

UK-Japan 21st Century Group 22nd Meeting

The 22nd Annual Meeting of the UK-Japan 21st Century Group was held at Ware in Hertfordshire from 16 to 18 March 2006. It was co-chaired by the Hon Yasuhisa Shiozaki, Member of the House of Representatives and Senior Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the Rt Hon Lord Cunningham of Felling.



The 22nd Annual Meeting gets under way

The Group, originally known as the UK-Japan 2000 Group, was established in 1985 to promote Japan-UK cooperation, by agreement of the Prime Ministers of the day, Yasuhiro Nakasone and Margaret Thatcher. Members include MPs, ex-diplomats, business people, academics and journalists. Meetings are held annually, alternately in Japan and the UK. Recommendations adopted through discussions are customarily submitted to both Prime Ministers.

Before the meeting, the Japanese delegation and Lord Cunningham called on the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and the Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, to whom Mr Shiozaki presented letters from the Japanese Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. Noting the excellent state of the Japan-UK relationship, both sides emphasised the scope for cooperation in multilateral contexts, notably on aid to Africa, counter-terrorism, Iraq, the WTO, the NPT and UN issues. The rise of China and India was also discussed. Mr Blair expressed continued support for Japan's bid for a permanent seat on the Security Council, and looked forward to the Japanese chairmanship of the G8 in 2008. He was most appreciative of the Japanese contribution in Iraq.


At the outset the Co-Chairmen explained that in view of the excellent state of the bilateral relationship, and in the absence of any strictly bilateral issues on which the Group might offer recommendations, they had approved an agenda focussing on topics of global or regional interest.

The discussions on **Japan and East Asia** centred on Japan's relationship with China. There is puzzlement in Japan that a solution to the present

difficulties is so elusive. A more sophisticated approach will have to be adopted: there is no alternative to constructive debate.

On **Energy**, the participants felt that the two governments would inevitably have to persuade public opinion of the advantages of nuclear power and of the need to conserve energy. The Group reiterated its recommendations from 2005 that there was much to be gained from UK-Japanese cooperation on nuclear issues and that closer dialogue be sought on technology, on recruitment and training of students in nuclear engineering, and on negative public perceptions.

In both countries, the **Movement of Peoples** is a sensitive issue that has risen to the top of the political agenda. It was felt that in Japan, new attitudes on immigration are urgently required as a result of changing demographics, and that the Government should establish policies on immigration and migrant labour. It was recommended that the authorities in the two countries share their experiences and that a study be undertaken to identify the key issues.

All agreed that it was in the interests of the UK and Japan to engage **India and China** in their rise to world power status, and to encourage them to contribute constructively to international institutions and respect international norms and agreements. It was agreed that vibrant Indian and Chinese economies would be of great benefit. Some participants felt that the Indian political and legal framework offered better economic stability and investment protection than the Chinese. There were calls on the Japanese side to expand intellectual collaboration and offer more scholarships to students from both countries. 

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January a busy month for high-level visits from Japan

As many as six high-level Japanese Government officials made trips to London in January. Two of the visits are described below. In addition, the middle of the month saw the visit of Mr Kouki Chuma, Minister of State for Administrative Reform, Regulatory Reform, Special Zones for Structural Reform and Regional Revitalisation; and that of Ms Akiko Yamanaka, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs. Then came Mr Iwao Matsuda, Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy, Food Safety and Information Technology. He was followed at the end of the month by Mr Katsuyoshi Kaneda, Senior Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Education Minister Kosaka visits the UK



Minister Kosaka delivers his presentation at the World Seminar for Education Ministers

Mr Kenji Kosaka, Japan's Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, visited the UK between January 8 and 11. During his stay in London, Minister Kosaka attended the World Seminar for Education Ministers entitled 'Moving Young Minds', which focused on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and e-learning. At the seminar, he gave a presentation on the use and future of IT in Japanese schools and engaged in a lively exchange of views with other participants on the digital divide and ICT education in schools.

