional hot spring onsen resorts where you can soak in a hot bath and warm the bones. For something more, Asama Onsen, a 20-minute bus ride from Matsumoto, hosts an illuminations display until mid-April.



Snow Monkeys

By now everyone knows about Nagano Prefecture's snow monkeys who can be found relaxing in the mountains' outdoor hot springs. You can see them

up close at Jigokudani Yaen Koen. Also known in English as the Snow Monkey Park, this is the go-to place for travelers, researchers and nature photographers to observe the wild Japanese macaques – the only species to develop such salaryman-like behavior.



Okinawan Islands: Where it's Always Summer



Your destination for thawing out from the wintry chill is none other than perennially sun-kissed Okinawa — read on for our winter adventuring picks along the Yaeyama and Kerama archipelagos

Words by Kimberly Hughes

Hateruma: Where cliché meets reality

Take the ferry to Japan's southernmost inhabited island, where you'll encounter shades of turquoise (known here as Hateruma blue) at Nishihama Beach, along with soft white sands and sea turtles swimming languidly while munching on seagrass. Bring a sweater to watch sunsets that fade into a sky scattered with stars against the streak of the Milky Way Galaxy.

More other-worldly scenes abound on Hateruma, whose name translates as “edge of the coral,” and which is closer to the Philippines than mainland Japan. At the monument designating Japan's southernmost point, walk over soft coral sand with ice plants and other native foliage to reach a walkway patterned in the form of intertwined snakes, as icy blue waters smash dramatically against the cove below.

Practically sitting on Taiwan's doorstep, the Yaeyama and Kerama islands in Okinawa are the tropical getaway you have been longing for. Your first stop, Ishigaki, is accessible via direct flights from Japan's mainland. If you have time, visit the Ishigaki-yaki pottery studio and gallery, where award-winning artist Haruhiko Kaneko employs a sophisticated ceramic-glass fusion technique.

Next door is Ishigaki Go-Kart, where you can travel the island in a go-kart or tuk-tuk. We took a tour to Kabira Bay, where swimming is not allowed due to strong currents, but where you'll find postcard-worthy vistas from glass-bottomed boats and a sweeping lookout point.

Continue exploring the island by bicycle, where the silence will be broken only by softly blowing winds and the bleating of free-roaming goats. Island treats include Taiwanese-style mango shave ice (try Kukurū Café), and the local brown cane sugar, famous for its rich, earthy flavor. Also try to procure a dram of awanami, the island's famed version of the local awamori spirit made from Thai rice.

As with other Ryukyu islands, ancestral and nature worship is intertwined with life here, along with matriarchal history. Designated local women pray inside ogan (sacred spaces) in accordance with the lunar calendar for rainfall and harvests. Should you encounter such sites (which are marked by signage or low stone walls), do not enter them or speak directly with locals while they are engaged in ritual.

Taketomi: Enjoy the slow life

Although our itinerary did not include Iriomote, the largest Yaeyama island, we did visit Taketomi and Kohama islands, both part of the Iriomote Ishigaki National Park.

Taketomi is a lovely place for a relaxed stroll (or a ride atop a water buffalo cart) amidst traditional Ryukyu village architecture, with stone coral walls and rooftops adorned with protective shisa lion-dog statuettes. The island's beaches are known for their star-shaped sand crystals.

Note that shops and cafés here do not open until 10-11am. We took the first ferry, and as we were processing the very earthly concern that our morning coffee would be hours away, we serendipitously saw a procession of the twice-yearly yuunkai ceremony, which welcomes gods from the ocean onto land.

“
You'll find postcard-worthy vistas from glass-bottomed boats and a sweeping lookout point
”



Take a resort break on Kohama

Tiny Kohama Island, lying adjacent to Iriomote, has claims to fame that include local granny girl band KBG84 (the figure referring to members' average age, in a nod to Okinawa's famed long-life expectancy).

Chill out at one of the island's resort hotels. The Hoshino Resort Risonare Kohamajima offers superb beach and poolside amenities, including a book café, as well as tours to visit one of the region's phantom island sandbars.

Kerama Islands and stunning beauty of Okinawa's southern island

Accessible via a short ferry ride from Tomari Port in Naha, and forming the Kerama National Park, these islands are the closer option for enjoying Okinawa's incredible sea life. The largest is Tokashiki, but we again opted for the smaller islands of Aka and Zamami, lying further west.

