

JLGC Newsletter



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PREFECTURE TODAY

ORIBE 2003 in NY Project — Gifu Prefecture Oribeism and the Arts of Sixteenth-Century Japan

The Gifu Cultural Industries Initiative represents the first of many projects implemented by Gifu Prefecture under the basic concept of Oribeism, the spirit of Oribe. The style of ceramics known as Oribe-ware is made for the tea ceremony and is traditionally associated with Furuta Oribe. Furuta Oribe (1543/44-1615) was born in Mino Province (the present Motosu-cho, Gifu Prefecture) and lived through the Age of Civil Wars in Japan over 450 years ago. Oribe was one of tea master Sen-no-Rikyu's seven disciples and was well known as a master of the tea ceremony and a cultural leader during the Momoyama period (1573-1615). He was also a warrior who served under prominent warlords such as Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu.

The Momoyama period was a time of unprecedented vitality in Japan's cultural and artistic development. During that period, a new sense of freedom permeated all classes of society and many of the cultural and aesthetic elements now regarded as distinctively Japanese made their first appearance. Oribeism is characterized by words such as freedom, innovation and creativity. Oribe demonstrated bold new ideas and constantly challenged the traditional stereotypes and beliefs of the Momoyama period. People in Gifu believe that the spirit of Oribe can contribute a great deal to the current restructuring of Japanese industrial and social spheres.

The event central to the Gifu Cultural Industries Initiative was the exhibition *Turning Point: Oribe and the Arts of Sixteenth-Century Japan*, organized by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in collaboration with the Museum of Fine Arts, Gifu. It was on view at the Metropolitan from October 21, 2003 to January 11, 2004. The exhibition was the first comprehensive examination of the subject in the West and explored the genesis of the dramatic stylistic changes in Japanese art during the brief but brilliant Momoyama period.

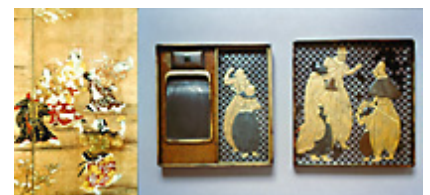
Furuta Oribe and Oribe Ceramics

Born in 1543 or 1544, about the same time as the first arrival of Portuguese merchants in Japan, Furuta Oribe worked closely with the principal characters who shaped the political and artistic climate of 16th-century Japan. Like many other warlords of the time, he cultivated a keen interest in the tea ceremony, and in the vacuum created by his mentor Rikyu's death, Oribe's name became increasingly associated with tea. Rikyu had already begun to move away from dependence on Chinese and Korean tea utensils, preferring Japan's indigenous products. Oribe went a step further, intentionally cultivating the beauty of the imperfect. The famous water jar nicknamed "Burst Pouch," with its enormous cracks resulting from several weeks of firing at high temperatures from the Iga kiln is an Important Cultural Property in the Gotoh Museum, Tokyo, and was considered by Oribe as a vessel endowed with a unique beauty.

Oribe ceramics - more than 100 of the finest examples of which were assembled for the first time in this exhibition - made a sudden appearance in the late 16th century. Never had



Top, left: Water jar, named Yaburebukuro (Burst Pouch), Momoyama period (1573-1615), 16th century, Iga ware; stoneware with natural ash glaze, The Gotoh Museum, Tokyo, Important Cultural Property. Top, right: Deep teabowl with chrysanthemum design, Momoyama period (1573-1615), 17th century, Mino ware, Black Oribe type, Private collection. Bottom, left: Square dish with design of stripes, Momoyama period (1573-1615), early 17th century, Mino ware, Narumi Oribe type; glazed stoneware, Tokyo National Museum. Bottom, right: Square dish with lid and design of ships (inside view), Momoyama period (1573-1615), 17th century, Mino ware, Oribe type; glazed stoneware, Private collection.



Left: Kano Naganobu (1577-1654), *Cherry Blossom Viewing* (detail), Momoyama period (1573-1615), 17th century, pair of six-panel folding screens; ink, color, and gold on paper, Tokyo

so many different vessel shapes and brilliant glazes been attempted, and the uninhibited designs, both naturalistic and abstract, are strikingly "modern." The thick glazes, in deep vitreous green, warm pink, and coal black, combined with a seemingly artless and playful decoration, create what an 18th-century observer described as an object not unlike that made by a child. Oribe's preference for accidentally warped or damaged vessels may have led to the willful distortion that characterizes many Oribe teabowls, such as the well-known clog-shaped tea bowls. Other Oribe ceramics display clearly Western influences, as seen in the carracks depicted on a lidded dish and the set of five dishes in the shape of stemmed glassware. A selection of Oribe-type ceramics produced in the late 18th and early 19th centuries illustrate the renewed energy of Mino potters who attempted to revive this singularly innovative era in the history of Japan's ceramic industry.

