



FULL SPEED AHEAD

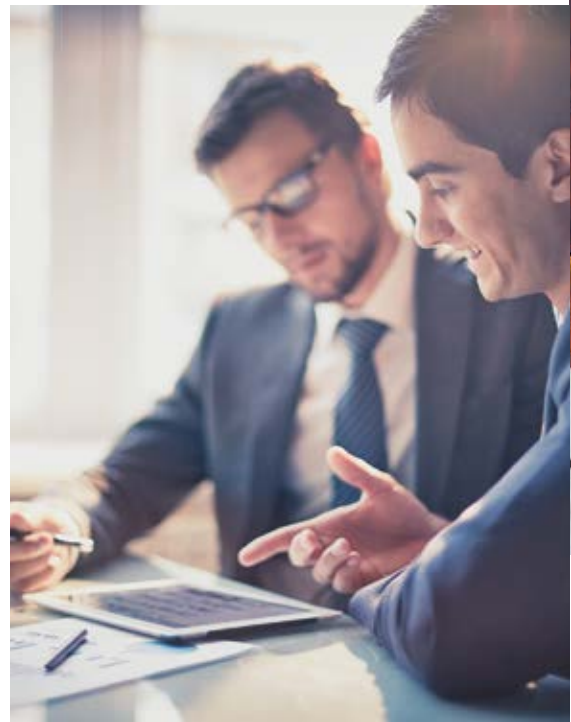
Takuya Haneda hopes to paddle his canoe to gold at Tokyo 2020

SUMMER SIPPERS

New and true Japanese liqueurs that will hold the Tokyo heat at bay

TIME IS RUNNING OUT

Japan's slapdash love affair with SDGs is anything but sustainable



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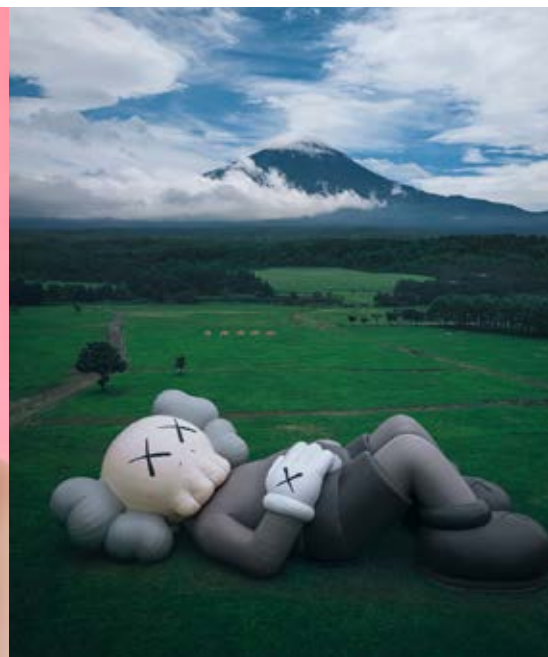
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July - August 2021

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not necessarily those of the publisher

EDS' CHAT

@nicknarigon: Tokyo 2020+ is finally here. How are you feeling?

@liam_ramshaw: To be honest I'm quite relieved. After a tortuous 14 months of will they, won't they? I just want it settled one way or another. It might not be the extravaganza we were all hoping for a few years ago, but I think it's still going to be pretty special. How are you feeling about it? Do you have stars and stripes regalia out?

@nicknarigon: I pilfered an official Team USA cap, but it feels sacrilegious to wear it in the city. The general attitude in Tokyo seems that people are 100 percent against the Olympics, or they want to get it over with. I do think Japanese Olympians like canoeist Takuya Haneda (pg 40) are left out in the cold. Speaking of cold, I am looking forward to some cold beverages courtesy of the Japanese liqueurs featured on pg 18.

@liam_ramshaw: Indeed, I was particularly taken with the matcha and anko flavoured liquors. I feel they're going to become a staple of my cocktail cabinet at home. However I think most exciting thing we did this month had to be the cover shoot at the studios of the Amazing Jiro. That place was incredible.

@nicknarigon: It was truly amazing. I could hide amongst his collection of costume masks and live there. It is inspiring to hang out with creatives taking it to the next level. Another of which is photographer Boa Campbell, who we both also got to meet.

@liam_ramshaw: Absolutely, it was amazing to work with Boa, her beautifully crafted fashion spread featuring local talent was a definite highlight this month. We were also fortunate enough to

interview the internationally renowned illustrator Yuko Shimizu and lest we forget the local shamisen craftsman, creating the official shamisen of Tokyo 2020. This issue is bursting at the seams with creative juice.

@nicknarigon: Kimiaki Kono even gave us one of his mini shamisen. Check out our colleague and shamisen savant Rena plucking away on our Instagram reel. If there has been one silver lining to the pandemic, it has forced us all to be a little more creative.

@liam_ramshaw: Indeed, make sure to keep a close eye on our Instagram and Youtube this month to see a whole host of fascinating content including Rena getting down on the shamisen, an interview with the Amazing Jiro himself and the TW crew enjoying a few Japanese-themed cocktails at the bar in the corner of our office.

@nicknarigon: Just got poked with a vaccine as we speak. Now I have to sit in a waiting room for 15 more minutes. Perfect time to watch our Ladybeard interview on YouTube. Nothing like Beard power to battle a pandemic.



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
Goya chanpuru	Quasi-emergencies	Delta variant
Vogue houses	Food delivery fees	Olympic Village sans condoms
Refugee Paralympians	Billionaires in space	Pride appropriation
Kyushu wellcations	Low-key mosquitoes	Greenwashing



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download from



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.



www.samboa.bar



03-3572-5466



1F 7-3-16 Ginza, Chuo-ku



[modern.ribs.holly](#)



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.



yamaharesort.co.jp



0538-48-6118



2505-2 Ugari, Fukuroi, Shizuoka



[pounding.torched.thinks](#)



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.fujimoto-dental.com



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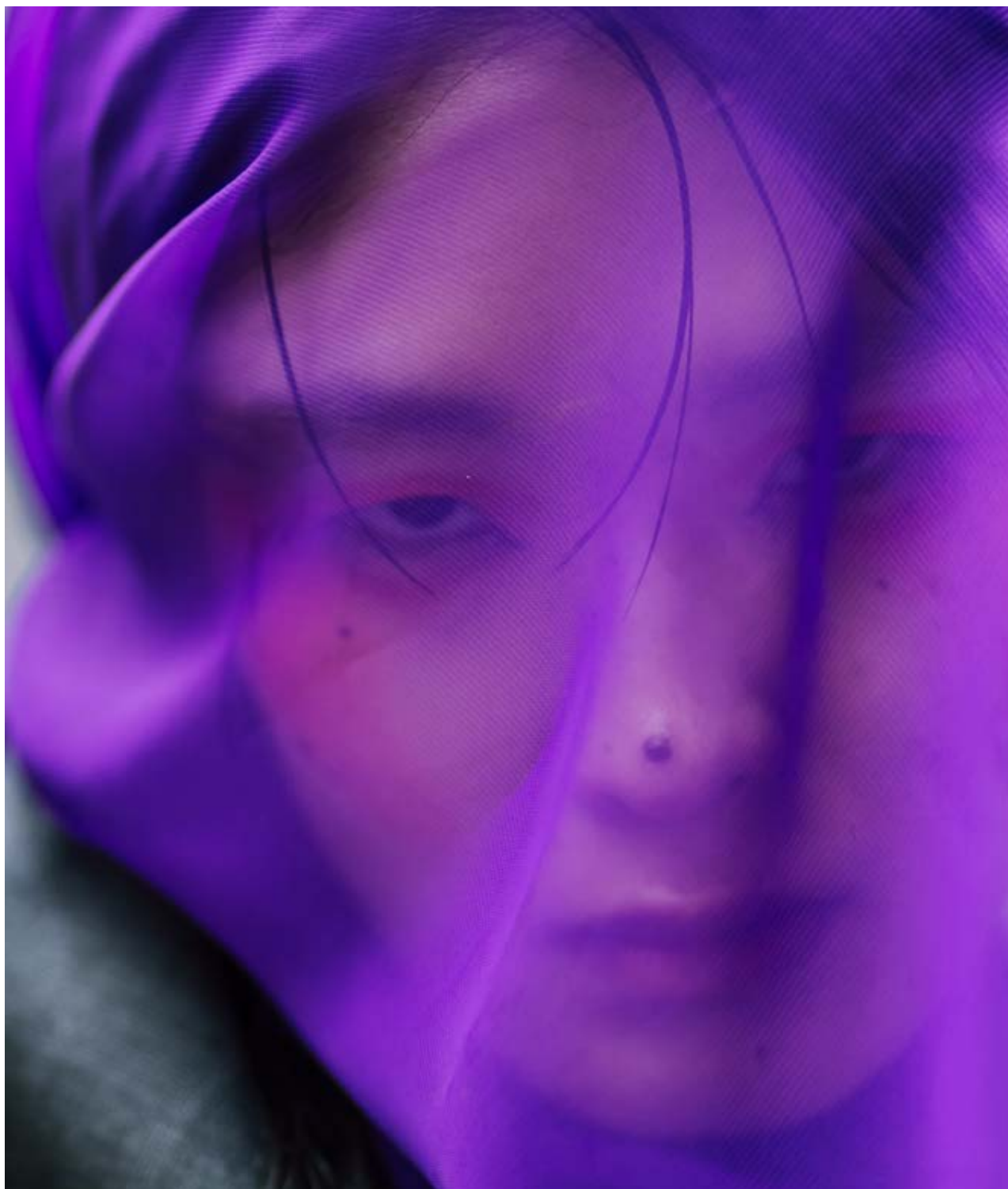


4F Kami-Pulp Kaikan, 3-9-11 Ginza, Chuo-ku



[edges.shelters.rainy](#)

RADAR



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Area Guide: Shin-Kiba

Tokyo's lumberyard now lights up at night as a popular entertainment hub.

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Ode to the Birds

Photographer Boa Campbell takes us on a flight through Tokyo's world of fashion.

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Shop Japan

These Japan-made beach accessories add style to your next seaside excursion.

TOKYO'S LUMBERYARD

This Tokyo Bay entertainment district will liven up during daylight hours for Tokyo 2020

Words and photographs by Stephan Jarvis

Better known for popular evening entertainment venues such as **Ageha**, **Studio Coast** and **1st Ring**, Shin-Kiba has more going for it during the daytime than you might know. In contrast to an image of industry and warehouses, it's an area full of green getaways that are perfect for the warmer summer months.

Lumber Support

Unsurprisingly, Shin-Kiba has a cultural link to its mainland namesake, Kiba. The latter had been Tokyo's center point of the lumber industry for centuries until redevelopment in the 1970s saw businesses up sticks across to this

unimaginatively named slab of reclaimed land. From raw materials to bespoke furniture, whatever your wood needs are, you'll be sure to find them here. And if you don't know your mahoganies from your maples, a trip to the informative **Wood & Plywood Museum** will provide you with all the answers, plus a whole lot more.

Tropic Thunder

Seeing wood out in the wild is arguably much more pleasurable and there are plenty of spots across Shin-Kiba in which to do so. The biggest, **Yumenoshima Park**, covers a large chunk of the island, and the **Yumenoshima Park Archery Field** will host the archery competitions during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. The park also includes the **Yumenoshima Tropical Greenhouse Dome**. Here, visitors can appreciate even more botanical beauty under three huge glass domes. There are around one thousand different species of plant life from all kinds of exotic locations, such as the tropical rainforests of the Ogasawara Islands.

Awash with pink during the cherry blossom season, there are tables and benches for enjoying bayside picnics and barbecues at the adjacent **Tokyo Yumenoshima Marina**. One of the most impressive boats to see, however, is not moored in the bay but housed in the free-to-enter **Daigo Fukuryu Maru Exhibition Hall**. The boat in question is better known in the West as the "Lucky Dragon No. 5." In 1954 the crew were famously innocent victims of nuclear fallout from



the Castle Bravo thermonuclear weapon test conducted by the US – an event that inspired the opening of the original *Godzilla* movie. The hall also provides plenty of information about those Pacific island tests and their consequences, although unfortunately, mostly in Japanese.

Get to the Chopper!

One of the best ways to enjoy Shin-Kiba is by bicycle. Pick up a set of wheels from the bicycle sharing service outside Shin-Kiba Station and take advantage of the smooth bicycle pathways that cover much of the area. Cycling from **Yumenoshima Green Road Park** through **Shinkibaryokudo Park** is a particularly pleasant journey, offering views across Tokyo Bay while surrounded by lush greenery. Along the way, there's an opportunity to stop by a viewing



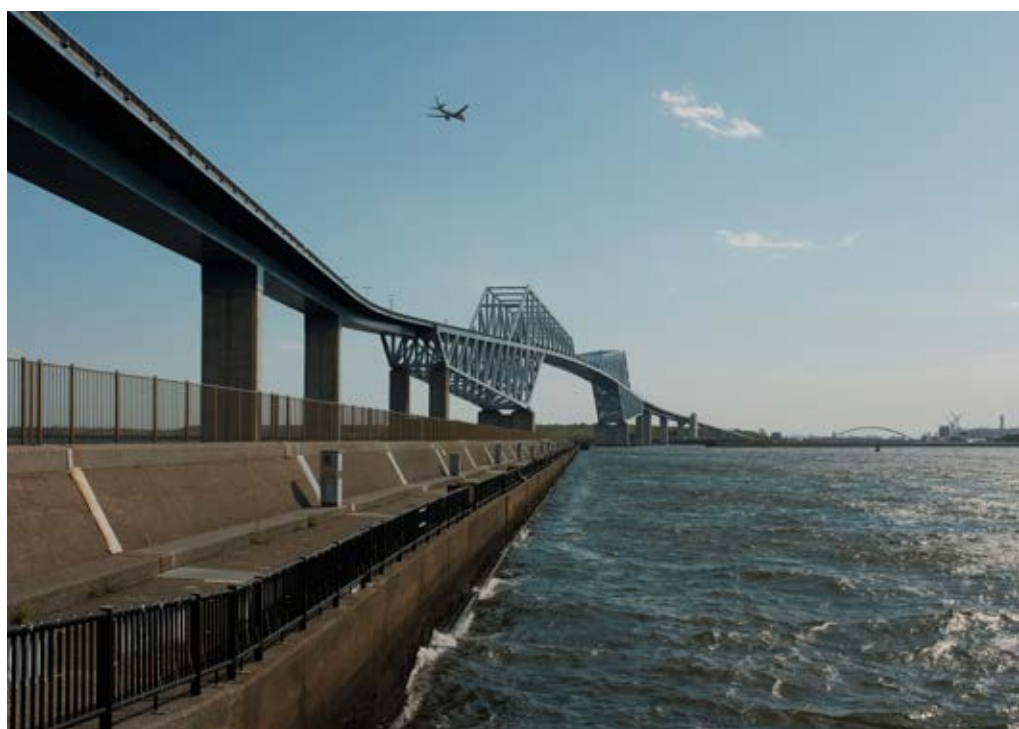
platform overlooking **Tokyo Heliport**. Recline in one of the sculpted concrete pilot's chairs and watch the take-off and landings of a variety of helicopters, including those operated by the police and fire departments and numerous news organizations.

