

# Asahikawa Info

February 2022, Vol. 303

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## Inside this issue...

- 1 Hokkaido News Top 5
- 2 Upcoming Events
- 4 Life in Asahikawa
- 5 Hello, Asahikawa!
- 6 Movies
- 8 Bulletin Board



For further information or to register for events, contact:

Asahikawa International Committee (AIC)  
(SUGANO Ayumi, SAITO Emmy, or GONZÁLEZ Gabriel)

### Location:

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## Hokkaido News Top 5

January 2022, compiled by AIC

### Hokkaido Begins Distributing Free COVID-19 Tests, 12/28

On December 27th, Hokkaido began providing PCR and antigen tests free of charge for those who are unable to receive the vaccine for health reasons. They have progressively set up a system that should be able to distribute 2,600,000 tests in at most 700 locations. They are also working on creating vaccine/test packages to possibly ease restrictions on activities like eating out at restaurants amidst the pandemic. If the new Omicron variant is found within urban areas, they are also considering widening the range of people eligible for the tests and early treatment.

### Poem by the Late Ayako Miura Discovered in Husband's Diary, 1/4

In celebration of what would be the famed Asahikawa-born author Ayako Miura's 100th birthday, the Miura Ayako Literature Museum will be holding an exhibition that includes a never-before published poem about her beloved husband. Though a collection of poetry survives from her time in elementary school, this is the sole poetic work from her adult life. The original manuscript will be on display at the exhibition, which was found within one of her husband's journals. He had kept journals for over 67 years, all of which were donated to the museum upon his passing. While it is still unknown when the poem was written, it is thought to have been in 1967, after her literary debut in 1964.

### Drink and Stay the Night at Iwanai Beer Brewery, 1/4

Planned to open in June, the Iwanai Beer Brewery is a new installment of the Iwanai Kogen Hotel that will be built within an annex of the hotel constructed in 1987. Its basement will house five fermenters, each holding 500 L of beer that you will be able to see through glass windows from the connected beer bar with 50 seats. The first and second floors will accommodate ten guests and will begin construction in February. They annually produce 25,500 L of pilsner and India pale ale (IPA), to be served at the beer bar. Nozuka, the area around the hotel, is well known as a resort area with *ryokan* and ski areas.

### Developing Nayoro's Winter Tourism, 1/17

The Kamikawa General Subprefectural Bureau has started trial package tours near the Nayoro Piyashiri Ski Area in an effort to look towards a future for local tourism after COVID-19. With the ever-increasing popularity of "workations," the bureau aims to uncover new tourist attractions for long-term residents of Northern Hokkaido to work while on vacation. Participants of the trial package tours were taken up Mt. Piyashiri, tasted the local cuisine, and took part in "nature-skiing," enjoying the scenery as they slid down the slopes.

### Ice-Fishing for Japanese Smelt Begins at Lake Abashiri, 1/18

Fishermen at Lake Abashiri have begun to rare practice of ice-fishing for smelt with nets, using their snowmobiles over the frozen body of water to open their nets. At the fishing area near the Yobito fishing harbor, fishermen caught 1,480 kg of fish on January 16th. One man in his seventies said: "We may not have caught a lot, but the size of the fish isn't bad." The amount of smelt caught in Lake Abashiri is the most in all of Hokkaido, and this season they plan to catch as much as last year by March, 100 tons in all.

## Iruka 50th Anniversary Concert: HONOBONO IKOUNE

### イルカ 50th Anniversary コンサート ~ほのほの行こうね！~

Come and listen to selections by Iruka, a female singer-songwriter celebrating 50 years of music performance since her debut in the 1980's! Still loved by fans, she goes every year on a national tour singing her warm, kind songs.

