

# Japan America Society of Minnesota



# 通 信

The Tsūshin is a membership publication of the Japan America Society of Minnesota

July 2020 Vol. 29, No. 7

## Recap: Hula with Kumu Kanani Atsuko Johnson — Hawaiian Music in Japanese



Kumu Kanani Atsuko Johnson

JASM held two sessions of hula lessons taught by Kumu (teacher) Kanani Atsuko Johnson on May 28 and June 11. At each session, she began with a brief lecture about hula followed by dance instruction for “Moon Night” (月の夜は) in May and “Pearly Shells” (真珠貝の歌) in June.

First, Kumu Kanani showed us the hula steps used in each song. Then we learned the steps by doing them. After practicing together, Kumu Kanani introduced choreography for each song and explained the meanings of the hand motions and gestures. For some of us it got harder to follow her when hands, arms, feet, and hips all had to move at the same time. We danced to each song twice, with beautiful choreography. It was fun to learn and dance along online with all registrants. Thank you, Kumu Kanani, for your time and for giving us the opportunity to learn hula!

## Recap: Curator Talk for Mia Exhibition Yoshitoshi: Master Draftsman Transformed

We reached maximum “Zoom capacity” for the June 17 JASM webinar. Participants enjoyed a virtual walk-through of the exhibition “Yoshitoshi: Master Draftsman Transformed,” presented by Dr. Andreas Marks, Mary Griggs Burke Curator and head of the Japanese and Korean art department at the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia). Starting with an anecdote about how the exhibition began, Dr. Marks explained Yoshitoshi’s creativity and originality and described more generally how woodblock prints were produced and published.

Mia is a JASM corporate member and we are grateful for their support. We learned a lot and hope to see the Yoshitoshi exhibition soon in person when Mia reopens on July 16.

**Yoshitoshi**  
Master  
Draftsman  
Transformed

(until Aug. 9)



Minneapolis Institute of Art

Mia



Dr. Marks showing how the entrance of the exhibition at Mia looks like

## Upcoming: Play Taiko with Harisen Daiko!

Let's play taiko together with Harisen Daiko via Zoom, on Thursday, July 9th at 6 p.m.!

Taiko is a Japanese traditional drum that has a long history. We are lucky to be taught in this webinar by the wonderful instructor from Harisen Daiko, Ms. Julie Schramke. Ms. Schramke will demonstrate taiko and play the song “Raku,” which is an open source work composed by Chabo-san of Shidara Taiko. We will learn how to play taiko by following her instructions.



Harisen Daiko

This is a family-friendly event. No prior experience is necessary to participate.

You don't have a taiko drum? Don't worry! Bring out a pillow or cushion and spatulas or wooden spoons, and you will have instant taiko at home.

**Harisen Daiko** is a group in Minnesota which promotes peace, joy, and community through the art of taiko. The instructor will offer unique performances that reflect the creative spirit of members while honoring the long-standing tradition of taiko.

**Julie Schramke** is a K-8 general music teacher at Achieve Language Academy, a public charter school in St. Paul. She also has been on staff at Concordia Language Villages Japanese camp for the past ten summers, teaching taiko to villagers in an immersion setting.

This is a great opportunity to experience and learn taiko. Please sign up today by clicking [here](#) or email us at [jasm@us-japan.org](mailto:jasm@us-japan.org).

We are looking forward to seeing you there!

Also, please check out page 3 for another upcoming webinar, *Bookbinding: Create your own one-sheet “Magic Book.”*

## Letter from the JASM President



*Elizabeth Fehrmann*

Dear JASM members, family, and friends:

I sincerely hope that this letter finds you as well as you can be, given the decidedly unusual environment in this moment.

We are living through a time of global -level societal disruption from the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are also living through a time of large-scale social change as worldwide movements bring attention to racial injustices that have been the status quo for far too long.

Minnesota continues to operate in a state of Peacetime Emergency, which has been extended through at least July 13. In keeping with recommended safety measures, our JASM staff members are still working from home as much as possible and we have moved to online platforms for our events. Recent events have included a sake tasting, hula lessons, and, most recently, a virtual tour of the curated Yoshitoshi exhibit at the Minneapolis Institute of Art. Both from what I've heard and from my own attendance, I've been blown away by the positive response to these virtual events. Rio and Yoko have done an excellent job adjusting to our new (hopefully temporary) reality and have certainly risen to the challenge of "bringing people together" remotely. Even though large, in-person gatherings are still restricted—which recently prompted Como Park to announce the cancellation of the upcoming annual Obon Festival celebration—we will continue to explore new and exciting ways to connect Minnesota and Japan!

