



# ConsuLink

December 2022 Newsletter

*Keeping you updated on Japan-related news in Michigan and Ohio*

## Yuzu Fruit Spices Up Winter Solstice Baths

Toward the end of December each year, the North Pole's tilt away from the sun results in the shortest day and longest night of the year. The winter solstice, or *tōji* in Japanese, may be a time of darkness and cold, but it is also the point at which the days start to become longer and the sun stronger as we move toward spring. A winter solstice tradition in Japan is to add a citrus fruit called *yuzu* to one's hot bath, whether at home, a public bath (*sentō*), or hot springs (*onsen*).



*Yuzu* (pictured above), a hardy fruit that ripens in the winter and can withstand freezing temperatures, symbolizes the resilience it takes to get through the cold, harsh winter and to overcome bad luck. Taking a *yuzu* bath, or *yuzu-yu*, is supposed to help prevent colds, improve circulation, and nourish the skin, as well as helping usher in good fortune. Hot springs can be found all along the Japanese archipelago. Onsen in Ohio's sister-state of Saitama include several in the mountainous Chichibu area (below left), and those in Michigan's sister-state of Shiga include several in the Ogoto area of Otsu (below right), near the coast of Lake Biwa, Japan's largest lake.



## Japanese Ceramics Highlighted at Michigan and Ohio Art Venues

Last month, two exhibits of Japanese ceramics were unveiled in Michigan and Ohio. On Nov. 12, "Clay as Soft Power: Shigaraki Ware in Postwar America and Japan" opened at the University of Michigan Museum of Art in Ann Arbor (UMMA; pictured below). Shigaraki-yaki, as it is called in Japanese, is a 700-year-old style of pottery known for its rustic appearance, with rough surfaces and irregular glazing. The exhibit, on view through May 2023, will be the subject of a Japanese Art Society of America webinar on Dec. 5, led by Dr. Natsu Oyobe, UMMA Curator of Asian Art.



*Photo credits: The Michigan Daily (above) and Dublin Arts Council (below)*

From Nov. 8 to Dec. 15, the Dublin (OH) Arts Council is hosting an exhibit titled, "Masayuki Miyajima: Pattern-Form-Function / New Variations," featuring artwork shipped from Motegi, Tochigi Prefecture, just outside of the town of Mashiko, one of Dublin's friendship cities. The artist, Mr. Miyajima (pictured below), also traveled from Motegi to Dublin for the show, and led ceramics workshops there on Nov. 12.



## Great Lakes JETAA Hosts Get-Togethers for JET Program Returnees

On November 11, JET alumni gathered in Ferndale, MI, for a Great Lakes JET Alumni Association "Welcome Back Dinner" focused on recent returnees from the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program. The impressive turnout included JET program participants from as far back as 1988! Great Lakes JETAA, which includes both Michigan and Ohio, is collaborating with the Japan America Society of Greater Cincinnati to host a "Holiday Meetup" in Cincinnati on December 14 for JET alumni and others with Japan experience and/or interest. Details and registration may be found [here](#).

## SPOTLIGHT ON JAPANESE CULTURE ENTHUSIAST FROM MICHIGAN

### Woodblock Print Artist Linda Beeman Combines Culture and Creativity

The artwork of Owosso (MI) native Linda Beeman (pictured below) combines woodblock printing techniques refined in Japan over 400 years ago, and nature scenes from her travels, including various locations in Michigan and its sister-state of Shiga, as well as other places in Japan, the American West, and so on. A recent exhibit of Ms. Beeman's prints, called "The Soul of a Moment," held at the Matthaei Botanical Gardens in Ann Arbor, included "Perspective on Rice," depicting a rice field in Yokaichi, Shiga (below right), and "Puddle Jewels" (below left), featuring fallen leaves on a Mt. Fuji trail.



Ms. Beeman began to study woodblock printing, or *"moku-hanga"* in Japanese, in 2008. Spurred by her own chemical sensitivities and concerns about the environmental effects of the ink and solvents used in traditional printmaking in the U.S., she embraced the water-soluble inks and toxic-free wood used in traditional Japanese printmaking. Largely self-taught, she has held exhibits in the U.S., Great Britain, and Japan, leads classes and workshops, and appears on YouTube.

After a stint in Kyoto and Shiga in 2011, Ms. Beeman was invited by the Japanese Government to be an Artist in Residence at Mt. Fuji in 2012. She returned to Japan on the 2017 Michigan-Shiga Goodwill Exchange Mission, while serving as President of the Michigan-Shiga Sister State Board. Ms. Beeman hopes to visit Japan again in 2024, when the International Mokuhanga Association will hold its conference in Echizen in Fukui Prefecture, just north of Shiga Prefecture.



*ConsuLink is the official newsletter of the Consulate-General of Japan in Detroit*

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[CGJ Website](#)

## CALENDAR Exhibits & Events

Through Dec. 15:  
[Masayuki Miyajima Ceramics Exhibit](#) @ Dublin Arts Council, Dublin, OH

Through May 7, 2023:  
[Clay as Soft Power: Shigaraki Ware in Postwar America and Japan](#) @ UMMA, Ann Arbor, MI

Fri., December 2  
[OSU-IJS Yanagiya Tōzaburō: Night of Rakugo Storytelling](#) @ Columbus, OH  
[WMU-JOI Virtual Japanese Conversation Table](#) @ online platform

Mon., December 5  
[Clay as Soft Power Webinar](#) @ online platform

Thurs., December 8  
[Hofu-Monroe Book Club](#) @ online platform  
[UM-CJS Hybrid Webinar/Lecture: Negotiating the Cold War - Yamaguchi Yoshiko in Sacramento 1950](#) @ Ann Arbor, MI and online platform

Wed., December 14  
[JASMO Holiday Wishlist Dinner](#) @ Rochester, MI  
[JASGC JET Alumni & Friends Holiday Meetup](#) @ Cincinnati, OH

## QUICK LINKS

[Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan](#)

## KIZUNA



[Kizuna: The official magazine of the Government of Japan](#)

Digital publication reporting on a variety of topics, promoting stronger links between Japan and the world.

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