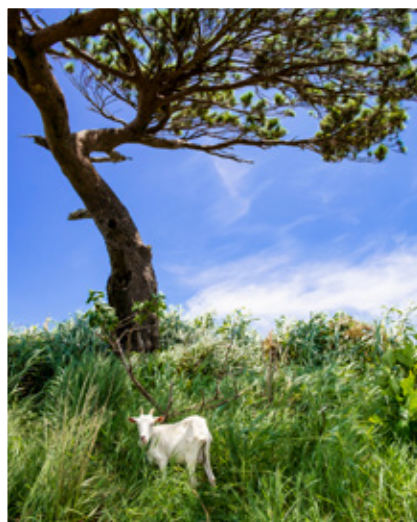
Both islands are excellent places to encounter sea turtles, fantastical corals and other underwater inhabitants. A friendly passerby on Aka island told us to look out for nemuribuka (the harmless white-chip reef shark) while snorkeling.

Enjoy Aka's chilled-out vibe at Yoshidaya for pub fare, and Bar Yonamine House (inside a traditional-style kominka folk house) for island cocktails. Consider a stay at the Hanamuro Inn Akajima, which features minimalist-style décor, superb meals and hot tubs.

On neighboring Zamami Island, encounter more sea turtles at Ama beach, and enjoy local fare such as jiiame (peanut-flavored) tofu. Zamami is also the best locale in the region for booking winter whale-watching tours, as boats are dispatched from watchtowers that follow individual whales to determine their positioning. The whales pass through the Keramas from December

through March en route to Alaska, with peak season around late January.

The Keramas are where the US fleet of military ships landed in March 1945 before approaching southern Okinawan island. Numerous peace and memorial monuments dot the islands and the southern



part of the Okinawan mainland, which was heavily affected by the WWII Battle of Okinawa.

Back on the main island, visit the Valley of Gangala, a collapsed limestone cavern featuring towering banyan tree roots and historically sacred caves, where the skeleton of a 20,000-year-old human was excavated. Adjacent is the Okinawa world theme park, where you will find an intricate underground cave network, along with any local omiyage you could possibly want.

End your stay at the Anteroom Naha hotel overlooking Tomari Port, which features rotating art exhibitions and stunning harbor views. Pick up a bottle of wine, some local tropical fruits and a cheese pack from John Davis (aka The Cheese Guy), who handcrafts exquisite cheeses, for a most memorable finish to your Okinawan adventure.

What To Know Before You Go

Winter swimming and snorkeling is allowed. Wear a light wetsuit. Many diving and snorkeling shops offer rentals.

Closely watch weather reports and updated ferry information, as inter-island ferry cancellations occur in case of typhoons or other inclement weather.

Do not touch or tread on the fragile coral reef, and keep a safe distance from living ocean creatures.

Observe Covid-19 protocols such as wearing a mask, washing and disinfecting your hands and refraining from traveling if you feel unwell.

THE CONCIERGE

Looking for a great place to eat, shop, sleep or play in Tokyo? Welcome to TW's roundup of recommended restaurants, hotels, stores, experiences and more.

Here, we share this month's editor's picks, but for the full lineup head to

www.tokyoweekender.com/the-concierge



Sukiyabashi Samboa

Opened October 2010 in Ginza, this non-smoking standing bar, which was founded in Kobe more than 100 years ago, offers various classic cocktails and rare Japanese whiskey. The street-facing bar, an unusual sight in Ginza's Sukiya-dori, has a sleek European-style interior. A compact bar, Sukiyabashi Samboa creates a calm space making it a marvelous location for intimate after-work drinks or social gatherings. With their collection of unique drinks and mixes, which can only be tried here, it offers one more reason to visit Ginza.

Katsuragi Kitanomaru

After driving up a long winding road, offering expansive views over the rolling mountains and towns of Shizuoka, you arrive at Katsuragi Kitanomaru, a dream-like castle resort constructed from seven 200-year-old repurposed country homes. Make sure to stay in one of the Japanese-style suites and let yourself get transported back to the Edo era. To complete your modern castle experience, indulge in one of the hotel's splendid kaiseki dinners, which combine the region's best produce and meat in a beautiful succession of courses you will never forget.

