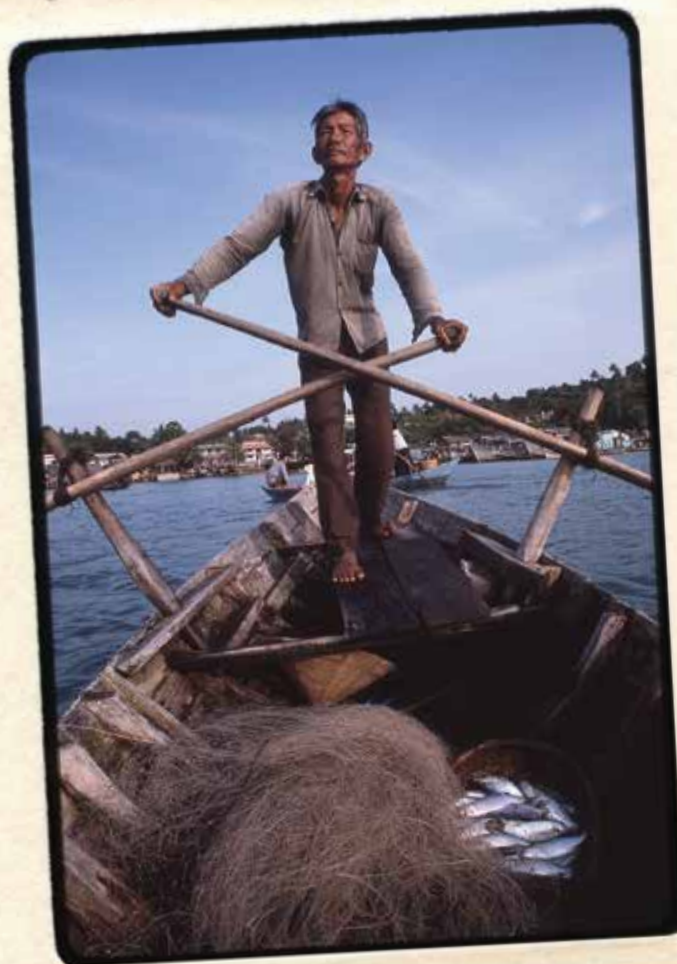


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MEKONG DELTA



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with a Club exhibition of his work from Vietnam

+ Beate's gift of equality Angry Tohoku mayor Manga's new directions

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Cover photograph: Greg Davis

President's message



FINDING NEW WAYS TO ADD value to membership in the FCCJ is one of the keys to securing the Club's future. And we must communicate the value we offer.

So I am pleased to communicate that our relationship with the Tokyu Group now affords FCCJ Members a range of discounts and benefits at Tokyu hotels, golf courses and fitness clubs across Japan.

For example, on weekdays FCCJ Members can now "stay and play" at the Katsuura Tokyu Golf Resort for ¥10,000 per person/night. And just by showing your FCCJ card you can visit any Oasis fitness club for ¥1,575.

Perhaps more crucial to Members who cover stories across Japan, and to those who live outside Tokyo, are discounts on hotels like the new Capitol Tokyo, the Kyoto Tokyu Hotel and the Pan-Pacific Yokohama. On some rooms at the 5-star Capitol Tokyo, we can get 60 percent off - rates that appear to be lower than you find on the internet. Still, ¥22,000 per night is beyond the budget of many Members.

So I have asked Rike Wooten (now advisor to the General Manager) to request a hotel deal near the Club that fits the budgets of our many Members who live outside Tokyo and come into the city once or twice a week. And our alumni who return to visit from overseas. Or for those little occasions when a hotel room is convenient. Ideally, we want something like ¥7,000/night within walking distance of the Club. We will let you know what we can get.

Some of the discount offers change with the season, so check with the FCCJ Front Desk for details. You may also want to sign up as a "Tokyu Comfort member." This program offers hotel discounts from 10-50 percent, late checkout and frequent stayer points. FCCJ Members need not pay the ¥500 initiation fee.

Adding new value to membership is good, but we need to use that value to recruit new Members. And we need to attract more more banquet business and "power breakfasts" - because the FCCJ badly needs more revenue. I have been criticized for painting, with typically Swiss pessimism, too dark a picture of the Club's finances. But if you look at the expenditures we face just to keep the current facilities running - to say nothing about badly needed renovations - you will see that I am not exaggerating. We have made significant progress but we are not out of the woods yet.

— Georges Baumgartner

Join the Movie Committee ...

... 7 PM ON MARCH 27 FOR A VERY SPECIAL SNEAK PREVIEW EVENT. Not only will they be screening *Herb & Dorothy: 50 X 50*, the hotly anticipated follow-up to our SRO screening of *Herb & Dorothy* in 2012, but Dorothy Vogel herself will be present for the Q&A. Hailed as art world visionaries, the aging, diminutive Vogels stuffed their one-bedroom Manhattan apartment full of thousands of works of Conceptual and Minimalist art over three decades, amassing a collection worth millions of dollars. And then they gave them all away. *50 X 50* documents the final chapter, as the former postal worker and the librarian oversee an unprecedented program whereby one museum in each of the 50 states receives 50 works from their collection, a total of 2,500 pieces. Not to be missed. (*US/Japan, 2013; 90 min.; in English with Japanese subtitles*)



CARLA HERNANDEZ

Empress Michiko and FCCJ Librarian Kanako Nakayama were among the dignitaries who attended a Jan. 17 performance at Kioi Hall by Mexican violin virtuoso Adrian Justus, whose Japan tour included concerts in Tokyo, Nagoya and Onjuku.

Win cash for coverage!

THE JAPAN SOCIETY OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA IN COOPERATION WITH THE U.S.-Asia Technology Management Center of Stanford University hosts the Japan-U.S. Innovation Awards Program. One new category which may be of interest to Club members is the "Untold Story in Innovation Award," in which the winner will receive a prize of \$3,000; two runners-up will receive \$1,000 each.

The program invites professional and part-time writers alike to submit a one- or two-page pitch proposal in English of an unpublished instance of a successful innovation within a large and already established Japanese company or a foreign company that does business in Japan. Finalists will be asked to write the article for judging.

Those interested in entering should go to www.usjinnovate.org. Note that the deadline has been pushed back from Jan. 30 to Feb. 19, U.S. time. (AK)

CLICK ON THIS

Steve McClure looks for laughs in cyberspace Japan

You laugh so hard you crack the walls.
— "Greasy Heart," Jefferson Airplane

YOU MIGHT THINK THERE'D BE LOTS of humorous or satirical blogs about Japan. Certainly there's ample material for an online Swift or Wilde.

But you'd be wrong. While there's no shortage of English-language blogs dispensing words of wisdom about Japanese politics, economics and society, there aren't many Japan-related blogs that score high on the laughometer (at least intentionally).

One of the few is the **Our Man in Abiko** blog. Ourmani Nabiko (geddit??) says he began writing the blog "as an attempt to be the Matt Drudge or Guido Fawkes of Japan." That didn't pan out, because of what he describes as his lack of knowledge of Japan or interest in "the daily ups and downs of breaking news."