Paintings, Lacquerware, and Textiles

The stylistic and technical innovations distinguishing the Momoyama period found expression not only in Oribe ceramics but also in painting, lacquerware, and textiles. In their shared themes, designs, patterns, and colors, these works suggest the strong influence of Oribe on the individuals working in these different areas of the arts during this period.

The warlords' ambitions to control the nation and its capital inspired the development of the paintings of Kyoto and its suburbs known as rakuchu-rakugai. Usually executed on screens, these pictures illustrate famous scenic spots and important monuments that served as settings for seasonal festivals and entertainments. The most popular of screens is Cherry Blossom Viewing. The most cherished example of this genre is a pair of screens, a National Treasure in the Tokyo National Museum, painted by Kano Naganobu, the youngest brother of Kano Eitoku, the renowned giant of Momoyama-period painting. Screens depicting visiting Europeans (Nanbans) in the port city of Nagasaki enjoyed great popularity for a brief period before the expulsion of the Christian missionaries in 1638.

The Momoyama period also witnessed many extraordinary advancements in the lacquer and textile industries. Ingenious new methods were devised for the production of lacquerwares intended both for export and for domestic consumption. Especially notable is the design device called katamigawari (alternating sides), in which the surface of the object is split into areas of contrasting colors of gold and black. This decorative technique, derived from Japanese textiles of earlier periods, became a vehicle for 16th-century lacquer craftsmen to create dramatic and strikingly modern designs, as seen on writing boxes.

Clothing and textile design, once governed by rigidly imposed codes of dress, underwent a similar transformation as silks with woven designs were replaced with fabrics decorated by painting, dyeing and embroidery techniques. By the late 16th century, Japanese textiles displayed an astonishing variety of rich designs achieved by a number of innovative methods.

Oribe 2003 in NY Project

Coinciding with the exhibition was the Informal Tea Ceremony and the Tourism and Craft Exhibition, also held in New York City. New York City is one of the world's centers for cultural information exchange, and Gifu Prefecture has given these separate events the generic name, *Oribe 2003 in NY Project*.

Gifu prefecture believes that this project has embodied the spirit of Oribe, combining the unique artistic expression of Japan and Western influences. It also presented an ideal opportunity to exhibit modern day Oribeism to the people of New York City and teach the spirit of Oribe around the world.

Various projects in Gifu prefecture are aimed at reviving traditional Gifu industries and promoting the growth of new industry and culture. They are the first steps toward their ultimate goal of making Gifu the best place to live in Japan.

Source: the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, news release

National Museum, National Treasure.
Right: Writing box with figures of foreigners, Edo period (1615-1868), 17th century; Black lacquer with gold and silver maki-e, colored lacquer, inlaid gold and silver foil, Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation.

Osaka-Chicago

Sister City 30th Anniversary Events

Osaka and Chicago established their sister city ties on November 9, 1973 and to celebrate their 30th anniversary, conducted a variety of exchange events in many fields including business, culture, sports, and arts. A special lecture by Osaka-born architect Tadao Ando kicked off the festivities at the Chicago Art Institute in April, 2003.

In July, 2003, the International House, Osaka hosted the Osaka-Chicago Forum, with the theme of "Creating Attractive Cities." The forum consisted of a panel discussion on efforts made to transform the two business and industrial centers into attractive visitor destinations. Participating in the forum were Mr. Frank Kruesi (President of the Chicago Transit Authority), Professor Shinya Hashizume (Associate Professor at Osaka City University), Mr. Mark F. Schwab (Osaka-Chicago Association Director and United Airlines Vice President - Pacific), Mr. Takeo Obayashi (Vice President, Obayashi Corp.), and Mr. Hiroaki Taniguchi (Director-General, Kinki Regional Development Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport).

On July 12 and 13, the Delmark All-Stars Band and the Campbell Brothers, world famous blues musicians from Chicago, performed at Namba Hatch to a full audience. Local artists from Osaka also performed at the Herbis Blues Session in a street performance that attracted many passersby.

A Chicago Fair at the Imperial Hotel Osaka gave many of our citizens the opportunity to sample original and traditional tastes of Chicago, such as Harry Carey's steak, pizza from Lou Malnati's, and Eli's cheesecake.