Wakasu

While in possession of some pedal power it's worth crossing over to the neighboring island of Wakasu (buses are also available if you prefer). Much of the island is taken up by the vast **Wakasu Golf Links** golf course but there is also the more inclusive **Wakasu Seaside Park**. Here you can enjoy an open, green space

and look up in amazement at the park's gigantic wind turbine, or follow a cycling route around the perimeter that leads to the shoreline.

A popular spot for anglers and friendly stray cats, the shoreline features a view of the spectacularly long **Tokyo Gate Bridge**. Opened in 2012, the double cantilever bridge also has the nickname "Dinosaur Bridge" due to its supposed resemblance to a pair of giant beasts facing off in the bay. On clear days Mount Fuji is also visible along Tokyo's horizon. Stay for a beautiful sunset before heading back up to the mainland, or grill up some freshly caught fish for dinner and enjoy a night under the stars at the park's campsite.



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

BOA CAMPBELL

Photography + film + director

THE ODE TO BIRDS CONCEPT IS...

Having part Japanese heritage, it's been an ongoing vision in this Japan chapter to work with local artists and talent, highlighting their aesthetic beauty in killer locations around Japan. This photographic and film story is a fantastical immersion in homage to the natural world and the modern world's relationship with it.

MY STYLE IS... Colourful, black, comfortable, geometric, layered and occasionally form fitting or curvy and sexy – sometimes all at once – depending on the mood and occasion.

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

GYPSIES CAFE: A dose of unpretentiously yummy food, drink and shisha, with the comfort of couches and super chill downtown hospitality. 2-23-10 Nishiasakusa, Taito-ku

CAFÉ OTONOVA: Take in the night air from the upstairs loft window. Euro-inspired cuisine, in a cosy, rustic style interior – killer date spot. cafeotonova.net

PIZZA & BAR 71 COPAIN: If you're craving the comfort of a legit wood-fired oven pizza in the deep, artsy backdrop of Nezu – look no further. [instagram.com/labocopain/](https://www.instagram.com/labocopain/)

GET THE LOOK

Body suit jacket
JOHN LAWRENCE SULLIVAN

Ruffled skirt
noir etoffe

Marble pattern top
Chika Kisada



boacampbell.com



[@boacampbell](https://www.instagram.com/boacampbell)

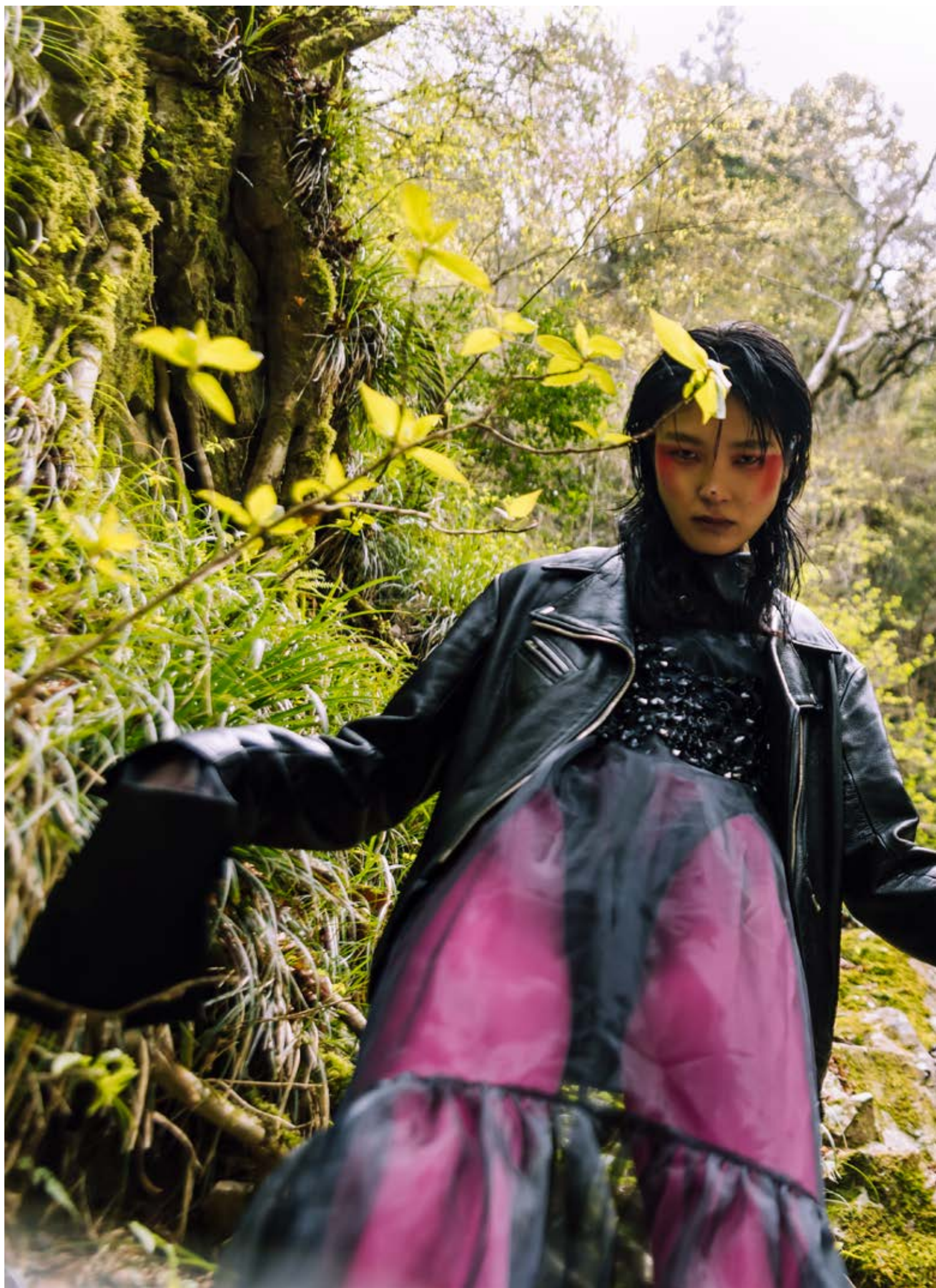
GET THE LOOK

Knit sweater
JOHN LAWRENCE SULLIVAN
Tulle dress
Chika Kisada
Square toe boots
JOHN LAWRENCE SULLIVAN

ODE

T O T H E B I R D S

Photos by Boa Campbell



GET THE LOOK

Leather jacket
sui

Bijou top
Chika Kisada

See-through shirt
Noir etoffe

See-through dress
HOUGA

Square toe boots
JOHN LAWRENCE SULLIVAN



GET THE LOOK

Zippered trench coat
JOHN LAWRENCE SULLIVAN

Lace dress
sui

Tulle skirt
Chika Kisada

Square toe boots
JOHN LAWRENCE SULLIVAN



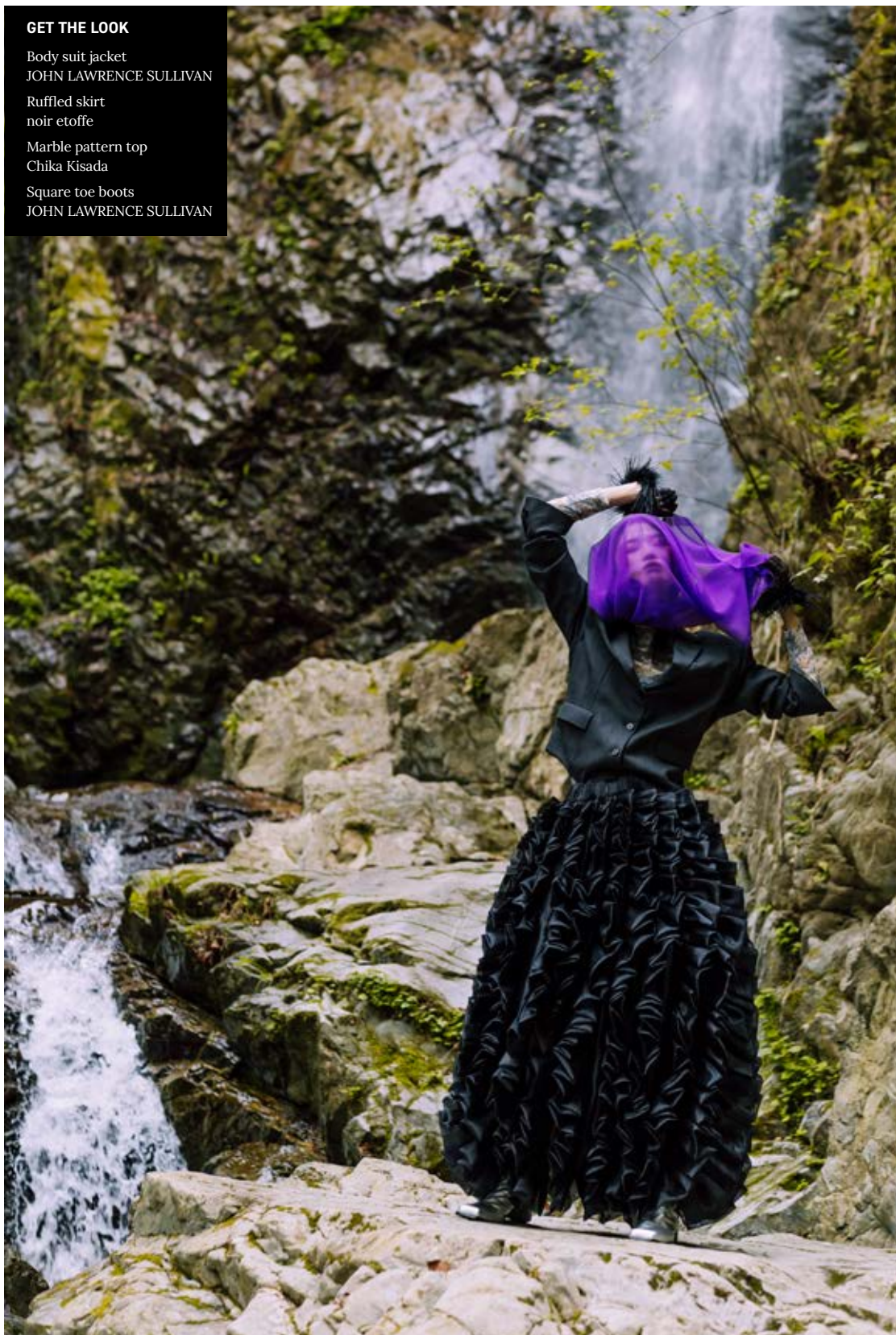
GET THE LOOK

Body suit jacket
JOHN LAWRENCE SULLIVAN

Ruffled skirt
noir etoffe

Marble pattern top
Chika Kisada

Square toe boots
JOHN LAWRENCE SULLIVAN



CREATIVE TEAM

PHOTOGRAPHER & CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Boa Campbell

STYLIST & CREATIVE DIRECTION: Kota Ueno | @st_ueno.tokyo

MAKEUP: Kotomi | @kotomi_makeup

HAIR: Hiroki Hasegawa | @pppppenta

MODEL: Misako (MAGMA MODELS, TOKYO) | @magma_model

Best of the Beach

Any seaside excursion requires these Japan-made accessories

Compiled by Sayaka Mitsui and Lisandra Moor



SHISEIDO THE PERFECT PROTECTOR SUNSCREEN

Tired of reapplying sunscreen every time you go into the water? Shiseido's sunscreen strengthens its UV barriers when it senses heat and water, so you can enjoy those long summer days while feeling light and protected.

¥5,170, shiseido.co.jp

MONO HANDMADE X GOODLUCK BUCKET HAT

An environment-friendly option to protect yourself outdoors, this cute bucket hat by Mono Handmade uses leftover offcuts from their pants and jumpsuits.

\$40.00, monohandmade.com

**SONY SRS-XB23 WIRELESS PORTABLE SPEAKER**

Good music is a must when it comes to summer days out at the beach. A reliable, waterproof portable speaker will make it easy to jam out to your favorite song anywhere you go.

¥13,200, sony.jp

**KURASHIKI HAMPU TOTE BAG**

Crafted using a 130-year old traditional weaving technique, these durable tote bags come in a variety of chic and summery colors. The opening has a zipper, which can protect your beach items from falling out or getting lost in the crowd.

¥19,800, store.kurashikihampu.co.jp

AYAME SUNGLASSES

Stand out in the crowd with these unique ayame sunglasses. Their new collection offers fun, colorful shades that are waterproof, so you don't have to worry about having cloudy lenses caused by masks and wet environments.