Our Man then tried his hand at satirizing Japanese media and politics in the *Private Eye* (jugular) vein. But he says that was like picking low-hanging fruit — "unpopular, slightly sour fruit at that."

That didn't stop him from applying his satirical scalpel to a recently published *taidan*-style interview between Education Minister Hakubun Shimomura and real estate entrepreneur Toshio Motoya, who disseminates his rightist political views through his *Apple Town* website. Our Man eviscerates the pair's revanchist ravings by slipping surreal riffs of his own into the text of the *taidan*. Sample: "You've been hanging out in think tanks too long. You should get out more, you know, read a book or watch a movie."

Sometimes this works, sometimes it's just gratuitous: with rotten fruit hanging this low, doing a *reductio ad absurdum* can be overkill.

Some of you may fondly recall the **Charisma Man** comic strip that used to be published in *The Alien* (which later changed its name to *Japanzine*) — easily the best English-language magazine ever to come out of Nagoya. The strip, which brilliantly mocked the whole teaching-English-in-Japan shtick, seems to be on permanent sabbatical. But past episodes

chronicling the adventures of the Canadian burger-flipper who becomes a babe magnet in Japan are available online.

And although its print edition is now in the same existential category as the Kano sisters' virginity, *Japanzine* is still going strong in cyberia. Here one can read the "Here's Kazuhide" mock Q&A forum featuring (presumably fictitious) salaryman Kazuhide Otani. It's funny — if you like sophomoric, racist humor. Occasionally inspired, nonetheless.

The unfortunately named **Fuckedgaijin** isn't a humor/satire blog per se. It's more of a forum for non-Japanese to vent their frustrations about living in "this blessed land" (to use Shisaku blogger Michael Cucek's term for Japan) as well as passing on random observations about things Japanese. But there's an ironic, verging on humorous, tone to much of the discussions — like one about the brouhaha concerning *Young Magazine's* publication of a photo of AKB48 member Tomomi Kasai. It shows her topless and being fondled from behind by a young Caucasian boy.

Sometimes the funniest or just plain weird stuff about Japan is found in the straightest of news stories. Here's a gem from a story by Hiroko Tabuchi, published in the Jan. 7 edition of *The New York Times* about the Fukushima radiation cleanup:

Japanese officials said adapting overseas technologies presented a particular challenge. "Even if a method works overseas, the soil in Japan is different, for example," said Hidehiko Nishiyama, deputy director at the environment ministry, who is in charge of the Fukushima cleanup. "And if we have foreigners roaming around Fukushima, they might scare the old grandmas and granddads there."

It's nice to see the government supporting satire and parody by employing comedians like Mr. Nishiyama. Who needs *gaijin* court jesters with homegrown talent like this? 🇯🇵

Steve McClure has lived in Tokyo since 1985. Formerly *Billboard* magazine's Asia Bureau Chief, he now publishes the online music-industry newsletter *McClureMusic.com*.



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For those already in on the secret, the application form is available on the FCCJ website or from the 19F Club office.



FAREWELL TO THE AMERICAN WOMAN WHO
GAVE JAPANESE WOMEN THEIR RIGHTS

Beate's gift to Japanese women

by Todd Crowell



Beate Sirota Gordon at the Club in 1998

AP PHOTO/CHIYAKI TSUKUMO

American women have yet to succeed in getting their own rights secured in the U.S. Constitution, but more than 60 years ago, one young American woman managed to enshrine women's rights in Japan's U.S.-imposed postwar constitution. It was Beate Sirota Gordon who wrote the language of Article 24 that guarantees equal rights for women.

Gordon died over New Year's at age 89, the last surviving member of the small cadre of military and civilian Occupation officials who drafted Japan's post-war charter that is still in force and has never been amended. Her memory lives on with Japan's feminists, who often refer to her handiwork as "Beate's Gift."

Although the Constitution is best known for its war-renouncing Article 9, the consequences of Article 24 have had an even greater impact, particularly on the daily lives of millions of Japanese women. It reads:

"Marriage shall be based only on the mutual consent of both sexes, and it shall be maintained through mutual cooperation with equal rights of the husband and wife as a basis. With regard to the choice of spouse, property rights, inheritance, choice of domicile and other matters pertaining to marriage and the family, laws shall be enacted from the standpoint of the individual dignity and essential equality of the sexes."

Gordon was only 22 when she joined Gen. Douglas MacArthur's staff in Tokyo as a translator. Brought up in Japan before the war as the daughter of Russian-Jewish émigrés, she recounted that she was motivated in part to write the equal rights article from memories of watching women walking behind their husbands in public. At school in the U.S. when hostilities began, she quickly returned to Japan after the surrender to find her parents, who had

been interned, and to take part in the great adventure of transforming Japan.

MacArthur at the time was unhappy with Japanese politicians' efforts to write a new constitution, rejecting drafts to replace the 1889 Meiji Constitution that he felt did not go far enough in turning the role of the Emperor into a constitutional monarch. In frustration, he ordered his staff to write an entirely new document.

MacArthur's legal adviser, Courtney Whitney, corralled a dozen members of the staff, Gordon included, and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, you are now a constitutional assembly, and you are now to write

a new draft of the Japanese constitution." They had nine days in which to do it.

Gordon was assigned the task of writing the portions dealing with women's rights. It wasn't hard to improve on the Meiji Constitution, which reflected the prevailing Confucian concept of the role of women as subordinate to men, especially husbands and, before them, fathers. The 1889 document contained language such as: "cripples, the disabled and wives cannot undertake any legal actions."

Gordon wrote draft after draft, many of them going beyond strictly women's rights to encompass, for example, legal rights for children born out of wedlock. Many provisions were thrown out by her superiors, who argued that they could be addressed later as amendments to the Civil Code. She argued that the conservative men who wrote Japan's laws would not amend the Civil Code in that manner. Sixty years later she seems prescient.

Very few liberalizing changes have been made in the ensuing years. Even today it is a matter of contention in Japan whether a married woman can keep and use her maiden name. The current law stipulates that any married couple must use the same name (it can be the wife's family name, but it must be the same).

Article 24 was resisted by Japanese politicians and bureaucrats, who argued, accurately enough at the time, that it did not fit Japanese culture and history. These objections were overruled by the American occupiers, and the Diet was ordered to pass it along with the other measures in the document, which it did in late 1946, with the charter going into effect in 1947.

One gets the impression that Article 24 was included in the constitution mainly because Gordon made a pest of herself, and the group was under severe time constraints. In her memoir, she notes that Lt.

'CRIPPLES, THE DISABLED AND WIVES CANNOT UNDERTAKE ANY LEGAL ACTIONS.'

Col. Charles A. Kadesaw, who headed the drafting team, told her, "My God, you've given Japanese women more rights than they have in the U.S. Constitution." To which she replied, "That's not very difficult to do because women are not mentioned in the [U.S.] Constitution."

