

# 「JAPAN TODAY IN ICELAND」

Contemporary Japanese Prints Exhibition

Photo Exhibition, Aspects of Japan Today

Photo Exhibition of Contemporary Japanese Architecture

Japanese Film Days

Concert by Tohru Takemitsu

Yoko Ono Exhibition

Contemporary Japanese Art Exhibition



Árið 1987 var haldin mikil kynning víða í Japan á menningu Norðurlandþjóðanna undir samheitinu «Scandinavia Today». Íslendingar tóku þátt í þessari kynningu með margvísnum íslenskum listviðburðum við góða athygli. Hvarvetna var fulltrúum Íslands fagnað sem vildarvinum enda er gestrisni japönsku þjóðarinnar margrómuð.

Nú er komið að því að Japanir sækja Ísland heim með mikla sýningu á eigin listmenningu sem þeir nefna «Japan Today», og er það fagnaðarefni. Það hefur lengi verið trú mín að fátt sé betur til þess fallið en listir þjóðanna til að kynna þær hverja annarri, því það sem skapað er í listum speglar einatt umhverfi listamanna og þjóðararf. Listsköpun er þannig hluti af þjóðarásjónu, eitt af margróma stefjum í hljómkviðu þjóða heimsins. Með þessari listkynningu sem hér er komin til Íslands treysta eyþjóðirnar tvær, Japanir og Íslendingar, bönd vináttu og skilnings sín á milli.

Við bjóðum góða gesti velkomna og þökkum þeim fyrir að gera sér ferð til okkar með sérstæða list sína okkur til yndis.

*Margróa Þjóðarinnar*



It is a great pleasure for me to introduce to you the programme of events and exhibitions in what we are calling «Japan Today in Iceland». This comprehensive cultural project, which is part of «Japan Today in Scandinavia», takes place from November to August 1991.

My people learned a great deal about the Nordic cultures during «Scandinavia Today in Japan» in 1987, and this has contributed very much not only toward improving our understanding of these Nordic peoples to which we seem to have a natural affinity, but it also deepened the friendship with those we were already in contact.

I am happy to note that Icelandic-Japanese relations continue to thrive as a result of trade, tourism and personal exchange. It's important to maintain these personal exchanges between our two countries as a means to nurture the mutual understanding of our two cultures.

I do hope that «Japan Today in Iceland» will contribute to an increased cultural exchange and that it will lead to an enriched interest in our two countries.

*Teruyuki Sawai*

Teruyuki Sawai  
Ambassador of Japan

# JAPAN TODAY

17th November – 2nd December

## Contemporary Japanese Prints Exhibition

*(Listasafn ASI)*

Contemporary Japanese Prints have their roots as far back as 1907, when a group, called Sosaku Hanga Undo (The Movement for Creative Prints), was established to promote prints as a means of expression for individual creativity, rather than simply as a means to reproduce paintings.

The graphic artists of the post war era achieved more freedom in their means of expression by keeping informed about the developments in production. As a result of this, exhibitions of graphical art increased.

The graphic arts became very popular during the 60's and the «print boom» was reached in the early 70's.

The most outstanding about contemporary Japanese prints is the variety shown in new forms and expressions.

On the other hand, due to Japanese dexterity and an eye for details, we find precision, in comparison with Western prints, in all phases from sketch to the finished piece of art.



17th November – 2nd December

## Photographic Exhibition, Aspects of Japan Today

*(Listasafn ASI)*

Japan, just off the coast of the Asian continent, is a highly industrialized nation that extends from the northwest Pacific Ocean in a north-southwesterly direction. It consists of the four major islands of Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu, plus hundreds of smaller islands off its shores. It has four distinct seasons and a rugged topography of volcanic peaks and mountain ranges, interspersed with swift-flowing rivers and beautiful lakes. The country's hilly topography, however, severely limits living space.

This exhibition shows various aspects of contemporary Japan. You will be able to enjoy beautiful Japanese scenery, life, festivals, traditional performances, high technology etc.



# IN ICELAND,

17th – 25th November

## Photo Exhibition of Contemporary Japanese Architecture

*(Ásmundarsalun)*

When Japan broke out of its isolation in 1868, they were greatly influenced by Western cultures, which resulted in great changes in architecture. European architects and techniques brought in new styles, new materials and great variations in the constructions of buildings.