Minister Kosaka also held individual talks focusing on education reform in Japan and the UK with the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, Ruth Kelly, the Minister of State for Schools, Jacqui Smith, and Home Secretary Charles Clarke.

During a visit to the British Museum, Minister



Secretary Kelly and Minister Kosaka

Kosaka met the Chairman Sir John Boyd, with whom he discussed the promotion of Japan-UK museum exchanges as well as museum management. 

Defence Ministers strengthen Ties

From January 10 to 12 Mr Fukushima Nukaga, Japan's Minister of State for Defence, visited the UK, where he held talks with British Secretary of State for Defence John Reid. The last visit by a Japanese Defence Minister to the UK took place in January 2004.

The two ministers exchanged views on a number of topics, including the deployment of

Japan's Self-Defence Forces in Iraq, the situation in Afghanistan and the issue of nuclear development in Iran. Secretary of State Reid expressed gratitude to Japan for the supply of fuel to British vessels in the Indian Ocean by Japan's Maritime Self-Defence Force ships. Mr Reid also referred to the close cooperation between the UK and Japan in Iraq.

Minister Nukaga noted that Japan's Self-Defence Forces in Iraq were achieving success in the field of humanitarian assistance, thanks to cooperation with their British counterparts. He expressed the hope that the two countries would continue to work together in Iraq.

Regarding the promotion of the Japan-UK defence dialogue, Minister Nukaga and Secretary of State Reid agreed to conduct further exchanges of views between senior officials and also at working level.

During his visit to the UK, Minister Nukaga delivered an address at the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies (RUSI) on Japan's defence policy and its international peace cooperation activities. Mr Nukaga outlined the change in security situation in the region surrounding Japan following the end of the Cold War and after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. He also touched on Japan's new



Minister Nukaga delivers his address at RUSI

National Defence Programme Guidelines, which were adopted in December 2004, and emphasised that Japan would accelerate proactive participation in international peace cooperation activities. On the subject of China, Mr Nukaga commented that it should not be regarded as a threat to Japan but as a competitive partner. 



Minister Nukaga with his counterpart Secretary Reid

New Japan-UK tax convention signed




Ambassador Nogami and Paymaster General Primarolo signing the convention

On February 2, a new Japan-UK convention for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income and on capital gains was signed in London by Ambassador Nogami and the British Paymaster General, the Rt Hon Dawn Primarolo, MP.

Since the previous convention entered into force in 1970, the close economic relationship which has developed between Japan and the UK had rendered

some aspects of it inappropriate. The two governments had therefore agreed to begin negotiations on a new convention to replace it and, in July 2005, agreement was reached in principle on a draft version.

The new convention represents a comprehensive revision of the previous one. In particular, reflecting the close economic ties between the two countries and in order to encourage investment in both directions, the rate of tax in the source country in the form of dividends, interest and royalties has been drastically reduced. In addition royalties, interest received by financial institutions and inter-company dividends (with certain limits) have been exempted from tax in the source country.

The signing of the new convention is expected to facilitate an increase in cross-border investment in both directions. Japanese companies with operations in the UK should benefit accordingly, while British companies will have more incentive to invest in Japan, which should have a positive impact on the economies of both countries. 

Sir John Houghton awarded Japan Prize



On January 12, the Science and Technology Foundation of Japan announced that Sir John Theodore Houghton, Honorary Scientist at the Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research and former Chief Executive of the Meteorological Office, had been

named as a Laureate for the 2006 Japan Prize.

The Japan Prize is an international award given to people who have made original and outstanding achievements in science and technology and contributed to the peace and prosperity of humankind. Laureates receive a certificate of merit and a commemorative medal, and there is also a monetary award of ¥50 million in each prize category.

Sir John is the sixth Briton to be awarded the Japan Prize. As the Laureate in the 'Global Change' category, he is being recognised for pioneering research on atmospheric structure and composition based on his satellite observation technology as well as for the promotion of international assessments of climate change.