Coinciding with these events, a group of high school students from Whitney Young Magnet High School in Chicago visited Osaka. They stayed with local Japanese families from the volunteer network organized by the Osaka International House Foundation, experiencing the Japanese lifestyle first-hand.

The Osaka-Chicago Forum and related events received nation-wide coverage in the Nihon Keizai Shimbun newspaper and TV Osaka.

The sister city relationship with Osaka has also drawn much attention in Chicago. In June 2003, the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry hosted a successful demonstration of rakugo (comic story telling) by Mr. Sanshi Katsura. In September, the annual Osaka Garden Festival was held at the Osaka Garden in Jackson Park with various presentations of Japanese art and culture.

Sister city relationships offer benefits in a variety of ways, but their most valuable aspect is clearly the strong sense of community and understanding across international borders. The 30th anniversary commemorative events enabled the two cities and their citizens to make a positive contribution to the friendship and goodwill between our nations, provided us with a mutual learning experience and further consolidated our sister city ties towards the future.

Additional information regarding Osaka-Chicago sister city can be found at:

The City of Osaka: <http://www.city.osaka.jp/english/>

Osaka-Chicago Association: <http://www.sisterc.net/Chicago/english/e-top.html>



Osaka-Chicago Forum, July 11, 2003



Chicago students at the Osaka Municipal High School, July 11, 2003

Wonderful Memories of a Visit to Japan

*Representing the National League of Cities on the CLAIR Fellowship
by Ken Harward*

Executive Director, Association of Idaho Cities

I had the honor of participating in the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR) Fellowship Program October 19-29, 2002. This proved to be one of the most interesting and educational experiences of my professional career.

My wife Margo accompanied me on the trip. Other North American members of the Fellowship Exchange included: Donna Folkemer, National Conference of State Legislators; Lisa Signori, Budget Director, City of Boston; Douglas Hill, Executive Director, County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania; Jack Ethredge, City Manager, Thornton, Colorado; Laura Nicole Clewett, Council of State Governments; Robbin Tourangeau, Office of the Prime Minister, Canada; and James Knight, Chief Executive Officer, Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

After being greeted and welcomed at the Los Angeles Airport, California, we were treated to a Japanese dinner at the Senbazuru (a Thousand Cranes) restaurant at the New Otani Hotel in downtown Los Angeles. There we met Naofumi Hida, Director of the Japan Local Government Center, New York, who was our host for the evening. We were very impressed with Mr. Hida and his kindness and graciousness were exemplary of what we were to experience during the next several days in Japan.

The excitement of seeing Japan grew during the nearly 12-hour flight to the Narita Airport, Japan. The long flight provided time to do some additional reading about Japan, particularly the Tochigi Prefecture where we would be visiting governmental authorities and having a home-stay experience.

CLAIR provided a memorable tour of Tokyo on Sunday, October 20. We met in the lobby of the Akasaka Prince Hotel-our hotel for the four nights in Tokyo. The tour included a visit to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Offices and a magnificent view of the city from the 45th floor observation deck. The tour of the Edo-Tokyo Museum provided an insight into the rich and interesting history of Japan. Visiting ancient shrines and temples added to the cultural



Meeting with Governor of Tochigi Prefecture Mr. Akio Fukuda (center)



Harwards being taught Japanese calligraphy by host family

experience.

In Tokyo, the home of several million people, we experienced a beautiful, clean and safe metropolitan city. The buildings we observed are magnificent and immaculately maintained. The trains and subways are clean and punctual. As visitors, we felt very safe walking the streets of Tokyo any time day or night. There is very little crime in this large city-an impressive commentary on the Japanese culture.

But most impressive is the graciousness of the Japanese people. Everywhere we went, from the hotel, to restaurants, to meetings with government officials, to our home-stay, we experienced kindness and gracious hospitality.

The Local Government International Exchange Seminar, held Monday and Tuesday, included a greeting from Mr. Masahiro Futahashi, Chairman of the Board of Directors of CLAIR, and a keynote address on Japan-United States relations by Mr. Masayuki Yamauchi, Professor at the University of Tokyo. An overview of the Japanese Local Government system was provided by Mr. Kentaro Kanasaki, Deputy Director of Japan's International Affairs Division, Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications.

The theme of the Seminar was "Changes in the Circumstances on the International Level and their Influence on International Relations between Local Areas." There were 200 participants from Japan and 60 participants from overseas attending the seminar. Simultaneous interpretation was provided in the following languages: Japanese, English, French, Chinese (Mandarin) and Korean.