Next, a huge "thank you" goes out to everyone who has renewed memberships and submitted donations over the past few months. Unfortunately, the economic effects of the pandemic have hit everyone hard, including nonprofits. Additional thanks go out to Membership Committee head Bob Luck and his volunteer team for their hard work to extend our communications and donation requests as far as possible. The outpouring of support from so many of you has helped us survive the uncertainty thus far. We greatly appreciate everyone who has supported us in this volatile time, and everyone who will support us in the days ahead.

Finally, and on a more serious note, the confluence of global pandemic and global social shifts have certainly shaken our concept of normality and challenged our priorities. In light of how the world is changing around us—both consciously and unconsciously—I believe it is our responsibility to listen and learn and reach out to others with compassion, and to always strive for understanding and respect in all our relationships. Even in these turbulent times, as we look to the future, it seems we have an opportunity in front of us to build better systems on a number of levels for the benefit of all. As the Japan America Society of Minnesota, we will continue to foster positive cross-cultural relationships and promote an appreciation for diversity of heritage, thought, and experience. For my part, I will do what I can to work towards a state of peace and healing for all.

Until next time, please take care.

Regards,

Elizabeth Fehrmann

## Mondale Award 2020



*Ambassador Mondale with 2019  
Mondale Award recipient  
Patricia Katagiri*

In 1997, the Japan America Society of Minnesota created the Mondale Award for Japan-Minnesota Partnership to recognize outstanding contributions to the building of understanding, cooperation, and respect between the people of Japan and Minnesota.

The award was named for — and first presented to — Joan and Walter Mondale

to recognize Mrs. Mondale's decades-long effort to promote the arts in both countries, and Ambassador Mondale's service as United States Ambassador to Japan. JASM hopes to continue the distribution of this esteemed award this year.

If you know someone who has dedicated their efforts to the continued benefit of the U.S-Japan relationship, please nominate them!

All applications must be submitted either by email to [jasm@us-japan.org](mailto:jasm@us-japan.org) or filling out the form [here](#) by Monday, August 12.

## Membership News

### Thanks to the following new JASM members:

Ronald & Joyce Beauchaine, Will Green,  
Chris Griese, Steven Harrison, Louise Indritz,  
Rollon Rempe, David Toplon,  
Alan Touchberry, Maria Traxler

### Thanks to the following renewing JASM members:

Naomi Fujioka, Brittany Greaner,  
James & Maria Gregory, Tom Haeg,  
Kyoko Haines, TJ Hara, Steven Harrison,  
Jim Hoffman, Kathryn Klibanoff, Richard Kushino,  
Machiko Larson, Darryl & Yukiko Magree,  
Joseph Montgomery, Michael & Sakiko Nilan,  
Jeff Peterson, Jeremy Pierotti,  
John Reinartz & Satoko Suzuki, Matt Schoenfelder,  
Craig Smith, Alfred Zdrasil

### Thanks to the following renewing Corporate members:

JETRO Chicago  
Satellite Industries, Inc.

## Upcoming: Bookbinding: Create your own one-sheet "Magic Book"



Join us for the event **Bookbinding: Create your own one-sheet "Magic Book"** on Thursday, July 23rd at 6 p.m.

In this online session, Ms. Sheila Asato will share her art with us and talk about how book arts have allowed her to

integrate her experiences of living in Japan, England, and the United States. She will also talk about how she has used the arts as a healing force to help others who are having vivid dreams after challenging events such as the great earthquake and tsunami in Japan. After her presentation, she will lead us through some simple paperfolding exercises to create our own one-sheet "magic book".

Using only a single sheet of paper and scissors, we will learn how to make folded books with multiple pages that are fun and a delight to share with others. If you would like to try this, please have at hand several sheets of printer paper (8.5"×11") and a pair of scissors. This is a great opportunity not only to learn about book art but also to create your own "magic book." Please sign up today from our website by clicking [here!](#)



Sheila Asato

Ms. Sheila Asato, M.A. is a visual artist deeply influenced by dreams, Japan, and the natural world. Her favorite media include drawing, watercolor, photography, Japanese calligraphy, and virtual reality, which she combines to create unique handmade books, paintings, and textile designs. Sheila teaches online, as well as at the Minnesota Center for Book Arts. She lectures on creativity, dreaming and health at the University of Minnesota. Bicultural and bilingual in English and Japanese, she returns annually to Japan to teach, reconnect with friends, and meander along the back roads of cities and the countryside with her camera, gathering ideas and inspiration for new projects when she returns to Minnesota. Check the website for [Sheila Asato & Monkey Bridge Arts](#) to learn more.

We are looking forward to seeing you at the webinar.

## Recap: New Member Social 2020

On June 23, JASM held its annual New Member Social on Zoom (like all other recent activities). It usually takes place in April but because of the COVID-19 situation, the gathering had to be postponed.