On hearing about the award, Sir John commented: "It was a really wonderful surprise to learn that I had been awarded the Japan Prize for 2006. I feel honoured indeed to receive such a prestigious award and look forward to travelling to Japan in April for the award ceremony."

Further information can be found at www.japanprize.jp/English.htm. 


Toyo Ito awarded RIBA Royal Gold Medal

On February 15, the Japanese architect Toyo Ito was presented with the Royal Gold Medal by Jack Pringle, President of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), in London. Given in recognition of a lifetime's work, the Royal Gold Medal is approved personally by Her Majesty the

Queen and is awarded annually to a person or group of people whose influence on architecture has been truly international.

Mr Ito is respected worldwide for his experiments with architecture, technology and light. He is best known for his Sendai Médiathèque (2001) in Japan and, in the UK, for the Serpentine Gallery Pavilion (2002). These works reflect Mr Ito's quest for "a dynamism that captures the momentary balance achieved during movement". Fascinated by the immense possibilities opened up by computer technology, Mr Ito is driven by a mission to create new, organic buildings, which explore their relationship with nature and the environment.

Presenting the award, Mr Pringle said: "Toyo Ito has been an inspiration for generations of architects worldwide since his work started to receive international acclaim in the 1970s. For thirty years he has been a leading figure in architecture and I am delighted that he has accepted the Royal Gold Medal."

Mr Ito is the fourth Japanese architect to be awarded the RIBA Royal Gold Medal. 




Toyo Ito and Jack Pringle after the presentation

Japanese pharmaceutical firm to invest £75m

Eisai, one of the world's top 20 pharmaceutical companies and the market leader in Japan, is to build a centre for its European operations at the Hatfield Business Park in Hertfordshire at a cost of £75 million. The site will include Eisai's European HQ, basic research, clinical development and manufacturing centres, and the UK sales and marketing operations, and will ultimately create more than 500 jobs. Construction is scheduled to start in 2006, and production and research facilities to begin operations in 2008.

At a press conference held on January 24, Haruo Naito CBE, President and CEO of Eisai, explained: "Eisai believes that integrating all functions at a single site improves quality, efficiency and productivity, and allows us to contribute to improving the lives of patients and their families by developing medicines as quickly as possible. The creation of a 'seamless value chain' is at the heart of our decision to bring together our European operations at a single site in the UK."

Ian Pearson, Minister of State for Trade, commented: "I am delighted that Eisai has decided to grow its UK business in such a pioneering fashion, and that it has located its manufacturing here, the first Japanese pharmaceutical company to do so." 




TOSHIBA to buy Westinghouse from BNFL

On February 6, Toshiba Corporation announced that it had agreed to acquire BNFL USA Group Inc and Westinghouse Electric UK Limited ('Westinghouse') from British Nuclear Fuels plc for US\$5.4 billion. While other investors may also participate, Toshiba will retain a controlling interest of more than 51%.

Toshiba has a strong presence in the Japanese nuclear power market and is a leader in Boiling Water Reactor (BWR) technology. Westinghouse is a world leader in Pressurised Water Reactor (PWR) systems. This agreement positions Toshiba as a global player in nuclear power, with leading-edge capabilities in both BWR and PWR. Toshiba expects the operational and technological synergies to help its nuclear power business triple in size by 2015.

Atsutoshi Nishida, President and CEO of Toshiba, said: "It is with pride and pleasure that we will start to work with Westinghouse in the strategic growth area of nuclear power. With Westinghouse, Toshiba will be a global business committed to delivering world-class nuclear power generation systems and services, backed up by proven technology, reliability and superb efficiency."

Mike Parker, Chief Executive of BNFL, said: "We are delighted to have reached this agreement with Toshiba. It represents a unique opportunity for both companies."