Other presentations included an international panel of local government authorities focusing on how local communities respond to changing international circumstances.

On Wednesday, we walked from our hotel to a nearby subway station for a quick ride to a central train station to catch the bullet train to go to the Tochigi Prefecture. The ride on the train provided time to have lunch and enjoy the scenery as we traveled from Tokyo to the Tochigi Prefecture.

Tochigi is known for its grand towering mountains, beautiful natural scenery, a balance of agriculture and industry and is historically represented by the temples and shrines of Nikko. October was indeed a beautiful time to visit Tochigi. The leaves of the trees were bathed in brilliant hues of yellow, red and orange.

We had the privilege of meeting with Mr. Akio Fukuda, the Governor of the Tochigi Prefecture. Tochigi's capitol city, Utsunomiya, is located within a 50-minute bullet-train ride from Tokyo.

During our stay in Nikko City, we enjoyed our meeting with the mayor of Nikko and spending a night at a traditional Japanese hotel, complete with Japanese baths. Our visit to the town of Motegi included a meeting with the mayor and other officials as well as a tour of the Twin Motegi racetrack and a tour of the Honda Museum. I was impressed to learn that Motegi Town is providing broadband lines to each home and business. This allows the town's residents and businesses the advantages of high-speed internet access and it also provides a means of communicating efficiently with residents in the event of a natural disaster.

I have wonderful memories of our three-day home stay with the Okamoto family; Ryoji, Megumi, Akiko, Noya and Hiroko. Margo and I have corresponded with the family since our return home and we intend to continue to keep in touch with them. We consider them very dear friends. We experienced gracious hospitality in their home. With them we visited schools and historic Tochigi Town, and enjoyed delicious Japanese food. We will always treasure the time spent with this wonderful family.

I am grateful to CLAIR for the well-organized exchange experience that provided an opportunity to share information on issues of common concern. We will treasure the memory of this experience all of our life.

JETAANY Presenting Japan to New JET Participants

JETAANY assisted the Consulate General and CLAIR in sponsoring the annual Pre-Departure Orientation for outbound JET participants in New York on June 21, 2003. This year JETAANY aimed to offer more than one day of seminars on team-teaching and adjusting to life abroad. Vice President Rosie de Fremery elaborates:

- Knowing that new JETs would encounter many aspects of Japanese culture while in Japan, we wanted to give them early exposure to some things that might interest them later, such as the tea ceremony, flower arrangement, Shinto, and martial arts.

We began with dinner at a Manhattan yakitori restaurant where new JETs could pepper alumni with any questions they had. Next was a Japanese workshop for those new to the language. Alex McLaren, a former Secretary of JETAANY, coordinated the session and gave a detailed handbook to participants. JETAANY later welcomed demonstrations of Aikido, Oyata-ryu Te (Okinawan traditional karate), Shorinji Kempo, and Budo Taijutsu (formally known as Ninjutsu) during the final hour of the Pre-Departure Orientation.

About a week after the Orientation, JETAANY presented a Chado (the way of tea) and Ikebana flower arrangement workshop. The Chado demonstration was led by Ms. Yumiko Hirai, a licensed teacher of Urasenke-style tea ceremony. Attendees sampled matcha (powdered green tea) and traditional Japanese confections while yours truly and Takahiro Onoue of the Japan Local Government Center performed different Otemae (tea-serving methods). Mrs. Hisako Kanzaki, a Sogetsu School practitioner with over 50 years of experience, created seven stunning flower arrangements within the space of forty minutes, answering many questions regarding topics such as the importance of the seasons and the practice of "kata" or set forms.

JETAANY also conducted a workshop on Shinto with Reverend Mitsutaka Inui of the International Shinto Foundation, a Shinto priest who has organized celebrations of the shichi-go-san festival - a children's festival celebrated by children 3, 5, or 7 years old, chrysanthemum day and autumn moon-viewing. He explained the idea of the "kami", loosely translated as deity, and the concepts of purity and sincerity which are central to Japan's indigenous faith.

Participants appreciated these opportunities for interactive learning before packing and saying their farewells to family and friends. One JET asked where she could learn the mystic arts of Budo Taijutsu, while another JET who attended every event remarked that it was a shame more people did not attend. We at JETAANY were pleased to observe a good mix of new JETs and alumni at each gathering.

JETAANY maintains ties to the many Japanese and Japan-related groups in New York, promoting their activities to our members while seeking out new partnerships for cultural workshops such as those described above. Even if your area has few apparent Japanese resources, you can build the foundation for joint efforts like these by surveying your own membership, Japanese organizations, friends, and acquaintances and then cataloguing the results. You may be surprised to learn how many connections to Japan exist in your own community.