¥12,000+ tax, ayame-id.jp



Japanese Liqueurs that Will Make You Go Mmmm

Satisfy thirst and curiosity with these new Japanese liqueurs

Compiled by Sayaka Mitsui and Lisandra Moor

2



1



3



4



5



1. SETOUCHI JAM'S GARDEN TERA TERRA LIMONCELLO

Inspired by the hot summers of Italy, craft jam maker Setouchi Jam's Garden released a refreshing limoncello made from lemons grown in Okayama Prefecture. From ¥1,700, shop.jams-garden.com

2. TSUTSUMI BREWERY MR. MORI'S BREWED COFFEE LIQUEUR

Iced coffee is a seasonal staple, but what about coffee liqueur? Tsutsumi Brewery's rich and complex coffee liqueur is made by soaking quality-roasted coffee beans in shochu. ¥1,298, tsutsumi-shop.jp

3. KURAND TAMBA MILK ANKO LIQUEUR

Made of milk, sugar, azuki beans and sake, Kurand's anko liqueur is perfect for fans of wagashi (Japanese confectionery) who want to get creative with their happy hour cocktails. ¥1,990, kurand.jp

4. KOKONOE RINCHA

Not every drink needs to pack a punch. Japanese company Kononoe created Rincha, a liqueur made from a mix of mirin and Japanese green tea. Iced tea with a kick, as we like to call it. From ¥985, kokonoe-shop.com

5. KANADE CRAFT MATCHA LIQUEUR

Kanade is Suntory's response to the Japanese craft liqueur boom and their lineup includes a succulent matcha liqueur. For those who love herbal drinks, this one is rich and flavorful. ¥2,156, suntory.co.jp

IN-DEPTH



"behind", Face & body paint: Amazing JIRO, Model: Vica D. Hirtzsmake: Ryn Miyazaki, Photo: Muga Miyahara

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Kyoto in Symphony

Composer Marios Joannou Elia orchestrates a masterpiece of sound dedicated to Kyoto

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On Impulse

Special effects makeup artist extraordinaire Amazing Jiro takes TW inside his twisted world

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Fighting Ignorance with Art

Highly acclaimed New York-based illustrator Yuko Shimizu is here to kick ass



BALLET IN THE TIME OF CORONA

*How National Ballet of Japan artistic director Miyako Yoshida
started her new post during a pandemic and survived*

Words by Paul McInnes. Photo by Jörgen Axelvall

2020 was the absent year. The year that dreams were cut adrift and individuals, families, communities and companies decimated. Nobody could have foreseen, in late 2019, that the world would have shifted so much to the perimeters of understanding, that our lives would have been permanently stained like an unwanted tattoo.

American poet W.S. Merwin, in his astounding piece “Separation,” writes:

Your absence has gone through me
Like a thread through a needle
Everything I do is stitched with its color

And, as sorrowful as it may seem, our lives, the survivors, will forever be stitched with the darkened hues of last year and perhaps even this year.

There aren't many success stories from this. Cafés, bars, local Tokyo haunts and favorite hangouts have closed permanently and our twisted and tainted memories of last year remain like a stinging and pungent scent.

For performing arts, the last year has been similarly grim. Most live events have been canceled with music, theater and

comedy being hit particularly hard. The Japanese government's quite spectacular mishandling of the pandemic with rules which are not rules and emergencies which are but, simultaneously aren't, have confused and divided many.

Amongst mixed messages from the government, some performances in 2020 were allowed to be performed under strict hygiene regulations and restrictions. Some companies, such as the National Ballet of Japan, managed to stumble through and survive. Compared with similar European companies such as the English National Ballet, which canceled its autumn 2020 program and replaced it with a video-on-demand service, the National Ballet of Japan should count itself lucky.

Former principal dancer at The Royal Ballet and Birmingham Royal Ballet, Miyako Yoshida OBE, was due to take over from predecessor Noriko Ohara as artistic director in September of last year but due to the global lockdown, Ohara was stuck in Glasgow, Scotland where she is based. So Yoshida was tasked with beginning her leadership in March with the unenviable aim of redirecting and maintaining the company (under lockdown restrictions), which, although it only has a 24-year history, is seen as the shining light and leader of Japanese ballet.



Nutcracker and the Mouse King, photo by Seto Hidemi

TW sat down with Yoshida, at the New National Theatre, Tokyo (NNTT) where the National Ballet of Japan is situated, to discuss her first season as artistic director of ballet and dance, the challenges she and her company has faced and the indomitable optimism which she has injected into the company. Yoshida, who is slight, athletic and has a charming southern English cadence to her voice, is seen as something of a global ballet superstar and is known for her international experience and outlook, which will undoubtedly have a lasting impact on the dancers and staff at the NNTT.

"I think that April and May of 2020 was the hardest time for the company, for the dancers especially, that we couldn't even do classes because everyone had to stay at home, and take classes at home," says Yoshida. "Also, there was so much additional work that dancers had to do like reporting their temperature every morning, wiping the bar after every class and cleaning up the floor at the end of day. Dancers had to do that! Every day! That never happened abroad. Only in Japan. And then regular PCR tests as well. So things like that add up. The hardest thing of all is that the show is canceled after long and hard-working rehearsals."

The company miraculously managed to put on several performances, at NNTT, throughout 2020 and early 2021, including "The Sleeping Beauty," "The Nutcracker and the Mouse King" and the outstanding "Afternoon of Fauns and Nymphs," a selection of classical ballet and contemporary vignettes which somehow managed to mirror the despair we felt and at the same time give us the energy and positivity to continue.

Some of the scheduled season was canceled, however, and the company had to adjust in order to survive and to ensure the dancers

received paid work and kept their levels of fitness and artistic drive. Roland Petit's "Coppélia," scheduled for spring 2021, was moved to a series of shows that were streamed live on YouTube and Facebook, managing to amass a combined viewing figure of 167,000 over four performances.

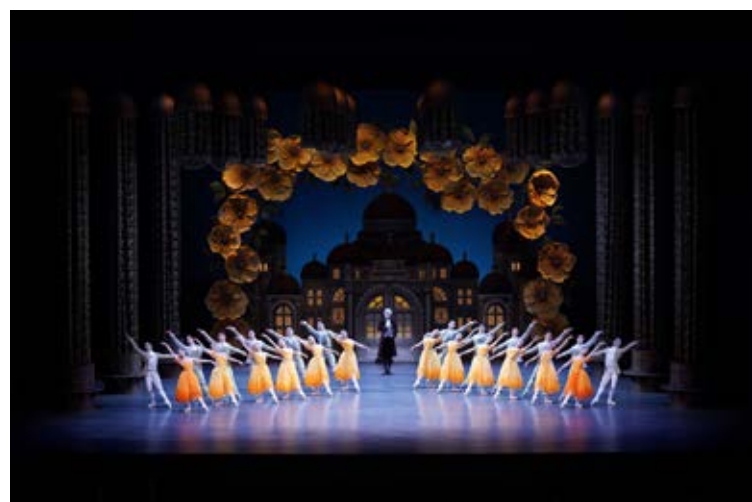
"It really helped us and the dancers," says Yoshida. "I never imagined that we would get that number [167,000]. I'd like to find a way to have more chances to do free livestreaming in the future."

It appears that one of Yoshida's aims is to perhaps make ballet more accessible and more democratic. Japan, as a nation, has a great deal of interest in ballet shown by the myriad ballet schools and professional and amateur companies, which are dotted throughout the country. It's her vision to tap into and harness this interest and passion for the future.

Yoshida embodies the Japanese characteristic of *nintai* (perseverance) and the National Ballet of Japan, under her stewardship, is looking ahead to the new 2021-22 season which has been finely curated by Yoshida. Sir Peter Wright's "Swan Lake," Sir Frederick Ashton's "Cinderella" and Christopher Wheeldon's "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" are all scheduled to be performed to sellout crowds at the NNTT.

“
The hardest thing of all is that the
show is canceled after long and
hard-working rehearsals
”

Nutcracker and the Mouse King, photo by Seto Hidemi



Yoshida remains upbeat and welcomes the challenges ahead with her signature elegance and composure. "Like canceling the shows and financial difficulties, my challenge seems further away now. It seems more difficult. But because of this difficult time, more people support us. And they are more interested in what we're doing. Shown by the livestreaming of "Coppélia," people are interested in our shows. Everybody at the theatre has been working together and working so hard fighting coronavirus. So, our spirits are not down. We feel like we will never give up."

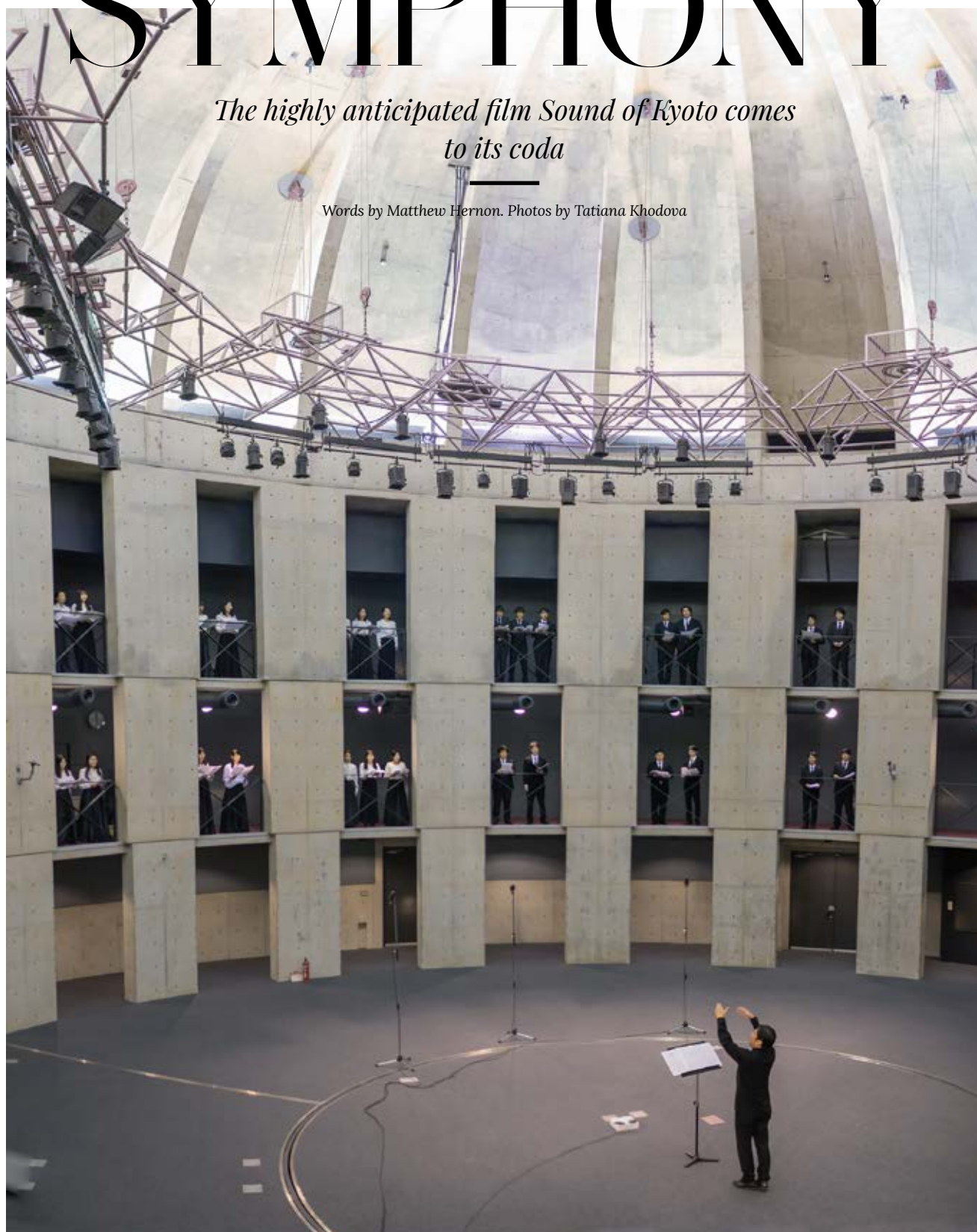
More info at:

nntt.jac.go.jp/english/ballet/the-national-ballet-of-japan/

KYOTO IN SYMPHONY

The highly anticipated film Sound of Kyoto comes to its coda

Words by Matthew HERNON. Photos by Tatiana Khodova



Following the success of his critically acclaimed short music film *Sound of Vladivostok*, Marios Joannou Elia was asked to create something similar for a city that reigned as the capital of Japan for more than 1,000 years.

And so, in 2018 began his latest endeavor: *Sound of Kyoto*. Over three years, 560 musicians, 18 original compositions, 4,000 video clips, 10,300 documentary photos and 1,650 sounds later, the ambitious project is now in post-production. By the end of the summer, we will have an idea of when screenings will start.

"This project was not just a personal goal for me to make another piece of music," Elia tells TW. "From the outset, the intention was to musicalize the city and mobilize its citizens to take part in an initiative that represents them and the place they live. It's a contemporary audio-visual portrait of their hometown." He describes Kyoto as the stage and its people as the performers.

"We are talking about a unique and historic place that has its own sound," says Elia. "My job is to then bring everything together. To combine those sounds and acoustic elements of the city with local musicians, orchestras and choirs, etc. This will then be presented as a unified whole via the medium of film."

Soundscapes of Japan

Through the video, Elia would like to make people more aware of the essence of sound and its importance to our living environment. The Cyprus-born composer believes that our everyday acoustical experiences have the power to re-energize and aesthetically heal us as long as we are consciously listening to them.

This notion, he feels, is particularly prevalent in Japan, a nation that has an intimate relationship with nature. He points to the "100 Soundscapes of Japan" as an example of this. Chosen by the Ministry of the Environment in 1996, the idea of the list was to promote the country's most unique sounds and preserve them for future generations while also combating noise pollution.

Included in the top 100 was the bamboo forest of Sagano in the Arashiyama region of Kyoto. It's a stunning location that features prominently in Elia's movie.

"The instrument being played in the forest is the shakuhachi which is of course made of bamboo," says Elia. "That is not just a coincidence. For a project like this you need to contextualize everything. The visual and audio aspects need to interconnect otherwise you have something that is disjointed. To achieve that, the timeline of thematic elements must be just right."

It is not an easy thing to achieve as there are so many contrasting components. You have very different generations involved, ranging from seniors to a kindergarten choir. There are also varying routines, including ballet and contemporary dance.

"On top of that, you have a distinct sound palette featuring traditional, modern and futuristic elements," continues Elia. "The idea is to bring all of these things together to create polyphonic musical sequences that represent the whole of Kyoto."