Steve Tritch, President and CEO of Westinghouse Electric, said: "This is excellent news for Westinghouse customers and employees, because Toshiba intends to invest in Westinghouse during this time of growth in the nuclear power industry." 



INTERVIEW WITH TOYO ITO

On being presented with the RIBA Royal Gold Medal, Toyo Ito spoke to *On Japan* about the ideas and interests evolving over three decades that have inspired his distinctive works.

Congratulations on being awarded the RIBA Gold Medal! How does it feel?

I am sincerely honoured to have been awarded this prize, with its long and glorious history going back to Victorian times. To bring a building to fruition requires a huge amount of time and the cooperation of numerous people, so I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone who has helped to make this achievement possible.

You have been involved in a number of projects both in Japan and overseas. Could you tell us something about what distinguishes your works and your design philosophy?



Sendai Mediatheque, Japan, 2001

In the early 1970s I established my first office. Initially my opportunities were limited, and until the mid-1980s almost all my work concerned the design of small residential buildings. In the 1990s I finally had the opportunity to participate in public buildings and over the last ten years my work overseas, especially in Europe, has increased significantly.

Up to the 1980s I favoured buildings featuring transparency and lightness. Buildings are generally thought of as solid and immutable but, in line with the emergence of the information society, people came to seek a sense of substance rather than the substance itself. I wanted to see if I could promote virtual buildings without that solid quality.

However, with the completion of the Sendai Mediatheque in 2000, my ideas about buildings changed considerably. 'Sendai' was built by welding an enormous amount of steel, and during that process I found myself attracted to the strength of steel and a sense of substance. If we think of people, this could refer to the attraction of their inner qualities, infused with life, exceeding their surface beauty. Since then I have been seeking a dynamism that captures the momentary balance achieved during movement in my works. This could be said to be groping for a contemporary organic space.

In this context, what sort of design philosophy informed the Serpentine Gallery Pavilion in London's vast Kensington Gardens that you designed in 2002? Moreover, when you were designing it, which aspects did you consider with regard to harmony with the surrounding environment?

That small, snow-white building only existed on the grass in the gardens for three months before being dismantled. However, as it was just three months I was able to experiment in a way that would

have been impossible with a permanent building. In the greatest experiment of this kind that I have ever undertaken, I developed a construction system jointly with Cecil Balmond, an engineer from Ove Arup, London. By segmenting the myriad overlapping lines which a rotating square inscribed on an abstract cube's top and side surfaces at those lines' intersections, we were

able to create a space with a geometry completely different from the conventional cube. I feel as if, through the use of these lines alone, we were able to do away with the usual elements of a building such as columns, beams, walls, windows and doors, and give people the experience of a totally new sense of space. Moreover, this abstract quality and the snow-white object, reflecting the green of the surrounding grass, made a beautiful contrast with the main gallery itself.

In Britain, and particularly in London with its many traditional buildings, the number of post-modern buildings has risen in recent years. How do you feel about such buildings?

20th-century modernism sought buildings unrelated to their localities which could be constructed in a short time, on a large scale and economically. As a result, flat buildings based on pure geometry and without any organic qualities came to line our streets, and cities around the world became homogenised. As a reaction to this, we are now seeing a growing number of buildings featuring historical elements.

However, I believe in the possibility of creating buildings for the new, post-industrial age with the use of computer technology. One could call them new, organic buildings which explore their relationship with nature and the environment. I think that architecture should reflect the sensitivities of the people of the age in which it is created and functions. ■



Serpentine Gallery Pavilion, London, 2002



Relaxation Park in Torrevieja, Spain, 2002

Tod's, Omotesando, Tokyo, 1997



Discovering the delights of KYUSHU

PHIL COLLEY

Phil Colley has had a lifelong interest in Asia. In 2000, he founded *The Oriental Caravan* (TOC) travel company in order to share his passion for small group exploration with independent-minded travellers.



Mt Aso, Kumamoto

Could you tell us about your experience of Kyushu?

