



Victoria Bennett

In 2022, Victoria completed an MA in History of Design at the Royal College of Art and the Victoria and Albert Museum, following a BA in Visual Communication at Leeds Arts University in 2014. She is interested in the material culture and cross-cultural complexities of 19th Century Japan, and her current research explores this through a focus on washi paper within British Japonisme. She is also studying the historical formula of Japanese persimmon oil ("kakishibu") in relation to its scent properties and practical application on washi as a sustainable dye. Alongside her studies, Victoria has a professional background in archives and cultural heritage - working as Digitisation, Database and Cataloguing Manager at the Courtauld Institute of Art. She aspires to combine her professional and academic experience to work as a Curator and Historian of Design.



Hannah Dickson

Hannah completed a BA in Art History and Visual Culture with proficiency in Japanese at the University of Exeter in 2020 and an MSc in Japanese Studies at the University of Oxford in 2021. She began self-studying Japanese at the age of thirteen, after falling in love with Japanese art and culture through Studio Ghibli films. She visited Japan by herself for three weeks at the age of 19 and visited again briefly in 2018. It was while visiting the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art on her first trip to Japan that she realised she wanted to research Japanese art history. Her Master's dissertation charted the cultural significance of place in modern Japanese woodblock prints ("sōsaku-hanga"), focussing on themes of modernity, artistic memory, individualism and national identity. She aspires to a career as a museum curator of Japanese art at a cultural institution in the UK, following doctoral study in Japan. Up until commencing the Scholarship, she has been working as Content Executive for Swanky Agency, an international e-commerce agency, with responsibility for the company's social media platforms.



Veer Gala

Veer completed a BSc in Physics at Durham University in 2021 and an MSc in Quantum Fields and Fundamental Forces at Imperial College London in 2022. He took up karate at a young age and studied Japanese at GCSE level. In 2015, he participated in an exchange programme, spending two weeks at high school in Wakayama. His family reciprocated, welcoming his Japanese school exchange partner to their home for two weeks. This gave him a deep insight into Japanese culture and left him with a lifelong friend. He is fascinated by technology, in particular machine learning, and the way that technologies such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing and quantum computing have been embraced by the Japanese public. He intends to build on his knowledge of machine learning to become involved in social impact-focussed technology start-ups, or to establish his own start-up.



Christopher Goring

Chris completed a BA in English and Modern Languages (French) in 2020 and an MSt in Comparative Literature in 2021, both at the University of Oxford. He has had a long-running interest in Japanese, having studied it at GCSE and AS-Level at Bexley Grammar School, and later at Oxford University's Language Centre. As part of the [ISA Japan Empowerment Programme](#) in 2018, he taught English in Tokyo high schools and stayed with two host families. This experience gave him preliminary insights into Japanese family life and etiquette. He especially valued travelling to Kyoto to visit a number of cultural and historical landmarks. He is committed to furthering his knowledge of Japanese language and literature. Upon completion of a PhD, he aspires to an academic career as a comparatist, working primarily on the development of the novel in English, French, and Japanese over the course of the last two centuries.



Gareth Matthey

Gareth completed a BA in English Literature in 2015 and an MPhil in Screen Media and Cultures in 2016, both at the University of Cambridge. They completed an MA in Operamaking and Writing at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 2018. In 2022, they completed an MFA in Dramatic Writing at New York University, while undertaking freelance work as a writer, director and teacher. Their interest in Japan began when they directed a student production of Benjamin Britten's chamber opera *Curlew River*, an adaptation of the Noh play *Sumidagawa*. In 2018, they attended a writer's residency in Tokyo with Theater Nohgaku and the Kita School of Noh to explore writing Noh in English. They aim to extend their operatic writing practice to include translation, to build on their nascent career as a writer across visual media (especially with film and video games) and to teach on the history and theory of these same subjects. They hope to seek out artists from across different media in Japan to learn from and to collaborate with in the future.



Amy Smith

Amy completed an MEng in Mechanical Engineering with Aeronautics at the University of Strathclyde in 2022. She is one of 35 Engineering Leaders Scholars identified by the Royal Academy of Engineering. Her passions and career interests are in the space sector and promoting women in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). She is interested in the opportunities for collaboration between commercial space companies in Japan and the UK, which she feels are ready to expand, particularly in the light of the memorandum of cooperation signed by the UK Space Agency and the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) in June 2021, renewing and strengthening the relationship between both countries. She is keen to combat the growing problem of space debris and develop solutions to ensure the sustainable usage of space.



Katherine Strachan

Katherine completed an MEng in Computer Science with a Year Abroad at Durham University in 2022. She has spent six months of Her degree at Yonsei University in Seoul, learning Korean. While at Durham she has been the president of the University's Manga Society. She is interested in Japan as it is the epicentre of the gaming industry, and visited the country in 2018 to learn more about its culture. While many of the tech giants of Japan have offices in Europe and North America, the main creative decisions tend to be made in their Japanese offices. She hopes to enter the gaming and associated technologies industry, applying her Computer Science expertise in creative computing applications to further the development of the artistry of gaming as well as the research and development of technologies such as virtual reality. She is also keen to inspire other women to break into this industry.



Rachel Venn

Rachel completed a BSc in Physics and Astrophysics at the University of Birmingham in 2021 and is currently completing an MSc in Space Science and Engineering at University College London. She taught herself some Japanese while at school and enrolled in an extracurricular Japanese course at Birmingham. While at university, she has been volunteering on the staff of the Space Generation Advisory Council, helping to represent the policy views of the younger generation of space students and early career professionals to the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. She is interested in Japan and the UK's long history of space cooperation, which she believes can be further enhanced. She aspires to a career in international space policy, combining her technical background in physics and engineering with her work experience in policy and international relations to plug the gap between technology and governance. Her goal is to work in space policy for an internationally cooperative and sustainable future in orbit.