 Kyoto International Conference Center

ICC Kyoto

NEWS LETTER
2015



Special Interview

Sharing Japanese Culture with the World

— The Role of Kyoto and the Kyoto International Conference Center

With Tokyo winning the bid to host the 2020 Olympics and Paralympics, Japanese culture is set to garner even greater attention from the world in the years to come. As a result, the importance of communicativity will be revisited.

The same trend holds true and will only grow stronger for international conferences as well. This is why the Kyoto International Conference Center

(ICC Kyoto) is rolling out initiatives focused more on Japanese culture and arts.

ICC Kyoto President Hiroo Kinoshita recently sat down with the 21st Commissioner for Cultural Affairs, Dr. Masanori Aoyagi, to talk about the various issues and roles that ICC Kyoto should play with regard to the future of Japan's economic and cultural strengths.

Dr. Masanori Aoyagi



Commissioner for Cultural Affairs
Emeritus Professor at the University of Tokyo
Member of the Japan Academy

Profile

Born in Dalian in 1944, Aoyagi has excavated and researched historical sites throughout the Mediterranean for more than three decades as a leading authority in ancient Greek and Roman art history. After graduating from the Department of Art History at the University of Tokyo's Faculty of Letters in 1967, he studied abroad at Sapienza University of Rome from 1969 to 1972, where he learned about ancient Roman art history and archeology. Aoyagi has a Doctor of Letters degree. After serving as the Vice-President of the University of Tokyo and Director-General of the National Museum of Western Art, Aoyagi was appointed in July 2013 as Commissioner for Cultural Affairs, a post he holds today. Recipient of the Medal with Purple Ribbon in 2006

Advancing National Strength by Boosting the Cultural Strengths of Local Communities

ICC Kyoto President Hiroo Kinoshita (below, "KINOSHITA")

The former Ministry of Education, Science and Culture building, where the Commissioner for Cultural Affairs office is located, stands in front of the high rise building where the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology is now housed. This creates juxtapose in which the former appears to have been preserved for cultural reasons. The reason why Kyoto was selected as site of Japan's first international conference center is because of its history, culture and aesthetics. You became Commissioner for Cultural Affairs in July 2013 and have engaged in various policies and promotional efforts of Japanese culture and international cultural exchange. What are your thoughts about these experience and your ambitions?

Masanori Aoyagi (below, "AOYAGI") Today, the world values culture a great deal. Countries around the world are working to increase their budgets for culture and establish new policies. In this regard, I believe Japan must work harder. Yet, while there are voices calling for the Agency for Cultural Affairs to be upgraded to a ministry on one hand, on the other our budget was 103.6 billion yen for fiscal 2014 and we employed a staff of less than 240. The fact of the matter is

there is a major gap between what we want to do and what we can do. One of the aspects I would like to work on more is supporting the strength of local communities. Communities that have and value deeply rooted cultural festivals and traditional performing arts have vitality, even marginal villages and communities without factories or advanced industries. We help to maintain this vitality and also share it with communities that lack it. One of our most important jobs is to maintain the vitality of local communities and find culture in communities that lack vitality to help them gain it. For example, cities that use their originality and ingenuity in excellent ways for urban development are recognized by the Agency for Cultural Affairs as "Cultural Creative Cities". Last fiscal year, we selected and awarded four cities for this distinction, including Iwaki City, Hachinohe City, Chikuma City, and Onomichi City.

KINOSHITA Tokyo is known for its communicativity and large market, but local communities in Japan have a great deal of culture, crafts, and traditional performing arts. Finding culture in communities is one way to pursue urban planning where the community has vitality and pride.

AOYAGI A nation's capital needs to continually grow and have vitality. This is the kind of driving force the world needs. Domestically speaking, though, having everything centered on the capital and local communities that are not vibrant will only weaken the strength of the nation. Cultural diversity goes hand

in hand with future ambition, so it is very important for small- and medium-sized cities to engage in unique cultural activities.

International Competitiveness Means Sharing a Broad Range of Information Bilingually

KINOSHITA You have spent time living abroad in Rome and often interact with international researchers and colleagues. What are your thoughts on Japan's communicativity when it comes to cultural policies?

