



JAPAN SOCIETY OF BOSTON

New England's Gateway To Japan Since 1904

Monthly Newsletter



[Become a Member](#)

Please View Entire Message in your email to see all of what we have to offer in our newsletter!

Announcements from JSB

The Japan Society of Boston is proud to welcome five new members to our Board of Directors! Learn more about them below.



Takako Edwards is a native of Tokyo, Japan, where she was born, educated, and began her career in the pharmaceutical industry. Since earning an MBA from the University of Chicago, Takako has worked in accounting and financial management roles across pharmaceutical, technology and finance companies, as well as a small Japanese startup. She and her family have remained actively involved with local Japan-America societies throughout the years. After relocating to Boston in the summer of 2024, Takako joined the Japan Society of Boston and is honored to serve on its Board. She looks forward to supporting the Society's mission and strengthening U.S.–Japan cultural and professional ties.



David Janes is Vice President, North America at the International House of Japan and Executive Director of the American Friends of the International House of Japan. He brings more than 25 years of experience in nonprofit, philanthropic, and educational leadership, with senior roles at the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology Graduate University (OIST), Global Citizens Initiative, and the United States-Japan Foundation. He holds a Ph.D. in Sociology from The New School for Social Research, as well as M.A. degrees in International Affairs and Asian Religions. He serves on the boards of the United States-Japan Bridging Foundation, Kobe College Corporation–Japan Education Exchange, the LEX Language Project, and EngageAsia, and is a Fellow of the U.S.-Japan Leadership Program, the U.S.-Japan Network for the Future, and the British-American Project.



Peter Kelley was born and raised in the Boston area, studied Japanese as an undergraduate, and received a B.A. in East Asian Studies from Harvard College. He worked for Teradyne, Inc. for 18 years in Japan-related positions, including six years residence in Japan. He was Executive Director of the Harvard-Yenching Institute, followed by 14 years as President of the National Association of Japan-America Societies (of which JSB is a member) in Washington DC. In 2024, he was awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette, for his work in support of the U.S.-Japan relationship. Peter has been a Japan Society of Boston member since the 1980s.



Rina Okawa was born and raised in Tokyo and came to Boston to pursue interior design at Wentworth Institute of Technology. After graduating, she joined ZEN Associates and has been with the firm for over 25 years, where she serves as Director of Interior Design. Her work focuses on creating peaceful, contemporary spaces for residences, restaurants, and offices that thoughtfully adapt traditional Japanese design principles within American contexts. She is honored to be selected on the Board of Directors of the Japan Society of Boston and looks forward to supporting and expanding opportunities for cultural exchange.



Yoshinori Uda is CEO and President of Ogawa Coffee Japan, Ogawa Coffee USA, and Ogawa Coffee Creates, where he leads the global management and strategic direction of the Ogawa Coffee Group. He has more than 30 years of experience at Ogawa Coffee across coffee roasting, product and system development, marketing, sales, and brand building. He has worked closely with coffee producers around the world and has also contributed to the development of barista education, including mentoring national and world champions. Through his work in Japan and the United States, Yoshinori is committed to advancing coffee craftsmanship, sustainability, and meaningful cultural exchange between communities.



NEW *Membership* DISCOUNT PARTNER

MUJI

MUJI
無印良品

Announcing a new discount partner for JSB members! Thank you to **MUJI U.S.A.** for their support.

[MUJI](#) is a global retailer of high-quality, simple products across categories – from homewares to fashion to wellness and more – that provide satisfying, expertly-designed solutions for everyday needs.

MUJI's full name, Mujirushi Ryohin, loosely translates to "No-Brand, Quality Goods," underscoring its enduring commitment to modesty, affordability, and quality.

JSB Members receive **10% off purchases** at MUJI's Newbury Street and Harvard Square locations.

See JSB's website for all discount partners and membership information.

Discount Partners

JSB Programming

Some events are limited to Japan Society of Boston Members. Interested in joining but not yet a member of the Japan Society of Boston? Consider [becoming a member](#) today!



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JAPAN SOCIETY
OF BOSTON

Connect with JSB!

Shinnenkai

Tuesday, February 17, 2026 | 6:00 PM
Hojoko



[JSB Member Exclusive]

Connect with JSB! – Shinnenkai 2026

Tuesday, February 17, 2026 - 6:00PM EST
Hojoko

1271 Boylston St, Boston, MA

It's your last chance to sign up for JSB's 2026 *shinnenkai* – registration closes at 4pm today, February 13th!

Celebrate the start of 2026, connect with the community, and enjoy great Japanese izakaya fare in this friendly reception-style gathering at Hojoko.

Advance registration is required, and members are permitted one guest each. Tickets include assorted food, one drink ticket, and the chance to connect with other members of the JSB community!

[Register](#)



SUN
FEB. 22
5:00-6:30
PM ET

おうちごはん!
Oûchigohan!
Ehomaki

WITH SOY MILK MATCHA LATTE

\$10 | JAS/JS/JETAA Members

\$15 | General Admission



おうちごはん！ (Ouchigohan)
Ehomaki with Soy Milk Matcha Latte

Sunday, February 22, 2026 - 5:00PM EST
Online

鬼は外、福は内！ Out with demons, in with good fortune!