It was only in 1923, at the time of the Great Kanto Earthquake, when buildings constructed according to Western design collapsed, that they started to analyse the Western influence. As a result of this, Japan started to look to its own architectural traditions and to seek inspiration from these.

Architects became more and more convinced that a people, whose life-style is so different from the Western one, could not strictly follow the Western style.

During the last ten years, Japanese architecture has broken away from the restrictions of the modernistic architecture and its production and technology, and it now shows a greater variety in its creation.

This exhibition of modern Japanese architecture shows the development which has taken place during the last ten years as well as the changes in architectural patterns.



18th – 23rd November

## Japanese Film Days

*(Regnboginn Kvikmyndahus)*

During this period modern Japanese films from the 70's and 80's will be shown.

You will be able to enjoy various kinds of Japanese theater films. What happens, for instance, if a boy and a girl exchange their bodies? This will be shown in the film «I are you, You am me» by Fumio Sakai.

Perhaps the most entertaining ones will be the Samurai film «Shoguns Samurai» by Kinji Fukasaku and the historical love film «Ogin, her love and faith» by Kei Kumai.

You will also have a chance to watch films based on the famous modern Japanese novels: «And Then» by Yoshimitsu Morita and «The Wild Daisy» by Shinichiro Sawai.



8th – 9th March 1991

## Concert by Tohru Takemitsu

*(Langholtskirkja)*



Tohru Takemitsu is one of Japan's most famous conductors. He is coming to Iceland to introduce modern Japanese music.

His ensemble consists of 12 musicians led by Aki Takahashi. They will play music by Tohru Takemitsu and other Japanese composers such as Yoshio Mamiya, Yoriaki Matsudaira, Toshio Hosokawa, Yuzuru Kondo and Noboru Miyoshi amongst others. Their repertoire consists mostly of modern Japanese music from the 80's.

Tohru Takemitsu was born in Tokyo 1930, but lived for the first eight years of his life in Manchuria where his father was stationed. His father died in 1938, but it was from him that Takemitsu inherited

his taste for jazz. During and after the Second World War, he mainly listened to military and popular music. But in 1946, together with other Japanese composers, he began to listen to modern foreign composers and he himself began to compose the following year. He has mostly taught himself, but he has studied privately with, inter alia, Fumio Hayasaka who wrote the music for Akira Kurosawa's films. From about 1950, his work began to be noticed and little by little he won international recognition.

He has written works for films, ballet, orchestra, smaller ensembles and electronic music. Takemitsu has also composed music for Japanese instruments, mostly for the 'Shakuhachi' and the 'Biwa'.

27th April – 2nd June 1991

## Yoko Ono Exhibition

*(Kjarvalsstaðir)*

This exhibition contains Yoko Ono's work from the period 1962–90. Even though Yoko Ono is most famous for her cooperation with John Lennon and of being his influential widow, she also has her own career as a pictorial artist, composer and film director. Her pictorial art belongs to the Pop Art of the 1960's and to the Fluxus Movement. As a film director she became important by making several «Underground Films» in the 1960's and 1970's.

Her films will also be shown for the first time in Iceland.



20th July – 25th August 1991

## Contemporary Japanese Art Exhibition

*(Kjarvarlsstaðir)*



If you study the world of Japanese art in the last 20 years then you will be witness to a great deal of excitement around the avant-garde or the anti-art movement which managed to liberate the picture from being a traditional painting on a canvas, giving birth instead to a physical object or a happening within an activity. But this never resulted in this art form taking root in or becoming established in Japan. Nonetheless art journalists continued to introduce every new form of art from USA without any serious critical appreciation or control.

The Seibu Sezon Museum of Art will now send various modern Japanese exhibits to Iceland. Some of the artists participating with their works in this exhibition are Kazumi Nakamura and Tomiaki Yamamoto. They paint in the decorative and anti-decorative style. In more recent years they have become well known for their clear colours. Atsuhito Sekiguchi paints in a style known as the construction and installation style. He often makes use of scrubbed glass in his art and his works are more a study than a way of expressing himself.

---

This programme is subject to change  
in the event of unforeseeable circumstances

---