Fujimoto Dental Clinic

At this Ginza-based clinic, which was founded in 1981, you'll not only receive world-class specialist restorative and periodontal dental care, but you'll also be in the expert hands of Dr. Kohei Fujimoto. He is fluent in English, a graduate of the University of Washington's Graduate Periodontics Program, and certified as a Diplomate of the American Board of Periodontology. Appointments can be made via phone.



www.samboa.bar



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[modern.ribs.holly](#)



yamaharesort.co.jp



0538-48-6118



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Shizuoka



[pounding.torched.thinks](#)



www.fujimoto-dental.com



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Ginza, Chuo-ku



[edges.shelters.rainy](#)

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Top exhibitions, including a collection of contemporary visionary artists and a showcase of Edo-era manga.

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TW Social

How our social page regulars are staying connected while staying safe.



The Sake Fair

For two weeks this past autumn, TW and ROPPONGI TSUTAYA BOOKS collaborated to host The Sake Fair, kicking it off with an exclusive launch party where our TW friends were introduced to exquisite sake from all corners of Japan

TW x ROPPONGI TSUTAYA BOOKS

Photos by Ryoko Ogawa



“Pleasure without Champagne is purely artificial,” wrote Oscar Wilde, but the sharp-tongued Irish playwright could have been talking about Japanese sake. Everything about The Sake Fair, held from October 24 to November 6 at The Lounge at ROPPONGI TSUTAYA BOOKS, was authentic, from the contemporary décor to the sake on hand.

On October 24, select TW Insider’s Club members were invited to sample varieties from Japan’s most celebrated sake regions of Niigata, Gifu and Shimane prefectures in the refined setting.

“It was such a special event,” says Tokyo-based recording artist Josiah Hawley. “To be introduced to 15 different sakes from three different regions felt like a luxury.”

Sake sommeliers were on hand to enlighten the guests, and the newly renovated second-floor lounge at ROPPONGI TSUTAYA BOOKS provided a chic vibe, which guests called “cozy and elegant.” Rave reviews were also given to the participating sake breweries themselves.



The Kubota sake brand is a clean, crisp and dry series launched by Asahi-Shuzo to meet the needs of modern epicureans. Based in Niigata Prefecture, Asahi-Shuzo uses the finest, locally sourced ingredients to make its versatile range of Kubota nihonshu, also available at the Mirai Sake Store / Kubota Sake Bar on Shibuya Parco’s B1 floor.

Hayashi Honten sake brewery in Gifu Prefecture celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2020. Renowned for producing original, high-quality sake, the brewery dedicates itself to the experimentation and exploration of a vast range of flavors – all while staying true to tradition and striving to share sake culture both in Japan and abroad.

Shimane Prefecture is considered the birthplace of Japanese sake, with ancient 8th-century texts mentioning the sake produced in the region. Five Shimane-based, family-run breweries supplied bottles to share at the Sake Fair. The master brewers use high-quality local rice and natural spring water to produce sake that is deep with flavor – and that is also available at Hibiya Shimane-kan, Shimane Prefecture’s antenna shop in Tokyo.

Meeting new friends and discovering new Japanese sake in a relaxed, sophisticated environment – what could be more pleasurable than that?

By Popular Demand

TW Insider’s Club members voted – and these are their favorite sake labels from the TW Sake Fair



Hyakujuro Junmai Ginjo White Flame

Full bodies with fragrant aroma, this well-balanced sake from Hayashi Honten has a delicate and vibrant taste that pops in your mouth.



Kubota Seppo Junmai Daiginjo

This distinctively dry tanrei-karakuchi sake from Asahi-Shuzo’s Kubota series is made through the traditional yamahai brewing process.



Rihaku WANDERING POET Junmai Ginjo

Brewed in Matsue in Shimane Prefecture by Rihaku Brewery, Rihaku WANDERING POET is known for its crisp and refreshing finish.

