

Carrying Souls to Newcastle

An Evening with Japanese Poetry

At the Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle

Tuesday, August 27th, 6 p.m to 8 p.m,
Lecture Room, Doors Open at 5.30, Free Admission

Photo by Yasuhiro Yotsumoto



Yasuhiro Yotsumoto is one of Japan's leading contemporary poets, but he has spent most of his life outside his own country, first in the US and then in Germany. He returned to Japan just before the pandemic and reconnected with the classical Japanese poetic tradition and with rural Japan. Inspired by the writings of Newcastle University philosopher, Mary Midgley, his work explores poetry as a form of resistance to technocratic society and the inhumanity of capitalism. He also mentors young poets in Japan, with a focus on performance and anti-establishment voices.

Yasuhiro will read from his own work and the work of other poets, in English translation, taking us on a pilgrimage with wandering poets across the ages. He will talk about Sado Island, in the Japan sea, where Zeami, the founder of Noh theater, was exiled. Zeami's art, merged the ethereal with the corporeal and his poetic Noh plays are inspired by timeless stories of gods and ghosts. Yasuhiro is involved in a project to build an arts residency in a remote village on Sado, working with other Japanese and international artists.

Yasuhiro will be joined by filmmaker, John Williams and Newcastle-based artists, Mike Collier and Hazel Barron-Cooper, for a talk about art and poetry in rural communities in Japan and the UK, art and the environment, poetry and politics and beyond. We hope to be joined by local poets for more readings.

This event is hosted by John Williams, Sophia University, Tokyo. John Williams is a Welsh/Japanese filmmaker, who has made three feature films on Sado Island. More information about his art-practice research in rural communities and work with artists in Japan and the north of England can be found on the HP below with biographies of the participants in the project.

Visit the web page of Sophia University Institute of Comparative Culture Collaborative Research Unit "Exploring a Japanese Fishing Village through Art" <https://www.icc-sophia.com/exploring-a-japanese-fishing-village-through-art>