



## New Consul General, Mitsuo Sakaba, Arrives in Chicago



Last month, the Consulate General of Japan at Chicago welcomed the Honorable Mitsuo Sakaba as the next Consul General from Japan. Mr. Sakaba entered the foreign Ministry in 1973 after graduating from Yokohama City University. Since then, he has held various posts in various countries, including France, Belgium, India and Egypt. Most recently, he served as the Assistant Vice-Minister for Parliamentary Affairs in Tokyo.

The Consul General agreed to answer a few ques-

tions about his thoughts on the new post and his expectations for the future. We are happy to share those with you here.

*What was your initial reaction when you learned of your placement at the Consulate General of Japan at Chicago?*

It was a very pleasant surprise for me when I learned of my placement at Chicago, as I had served mainly in French speaking European countries during the previous thirty years of my diplomatic career.

*What were your conceptions of America? Have those been confirmed or dispelled in your first weeks of service here?*

I visited the U.S. many times as a member of various government missions, and my impression of America was that it was a big, open, energetic country. I had many American friends when I served in Europe and other countries, and they were friendly, open-minded people. That good impression has generally been confirmed here.

*Turning to the professional, why did you decide to join the foreign ministry and make a career of diplomacy?*

The first American I met in my life was a military man who was serving in my hometown near Tokyo. I was six and had an accident with his military Jeep. He was gentle, kind, and friendly. While growing up, I wanted to work for international relations; the incident at age six might have influenced my decision.

*(Continued on page 4)*

**2003 JET  
Program  
Applications  
Available Now!!**

See story on page 6

## Daidogeï Japanese Street Theater Comes to Chicago, Northwest Suburb

*Daidogeï*, or Japanese street theater, has its origins in the entertainers functioning in the court and religious settings of ancient Japan. Eventually, *daidogeï*, like so many of Japan's arts, reached its apex of popularity in the Edo period, when entertainers practiced an estimated 300 different types of performance, including trained animal acts, magic shows, juggling, and simple dramas.

Today, only a few of these acts remain. In October, two of them will come to the Chicagoland area.

**Edo-Daikagura** (right) is a juggling and balancing troupe that carries on these centuries-old arts. Originally a sacred and serious ritual performance to exorcise evil spirits from temples, it adapted to the tastes of the Edo populace, morphing into



a more light-hearted and humorous style. However, the symbolic lion-dance will be performed first to chase away any evil spirits that may be residing in the theaters.

The **Edo Marionette Group** (left) was formed in 1993 as a revival of the *daidogeï* puppeteering arts of the Edo Period. Puppets are divided into categories of male, female, and animal, each with its own special characteristics to more realistically portray its expressions and behavior. The show will include explanation of the art, as well as traditional dramatic vignettes.

The Japan America Society of Chicago (JASC), the Mid America Japanese Club (MAJC), and the Japan Foundation, in cooperation with the Consulate General of Japan,

have organized a performance on **Friday, October 11** in downtown Chicago, and another on **Saturday, October 12**, in Arlington Heights. Each group will perform at both shows.

To ensure ticket availability, reservations are recommended by **October 3**. Remaining tickets will be available at the door.

### Downtown Chicago

**Date** October 11, 2002

**Time** 6:30 to 8:30 pm

**Place** James R. Thompson Center  
100 W. Randolph St.  
Chicago IL 60601

**Cost** \$10 adults  
\$ 5 children up to 12

**Info** 312-263-3049  
meg@us-japan.org

### Arlington Heights

**Date** October 12, 2002

**Time** 2 to 4 pm

**Place** Forest View Educational  
Center Theater  
2121 S. Goebbert Rd.  
Arlington Heights IL 60005

**Cost** \$10 adults  
\$5 children up to 12

**Info** 312-263-3049  
meg@us-japan.org



## Mr. Koji Naito, New Director of the JIC, Arrives from Embassy in Oman

In late August, the Consulate General of Japan saw the arrival of Mr. Koji Naito as the new director of the Japan Information Center (JIC). He replaces outgoing director, Mr. Jiro Maruhashi, who has been assigned to the Japan Information Center at the Embassy of Japan in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Mr. Naito's assignment to Chicago marks his first post in the United States. He has previously worked at the Japanese embassies in Egypt, Sudan, Kuwait, and, most recently, Oman.

While his past experiences have been as a specialist for the Middle East, his role as the head of the JIC is his first in the public relations and cultural exchange fields. He says his goal is to "strengthen the JIC as an open and friendly gateway to Japan for the people of the Midwest."

