

Waseda University / University of Birmingham news release

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Universities of Birmingham and Waseda stage key Shakespeare symposium

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE WITH UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM EXPERTS

Experts from the University of Birmingham are joining their counterparts at Waseda University, Royal Shakespeare Company directors and Japanese Kyogen actors to explore how to bring Shakespeare to life for today's theatre audiences.

The international symposium is expected to deliver new insight on bringing together stage practice and academic research to stage the Bard's plays – particularly focussing on how Japanese traditional theatre can help better understand Shakespeare.

Waseda's 'University of Birmingham Day' opens on **Monday 26 November 2018** with an exploration of the importance of global Higher Education research – particularly focussing on Britain's research links with Japan.

It celebrates a strategic joint research partnership between the Universities of Birmingham and Waseda, started in 2016, that is producing collaboration across areas such as robotics, corpus linguistics, atmospheric environmental science, urban studies, language education, creative writing and Shakespeare.

The event also marks a further day of workshops and discussions between researchers, which will set the stage for even more collaboration between the two universities in the future.

University of Birmingham Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) Professor Robin Mason commented: *"The UK is one of Japan's top research partners. It is vitally important for both the University of Birmingham and our country to develop closer engagement with our counterparts in Japan, especially in areas of shared research strength.*

"Our collaboration with Waseda University continues to bear fruit, as there is much common ground between us. The joint symposium on Shakespeare is tremendously exciting in itself, but I look forward to celebrating and progressing our other areas of joint research."

Professor Mason will deliver a keynote speech at the opening ceremony, outlining the globally important role played by British universities' research. H.E. Paul Madden CMG, British Ambassador to Japan will also address the audience.

The symposium 'Adapting Shakespeare for the Stage Today' is sponsored by the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation, co-organised by the University of Birmingham's world-renowned Shakespeare Institute and Waseda University. It explores what it means to present Shakespeare's work to audiences around the globe today and features:

- Professors Hiromi Fuyuki and Ryuichi Kodama - Waseda University
- Professor Michael Dobson - Director of the Shakespeare Institute
- Professor Tiffany Stern - Shakespeare Institute
- Angus Jackson - Associate Director, Royal Shakespeare Company
- Kelly Hunter - Artistic Director, Flute Theatre

Professor Stern will also present a guest lecture 'Tragedy and Performance in the Time of Shakespeare' on Tuesday 27 November.

Delegates from Waseda visited Birmingham in 2016 to launch a partnership with the School of English Drama and American & Canadian Studies - marking the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. It united the Shakespeare Institute, in Stratford-upon-Avon, with Waseda's Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum and the Faculty of Letters, Arts and Sciences.

The Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum is a Waseda facility devoted to the history of performing arts and used for performances by artists from across the globe. It is named after Professor Tsubouchi Shoyo, a pioneer in modern Japanese literature and theatre, also known for translating Shakespeare's complete works into Japanese.

The two universities have worked together for some time before signing their formal agreement in 2016 and there is an active student exchange between Waseda and Birmingham.

A detailed schedule of the 'University of Birmingham Day' can be found [here](#).

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For more information or to request interviews with the University of Birmingham experts, please contact:

- **Tony Moran, International Communications Manager, University of Birmingham on +44 (0) 121 414 8254 or +44 (0)782 783 2312. Out-of-hours enquiries: +44 (0) 7789 921 165.**

For more information about the event, please contact:

- **International Office, Waseda University at BirminghamDay@list.waseda.jp**

These University of Birmingham experts are available for interview Monday 26 to Wednesday 28 November (This list was provided by the University of Birmingham).

Academic	Specialism
Michael Dobson	Given Waseda status as guardians of Shoyo Tsubouchi 's legacy - collaboration with theatre practitioners; performance editions and briefings with RSC. Shakespeare and national theatre institutions – Japan as a country which has invested conspicuously in performing Shakespeare over last 150 years.
Tiffany Stern	Performance in Shakespeare's day - and how we can understand the plays better if we understand conditions for which they were written. Drama in Shakespeare's time was performed more formally, akin to 'Kabuki' theatre - Japanese performance helps us understand Shakespearean performance. Editor and general editor of Shakespeare. What should 'born digital' editions - books of the future - be like. Explore where Japanese thought is on similar issues.
Yulong Ding	Working with Birmingham alumni at Japan Institute of Applied Energy and a leading researcher of Germany Space Centre on Carnot batteries and new wind energy technology, together with new invention of thermal-chemical-electrical conversion and storage technology. Working on a project funded by a Daikin subsidiary on cold storage technologies for chain applications.
Qulsum Fazil	Migrant communities' health, wellbeing and health care access - depression in Pakistani women; families' experiences of having a disabled child and access to health and social care; Black minority ethnic patients experiences of cancer care. How can creative arts methodologies generate knowledge that adds to evidence in health inequalities research. Raising disability awareness to health professionals.
John Round	Migration, internal displacement and mental health. Wellbeing impacts of people displaced by the Fukushima disaster. Japan is changing its migration policy and happy to talk about UK policy too.
Daniel Vyleta	Conversations with Waseda about English-language creative writing in the non-native speaker classroom - genuine literary potential. Novelist who grew up in Germany and Czech Republic, but writes in English. Fostering relationship across two universities in creative writing across various genres.
Paul Thompson	Corpus linguist with a special interest in language used by teachers, learners and researchers. Working with Laurence Anthony of Waseda University on apps for helping university English teachers and learners to create their own corpora of academic research articles. Research interests: characteristics of writing for interdisciplinary audiences; study of development in undergraduate student writing; applications of corpus analysis in the language classroom, and uses of new technologies in language teaching and learning. Paul lived in Japan 1982-1996.
Mohan Sridharan	Autonomous robots and adaptive agents - architectures and algorithms that enable robots to collaborate with non-expert human participants, acquiring and using sensor inputs and high-level human feedback based on need and availability.
Claudio Zito	Exploring how we can create deep learning robots which grasp and manipulate objects such as [insert examples] in environments such as people's homes.

Notes to Editors

- The University of Birmingham is ranked amongst the world's top 100 institutions, with its work bringing people from across the world to Birmingham, including researchers and teachers and more than 6,500 international students from over 150 countries.
- Its Shakespeare Institute is an internationally renowned research institution established in 1951 to push the boundaries of knowledge about Shakespeare studies and Renaissance drama. Based in Stratford-upon-Avon, the Institute is led by Professor Michael Dobson.
- Waseda is one of Japan's most prestigious private universities. Based in Tokyo, it was one of the first Japanese universities to accept foreign students, and it currently hosts 5,000 international students from 100 countries, the highest number in Japan.