In closing, it is important to remember that JET offers its participants the opportunity to learn about all aspects of Japan. A pre-departure orientation would be incomplete without suggesting the vastness of Japanese culture and communicating to new JETs that there is no end to what they can learn during their stay.



A workshop on Shinto with Reverend Mitsutaka Inui of the International Shinto Foundation

A Message from the New JLGC Assistant Directors

Atsushi Fukuda

I came to New York from Kitakyushu City. My first name is Atsushi, which is appropriate since sushi is one of my favorite foods! I look forward to learning all I can about US local government.

Akira Tagawa

I'm from Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department. Now I am living in New Jersey with my wife, daughter (2 years old) and son (6 months old). So every day, I'm very busy changing diapers! I have dreamed of working in a foreign country for a long time. Now my dream has come true. The U.S. has superior ability in the field of crisis management. I hope to gain this knowledge and share it in my department.

Yujiro Toi

I was named "Yujiro" because my mother was a big fan of "Yujiro Ishihara", who was one of the greatest actors in Japan and is the younger brother of "Shintaro Ishihara" who is now the governor of Tokyo Metropolitan. Originally, I came from Hiroshima City, which is well known for its continued search for world peace. Working and living in New York was my dream. Now I live and work in New York City, which makes me really happy. My goal during my stay in the U.S.A. is to have many American friends. I am looking forward to meeting you in the future.

Atsushi Wakimoto

I am from the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications in Japan. When I was a university student exactly a decade ago, I traveled to the U.S. on vacation. That was my first time visiting the U.S. Working in the U.S. has been my dream. Finally, the dream has come true! I am overjoyed at even being here every day. I would like to make the most of this precious opportunity to work in N.Y.

Hideki Takahashi.

I am from Saitama Prefecture and have been working for Saitama Prefectural Government as a city planner. I am very happy to have the opportunity to work in New York City, one of the greatest cities in the world. I would like to study the governmental system in the U.S and enjoy my life here!

Masashi Takahashi

I am from Miyagi Prefectural Government. I am very enthusiastic about my work and know that I have a tendency to be an impatient perfectionist. When I have been given an assignment, I make it a rule to always say, "Yes, I can" even though it seems to be difficult for me to accomplish. I believe my willingness to do things well will eventually make a difference during my life in New York City.



New JLGC staff members for 2003. L. to R.: Atsushi Fukuda; Hideki Takahashi; Yujiro Toi; Atsushi Wakimoto; Mieko Sato; Masashi Takahashi; Akira Tagawa

*JLGC Staff Visits September 11 WTC Site
2003 Commemoration and Aftermath
——The Lesson from Terrorist Attack——*

*by Masashi Takahashi
Assistant Director*

I will never forget seeing ground zero for the first time when I arrived here in New York City several months ago. It was not a coincidence that the Japanese baseball super star, Matsui also had thought of going there first. Such a terrorist attack affects not only US but the world as well. When they saw the September 11 attack on TV, the Japanese had the same feelings of sympathy for all US citizens. My visit to ground zero had a powerful impact on my life.

Two years have passed since that tragedy happened. I had heard that this year's commemoration was not as big as last year's. We saw Vice President Dick Cheney cancel his participation and the monuments for the police officers and fire fighters who died on that day have yet to be agreed upon, much less created. And yet, it is not about the slow fading into memory of a tragic event. The US government has tightened up security more than ever and has been cracking down on extremists who have the possibility of promoting further terror attacks.

The other day we heard the terrifying news that a Briton who was born in India was arrested in New Jersey for attempting to attack commercial airplanes by using a shoulder missile launcher. British Airways took immediate action to prevent him from attacking but CNN told us that it is uncertain whether available technology would work on commercial aircraft and what the cost of outfitting their planes would be. All we can say is that we've been vulnerable to terrorist attacks. Although the US government has been cracking down on terrorists by establishing the Department of Homeland Security, an estimated 750,000 shoulder-fired missiles exist in the world, and they are easy to obtain on the black market.

In Japan, it seems to me that Japanese citizens have been considering keeping peace cost free. We need to rethink the security issue and learn what's happening in US. We need to tell the truth to our prefectural and city governments about the importance of homeland security and to always be aware of the capricious nature of terrorist attacks. It could happen to anyone, anywhere and at any time. The US increase in security is a lesson for us here in Japan.



JLGC staff, Masashi Takahashi, visits ground zero.