

# IASIL Japan Newsletter

2019 No. 1

The Japan Branch of the International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures

April 2019

## 1. Message from the New President

I am deeply honoured to have been entrusted by the membership of IASIL Japan with the privilege of being President. I was moved by, and will never forget, the expressions of support received from so many members, and hope that I can repay this trust and support by continuing, as best I can, the wonderful work of our last President, Professor Naoko Toraiwa, and the work of previous Presidents, whose contributions have established our organization as a vital forum and vehicle for the study of Irish literatures in Japan.

One of the extraordinary facts about IASIL Japan is that we have a membership larger than that on the island of Ireland. It is an organization that all members, past and present, should be proud of, and one that has by now, with the extensive roll call of writers and scholars that we have had as our guests and the distinguished work of our members, as writers, scholars and as translators, created a special place of its own in the story of contemporary Irish literature.

On a personal note, IASIL Japan has been a fundamental part of my life in this country. I joined, almost accidentally, in 1998, at the conference at Waseda University, when the guests were Paul Durcan and Medbh McGuckian. It was my first year in Japan, and adjusting to life here has been eased and helped in ways I am only now beginning to realise by the acquaintanceships, and eventually friendships, made at that conference and over the now twenty years of my membership. I look forward to the coming three years, not without some trepidation, but I am lucky in having a strong new IASIL Office team, in Toshiki Tatara, as Secretary, and Hironao Kobayashi, as Treasurer, to follow on from the intimidatingly capable Haruko Takakuwa, and Mika Momoo. I thank you all once again, sincerely.

Andrew Fitzsimons

## 2. New Secretary and Treasurer

The new IASIL Japan secretariat assumed office in January 2019 and will serve for the next three years. Toshiki Tatara is the new Secretary, and Hironao Kobayashi is the new Treasurer. The IASIL Japan office is located at the address below. Please inform the office of any changes in your contact information, including email address or affiliation:

IASIL Japan

c/o Toshiki Tatara

Department of English, Faculty of Letters, Yasuda Women's University

6-13-1 Yasuhigashi, Asaminami-ku, Hiroshima 731-0153, Japan

Tel: +81-(0)80-3701-0547 Email: [secretary@iasil.jp](mailto:secretary@iasil.jp)

### 3. Payment of Annual Fees

Please find enclosed the 2019 Membership Fee remittance sheet payable to Japan Post Bank. You may choose to pay to the IASIL Japan account at the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi below. If you have not paid the membership fee below for any of the past three years, a separate sheet indicating the unpaid year is enclosed, so we ask you to add that amount to the 2019 fee.

If you are applying for Student membership fee, please provide the office with a copy of valid student ID with your payment.

Membership with <i>JIS</i>	¥ 7,000	Couple membership with <i>JIS</i>	¥ 10,000
Membership with <i>JIS</i> & <i>IUR</i>	¥ 10,000	Couple membership with <i>JIS</i> & <i>IUR</i>	¥ 13,000
Student with <i>JIS</i> *	¥ 5,000		

\*a copy of valid student ID should be provided annually

If you live abroad, please transfer your membership fee to the following account:

Bank Name: Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, LTD.

SWIFT CODE: BOTKJPJT

Branch Name: Kawagoe Branch (Branch No. 382)

Branch Address: 1-2-7 Shintomi-cho, Kawagoe City, Saitama Prefecture, 350-0043, Japan

Tel: Tel: +81 (0)49-222-2351

Account Name: IASIL Japan Treasurer Hironao Kobayashi

Account No: 0343056

The membership fee does not include the transfer charge, so please make sure that the exact amount reaches us. Please add the overseas postal charge to mail you the copies of *Journal of Irish Studies* and *Irish University Review* for which you have paid, according to the table below.

International postal rates for <i>JIS</i> & <i>IUR</i>	Asia	Oceania, North America, Central America, Europe, Middle East	South America, Africa
<i>JIS</i>	¥ 750	¥ 1,000	¥ 1,300
<i>JIS</i> & <i>IUR</i>	¥ 1,500	¥ 2,000	¥ 2,600

### 4. IASIL Election 2019

The IASIL Japan Executive Committee has sent the nomination of the following members to represent Japan at the IASIL Executive Committee for 2019-2021.

Vice-chairperson: Andrew Fitzsimons

Representatives: Hironao Kobayashi, Toshiki Tatara, Naoko Toraiwa

### 5. IASIL Conference 2019, “The Critical Ground”

IASIL Conference will be held from 22 to 26 July at Trinity College Dublin. For details and registration, please go to the Conference website: <<https://www.tcd.ie/English/iasil-2019/>>. We hope to meet many participants from IASIL Japan in Dublin!

## 6. IASIL Japan Scholarship

There was no application to IASIL Japan Scholarship. We ardently encourage more postgraduate students to apply for the scholarship next year.

## 7. *Journal of Irish Studies*

The deadline for submission to *Journal of Irish Studies* Vol. XXXIV is **25 April 2019**. Contributors should send articles for consideration together with a short biographical note to Jane O'Halloran at [editor@iasil.jp](mailto:editor@iasil.jp). Please send articles and biographical information as MS Word files attached to the e-mail. The biographical information should include the author's affiliation, full postal and e-mail addresses, and telephone and fax numbers. More information can be found on the IASIL Japan website: <<http://iasil.jp/guidelines.html>>.

The editor suggests that those whose mother tongue is not English should have their articles checked by native speakers of English prior to submission.