Learn more about participating sake brands at:

kubota-sake-bar.com &
asahi-shuzo.co.jp/global/
hayashihonten.stores.jp
shimane-sake.or.jp/en



Miyamoto Saburo, Nurse, 1941

Miyamoto Saburo: Portraits of Women - Their Work and Roles

Painter Miyamoto Saburo's style can be defined by his range of portraits, especially of women of the entertainment world. Through his paintings, he captured the reality of women in urban cities and their roles in society. Rather than posing a perverse or objectifying eye on them, Saburo looked to paint the colors of their personality. This unique collection of works suggests reflection on how the times have changed and the portrayal of women in the 21st century. **Miyamoto Saburo Memorial Museum**, Until March 14, 2021, www.miyamotosaburo-annex.jp



Miyamoto Saburo, Actress, 1961

THE ART WORLD

Our pick of the city's best exhibitions

Compiled by Lisandra Moor and Lisa Wallin



Tokyo Puck I, Vol.1 No.4 (All term), from the Kyoto Seika University International Manga Research Center and the Kyoto International Manga Museum Collection

GIGA MANGA: From Edo Giga to Modern Manga

Today, manga from Japan are translated into countless languages and distributed all over the world. In fact, in 2007, Japanese manga represented 70% of the total amount of comics sold in Germany that year. But the history of manga in Japan goes back much further than the 1990s when they first hit the international market. This exhibition explores the cultural connection between modern manga and Edo giga, an art form popular during the Edo period and often presented as the predecessor of manga. How has it evolved since then and what traces of giga remain in modern manga? A great exhibition to add to your list if you love all things history and pop culture. **The Sumida Hokusai Museum**, Until Jan 24, 2021, hokusai-museum.jp



Utagawa Kuniyoshi, Ukiyo: World of "Yoshi" (1st term), from the Kyoto Seika University International Manga Research Center and the Kyoto International Manga Museum Collection



Installation view of Matthew Barney, Carolee Schneemann, Kazuo Shiraga, Min Tanaka at Fergus McCaffrey Tokyo, October 2020. All Artworks © Artists; Photo by Ryuichi Maruo

Matthew Barney, Carolee Schneemann, Kazuo Shiraga, Min Tanaka

This selection of visionary artists seeks to prompt cross-generational insights into the physicality that underscores the act of artmaking. This animating drive, alongside its archival challenges, is articulated in the shared expressions of these artists. Matthew Barney, Carolee Schneemann, Kazuo Shiraga and Min Tanaka all share impulse for the exploration of sensorial adjustments, performance and radical corporeality with meaningful impact and message. Cultural differences would maybe otherwise divide them, but their relationship and use of art brings them together. **Fergus McCaffrey Tokyo**, Until Jan 23, 2021, fergusmccaffrey.com

traNslatioNs: Understanding Misunderstandings

Researcher Dominique Chen, who has explored the fields of art, design and expressive media in past interdisciplinary studies leads this exhibition with the hopes of opening the eyes to the true complexity of communication, beyond the boundary of language itself. Modes of communication have changed so much that what was once in an unknown world is now familiar. This exhibition is based on Chen's idea that "translation is designing communication," and thus all the works enquire into the possibility of translation, encouraging visitors to re-realize the joy of finding emotions and cultures through "others." **21_21 DESIGN SIGHT**, Until March 7, 2021, www.2121designsight.jp/en

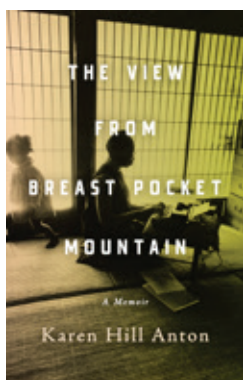


yang02, "Couldn't seen well"



Haven't joined our online book club yet? Here's how it works and what we're reading next

Join us as we dive into contemporary books that are either written by Japanese authors, are set in Japan or have some sort of connection with Japan.



December

Our first YA book pick is Suzanne Kamata's delightful story, *Indigo Girl*. It's a follow-up to the 2013 release *Gadget Girl: The Art of Being Invisible*, but can be read independently. We follow 15-year-old Aiko, a bicultural girl with cerebral palsy, as she travels from the USA to Shikoku for the summer. The plan is to reconnect with her biological father and extended family, but nothing goes quite according to plan...

January

We start off 2021 with a bang, with Karen Hill Anton's recently released memoir, *The View from Breast Pocket Mountain*. Anton started out in New York City and traveled the world before arriving

in Japan in 1975. She boasts an illustrious career as a columnist for *The Japan Times* and the *Chunichi Shimbun*, as well as cross-cultural competence consulting — all while raising four bilingual children in rural Japan. Her story is a unique and fascinating retelling of a life well-lived.