Many traditionalists, mostly male, blame the "American imposed" Article 24, not to mention other portions of the document, for all kinds of social ills

Todd Crowell worked as a Senior Writer for *Asiaweek* from 1987 to 2001. He is the author of the recent book, *Who's Afraid of Asian Values?*

in modern Japan, everything from the plummeting birthrates to school bullying.

As recently as 2004 an LDP constitutional panel denounced the article as "promoting egotism in postwar Japan" presumably as opposed to the purity of purpose and self-sacrifice that they think characterized Japan in years past.

With the LDP's landslide victory in the Dec. 16 general election, conservatives now have the votes, at least in the Lower House, to propose amendments and changes in the constitution, and they have indicated they will do just that, starting with weakening the constitutional barriers that make it difficult to amend the charter.

It has often been said that of the many reforms undertaken by the U.S. Occupation of Japan after the war, the most lasting was the emancipation of women, exemplified by Article 24 and another provision that gave women the vote. Prior to 1947 women were not only denied the franchise but were prohibited from joining political parties or even taking part in politics.

In April 1946, even before Japan's new constitution went into effect, women voted in the first postwar election to the Lower House of the Diet. They returned an impressive number of women members, about eight percent of the total membership. Japan seemed on its way.

Yet this figure was not exceeded until the election of 2005, nearly 60 years later, when a number of "Koizumi's daughters," named after then PM Junichiro Koizumi, were elected in the LDP landslide that year. Japan continues to rank low among international legislative bodies in the number of women parliamentarians. The Dec. 16 polls did not change that.

Over the years little progress has been made in women's rights. In 1985 the Diet passed the Equal Employment Opportunity Act which improved the working

conditions for the significant numbers of women entering the workforce.

But Japan declines to ratify the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women on the grounds that it would interfere with Japanese customs, specifically the requirement that married couples use only one name. And it wasn't until 1999 that Japan even legalized oral contraceptives. Before that it shared with North Korea the dubious distinction of being the only countries to proscribe their sale. But at least Beate got things moving in the right direction. **1**

Purev Erdene Batochir, *Mongoliin Unen*

by David McNeill

Tokyo-based correspondent Purev Batochir's complaint doesn't sound so different from that of many of her colleagues from around the world: The 30-year-old rarely sells enough stories to newspapers back home to make a decent living. Her problem is compounded, however, by being from one of the planet's poorest countries.

"The average Mongolian has no interest in Japanese politics because they've got too many of their own problems to deal with," she says of her 2.5 million compatriots dur-

ing at his own television station, proving the old adage that ambitious politicians cannot afford to ignore the media.

Purev came to Tokyo seven years ago, after studying Japanese at a Mongolian university. She says she never shared the anti-Japanese sentiments of Mongolia's neighbor China. "I always liked the culture and language. I admired the precision and neatness of Japanese people and wanted to go and see for myself.

"Of course, there are people in Mongo-

ably the only Mongolian correspondent in the entire country.

"There was so much erroneous information in Mongolia," she recalls. "People thought Japan was actually collapsing, that Tokyo was destroyed. I was angry at the stupid things being said, so I thought, 'This is an opportunity for me.' I didn't even want payment. I just wanted to do a job I knew I'd like, and give an accurate picture of what was going on."

She began filing several stories a day

'OF COURSE THERE ARE PEOPLE IN MONGOLIA WHO DISLIKE THE JAPANESE – WE FOUGHT THEM IN THE WAR. BUT THERE HAVE BEEN HUGE CHANGES IN THE LAST 70 YEARS.'

ing a recent interview at the FCCJ.

Even Mongolia's appetite for news about its string of successful sumo exports is pretty limited, she laments.

Like many of the former centrally planned economies, Mongolia is struggling to emerge from the dead hand of Stalinism and transform into a market-led, multiparty democracy. The result has been breakneck economic expansion – the economy grew at a record 17 percent-plus last year – and toxic corruption, fueled by the rise of a new breed of mining oligarchs.

Purev's publication is hardly immune. The daily *Mongoliin Unen* (Mongolian Truth) is the country's oldest newspaper and the official organ of the Mongolian People's Party, which changed its name from the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party after the fall of communism in 1989. The Ulan Bator-based paper was set up by exiled Mongolian revolutionaries in 1920.

The boss of her newspaper is a former advisor to the country's president, she points out. "He's not a proper journalist. To tell you the truth, the paper is like a party mouthpiece," she admits, using the Japanese word *kikanshi* – Purev speaks little English but fluent Japanese. "If I got the chance, I'd like to write for other newspapers too."

Mongolia's corruption briefly became front-page news last year when the country's ex president, Nyamdorj Enkhbayar, was thrown in prison. Among his crimes was illegally privatizing a newspaper and misusing donated broadcasting equip-



for *Unen*, ignoring the pleas from relatives and compatriots to flee Tokyo. "It was fine here," she says. "I wasn't worried at all." Inevitably, that work has tailed off since. Last year, she got a chance to meet the newspaper's president when he came to the FCCJ but there was no full-time contract.

These days she continues to file feature stories every month even as her quest for a proper correspondent's job continues. She has written stories on the exploits of Mongolian

companies in Japan, the problems of Sony and other electronic giants and, of course, sumo. Yokozuna Hakuho is a friend. Luckily, she says, he seems to have emerged clean from the match-fixing scandals that tarnished the sport two years ago – a scandal that upset Mongolians.

Her problem is finding time to research stories while working, and paying her FCCJ monthly membership. "I can manage ¥4,000 a month but what am I going to do when I get to 34?" she laughs, pointing out that her membership fee will more than double.

Someday, she hopes her country develops a genuinely free press that tackles corruption on its own doorstep – and pays a livable wage to its correspondents. "We're not as bad as China but the powerful are becoming more powerful. Journalists should not be afraid to tell the unvarnished truth – that's the first principle of our job. We need them to monitor and dig out what's happening, whatever country we live in." ❶

David McNeill writes for *The Independent*, *The Economist*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and other publications. He is the co-author of *Strong in the Rain: Surviving Japan's Earthquake, Tsunami and Fukushima Nuclear Disaster*.

ALBERT SIEGEL

GOVERNMENT RECONSTRUCTION PLANS ARE FOMENTING FRUSTRATION AND ANGER AS THE VICTIMS OF 3/11 CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE

Rebuilding with red tape in Rikuzentakata

by Julian Ryall

Futoshi Toba has been through a great deal in the last two years, but he appears to be holding up. It is, perhaps, the plight of his community that enables him to put to the back of his mind the thought that the earthquake of March 11, 2011 – and the tsunami that it triggered – killed his wife, Kumi, and 734 other residents of the town of Rikuzentakata.

Toba, now 48, had taken office as mayor of the Iwate Prefecture town less than one month prior to the disaster that claimed a total of nearly 20,000 lives and caused devastation on an almost unimaginable scale along hundreds of kilometers of coastline. As the anniversary of that fateful day approaches, Toba finds himself increasingly frustrated and angry.