Date: 2/11 (Friday)

Time: Opens 16:00, Starts 17:00

Venue: Takasu Melody Hall (Takasu-cho Minami 2-jo 4-chome 1-1)

Admission: ¥5,000 (Presale), ¥5,500 (Day of)

Ticket Office: Shinohara Shoten (0166-87-2004), JA Asahikawa Kitano Materials Center (1066-87-2131), Hokuto Community Center (1066-87-2755), Mai Furendo Café (0166-54-0404), Coach and Four Store (0166-76-4002), Takasu Malody Hall (1066-87-2500)

For further information, contact: 0166-87-2500 (Takasu Melody Hall)



## 70 Years Since France: Lettre de Paris

### 渡仏から70年 パリからの手紙

Ever since he was a young child, Keou Nishimura dreamed of being an artist. After studying fine arts in Tokyo, he travelled off to Paris, where he spent 40 years of his life fulfilling his dream. This exhibit will center on works from his time in France, letters he sent to family and his newspaper contributions.

Date: Until 2/13/2022 (Sunday)

Time: 9:00-17:00 (Entry ends at 16:30), Closed Mondays (The following Tuesday if Monday is a national holiday)

Place: Musée Kéou Nishimura (Kyowa-cho Minami Horoni 143-2)

Admission: General ¥500 (¥400\*), High School students ¥200 (¥150\*), Elementary and Middle School students ¥100 (¥80\*) \*groups (10+)

Ticket Office: Musée Kéou Nishimura

For further information, contact: TEL 0135-71-2525, FAX 0135-71-2527 (Musée Kéou Nishimura)



## 3rd Lecture on Enjoying Picture Books by Tatsuya Miyanishi

### 第3回 絵本を楽しむ講演会by宮西達也

Have fun with picture books and Tatsuya Miyanishi, an established children's book author and illustrator who has won the Kodansha Publication Culture Award for his work. Beginning as a graphic designer and puppet maker, he now wishes to share the joy of picture books with people of all ages.

Date: 2/19 (Saturday)

Time: 13:30-16:00 (Opens 13:00)

Place: Asahikawa Civic Culture Hall (Small Hall, Asahikawa 7-jo-dori 9-chome)

Admission: FREE, but must sign up beforehand (if spaces are available, you can sign up the day of): fill out sign-up form at <https://ehon-lib.net/>

For further information, contact: info@ehon-lib.net, 050-3557-9601 (Picture Book Library Network Office)



## Masterpiece of Chairs: Oda Collection at Station Gallery

### マスターピースオブチェアーズ展 織田コレクションから

This exhibit presents a truly unique selection of furniture from all around the world, many of which are not only original but the only one of its kind ever made! Driven to display the allure of design and how these pieces have left their mark in the field, this display allows the visitor to discover the exceptional world of chairs.

Date: Until February 20, 2022 (Sunday)

Time: 10:30-18:30 (Entry ends at 18:15), Closed: Mondays (The following day if Monday is a holiday) and 2021/12/30-2022/1/4

Place: Asahikawa Museum of Sculpture in Honor of Teijiro Nakahara (Miyashita-dori 8-chome)

Admission: FREE

For further information, contact: 0166-46-6277 (Asahikawa Museum of Sculpture)



## Picture Book Author Mayumi Homma: From “Umarete no Iro” to “Snow, Snow, Snow”

### 絵本作家ほんままゆみ展「うまれたてのいろ」から「ゆきゆきゆき」まで

This exhibit will center around the work of Mayumi Homma, a children's book author born in Sapporo that currently lives in Niseko. Inspired by the very books she read to her own children, she went on to develop a career in picture books and in 2020 published “Yuki Yuki Yuki: Snow Snow Snow,” her first bilingual book. Take a step into her imagination and take a look at the original illustrations that decorate her work in this exhibition!

Date: Until 02/27/2022 (Sunday)

Time: 9:00-17:00 (Entry ends at 16:30), Closed Mondays and during New Year's

Place: Niseko Arishima Takeo Memorial Museum (Niseko-cho Aza-Arishima 57 banchi)

Admission: General ¥500 (¥400\*), High School students ¥100, Middle School and under FREE, Those over 65 FREE \*groups of 10+

Ticket Office: Niseko Arishima Takeo Memorial Museum



## Paintings by the KANDA Brothers: KAZUAKI and NISSHO

### 神田一明、日勝展

Brothers Kazuaki and Nissho Kanda began their art journeys from a young age, even learning and teaching each other along the way. This exhibit is centered around the works representative of both artists and the different paths they took, intending to demonstrate the constant rapport between the two in life and in their art.

