



UK IN JAPAN  
2019-20



## Press release

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 19.00PM ON WEDNESDAY 26 JUNE 2019**

### **British Council reveals artists-in-residence at Ise Grand Shrine for UK in JAPAN 2019-20**

The British Council today reveals the UK artists chosen to take up residency in Ise City, home to Ise Jingu (Ise Grand Shrine) known as the spiritual home of the Japanese. This shrine will host artists-in-residence for the first time as part of the cultural programme for UK in JAPAN 2019-20.

Following more than 600 submissions, the selected artists span the artforms, reflecting the current diversity of UK creativity. They are:

- **Grace Boyle** - Multisensory Artist
- **Season Butler** - Writer and Performance Artist
- **Matthew Rosier** - Artist
- **Duncan Speakman** - Artist and Composer
- **Nicole Vivien Watson** - Choreographer
- **Jane and Louise Wilson** – Visual Artists

The two-week artistic research residency takes place in October 2019 in Ise City which is the site of one of the most important and prestigious Shinto shrines in Japan, Ise Jingu (Ise Grand Shrine). The residency will give the UK artists a unique opportunity to interact with traditional Japanese culture. The artists will document their experiences on their return to the UK.

The Mayor of Ise City, Kenichi Suzuki, said:

*"It is a great honour to be able to welcome seven brilliantly talented artists from the UK to Ise. The fortunate coincidence of being able to host these guests from the UK, the home of one of my passions, rugby, at the same time as Japan hosting the Rugby World Cup makes me as excited as a young boy. Through this project, undertaken in collaboration with the British Council, I hope fully to convey the charms of Ise and of Japan to our friends in the UK. I am very much looking forward to seeing how the seven artists, with their finely-honed sensibilities, perceive Ise. I and all the people of Ise extend a heartfelt welcome to our British guests. See you all in Ise!"*

UK in JAPAN 2019-20 is an ambitious joint initiative by the British Council and the British Embassy Tokyo highlighting the breadth of the UK relationship with Japan, from culture to

business. At its heart is a rich and varied programme of cultural projects, convened by the British Council, with events and exhibitions from UK cultural organisations taking place across Japan throughout the year.

The cultural programme aims to build new cultural relationships with Japan. Leading British institutions will present work from the worlds of classical music, theatre, visual arts, and disability arts, continuing a legacy of inclusivity borne out of the 2012 Paralympics in London. Highlights of UK in JAPAN cultural events include:

- A British Council partnership with the London Symphony Orchestra engaging diverse members of the Japanese community in the creation of music
- The first ever BBC Proms taking place in Japan in autumn 2019 with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, led by Chief Conductor Thomas Dausgaard
- Jason Bruges Studio's large-scale robotic installation, *The Constant Gardeners*, inspired by Olympic athletes.
- The Burrell Collection touring masterpieces of French painting, alongside supporting works from Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum
- The Courtauld Gallery staging an exhibition of treasures from its Impressionist and Post-impressionist collection in three museums across Japan
- Drake Music and the City of Kawasaki's cutting-edge creative tech project, increasing access to music and co-creating new instruments with and for disabled people
- Graeae Theatre Company's collaborative production of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* with Deaf and disabled artists from Japan, the UK and Bangladesh, directed by Jenny Sealey
- A large-scale solo exhibition showcasing the diverse works of contemporary artist Julian Opie
- LSO's Musical Director Sir Simon Rattle returning to Japan for a series of concerts
- National Dance Company Wales celebrate rugby with a contemporary dance performance
- An exhibition of around 60 masterpieces from the National Gallery Collection, including Vincent van Gogh's *Sunflowers*, which travel to Japan for the first time
- The Philharmonia Orchestra performing concerts with Principal Conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen
- Royal Court Theatre's international playwriting workshops hosted by the New National Theatre Tokyo, led by Royal Court playwrights and members of the theatre's Artistic Team
- The Royal Opera returning to Japan with productions of *Faust* and *Otello*
- Scottish Ensemble and composer Anna Meredith transforms Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* into an original new piece, *Anno*
- Traverse Theatre connecting two Scottish playwrights with residencies in Japan

Matt Burney, Country Director Japan at British Council, comments:

*"Our cultural relationship provides a very strong foundation from which we can build trust, learn from each other and enable business links to flourish. There is no better time to be celebrating ties with UK in JAPAN 2019-20. The eyes of the world will be on Japan as we enter a new Japanese era, and with the country hosting the Rugby World Cup and the Olympics and Paralympics. We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to celebrate and*

*develop the deep ties that exist between our countries. The artists chosen to participate in the Ise residency will come to represent the embodiment of the cultural relationship that exists between the UK and Japan.”*

## **ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors**

Ise Grand Shrine artists-in-residence images here: <http://bit.ly/2WWMJJX>

UK in JAPAN 2019-20 cultural programme: [www.britishcouncil.jp/en/uk-japan-2019-20](http://www.britishcouncil.jp/en/uk-japan-2019-20)

Dates: September 2019 – September 2020

Follow updates on: #UKinJAPAN2019\_20

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### **About the British Council**

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We work with over 100 countries in the fields of arts and culture, English language, education and civil society. Last year we reached over 75 million people directly and 758 million people overall including online, broadcasts and publications. We make a positive contribution to the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust. Founded in 1934 we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body. We receive 15 per cent core funding grant from the UK government.

[www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)

### **About the Ise City artists-in-residence**

#### **Grace Boyle**

Artist and storyteller working at the intersection of art and science. Since 2015, she has focused on a multisensory, immersive medium, focusing on developing how to write, 'shoot' and perform stories that are multisensory from first concepts. She is the founder and director of The Feelies, which serves as a vehicle for this work, and a congregation point for collaboration with other artists of a wide range of fields.

#### **Season Butler**

Writer, artist, dramaturg and lecturer. Her writing, research and performance practice explore the opportunities and traps of hindsight and hope, coming-of-age into unprecedented change and what it means to look forward to an increasingly wily future.

**Matthew Rosier**

Installation artist whose work seeks to augment our environment with memories of our past, distortions of our present, and visions of our future. Having trained as an architect, place is central in Matthew's work; how it is used, by who, its history, its future, and what this communicates about society today.

**Duncan Speakman**

Artist and composer who trained as a sound engineer at the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts and is now based at the Pervasive Media Studio in Bristol. Often working with mobile audio and locative media, he creates narrative experiences that engage audiences emotionally and physically in uncontrolled spaces.

**Nicole Vivien Watson**

Director of Surface Area Dance Theatre, and for over twelve years, she has contributed to the artistic community by presenting a vibrant, repertoire of engagement, that encompasses performance and socially concerned activities. She is presently working toward an MA in Japanese Studies, from the School of African and Asian Studies, University of London.

**Jane and Louise Wilson**

Identical twin sisters working as an artist duo in collaboration for over two decades. Since 1990, they have gained a national and international reputation as artists working with photography and the moving image, installation in an expanded form of cinema and lens-based media. In 1999 they were nominated for The Turner Prize for their multi-screen installation Gamma.

**About UK in JAPAN 2019-20**

UK in JAPAN 2019-20 campaign is a joint initiative between the British Council and the British Embassy Tokyo. It will run from September 2019 to September 2020, coinciding with the Rugby World Cup 2019 and Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics and Paralympics. A series of events and activities will take place to showcase UK excellence and create partnerships in business, innovation, culture, arts and education.

**About Ise City**

Ise City is located near the heart of the Japanese archipelago, rich with nature and boundless nourishment. It is the home to Ise Jingu, a Shinto shrine known as the spiritual home of the Japanese, and it is here that the stories of Japanese myth still live and breathe. Since ancient times, pilgrims have gathered here in Ise from across the country, interacting and exchanging ideas. In this way, Ise has served as a cultural crossroads, spreading a diverse array of ideas and beliefs closely tied to Japanese spirituality. Even today, the city remains a cultural touchstone for the people of Japan as the origin of Japan, and it welcomes eight million visitors every year.

**Ise City Residency selection panel**

Dr Simon Kaner - Director of the Centre for Japanese Studies, University of East Anglia

Kirsty Lang - BBC Broadcaster, British Council Trustee

Fumio Nanjo - Director of Mori Art Museum, Tokyo

Clare Reddington - CEO of Watershed, Bristol

Yukiko Shikata - Curator