Rio Saito, JASM Executive Director, opened the event with warm greetings to JASM's new members. After JASM Program Manager, Yoko Ueno, and the Event Coordinator intern, Megumi Yokomizo, had introduced themselves, each one of the new members spoke of their connection to Japan. Ron Leonhardt, JASM board member, also joined the event.



New Member Social 2020

Director Saito then explained JASM's events and activities in the categories of education, business, community, and art/culture throughout the year, by showing pictures from 2019.

It was a great opportunity for us to get to know the new members and learn where their interest in Japan lies. We hope it was a fun and informative evening for the new members as well.

See you all at future events!

*Please thank our members with your support!*

### Corporate Benefactor Members

Anime Twin Cities, Inc.  
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MTS Systems Corporation  
Sawai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.  
Taiyo International

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### Partners in Service

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Kiku Enterprises, Inc.  
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Origami Restaurant  
Sakura Restaurant  
Saint Paul Saints Baseball Club  
Saji-Ya Restaurant  
Suishin Restaurant  
Tomodachi  
Zen Healing Center

### Nonprofit Members

Concordia Language Villages  
Economic Club of Minnesota  
Global Minnesota  
JETAA Minnesota  
JETRO Chicago  
JP Network, St. Cloud State University  
KCC-Japan Education Exchange  
Macalester College Asian Language & Culture Department  
Minneapolis Japanese School  
Minneapolis Institute of Art  
Minnesota Council of Teachers of Japanese  
Minnesota Orchestra  
Mu Performing Arts  
NDSU-Emily Reynolds Historic Costume Collection  
Twin Cities Aikido Center  
UMN Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies  
University of North Dakota-Grand Forks  
Winona State University Global Studies Dept.



## A Word from Nihonjinkai

Happy July 4th! “On July 4, 1776, the 13 colonies claimed their independence from England, an event which eventually led to the formation of the United States. Each year on the fourth of July, also known as Independence Day, Americans celebrate this historic event.”

For most of us, July 4th is a time to enjoy a long weekend filled with picnics, parades, friends, family, and fireworks. This year we won't have any big parades; no large gatherings to watch the fireworks in our local town or city. Any gatherings will be small and intimate.

This is a difficult time for many of us. We want our Nihonjinkai members to know that we miss getting together to share food and conversation. We don't know how or when we will be able to do that again safely. Our summer garage sale has been cancelled; the fall Obon Festival has been cancelled. As a group, we don't seem to have much to look forward to! I decided to share pictures from past gatherings in order to stir up good memories and thoughts of happier times!

The library can be accessed via private appointment by calling Yoko Breckenridge as long as you can be flexible. And don't forget to “like” our Facebook page: “MN Nihonjinkai/Japanese Library.”

Please stay safe and take care!



Don't forget to join our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1644814705588014/>

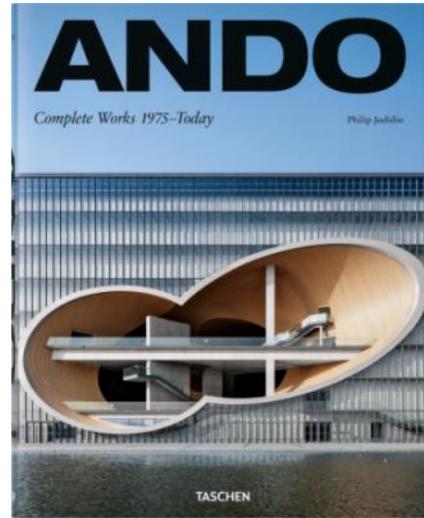


Photo by  
Ackerman + Gruber

**Yoko Breckenridge**  
612-839-0008



## Tom Haeg's Book Review



*Ando: Complete Works 1975-Today*; Philip Jodidio, Taschen Books, 2019.

Perhaps the most brilliant modernist architect today is Pritzker Prize-winning Tadao Ando. The scope of this Osaka native's creativity is eclectic: residential, industrial, commercial, temples and churches. His style is sleek and minimalist; his tone natural and elemental; his mood direct and inviting. CNN dubbed him “The King of Concrete.”

Recently, a Malibu beach house he designed went on the market for over \$75 million. It contains 1,200 tons of concrete, 200 tons of steel, and 12 pylons driven 60 feet into the earth. And don't ask about the square footage of glass. The homeowner was recently quoted in the Wall St. Journal: “This is not just a house. This is like a Picasso Cubist painting, very important, and very rare.”

*Ando* is the definitive compilation of the architect's celebrated career. It contains hundreds of illustrations and pages and pages of professorial commentary. If Ando made it, it's in this book. And, if it isn't, then he probably didn't make it. His unique approach is sometimes referred to as “scale and form beyond the customary.” We learn that Ando is self-taught (his erstwhile career was a boxer) and he is not tethered to any association or idea (only beauty). By his own description, he does not even feel Japanese during his work. *Ando* is more than a coffee table book. Like *Seinfeld's* Kramer's sophomore publishing attempt, this is the table.