Date: Until March 13, 2022 (Sunday)

Time: 9:30-17:00 (Entry ends at 16:30), Closed: Mondays

Place: Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art (Inside Tokiwa Park)

Admission: General ¥800(¥600), High School and College Students ¥500(¥400), Elementary and Middle School Students ¥300(¥200) \*Prices in parentheses are for groups of 10+ or pre-sale

Ticket Office: Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art

For further information, contact: 0166-25-2577 (Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art)



## Kyokuzan Fujita: Asahikawa's Very Own Haiku Poet, “As calm as water”

### 藤田旭山展 旭川ゆかりの俳人 ～水の如く淡々たる～

This exposition looks back on the life and work of Kyokuzan Fujita, a haiku poet that strived to always write poetry that respects both freedom and individuality. Introduce yourself not only to his published collections, but the original manuscripts written by his own hand.

Date: Until March 26, 2022 (Saturday)

Time: 9:30-17:00, Closed: Mondays

Place: Asahikawa Museum of Literature (Inside Tokiwa Park, Asahikawa)

Admission: FREE

For further information, contact: 0166-22-3334 (Tokiwa Kan)



## Uilta Objects and Words: The Cosmology Reflected in an Indigenous Language of Sakhalin

### ウイлтаのモノとコトバ サハリン先住民のコスモロジー 言語が切り取る世界

The languages that we use everyday all function to categorize the world in front of us, and that categorization in turn shapes our worldview. This exhibit takes a look at the language of the Uilta, and how it is linked to their culture, both material and immaterial.

Date: From 2/5 (Saturday) to 3/27 (Sunday)

Time: 9:30-16:30, Closed Mondays (Open every day in February)

Place: Hokkaido Museum of Northern Peoples (Abashiri-shi, Aza-Shiomi 309-1)

Admission: FREE

For further information, contact: 0152-45-3888 (Hokkaido Museum of Northern Peoples)



February Events in Asahikawa

**AIC:** Please tell us about yourself and where you are from.

**Ashley:** My name is Ashley Kiyoko Sugimoto. I am a 4th generation, mixed-race Japanese Canadian, and I hail from Vancouver, Canada! I was born on Canada's east coast in Toronto, but moved to Vancouver for University where I studied film production, and I never went back! I've made four short films of my own, and a program run by Yahoo Japan in partnership with the Short Shorts Japanese Film Festival. I also co-host a podcast called The Hafu It. Currently, I am in Japan working as an ALT on the JET Programme while I work on other film projects and prepare to write my first feature-length film.

**AIC:** How did you first get interested in Japan?

**Ashley:** It's a long story (laughs). In simple terms, I



**Name: Ashley Sugimoto**

**Home Country: Canada**

**Interviewed: 2021/1/19**

**If you live in Asahikawa or are just passing through and would like to be interviewed for "Hello Asahikawa," email us at: [cir\\_kokusai@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp](mailto:cir_kokusai@city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp)**

## Hello, Asahikawa!

have a lot of curiosity about Japan because I have ancestry here.

Being mixed-race doesn't often leave one with a very clear idea of their own identity. I think many other people with mixed roots can relate to the imposter syndrome that comes with being mixed. For me, I was never Japanese enough to fit in with the Asian crowds at school, but I also wasn't Caucasian enough to fit in with that group either. We're a unique group of misfits in society set on categorizing each other.

It's an interesting topic of identity, the issue of being mixed race. We aren't rare by any means, but I think we are some of the least represented or understood communities out there. I haven't met another mixed-race person, Japanese or otherwise, who has ever felt like they "fit in". Our mixed-identities always lead us to have questions about our ancestry. I was lucky enough to grow up with my *hii-ojii-chan* and *hii-obaa-chan* and spent a lot of time with my Japanese family in Canada. Yet, I still felt like at this point in my life that I didn't know anything about where we came from.

Many children, or grandchildren of immigrants go through such a serious loss of culture as families attempt to assimilate to foreign cultures and avoid the discomfort of "standing out". My family was just one of the many victims of such a situation. When my *hii-obaa-chan* and *hii-ojii-chan* passed away recently, I felt I greatly owed it to my family to be able to fill in the information gaps that they were to afraid to share with us. So, I started doing a lot of research from the remnants of papers, letters, and photos left to us, and here I am. I hope that my time here leads my to finding more than I already have.