## Wisconsin Artists “Exchanged” with Japan

In Fall of 2000, in commemoration of its 100th year, the Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors, Inc. (WP&S) welcomed 18 Japanese artists and their families to Madison, Wisconsin for a week-long stay.

While in the U.S., the artists stayed with Wisconsin artists, visited museums, and engaged in personal artistic exchange. In addition, their work was featured in a one-month joint exhibition with WP&S members at the Memorial Union galleries of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Several of the Japanese artists also gave demonstrations of their work, including painting, wood carving, dying, and ceramics.

Now, two years later, 16 WP&S artists are making the reciprocal trip. Their work will be on display in three Japanese museums: The Saitama Modern Art Museum in Saitama, Japan, The Inoue Gallery located in the Ginza district in Tokyo, and the Tomioka Museum in Ohtaku.

Since its inception in 1900, WP&S has had ties to the wider art community. In fact, the group was

formed by German painters who had made Wisconsin their home, and since then, has been committed to the principle that the work of artists requires the fertilization of ideas that know no boundaries.

Doug Haynes, who played a leading role in organizing the exchange on the Wisconsin side, said, “The exchange exposed all participants, both Japanese and

American, to new perspectives. Artists may be creators of images and objects, but these objects always reflect the ideas and traditions of the person and culture that created them. The opportunity to step outside of one's culture allows one to learn about oneself and about others. Without this perspective, we become like a fish that is happily unaware of the water it swims in. I am eager to take the plunge into Japanese waters and see what I find swimming there.”

For those interested in more information about the Wisconsin-Japan Artist Exchange, the website at [www.emill.com/japan-w/](http://www.emill.com/japan-w/) contains background information, artist lists, and a slideshow of 20 images, including Japanese art.

*“I am eager to take the plunge into Japanese waters and see what I find swimming there.”*



*The Secret of Beauty* by Doug Haynes, watercolor on paper, 31" x 45"

## Kurosawa-Mifune Film Retrospective Opens at Music Box

The Music Box Theatre in Chicago is planning a series of 12 films featuring the legendary director-actor team of Akira Kurosawa and Toshiro Mifune. All the films are new prints featuring newly translated subtitles. The retrospective concludes with a daily two-week run of “Seven Samurai,” one of the most influential films ever made.

*Throne of Blood*  
October 25—27

*Drunken Angel* (weekend matinee)  
October 26—27

*Stray Dog*  
October 28

*Rashomon*  
October 29

*Yojimbo*  
October 30—31

*Hidden Fortress*  
November 1-3

*I Live in Fear* (weekend matinee)  
November 2—3

*The Bad Sleep Well*  
November 4

*Sanjuro*  
November 5

*High and Low*  
November 6—7

*Seven Samurai*  
two weeks starting November 8

*Red Beard* (weekend matinee)  
November 9—10

Music Box Theatre is located at 3733 N. Southport Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60613. For more information about the films, call 773-871-6604 or visit [www.musicboxtheatre.com](http://www.musicboxtheatre.com).

## Fall Open House, Cultural Programs Fill Japan House October Schedule

Japan House at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign has scheduled four cultural workshops and their Fall Open House for the month of October, offering participants insight into arts of Japan ranging from the literary to the culinary. Plus, the usual tours of the house and grounds continue every Thursday from 1 to 4 pm, the third Saturday of each month from 1 to 5 pm, or by appointment.

The *Taste of Japan* cultural workshops are available individually, or participants may sign up for the entire series of four. Prices for individual programs are listed below. Cost for the series is \$45 for members, \$65 for nonmembers (represents a \$5 discount). Registration is required by **Friday, October 4** for all programs.



### Haiku: Lecture and Workshop

*Wednesday, October 9, 7 - 9 pm*  
*\$10 members / \$15 nonmembers*  
Participants will be given a brief introduction to the art of Japanese haiku and have the chance to write their own haiku and share their insights with others.

### The Art of Japanese Sweets

*Wednesday, October 16, 7 - 9 pm*  
*\$15 members / \$20 nonmembers*  
A brief history of *wagashi*, Japanese

traditional sweets, and their characteristics and various forms will be explained. Participants will have a chance to make examples of sweets and taste them with a bowl of tea.

### The Art of Bonsai

*Wednesday, October 23, 7 - 9 pm*  
*\$10 members / \$15 nonmembers*  
Bonsai (dwarf trees) is an art form that consists of planting and culti-

vating a tree in a way that draws on and accents the plant's natural elegance of form. Bonsai pieces will be shown and an explanation will be given on how to start your own bonsai. Those with their own bonsai are welcome to share them with the group.

