

JAPAN UPDATE CULTURE PANEL

SOFT POWER AND CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

In partnership with The Australian National University (ANU)



The Japan Foundation, Sydney is proud to present **Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy**, an expert panel on soft power in Japan, on **October 13 (Tuesday), 6:30 – 8:00pm** at The Japan Foundation, Sydney. This public event is presented in partnership with **The Australian National University (ANU)**, as an extension of the ANU's annual *Japan Update* conference.

Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy brings together three experts from different fields: 'cute culture' theorist **Christine R. Yano** (University of Hawaii), public diplomacy analyst **Yasushi Watanabe** (Keio University) and trans-Asia globalisation specialist **Koichi Iwabuchi** (Monash University). Respectively, they draw from their innovative work to critically explore the global clout of **Hello Kitty**, the politics of soft power and the policies around '**Cool Japan**'.

The panel will be convened by **Dr Simon Avenell (ANU)**, who handpicked the speakers for their cutting-edge research on contemporary Japan's new modes of international engagement. It will offer valuable insights into the forces shaping Japan today, and the "soft" tools Japanese business and government elites are deploying to promote Japan's interests on the world stage.

Says **Dr Avenell**, "For many years Japan was known internationally as a high-tech manufacturing superpower, but in recent decades Japan has also become a major exporter of popular culture—particularly to Asia.

“Amid the rising economic clout of Northeast Asia and intensifying regional rivalries, Japan has been ramping up its involvement in the sphere of cultural diplomacy. Domestic politicians are touting Japan’s popular culture industries as a new economic horizon, and soft power initiatives will undoubtedly continue to intensify as the 2020 Tokyo Olympics approach.

“This panel is a chance to understand the dynamics and manifestations of Japanese soft power and cultural diplomacy, as well as an opportunity to dig beneath the hype and ask some incisive questions about the objectives behind them.”

Says **Nao Endo, Director of The Japan Foundation, Sydney**, “Continuing developments at the intersection between culture, politics and society are crucial to understanding Japan today and have broad relevance for a range of communities, including business people, scholars, policy makers and arts practitioners. We are delighted to partner with ANU to present this panel of eminent scholars in Sydney as a shared contribution to global conversations around soft power and influence.”

Event Details

Date:	October 13 (Tuesday), 2015
Time:	6:30pm - 8:00pm (Doors open 6pm)
Venue:	The Japan Foundation, Sydney Level 4, Central Park (Access via lifts) 28 Broadway, Chippendale NSW 2008
Entry:	Admission free. Bookings essential.
RSVP:	Online via www.jpf.org.au
Enquiries:	reception@jpf.org.au / (02) 8239 0055
Website:	www.jpf.org.au



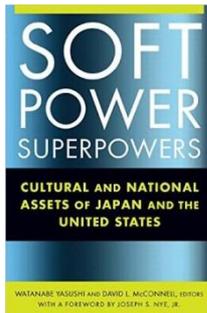
Free CHOYA tastings available on the night

ABOUT CHRISTINE R. YANO



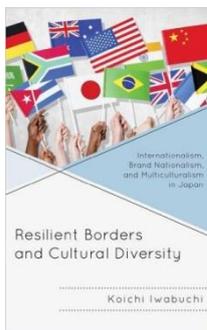
Christine R. Yano is a professor of anthropology at University of Hawai’i and 2014-15 Visiting Professor at Harvard University. Her research focusses on Japan and Japanese Americans, and looks at popular culture within the frameworks of gender, class, nationalism, and globalism. Professor Yano’s recent work on ‘cute culture’ received worldwide attention with the release of her latest book, *Pink Globalization: Hello Kitty and its Trek Across the Pacific* (2013), and a major exhibition she curated for the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles, titled ‘Hello! Exploring the Supercute World of Hello Kitty’ (2014-15).

ABOUT YASUSHI WATANABE



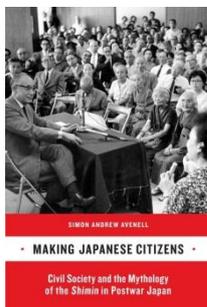
Yasushi Watanabe is a professor in the Graduate School of Media and Governance at Japan's Keio University. He has been affiliated with some of the world's most prestigious universities, earning his PhD at Harvard and completing postdoctoral research at both Cambridge and Oxford before joining Keio in 1999. He has since held posts at the University of Cambridge's Downing College and L'Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris in France, has served on the Public Diplomacy Advisory Panel for the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and also has extensive experience in the media sector. His English-language publications include the co-edited volume, *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States* (2008).

ABOUT KOICHI IWABUCHI



Koichi Iwabuchi is Chair Professor in media and cultural studies and Director of the Asia Institute at Monash University. His work centres on cultural globalization, trans-Asian media and cultural connections, and multiculturalism in Japan and East Asia. Professor Iwabuchi worked for a mainstream TV network in Japan before turning to academia. He earned his PhD in Australia and held academic positions in Japan before entering his current role at Monash. He is editor of the Asian Cultural Studies book series, and is currently leading an international collaborative project on trans-Asian multiculturalism. His most recent publication is *Resilient Borders and Cultural Diversity: Internationalism, Brand Nationalism and Multiculturalism in Japan* (2015).

ABOUT SIMON AVENELL



Simon Avenell is an associate professor in Pacific and Asian history and Director of the Japan Institute at The Australian National University (ANU). He trained in History and Asian Studies at the University of California and served as deputy head of Japanese Studies at the National University of Singapore before joining ANU in 2013. He specialises in modern Japanese history, civic activism and civil society, as well as environmental and transnational history. He is the author of *Making Japanese Citizens: Civil Society and the Mythology of the Shimin in Postwar Japan* (2010), a sweeping history of civic thought, social activism and civil society in postwar Japan.

ABOUT JAPAN UPDATE

Japan Update is The Australian National University (ANU)'s flagship annual conference on Japan. Held at the ANU in Canberra, *Japan Update* aims to give policy-makers and academics a comprehensive overview of Japan's economic and political landscape, and the changing opportunities and challenges it offers. Historically, *Japan Update* has focused on politics, economics and trade. However, this year for the first time, *Japan Update* incorporates a culture panel which will run as part of the Canberra conference on October 12 before coming to Sydney on October 13. The *Japan Update 2015* culture panel is proudly supported by The Japan Foundation, Sydney.

ABOUT THE JAPAN FOUNDATION, SYDNEY

The Japan Foundation, Sydney is the Australian arm of the Japan Foundation, which was established by the Japanese government to promote cultural and intellectual exchange between Japan and other nations. It runs a diverse range of programs and events, including exhibitions, talk events, grant programs and Japanese language courses for all levels from beginner to advanced. The Japan Foundation was established in 1972 with a global network of 22 offices in 21 countries. The Australian office was founded in 1978.



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For more information please see www.jpf.org.au or contact:

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