GIVEAWAY

Send an email to editor@tokyoweekender.com with a funny or memorable experience you've had while living in Japan for a chance to win one of two copies of Karen Hill Anton's memoir.

Don't forget to share your thoughts with us by tagging us at [@twbookclub](https://www.instagram.com/twbookclub) on Instagram and [@twbookclubjp](https://twitter.com/twbookclubjp) on Twitter

WHAT WE'RE READING NOW

To send off 2020 and welcome 2021 we will be reading works by two American women who have spent most of their adult lives in Japan.

AGENDA

For more events go to www.tokyoweekender.com/events-calendar

Gransta Christmas Fair at Tokyo Station



It's never too early for a slice of Christmas cake, and the Gransta Christmas Fair is on full supply.

- Tokyo Station Area
- Until Dec 25
- buck.circling.cool
- Prices range from ¥490~¥8,640



Tokyo German Village Winter Illumination

This illumination display delivers the "miracle of smiles" for Tokyo German Village's 15th anniversary.

- Tokyo German Village
- Until Mar 28, 2021
- sooner.skins.tapers
- Regular admission: ¥500



Time Flows: Reflections by 5 Artists

Five groundbreaking Japanese contemporary artists offer representations of the world around them.

- Hara Museum of Contemporary Art
- Until Jan 11, 2021
- stencils.single.wool
- Prices vary

Ultraman Zero 10th Anniversary Event

Live on stage, witness the amazing crime-fighting superhero Ultraman battle the forces of evil.



- Tokyo Dome
- Dec 26, 2020-Jan 4, 2021
- drivers.callers.soak
- Prices vary

Osechi at Hotel Ryumeikan

These gorgeous, artisan-crafted osechi meals contain 20 different New Year's dishes.



- Hotel Ryumeikan
- Until Dec 31
- gashes.abode.copies
- ¥5,500 (90 minutes)



Jun Oson Exhibition: D_I_S_T_A_N_C_E

The Kamakura-based artist launches first solo exhibition in four years.

- Diesel Art Gallery
- Until Feb 4, 2021
- burst.torches.shade
- Free



Yomiuriland Jewellumination

The world's only gemstone-inspired illumination event lights up the amusement park.

🏠 Yomiuri Land

📅 Until Apr 4, 2021

📱 shoebox.director.like

💰 General admission



TRUNK(HOTEL) x Mr Lyan Studio Cocktail Collaboration

The London-based bartender re-interprets Japanese ingredients to produce exclusive cocktails.

🏠 TRUNK(HOTEL)

📅 Until Dec 29

💰 ¥ 1,300~¥1,800

📱 debating.tedious.sweeter

Midtown Winter Lights 2020

A giant snow globe, an ice rink and illuminated trees as far as the eye can see – Tokyo Midtown hits all the festive buttons.

🏠 Tokyo Midtown

📅 Until Feb 28, 2021

💰 Free entry

📱 nagging.ranges.blunt



Yokohama City of Lights Illumination

Romantic blue lights guide the way from Yokohama Station through Grand Mall Park, ending at Sakura Street.