"I had been elected on February 6 and took office on February 13. When I saw the devastation, for the first time in my life I felt truly helpless," he said.

Toba was forced to take refuge in the city hall with his colleagues as the waves crashed around them. The following morning, they were able to escape to the relative safety of the mountains that surround the town.

"My wife was still missing at that point, but I was not able to search for her because, as mayor, I had the responsibility of taking care of the entire community," he said. "I did the right thing as the mayor, but as a human being I have a great sense of regret that I was not able to go and search for her."

In the days that followed, the scale of the disaster that had befallen the town became appallingly apparent: around 3,300 of the 8,000 homes in the heart of the city had been destroyed by the waves.

Everywhere Toba looked, the town had been reduced to piles of twisted steel, overturned cars and the detritus of lives lost. The stench of decaying debris mixed with petrol, burned tires and the dead was nearly unbearable.

"We thought that given time, the situation would get better, and that in a year or two things would be more or less back to normal," Toba says. "Now we are coming up on the second anniversary and, frankly speaking, the reconstruction efforts have



not proceeded very well at all."

Toba says the residents of the town are still surrounded by mountains of rubble. Many public buildings that were damaged by the tsunami have yet to be demolished.

"My sense of hopelessness for the future is shared by many of the victims," he said. "There are several reasons why the reconstruction work is so slow, but the biggest problem is the government's way of thinking."

"On the face of it, politicians are very supportive of us and talk about this 'unprecedented disaster' and how we must all work together to help the people of Tohoku recover, how we are all working side by side," he said. "Those are beautiful phrases, but they bear very little relation to the reality."

The examples of bureaucratic red tape and mismanagement are numerous and infuriating, Toba says.

Requests to build new supermarkets to feed the survivors were turned down on the grounds that the land is set aside for agriculture. One ministry that provided much-needed gasoline would not permit troops from the Self-Defense Forces to deliver it because they came under

Julian Ryall is Japan correspondent for *The Daily Telegraph*.

the authority of a different ministry. And it took more than one year to fill in all the paperwork required to cut down trees and level a hill to construct emergency housing units for people who had lost their homes.

"For people who suffered in this tragedy, even 24 hours is a long time," said Toba. "But for the politicians in the Diet, 24 hours is nothing."

He shrugs his disappointment. "Former Prime Minister Naoto Kan visited the town several times while he was still in charge, and I tried to explain to him the difficulties that we were facing," Toba said. "But I really do not think he understood our situation. He had no intention or desire to do anything to help."

The Democratic Party of Japan, which was defeated in December's general election, seemed to lack power, Toba said.

"Representatives of the government came to brief us, but they were unable to take the hard decisions that were needed," he added. "They left us with nothing but a tremendous sense of disappointment."

The people of Rikuzentakata have higher hopes for the new Liberal Democratic Party government of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, although Toba questioned why two local politicians had been given portfolios in the cabinet that are not connected to the reconstruction work.

Despite the lack of comprehensive assistance from the authorities, Toba appears reconciled to the fact that his community will have to do the heavy lifting required to rebuild.

The community is aiming to attract new businesses, although its relatively remote coastal location is off-putting to many potential investors. Approximately 70 percent of the town's fishing industry is back in business, primarily in shellfish and seaweed products. Toba says he would like to make his town a model retirement community for the elderly and infirm.

"I have two missions to fulfill in my life: the first is to rebuild Rikuzentakata as a prosperous town. The second is to make sure that I raise my two sons well," he said. "I promise that Rikuzentakata will be reborn as a beautiful city." ❶

TWO INDUSTRY VETERANS SPEARHEAD AN EFFORT TO PUSH THE BOUNDS OF ONE OF JAPAN'S BIGGEST CULTURAL EXPORTS

Manga gets animated

by Tyler Rothmar

As the country's leviathan electronic firms struggle to keep their blowholes above the swell and the miasma from the Fukushima nuclear disaster refuses to dissipate, Japan is a nation longing for the stories of better days.

Adjust the focus slightly from the sharp economic realities, however, and hopeful scenes take shape. One field where Japan continues to set the global standard is manga and anime. Arguably its greatest modern cultural exports, Japan's manga and anime remain the high-water mark, a beacon to which the rest of the world looks for innovation and quality.

Yet no field is immune to the changing times; the past few years have been difficult as the industry battles online piracy, searches for a way to cut production costs and struggles to stay relevant.

At an FCCJ event in January, venture company Comic Animation Inc., headed by CEO Toshiyuki Tateishi, unveiled a new format for artistic expression that harnesses the power of our seemingly ubiquitous media devices. Through instantaneous distribution of content to tablets and smartphones via a free app available from Apple's iTunes Store, Comic Animation is blurring the lines between reader and protagonist, and indeed, between the forms of manga and anime themselves.

To illustrate the kind of content Tateishi hopes to market, he was joined by two noted creators: Mamoru Oshii, manga artist and director of *Ghost in the Shell* and *Patlabor 2*, and Kamui Fujiwara, a manga artist of *Dragon Quest* fame. Both men agreed to showcase their original work in what was essentially the new format's first test drive.

Oshii's 12-episode story, *Chimamire Mai Love*, is about a boy who enjoys giving blood who meets a young female vampire, and his struggle to keep her lust for blood sated. Although the plotline is fixed, navigating the story feels like a role-playing game or a Choose Your Own Adventure book.

"The reader, or rather the user, moves

the story forward with the touchscreen. The main character doesn't appear that often. We want the user to feel like the main protagonist," Oshii explained, as tablets containing the work circulated. Soon the room was randomly punctuated by chimes and other sounds produced by journalists' interaction with the devices.

Oshii said although *Chimamire Mai Love* is unique in that the user literally animates the story at their own pace, pausing to linger on and explore scenes they enjoy, it also relies on some staple manga techniques. "I believe one of the key features of Japanese manga is the use of symbols to express emotions. . . . I tried to keep



Comic Animation Inc. CEO, Toshiyuki Tateishi, and manga artists Mamoru Oshii and Kamui Fujiwara at the Club

the character more or less static, while manipulating the symbols around the character to demonstrate emotions."

Fujiwara contributed his own 12-episode story inspired by a kind of traditional Japanese theater. Entitled *Gin-iro no Usagi*, its main character, a young boy, wakes to find himself in a fantastic world populated by ghosts and other mythical creatures.

Endowed with extraordinary vision, the boy uses it to help a silver rabbit who is attacked by the strange and horrible creatures. When viewed on a tablet or smartphone, the device senses small shifts in angle, causing characters and backgrounds to appear to slide against each other.

Fujiwara explained the inspiration for this novel mode of interaction: "Normal

Tyler Rothmar is a Tokyo-based freelance writer and editor.

procedure involves drawing the background and the character separately and integrating them on a PC for final touches. I thought this so-called layering process might be the key to creative expression.

"About a year ago, a traditional performance of *nozoki karakuri* came to the local shrine . . . it consisted of a wooden board with semi-three-dimensional fabric structures attached . . . so it was like a paper screen, but more 3D. People look through a small hole in the box to enjoy this semi-3D mini-theater. I started to see the tablet as a hole through which the user can enjoy the shifting of the character and the background, albeit virtually."

