

**APRIL
2014**

**JAPAN
CREATIVE
CENTRE**

EMBASSY OF JAPAN

CULTURAL E-MAGAZINE

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 2014

UPCOMING EVENTS IN JCC

05 - 16 Apr 2014 ["10 Nights of Dream" : Glass Art Exhibition](#)

26 Apr - 10 May 2014 ["Change The World" Exhibition by NHN](#)

SUPPORTED EVENTS

15 - 27 Apr 2014 [Ikebana International Singapore Chapter 135 Annual Exhibition @ Paragon](#)

08 May 2014 [Sachiyo Live with Yasukazu Kano @ Chamber \(The Arts House\)](#)

RELATED EVENTS

19 Apr - 18 May 2014 [Tomio Koyama Gallery Presents Goh Chai Seng's " Some Truth"](#)

25 Apr - 25 May 2014 [Liang Court- Celebrates Kodomo no Hi](#)

26 Apr 2014 [Dansu - Japanese Dance Workshop](#)

30 Apr - 01 May 2014 [KAGEMI : Beyond the Metaphors of Mirrors by Sankai Juku \(Japan\)](#)

12 May 2014 [May'n 10th year Anniversary World Tour @ Orchard Hotel](#)



"10 Nights of Dream" Glass Art Exhibition



NHN: Change the World Exhibition

Further information and updates about JCC events can be found on the [JCC Website](#) and [Facebook](#)

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Ikebana Arrangement by First Master Yuko Niiji

1 OVERVIEW

In March, JCC held an array of events from Ikebana (Flower Arrangement) Exhibitions as well as Ikebana Demonstration by First Master Yuko Niiji. The Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Returnee Reception was also conducted to share the experience of participants. Towards the end of the month, JCC screened Japanese movie “Quartet!” with Singer-Songwriter Sachiyo as the guest speaker for the event.

1.1 “IN BLOSSOMS” IKEBANA EXHIBITION & OPENING CEREMONY

Co-organised by Japan Creative Centre (JCC) and Ohara School of Ikebana Singapore Chapter, “In Blossoms”, Ikebana Exhibition was held from 13-15 March at JCC.

Ohara School of Ikebana Singapore Chapter is one of the schools under Ikebana International Singapore Chapter 135, teaching the delicate art form of Ikebana. The organisation is a not-for-profit cause to promote the understanding and appreciation of the Japanese way of flower arrangement.

This year marks the 30th Year Anniversary of Ohara School of Ikebana Singapore Chapter, which the organisation celebrated by presenting “In Blossoms” Ikebana Exhibition.

The exhibition showcased 36 arrangements done by members of Ohara School of Ikebana not



Ikebana Exhibition display

only from the Singapore Chapter but also from Hong Kong and Canada as well. The Opening Ceremony was held on 13 March commencing with the opening remarks by the Director of JCC, Mr Toshihide Ando who commended the organisation for their dedication and efforts in cultivating the art of Ikebana in Singapore. A short message was also given by Ms Grace Chan

President of Ohara School of Ikebana Singapore Chapter.

1.2 “IN BLOSSOMS” IKEBANA DEMONSTRATION

Shortly after the Opening Ceremony of “In Blossoms” Flower Exhibition, a special demonstration was held at JCC. In view of 30th Anniversary of Ohara School of Ikebana, First Master Yuko Nijji was invited to perform a demonstration exclusively for guests.



First Master Yuko Nijji during the demonstration

Ms Yuko Nijji made five demonstrative arrangements in a short time span of 10 – 15 minutes each. She shared that in Ikebana having 心象描写 (Shinshōbyōsha) or mental imagery of what is hoped to be conveyed in the arrangement is important. She also mentioned that Ikebana should be arranged from the viewer’s perspective and not that of the person doing the arrangement.

Ikebana due to their contour and lines of branches and stems, require structures to be propped up vertically or in the direction of flow without drooping off. To ensure this, Ms Nijji suggested attaching a stick to the branch and vase in a way that it maneuvers without falling.



First Master Yuko Nijji’s demonstrative pieces

Ms Niiji shared that her inspiration for her main piece was the idea to create movement in her arrangement. Using dried bush, she placed emphasis on the branches rather than on flowers as she believed that the beauty of flowers may draw attention away from the branches. To Ms Niiji, the branches themselves were remarkably exquisite and she wanted to capture this, which normally may go unnoticed due to the vibrant colour of flowers. Her idea in creating movement in the arrangement was to make it seem as if it were moving in the direction of the wind from left to right.