Perhaps the nearest we have in Minnesota to an Ando creation look-alike is the abbey church at St. John's in Stearns County. This Marcel Breuer-designed opus with its massive concrete banner and walls will heighten your appreciation of Ando's design work.

Do you need further proof of genius? Just call up your JASM program director, Yoko Ueno, who studied architecture in Germany. She will gladly attest to Ando's magnificence.

For further reading, check out Ando's own book, *Endeavors*, and his foreword in *Super Potato Design: The Complete Works of Takashi Sugimoto*.

Tom Haeg

# Japanese Conversation Clubs



**The Japanese Speaking Club** is an informal meeting place for those wishing to practice Japanese. We encourage those just beginning the language as well as native speakers to gather at **Corner Coffee** in Uptown Minneapolis to meet new people, discuss experiences in Japan, or simply to speak Japanese. Activities are now suspended until local nonessential businesses reopen.

**Date/Time: ONCE CORNER COFFEE REOPENS,** Every Saturday at 3:00 p.m. (however, most people do not show up until at least 3:30.)

**Place:** Corner Coffee  
1414 W 28th St, Minneapolis, MN 55408 (Just east of Hennepin Avenue South)

Check out another conversation group: **Twin Cities Japanese Conversation Meetup Group** (<https://www.twincitiesjapaneseconversation.com/>)

*Note: This is a private group. In order to join, a questionnaire must be completed at the web site linked above.*

The goal of Twin Cities Japanese Conversation Meetup is language fluency in either Japanese or English. This group is for Japanese language learners who want to improve their Japanese speaking skills or/and native Japanese speakers who want to improve their English speaking. Those who just want to help out are also welcome.

Parts to the meetup: 自己紹介 (self-introductions), 質疑応答 (questions and answers about language) and 会話練習 (conversation practice).

**Meetings:** Edina (Monday), Minnetonka (Thursday), Saint Paul (Saturday).

**Since March 16 the group is holding all meetings online.**

For any question about this group, please email Mariquita Anderson: [mariquita@twincitiesjapaneseconversation.com](mailto:mariquita@twincitiesjapaneseconversation.com)

## Calendar

### July

Play Taiko with Harisen Daiko, **July 9**

Bookbinding: Create your own one-sheet "Magic Book  
**June 23**

## Advertise in the Tsushin!

### Advertisement Rates

Style	Size (height x width)	Cost/issue
1/4 page	5 x 3.5 in	\$50.00
1/2 page	7.5 x 5 in/3.5 x 10 in	\$90.00
Full page	7.5 x 10 in	\$150.00
Classified	80 character line \$10/ line (minimum 2 lines)	

Ad production and design available in both Japanese and English for an additional charge. Deadline for completed ads and classifieds is the 20th of every month.

**Questions? Contact  
the JASM Office  
Tel: 612-627-9357  
[jasm@us-japan.org](mailto:jasm@us-japan.org)**

## Become a JASM Member online

*Support our mission and become a member!*

1. Go to [mn-japan.org](http://mn-japan.org)
  2. At the top, hover over 'Support' then click on 'Join'
  3. Select your membership type and read the benefits and instructions.
- You can also become a member using your smartphone.

## Japan America Society of Minnesota

- Membership Application    Change of Address  
 Tax-deductible Donation

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name (2nd adult of a household membership) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make an additional tax-deductible donation of \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please make checks payable to JASM)

### Individual Membership

Patron.....	\$1,000+
Sustaining.....	\$500+
Contributing.....	\$100+
Individual .....	\$30
Student .....	\$20
Household .....	\$50
(2 adults plus children under 18)	

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## 通信

Tsūshin  
July 2020

The Japan America Society of Minnesota is a non-profit, non-political association engaged in bringing the peoples of Japan and the United States closer together in mutual understanding, respect, and cooperation. Through programs and interchange, it endeavors to promote an appreciation of cultural, educational, economic, public, and other affairs of interest to both peoples. Membership in the society is open to individuals, corporations, and other organizations interested in furthering its programs.

The Japan America Society of Minnesota is a member of the National Association of Japan-America Societies.

*(Please report any inaccuracies you find in this publication to [jasm.interns@gmail.com](mailto:jasm.interns@gmail.com))*

## June Webinars



Hula with Kumu Kanani Atsuko Johnson— Hawaiian Music in Japanese 2



Curator Talk for Mia Exhibition *Yoshitoshi: Master Draftsman Transformed*



Hula with Kumu Kanani Atsuko Johnson— Hawaiian Music in Japanese 1



Curator Talk for Mia Exhibition *Yoshitoshi: Master Draftsman Transformed*



Hula with Kumu Kanani Atsuko Johnson— Hawaiian Music in Japanese 2



New Member Social 2020