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Contrasting Cities

Elia began working on the Kyoto project at the beginning of 2018, just a few months after *Sound of Vladivostok* had been released. While the concept was basically the same, the two cities provided the composer and project's director with different propositions. They are, after all, worlds apart in terms of culture and history.

Founded in 1860 as a military outpost, Vladivostok's geographical location made it an important strategic base for Russia's navy. This was reflected in Elia's video, which featured warships, cannons, fighter aircrafts and industrial machinery in addition to a Siberian tiger.

Kyoto, meanwhile, is known as the cultural capital of Japan. The seat of the imperial court for centuries, it was spared from large-scale destruction during World War II. Secretary of War Henry Stimson described the place as an "important cultural center," before removing it from the list of potential atomic bomb targets in 1945. The fact that he had honeymooned there may have influenced his decision.

The city has numerous well-known sites such as Kinkakuji (the Golden Pavilion), the picturesque landscape of Arashiyama, the Geisha district of Gion and the thatched roof houses of Miyama Village, all of which are set to appear in Elia's short movie.

Spectacular Seasonal Colors

The Cypriot's first ever visit to Kyoto was in September 2018. He and his 32-member crew stayed for three months and then returned around the same time the following year. The idea was to catch the autumn foliage, particularly the vibrant red leaves.

"I had seen this view in films and documentaries but to experience it up close was much more beautiful," says Elia. "It had a much stronger impact than anything a camera can show you."

However, getting approval to shoot in certain locations in Japan proved cumbersome as there is so much red tape. With a limited timeframe, Elia would often try to think outside the box.

"Generally speaking, officials in Japan aren't so receptive to improvisation," says Elia, smiling. "Russia is more of a free spirit. There was one time when we managed to organize a symphony orchestra there in one night. That would have been impossible in Kyoto. You need to work within social codes. That can be tricky for a creative person, but it's why Japan functions so well. Things did become much easier when we spoke face-to-face rather than remotely."

Harmony in Paradise

Another thing Elia had to consider was the number of tourists. As it was filmed before the coronavirus pandemic, there were many people around. To truly capture the sounds he wanted, it was essential to shoot and record in a quiet environment.

"Many of our highlights in Kyoto occurred before the crack of dawn," says Elia. "A personal favorite was when we were on a boat heading towards Arashiyama. As well as the musical performance, you could hear the gentle sound of the oarsman's stick bobbing along on the emerald water as the sun was rising. That was the perfect harmony."

Part of that scene is included in the recently released *Sound of Kyoto* trailer. If the 1:12 video snippet is anything to go by, the final version is certainly something to look forward to. There's still some post-production steps to be done, but it should be ready for screening soon.

As for Elia, he is already planning for his next project. Kyoto will be followed by Moscow as he continues with his ultimate aim of discovering the sounds of the earth.



PROFILE: Born in the coastal city of Paphos, Cyprus in 1978, Marios Joannou Elia is famed for his extravagant, large-scale concerts and cultural events. One of the most spectacular came in Mannheim, Germany in 2011. Celebrating the 125th anniversary of the automobile, it was an open-air multimedia symphony titled "Autosymphonic" that involved 290 musicians and 81 cars. Hailed as the "event of the century," by the German media, *The Huffington Post*, described it as "one of the world's most remarkable symphony concerts."

He has continued to enhance his reputation since, winning numerous awards. He's also become one of the world's most in-demand composers. After his hometown of Paphos was chosen as a European Capital of Culture, Elia was selected to direct the festivities. He became the youngest person in history to be given the role.





A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A SHAMISEN MAKER

Meet Kimiaki Kono, the man behind the licensed Tokyo 2020 shamisen

Words by Zoria Petkoska. Photos by Ryoko Ogawa



Why and How Does a Salaryman Become a Craftsman?

The feel-good story is not necessarily false, it's just simpler. Kono's mother owned a rather neglected shamisen which he took to a craftsperson for repairs. That encounter tugged at his heartstrings, sparking a whole career pivot from a dime-a-dozen salaryman to one of Japan's few remaining shamisen artisans.

Sitting amongst a silent audience of shamisen and one writer in his east Tokyo studio, Kono tells us the longer story. He was already set on escaping the daily salaryman grind when he took his mother's instrument to the workshop. What

piqued his interest was a business opportunity. The traditional three-stringed instrument is predominantly made from red sandalwood native to India, and at the time there was only one importer to Japan. Kimiaki Kono managed to win a global tender and become the second importer.

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You want the feel-good story, or the real one?
”



Let your mind conjure the image of the stoic sullen craftsman. Furrowed brow, few words, sunk in his world. Kimiaki Kono, a Tokyo shamisen craftsman, takes that image, considers it for a second, and chucks it out the window. To my question about his workday he is nothing short of honest – “I do my best work after I’ve had a couple of cups of sake.” To my next question about why he became a shamisen maker he slyly retorts, “You want the feel-good story, or the real one?”

The shamisen’s ancestors are a Chinese instrument and subsequently the Okinawan sanshin. The instrument can be found all over Japan, but a true Tokyo shamisen is the one made entirely by one craftsperson. There are only five of those in Tokyo, and Kono is one of them. Aside from that, there are just around 50 shops around Tokyo where one can find a shamisen.



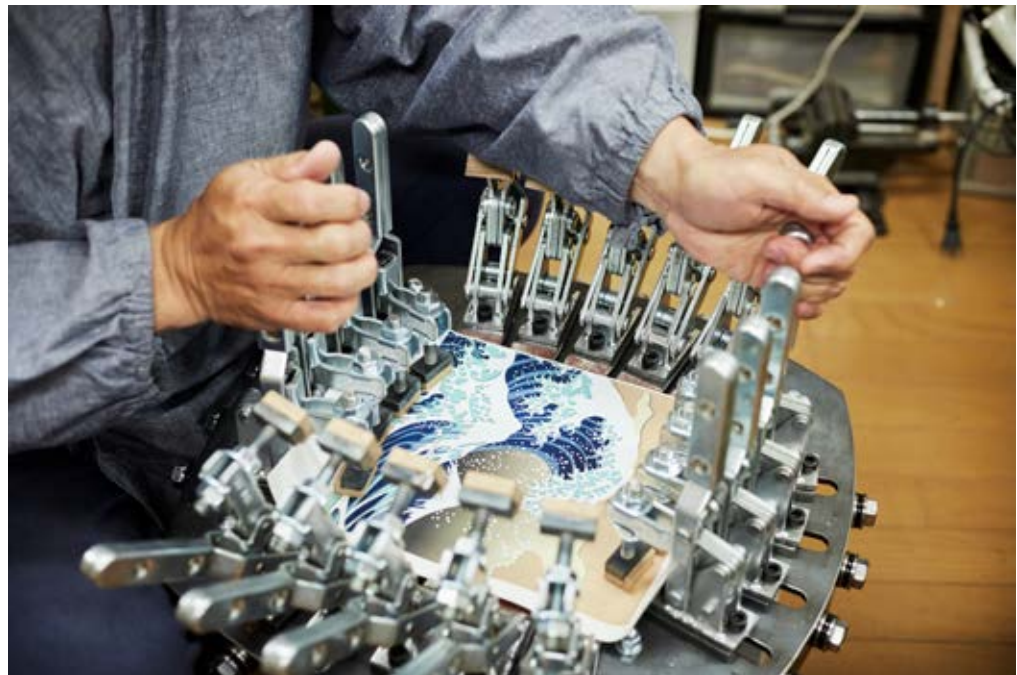
at the strings for the first time. The ex-salesman has thought of everything – he made the instrument the perfect size for carry-on luggage, to take home as a souvenir from Japan. He also made a shamisen in parts to be easily assembled. “I have no idea why everyone in the 1980s came back from Hawaii to Japan with a ukulele” he says.” But I hope shamisen will be the next big thing.”



Doing business regularly with shamisen makers, Kono witnessed firsthand the decline of the craft. With sales dwindling and no successors to learn the craft, Kono decided to take it upon himself. Traditional crafts like this are often gatekept, passed on to family members only, but he learned from everyone. “I am no one’s successor, and no one is mine,” he says. “So I’m free to do whatever I want.” It is exactly this creative freedom and his entrepreneurial spirit that made Kono’s Tokyo 2020 shamisen possible.

Mini Shamisen and the Tokyo 2020 Traditional Crafts Collection

Not afraid to think outside the box, Kono created a so-called mini shamisen that he often compares to Hawaii’s ukulele. Unlike the traditional shamisen, his mini version is lighter, cheaper and easy to play. It wasn’t meant for professional use, but for any beginner plucking



Made from hinoki wood and special washi paper, the mini version is also cruelty-free compared to a traditional instrument made from several animals. In a funny twist, it's also more Japanese and closer to the instrument's past, when it was made of cherry and persimmon wood.

Not everyone appreciated Kono's inventiveness. On the contrary, some of his peers were unhappy with the mini as an inferior cheaper product, calling it a toy. They all had to change their tune, as Kono was swamped with orders for his mini shamisen. "[Customers] were mostly elderly Japanese, who grew up in the war and music was a luxury they didn't dare enjoy at the time," he says.

A final redemption for his mini shamisen was being certified to represent Tokyo in the licensed Tokyo 2020 Traditional Crafts Collection. The collection consists of more than 100 items from all 47 Japanese prefectures, all created by some of the country's most skilled craftspeople. If anything can launch this instrument in the global market, it's this.

“
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”

Kono Dreams of the Future

"I wish the word shamisen becomes known around the world like sushi or samurai," says Kono. He acknowledges that referring to the instrument as a "Japanese guitar" is not doing it justice. In fact, if there is one thing he wants people to know is that the sound of shamisen is different from that of a guitar. "Every handcrafted shamisen has a different sound," he says, explaining how he stretches the skin or paper. He taps the instrument while making it, listening for every little change. "All you need to become a master is to learn to listen," he says. "And there's no better feeling than when a customer tests the instrument and is happy with the sound."

Marrying tradition with technological progress has been the winning combination for many facets of Japanese culture. Inventing



new versions of the instrument and seeing musicians play new music genres on it will help it survive. But Kono admits it's become a lonely job, and he laments not having students. Past shamisen makers have kept the craft away from outsiders, foreigners and women. But Kono, originally an outsider himself, says he will accept anyone as a student. If he had to choose,

he says he would love to have a female successor. He has never met a woman shamisen maker and he wants that to change.

Before we leave his studio, he teaches us how to play the "Sakura, Sakura" song on one of his mini shamisen. "I'll be happy if you tell everyone it's easy to play," he said. So, here we are and now you know.

"Transhuman Romance", Art Direction: Jonas Leriche /Amazing JIRO

Photo: Jonas Leriche

Face & Body paint: Amazing JIRO

Model: CHAU B.

Headpiece: Ken (UR DELTA)



ON IMPULSE

TW takes a deep dive into the
twisted world of special effects
makeup artist Amazing Jiro

Words by Nick Narigon. Interview & translation
by Alex Shapiro

“
I always focus on
making people have
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reactions
”



One fateful day in Poland, an unwitting customs agent at Warsaw Chopin Airport unlatched the suitcase of Kazutaka Sakagami to discover the skin of a human face, fileted like a slice of Swiss ham.

The spine-tingling episode quickly turned into a light-hearted misunderstanding as Sakagami, more well-known as the special effects makeup artist Amazing Jiro, revealed to custom agents that the face mask was nothing but a latex prop.

“They all had a good laugh while looking at my works,” says Amazing Jiro. “They all became very friendly and I was able to get out of there no problem.”

Called a “rare artist who can easily come and go between analog and digital” who can make the “impossible possible,” Amazing Jiro has collaborated on special effects makeup projects with entertainment luminaries like pop artist Takashi Murakami, *Shin Godzilla* director Shinji Higuchi and now Tokyo Weekender.

To create the makeup art for this month’s cover of TW, we meet Amazing Jiro across the Sumida River in eastern Tokyo’s Koto ward at the headquarters of JUR Co., Ltd., the special effects makeup and molding company Amazing Jiro founded nearly 20 years ago after graduating from Tokyo University of Arts.

“Alien”
Body paint & Costume: Amazing JIRO
Hair: Ken (UR DELTA)
Model: RANMA YU
Photo: Kimio Sekimura



Arriving fashionably late, Amazing Jiro welcomes us into the elevator, sliding open a corrugated metal door that looks like it belongs on an industrial warehouse. The walls of the elevator are painted with the kanji for sho, ha and ri. Jiro explains they mean that to be perfect, you must follow your teacher; to succeed you have to become better than your teacher; and then you must separate to become your own teacher.

The elevator ride takes us past the second floor, the location of the Amazing School Jur, a full-scale makeup and modeling technique school founded by Amazing Jiro. Here, professional artists and guest lecturers share lessons with the next generation, hence the inspirational artwork within the elevator.

On the third floor is the JUR Co. workshop, where amongst the paint and latex fumes employees busily scan 3D

Special Makeup: Amazing JIRO
Dancer: KELO
Lighting: Takuma Sacki
Styling: Subterranean Garden
Photo: ARISAKI



images of their faces for a future project. Shelves are lined with face masks made from silicon and resin, a museum showcasing the past decade of Amazing Jiro's work for television, movies, amusement parks, you name it. There's a bust of Yoda, Albert Einstein, a lion in a menacing roar, a grotesque version of an elderly Pinocchio, etc.

When we reach Amazing Jiro's personal studio on the fourth floor, he whips out his iPhone to share his latest project. Without warning, we watch one of Jiro's assistants gouge her fingers into the eye sockets of a latex mannequin head, and fake blood starts gushing out.

The head was built for a short film Amazing Jiro produced for his latest project – a haunted house built inside two container trucks that are currently touring Japan, bringing ghoulish entertainment to

the masses who aren't able to travel far from home due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Like the Cryptkeeper to the stars, Amazing Jiro giggles deliriously as he swipes through his phone. This time we watch the short film he created, "Mugan," or "No Face," which explains the backstory for the ghostly character featured at the haunted house.

Not unlike *The Grudge*, the lead character is a woman distraught over the end of a love affair. With long sewing shears, she snips off her nose so she can no longer smell the scent of her ex. Then she gouges out her eyes so she can no longer see him. Then she rips out her tongue, for no special reason, Amazing Jiro tells us. "She just wants to die."