### The Art of Sushi Making

*Wednesday, October 30, 7 - 9 pm*  
*\$15 members / \$20 nonmembers*  
Contrary to popular conception,

sushi is not simply raw fish. Rather, sushi can include cooked fish, egg, and even vegetables. The defining ingredient is the rice, seasoned with sweet rice-wine vinegar. Participants in this program will learn how to make different forms of sushi and share their creations with one another.

In addition to the workshops, Japan House welcomes everyone to their annual Fall Open House on **Saturday, October 19** from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is free.

Internationally-known musicians David Wheeler and Yoko Hiraoka will deliver musical performances at 11 am and 2 pm. Each of them is proficient on the *shakuhachi* (bamboo flute), *koto* (13 string zither), and *shamisen* (3 string lute).

In addition, Japanese tea ceremonies will be conducted throughout the day by the Urbana-Champaign Association of Chado Urasenke Tankokai.

Bonsai trees, tools, and figurines will also be on display.

Japan House is located at 2000 South Lincoln Avenue in Urbana, Illinois. For more information about Japan House or any of these events, please call **218-244-9934**.

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### Consul General

*(Continued from page 1)*

*What are your professional goals/objectives for the Consulate in Chicago while you are serving as Consul General?*

I set four objectives for the Consulate:

1. Rationalize consular works and better serve Japanese people in Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, and Wisconsin

2. Organize many cultural events in full cooperation with other Japanese-related organizations and associations
3. Strengthen economic and business ties between Japan and the Midwest
4. Establish ever closer relations with Japanese-American associations here

*How do you anticipate the relationship between the United States and*

*Japan will grow or change in the future? In what directions do you see it heading?*

My strong belief is that Japan-U.S. relations should continue to be the strongest among all bilateral relations in the world. Our strong ties serve to maintain peace, stability, and prosperity in East-Asia, and in the world. We should do our best for this goal.



## FMF Teacher Program Deadline in December

Since its establishment in 1997, the Fulbright Memorial Fund (FMF) Teacher Program has enabled more than 3000 American educators to visit Japan to study the country, its culture, and its educational system. This year, 600 participants from the United States will be chosen. Deadline for application is **December 10, 2002**.

Fully funded by the Japanese government, the program invites primary- and secondary-grade teachers and administrators to Japan for three weeks in an effort to increase the level of understanding between the U.S. and Japan, and to provide opportunities for professional development. Participants interact with Japanese teachers and students, and attend professional seminars and home stays.

Applicants who are selected for the program visit Japan in one of three groups at different times: June 15 to July 4, October 5 to 24, or November 16 to December 5. Then, upon their return to America, "FMFers" commit themselves to sharing what they learned with fellow teachers and students. They must devise and submit a "follow-on plan" that describes the measures they will take to spread the value of this experience throughout their community of educators.

Those interested in the program are encouraged to apply online through the program's website at <http://www.glocomnet.or.jp/fmf/>. Applications are also available from the Consulate General of Japan at Chicago. To request an application, email [jicchicago@webkddi.com](mailto:jicchicago@webkddi.com) or call 312-280-0430.

## HotHouse Hosts Final Day of Jazz Festival

Closing out the seventh-annual Asian American Jazz Festival, Hothouse in Chicago will host the last day of the event on **Sunday, October 27**. The climactic show will include performances by Japanese harmonica sensation Seiji "Wabi" Yuguchi and the Yoko Noge All Stars.

The show starts at 7 pm and tickets are \$15 for the general public, \$12 for students. Hothouse is located at 31 E. Balbo, Chicago IL, 60605. For more information about the concert, call Hothouse at **312-362-9707**.

## JIC Hosts Exhibit by Two Japanese Artists

From **November 5 through 15**, the Japan Information Center (JIC) will host an exhibit of prints and ceramics by a husband-and-wife pair of Japanese artists.

The exhibit will include more than 50 paintings by Yasumasa Suzuki, whose images depict poets and poetic topics from the *Manyōshu*, an ancient Japanese literary collection of poetry. Comprising more than 4500 works (the exact count varies depending on how one considers variants of poems) created between the 7th and middle of the 8th Centuries AD, the *Manyōshu* represents the very foundations of Japanese poetic forms.