AOYAGI For many years active communication has not been viewed as a good thing by people in Japan, but this has changed because expressing your cultural identity within international society, especially during this time of advancing globalization, directly influences a country's presence in the world. There are two essential elements to communicativity. First is bilingual education. The level of bilingualism required is one where you can speak in the other person's language immediately, even at international conferences. The second is communicating information broadly in a wave-like pattern using government and academia and their individual specialized values.

KINOSHITA Today is a time when the people of Japan need to change their disposition. That is, they need to learn about Japanese culture, such as classic literature, for example.

AOYAGI For example, at a Western tea party we can say something to the effect: "In the West you hold a teacup by the hand, but in Japan we hold our tea cups in our palm, so you can feel the shape, material and warmth." If you can discuss your own country's culture, your presence will change completely. Japan boasts some of the world's foremost quality in terms of Japanese painting and traditional arts and crafts, yet there are very few people who understand enough to discuss these in detail. This is a major issue facing Japan.

KINOSHITA Japan needs international exchange initiatives to share its culture with the world.

AOYAGI I heard this year that the University of Tokyo used its Hokkaido training facility, which was vacant for the summer, to host an international doctrine course, to which 90 people from the UK applied. Overseas youth have an interest in Japanese culture, so this type of educational program is one way to attract them. Additionally, recently a city hotel in Tokyo's Yushima neighborhood was converted into a hostel for foreign backpackers, and since then it has been welcoming young people with open arms.

KINOSHITA We need to have a cultural exchange platform for international students and researchers. We also need better hotel accommodations for international conferences, but traditional homes in Kyoto used as B&B that are cheaper than hotels are popular among foreign nationals who like to interact with the places they visit. After Tokyo won the bid for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Kansai region has been spurred on to expand its cultural exchange initiatives. One such initiative is Kyoto's efforts to attract the International Council of Museums (ICOM) General Conference

in 2019. To that end, Kyoto needs to create an aura of culture throughout the entire city. I call Kyoto a "city of intellectual exchange," and I hope to make the city a hub of interaction with great hospitality where overseas visitors can enjoy high level cultural conversations with Kyotoites.

AOYAGI MICE is extremely important for inbound visitors as well.

Community Strengths Essential to Attracting International Conferences

KINOSHITA Since it was first established, the Kyoto International Conference Center has had a large number of meeting rooms of various sizes, which are used for various types of meetings. To gain greater meaning, I hope to use these meeting rooms and our lobby as a venue for information exchange and discourse as an interactive saloon for foreign researchers and international students.

AOYAGI I hope you will also regularly exhibit Japan's traditional arts and crafts to introduce various works to foreign visitors.

KINOSHITA I am also considering setting up art installations in ICC Kyoto's garden to host outdoor art shows. Moving forward, I hope ICC Kyoto can be used as a venue for culture, arts, health and sporting events.

AOYAGI When a major international conference is held overseas, the national and local governments provide financial support, but Japan does not have such a custom. Local governments face challenging finances and so they will need to get more active at fund raising efforts, as international conferences will continue to grow in importance moving forward. A great deal can be communicated over the Internet these days, but people still need to meet together for consensus building and to convey sensitive matters. The entire world is becoming a more active society, and this requires the development of simultaneous interpreters who can speak three or four different languages. Once more meetings are hosted, demand will be generated, which in turn will help to develop the human resources needed.

KINOSHITA On September 13, 2014 the Heisei Chishinkan Wing opened at the Kyoto National Museum. I would be very grateful if the Agency for Cultural Affairs can propose positive solutions, such as enabling participants of international conferences to visit temples and art museums at night after the end of meetings, for example.



(Left) Interviewer Hiroo Kinoshita: After serving as Vice Minister for the National Land Agency and President of Hanshin Expressway Co., Ltd., he became President of ICC Kyoto in 2012.