"I don't think there's anything really too disturbing," says Amazing Jiro. "When it comes to doing



"Paper Human"
Face paint: Amazing JIRO
Model: MAEKEN'
Photo: Youhei Kodama



"YU-ZEN"
Art Direction: Jonas Leriche /
Amazing JIRO
Photo: Jonas Leriche
Face & Body paint: Amazing JIRO
Model: Zoey Sao

special effects makeup, or any makeup in general, you're making something from thin air. Keeping that in mind, if I'm making a scary character, I'll add some beauty to it. If I'm making a cute character, I'll add something sickening to it. I think that humans have duality and depth, and I put that into consideration when I make my characters."

The man who is afraid of the sight of his own blood was born in Osaka but moved with his family to Pasadena, California where he lived until relocating to Chiba at age 5. He still considers the Los Angeles suburb as his hometown and is proud to return annually as a special guest at the International Make-up Artist Trade Show.

Recognized as a talented artist from a young age, in high school Jiro drew late into the night, sometimes sleeping through most of his classes in the nurses' station. At university he studied metal carving. After his graduation exhibit he put the sheet metal away as he had become fascinated creating lifelike work.

A dissection scene from the movie *Spiral* inspired Jiro to study special effects makeup and he joined the Yoyogi Animation Academy. An early encounter with Etsumi Kawashima at HairMake UR in Aoyama inspired Amazing Jiro to launch his own special effects makeup company. Within his second year of business he won TV TOKYO's "TV Champion" Special Effects Makeup Artists Championship.

While Kazutaka Sakagami is Amazing Jiro's given name, for as long as he can remember people called him Jiro in recognition of the Showa Era entertainer Jiro Sakagami. Eight years ago when he started producing more full-body, fashion makeup, he launched an Instagram account. There were too many Jiros on Instagram, so he combined the name of his studio – Amazing Studio – with his nickname and the moniker Amazing Jiro was born.

“From then I got a lot of comments on my posts saying that I really was amazing, so I decided to use that as my name outside of Instagram too,” he says.

Like most companies, business slowed for Amazing Jiro during the Covid-19 pandemic and for two months he received no commissions. He started painting makeup on his left hand every day. This grew into the One Hand Monster project on YouTube.

“Up until then, I had jobs coming in all the time, but during the time I didn't, I realized just how much I liked doing makeup,” he says. “I also realized that kids around the world were just as bored at home as I was, and in a way to help them beat their boredom and learn to wash their hands, I came up with the One Hand Monster idea. I had many parents send their kids' One Hand Monsters to me.”



"Phantom"
Face & Body paint: Amazing JIRO
Model: hii
Mask: Sakura Izakawa
Photo: Youhei Kodama



Demonstration at IMATS LA.
Face paint: Amazing JIRO
Hair & Makeup: Ryu Miyazaki
Model: Jina
Photo: Nick Wall



Not one to stay idle, Amazing Jiro launched his traveling haunted house with inaugural demonstrations held at Shibuya Crossing. He also has a large-scale, fibre-reinforced plastic piece on display at Diesel Art Gallery as part of the “immaten” group exhibition.

Once travel is allowed again, Amazing Jiro's first stop will be his adopted hometown of LA, and he is anxious to work with international artists and present demonstrations abroad, continuing to break down barriers and collaborate with artists all over the world.

“I always focus on making people have simple, impulsive reactions,” says Amazing Jiro, who smiles as he talks, his cap pulled low over his eyes. “I've never felt the need to make people disgusted or make them think hard, but merely surprise them.”

"FFFaceee"

Face paint: Amazing JIRO

Hair & makeup: Yui Amano

Model: Jina

Photo: Yuihei Kodama



富士媽媽





FIGHTING IGNORANCE WITH ART

*New York-based illustrator
Yuko Shimizu is here to kick ass*

Words by Laura Pollacco

“I’m strong but people are not just born strong, right? People become strong because circumstances make us that way.”

Yuko Shimizu has certainly faced more than her fair share of these circumstances and as she herself attests; she is strong. Now a multi-award-winning illustrator and college art instructor based in New York, Yuko uses her art to generate conversations and to educate. So admired is her work and progressive attitude that in 2009 she was named by *Newsweek Japan* as one of the “100 Japanese People the World Respects.” She has also received over 15 medals from the Society of Illustrators and most recently was awarded the prestigious Caldecott Honor, one of the highest awards for picture books in the States, for her illustration of the book *The Cat Man of Aleppo*, based on a true story.

Talking with Shimizu, you can hear her passion, her humor and her determination to create art that is true to herself; though it hasn’t been the easiest ride to get to this point.

Born in Tokyo, she spent her middle school years in New York, where she attended a local American school rather than a Japanese private school. Because of this integration in the States, on returning to Japan Shimizu found herself a *kikoku-shijo*, an “outsider,” with thoughts and opinions that didn’t fall in line with her peers.

“I came back and I think I was opinionated from a very young age, it was my natural personality, but now it was enhanced 100 times,” she says. “But I also didn’t feel I was very American. I always felt I didn’t fit in in my American school. I was only there for four years and I thought differently. Even in art class I used the colors differently, but what’s good about New York is they think ‘yeah she is different but whatever.’ Back in Japan it was not like that and so for the 18 years I was back in Japan, I was thinking of how to go back to New York.”

During those years Shimizu graduated from Waseda University where she studied advertising and joined the manga club, and then spent more than a decade working in the PR department for a trading firm in Tokyo. Facing sexism and alienation in each, she still found ways to fit her passion for drawing into her work.



“During my 11 years working in a big corporation I had some mentally abusive bosses and colleagues, male colleagues who think that women are tea-making machines. So I knew from day one that I’m not going to get promoted,” she says. It wasn’t until her 30s that Shimizu returned to the States to study art and work towards being a professional illustrator. Returning to New York had its own challenges.

“After I moved back here as an adult I quickly realized how men perceived Asian women and I became disgusted. I didn’t know this part of the culture because I was a kid when I was last here and now I came back as an adult, female, and this is kind of gross,” she says. “Asian women, East Asian women, are considered meek and submissive and that’s a Western stereotype and stereotypes do to an extent come from how we as Asian women behave or are taught to behave in our own culture.”

Shimizu uses her art to challenge these perceptions, depicting women, especially East Asian women as “kick-ass.” She has created many portraits along this theme, one of which was widely used back in 2017’s Women’s March. Shimizu took her





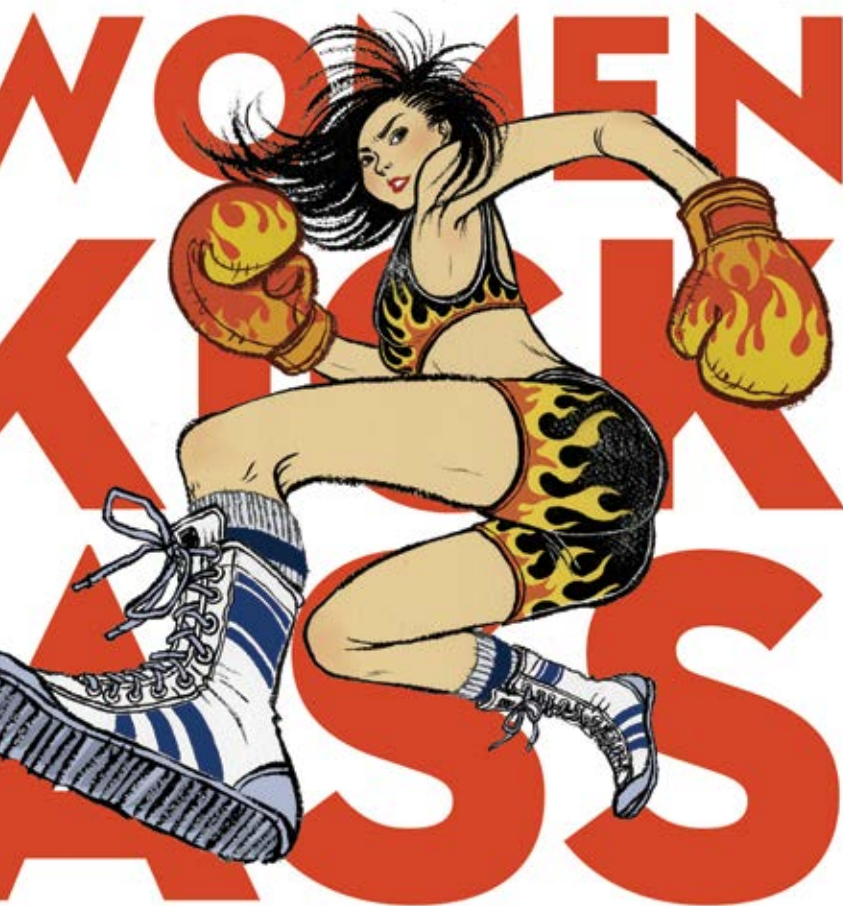
“
If any woman isn't a feminist
I don't understand it
”

illustration titled “Women Kick Ass,” previously done for a feminist magazine, and made it available to download so others could use it for signs. She says, “I’m a feminist. If any woman isn’t a feminist I don’t understand it, but that is a whole other story. How do women not want other women to thrive? It’s half of the population!”

Talk turns to the rise in anti-Asian hate crime seen in the West, predominantly in the States, that has been fueled by the pandemic and the former president’s tactless and inflammatory coverage of Covid-19 as the “China virus.” Recent horrific shootings that occurred in Georgia where Asian women were the target of a white male shooter claiming to have been motivated by “sexual addiction” caused shockwaves across the country.

“It’s terrible, right now I don’t even feel like taking the subway because I don’t feel safe, which is terrible,” says Shimizu. “Otherwise I’m doing okay. I think if anything good came out of it, as horrible as it is, is that people are finally listening. Asians in the West, the US and other Western countries have been in an odd situation. We are among the most educated, Asian women are some of the highest earning race and gender groups, but at the same time we are still a minority.”

In the days and weeks after the attack, Shimizu took to social media to repost her strong female characters. Under one she wrote “the heroine is exactly the opposite of how East Asian women are perceived. She is strong, independent and she will kick your ass. Stop fetishizing Asian women. Stop fetishizing our cultures. Protect our sisters, and brothers.”



Shimizu has many projects that she is working on at any given time, many of which she cannot discuss; such is the nature of her work. What she can tell us is that she has been illustrating for a few books that are available for purchase this year. For those who love fiction, the book *The Cat who Saved Books*, written by best-selling author Sosuke Natsukawa, will be on sale in English and with her illustration on the cover. For those interested in experimenting with Japanese alcohol, Shimizu collaborated with Julia Momosé to create illustrations for *The Way of the Cocktail*, showing cocktails throughout the micro seasons, 24 in total. To see her ongoing work and even short videos of her calligraphy technique (which are exceptionally soothing to watch), head over to her Instagram at [@yukoart](#)

Achieving True Sustainability

Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) are all the rage, but are Japanese companies making real change? SDG expert Trista Bridges explains

Words by David McElhinney
Photo by Ryoko Ogawa

What does the word “sustainability” mean to you? Perhaps its ridding the oceans of plastic, returning to a more pastoral lifestyle or adopting the in-vogue “climatarian” diet. You may want to reduce the global carbon footprint and ensure our coastal cities aren’t home to more fish than humans in the next few decades. Maybe it’s all of the above. Or has it lost meaning altogether?

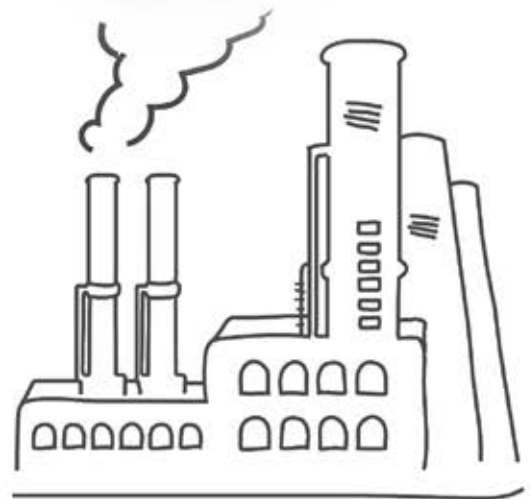
As a branding tool and sleight-of-hand marketing ploy, “sustainability” has been so wantonly bandied around over the past decade it’s become vacuous; the usurper of actual concerted action. But at its core, the principles of sustainability are vital to the modern world.

For Trista Bridges, co-founder of the Tokyo-based business advisory coalition, Read the Air, sustainability is about “everything that we need in order to make society a liveable place over the long term,” she says. “A lot of the ways we work and live today are not really conducive to well-being, or to achieving a paradigm for sustainable living.”

To attain this kind of utopian paradigm, in 2015 the United Nations formulated the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which outlined 17 Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs. The SDGs were based upon four-plus decades of work, starting with the 1972 Stockholm Declaration, the first world conference to make the environment an important issue.

The 80-page document was further developed over the subsequent decades, most notably through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set forth in 2000. Among these rather lofty objectives – which only applied to “developing” countries – were the eradication of extreme poverty, universal primary education and environmental sustainability by 2015. Does that sound like the world we lived in six years ago?

Understandably, the success of the MDGs was a “subject of considerable debate,” according to a report by the Local Governments for Sustainability network. In response, the SDGs were conceived and still serve as the blueprint for all member states to achieve “peace and prosperity for people and the planet.” The goals haven’t lost any of their ambition; they cover everything from battling climate change and the accessibility of clean water and sanitation to improved personal well-being and the all-encompassing reduction of inequalities.



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But perhaps now there is a greater sense of balance to the goals: the definition of sustainability has “broadened” according to Bridges, going beyond environmental and human-rights concerns. Moreover, unlike the MDGs, the SDGs don't represent the developed world imposing a plan on the less developed: it's a mutually agreed set of goals for all.

This has been coupled with greater urgency by both sovereign nations and private entities to achieve their respective targets. Tinfoil-hat movements like climate denialism have been consigned to the realm of the truly loopy. Technology enables exposés on humanitarian violations and defacing of the planet to reach millions across the world in a matter of hours. Whether driven by altruism, morals or profit, modern companies have little option but to conduct business in light of SDGs.

