



2022-2023

General Meeting Info

This will be SIEA's 2nd year as a non-profit organization.

We'd like to take the opportunity to thank you all for your support.

The next general meeting will be held on 5/14.

There will be a guest lecture after the meeting.

This will be our first in-person meeting in 2 years, so please attend.

2022 5 / 14 (Sat.)

General Meeting: 1:30 pm - 1:50 pm (Open at 1:20 pm)
Guest Lecture: 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Venue City Hall, Main Building 5F
Large Meeting Room

Eligibility General Meeting: Members-only
Lecture: Open to the public

Lecture Lecturer: **Ruth Vergin**
Former Prof. at Ehime University
Institute for International Relations
Topic: Int'l Cultural Exchange

2021-2022

Events

- Language Courses (ZH/VI/EN)
- English Writing Camp (8/9 - 8/31)
- From Saijo to the World (8/4 - 9/30)
- Family Trivia Night (9/25)
- Int'l Understanding: Indonesia (12/19)
- Vietnamese Lunar New Year (2/20)
- SDGs Workshop (2/27)

Contact Info.

Saijo International Exchange Association
TEL: (0897)56-5151 EXT:2292

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Become an SIEA Member for 2022-2023!

Thank you to the SIEA members of 2021-2022!
SIEA would like to thank you all for your support.
Membership dues go toward the operation of SIEA and its events.
We look forward to your membership in 2022-2023!



【Yearly Dues】Individuals: 1,000 yen, Students (up to HS) 500 yen, Groups 10,000 yen

【Membership Length】April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023

【Application Process】After filling out the Member Application Form, please submit it to the SIEA office.

(Download the form from the official website of City Hall, every Branch Office, or every Community Center, or the SIEA homepage.)

※ Members receive information on SIEA activities, the SIEA newsletter, and discounts on SIEA events. For more information, please contact the SIEA office.



International Relations SAIJO is a newsletter published by the Saijo International Exchange Association (SIEA). Feel free to contact us with your comments, questions, and submission requests.



Event Information



Here are all the events held between December 2021 and February 2022. Due to the spread of COVID-19, one event was cancelled. We can only hope for a swift return to normalcy.



12

12/19/21

Republik Indonesia

Int'l Understanding: Indonesia



Me? I still believe in paradise.



For the first time in several years, SIEA invited Cantika Pello, who hails from Indonesia, to speak at its International Understanding Lecture on Indonesia. The lecture opened with an introduction to the origins of Indonesia, and discussed its distinctive red and white flag akin to that of Japan, its more than 700 languages, its beautifully vibrant tourist attractions, and its abundance of gourmet dishes.

The post-lecture Q&A session was a hit, and there were many nice comments from the attendees, like "I miss Indonesia!" and "I want to learn about the Indonesian language!" I for one want to watch Earth's beloved "living dragons," the Komodo monitor lizards, from a safe distance.



2

2/27/22

"SDGs Through LEGO® Blocks" Workshop



2

2/20/22

Việt Nam

Vietnamese Lunar New Year



The Vietnamese Lunar New Year event held in a corner of the Konyamachi Shopping Street was a lively event with over 50 participants. Planned by local Vietnamese resident, Tran Thi Hong, it showcased Vietnamese culture and began with a fashion show of Vietnam's traditional dress, the áo dài. It also featured a gorgeous dance routine, various Lunar New Year games, and a zongzi-making session that came with free zongzi samples.

Thank you all for attending the event and practicing infection countermeasures. I'd like to try some fresh zongzi once COVID-19 settles down.



