

Keynote Report and Debriefing Meeting of JAL 2015

Mizutani Takeshi

Vice-President and Secretary General of JAL2015

The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

Introduction: First and second year JAL Project and Open Workshop

1st year's JAL Project 2014: Project for inviting, giving training to, and exchanging with Japanese-art librarians from outside Japan

Supported by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan in the fiscal 2014

2014.12.1-12.11

7 Japanese invitees from 3 countries

Open Workshop of JAL2015 titled "Recommendations for More Effective Dissemination of Information on Japanese-Art-related Materials"

December 11, 2014 at the auditorium of the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

2nd year's JAL Project 2015: Project for inviting, giving training to, and exchanging with Japanese-art librarians from outside Japan

Supported by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan in the fiscal 2015

2015.11.16-11.17

9 invitees from 7 countries

Open Workshop of JAL2015 titled "Recommendations for More Effective Dissemination of Information on Japanese-Art-related Materials II"

November 27, 2015 at the auditorium of the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

1. 5 aims of JAL2015

1) To further JAL*s' understanding of the art libraries and related information systems in Japan.

* JAL: Japanese-art librarian [abroad]

2) To further JJAL**s' understanding of the art libraries that the JAL project invitees are working for, and the situations in which the libraries find themselves.

** JJAL: Japanese Japanese-art librarian

3) To promote mutual understanding and exchanging between JJALs and JALs abroad.

4) To promote mutual understanding and exchanging among JALs abroad.

5) To try to review and rethink the current state of Japan's art libraries and related information systems from the perspectives of JALs abroad.

2. This year's JAL is 7-8-9

7 countries:

Czech Republic, UK, Norway, Ireland, Germany, USA and Korean

8 cities:

Prague, London, Oslo, Dublin, Berlin, Pittsburgh, Oregon and Seoul

9 invitees:

Jana Ryndová, The National Gallery in Prague

Jiyeon Wood, SOAS, University of London

Vibeke Oseth Gustavsen, University of Oslo Library

Mary Redfern, The Chester Beatty Library, Dublin

Cordula Treimer, Museum für Asiatische Kunst / Kunstbibliothek Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Kevin Trent McDowell, University of Oregon

Carolyn Wargula, University of Pittsburgh

李世泳, Lee Se-Young, Digital Library & Archive, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul, Korea :

文貞姫, Moon Junglee, Center for Art Studies, Seoul, Korea

3. New Schemes at the JAL 2015 Open Workshop (WS2)

3.1 Linguistic support

The JAL Project 2014, the first year, invited 7 Japanese JALs, who are Japanese specializing in Japanese-art related materials and information abroad, whereas in The JAL 2015, the second year, however, 9 participants are from 8 cities of 7 countries, where Japanese is not a native language. Difficulties and burden experienced by these 9 participants in training and presentations at WS2 conducted with Japanese language were nothing compared with those of last year.

Call for Application for 2015 was prepared with an intention to invite participants with more nationalities. Though Japanese language proficiency in everyday conversation was an essential requirement, we appointed a bilingual program coordinator, Ms. Yoshimura Reiko, Head Librarian, Freer Gallery of Art and invitee at the JAL 2014, to help mitigating linguistic barriers in presentations at WS2 by securing a budget for providing supports by translators.

3.2 Presentation for recommendations

In the first year's WS 7 invitees individually delivered a 20-minute presentation, consisting of self introduction and 'recommendations'. This year, however, 9 invitees delivered a 15-minutes self introduction individually in the morning session, and 3 groups comprising 3 invitees delivered a presentation for 'recommendation' in the

afternoon session.

All invitees with different nationalities and native languages got together for the first time on November 16, and deepened friendship during subsequent 10-day training session. Even though, they had to make enthusiastic efforts by spending long time to work out presentation jointly by group in a short period of time.

The outcome and the content of ‘recommendations’ resulted from invitees’ hard work are shown in the subsequent pages as a core part of this report in the next page and beyond.

Titles and members of 3 Groups’ presentations forward “Recommendations for More Effective Dissemination of Information on Japanese-Art-related Materials II”:

■1st Group by Ryndová, Gustavsen and Lee

Issues and prospects for art material research systems in Japan.

■2nd Group by Wood, McDowell and Redfern

From preservation to productivity: databases, access and collaboration in Japanese art libraries.

■3rd Group by Wargula, Treimer and Moon

Towards a global “objectification” of Japanese art data.

3.3 Special Invited Lecture by Yamada Mcvey Kuniko, Chair of NCC

In view of the fact that JAL’s activities are found broadly in the context of Japanese studies abroad, we have asked Ms. Yamada, who is a chair of NCC and librarian of the Harvard-Yenching Library, to talk about how Japanese studies-related materials, particularly audiovisual materials should be. Please refer to page 159-167 of the report for her lecture.

4. The JAL 2015 Debriefing Meeting

This year’s invitees got together in Tokyo on November 15. Though there was no influence of terrorist attacks in Paris on 13th of the same month, invitees returned to their respective countries with great concern.

After the closing of WS2 on December 9, the members of the Executive Committee and the commentator attended the JAL 2015 Debriefing Meeting and discussed and reviewed the results and challenges of the JAL 2015. The discussion has reminded that the Executive Committee should be responsible for responding to and implementing the recommendations made by the invitees, which are summarized in “New Schemes to respond to the ‘Recommendations’ by invitees in the JAL 2015.”

One more thing to be noted is that there were various comments on Japanese ability of invitees to the Project, including ‘presentation in English should be permitted’ and ‘translators should be fully used in every aspect.’ We received valuable comments for the next year, but as I wrote in a different document (reference 3) in the note of “Introduction” of this report, I kept following decision throughout the JAL 2015. We would like to discuss this matter again by exchanging opinions in advance with invitees and Executive Committee members next year.

Description

We checked and identified Japanese proficiency of 9 invitees at the selection process through the certification Japanese Language Proficiency Test, etc. In the interview with and hearing from these 9 invitees in their respective countries till just before visiting Japan, I was confident that Japanese language ability of the JALs selected to participate in the 2015 event is sufficient for delivering presentations in Japanese in WS. Having said that, they faced various challenges: they gathered in Tokyo on November 16, and were asked to make 3 groups consisting of 3 members whom they have just met for the first time (though doing of such group work had been explained in the interview in advance), discussed in Japanese, English and Korean to compile ‘recommendations’ and preparing an oral manuscript and powerpoint slides in 2 days. They also had to brush up their 15-minute self introduction text, even though they had almost completed the text and slides before coming to Japan. I can write this only now that I was really impressed by their efforts to get over these difficulties. These challenges could have been never overcome without support and help by Yoshimura Reiko, a program coordinator (Freer Gallery of Art and the invitee to the JAL 2014) and McDowell Kumiko or Mrs. Kevin McDowell, invitee to the JAL 2015 Project, Executive Committee members and the secretariat.

The author agonized over the involvement of professional translators right up to the end, but finally decided to do the WS without their help. I made this decision because of my concern that the solidarity and harmony created among invitees by sharing time as a member of the same community for 10 days would be disrupted by involving temporary-based professional translators. Comments and suggestions given by many people concerned after the closing of the project have made me feel that I need to change my thought about the use of translators, but I am convinced to accept and appreciate the excellent results created by invitees’ enthusiastic efforts.

Quoted from Mizutani Takeshi, “Report on Open Workshop of JAL2015: 7 nations, 8 cities and 9 invitees of JAL2015”, *Newsletter of Japan Art Documentation Society*, no.108, 2016.2.25, p.9-10.