**AIC: Is this your first time in Japan? How long have you been in Japan?**

**Ashley:** I actually came here for the first time in March of 2020 for what was meant to be a month-long trip. I was here with two of my friends who were helping me on my first attempt at a self-lead pilgrimage on my family history in Japan. Unfortunately for all of us, our trip was cut short when COVID-19 was officially declared a pandemic., and foreign travelers were called back home. I made it my mission to get back here, and tada! Here I am. I've been in Japan for about for months now.

**AIC: What brings you to Asahikawa?**

**Ashley:** Asahikawa is as close to a city as I can get (laughs). Where I live there aren't any stores, so Asahikawa has become a bit of a safe-haven in-between my travels to Sapporo and beyond.

**AIC: What kind of work do you do?**

**Ashley:** I work in a Junior High School as an ALT in the English Department! I am not the main teacher, so mostly my job is to assist the Japanese Teacher of English to the best of my ability. Sometimes that just includes reading passages from the textbook, and other times it means arranging an activity for the class!

**AIC: What are your hobbies? What do you like to do in your free time?**

**Ashley:** I've definitely been bad at keeping up with hobbies that don't include binge-watching Netflix every night, but one of my 2022 resolutions has been to get back into writing which has been my passion for

as long as I can remember. I'm not confident about a lot of things, but I know that I am good at writing. I'm just thankful that I also enjoy doing it! Right now in my free time, I'm reading books, and watching movies to help inspire the film that I want to write next.

When COVID restrictions ease up a bit, I want to travel again as well.

**AIC: Do you have any favorite Japanese foods?**

**Ashley:** I LOVE Japanese food! Ramen is probably my favourite for nostalgic purposes. It's a simple, but classic dish, and I will never turn down a good bowl of shoyu ramen. I also love yakitori, sushi, mocha, and spinach gomaе.

**AIC: Any places you would recommend to others (restaurants, sight-seeing, etc.)?**

**Ashley:** I'm a huge coffee enthusiast, so cafes like Coffee Stand and SUNUSU+ Café have been a life-saver on a couple occasions. There's also a super cute Italian restaurant on the edge of Asahikawa called My

House that serves up a good plate of risotto and pizza using their home-made sauces. I haven't been here long enough to see much of it, but I think anywhere in the Daisetsuzan Mountain Range, like Sounkyo for example, are pristine places to go sight-seeing.

**AIC: Do you mind sharing any frustrations or challenges you have encountered thus far?**

**Ashley:** I think the most frustrating experiences I've had so far have just been in tune with the regular throws of culture shock. Language barriers, cultural differences in the workplace, all of it makes things just a bit more difficult than I anticipated. I've also



## Hello, Asahikawa! Cont.

had a hard time trying to balance keeping in touch with my friends and family back home with trying to develop my life here in Japan. It's all part of the process, and I keep optimistic in that I haven't been here very long, and that this is as happy as I've been in a long time despite all the roadblocks.

**AIC: Do you have any goals or things you are looking forward to doing here?**

Ashley: Something I know I must do before I can even think about going back home is to visit my ancestral grave down in Kumamoto. I had it all planned out back in 2020, and missing out on that was probably the most difficult part of having to book my flight

back to Vancouver. I'm excited to finally get to complete that!

**AIC: Is there anything else you would like to say to our readers?**

Ashley: "One more time!" That's what I tell myself every time I feel defeated. Living in a country far away from home is unlike any similar experience I've had before. It's easy to become discouraged. Especially when you feel like you've already put all your energy into making the best of every new situation you encounter. Next time you feel like you can't go on, ask yourself to try one more time. It's saved me more than once.

# Movies - February

*\*The 1st day of every month is "Movie Day" in Asahikawa. Admission (tax included) is ¥1,100 for Adults, ¥800 for High School Students and Under at all theaters.*

**Aeon Cinema Only:** Every Monday is "Happy Monday." Admission is ¥1,100 (tax included) for all.

**Cineplex 7 Asahikawa and Dinos Cinemas Only:** Every Wednesday is "Ladies' Day." Admission is ¥1,100 (tax included) for women at all theaters.