We're celebrating February with **ehomaki**—an uncut sushi roll traditionally eaten on Setsubun (February 3) while facing the year's auspicious direction for good luck. The roll will be thickly filled with a customizable assortment of ingredients including omelette, marinated mushrooms, seafood, and other vegetables. We'll finish the meal with a cozy **soy milk matcha latte** that's perfect for warming up in the late winter weather.

Joining **Debra Samuels** as a guest instructor is **Kevin Hiromoto**, owner of the former Ebisuya Japanese Market, a beloved Japanese delicatessen in the Boston area for over 15 years. Kevin and Debra will share simple techniques, ingredient tips, and cultural context to help home cooks of all ages and experience levels enjoy this special Setsubun-themed meal!

[Register](#)



MONKEY: New Writing From Japan Vol 6. Horror – Your Host of Ghosts!

**Tuesday, March 3, 2026 - 7:00PM EST
Online**

From "Rashomon" to "The Ring," no one does psychological horror better than Japan, and horror is the theme of the new issue of *MONKEY: New Writing from Japan*, the annual English-language journal of original Japanese stories, poetry, and art.

But MONKEY 6 is not only about ghosts, spirits and hauntings. Quite often it takes on something more subtle that feels almost *anti*-horror in spirit.

This event's award-winning guest authors Kaori Fujino and Hideo Furukawa, and their lauded translators Laurel Taylor and Kendall Heitzman, will discuss what it means to write and translate in our contemporary world filled with its own omnipresent horrors. Hosted by *Japanamerica* author and contributing editor Roland Kelts and award-winning translator and founding editor Motoyuki Shibata, this is a unique transcultural literary celebration not to be missed!

This free, hour-long session will include presentation and opportunities for audience Q&A. Pre-registration is required.

[Register](#)



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 Temple
University
Japan Campus

JSB LANGUAGE ROOM

A JAPANESE & ENGLISH
VIRTUAL LANGUAGE
EXCHANGE



JSB Language Room

Thursday, February 19, 2026 - 6:00PM EST

(日本時間では2月20日金曜日午前8時)

Online

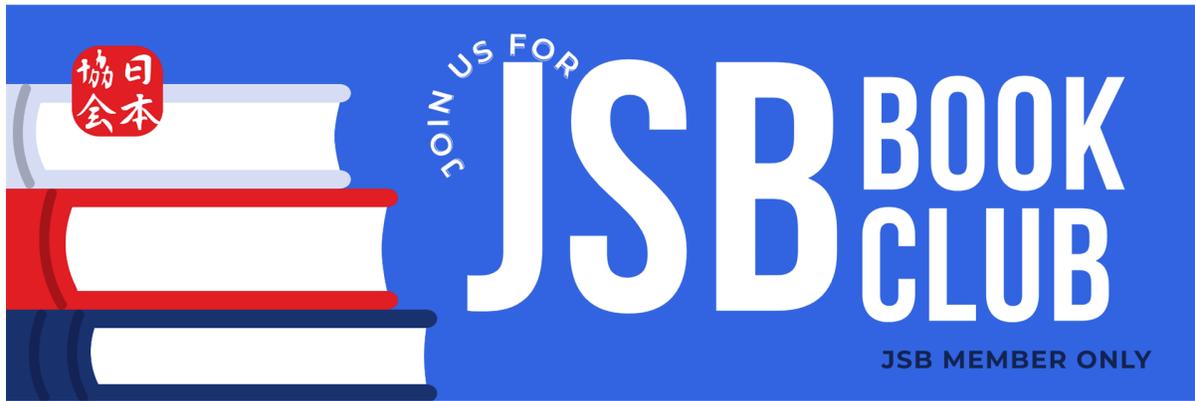
Looking for a fun way to socialize and grow your language skills from the comfort of your own home? Join JSB to practice your Japanese or English at our next online Japanese / English language exchange.

Our monthly language room is sponsored by Temple University, Japan Campus (TUJ), the oldest and largest foreign university in Japan.

This Month's Theme: 冬季オリンピック / Winter Olympics

Advance registration required.

[Register](#)



[JSB Member Exclusive]

JSB Book Club

Wednesday, February 25, 2026 - 6:00PM EST
Online

The JSB Book Club will meet in February to discuss *The Makioka Sisters* by **Junichiro Tanizaki**.

In Osaka, in the years immediately before W.W.II, four aristocratic women try to preserve a way of life that is vanishing. The story of the Makioka sisters is arguably the greatest Japanese novel of the 20th century, a poignant yet unsparring portrait of a family—and society—sliding into the abyss of modernity. Filled with vignettes of upper-class Japanese life and capturing both the decorum and the heartache of its protagonists, *The Makioka Sisters* is a classic of international literature. (From the publisher's description)

Find a copy [here](#). The discussion will be in English, but you are welcome to read the novel in any language.