## 8. Plans for the IASIL Japan 2019 Conference, "Borderlands"

Dates: 12-13 October

Venue: Konan Women's University <<https://www.konan-wu.ac.jp/en/access/>>

Guest Speakers 1) Aileen Douglas (Trinity College Dublin) and 2) Eoin McNamee

Symposium 1: "Crossing/Negotiating Borders: gender and nation in Ireland under the Union"  
(tentative title)

Chair: Haruko Takakuwa

Panelists: Hiroko Ikeda, Saeko Nagashima, Kimiyo Ogawa, Masaya Shimokusu

Symposium 2: "Borderlands between Various Art Forms" (tentative title)

Chair: To be announced

Panelists: Richard Kelly, Akiko Manabe, Hiroko Mikami, Naoko Toraiwa

### Call for Papers!

Applicants for a 20-minute paper reading are requested to send a synopsis of 250–300 words as a Word attachment to IASIL Japan office at [secretary@iasil.jp](mailto:secretary@iasil.jp). Besides the synopsis itself, please send details of the author's affiliation, full postal and e-mail addresses, and telephone and fax numbers by **31st May**.

In light of the recent tourism boost in Kobe, the members are advised to make their hotel bookings for the conference early. Hotels around Sannomiya, Motomachi, Osaka and Hankyu-Umeda Stations should be most convenient for the venue.

Please also note that in 2017, we introduced online registration system for IASIL Japan conference and that the members will be notified of the conference details digitally.

## **9. Announcement: Seamus Heaney Award, Japan**

Literary relations between Japan and Ireland might be said to date back to Jonathan Swift's Lemuel Gulliver, who landed near Edo (Tokyo), albeit briefly, the only real location he visited on his fantastic voyage. Two hundred years later, another voyager, Lafcadio Hearn landed, but stayed longer, becoming eventually a Japanese citizen. Hearn is well known in Japan for his adaptations of Japanese folktales, which, some argue, betray the indelible mark left by his Irish upbringing.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Japanese scholars and writers, such as Yone Noguchi, were some of the first to take a serious interest in the work of W. B. Yeats, an interest that was reciprocated by Yeats, in his adaptations of Noh drama, and in the many poems that reveal the hold that Japanese culture had on the thrust of his imaginative life. It would now be impossible to do justice to the range of poets, novelists, playwrights, academics, translators and scholars, in both countries, whose work has added to this tradition. The distinguished and sustained nature of this work, particularly over the last thirty years, make it appropriate for the Embassy of Ireland, Japan, in conjunction with IASIL Japan, to establish an award to recognise outstanding contribution to the enhancement of literary relations between Ireland and Japan.

To name this award the Seamus Heaney Award, Japan, is to honour a poet whose work, and whose presence on many occasions in Japan, played a vital role in inspiring much of the work that the award will recognise, and to acknowledge in an official manner, and continue, a relationship with Japan which was substantial, sustained, and marked by mutual affection and regard.

The award will be administered biennially by IASIL Japan under the auspices of the Embassy of Ireland, Japan, and to be given to: a work/body of work of outstanding literary merit; an outstanding work/body of work of translation and/or scholarship. Nominations are requested from relevant literary and scholarly associations and institutions, in Japan and Ireland. The nominations will be evaluated by a panel of well-qualified judges drawn from among these nominating organizations. The award itself will be a citation of the recipient's outstanding contribution to literary exchange between Ireland and Japan, on a specially commissioned piece by Richard Gorman, an Irish artist whose own work has had a long association with Japan.

Nominations, to be received by November 30, 2019, can be sent by email using the subject line 'Seamus Heaney Award Japan Nomination' to: IASIL Japan Office: [secretary@iasil.jp](mailto:secretary@iasil.jp) or

Embassy of Ireland, Japan: [Tokyoembassy@dfa.ie](mailto:Tokyoembassy@dfa.ie)

## 10. Obituary: for Prof. Seishi Matsuda

Seishi Matsuda, Professor Emeritus of Kobe Shinwa Women's University, former President of the Yeats Society of Japan, and in charge of many roles for promoting Irish literary studies not only in IASIL Japan but also in other sister academic bodies, went on his last journey. He would never return to our world. He was a living book of life and death, and we could never open a page in it again.

Prof. Matsuda was born September in 1941, the same year of Zero fighters' birth. His hometown was the meek mountain area of Kasaoka, Okayama Prefecture. After years he learned much in Hiroshima and became one of the translators of Dr. Robert J. Lifton's award-winning record and analysis of the *hibakusha*, *Death in Life: Survivors of Hiroshima*. He worked long in Kobe, and there hosted many renowned guests from abroad, including Profs. Edna Longley and Luke Gibbons, while always being a sincere teacher and care-taker for the younger generations.

He never picked up part of anything or anyone. His wide, panoramic and synthetic sight over W. B. Yeats and other writers must have been based on huge reading of many Eastern and Western thinkers, old and contemporary. However, he never forgot to listen to a living soul.

He kept a photo on the head-side row of books in his last den in his house, taken by another great scholar and his close friend Prof. Hiroshi Shimizu. In the photo a local bamboo flutist is making impersonal, universal dance music with free breath and quick fingers at a Feis Lughnasa at the foot of Mt. Iwaki in Tsugaru, a northern country of Japan.

I, perhaps I can say "we", cannot believe he is gone; we just expect him to suddenly appear at the next corner on our way, and smile at us, asking interestingly "Now, how and why are you here?"

The last words to say- Goodbye, Matsuda-sensei, thank you.

Fuyuji Tanigawa



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**IASIL Japan Newsletter 2019 No.2 will be distributed digitally in September.**