**Dinos Cinemas Only:** Every Thursday is "Men's Day." Admission is ¥1,100 (tax included) for men.

★ **Dinos Cinemas:** Taisetsu-dori 5-chome / 0166 - 21 - 1218 URL: <http://cinema.sugai-dinos.jp/pc/> (Japanese)

### Now Showing

- Noise (Japanese)
- Kagawa Iku (Japanese)
- Success Sou: Shinryakusha S to Nishi Ogikubo no Kiseki (Japanese)
- Resident Evil: Welcome to Raccoon City (English/PG12)
- Deliver Us from Evil (Korean/PG12) ~2/3
- The End of the Pale Hour (Japanese)
- The Confidence Man JP: Episode of the Hero (Japanese)
- Cry Macho (English)
- Spider-Man: No Way Home (English)
- 99.9: Criminal Lawyer (Japanese)
- The King's Man (English) ~2/3
- Jujutsu Kaisen 0 (Japanese/Anime)
- Your Turn to Kill (Japanese)

### Coming Soon

- Silk Road (English)
- The 355 (English/PG12) 2/4
- Daikaiju no Atoshimatsu (Japanese) 2/4
- Ghostbusters: Afterlife (English) 2/4
- Drive My Car (Japanese/PG12) 2/11
- Usogui (Japanese) 2/11
- West Side Story (English) 2/11
- Ushikubi Mura (Japanese) 2/18
- King Richard (English) 2/23
- Death on the Nile (English) 2/25
- Mankai Movie 「A3!」 Autumn & Winter (Japanese/Anime) 3/4
- Doraemon: Nobita's Little Star Wars (Japanese/Anime) 3/4
- The Last 10 Years (Japanese) 3/4
- Shimajiro to Kirakira Okoku no Ojisama (Japanese/Anime) 3/11
- The Batman (English) 3/11

**\*Movie schedules change often. Please call the theater for confirmation details.**

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**Dinos Cinemas Only:** Every Thursday is "Men's Day." Admission is ¥1,100 (tax included) for men.

★ **Aeon Cinema:** Miyashita-dori 7-chome / 0166 – 74 – 6411 URL: [cinema.aeoncinema.com/wm/asahikawa](http://cinema.aeoncinema.com/wm/asahikawa) (Japanese)

**Now Showing**

- Zenkamon (Japanese/PG12)
- Noise (Japanese)
- Adam's Family 2 (English/Anime)
- POP! (Japanese)
- Korosuna (Japanese)
- Waiting for Rain (Korean) ~2/3
- Secreto Matsushita (Spanish) ~2/3
- CODA (English/PG12)
- The Confidence Man JP: Episode of the Hero (Japanese)
- Cry Macho (English)
- House of Gucci (English/PG12)
- Spider-Man: No Way Home (English)
- The Sunday Runoff (Japanese) ~2/3
- 99.9: Criminal Lawyer (Japanese)
- The King's Man (English/PG12)
- Jujutsu Kaisen 0 (Japanese/Anime)
- Your Turn to Kill (Japanese)

**Coming Soon**

- The Deer King (Japanese/Anime) 2/4
- Ghostbusters: Afterlife (English) 2/4
- Daikaiju no Atoshimatsu (Japanese) 2/4
- West Side Story (English) 2/11
- Usogui (Japanese) 2/11
- Goodbye, Don Glee! (Japanese/Anime) 2/18
- Ushikubi Mura (Japanese) 2/18
- The Blue Skies at Your Feet (Japanese) 2/18
- King Richard (English) 2/23
- Cyrano (English) 2/25
- Stigmatized Properties (Japanese) 2/25
- The Last 10 Years (Japanese) 3/4
- Doraemon: Nobita's Little Star Wars (Japanese/Anime) 3/4
- The Batman (English) 3/11

★ **Cineplex 7 Asahikawa:** Nagayama 12-jo 3-chome Western Powers Nagayama / 0166 – 49 – 1000

URL: <http://www.unitedcinemas.jp/asahikawa/index.html> (Japanese)