Register



[JSB Member Exclusive]

JSB Film Club

**Wednesday, March 25, 2026 - 6:00PM EST
Online**

In March the JSB Film Club will discuss *Plan 75* (2022), a dystopian drama directed by Chie Hayakawa.

The film takes place in Japan, in a near future. The government program « Plan 75 » encourages senior citizens to be voluntarily euthanized in order to remedy a super-aged society. An elderly woman who loses the means to live independently, a pragmatic Plan 75 salesman, and a young Filipino caregiver face choices of life and death. (Synopsis from Urban Sales)

Watch the trailer [here](#).

Films should be viewed independently in advance of our meetings. Find the film [available to stream online](#) or check out your local library.

[Register](#)



Spring Sake Fest

Spring Sake Fest

Saturday, March 28, 2026 - 2:00-4:00 PM EDT

Julio's Liquors

140 Turnpike Rd, Westborough, MA 01581

The producers of **Sake Day East** are bringing a brand-new seasonal tradition to Julio's Liquors in Westborough!

The **SDE Spring Sake Fest** features a hand-picked lineup of premium sakes to sample, small bites, and local vendors. Whether you're an expert or a beginner, it's the perfect opportunity to explore various sake styles in an intimate setting and place on-site orders for your spring collection.

Tickets are \$60 and include **unlimited sake pours and food pairings**. JSB members receive a **\$10 discount** on each ticket! Visit the [JSB Member Portal](#) for the discount code.

Register

Signature Content from JSB



MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Showcasing stories from our vibrant community



Tatsushi "Tachi" Izuta

[Full Article](#)

"I first started visiting Boston in 1992 while attending graduate school in New Hampshire. I remember visiting a ramen shop in Cambridge, hoping for a taste of home, only to find it so unpalatable that my Japanese classmates and I could only laugh. When I began working in Boston in 1994, I would visit a small Japanese restaurant where the menu simply listed "Yaki-Soba", "Miso-Rahmen", etc. without any explanation. I was impressed by their boldness—it was as if they didn't feel the need to cater to anyone who wasn't already an expert on Japanese food. Today, the landscape is entirely different; friendly ramen, sushi, and other Japanese eateries are everywhere, and many of their offerings are truly delicious."

JSB MEETS JET ALUMNI

An interview series on alumni experiences in Japan



Laura Escher
Okinawa (2023-2024)

"My connection to Japan is stronger now than ever before! I returned to Okinawa this past summer to see friends and volunteer at an English summer camp.... My passion for teaching English as a foreign language hasn't faded and it will likely remain something that I do on the side throughout my life. I hope that my future work can involve Japan in some capacity, whether that is traveling to Japan for work or working for a Japanese company in the US. Without a doubt, Japanese language and culture will be a part of my life forever."

[Full Article](#)

From Our Friends

Below are just a few featured events and opportunities from other local organizations. Check our [website](#) for many more!

Japanese Flag Raising at Boston City Hall

Monday, February 23, 2026 - 12:00PM EST

Boston City Hall

1 City Hall Sq, Boston, MA 02201

The Japanese national flag will be raised at Boston City Hall, to commemorate the Birthday of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan. The Flag Raising Ceremony will be open to the public, and walk-ins are welcomed.

Hiroaki Umeda

Wednesday, March 11, 2026 - 7:30PM EST

Frederick C. Tillis Performance Hall, Bromery Center for the Arts

151 Presidents Dr, Amherst, MA

Choreographer and multidisciplinary artist Hiroaki Umeda has been a leading figure in Japan's avant-garde arts scene over the last two decades. His subtle yet visceral dance theater works have toured worldwide to audience and critical acclaim. Dancing within a gorgeous digital stage environment, Umeda choreographs optical, tonal, sensorial, and spatiotemporal elements.

UMass Amherst is the first of just five stops on Umeda's 2026 U.S. tour. His program includes two brand new works, *Moving State 1*, which will be performed by dancers from Umeda's Somatic Field Project; and *assimilating*, Umeda's solo performance. Both pieces explore behavioral design and the "attitudes" of things in motion within a dance aesthetic where refined physicality merges with cyberart.

JSB members can get a 15% discount on tickets! Visit the [JSB Member Portal](#) for the code.

[Tickets](#)

Sixties Shinoda

March 27 - April 24, 2026

Harvard Film Archive

24 Quincy St, Cambridge, MA 02138

Throughout a career spanning a wide range of styles and subjects, Shinoda Masahiro (1931-2025) reinvented himself several times, sometimes as often as from one film to the next. A will to innovation unifies his work, which is also marked by a sympathy for rebellion and a taste for secrecy and conspiracy. The loosely connected group of films from *Dry Lake* (1960) to *Double Suicide* (1969) is central to Shinoda's filmography. In addition to two of his best-known films, *Pale Flower* (1964) and *Double Suicide*, this group includes several others in which the director's penchant for visual abstraction matches up with an abrasive and bleak sensibility, breaking open the narrative forms he has inherited.

JSB members can get a \$3 discount on tickets! Visit the [JSB Member Portal](#) for the code.

Tickets

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