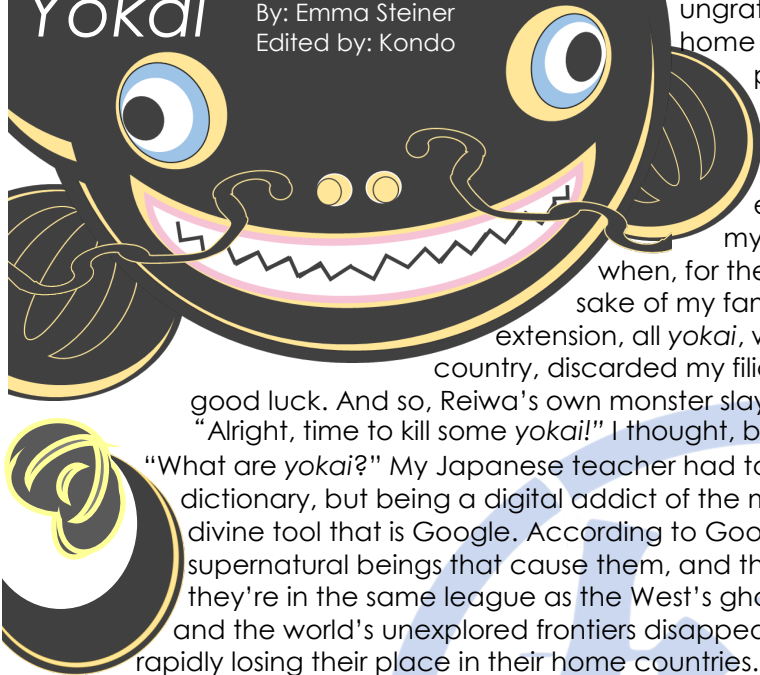
THE COLD NEVER BOTHERED
ME ANYWAY

Sustainable Development Goals

This workshop was designed by the International Relations Promotion Team for students from upper elementary through high school, and, including the trial teachers, 19 people were in attendance. The LEGO® block presentation format made expressing one's ideas much simpler and bolder in comparison to the usual oral format. "Realizing one goal has a positive effect on the other goals." That phrase left a lasting impression on me. I want humanity to take steps toward a bright future, with the hope that we can eventually solve the world's biggest problems by just doing our part.

Brimming with Vitality: Japan's Yokai

By: Emma Steiner
Edited by: Kondo



The Onamazu of the Abyss Stirs...

I experienced my first earthquake on May 17, 2019. As the ground shook, I reflected with regret on every time I was ungrateful toward my parents, telling myself that if I got home alive, I would treat my dad better. With my heart purer than ever before, I was ready to accept my fate. My father whispered the bolded words above to me, with my face still pale long after the tremors stopped. In response, I demanded the immediate extermination of the beast. "It's a **yokai**, you know," my dad replied simply. The fear in me flashed to anger when, for the first time, I saw the resigned look on his face. For the sake of my family, the extermination of the *onamazu* and, by extension, all *yokai*, was unnegotiable. I left my dad behind in my home country, discarded my filial piety for him, and took an army knife with me for good luck. And so, Reiwa's own monster slayer was born.

"Alright, time to kill some *yokai*!" I thought, but one fundamentally important question remained: "What are *yokai*?" My Japanese teacher had told me to look up unfamiliar words I encountered in the dictionary, but being a digital addict of the modern age, I immediately lifted my ban on using the divine tool that is Google. According to Google, *yokai* are mysterious phenomena or the supernatural beings that cause them, and they transcend human understanding. In other words, they're in the same league as the West's ghosts and monsters. As the physical sciences develop and the world's unexplored frontiers disappear at a quickening pace, ghosts and monsters are rapidly losing their place in their home countries. Surely, Japan's *yokai* are no exception, and unable to compete in a world that is becoming more concise and clear with every passing day, their time too will come to pass and they'll go the way of the dinosaurs. With that conclusion, Reiwa's Monster Slayer retired without seeing combat, their good-luck army knife safely joining the ranks of assorted camping equipment.