Since the launch of Oshii and Fujiwara's novel content via the iTunes Store in both English and Japanese on January 20, Tateishi said interest from abroad has been promising, and predicted healthy growth at home. Although the app itself is free, the first episode of *Chimamire Mai Love* sells for ¥250, while the first *Gin-iro no Usagi* sells for ¥170.

As technological innovation pushes the bounds of our interactions with

devices, Marshall McLuhan's increasingly relevant maxim that 'the medium is the message' again comes to the fore. Tateishi said Comic Animation "expects many unimaginable new device capabilities, and we would like to keep pace with such developments to produce content." Despite the possibilities, Oshii lamented a certain tendency in his industry toward the status quo.

"The animation world doesn't like innovation very much. It's a bunch of people who like to repeat the same thing over and over. . . . Viewers are also like that," he said. "I don't feel motivated if I don't engage in new things. But if we do too many new things, we'll dry up, both of us. So the idea is to dabble in new things and then go back to our conventional work as manga and anime creators. The shifting back and forth is the important part." ❶



An interview with FCCJ Executive Chef Tatsuo Kobayashi

by Lucy Birmingham

No. 1 Shimbun last interviewed FCCJ Executive Chef Tatsuo Kobayashi when he had just taken over the helm of the Club's busy kitchen last year. This former Iron Chef contestant (and winner), talked then of big plans and the challenge ahead. After six months of catering to the demands of Club members and a heavy schedule of event catering, we thought we'd check in and see how he was handling the pressure, and whether his goals and his idea of the perfect menu had changed.

Lucy Birmingham: What convinced you to sign on as the club's chef despite the many challenges you knew you would be facing?

Tatsuo Kobayashi: I'd never worked at a private club before so I thought it would be a good experience. I knew that it would be difficult, and I wanted to take on the challenge. I'm the type who's willing to take on anything.

Do you have a problem-solving strategy?
I try to solve them on the spot.

What kind of issues are you facing?
It's probably my fault, but sometimes there are communication gaps. In most hotels and restaurants, parties and events are scheduled with time in between for food preparation. But at the FCCJ, events are sometimes bunched together, so the kitchen has to prepare event dishes and handle regular service for the restaurant at the same time. There are big overlaps and sometimes accidents happen. I'll be concentrating on a banquet, for example,

and overlook a small event that's going on. I can handle it, but most of the staff don't have the professional experience needed in these situations. We can get into a panic situation.

Would more staff and cooks help remedy that?
Restaurant budgets everywhere have been shrinking so the number of staff and chefs has been shrinking as well. But it's not so much a matter of numbers; it's more about training and experience. We don't have a lot of professional-level staff or cooks, and the younger cooks lack a sense of professionalism. It's not just at the Club, it's that way in the restaurant business overall.

What do you mean by professionalism?
Young cooks don't seek perfection. They only look at the surface – how the dish appears – and don't concentrate on the taste. I always taste the dishes I'm cooking and consider what needs to be added to make it perfect. A cut of meat, for example, may need to be grilled longer or less.

I'm trying to make things that appeal to all the senses. Young people tend to give up easily on this.

Is it just a matter of training?
It's very difficult for a chef to train staff on the job, especially one-on-one. Many cooks are only capable of reaching a certain level. I'm trying to do training but I'm very busy with the many elements of my job, such as preparing menus, etc. I'm in a tough spot.

Don't young people train at cooking schools?
They do, so I don't know why their level isn't higher. It seems to be a problem with this young generation in particular.

Before joining the FCCJ you were in Seoul working as executive chef at a French restaurant. Do Koreans and Japanese have very different preferred tastes in food?
Yes, quite different. Koreans like sweet and spicy food. They don't like salt added into their dishes since they like to add the salt themselves. It's because they have very individual tastes, which makes it tough for a chef to create tasty dishes with a wide appeal. French food isn't so popular there. Italian food is.

Because the FCCJ is a foreign press club there's a big mix of foreigners and Japanese. It must be difficult to make your dishes consistently appealing.
It is quite challenging here because the Members have such a variety of tastes. There are some who don't like strong flavors and others who do. When I had my

own restaurant I made things based on my own taste, and it catered to people who liked that taste. At the Club I need to serve what the Members want, even if it is impossible to keep everyone satisfied all the time. If 60 to 70 percent of the Members understand this and are happy, then I'm happy.

What kind of flavoring do you prefer?
That's a difficult question. I like to bring out the flavor of each ingredient so the Members can taste every ingredient individually. I'm trying my best to achieve that.

The salmon dish at a recent Book Break was delicious. Did you add something special?
In the middle of making the sauce, I tasted it, as usual, and decided to change the recipe. I thought a bit of mustard would improve it so I added some mustard seeds. Whenever I'm making something, I always change the recipe a bit, even right before it's served. So often what is served is slightly different from what's on the menu. Sometimes I tone down the flavors or increase them. I'm always thinking of ways to make the dish better. I want to make the dishes as perfect as possible so the Members will be happy.

Are you concerned about food safety after the Fukushima disaster?
Right now, I'm not too concerned about food safety. But because we have to support the Japanese economy and the local Tohoku producers, the kitchen buys some products from the region.

The government says the food in Tohoku is within safety limits. Do you believe that?
I want to believe it. Even so, we make sure that all ingredients used in the club have been tested for radiation. We don't buy products from Fukushima.

How about rice and fish?
Japan is very strict about rice and we can only use Japanese rice. We don't use a lot of fish from Tohoku since its safety is still uncertain. Although we have a lot of requests, I don't want to serve oysters or shellfish from Tohoku, even if the region is famous for them. We mainly buy fish coming from Japan's southern regions, and though there's still a variety of seafood and fish to choose from, there is less of a choice than in previous years.

Lucy Birmingham is a Tokyo-based journalist who writes regularly for *Time*. She is the co-author of *Strong in the Rain: Surviving Japan's Earthquake, Tsunami and Fukushima Nuclear Disaster*

How about oysters from abroad?
I've never served oysters from abroad, only those grown in Japan. But I'm thinking of using New Zealand oysters because I've heard they're good.

What about other ingredients?
All our shrimp comes from abroad, as well as asparagus and other special ingredients. Like most restaurants, we mainly buy foods produced in Japan, especially when they're in season. I avoid Chinese-produced foods as much as possible. They are not rated highly and there are problems with agricultural chemicals.

What are your goals now?
For now, I just want the situation in the kitchen to calm down a bit. I want to train the staff more. And, most importantly, I want keep the Members happy.

Do you ever get advice from other chefs?
Yes, I do seek advice from friends who are chefs. If they come to the club kitchen for a look, they're always very surprised. They'll say to me, "Wow, you've got a very tough job." I ask them if they'd like to try it, but they always have a quick response: "No thank you!" (Laughing)

Do you have a chance to get feedback from Members?
Some Members have wandered into the kitchen to tell me they have or haven't liked a dish, and I'm very thankful. When we're busy, I can't really attend to visitors, but Members are very welcome otherwise. It's important that I get feedback.