In Japan, however, sustainability has struggled to gain a foothold in the popular consciousness. Bridges attributes this to the “societal upheavals” around sustainable action, which kickstarted in the more activist West, before slowly migrating eastward. “A sustainable way of living also requires changing our behavior; how we shop, how we work, how we eat has to change,” she says. “In Japan, I'm not quite sure we have gotten to that point yet.”

Bridges believes a demographic shift could change this mindset. Japan's workforce continues to gray, paving the way for younger, perhaps more adaptable, individuals to assume positions of influence. Meanwhile the

domestic customer base is shrinking year-on-year. According to the health ministry, for the first time on record fewer than 900,000 babies were born in Japan or to Japanese nationals in 2020. As a result, companies of the future must look abroad for profit or foreign capital.

To operate in this increasingly SDG-aware international market, Japan's old operational models also need a shake-up. In spite of recent pledges to cut CO2 emissions, Japan remains a champion of coal and fossil fuels. This could make conducting business where carbon import taxes are involved – as the EU is currently considering – difficult, if not impossible.

At Read the Air, Bridges and Co. offer advice on how Japanese companies can adopt a truly sustainable method of operation in such a dynamic world. “When I started out on this journey, the initial intention was companies would do something on every SDG,” she says. “But business has a really difficult time doing lots of things at once... the [companies] that are mastering this are the ones that can identify which SDGs they can take action on most credibly and most effectively.”

In *Leading Sustainably*, a book Bridges co-wrote with her Read the Air co-founder, Donald Eubank, the authors outlined a five-step plan for achieving a sustainable business model. They now apply this tier-based system to Japanese companies. Tier one is gaining a basic understanding of the problem before trying to solve it. Tier three is the action phase, where a company might develop a

sustainable product line, like biodegradable packaging. The final phase is a business model built entirely around principles of sustainability.

Most companies are around tier two or three, she says. Meaning they see sustainability, or lack thereof, is a problem and they are intent on doing something about it. In Japan, however, there remains a “chasm” between surface level responses and a deeply imbedded worldview on the importance of sustainable business. Bridging that chasm is one of the major challenges for Japanese enterprise in the coming years.

But, says Bridges, “We don't have time for companies to work this out.” Based on the Paris Agreement, the UN's Agenda for Sustainable Development, and almost every nation's pledge to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, 2030 is our year of climate reckoning. While Bridges sees Japan's heavy industries and trading companies (who tend to have their irons in various fires) facing the greatest challenges in hitting their targets, most businesses have yet to implement a holistic sustainable strategy.

In 2015 the UN set the SDG paradigm. Companies now must place reasonable yet ambitious 2030 targets that fit within that framework. “The opportunity is there to change something,” Bridges says. “But it has to be an all-hands-on effort across the business community if we are going to do this.”

More info at www.readtheair.jp

MEET THE 2020 ATHLETES:

TAKUYA HANEDA

Japan's groundbreaking canoeist aims to improve upon his bronze medal finish from Rio

Words by Matthew Hernon

It's been over a year since our last Meet the 2020 Athletes article for obvious reasons. The latest and last in our series is Takuya Haneda. Set to turn 34 just before the event begins, he'll be appearing in his fourth Games. In Rio five years ago, he became the first Asian canoeist to win a medal at the Olympics in the men's slalom C1. The color back then was bronze. On home soil, he's hoping to win something even shinier.

It won't be easy. The event has long been dominated by European countries with Slovakian and French paddlers leading the way. This time, though, there's the added factor of the coronavirus impact to consider. It has disrupted training sessions and led to many competitions being canceled. There's also been

the constant threat of the Games being canned. Preparation has been difficult for all athletes and Haneda is no exception. But now, as the event draws near, he's fully focused and raring to go.

Learning to Adapt

"There's been lots to think about in the past 18 months," Haneda tells TW. "Obviously the restrictions have made it that much harder to practice as I would've liked but it's been the same for everyone. The lack of tournaments has been another issue. On top of all that, you've had many people speaking negatively about the Games and sport in general. It's time to forget about that, though and start mentally preparing for the competition."



"You've just got to go all-out and give 100 percent," he adds. "From there, you hope a positive result will follow. As I mentioned, there have been several challenges leading up to the Games, but you need to adapt and figure out the best way to practice in those circumstances. Training's currently going well and I believe I can give it my best when the competition starts."

Coming from a sporting family, Haneda initially took up artistic gymnastics before turning to canoeing at the age of 10. It was the "dynamic power of the torrent and the thrill of a competition where split-seconds mattered," that attracted him to the sport. The fact that his father had been a canoeist was no doubt another reason.

By the time he'd finished high school, Haneda was a canoeing national champion. The biggest problem with training in Japan, though, was that the country didn't have any big artificial whitewater courses. There was also a lack of coaches and training groups. To reach the next level as an athlete, Haneda felt he needed to move abroad.

A New Home

He chose Slovakia, a country steeped in canoeing culture. Since the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1993, it's won nine gold medals at the Summer Olympics, eight of which have come in canoeing. It was a fantastic environment for Haneda to further develop





his skills in the water. The Aichi Prefecture native was just 18 when he first arrived in the capital city of Bratislava. He had to balance training sessions with his studies at Comenius University while also learning the language.

“Slovak was very difficult,” says Haneda. “I didn’t speak any before I went there but had to persevere to be accepted by local communities. You can’t build proper relationships with people without getting to grips with their language. Life became easier as I improved and I have no regrets about moving there. I wanted to aim for the top and the environment in Japan just wasn’t competitive enough.”

In 2008, Haneda qualified for his first Olympics. The Beijing Games ended in disappointment, however, as he was eliminated in the qualifying round of the C1 event. Four years later in London, he made it to the final, finishing in a respectable seventh place. As well as being more experienced, one of the main reasons for the improvement was the fact that he’d started training under coach Milan Kuban. A former teammate of Michal Martikan, the world’s most decorated slalom paddler, Kuban knew what was required for Haneda to challenge the world’s elite paddlers.

Constant Progress

“It’s been wonderful working with Milan,” says Haneda. “In terms of my performances at competitions, there was a significant change after he became my coach. At the Beijing Games I couldn’t compete at all. That said, just being at the Olympics was an important learning experience that benefited me later on. I was able to respond much better to the pressure of the situation in London which gave me lots of confidence.”

Haneda continued to progress steadily after the 2012 Games. He finished fifth at the World Championships in 2014 and triumphed at the Asian Games the same year. At the Olympic test event in Rio, the Japanese man was runner-up. Winning a medal at the Games proper, however, promised to be a tall order.

In the final, he had the second fastest time behind Slovakia’s Matej Benus. However, there were still five of the world’s best paddlers to go. All Haneda could do was sit and wait. France’s Denis Gargaud Chanut went quicker to capture the gold. The other four failed to overtake Haneda. As a result, Japan and Asia had its first medal in canoeing. The question now is can he improve on that on home soil.

Follow TW’s 2020 Athletes

We interviewed 11 Olympic athletes in the buildup to the Games. Here’s when you can watch them in action.

RYO KIYUNA: The Okinawan machine begins his quest for gold in the kata competition on the morning of August 6 with the final later that evening.

SKY BROWN: The child prodigy represents Team GB in the Park Skateboarding competition on August 4.

KENTO MOMOTA: Badminton kicks off on July 24. Momota hopes to play in the final on August 2.

YUTA WAKIMOTO: The first round of men’s keirin is on August 4. Wakimoto is aiming for the final the following day.

YUMI KAJIHARA: The women’s omnium races will take place on August 5. Can Kajihara challenge for a medal?

DAIYA SETO: From July 24–30, Seto will compete in the 200m and 400 individual medleys as well as the 200m butterfly.

TOMOA NARASAKI: World number one climber Narasaki begins his ascent on August 3 with the final on August 5.

YUKAKO KAWAI: The wrestling sister act begins on August 3 with the younger of siblings in action in the –62kg category. The final is the following day.

RISAKO KAWAI: The gold medalist from Rio performs in the lower –57kg category from August 4. She is expected to be in the final on August 5.

SAKI KUMAGAI: Bayern Munich’s new signing leads Nadeshiko Japan out for its first game on July 21 against Canada.

TAKUYA HANEDA: The bronze medalist from Rio takes part in the men’s slalom C1 heats on July 25 with the final the next day.

“I felt a sense of accomplishment in Rio,” recalls Haneda. “All that effort had been worth it and I’d been rewarded. Of course, I hope to do even better this time. To top the podium, you can’t start thinking about specific rivals. It’s about defeating the whole field. That’s my aim in Tokyo.”

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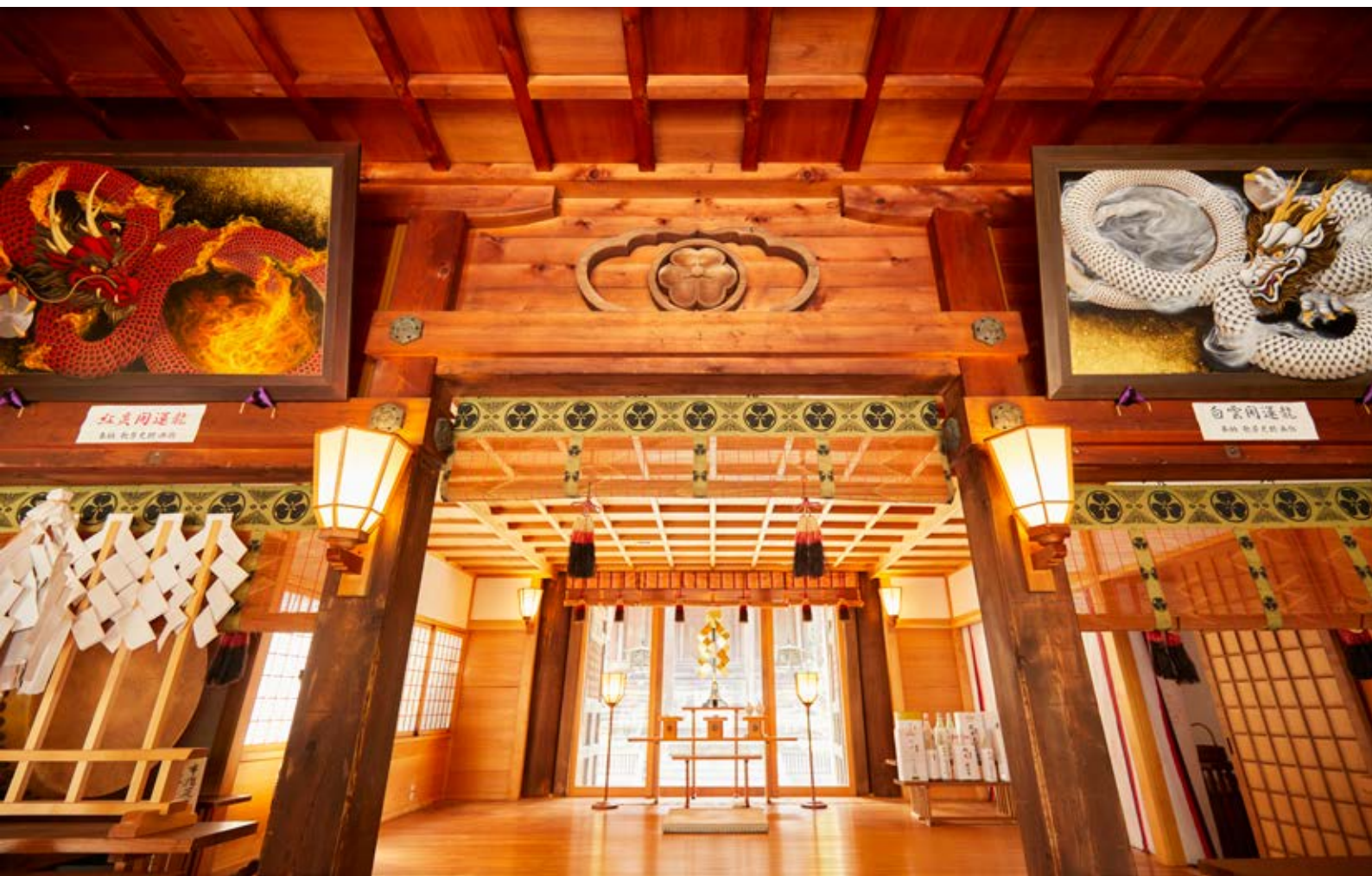
Kyushu by Train

Escape to these iconic locales with assistance from the JR Kyushu Rail Pass



Shonai Shrine:

Small Adventures at a Former Yamagata Castle



Home to lords of old and, more recently, a handsome prince

Words by Lisa Wallin. Photos by Ryoko Ogawa

Walking down the approach to Shonai Shrine is a test in concentration. To the sides, flowers tempt with their intoxicating scents and vivid colors, and – if you do a full 180 – you’ll face Mount Haguro, one of the three holy Dewa Sanzan mountains in Yamagata Prefecture. This gargantuan spiritual powerhouse draws pilgrims from all over the country, though many miss a visit to this diminutive shrine in central Tsuruoka city. But, as they say, size isn’t everything. Sometimes it’s the smaller spots that offer the most memorable experiences.

Shonai Shrine: City Oasis

Built on the ruins of Tsurugaoka Castle, the former stronghold is now a park with one of the nation’s top cherry blossom spots. In late April, 730 cherry trees explode into flurries of baby pink and snow-white petals, which flutter onto the moat, creating a carpet of pink on the surface. In May, wooden trellises spill over with drippings of lilac wisteria. Behind the ayame iris garden is the takifuji – a wisteria waterfall. This giant vine stands 20 meters tall, and when a breeze blows through, it creates the illusion of a rippling flow of lavender-colored water. With each season comes a new discovery, both in the park and the shrine precinct within.



At the shrine's entrance, the purification font is filled with seasonal blossoms. The floating petals perform two roles: one, they offer an opportunity for stunning photos and two, they discourage people from using the fountain for the ritual purification of hands and mouth. For now, hand sanitizer will have to do.