I first visited Japan in 1997 and set up one of the UK's first 'adventure travel' programmes in 1998. Since then I have visited Japan every spring and autumn. My first visit to Kyushu was in 1999 and, after setting up TOC the following



Yamagasa Festival, Fukuoka

year, I started 'the Land of the Rising Sun' Kyushu tour which has now operated around 15 times. Having already organised a successful tour on Honshu, I was interested in opening up other parts of Japan to British tourists and, with its wealth of beautiful scenery and historically important areas, Kyushu seemed the obvious choice. Many tourists who come to Japan only get to see Tokyo and maybe Kyoto but really there is so much here to reward the traveller who is prepared to get a little bit off the beaten track.

Where is your favourite place to relax in Japan?

Kyushu! It has a slow and relaxed rural feel about it with really friendly people, a great climate and also good *sake* and *shochu*. There is a beautiful volcanic landscape especially around Mount Aso and some great hiking opportunities. I have hiked up Yufu Lake and Tsuruma Lake in



Takachiho-kyo Gorge, Miyazaki

Beppu/Yufuin and also hiked around Mount Aso. Mount Aso is where they filmed the James Bond film 'You Only Live Twice'. Also of course the hot springs are great. Historically, Kyushu is the first place that westerners visited when they came to Japan - including William Adams, the 'English Samurai' (in Hirado).

What charms does Kyushu have that cannot be found in other parts of Japan?

Volcanic landscapes and good hiking. Hot springs. Gardens - Suizenji and Glover.

Historic cities (Nagasaki and

Kumamoto) and events (the Satsuma Rebellion). Some great small railway lines and local trains. *Imo shochu*.

Where are your favourite sightseeing spots in Kyushu?

I like Beppu as there are so many different spas and things to see and do. My favourite onsen is a little *rotemburo* in Yufuin called Shitan-yu - it is in a thatched hut on Kinrin-ko Lake, only costs 100 yen and to soak in it is a great way to unwind after the trek up Yufu Volcano. I also like the nightlife area round Shianbashi in Nagasaki - it is a maze of narrow alleys and tiny bars, very atmospheric and very easy to get lost!



Kumamoto Castle, Kumamoto



Roof-top spa, Beppu

Could you recommend any other areas in Kyushu which might appeal to British tourists?

Many of our clients say that their favourite city in Japan is Nagasaki: a beautiful harbour, which has lovely views from the slope of Glover Garden or viewpoint on Mount Inasa, a great and easy-to-use tram system and a fascinating history of contact with China, Korea and Europe. I was a student



Glover Garden, Nagasaki



in China in the 1980s so it has been interesting to see the Chinese influence in Nagasaki - great Chinese food especially.

Takachiho is also a lovely town because of




Jomon-sugi, Yakushima Island

the gorge and the story of Izanami and Izanagi. Takachiho Gorge is a really dramatic and unusual rock formation presumably created by some ancient volcanic cataclysm. You can either walk along the gorge or

better still take an awe-inspiring boat journey, which allows for great views of the towering basalt cliffs on either side. I have yet to visit but the places I would like to go are Kagoshima (I heard that sometimes you need an umbrella because of the falling ash from Sakura volcano!); and Yakushima for its subtropical rainforest. A Japanese friend has also recommended Hitoyoshi onsen.

Did you find any difficulties travelling in the Kyushu area without much knowledge of Japanese?

Sometimes it can be a little tricky if you know no Japanese language at all but it is not hard to learn a few words and just a few can make a big difference.

A phrasebook can be handy but most people in Kyushu, as everywhere in Japan, are only too keen to help a foreigner. So as long as the traveller is patient, the language barrier is only ever a minor inconvenience. 

www.seejapan.co.uk

First Japanese Speech Contest for University Students



Mr Keir Howie, winner of the first prize

The first Japanese Speech Contest for University Students took place at the School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS), University of London, on January 28.