**Now Showing**

- The French Dispatch of the Liberty, Kansas Evening Sun (English)
- Noise (Japanese)
- Resident Evil: Welcome to Raccoon City (English/PG12)
- Tiger & Bunny –The Beginning- (Japanese 4DX/Anime)
- The Midnight Maiden War (Japanese)
- The Confidence Man JP: Episode of the Hero (Japanese)
- House of Gucci (English/PG12)
- Spider-Man: No Way Home (English 4DX)
- 99.9: Criminal Lawyer (Japanese)
- Jujutsu Kaisen 0 (Japanese/Anime)
- Boss Baby Family Business (English)
- The Matrix Resurrections (English 4DX)
- Your Turn to Kill (Japanese)

**Coming Soon**

- Ghostbusters: Afterlife (English/PG12) 2/4
- Daikaiju no Atoshimatsu (Japanese) 2/4
- Tiger & Bunny –The Rising- (Japanese 4DX/Anime) 2/4
- The 355 (English/PG12) 2/4
- West Side Story (English) 2/11
- Usogui (Japanese) 2/11
- Just Remembering (Japanese) 2/18
- Drive My Car (Japanese/PG12) 2/18
- Aikoku Joshi: Beni Bushidou (Japanese) 2/18
- Uncharted (English) 2/18
- King Richard (English) 2/23
- Death on the Nile (English) 2/25
- Doraemon: Nobita's Little Star Wars (Japanese/Anime) 3/4
- The Last 10 Years (Japanese) 3/4
- The Batman (English) 3/11

\*Movie schedules change often. Please call the theater for confirmation details.



# AIC Bulletin Board

## Calling All Writers!

If you would like to contribute to the dissemination of local information, or simply share a story with the English-speaking community in Asahikawa, we would love to hear your voice! We are open to suggestions for new articles and will accept periodical submissions, so there is no need to commit to a monthly article. Why not join the Asahikawa Info team and let your voice be heard? If you are interested in writing for the newsletter, please contact the AIC at the e-mail address listed below. Also, if you have any suggestions as to what kind of information should be included in the only English language periodical in Asahikawa, please let us know!

## Japanese for Daily Life

If you've been looking for a way to improve your day-to-day Japanese skills, then look no further! The Agency for Cultural Affairs of the Japanese government has created a free Japanese-learning website for foreigners living in Japan! It covers 3 levels of Japanese used everyday life with topics such as "Using the Bank," "Using Public Transportation," "Using a Pharmacy" and many more! The website has also been translated into 9 different languages to help facilitate learning! You can access it through here:

[tsunagarujp.bunka.go.jp/?lang\\_id=JA](http://tsunagarujp.bunka.go.jp/?lang_id=JA)



Interesting activities such as quizzes, discussions, songs, games, handicrafts and much more, all in English! Come meet new people, relax and relate on Fun Fridays!

## FUN FRIDAYS!

**Dates:** January 14th & 28th, February 10th & 25th, March 11th & 25th  
**Times:** 1:00pm-2:00pm ~Afternoon~ 2nd and 4th Friday of the month  
6:30pm-8:30pm ~Night~ 2nd Friday of the month  
**Location:** Asahikawa International Center, Common Meeting Room (1)  
(Feeeal Asahikawa 7F 1-jo-dori 8-chome)  
**Charge:** ¥1,500 for 3 months (Free for volunteer leaders)



The AIC offers many services to make your life in Asahikawa more enjoyable. Here are just a few:

**Volunteer Guide:** Volunteers are registered to help translate and interpret.

**Event volunteer:** The AIC plans many exciting events throughout the year, such as Friendship Parties.

Why not become a volunteer and help plan these events?

**Homestay:** Families are registered to welcome you into their homes for an overnight stay or just for an afternoon visit.



The Asahikawa International Center (Feeeal Asahikawa 7F 1-jo-dori 8-chome) has free Wi-Fi available for public use and is free of charge. If you reside in Asahikawa, registration for a user card is required. Please feel free to come by anytime, as well as check out some of the other services and activities available at the Asahikawa International Center!

## Spread the Word...

Contribute to the AIC newsletter and share any interesting information you may have with other readers. You may write on any topic including, items to buy or sell, offers for culture/language exchanges, or write an essay about your life in Asahikawa or your hometown. The article should not be profit related! Please send your submissions to us at the AIC.



Asahikawa International Committee  
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