The New Kid on the Block

As shrines go, Shonai Shrine is a relatively recent addition, founded about 140 years ago. Meiji period leaders ordered the samurai class to be dissolved, and all castles – with some exceptions – were dismantled. Tsurugaoka Castle was taken apart and, in its place, Shonai Shrine was constructed. The old castle's roof tiles, wooden boards and even pillars found new homes in the shrine's worship hall and other buildings. The former head of the Sakai clan was enshrined here, a testament to the family's approximately 250 years of prosperous ruling of the Shonai region. The shrine's emblem – the leaves of a creeping wood sorrel plant – is borrowed from the Sakai family. Nearby Chido Museum and Chidokan, the old Shonai domain academy, offer more insights into the daily life of samurai in the region.



Getting the Word Out

Drawing people to a smaller shrine, even when it's conveniently located, isn't always easy. Wakako Ishihara, one of Shonai Shrine's Shinto priests, posts daily behind-the-scenes pictures on social media. "At first, the shrine didn't even have a website. It was hard for people to know the history of the shrine before coming here and it was difficult for people to find out about us. I think a lot of shrines suffer from people only coming for important early life ceremonies and annual events, like hatsumode. I wanted people to know about us, but also let them feel closer by showing them festival preparations and sharing new information."



Oji: The Cat that Lived a Million Lives

Ishihara got an unexpected boost to her social media campaign in 2017, when she posted a picture of Oji (that's "prince" in Japanese) the shrine cat, lounging on the carefully raked karensui dry landscape garden. The reaction was instantaneous, racking up over 100,000 likes and more than 50,000 shares. "I uploaded it because I thought it was cute, not thinking much of it at the time. But soon we got calls from TV stations and newspapers from all over Japan. They wanted to recreate the scene, but as he was a cat, he was quite capricious. Sometimes he wouldn't appear at all, and if he was around, we couldn't tell him what to do," she recalls.

Oji became a popular fixture at the shrine and even had his own business card. Sadly, he passed away in early March 2020 at the impressive age of 14. His memory, though, lives on. Visitors can ask for one of his cards at the main reception desk and the shrine has held photo exhibitions so that his devil-may-care attitude and striking good looks can live on. Ishihara says, "More people came to see Oji than any of the shrine staff. Even now after he's gone, people smile when they talk about their memories of him. We even get asked when Oji the Second will make an appearance. If there is an opportunity then maybe..."

Where to Find Shonai Shrine: Explore the grounds in person, or find out more about Shonai Shrine's activities through their social media posts.

Address: 4-1 Babacho, Tsuruoka city, Yamagata Prefecture

Nearest Bus Stops: Tsuruoka-shiyakusho or Uchikawadori

Website: jinjahan.com | **Twitter:** @jinjahan0817 | **Instagram:** @shonaijinja

This has been especially important during the Covid-19 pandemic. Ishihara continues, "There are many people who want to come visit but can't, or who can't return to their hometown. So, I try to share a piece of this place through photos on social media. When the weather changes, you experience the shrine in that moment. But if you can't come, you would normally miss this."

Ishihara also shares images and videos of seasonal goshuin shrine stamps, each one a colorful representation of a timely flower or event. One of the most popular themes is of the mizu-omikuiji fortune slips. Upon first appearance they look like blank pieces of paper, but by dipping them in a bowl of water – often decorated with stones or flowers – your level of luck and advice for the future gradually appears, as if by magic.

Stay in Style at Shonai Hotel Suiden Terrasse

Designed by lauded architect Shigeru Ban, Shonai Hotel Suiden Terrasse's simple minimalist design creates a seamless connection with the environment around it. In early summer, the surrounding

water-filled rice fields create reflections, making it seem as if the hotel is floating above them. Inside, wooden panels and furniture envelope you in a luxurious warmth, while the floor-to-ceiling windows keep the natural surroundings close. Spend your night relaxing at either the sake bar or sake lounge, both of which serve local brews, or in the curated library spaces that boast about 2,000 books on design and more. The restaurant prides itself on serving farm-to-table seasonal ingredients and regional wines to match. Or, relax in the spa area with its hot spring baths and its most recent addition: genuine Finnish-style saunas.

More info: suiden-terrasse.yamagata-design.com



SPORTS PARADISE



Miyazaki Prefecture is more than sea resorts and mountain escapes

Words by Yeo Kwee Chuan

Iconic waterfalls, untouched nature, and Shinto legends: this is all known about Miyazaki Prefecture. Thanks to its tropical location and warm seas, this oasis on the east coast of Kyushu is also a surfer's paradise known for some of the best waves in Japan.

Miyazaki's sunny weather also makes it a sought-after location as a training camp for professional sports teams and Olympic athletes. Tokyo's Olympic and Paralympics triathlon pre-training camp will be held here. Also, teams from nine countries, for six sports ranging from boxing to women's football, are expected to arrive in Miyazaki.

Throw into the mix the prefecture's burgeoning reputation as a hotspot for martial arts aficionados and what you get is more than a peaceful and beautiful tourist destination.

Surf's Up

Miyazaki ranks third among Japan's prefectures in terms of average temperature and sunlight hours. Its waters are a warm 20 degree Celsius all year round, making them ideal for surfing even in winter. Stretching approximately 400km, its coastline offers a wide range of conditions for surfers of all levels.

For those who can't wait to suit up, look

no further than Kisakihama Beach, about 10 minutes away from Miyazaki Airport by car. It has hosted many international competitions, including the 2019 ISA World Surfing Games and the qualifying rounds for the 2020 Summer Olympics.

Aoshima Beach is another popular spot on the Nichinan Coast. This shallow beach's gentle waves are suitable for beginners. Non-surfers can enjoy other beach activities at the ANA Holiday Inn Resort Miyazaki, or check out the famous Oni-no-Sentakuita (devil's washboard) coastal rock formation.

Okuragahama Beach is a 4km-long, pine tree-covered, white sand beach. Officially recognized as one of Japan's 100 best beaches, it was the first Asian venue for the ISA World Junior Surf Championships in 2017.

Advanced surfers adore Kyushu's southernmost beach, Koigaura Beach, for its uncrowded, ultramarine waters. Meanwhile, the waves roll onto shore at a slower pace at Kaguchihama Beach in Takanabe, making it an



ideal spot for beginners.

Takanabe is also the hometown of skateboarder Sky Brown, who at 12 years old (as of June 2021), is set to become the UK's youngest ever Summer Olympian after being listed as one of 20 women's qualifiers for the Tokyo Games. Brown is also a pro surfer who picked up the sport when she was two. "Miyazaki's my favorite place on the planet," she previously told TW. "The weather's usually warm and the waves are great all year."

Martial Arts Mecca

Miyazaki is increasingly coming under the spotlight as a Mecca for Japanese martial arts, to which it has been linked in ancient folklore.



to convey a holistic experience of the samurai spirit. (Due to the pandemic, the tour is currently only available for Miyazaki residents.)

Kyudo is the Japanese martial art of archery, and is also embedded in the history of Miyazaki. England's rugby team tried their hand at kyudo while holding training camp in Miyazaki ahead of the 2019 Rugby World Cup.

Craftsmen in the city of Miyakonojo established a manufacturing method of archery bows in the early Edo Era, and at its peak 20 to 30 artisans made 200 to 300 handmade, two-meter-long, bamboo bows per day. Four Miyakonojo bow masters continue to operate workshops in this bucolic region of Miyazaki.

Judo, another form of budo, is also synonymous with Miyazaki. Introduced as an Olympic sport for men at the 1964 Tokyo Games, judo is practically a part of Miyazaki's DNA, and prefectural tournaments are held

It is said that a divine revelation at the vermilion-colored Udo Jingu Shrine on the Nichinan Coast at the end of the 15th century led to the creation of kage ryu, one of Japan's original schools of swordsmanship. It's no coincidence, perhaps, that Japan's top-ranking swordsmith today resides in Miyazaki.

While you'll be hard-pressed to find real swordplay today, a form of budo (Japanese martial arts) called kendo is thriving in Miyazaki. Descended from swordsmanship, practitioners dress in protective armor and spar with each other using bamboo swords.

Miyazaki is a center for the production of kendo equipment and many kendo dojos can be found here. For visitors who want to dip their toes into the kendo world, check out Feel Samurai Tours, which has a wide lineup of curated experiences, including a tea ceremony,



here annually. Kosei Inoue, who won gold in the men's under-100kg class at the 2000 Summer Olympics by winning every single match with ippon (the equivalent of a knock-out punch), is a Miyazaki native.

Inoue is one of four men to win three golds at the World and All Japan Championships. The celebrated Olympian is now Japan's national judo team coach, and will deliver the Olympic Oath on behalf of coaches at the Tokyo 2020 Opening Ceremony.

Back to Nature

Miyazaki is also a great place to hit the trail, or boat, and explore rugged nature. A must-see is the famous Takachiho Gorge. The sheer cliffs and distinctive rock layers rise from the Gokase River, forming a stunning background for the dramatic Manainotaki waterfall. This designated natural monument is also known as a "power spot" of spiritual energy.

Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park, one of Japan's first national parks, is believed to be where sun goddess Amaterasu's grandson first



made his entry into Japan. Volcanic mountain ranges, caldera lakes and hiking trails, the park is a paradise for avid hikers. Start exploring from the educational Ebino Eco Museum Center, where you can set off toward the summit of Mount Ebino. The observatory at the top of the mountain offers great views of Kagoshima's famous Mount Sakurajima.

Afterwards, head straight to Maruo Onsen – the largest hot spring town on the lower slopes of Kirishima – and soak up Miyazaki's goodness. Located nearby on the Ebino Plateau, Hotel Pico Lanai recently reopened after a renewal project. You could use some pampering after all that surfing, martial arts and outdoor adventure.

Access: At JR Miyazaki Airport Station purchase a JR Kyushu Discover Rail Pass
More info: visitmiyazaki.com

KYUSHU BY TRAIN



Discover Japan's southern region with the JR Kyushu Rail Pass

Words by Lisandra Moor



The ancient volcanoes of Kumamoto, the enchanting hot springs of Oita, mountain escapes in Miyazaki, the mystical islands of Kagoshima and the nightlife of Fukuoka – it is all so enticing, yet the entire island of Kyushu may seem unattainable in one trip.

The JR Kyushu Rail Pass, usually reserved for inbound tourists, is now available for Japan residents with foreign passports. Thanks to this limited time offer, foreign nationals living in Japan can easily access all of the wonders of Kyushu.

Dine on authentic Hakata ramen in Fukuoka, or Kumamoto's basashi, or "cherry blossom meat," a delicacy of raw horse meat served in a sashimi-like presentation. Explore Saga's traditional ceramics workshops in the pottery towns of Karatsu, Arita and Imari. (Pro tip: Most shops will ship anywhere in Japan.) Alternatively, check out Nagasaki's European-themed theme park Huis Ten Bosch, which celebrates the historic relations between Japan and the Netherlands, or ride the Umisachi Yamasachi train down the coast of Miyazaki and sightsee from the comfort of a stylish car.

Getting Around Using the JR Kyushu Rail Pass

When traveling in Japan, a considerable amount of the budget is usually spent on bus tickets, train fares and shinkansen rides. Food can be found cheap (depending on your affinity) and there are tons of affordable accommodation options, but saving some yen on transportation is difficult. Newly available to foreign residents this July, the JR Kyushu Rail Pass allows you to travel to your heart's content for a fraction of the cost. Take this as a sign to finally plan the trip you've been putting off.

There are three types of passes to choose from: The Northern Kyushu Area Pass, the Southern Kyushu Area Pass and the All Kyushu Area Pass.

With the Northern Kyushu Area Pass, travelers can visit Fukuoka, Saga and Nagasaki prefectures as well as some parts of Kumamoto and Oita prefectures. If it's your first time in Kyushu and you want to hit the bigger cities and tourist areas, this is the pass for you. The Southern Kyushu Area Pass encompasses Miyazaki and Kagoshima prefectures as well as some parts of Kumamoto and Oita prefectures. If what you're looking for is hiking trails or simply a more mellow place to relax, this is where you should head to. Finally, for the ambitious of us who want to leave no road untraveled, there is the All Kyushu Area Pass. This pass covers every prefecture mentioned above, allowing you to go from Fukuoka to Kagoshima and back.

How to Purchase the JR Kyushu Rail Pass

PRICE BREAKDOWN:

Northern Kyushu Area Pass:

¥9,500 for 3 days or ¥11,000 for 5 days

Southern Kyushu Area Pass:

¥8,000 for 3 days

All Kyushu Area Pass:

¥16,000 for 3 days, ¥18,500 for 5 days or ¥20,000 for 7 days

All three passes can be used to ride most local and limited express trains as well as the shinkansen in their respective regions. For details and exceptions or to learn more about each pass at www.jrkyushu.co.jp/english/kyushurailpass_limited

Note: This offer is available until March 31, 2022. The pass can only be purchased at the following JR stations: Hakata, Kokura, Mojiko, Saga, Nagasaki, Sasebo, Beppu, Oita, Kumamoto, Kagoshima-chuo, Miyazaki and Miyazaki Airport.