🏠 Grand Mall Park

📅 Until Feb 14, 2021

📱 harmless.paraded.player

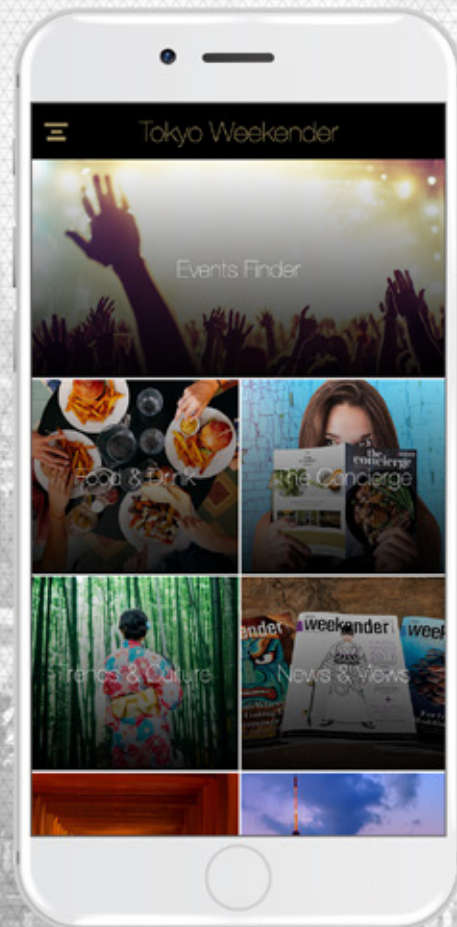
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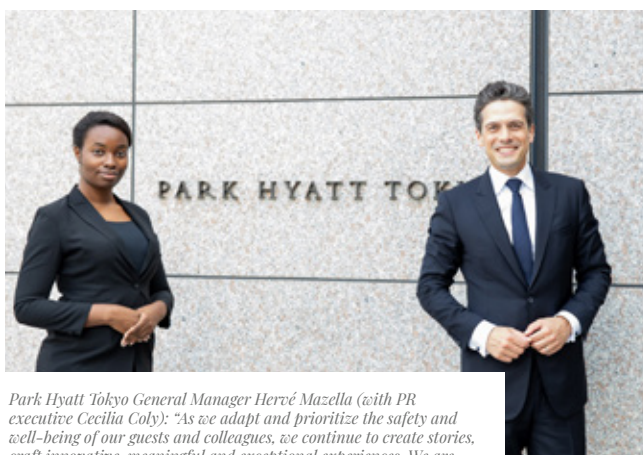
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TWsocial

Here at TW we've taken the coronavirus outbreak seriously and have done all we can to #stayhome. The same goes for our social page regulars. This month, we check in on the community to see what everyone is doing to stay safe while staying connected

By David Schneider



Park Hyatt Tokyo General Manager Hervé Mazella (with PR executive Cecilia Coly): "As we adapt and prioritize the safety and well-being of our guests and colleagues, we continue to create stories, craft innovative, meaningful and exceptional experiences. We are very grateful to our loyal customers and to our team of passionate professionals here to welcome our guests for an exclusive escape at Park Hyatt Tokyo: an elegant oasis in the sky, to stay or dine. Let us all practice self-care as we move forward towards a brighter tomorrow."

The Finnish Embassy in Tokyo held a press conference for a presentation of Finnish products showcasing Metsä Pavilion, one of which was built in front of the Embassy complex. Ambassador Pekka Orpana of Finland (center right) hosted the event.



Ambassador Eduardo Saboia, center, (with Pedro Peixoto and Camilo Licks Rostand Prates at the Brazilian Embassy): "The challenges posed by the coronavirus to public health and to the economy have been unprecedented. Despite all the difficulties, 2020 is a special date for Brazil-Japan relations, as we are commemorating 30 years of the Brazilian community in Japan and the 125th anniversary of our bilateral friendship."



Ambassador Julio Fiol of Chile, center (with Claudia Aravena and Keiko Noguchi at the Chilean Embassy): "Covid-19 has changed the whole world in ways unforeseen before. Thanks to the generosity of countries like Japan, Chile is able to better fight all negative consequences deriving from this pandemic."



Departing French Ambassador Laurent Pic (right): "I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all our Japanese friends who have much contributed to strengthening the partnership between our two countries."



Departing Ambassador of the Dominican Republic Hector Dominguez and his wife Andrea Alvarez C. Dominguez say goodbye to Japan and their many friends they made here.



Estonian Ambassador Väino Reinart and his wife Kaire Jürgenson hosted the Estonian design event called "the Estonia, born from nature - Secret of Estonia" at the IDEE SHOP in Jiyugaoka.



Grand Hyatt Tokyo General Manager Steve Dewire (with Hotel Manager Christiane Ferger): "We are grateful for the ongoing support, understanding and flexibility of our guests and colleagues as we focus on caring for their health and comfort by listening and showing sensitivity for their wellbeing. Following Hyatt's Global Care & Cleanliness Commitment, Grand Hyatt Tokyo continues to maintain extensive hygiene and sanitation measures. We look forward to welcoming our guests, and we remain very positive about the future of the hospitality industry."

Iceland Ambassador Elin Flygenring (with Commercial Counsellor Ryosuke Hosaka): "During the Covid crisis the need for strong multilateral cooperation has become very apparent. Iceland relies on, and firmly believes in, the need for a strong multilateral system – not just to tackle the current crisis but for future challenges."