Mrs. Seiran Suzuki, whose ceramic pieces will be on display with her husband's paintings, creates *ikebana* (flower arranging) vases in



*Kaze no yukue (Destination of Wind)*, Seiran Suzuki

modern shapes and configurations. Together, the two translate ancient and traditional aspects of Japanese culture into the language of the contemporary world.

In addition to its usual hours (9:15 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday, and until 7 pm on Thursdays), the JIC will also open from 1 to 5 pm on Saturday and Sunday. The exhibition closes at noon on Friday, November 15.

**Dates** November 5 to 15  
*closed Monday, November 11 for Veterans' Day*

**Place** Japan Information Center  
737 N. Michigan Ave.  
Suite 1000  
Chicago IL 60611

**Cost** Free

**Info** 312-280-0430  
[jicchicago@webkddi.com](mailto:jicchicago@webkddi.com)



*Otomo Yakamochi*, Yasumasa Suzuki

## JET Program: The Peace Corps in Japan

"As a JET, I expected to teach English to Japanese students. What I didn't expect was to find myself scaring monkeys out of the rice paddies of local farmers!"

Unusual statements like this are common among current and former Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program participants. Inaugurated in 1987 as "one of the largest educational programs in the history of mankind," the JET Program offers Americans and other non-Japanese a one-year renewable contract to assist local Japanese governments, schools and communities with foreign-language education, sports education and cultural exchange programs.

Begun in response to criticism that Japan was too insular, the aim of the JET Program is to promote grassroots intercultural exchange through team-teaching in local public schools or work in local government offices. At the same time, the JET Program also seeks to increase foreigners' awareness of Japanese society and culture.

In its first year, 848 young people from the United States, Britain, Australia and New Zealand joined the program; this year, over 6,000 people from 38 nations are carrying out their missions throughout Japan.

The JET Program offers three types of positions to applicants: Assistant Language Teacher (ALT), Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) and Sports Exchange Adviser (SEA). The ALT position constitutes the majority of JET participants.

Although teaching English is the primary means by which ALTs promote internationalization in Japan, they also get involved in a broad spectrum of activities from judging speech contests to creating web pages to participating in local sports events. Some have even created their own local TV programs. "When I first found out about the JET Program, I was a little leery about teaching because I lacked experience. But, I found out that 'teaching' can include a wide variety of things. And more than just variety, I got a lot of satisfaction out of helping the kids. You might say the JET Program is like the Peace Corps with excellent pay and living conditions," said one former JET.

### Information Sessions

For anyone interested in learning more about the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program and how to apply, two JET Program information sessions will be held at the Japan Information Center on **Monday, October 7**, 6:30 - 7:45 pm and (tentatively) **Saturday, November 2**, 2:00 - 5:00 pm. New 2003 applications will be available. Information may also be obtained from the Consulate General of Japan webpage at [www.chicago.us.emb-japan.go.jp/jic.html](http://www.chicago.us.emb-japan.go.jp/jic.html), or by writing [jicmext@webkddi.com](mailto:jicmext@webkddi.com) or calling 312-280-0434.

## FRIENDLY REMINDERS...

- Asian American Jazz Festival performances happen at the Museum of Contemporary Art at 220 E. Chicago Ave., Chicago IL 60611 on October 24, 25, & 26. Call 312-280-2660 or visit [www.mcachicago.org](http://www.mcachicago.org) for more information.
- Midwest Japan Seminar meets at the University of Wisconsin, Madison on October 26 and at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, Illinois on December 7. Contact Dr. Laura Miller at [lmille2@luc.edu](mailto:lmille2@luc.edu) or 773-508-3469 for more information.

## JAPAN INFORMATION CENTER

[www.chicago.us.emb-japan.go.jp/jic.html](http://www.chicago.us.emb-japan.go.jp/jic.html)

The Japan Information Center (JIC) is the educational and cultural branch of the Consulate General of Japan at Chicago. Established in 1978, the JIC aims to promote knowledge of Japan in our four-state jurisdiction of Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

### SERVICES

The JIC distributes Japan-related materials; maintains a lending library of books, videos, films, and slides; answers inquiries; and sponsors lectures, concerts, art exhibits and other cultural events related to Japan.

### BUSINESS HOURS

9:15 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday

*We are open until 7 pm every Thursday.*

The office is closed on most American holidays and between December 29 and January 3 (Japanese year-end and New Year holidays).

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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### JAPAN JOURNAL

*If you would like to subscribe or submit an article or event for a future issue, please contact editor Chip Meyer at (312) 280-0431 or [jicoutreach@webkddi.com](mailto:jicoutreach@webkddi.com). We review all submissions.*

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