Then I can adjust the taste little by little to make the food better and better.

The layout is very different from most restaurant kitchens, yes?
In the Club it's very easy for Members to enter the kitchen. (Laughing as he points to the easy access from the main dining room.)

How often do you change the menu?
Restaurants change the menu every one or two months. We change the PAC press conference lunch menu once a month, and the overall "grand" menu once every two or three months. We'll also change the menu on the spot depending upon what ingredients are available and what's in season.

If a member requests a certain dish can you make it?
We'll try our best to accommodate the request if we're not busy with a party or event.

The portions seem quite large.
The portions are on the large size, which is what I was asked to serve from the beginning. This is something I need to give some thought to, since restaurants usually try to control the size of the portions.

And the price is quite low compared to most commercial restaurants.
That's true, and I'm trying to adapt to that.

Sounds like you've been having some tough moments here. Are you having any fun?
It's fun to be the FCCJ chef because I love to cook and prepare food. 🍴

CHEF KOBAYASHI'S GRILLED CHICKEN WITH HERBS AND SOY SAUCE

Four servings

- 4 chicken thighs
- salt and pepper
- Marinade**
- 120cc soy sauce
- 30cc white wine
- 1 garlic clove
- 3-4 lemon slices
- 40-50cc olive oil
- thyme, oregano, rosemary and chervil

Pat the chicken thighs dry with kitchen paper, then lightly season with salt and pepper.

Mix the marinade ingredients. Place the chicken thigh in the marinade and leave for at least 30 minutes.

Heat the oven to 180c and grill until done. The chicken can also be cooked in a frying pan over medium heat.

CHEF KOBAYASHI'S CREAM OF MUSHROOM SOUP

Four servings

- 400g mix of shiitake, shimeji and maitake mushrooms
- 500cc chicken stock
- whipping cream
- grated garlic
- chives
- salt and pepper to taste

Clean the mushrooms.

Bring soup stock to a boil and add mushrooms for 3 to 4 minutes.

Remove any scum that rises to the top and put the soup stock with the mushrooms into a blender.

Whip the fresh cream until it forms in soft peaks. Add grated garlic and diced chives.

Add the whipped cream to the soup mixture according to taste.

▶ WHY JAL AND ANA TOOK THE UNUSUAL STEP OF
GROUNDING BOEING'S VAUNTED NEW DREAMLINER



Dark skies for the Dreamliner

by Geoff Tudor

Once is happenstance, twice is coincidence. Three times it's enemy action. So said James Bond adversary Auric Goldfinger.

Adopting the Goldfinger approach to crisis management, Japanese carriers All Nippon Airways and Japan Airlines took the unusual but understandable step of voluntarily grounding their fleets of Boeing 787 Dreamliners after each experienced lithium-ion battery combustion incidents within 10 days of each other.

The first was in a JAL 787 parked at Boston's Logan Airport on Jan. 7. ANA's incident on Jan. 16 was on a domestic flight, forcing an emergency landing and a dramatic evacuation of the aircraft by emergency slides. It came after a rush of other 787 incidents, none of which was particularly serious, despite intensive media coverage. ANA's reaction to take the "safety first" route was a brave but correct decision by president Shinichiro Ito to make in ultra safety-conscious Japan.

With safety of the Japan-made lithium-ion batteries in question, the two airlines, two of the biggest customers for the Dreamliner, announced that the groundings would provide time for safety checks of all their aircraft, without specifying how long the process would take.

For both Japanese airlines, customer confidence in the 787's safety is paramount. ANA, with the biggest global order of 66 airplanes, already has 17 in its fleet. JAL ordered 45 and currently owns seven. Neither plans cuts.

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), already reviewing the Boston incident, seemed initially taken aback by the two carriers' action.

But within hours, they issued an Airworthiness Directive grounding all six U.S.-based 787s – all operated by United Airlines. Around the world other regulators followed suit. A total of 49 airplanes were grounded, including the 24 based in Japan. The last time the FAA took this action was in 1979, when the DC-10 was grounded after a fatal accident.

Teams of investigators from the U.S. and Japanese Transport Safety Boards, the FAA and the Japan Civil Aviation Bureau of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), Boeing boffins and manufacturers of the batteries and associated electrical systems have been working round the clock to investigate the problem, with no success as of this writing. There is speculation that finding a solution could take months.

Early suspicions of the batteries have been put on hold, as investigations to date show they were not overcharged. But questions linger – why did they fail? Examination of the electric system continues – a complex undertaking as components come from many sources. System designers are Thales, a French company. They chose the Japan-made batteries, while the battery chargers are designed by a British company but manufactured in the U.S.

As the grounding goes on, it will affect the production plans and cashflow of many makers of parts and systems worldwide.

About 35 percent of the Dreamliner's main components are made in Japan, involving key players in the nation's aerospace industry. Toray Industries provides the carbon fiber which is used for much of the aircraft's construction. Mitsubishi

Heavy Industries makes the wings, Kawasaki Heavy Industries produces the upper fuselage and the central wing box is made by Fuji Heavy Industries. The lithium-ion batteries come from GS Yuasa. Toilet units are supplied by Jamco Ltd. If production of the aircraft is delayed, these stakeholders could be hit badly.

Despite lengthy test flying by the manufacturers, all new aircraft models experience glitches, euphemistically termed "teething troubles," when introduced to the rigors of commercial operations. The 747 and the more recent Airbus 380 also suffered, though none called for grounding.

The Boeing 787 design is a radical change in the industry, with state-of-the-art technologies never used before to such an extent. By using electrical power from the lithium-ion batteries for functions previously handled by pneumatics and hydraulics, the 787 makes big weight savings. The same is true of the light composite materials such as carbon fiber in the wings and fuselage. The overall result is a ballpark figure saving in fuel consumption of about 20 percent.

For airlines, such an airplane is the answer to their dreams, allowing them to operate to many destinations which other airplanes cannot profitably reach.

ANA believed that being the 787 launch customer would help raise their profile in the global market. Long in JAL's shadow, the carrier has always dreamed of being Asia's number one airline. In April 2004 ANA ordered 50 of the aircraft, later increased to 66. They built their future business planning around the aircraft, and the slogan, "787 – First to Fly," was featured on promotion materials and business cards.

Though three years of delay, ANA stuck by their choice, and on October 26, 2011, operated the world's first 787 commercial flight, a charter flight from Tokyo's Narita airport to Hong Kong.

Now the airline is cancelling up to 60 domestic flights and an average of seven international operations a day. JAL, meanwhile, has cancelled a small number of international routes. To date the two airlines have announced flight cancellations up to mid February.