Congratulations to Miss Supranational Japan 2020 Emiri Shimizu, pictured with National Director Steven Haynes and Diana Co., Ltd. President & CEO Mitsutaka Tokuda.



The Austrian Cultural Forum Tokyo at the Austrian Embassy launched the art platform #JapanRevisited202x. Pictured are Jan Vranovský from Studio VVAA (design and website), Akiko Soga, assistant at Austrian Cultural Forum Tokyo, Sybilla Patrizia, project manager & curator, and Mario Vielgrader, director at Austrian Cultural Forum Tokyo.



Celebrating 40 years of Rubik's Cube in Japan are Hungarian Ambassador to Japan Norbert Palanovics (center left) with his Embassy team at the Hungarian Cultural Center in Nishi Azabu. Here, holding cubes signed by the inventor, Ernő Rubik.



Organizers of the Support for Beirut from Japan Charity event at the Cerulean Noh Theater included Noh performer Shonosuke Okura, Madeleine Abdeljalil Umewaka and Lebanese Ambassador Nidal Yehya. All proceeds went to the Japanese Red Cross and Unesco Japan.



The annual Japan through Diplomats' Eyes Photo Exhibition 2020 was held at the Roppongi Hills Cafe, under the patronage of Her Imperial Highness Princess Takamado. The Prince Takamado Memorial Prize went to Večeslav Tumor, Counsellor at the Vatican Embassy, for his photos, "Keep the distance and carry on."



The Japan-Latin American and Caribbean Ladies Association met at the residence of the Chilean Ambassador with the support of its President Kumiko Hashimoto (wife of former PM Hashimoto), Dr. María Jesús Herrero and other members of its board committee to bid farewell to Martha L. Zelayandia (Ambassador El Salvador) and Alexandra Álvarez (spouse of the Ambassador of the Dominican Republic).



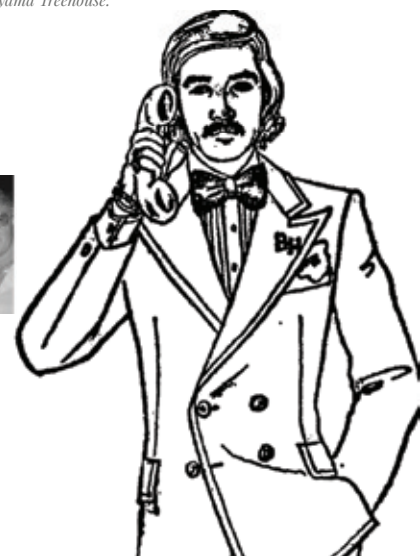
Fashion designer Zin Kato (here with fans) at the Zin Kato runway fashion event during the 2021 S/S Rakuten Fashion Week Tokyo at Aoyama Treehouse.

Bill Hersey's Partyline • Connecting Communities Since 1970 •

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These pages are dedicated to the late Bill Hersey, Tokyo Weekender's original society columnist who wrote for the magazine from 1970 to 2018. Originally called "Bill's Party Line," the column featured visiting celebrities and local VIPs, and helped to connect expat communities within Tokyo, with Bill achieving legendary status amongst his peer group and our readers.



TOKYO WEEKENDER

Vol. XX, No. 1

"A Forum for Foreigners in Japan"

January 13, 1989

日本と太平洋

For the past 22 years, the College Women's Association of Japan has begun each year with a scintillating, informative lecture series featuring some of Asia's most-enlightened, erudite scholars. This year—the 23rd in the series—is entitled "Japan and the Pacific—A New Era." Read details on P. 6, written by Cathie Gandel.

JAPAN and the PACIFIC— A New Era?

Speakers and panelists are (from "2 o'clock") Prof. Gregory Clark, Prof. Sadako Ogata, Prof. Han Sung-Joo, Dr. Saburo Okita, James Fallows, Stella Danker, Rogie Kahlon-Timonera, Zhu Rong-Geng, Vladimir Ovsyannikov, Maevadi Karnchanachari and Prof. Robert O'Neill. Co-Chairmen of the CWAJ Lecture Series are Harue Mawatari & Rachel Miller.

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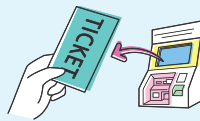
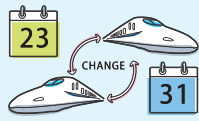
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