

Japan-America Society of Greater Austin

The 2018 JASGA Gala

Sunday, March 4, 2018

Keynote Speaker and Bridges-to-Friendship Award Recipient

Kumiko Kitamura

Kumiko Kitamura is R & D Project Leader and Executive Producer at AOI Pro. Inc. She is also a co-founder and producer of Japan Factory at SXSW Interactive held in Austin, Texas every year in March. She has received numerous creative, advertising and design awards from Cannes Lions, D&AD, One Show, Red Dot Award (Communication Design 2017), and other creative communication design awards, both in Japan and worldwide. She served as a judge at TIAA (Tokyo Interactive Advertising Award), ADFEST (Creative Festival in Asia), etc. and is one of the founders of Fabulous Four (at the time called Remarkable Five), which is a passport to success for young directors. In 2015 she founded the Japan Factory at SXSW Interactive, which brings a large numbers of attendees to meet with innovators and create sustainable friendships between people of Japan and the US.



She was raised in Germany and travels in Europe quite often. She recently participated in a media conference in Berlin, and she is currently on an investigatory mission to cover the culture and community of the 2018 PyeongChang Olympic Winter Games.

Opening Speaker

Tomoko Ara

Tomoko Ara received BA in Humanities and Social Department from Keio University in 2004 and MBA from Waseda University and University of Washington in 2016. She joined NTT DATA Corporation in 2004. Her main theme is how to create and commercialize new business with technologies researched and developed by NTT R&D and she already produced several new services in the market.

She started her mission from the “Robust Media Search” projects which use audio, movie and solid recognition technology and produced systems like music and movie monitoring system for anti-piracy and rights management or second screen service for automatically connecting related contents between TV and internet as a new marketing and promotion tool in Japan and US.

She joined the project with the theme “Immersive” technology including VR from 2016 and preceded the experiment “VR Batting Training system” with Rakuten Eagles, one of Japanese professional baseball team, at first. She also found VR sports project team in US office located San Francisco to approach and manage several projects with MLB teams.

With the success of baseball VR training project, she is now expanding the business field to other sports like tennis and football or entertainment world to approach new market.



Guest Speaker



Dr. Patti Maclachlan

Patricia L. Maclachlan received her PhD in comparative politics from Columbia University and is now Associate Professor of Government and Asian Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. Her publications include *Consumer Politics in Postwar Japan: The Institutional Boundaries of Citizen Activism* (Columbia University Press, 2002), *The Ambivalent Consumer: Questioning Consumption in East Asia and the West* (Cornell University Press, 2006), which she co-edited with Sheldon Garon, and *The People's Post Office: The History and Politics of the Japanese Postal System, 1871-2010* (Harvard University East Asia Center, 2011).



Her current research focuses on the political economy of Japanese agriculture and the reform of the agricultural cooperative system. Dr. Maclachlan serves on the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission and the United States-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange (CULCON), the American Advisory Committee of the Japan Foundation, and the editorial board and board of trustees of the *Journal of Japanese Studies*.

Entertainer Japanese Classical Dance, Nihon Buyo



Marie & Amy Yamamoto

Marie and Amy Yamamoto were born and raised in Austin, Texas. Marie is currently studying business at the McCombs School of Business at UT Austin. Amy is an 8th grader at Grisham Middle School and will attend Westwood High School next year.



They both started Japanese classical dance 8 years ago. Their dance teacher is Chizuko Matsumoto, whose stage name is Rokumizu Hanayagi. She teaches Hanayagi-style Japanese classical dance. She used to live in Austin but moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico in 2011. Marie and Amy go to Mrs. Matsumoto's house every year to take lessons and perform Japanese dance at the Santa Fe Japan Festival. It will be their 6th year performing at the event this May. Here in Austin, they have performed at the UT Japan Festival, Asian Occasion at the Long Center, JASGA Japan Fall Festival, the Dragon Boat Festival, and at various schools and business events.