GUIDE



KAWS HOLIDAY, 2019 © KAWS, photograph by @hirokinography courtesy AllRightsReserved

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The Art World

KAWS launches his first large-scale exhibition in Japan

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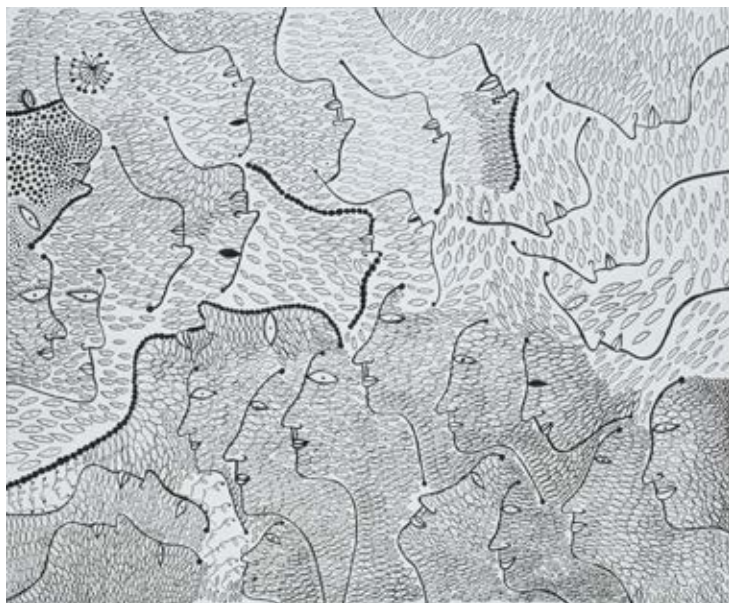
TW Social

How our social page regulars are staying connected while staying safe

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Agenda

What's on in Tokyo during July and August, plus events to enjoy from home



Yayoi Kusama, WOMEN IN THE MIDNIGHT, 2005, Silkscreen on canvas, 130.3 x 162 cm, © YAYOI KUSAMA

Midway Between Mystery and Symbol: Yayoi Kusama's Monochrome

So much of the Yayoi Kusama lore has been about her pumpkins and polka dots, and the vivid color mixes that enliven these motifs. For whatever reason, her monochromes get less attention. Monochrome is a timeless technique, spanning from the ink wash paintings of ancient China to the upheavals of abstract expressionism in the 20th century. In 1959, Kusama debuted her painting series *Infinity Nets*. To match the repetition of a single pattern or brushstroke, many of the *Infinity Nets* are minimal in palette. Her experiments in monochrome traverse mediums, from her soft sculptures of white or silver to her fantastic and mesmerizing installation "Flower Obsession." Figure and ground bleed into each other. (Be aware that tickets must be bought in advance.) **Yayoi Kusama Museum** Until December 26 yayoikusamamuseum.jp

THE ART WORLD

Our pick of the city's best exhibitions

Compiled by Taylor Stewart and Lisa Wallin



KAWS NEW TURN, 2020 © KAWS, photograph by Farzad Owrang, Shanghai Powerlong Museum Collection

KAWS TOKYO FIRST

Like Kusama, KAWS has a certain lore surrounding his work. You might have spotted his cast of characters on a Uniqlo tee, modeled off of pop-cultural idols. Usually we see his characters in states of distress, consoling each other. From graphic paintings to colossal environmental installations –



KAWS Brian Donnelly photo: Nils Mueller for Vertical

such as a 28-meter floating figure on Hong Kong Harbor – KAWS is ever ambitious. This is his first large-scale exhibition in Japan, and will trace his creative development across the ages, featuring pieces from his own private collection. The exhibition will even feature AR (Augmented Reality) works and interactive installations. It is an aim of the exhibition to emphasize KAWS' continuing cultural force.

Mori Arts Center Gallery July 16 to October 11 www.kaws-tokyo-first.jp/#



Katsushika Hokusai, from *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*, Joushū Ushibori, Hagi Uragami Museum, Uragami Memorial Collection

All Sorts Of Hokusai

Katsushika Hokusai, the Edo-period painter of that iconic maritime view of Mount Fuji, constantly challenged himself throughout his 70-year career as an ukiyo-e artist, to form one of the most remarkable and textured oeuvres in the world. A special exhibition at Tokyo Midtown Hall in Roppongi brings together most every single picture and page of his masterpieces: *Hokusai Manga* (a collection of sketches that range from landscapes to cats and supernatural creatures), *Thirty-six Views of Mt Fuji* (the famous woodblock print series) and *One Hundred Views of Mt Fuji* (a series of illustrated books furthering his spiritual exploration of the mountain). This ambitious project allows us to see the development of his visual tools. We will also see rare prints like the first copy of "Ushibori, Hitachi Province," a small cargo boat in the riverside district Itako. **Tokyo Midtown Hall, Roppongi** July 22 to September 17 hokusai2021.jp

EN ROUTE VERS L'IMPRESSIONNISME: Peintures françaises du musée des Beaux-Arts de Reims

Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot painted somewhere between the Arcadian tastes of Neo-Classical painting; and the sensual effects and plein-air principle of Impressionism. To many, he was the progenitor of the latter movement. This exhibition traces the trajectory of 19th-century French landscape painting, from Corot to its peak during Impressionism. From a selection of masterpieces from the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Reims, we are able to see the growth of landscape from an inferior lower-class genre to an artistic and societal cornerstone. In addition to the SOMPO's impressive permanent collection – which includes Gauguin and even van Gogh's "Sunflowers" – you will view some 50 oil paintings and 20 woodblock prints from the realist Barbizon school and such luminaries as Michallon, Courbet, Pissarro and Monet. Advanced reservation is recommended. For safety purposes, museum visits are divided into four sessions.

SOMPO Museum of Art Until September 12 www.sompo-museum.org/en/exhibitions/2020/musees-reims-2021



Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot, *Le Coup de vent* 1865-70 Inv. 899.16.23, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Reims © MBA Reims 2019/Photo : C.Devleeschauwer



Haven't joined our online book club yet? Here's what we're reading next and where to find us

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.

WHAT WE'RE READING NOW

In July and August, we touch on memories, misfits and outcasts. July's pick is a masterful short story collection, while August provides us with a lens into the life of a bullied youth.



July

Things Remembered and Things Forgotten by multi-award-winning author Kyoko Nakajima is a collection of 10 carefully crafted stories about men and women haunted by memories lost and memories kept. Nakajima's deceptively simple prose effortlessly carries the weight of the heavy topics covered. Translated by Ginny Tapley Takemori and Ian MacDonald.

August

Heaven is Mieko Kawakami's latest masterpiece to be translated into English. Like *Breast and Eggs*, this novel is translated by Sam Bett and David Boyd. Emotionally devastating at times, the story follows Eyes and his friend-in-exile Kojima, both bullied by their peers. But is the creation of community based on othering truly a boon for them both or is it at best a tenuous connection easily torn?

Don't forget to share your thoughts with us by tagging us at @twbookclub on Instagram and @twbookclubjp on Twitter! You'll also find us on Facebook at facebook.com/TWBookClub

TW'social

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



From left, Ms Mina Uchida, Akino Kaneko, Tom Wilson, counsellor public affairs, and Greg Ralph, minister-counsellor – political, enjoy the cherry blossoms at the Australian Embassy's garden during Media Day.

From left, Kyoko Spector, Kazuko Nakajima, Matelda Starace, Hiroko M. Ohiwa and Akira Nakajima at the Charity Bazaar at the Italian Embassy residence. All proceeds from the bazaar were donated to Saint Francisco Children's Home in Tokyo and Sayuri Home in Oita Prefecture.



From left, Mariza Hanna-Ishii, artist Tanja Houwerzijl and Madeleine Umezaka attend Houwerzijl's solo exhibition, LAYERED BEAUTY, at Place M in Shinjuku.

From left, Japan and Hollywood actor Sho Ikushima, his father, former TBS broadcaster Hiroshi Ikushima, Backstage Pass producer Daniel L. Smith and Japanese actor Hiroshi Fujioka at the Tokyo Skytree to celebrate the launch of its "Tree Of Hope." Global audiences can contribute a ribbon through social media using the hashtag #WiSHRIBBON.



Fashion model and designer Mariè Desmarais (front) poses with finalists from a contest held on the online platform Showroom to select a brand ambassador for Mariè's PMD Fashion. From left, Kurumi, Iyen, Nana, Erina, Rin and Fumi. The group also participated in the filming of the Aurora Borealis Entertainment documentary, "Mariè Desmarais Already Famous."



Mexican Ambassador Melba Pría and Italian Ambassador Giorgio Starace at the Charity Bazaar at the Italian Embassy residence.

Japanese painter Toyohiko Nishijima, left, and flower arrangement artist Shogo Kariyazaki collaborated for their exhibition, titled A Day with Flowers, held at Mitsukoshi department store in Nihonbashi.





Rose Crusaders founders and organizers of the Mrs. International and Ms. Fabulous pageants, Takashi Ito and wife Sakurako Ito (former Mrs. Japan International 2015), at the 2021 event at the Courtyard by Marriott Tokyo Ginza Hotel.



Friends of Dewi Sukarno attended roadshow day for A Dog Named Palma at Human Trust Cinema in Shibuya.



Romanian Ambassador Tatiana Iosiper at the Romanian Embassy: "As I am leaving Tokyo upon completion of my mission as Ambassador of Romania to Japan, I recall my brief encounters with legendary Bill Hersey. I met him at various diplomatic receptions and I remember well his unique style and witty conversation. Tokyo Weekender has been a mandatory lecture for me ever since. Thank you, TW, for the irresistible immersion in the exciting Tokyo lifestyle. I wish you all the best and I will continue to keep in touch from wherever my diplomatic career will take me. Sayonara Tokyo Weekender, sayonara Japan!"

Gordana Labuda (bottom right) shows her latest silver and gold jewelry collection at her home atelier in Minami Azabu. Here with daughter Ester (left), Mariza Hanna-Ishii (top right), and her daughter Sarina (center top).



From left, Madeleine Umewaka, event organizer Mic Teno, Tunisian Ambassador Mohamed Elloumi and his wife Houada at the Grand Family Concert 2021 performed by violinist Narimichi Kawabata at Kiou Hall.

Executive producer and Ceremony President Tsukasa Shiga, left, with Kamui Kobayashi and Fabio Oka, attend roadshow day for the film A Dog Named Palma at Human Trust Cinema in Shibuya.



Assistant Conductor Teppei Nakata, left, and Tokyo Sinfonia founder Robert Rýker at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan, where Tokyo Sinfonia hosted a dinner concert, performing the "Austrian Serenade."



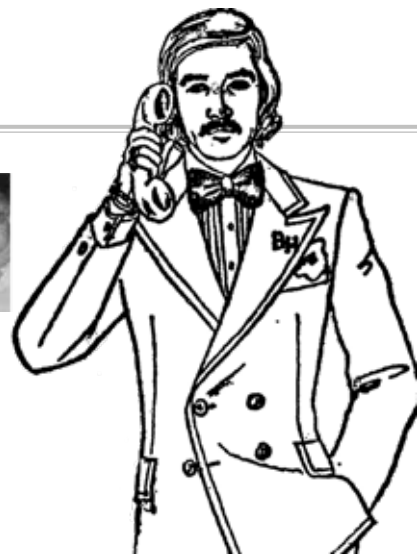
Sergey I. Ykimets, senior counsellor at the Russian Embassy, supports the Russian-Japanese co-production, A Dog Named Palma, which premiered on May 28 throughout Japan.

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.



AGENDA

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

DRUM TAO Mangekyo Project 2021 – W-1



Internationally-acclaimed wadaiko drum group DRUM TAO is back with another exhilarating show for the summer.

🏠 Lumine O 📅 Jul 22–Aug 9
 📺 rainbow.jacuzzi.lost 💰 ¥8,500



Eclipse: TEDxWasedaU Event

Renowned speakers shed light on the true gravity of the social changes in this past year at TEDxWasedaU's 10th anniversary event.

🏠 Online 📅 Jul 18 💰 Free



Nirohito Ishii: The Garden of Garando

Butoh dancer Nirohito Ishii explores the concept of life, death and the passage of time in his collaborative spatial installation-cum-performance.

🏠 Gallery Shell102 📅 Jul 25–Aug 1
 📺 donates.liquids.downward 💰 ¥500 | Performance: ¥3,000 | Workshop: ¥10,000

Splendour XR Music Festival

Teleport across all stages of Australia's biggest music festival online, including performances by Japanese artists Band-Maid and Millennium Parade.



🏠 Online 📅 Jul 24–25
 💰 One-day ticket: ¥2,184 | Two-day ticket: ¥3,822

73rd Lake Suwa Fireworks Festival

Though the large-scale fireworks show was canceled, this two-week festival will display 10-minute daily illuminations that can be watched on YouTube.



🏠 Lake Suwa Park 📅 Aug 1–15 💰 Free
 📺 game.blossom.bundles

Ballet for Children 2021 Ryugu: The Turtle Princess

Vibrant stage design and mesmerizing ballet choreography by Kaiji Moriyama bring this classic Japanese fairy tale to life.

🏠 New National Theatre, Tokyo 📅 Jul 24–27
 💰 General admission: ¥5,500 | Children under 12: ¥2,750
 📺 camped.nail.workouts

TOKYO WEEKENDER

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"A Forum for Foreigners in Japan"

September 24, 1982

SAIPAN WEEKENDER

...is the guy with the great tan. He leaves tonight after work and catches one of our two daily flights back when he's ready to call it a weekend.
Any weekend.

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TIP '82-'83 season begins Oct. 9

'Little Mary Sunshine' kicks off exciting, bold slate of 7 productions

HURRY! HURRY! HURRY! Make plans now to attend Tokyo International Players' (TIP) fifth annual Pre-season Party. As in seasons past, this happy event will give the Tokyo foreign community a chance to see its community theater strut its stuff in preparation for another entertaining series of comedies, dramas and classics designed to delight the English-speaking theater-going community.

TIP season subscriptions will be on sale at the pre-season party, and there will be complimentary wine plus the group's rendition of "Little Mary Sunshine." This musical spoof, a playreading fully staged, costumed and choreographed, may remind TIP playgoers of last season's popular preview play, "Dames at Sea." In fact, the two shows share the same multi-talented director, **Judy Sackheim**, and choreographer, **Shuny Palmisano**.

"Little Mary Sunshine," written by Rick Besoyan, has cast of 11 delightful characters, including "Kadota" indians and forest rangers. Little Mary and Captain Big Jim are madly in love. Little Mary keeps busy running the Colorado Inn, purchased with her homemade cookie profits, while Big Jim must see that justice is done by capturing the infamous outlaw Indian Yellow Feather. **WILL IT ALL WORK OUT IN THE END?** There's only one performance to find out... Saturday, Oct. 9, at 7:45 p.m. at the Tokyo American Club.

Admission, including complimentary wine, will be ¥1,500. Remember! Although all TIP auditions and performances are held at the Tokyo American Club, **it is not necessary to be a club member** to participate in TIP productions, either onstage or off! Everyone is welcome to join! The doors open at 7 p.m. and the community is invited to come early to get into the party atmosphere. No reservations needed.

(Continued on Page 5)



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