The speech contest was established by the British Association for Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language (BATJ) and the Japan

Foundation with the purpose of promoting Japanese language learning at Higher Education level in the UK and Ireland, and of deepening mutual understanding between Japan and the UK.

This year's contest winner was Mr Keir Howie, whose speech 'Yasukuni Shrine and reasons for change in ways of mourning the dead' dealt with the issue of prime ministerial visits to Yasukuni Shrine as a means of mourning Japan's war dead. He highlighted the two main strands of opinion in the domestic debate on this issue.

Mr Howie is a fourth year student at the University of Leeds, studying for a BA in Asia-Pacific Studies and Japanese. On receiving the award he said, "I am very happy to have been able to take part in the first Japanese speech contest for university students and was delighted to be chosen as the inaugural winner. The quality and success of the event is obviously a sign of the progress of the teaching of Japanese in the UK in recent years."

The runner-up in the speech contest was Ms Lee Sangeun, a fourth year student at the University of Reading taking the BA course in International Management with Japanese. Her speech, entitled 'Internationalisation and Culture', addressed the theme of the increasing internationalisation of Japan, attitudes towards foreign culture and how Japan should cope with internationalisation.

The third prize went to Mr Ardeshir Pahlabad, who is in his fourth year at SOAS, University of London, studying for a BA in Japanese. He spoke about the roots and history of Nebuta Matsuri, one of the most popular summer festivals in Aomori Prefecture in Japan's Tohoku Region. ■

GRASSROOTS

Daiwa Foundation features demographic change in 2006 seminar series



Minister Hiramatsu delivers a lecture at the seminar series

The theme of the 2006 Joint Seminar Series organised by the Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation in co-operation with The Japan Society is 'Life's Chances: demographic change in the UK and Japan'.

Changing demographics have become one of the major challenges facing Japan as well as the United Kingdom in the 21st century. The rapid ageing of societies points to a future in which family life, work and employment, and social welfare needs will increasingly depart from established norms.

On January 18, Mr Kenji Hiramatsu, Minister and Consul General at the Japanese Embassy, delivered a lecture entitled 'Japan's challenge of fewer children and an ageing society' at the first seminar in the series.

This series of nine evening seminars will explore the implications of demographic change in Britain and Japan from the perspective of both the issues and the proposed solutions being debated in government, business, the media and academic circles. ■

www.dajf.org.uk

Teachers' workshops Explore Japan



Two *Explore Japan* workshops were held in Durham and London in January with the aim of providing geography and primary teachers with ideas and knowledge for teaching about Japan within the framework of the National Curriculum. Similar events are co-organised every year by the Embassy and Japan 21.

In Durham, geography teachers had an opportunity to try out resources and discuss the practicalities of introducing Japan in Key Stage 3 geography. In particular, they were able to explore methods of promoting

understanding of the way of life in Japan and the culture of the people through the medium of geography. Meanwhile, primary teachers looked at how to incorporate the study of Haiku into their literacy lessons in a way that would enable pupils to appreciate the beauty of the words while being fun at the same time. Participants also had the chance to write their own poems.

In London, Key Stage 1 teachers worked with the new 'Japan Detective' resources, a distant locality study based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work for geography. They were introduced to various methods of appealing to young pupils with teaching aids and were furnished with a CD and visual resources to use with their classes. In addition, they looked at the potential for introducing Japan in cross-curricular activities.

In both workshops, primary teachers were introduced to spoken Japanese via *Ready Steady NihonGO!*, a new 10-unit language and culture study course for Key Stage 2.

After the workshops, the teachers headed back to their classrooms armed with an exciting array of new ideas for Japan topic work. Many of them had been inspired to start learning Japanese, while all felt a renewed sense of confidence about tackling Japan in the classroom. Children at schools around the UK will surely benefit from their teachers' participation in these workshops. ■

Leach Pottery Restoration Project



Bernard Leach

The famous pottery in St Ives established by the late Bernard Leach is to be saved as a result of funding decisions by the European Regional Development Fund and the Rural Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Partnership. The substantial awards involved are in addition to funding already provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Arts Council of England South West, Cornwall Council and Penwith District Council. However, further funding is still required.

