

Asian Arts & Culture Program Series



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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WHAT: A Festival of Japanese Arts: Sakura Matsuri

WHEN: Wednesday, April 16 through Saturday, April 19, 2008

WHERE: Events held in various locations, days and times.
 Check for individual events

“Cherry Blossoms in the Valley”

**Presented in collaboration with the UMass Asian Arts & Culture Program,
the Department of Asian Languages and the Wistariahurst Museum**

Beginning on Wednesday, April 16 through Saturday April 19, three programming units in the Pioneer Valley- the Asian Arts and Culture Program, the Japanese Program of the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures at UMass and the Wistariahurst Museum will present a **Sakura Matsuri** (Cherry Blossom Festival).

On Wednesday, April 16, the Wistariahurst Museum located at 238 Cabot St., Holyoke will host **Chanoyu** Japanese tea ceremony with tea masters from Japan. There will be two sessions at 3:30PM and 7:00PM. The ticket fee includes a beautiful handmade tea bowl made especially for this event by well-known local potter and ceramic artist, Linda Siska.

On Thursday, April 17, the Wistariahurst Museum will present a talk on **Japanese Kimonos** by Ms. Joanne Ingersoll, curator of textiles at Rhode Island School of Design from 6:00-7:00PM. Tickets are \$7 per person. For tickets for above events please call 413-322-5660.

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On Friday, April 18, the University of Massachusetts campus will be the location for multiple Japanese events held throughout the day. The Japanese Language Program will host Professor Edwin Cranston from Harvard University for a talk on **Waka and the Japanese Poetic Tradition** at 4:30-6:00PM. The event will be held in Herter Hall and is open to the public.

At 8PM in Bowker Auditorium, the Asian Arts & Culture Program will present **Furoshiki: Interpretations of Treasured Ceremonies**, a concert highlighting the beauty and poignancy of traditional and contemporary Japanese performing arts through music dance, calligraphy and poetry by two sets of internationally known Japanese artists – *Kitanodai Gagaku Ensemble* and master koto musician, *Masayo Ishigure*.

Furoshiki will combine movement, words and images to present a series of visual and arresting scenes that introduce the audience to age-old Japanese rituals and traditions. The second half of the concert will feature virtuosic musician, **Masayo Ishigure**, on the koto. A veteran of international music festivals, Ms. Ishigure's string of performances include the World Music Institute, Japan Society, and the Bang on a Can Festival. She has performed with Yo-Yo Ma, Itzak Perlman, and John Williams and most recently can be heard on the soundtrack of Columbia Picture's *Memoirs of a Geisha*. Please call the box office at 413-545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS for tickets. A special adaption of this concert titled, **Cherry Blossoms in the Valley: Japan Festival of the Arts** will be held for public school children on Friday, April 18 at 10:00AM in Bowker Auditorium. For tickets, please call the Fine Arts Center school audiences line at 413-545-2116.

On Saturday, April 19, the Japanese Program in Asian Languages and Literatures (Department of Languages, Literatures & Cultures) will present a symposium on **Waka Poetry** from 10:00AM to 3:00PM in Herter Hall, Room 601. The colloquium will cover topics in Japanese poetry and translation and will feature short presentations from several scholars. Harvard University Professor of Japanese Literature, Edwin Cranston will be the respondent and there will be time for open discussion. This event is free and open to all, but pre-registration for attendance is required. Please email to Professor Stephen Forrest at: sforrest@asianlan.umass.edu or by phone (413- 545-4950).

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On Saturday, April 19 the Wistariahurst Museum will host two workshops in *Ikebana* (Japanese flower arrangements) at 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM. Tickets are \$20 per person and includes the cost of flowers. For information and reservations (required) call 413-322-5660 or www.wistariahurst.org.

The Japanese Festival of the Arts in the Valley is a conceptual idea of the Asian Arts & Culture Program (AACP). Initiating collaborations region wide is the result of AACP's ongoing commitment and outreach efforts to provide access, appreciation and education about the arts and cultural traditions of Asian countries for Western Massachusetts audiences. For more information, please check the calendar on the Fine Arts Center Website at: www.fineartscenter.com

Electronic format press release and downloadable high resolution photos for some of these events are available at: <http://www.umass.edu/fac/asian/press.html>.

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Calendar Editor:

Special Event: Sakura Matsuri: A Festival of Japanese Arts. April 16-April 19, 2008.

Events presented in various locations including University of Massachusetts, Amherst and Wistariahurst Museum, 238 Cabot St. Holyoke, MA. Tickets: Please call the presenting organization. UMass Events: 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511.

Online at www.fineartscenter.com.

Wistariahurst Events: 1-413-322-5660. Online at www.wistariahurst.org.

Information: Asian Arts & Culture Program: 413-577-2486 or

www.fineartscenter.com/asian