"Safety & Comfort" provided by ICC Kyoto

The seismic retrofit construction that started on February 24, 2011 was completed in October 2014, three years after it began. Though ICC Kyoto has undergone successive repairs and renovations ever since it opened its doors in 1966, the conclusion of the current large scale retrofit is special in that it marks the completion of seismic reinforcement for the entire building. In addition to seismic reinforcement, we made this construction an opportunity to enhance the bevy of functions in our conference halls as well.

The main feature of this construction was a system of "staying open during the retrofitting" that allowed ICC Kyoto to be used during the actual retrofitting. Visitors to ICC Kyoto were kind enough to work around ongoing construction while conferences and events were held as per the normal schedule. And with this much appreciated cooperation, we were able to complete the retrofitting within the initially planned three year schedule.

On the occasion of our renewal, featuring the newest in seismic strengthening and noncombustible material, we would like to take this opportunity to show you what is new in the even safer and more comfortable Kyoto International Conference Center's Main Hall, Room A, Room B-1/B-2, and external walls.



External walls

We installed scaffolding along all of the external walls, inspected the surfaces, and initiated retrofit work based on inspection diagnoses. We especially focused on things like new handrail installation, side PC tile renovation, water proofing, and concrete reinforcement for seismic safety. The retrofit construction was all done with "restoration" in mind. As such, we attempted to bring the building back to the original designer's vision as much as possible.

Main Hall

The Main Hall facilities are even more convenient and effective after the retrofit construction.

- More stage battens for more multiple lighting! Amaze audiences with beautiful lighting that makes full use of the expansive space.
- Large scale screen now permanently "on call" (7.8 m high x 10.5 m wide) (photograph A) Provide powerful video screening for a more comfortable presentation environment.
- Implementing LED in lighting has allowed us to enable energy reductions of 45% in electricity consumption.
- Fixed seating renewal We installed side tables (photograph B) and desktop electrical outlets (photograph C) in attendant seating. We also made seating more user-friendly by adopting a sliding seat system and enabled wheel chair accessibility by installing removable seating.



With its 15 meter high atrium ceiling, spacious trapezoid layout, and two thousand person seating capacity, the Main Hall is the only United Nations style international conference hall in all of Japan.



Room A

This is a conference hall usable for government-level meetings and international meetings. A diverse array of seating arrangements are available, such as a horseshoe style, school style or theater style. The seating capacity is a maximum of about 550 seats with an additional 222 gallery seats on the upper level as well. The Kyoto International Conference Center logo was taken from this horseshoe conference hall seating.

- The ceiling, walling, and flooring were all removed and replaced.
- The standard screen size was increased to (5.0 m high x 8.8 m wide) and new stage battens were added.
- The ceiling and air conditioning ducts in the walling were removed and replaced. (completely refurbished to increase comfort level)



Room B-1/B-2

This room can respond to a diverse array of needs, such as meetings or breakout sessions. With its blue color scheme, Room B-1 can accommodate 100 to 250 people. The orange-brown based Room B-2 can accommodate 72 to 160 people. The layout can be changed for each room.



Hidden safety/protection features in the Main Hall, Room A, and Room B-1/B-2

- "Seismic control paneling" in walls in the conference halls to reduce oscillation from earthquakes.
- "RC reinforced walling" and "steel frames to reinforce walls" that reinforce steel and concrete to increase seismic resistance.
- Reinforcing material that prevents deformation in buildings from things like earthquakes.
- Interior retrofits such as changing to wall paper that uses difficult-to-burn, noncombustible material.

Visit to the Myanmar International Convention Center

—The beginning of a new international contribution—



In September of last year, we visited the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. This is a nation which, as the Chair of ASEAN in 2014, has successfully completed hosting various international conferences such as 25th ASEAN Summit, 9th East Summit and related summits. The Kyoto International Convention Center is the first national conference center in Japan to hold international conferences. We feel that contributing to the management and operation of the Myanmar International Convention Center (MICC) by offering knowhow involved in operating a conference center gained from our half-century long history and experiences is one of our new roles as ICC Kyoto. We continue to provide knowhow regarding the overall flow and logistics for international conference center operation in an effort to help the MICC staff maintain a level of sustainable conference center operation.