Bernard Leach (1887-1979) was born and brought up in East Asia. As a young man he

studied etching at the London School of Art before settling in Japan, where he became fascinated with pottery and studied under the great master Kenzan. While there he also became acquainted with the renowned potter Shoji Hamada, and in 1920 returned to the UK with him to found his own kiln in St Ives. Over the next 50 years that facility became the epicentre of the craft pottery movement, with potters all over the world drawing inspiration from Leach's work.

Leach interpreted the great tradition of Japanese pottery with his sensitive European eye. To this day he is highly respected in Japan, where devotees of pottery and folk crafts consider the Leach Pottery to be an important cultural asset in Japan-UK relations.

The Leach Pottery Restoration Project



Leach discussing jug handles with students including his son David by the pottery fireplace in 1947



Workshop at the pottery



Kiln used until the mid-1970s at the pottery

aims to restore and preserve the Leach Pottery for future generations. Lady Carol Holland, Chair of the Bernard Leach (St Ives) Trust, has encouraged local people and other interested parties "to become part of this exciting adventure by supporting our appeal".

The site was put on the open market at the beginning of 2003, presenting the community with a rare opportunity to bring it into the public domain. The project to restore it has the potential to become an inspirational focus for the revival of studio pottery within the creative industries in Cornwall.

Among other things, the project seeks to restore the existing Grade II listed buildings and to create a new museum exhibition space, a showcase contemporary studio pottery gallery and a new pottery training facility. It also envisages the development of a programme of pottery-based courses and events open to the general public and visitors.

Readers seeking information on how to support this project should email: appeal@leachproject.co.uk

GRASSROOTS



The Leach Pottery



Display of Leach's artworks

Japan Day Seminar 2006

On February 2, the annual Japan Day Seminar was held in Belfast. It was organised by the Japan Local Government Centre (JLGC) London Office in partnership with the host city and supported by the Embassy of Japan. The aim of the event was to raise awareness of Japan and Japanese local government while providing an opportunity for participants to exchange information and ideas at an international level.

This year's topic was 'The Present and Future Role of Local Authorities in Northern Ireland and Japan'. The seminar was held in Belfast because the issue of local government reorganisation is of mutual interest, with a series of amalgamations currently taking place in Japan while an ongoing public administration review is under way in the Province.

The event brought together representatives from the local

authorities of Northern Ireland, academics and Japanese government bodies, organisations and companies.

Minister Hiroyuki Kishino, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Japanese Embassy, delivered an address on Japan-UK Relations and Northern Ireland.

Cllr Peter Weir, President of the Northern Ireland Local Government Association, followed with a talk entitled 'The Big Leap - Outlining A Vision for Modern Local Government,' in which he described his vision for modern local government in Northern Ireland.

Representing the JLGC, Director Shigeru Naiki gave a presentation on recent developments in Japanese local government bodies. Mr Peter McNaney, Chief Executive, Belfast City Council, then delivered a talk on 'The Improvement and Transformation of Belfast', in which he addressed the challenges facing local government.



JLGC Director Naiki with Belfast Lord Mayor Cllr Browne

CONCERT

English Chamber Orchestra

24 APR 7:30pm

Conductor: **Daisuke Muranaka**
Piano: **Noriko Ogawa**
Flute: **William Bennett**

Cadogan Hall
5 Sloane Terrace
London SW1X 9DQ
Box office tel: 020 7730 4500
www.cadoganhall.com

This evening offers a feast of Japanese classical musical talent, featuring Daisuke Muranaka and Noriko Ogawa as well as a performance of Takemitsu's *How Slow the Wind*. The programme also includes Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 3, Mozart's Flute Concerto in D and *Le Tombeau de Couperin* by Ravel.

