

## Secretary General visiting Japan

In the beginning of June I had the opportunity and great fortune to spend a few days with Japanese IAML-colleagues in Tokyo. I was visiting my IAML-friend Yasuko Todo – something we had discussed several times during the years. I am sure many of you know Ms Todo well since she has visited IAML conferences regularly starting with Cambridge 1980. To my delight it turned out that my visit happened to coincide with the annual meeting of the Japanese IAML Branch! In addition I gladly accepted the invitation to the library of the prestigious Kunitachi College of Music.

The meeting took place Sunday 3 June, in the Tokyo Metropolitan Festival Hall, a concert hall located in the Ueno Park. The park is one of Japan's most popular public city parks and produced a lively impression with many people of all ages, a flea market, a marvellous bonsai exhibition and much more. It is also the home of many museums, among them Tokyo National Museum, which offered a special exhibition at this time: "Japanese Masterpieces from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston". The Boston collection of Japanese art is extensive and there was a huge crowd of visitors. We managed to see a part of the exhibition before the meeting.

The Japanese IAML Branch has 73 members – 58 individuals and 15 institutions. Around 20 people had turned up to the annual meeting. Fortunately I was not the secretary, since it was obviously in Japanese and the only thing I could figure out on the agenda was my name! The meeting lasted not more than an hour, and after a break two more items were scheduled, namely a report by Shu-Ji Lin and my own presentation.



Ms Todo pointing out the room for the IAML meeting



From left to right: Mr. Yamada, Mr. Teramoto, Ms Arakawa, Vice-President

Ms Lin reported on the activities of “the Research Committee of Musical Sources in Japan”. This is a joint project with the Musicological Society of Japan, the Music Library Association of Japan and the Japanese IAML Branch, commissioned by the Agency for Cultural Affairs. “The Research Committee was formed in 2008 with the aim of comprehensively documenting sources of music surviving in Japan, which are stored in libraries, archives and schools. The Committee investigates, *what exists and where it is kept*, as the RISM says. Our research fulfils the purpose of both. One is to prevent the loss of the materials, and is inherited as a cultural legacy. Another is that they will be available and utilized for musical activities.” (from the Committee Objectives). Those of you who will attend the IAML conference in Montréal will have the opportunity to listen to a presentation by Keiichi Kubota (Kunitachi College of Music, Tachikawa, Tokyo), Thursday 26 July at 14.00.

I had been asked to make a presentation and chose “the Future of IAML” as the topic, with the preliminary report of the Strategy Committee as the basis. We managed to have a small discussion at the end, in spite of shortage of time.

The meeting ended with a nice dinner in a jolly atmosphere, maybe partially due to the abundance of sake served!



Ms Lin (left) and Ms Hasegawa (right)

On Monday I visited Kunitachi College of Music together with Ms Todo and Ms Arakawa. The College was founded in 1926 and has about 2 000 students and 420 staff members. During the IAML Conference in Tokyo 1988 it was the venue of a reception with many participants - some of you readers might remember.

Kunitachi College of Music has three departments:

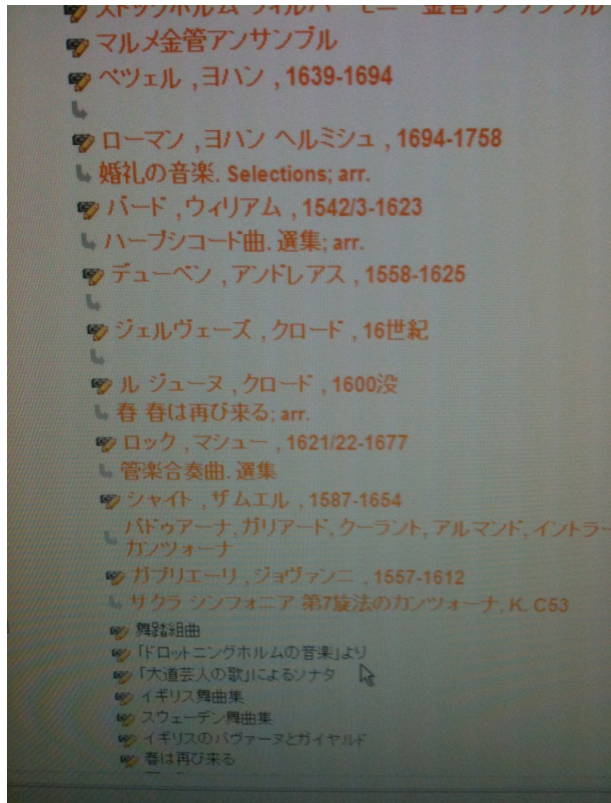
- Department of Music Performance (Vocal, Keyboard, Orchestral Instruments and Jazz)
- Department of Music Culture Design (Composition, Musicology and Music Therapy)
- Music Education (Music Education. Early Childhood Education)

We were greeted by the Chief Librarian Junko Matsuura, who then “handed us over” to Yoko Ito — our excellent English-speaking guide for the day.

My visit was carefully prepared and I felt very welcomed. It does, for example, make the heart of a Swedish music librarian warm to see several examples of Swedish music in the library. We walked through the entrance hall with exhibitions of library material, the reading room, the reference room, the main circulation counter, the audio-visual department and the staff offices.



From left to right: Ms Ito, Ms Shekhter, Mr. Erabu, Ms Arakawa



Opac: Johan Helmich Roman – “The Father of Swedish Music”



After this we were given a demonstration of how a professional bookbinder works. The quality of the so-called Japanese paper suits the purpose very well.



Ms Someya

Finally Dr. Hasegawa Yumiko was delivering a most interesting presentation of the rare books, and scores owned by the library. There were autographs by Rossini and Bellini, early manuscripts, first editions of

works by many composers, for example Lully, Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann and Brahms. At the end we were shown some beautiful examples from the vast collection of Japanese woodcut prints.



An interesting article about “Collections of Western Music in Japan”, written by Yasuko Todo and Masakata Kanazawa was published in *Fontes* 56/3 (July-September 2009). I would also like to recommend the informative article about Tokyo in the *New Grove* written by Mr. Kanazawa, President of the Japanese IAML Branch.

After the library we visited a very impressive building inaugurated last year with special studios for orchestra, opera and choral rehearsals, ensemble rooms of various sizes, an organ room and a room for percussion instruments. All rooms had individually designed acoustics to create optimal working conditions. The lesson rooms for private and group lessons had detachable absorption panels to adapt the acoustic to suit any kind of instrument.



From left to right: Ms Arakawa, Ms Shekhter, Ms Ito and Ms Todo

After a full day I must admit that I was quite exhausted and therefore the dinner in the evening was a real treat. Masakata Kanazawa, president of the Japanese IAML Branch, had generously invited us to a restaurant in Kyoto style, Minokichi in Ikebukuro. The exquisite food and the serene atmosphere made the evening very special.





During my short visit I managed to learn a few words in Japanese from a guide book Ms Todo had lent me. They were said to characterize Japanese people. One of them was “kikubari” – consideration, a word I think fits my hosts very well. Every detail was meticulously taken care of, which made my stay both smooth and enjoyable. The second word was “gaman” – in English, patience. Ms Todo is simply a personification of the word. She stoically put up with all my silly questions and never showed any sign of tiredness. Finally a word often used in Japan, “sumimasen” – excuse me. And do forgive me for being so long-winded as a result of my enthusiasm over the exciting days in Tokyo!

Pia Shekhter

事務局長 (Secretary General)