Left: Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Transport
Right: President of ICC Kyoto

ICC Kyoto Summer Festival 2014



Every summer, the Kyoto International Conference Center holds a garden party for city residents focused on a theme country. This started as commemoration of the launch of subway service to ICC Kyoto in 1997. 2014 marks the 18th installment.

In 2014, we celebrated the commemoration of 90 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Turkey. Some three thousand visitors participated over a two day period. With a theme centering on the Republic of Turkey, everyone enjoyed cross cultural experiences weaving the East and West together, featuring things like culture, customs, and food and drink. In the opening ceremony, we welcomed Turkish Ambassador to Japan Ahmet Bülent Meriç, who was kind enough to give an opening speech.

ICC Kyoto is the only venue in Kyoto that can hold a fireworks show privately, so we were proud to finish the event with a laser and fireworks show blazing beautifully across the summer night sky amidst shouts of admiration from the audience.



Japan Premium Screening Beyond Metabolism

The film "Beyond Metabolism" showed at the Kyoto International Conference Center on April 27, 2014. This film was set around ICC Kyoto and made by Volker Sattel and Stefanie Gaus, German filmmakers and residents at the "Goethe-Institut Villa Kamogawa." They received raving reviews for their German nuclear power plant dismantling documentary film "Under Control." Their newest work, "Beyond Metabolism," captures on film discussions revolving around the building in which the "Kyoto Protocol" was adapted in 1997. It does this from the points of the international conference, architecture, and simultaneous interpretation. First screened at the February 2014 Berlin International Film Festival, this film has already received outstanding reviews.

*An apartment and studio that invites German artists to stay in Japan for three months and provides them with an opportunity to create artwork here.

Prologue

Discovering "Metabolism" (the story behind making the film)
Volker Sattel & Stefanie Gaus

"Metabolism" is a concept put forward at the Tokyo "World Design Conference" held in 1960 by architect Kisho Kurokawa and contemporaries. It refers to a school of architecture that aims to propose cities and architecture which grow organically in line with social change and population growth. We first learned of this architectural concept at an exhibit at the Mori Art Museum (Tokyo) in 2011. After that, we decided to make "Beyond Metabolism" as an effort to grasp this concept of Metabolism through the process of showing on film just what role this historical Kyoto building called the Kyoto International Conference Center has played in all sorts of international conferences and what kind of impact it has had.

Episode 2

Round table talk:
"Discussing the Kyoto International Conference Center, a cultural asset for the future that has witnessed history"

At the round table talk, the people who filmed ICC Kyoto, the people who appeared in the film, and people involved in the original architecture and design freely discussed various things like the filming of ICC Kyoto and episodes that occurred in the original design and building of ICC Kyoto.

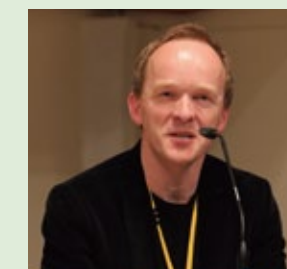
Profile

The filmmaker Stefanie Gaus, born in 1976 in Ulm, and the filmmaker, writer, and cameraman Volker Sattel, born in 1970 in Speyer, live and work in Berlin. Sattel's documentary Unter Kontrolle – Eine archäologie der Atomkraft was premiered in at the Forum of the Berlinale.

Episode 1

"Beyond Metabolism," the movie (story)

A normal day at ICC Kyoto when no conferences or events are going on. Using a backdrop that features scenes of cleaning going on in the Center interior and conference hall maintenance, a quiet lobby punctuated from time to time by the voices of the staff, and images of a landscaper working on the gardening along with the expressions of the wild deer which run through it, we are shown time passing nonchalantly along in ICC Kyoto and its everyday essence. This is the main jumping off point for the documentary as it weaves together scenes of the blazing debate at the Third Conference of the Parties (COP3) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Kyoto in 1997 and the almost alien landscape of the quiet simultaneous interpreting booth.