Mr Muranaka, who began his musical career as a conductor in Vienna, has not only established his reputation with successful performances at many Italian opera houses but is also in great demand for his wide symphonic repertoire.

Ms Ogawa is internationally renowned as a recitalist and soloist, winning the third prize in the 1987 Leeds International Piano Competition. Ogawa now records regularly for the BBC, gives chamber recitals and appears with all the major UK, European, Japanese and US orchestras. 



Daisuke Muranaka and Noriko Ogawa



English Chamber Orchestra

This concert is supported by the Embassy of Japan.

EVENTS

Ikenobo Ikebana Society UK

London Chapter 11th Anniversary Symposium in the presence of 45th Headmaster Sen'ei Ikenobo

18-23 JUN

Ealing Town Hall, New Broadway
London W5 2BY
Tel: 020 8904 6599
kiyoko@ikenobolondon.org.uk
www.ikenobolondon.org.uk

18-20 June

Ikebana Workshops

23 June

10:30am - 5:30pm

Ikebana Demonstration

1:30am - 3:15pm

Demonstrations by Headmaster Sen'ei Ikenobo



Headmaster Sen'ei Ikenobo

Sen'ei Ikenobo, who assumed the position of 45th generation Headmaster in 1945 upon the death of his father, has compared the 500-year history of

Ikenobo with the history of Ikebana itself, adding: "Ikenobo considers a flower's bud most beautiful, for within the bud is the energy of life's opening

toward the future. Past, present and future ... in each moment plants and humans are vital parts of nature and Ikebana expresses this awareness. Ikenobo's spirit has spread not only in Japan but throughout the world. It is our hope that the beauty of Ikenobo will increasingly serve as a way of drawing the world's peoples together".

In 1971 Sen'ei Ikenobo was awarded the Dark-blue Ribbon Medal by the Japanese government and created two new styles of Ikenobo Ikebana. 

This event is supported by the Ikenobo headquarters in Japan and the Embassy of Japan.

Chabana Exhibition

27 MAY 11am-7pm


Chelsea Old Town Hall (Small Hall)
Kings Road, London SW3 5EE
Tel: 020 7361 2220



This exhibition of flower arrangements for the tea ceremony offers the opportunity to experience the ceremony at first hand.

Chabana is the art of arranging flowers to decorate a tea ceremony room. The

essence of chabana is to reproduce the transient beauty of trees, branches, leaves and flowers as they appear in nature: in the wild, some flowers bloom for only one day.

To make fine flower arrangements, chabana students must not only develop their technique but also their hearts. The aesthetic of chabana is, at its deepest level, based on the sublime simplicity and tranquillity of Zen, which is also the root of the tea ceremony. 

This exhibition is supported by the Embassy of Japan.

KABUKI PERFORMANCE

Wed 31 May - Sat 10 June 7:30pm
Sun 4, 11 June 2:30pm


Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Avenue
London EC1R 4TN
Box office tel: 0870 737 7737
www.sadlerswells.com

This is a rare opportunity to see authentic Kabuki performed by Japan's most iconic actors.

Dating from the early 17th century, Kabuki is one of Japan's oldest and most magnificent art forms. It is a highly stylised performing art that employs

flamboyant costumes, elaborate make-up and exaggerated body movements, combining acting and dancing with live traditional music.

This visit features Kabuki superstar Ebizo XI from the famous Ichikawa family, who have set the standard for Kabuki performance for eleven generations. With his film-star looks, 28-year-old Ebizo is one of Japan's most popular actors, credited with re-introducing Kabuki to a new generation. He is accompanied on stage by over 30 actors and musicians.

The programme features two classic Kabuki works: the visually stunning *Fuji Musume*, in which the Wisteria Maiden dances against a gorgeous backdrop of wisteria flowers, and *Kasane*, a dramatic tale of love, murder and revenge, famous for its beautiful musical accompaniment. 

An English translation will be available.



Ebizo XI

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