First Master Yuko Niiji with her main piece

1.3 WELCOME BACK JET ALUMNI RECEPTION

The Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme is an effort implemented by the Japanese government to promote and strengthen grass-roots international exchange between Japan and other nations. It aims to promote internationalism in Japan's local communities by helping to improve foreign language education. Participants are placed in appointed areas in Japan where they live and teach English to Japanese students.



JET programme returnees listening to the presentation of other participants



JET program returnees taking a fun group photo

experiences from imparting their knowledge and skills to students in Japan as well as fostering bonds between both Singapore and Japan.

JCC co-organised a ‘Welcome Back’ reception with The Japan Council of Local Authorities for International Relations, Singapore (CLAIR Singapore) which took place on 6 March, where participants shared their memories and valuable learning experiences from their exchange in Japan.

1.4 LITTLE BY LITTLE: CULTURAL EXCHANGE AT THE LITTLE ARTS ACADEMY



At Little Arts Academy

The programme has proved over and over again to be successful as seen in its repeated applications yearly. Additionally, JET returnees from the successful completion of the contract, are invited to gather for receptions where they share their experiences from the programme. Year after year, JET returnees have brought back rich and fulfilling

JCC collaborated with the Singapore International Foundation (SIF) in holding a cultural exchange at the Little Arts Academy (LAA) on 8th March.

Shamisen Master Baisho Matsumoto was invited to this event where over 20 students from the academy participated.

Mr Masato Kinoshita, Researcher from JCC began the day's event by giving a talk about Japanese Manga. Next it was the students' turn to demonstrate a local Malay wedding ceremony.

Moving on to the highlight, the students were treated to a lively and energetic performance by Mr Matsumoto and members from Hibikiya Drum Group. On top of experiencing live traditional Japanese music using the Shamisen and the Taiko drum, the students also enthusiastically danced to the popular folk song Soran Bushi.

Overall the event was a fulfilling experience filled with fun and laughter, with the students gaining an insight into the world of traditional Japan music.



Performance by Shamisen Master Matsumoto Baisho

1.5 JCC CINEMA 26: "QUARTET!"

JCC held its 26th movie screening event on 29 March, featuring the Japanese movie "Quartet!". The movie is about a dysfunctional family of four who become closer and bond through music. Kai, his sister and their parents are musically gifted but have long since forgotten the joys that music gives them due to various struggles and setbacks that they face. Kai's idea of forming a family quartet sends them on a journey to mend their relationships and re-ignites the love for music that was once forgotten.



During the movie screening

The production of “Quartet!” was mainly set for filming in Urayasu City of Chiba Prefecture, Japan. It was during the period of filming, that the Great East Japan Earthquake shook the region. Despite the turmoil, the residents of Urayasu helped clear rubble and support with extras in the movie. The completion and success of the film was a reflection of the people’s harmonious spirit, optimism and perseverance for recovery.



Ms Sachiyo sharing her concert experiences

As such, a sharing session was held by Singer-Songwriter Sachiyo on her concert "Songs from Singapore to Tohoku" which she organises and performs every year since the Great East Japan Earthquake happened to comfort disaster victims. Ms Sachiyo shared her experience and stories about the activities she undertook together with Singaporean musicians to support disaster aids. She shared that she had learned much about the importance of music in our lives through these efforts.



Ms Sachiyo being presented the Certificate of Appreciation by Director of JCC, Mr Toshihide Ando

2 JAPANESE CULTURAL FACT OF THE MONTH

2.1 GOLDEN WEEK

Many Japanese workers get about a week off around the end of April and beginning of May. This is because there is cluster of national holidays during this time.

The "week" starts on April 29, a national holiday that used to be celebrated as the birthday of Emperor Showa, who passed away in 1989. It is now celebrated as Greenery Day, a day for nature appreciation.

May 3 is Constitution Memorial Day. The present Constitution of Japan came into effect on this day in 1947. May 5 is Children's Day, set aside to pray for the healthy growth and happiness of boys and girls. Because May 4 falls between two holidays, this day, too, was designated a national holiday. Some companies give employees a day off on May 1, which is May Day.

The word "Golden Week" was first used by movie companies to get people to take advantage of the "golden" opportunity to go see a film. The term gradually began being used by other people to refer to this string of holidays.

Many big factories close down for a week or even 10 days because it's inefficient to keep shutting them down and starting them back up when holidays and weekends are clustered together. Although offices tend to be open on days that are not holidays, many workers use their paid vacations to take an extended break from the daily routine.

Golden Week comes at a very pleasant time of the year in Japan; temperatures are neither too cold nor too hot. Many people thus travel to resort areas. In recent years, increasing numbers have been traveling to foreign destinations with their families.

Any comments for JCC e-magazine?

We would love to hear them!

So please do send in your suggestions and thoughts to
jcc@sn.mofa.go.jp.