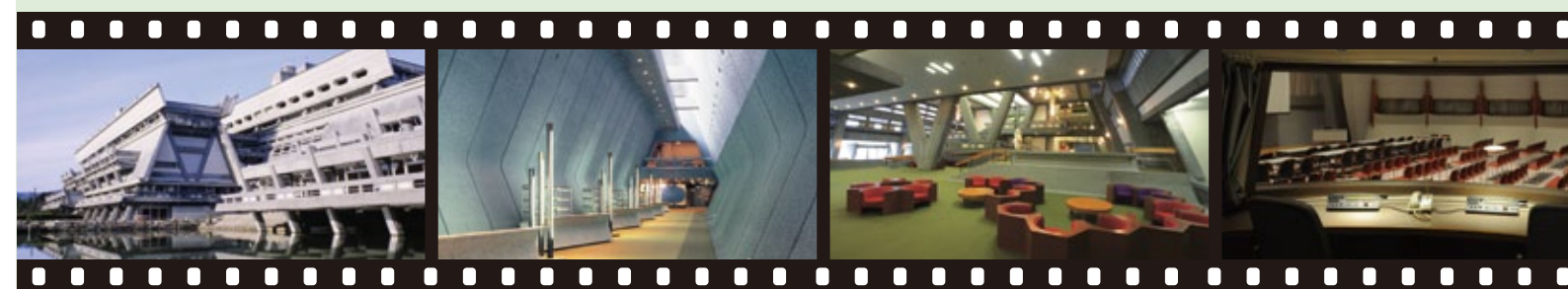
Comments from Volker Sattel

When we create a film, we start by looking at the structure and composition of the "place" (building) that we need to film. And, in the filming process, we always attempt to communicate what kind of role these things play as architecture and the things that become apparent through the capturing of that "time" on film.



Comments from Stefanie Gaus

The everyday feel of ICC Kyoto, when no conferences are going on, really gives you the feeling that this building almost seems to be "alive." And this is what ultimately enables a "conversation" between people and the building. We are extremely interested in the role that ICC Kyoto has played in the Kyoto area and the question of just what direction ICC Kyoto will advance towards in the future.



Event Calendar 2015

As of January 2015

Date	Event	Participants
Jan.30-Feb.1	The 38th Annual Meeting of Japanese Society of Ophthalmic Surgery	4,000
Feb.5-6	The 53rd Kansai Economic and Management Summit	600
Feb.7	The Earth Hall of Fame Kyoto / The Earth Forum Kyoto	1,000
Mar.18-19	2014 TPM Awards Ceremony ※TPM(Total Productive Maintenance)	500
Apr.11-13	The 29th General Assembly of the Japan Medical Congress 2015 Kansai	30,000
May25-29	15th International Congress of Radiation Research (ICRR) 2015 Kyoto	1,200
June21-24	The 7th International Symposium on Emerging and Re-emerging Pig Diseases	800
July13-15	The 3rd International Symposium on Process Chemistry (ISPC 2015)	1,000
July17-19	The 37th Annual Meeting of the Japan Society of Respiratory Care Medicine APELSO2015(The 2nd Conference of Asia-Pacific Chapter of Extracorporeal Life Support Organization)	2,500
July28-31	The 30th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Heart Rhythm Society The 32nd Annual Scientific Meeting of the Japanese Society of Electrocardiology	3,000
Aug.3-7	XVIIth World Economic History Congress	1,000
Sep.1-4	12th World Congress of Veterinary Anaesthesiology 2015	2,000
Sep.11-12	The 21st Annual Meeting of the Japanese Society of Dysphagia Rehabilitation	5,000
Sep.17-19	International Society for Experimental Hematology's 44th Annual Scientific Meeting	500
Sep.24-27	10th World Congress for Microcirculation	500
Oct.4-6	12th Annual Meeting of Science and Technology in Society (STS) forum	900
Oct.29-31	The 53rd Annual Meeting of Japan Society of Clinical Oncology	10,000
Nov.10-12	The 2015 Kyoto Prize	3,000
Nov.29-Dec.4	World Engineering Conference and Convention (WECC2015)	2,000
Dec.12-13	"Southeast Asian Studies in Asia" Conference(SEASIA 2015)	500

(Events with more than 500 estimated participants)