It's ironic that the airline that boasted, "First to Fly," was the first to ground the new airplane, but ANA strongly believes in the Dreamliner and hopes for a successful outcome as early as possible. For the time being the airline has no plans to radically its business plans and forecasts... but that could change. ❶

Geoff Tudor writes for *Orient Aviation*, Hong Kong

FCCJ EXHIBITION

▶ A DOCUMENTARIAN FINDS SUFFERING AND
SOLACE IN THE STORIES OF AGENT ORANGE VICTIMS



A mother comforts her child, Duyen, in this still from Sakata's first documentary film.

From A Personal Requiem to Silent Spring

by Masako Sakata

In 2003, my husband, photojournalist Greg Davis, died of liver cancer. He was stationed in South Vietnam with the U.S. military from 1967 to 1970, and I was told that Agent Orange, the defoliant that American forces used widely during the war, was suspected to be the cause of his illness and sudden death.

Until then, I knew very little about Agent Orange and the affect it has had on so many people. I felt lost without Greg. Yet life had to go on, and I needed to know what killed him; what, exactly, Agent Orange was. I decided to make a record of my journey of discovery, and this resulted in a documentary film called *Agent Orange – a Personal Requiem*.

When I visited Vietnam in the summer of 2004, I had no idea what to expect. I thought I would have to search for victims in isolated regions. But as I traveled from Hanoi to the Mekong Delta, I found them everywhere – in big cities and small hamlets. I was overwhelmed by their numbers and the problems they faced. Some led lives of great severity; others' circumstances were less tragic. But all were coping with the tragedy with whatever means they had. I was moved by the love and care that families and communities extended to the unfortunate ones. The tenderness between the mothers and children sometimes seeped into me through the camera lens, and their struggles helped me in my own healing process. In the worst situations, I still saw hope.

When I finished the film, I thought I would move on to something else, but I couldn't let it go. I decided to make a sequel, to tell more stories about the victims of Agent Orange.

I moved to Vietnam in 2010 in order to have a more intimate look at the situation, to better grasp the larger scope of the issue. During this time I also came into contact with a group of widows and children of American Vietnam veterans. Their husbands or fathers were dead, sick or suffering from PTSD. Some of the children were born with severe disabilities.

Heather Bowser was one of them. She was born missing a leg and many of her fingers – from what was thought to be her soldier father's exposure to Agent Orange during the war. Heather visited locations in Vietnam where her father fought, and discovered the importance of building links between victims in the U.S. and Vietnam. Meeting her was a harsh lesson for me in how the defoliant continues to harm people so many decades later, even at such a distance.

In 2011, I completed my second film, *Living the Silent Spring*, depicting the struggle and courage of American and Vietnamese children who bear the scars of Agent Orange. I took the title from *Silent Spring*, Rachel Carson's famous book that was one of the first calls awakening the public to the danger of pesticide.

The warning she delivered in her book

was ignored by the U.S. military 50 years ago, and many people – and the environment – are paying the price today. In making *Living the Silent Spring*, I wanted to express the importance and the urgency of preventing further environmental disasters. I wanted to show that actions that are being taken now may have devastating results some 50 years down the road, and that we are responsible for the future. As I was editing the film, the Fukushima disaster happened. It may be too late to undo what's already done, but we should at least look for things we can do that will lessen the impact.

Carson wrote, "We stand now where two roads diverge. The road we have long been traveling is deceptively easy, a smooth superhighway on which we progress with great speed, but at its end lies disaster. The other fork of the road – the one 'less traveled by' – offers our last, our only chance to reach a destination that assures the preservation of our earth. The choice, after all, is ours to make"

Through the experience of making these two documentaries over the past 10 years, I have learned to reach out to people and to truths that are often hidden.

I am so thankful to Greg for having left in me a little fire and a seed of hope. He continues to live within me in this way. ❶

Masako Sakata is a documentary film maker focusing on environmental awareness through her films, writing and talks.

FCCJ EXHIBITION

Remembering Greg Davis (1948-2003)

"Photography is a way of seeing the beautiful, desolate and deadly human spectacle, bringing some clarity to the complicated business of life." – Greg Davis

The world of photography has gone through phenomenal changes in the past decade. I often think with nostalgia of those days when my late husband Greg would pack his (all analog) Nikons, Leicas and Canons, along with numerous yellow packages of Kodak film, for his assignments, often to Southeast Asia.

I wonder how he would be coping with today's increasingly digital world – with Skype, Twitter, Facebook, Wikileaks. While I believe he would have embraced their power to network and inform, he would not have welcomed the way information has become so lightweight, often lacking the weight of experience and expertise.

On the 10th anniversary of his passing, I am pleased to share some of his photographs along with the following words by the Welsh Magnum photographer Philip Jones Griffiths, best known for his book, *Vietnam Inc.* He wrote this for *The Digital Journalist* in June 2003. Sadly, Philip himself passed away in 2008; their poignant and critical points views of the world are very much missed. – Masako Sakata

THE WORLD OF PHOTOGRAPHY IS A POORER PLACE.

Greg Davis, one of the most important photographers of recent years, has passed away. He was born in California of Russian descent and, like many American teenagers in the Sixties, found himself in Vietnam. Later he would explain, "Vietnam at war was akin to an Alice in an evil Wonderland . . . the death of innocence." The three years he spent "in-country" not only turned him into an anti-war activist but also ensured a lifelong distrust of all authority.

After Vietnam, Greg briefly went back to the States, quickly got disillusioned and returned to Asia, settling in Japan. He discovered photography and set about exploring other countries.

I first met him 25 years ago in Seoul where he had "gone local" – preferring to sleep on the floor of a Korean hotel during his assignment. This, I remember thinking, was a very different kind of American. As he put it so eloquently. "I became an exile. A voluntary one, for sure. I have largely escaped from the constraints and bonds of my birth, language, culture and religion. This is essential to my photography. It gives me the pleasure of finding things out. A mirror to critically hold up against all my putative ideas."

Greg was a born anarchist and libertarian. He had a keen moral sense and was quick to detect injustice and, with his camera, reveal the perpetrators. He was exceptionally kind and generous. As his colleague Peter Charlesworth put it, "He was generous in all senses of the word; with his praise, with his wallet and with the sharing of his contacts and knowledge. Greg rarely had a bad word to say about anyone, unless of course they were politicians, petty officials or bureaucrats and then he would give you an earful."

Greg was in many ways part of the old school of photojournalism. He believed his art required form and content. Often, when we traveled together, the talk would be about the light, the approach, or the best angle, but the major discussion would always come down to, "What does it mean!" He strove for eloquence in his pictures. He wanted his photographs to speak out, even shout out a message.

Recently an old friend of ours admitted, "You know, I sometimes thought some of Greg's theories were a little crazy but now, wow, he was the one who got it right!" Today, more than ever, the world needs people like Greg Davis; photographers with inquiring minds tinged with scepticism. Now, every time the phone rings, I expect to hear his voice as I have almost daily for the past 25 years.