"He's become a **tengu**!" I could hardly believe my ears. My friend called me in the dead of night to complain about their sweet and sour love life when they suddenly disclosed that their boyfriend had become a *yokai*. Just imagining it, I began to panic and nearly fainted, but my friend showed no sign of distress. Every word that came out of their mouth showed only compassion for their beloved. Having witnessed their undying love and resolution to never abandon their partner no matter his appearance, my eyes began to water. I got back home feeling like I had watched a movie and wanted to share my feelings with someone, so I shook my mother awake. "Could you still love your partner if they became a *tengu*?" My mother stared at me wide-eyed for a moment and then burst out laughing. "Back when I was just a young girl, I was called a **yamanba**," she confessed, to my bewilderment. I didn't get a wink of sleep that night. As soon as I got out of bed the next morning, I grabbed my older sister and told her our mother's secret. "I'm a **noppera-bo** when I don't have my make-up on," she said. It felt like I was hit with a double whammy. Incidentally, a **yakubyogami** is said to haunt her workplace, and it is supposedly the source of abnormal surges in complaints. Is it possible that the *yokai* hadn't gone the way of the dinosaurs? I was afraid — if *yokai* could blend so naturally into everyday life, what's stopping them from attacking?

For a while after that, there were no particularly alarming movements made by the *yokai*, and I became more willing to accept their existence, so long as they stuck to the shadows. Then, in April 2020, they were back. While Japan struggled against the COVID-19 pandemic, one *yokai* made a spectacular debut. I'm talking about the **amabie**. Even in these strange and uncertain times, I'd never heard of a ghost or monster being showered with high praises. I shuddered to think that this was another example of Japan's infamous Galapagos syndrome.

Unlike their foreign brethren who find themselves at a dead end, Japan's *yokai* had a truly innovative survival strategy. There must be other *yokai* that have chosen even more clever means of survival that I'm simply not aware of. Even as the physical sciences keep advancing, Japan's *yokai* will probably continue to live robustly by exquisitely altering their forms and modes of life. Geez... how much vitality do you *yokai* have?

— Emma Steiner 4/4/22



Access event info whenever!

SIEA has its own
YouTube channel!

YouTube 西条市国際交流協会

検索

[https://www.youtube.com/
channel/UCmaXEqVbFPYyuZuWhjwfHHQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmaXEqVbFPYyuZuWhjwfHHQ)

SIEA-Tube

SIEA now has its own YouTube channel: [西条市国際交流協会!](#)

With COVID-19 still looming and the future of in-person events up in the air, SIEA started uploading event videos starting from last year. We're planning on uploading other videos too, so please check them out! Give us a like and subscribe!

TIA-Thanks in advance.



【Location】 Saijo City Welfare Center

【Eligibility】 City Residents, Commuters, and SIEA Members

People able to attend at least 70% of the classes

【Fees】 6,000 yen (4,000 yen for SIEA members) ※Textbook fees not included.

【Term Length】 Jun. 2022 - Jan. 2023 (15 total classes, 3 times/mo.)

【Date and Time】○Elementary Wed. 7 pm - 8 pm

○Intermediate Wed. 8 pm - 9 pm

【Application Period】 5/6 (Fri.) ~ 5/20 (Fri.)

【Contact Info】 Saijo International Exchange Association

TEL: (0897)56-5151 EXT:2292

※This is not a professional course. It may be changed to an online format at any time.

We're taking
event
suggestions for
2022-2023!

★ I want an English business e-mail lecture!

★ I want to hold a Bhutanese cooking class!

★ I want to talk about world heritage sites!

...and so on!

Tell us about international exchange events you want to attend or hold!
Ideas are also welcome! Let's make this year's events a blast!

◆Eligibility: SIEA Members (Groups/Individuals/Students)

◆Description: Int'l exchange event suggestions in Saijo

◆Procedure: Please consult us via telephone or e-mail!

Editorial
Note

Here's to another fruitful year for SIEA!

International Relations SAIJO

Staff:

Minoru Tokumasu
KondoReadable in
Full Color!