The silence deafens my heart . . . ❶

– Philip Jones Griffiths



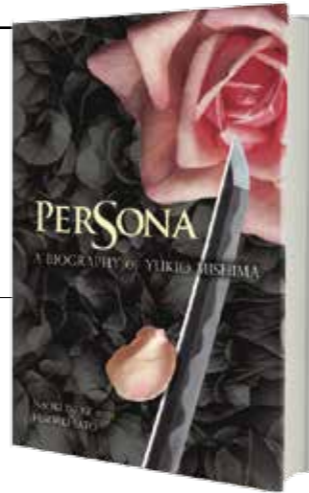
Top, a scrapmetal worker in Saigon. Above, Greg on the road in Cambodia. Right, this farmer's portrait was selected for the cover of *TIME*. Far right, a shop in Hanoi.



BOOK REVIEW

PERSONA: A Biography of Yukio Mishima

By Naoki Inose and Hiroaki Sato (Stone Bridge Press, 2013)



reviewed by Andrew Potthecary

What would Yukio Mishima – individual, clown, actor, imposter, gangster, or aristocrat, as theater producer Nobuko Albery once described him in a BBC arts program – make of today’s Japan?

It’s an unanswerable question, but one that rears its head when reading the new biography, *Persona*. If the LDP in power, questions about Article 9 of the Constitution, Shintaro Ishihara’s “emotive activism” creating a sense of political crisis, and an awkward Japan-U.S. relationship all sound familiar, it’s not far from the political landscape of 40 years ago, when Mishima committed *seppuku* after a doomed attempt to incite the SDF to rebellion and to reinstate the rule/role of the emperor.

Persona’s original Japanese version was an analysis of Mishima in relation to the politics and society in which he was born, lived, worked and acted, written by current Tokyo governor Naoki Inose in 1995. This new English edition is not simply a translation; it has been embellished with a study of Mishima’s “literary, theoretical and ideological theories and activities” by Hiroaki Sato.

As to that ideology: Mishima still suffers a nomenclature that includes the term “fascist,” but *Persona* – as did Marguerite Yourcenar’s *Mishima: a Vision of the Void* – reveals why it doesn’t fit, while never shying away from analysis of his rightwing ideology.

I started reading Mishima at school and continued even after I became involved in anti-fascist campaigns. So how do I explain – or justify – my admiration of the work and the man with such seemingly opposing views?

I am not alone. *Persona* has a reassuring passage about Mishima’s final interview with a Marxist literary critic whose questions “were not just probing but frequently antagonistic.” In the end, the critic admitted being told once by another

author after attacking Mishima, “If you like Mishima so much, come right out and say it. That would make your argument more logical.” And the critic acknowledged that it was true.

If Mishima were merely a purist and right-winger, he would of course be dull to all but fellow travelers. It’s the constant paradox that makes him interesting. *Persona*, in its detail and length, does a fair job of getting behind the multiple contradictions. His bisexuality, in fact, often more clearly expressed in his fiction than declared in his lifetime, is only one more “double” aspect.

The married Mishima’s adult homosexuality is broached early but hesitantly. Inose asks, “Was Mishima exaggerating or in some way faking his homosexual tendencies?” Fortunately, his question seems rhetorical, and the authors employ more – and occasionally explicit – examples of the reality. But if obfuscation remains, it wasn’t helped by Mishima himself: a month before he died, he is quoted as saying, “Hmm. I wonder if I have some homosexual elements in me, though I do not think I’m homosexual...”

Good grief, he wondered!? His sexuality was complex, but this statement was, of course, disingenuous, especially considering that it was the same month he discussed a limited edition of *Confessions of a Mask* that would have a glass cover – to indicate that the supposedly “masked” narrative was, in fact, plainly autobiographical.

A THIRD BIOGRAPHY

What does the book bring to English-language readers that FCCJ member Henry Scott Stokes or John Nathan didn’t cover in their biographies? Scott Stokes’ book remains perhaps the introduction to Mishima, with its journalist’s research and insights from his friendship with the author. *Persona* is a work of greater research and analysis – with benefit of 20

more years of research and Sato’s further additions – and is a great find for Mishima readers who want to be taken further into the work and his context. It also has some extracts that haven’t been available in English. (Note to publishers: if there’s a market for another biography, surely there is also one for not-yet-translated works – for a start, his epic *Kyoko’s House*.)

There are quibbles. Some of the text could have done with an extra round under an editor’s eye. Although this seems to improve after the early pages, it remains noticeable in translations of quotes from the man or his books. Though Sato has translated Mishima (the novel *Silk and Insight*) in the past, his retranslation of the poem “Icarus” is an example. The published translation by John Bester includes the two flowing lines, “Is the blue of the sky like a dream/Was it devised by the earth, to which I belonged...” *Persona* clumsily has it: “Was everything what the earth where I belonged schemed/The blue of the sky a hypothesis...”

BACK TO TODAY

Mishima died – disappointed in a modernizing Japan – after a life infused with inklings of death. But while the political situation noted above remains, it’s impossible to imagine Mishima living now. The book quotes him in 1970: “I am deepening my sense every day that, if things continue as is, ‘Japan’ may cease to exist. If it does, there may remain in its place, in one corner of the Far East, a great economic power that is inorganic, empty, neutral, intermediate-color, wealthy, and shrewd.”

We may not need the mortal cut that Mishima prescribed for himself, but even without sharing his ideology, one might wonder if his fears were justified. ❶

Andrew Potthecary is a freelance designer and art director of *Number 1 Shimbun*. His design-work name – Forbidden Colour – is partly inspired by Mishima.

NEW MEMBERS



LUCY ALEXANDER arrived in Tokyo in April 2012 after 10 years in London as a staff writer for *The Times*. She now works with the *Times* office in Tokyo in a freelance capacity, writing business and news stories for the paper. She has also written about Japan for the *Wall Street Journal* and her new year’s resolution is to write more widely for other publications.

Originally from St Andrews in Scotland, Lucy graduated from Oxford University, and in 2000, she joined *The Times*. In 2006, she became the staff writer at *Bricks & Mortar*, the *Times*’ property section, where she had to master basic economics and advanced jargon. She spent five years reporting on the British property market, from the ultra-extravagant London bubble to deprived post-industrial estates, across the news, business and features pages of the paper.

She decided to move to Japan when her husband was offered a position in Tokyo earlier this year, and is now juggling two expatriate toddlers with life as a freelance foreign correspondent.

REGULAR MEMBER
Lucy Alexander, *The Times*

Takashii keda, *Landscape Co., Ltd.*
Masaichi Nakauchi, *International Restaurant Service Co., Ltd.*

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS
Kazumasa Suezawa, *Fujita Kanko Inc.*

2012 Autumn Golf Tournament



Participants in the FCCJ Autumn Golf Tournament held on Nov. 15 at the Lakewood Golf Club in Kanagawa. The winner of the overall score and best gross score was Yoshihisa Asai. Sports Committee Chairman Duke Ishikawa wishes to thank Lakewood and PING Japan for their support.

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Atlantic Monthly Press

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Fujimoto, Kenji
Kodansha
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Kurokawa Kisho no Sakuhin
Kurokawa, Kisho
Bijyutsu Shuppansha
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Seven Stories Press
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James, P. D.
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