

Learning the Japanese way

Sultan Qaboos University with the Embassy of Japan will conduct Japanese language courses for beginners

By **Rahima Al Balushi**
Times News Service

MUSCAT — By way of promoting and introducing Japanese culture to the residents of Oman, the Embassy of Japan in Muscat recently announced a talk on, "The roots of Japanese cinema and animation" to be held at the Cultural Club on October 5 at 7pm.

An intensive course to learn Japanese has also been introduced at Sultan Qaboos University. The course can be availed till October 27.

Speaking at a conference yesterday Seiji Morimoto, ambassador of Japan said to the people of the Sultanate, "We have put this together in response to the people of Oman's interest in Japan's culture and Japanese language. In fact, this will provide a rare opportunity for Omanis to get familiar with the culture of Japan."

The 90-minute lecture about the history of Japanese cinema will be delivered by Larry Greenberg, CEO of urban connections and digital meme.

Greenberg is a native New Yorker who has spent more than 20 years in Tokyo, and is an aficionado of silent movies, which because of its long narrative tradition holds a significant position.

"This is a unique opportunity to watch classic Japanese animation and films. The lecture will provide a platform to the Sultanate's audience who prefer intellectual cinema and themes to better understand the narrative traditions in the Japanese culture as well as the initial historical steps in its cinema and the personalities behind it," the ambassador added.

Accompanied by English subtitles, several rare films from the Japanese Anime Classic Collection developed by digital meme will be screened during the lecture combined with a 10-minute video presentation on the different methodology used to digitally preserve, restore and commercialise the treasure of Japan's cinematic legacy.

A short feature film from the Talking Silents collection of



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Seiji Morimoto
Ambassador of Japan

restored Japanese classic films will also be screened.

The embassy is optimistic that the lecture will do justice to the intellectual dialogue and facilitate cultural exchange, and further contribute to the building up of a relationship between Oman and Japan.

Closer ties

As part of the continued effort to strengthen the close ties between Japan and Oman and taking it beyond the sphere of

economic fields, a collaborative effort of the Oman-Japan Friendship Association in cooperation with the Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) as the host, with the embassy will conduct Japanese language intensive courses for beginners starting from September 26 for a period of five weeks.

By conducting the courses at SQU, the embassy aims to expand and enhance the understanding of the Japanese society and culture among young

people including university students, and to help develop an appreciation for other cultures, besides enabling the participants to learn and develop practical skills of the Japanese language.

"This is a good step to observe the reaction of young people learning the Japanese language. SQU has language course facilities and has a focused approach towards the young generation.

"From a future point of view,

I hope, one day to see SQU as a world renowned place for education and with faculty to teach a language like Japanese. In fact, it has a long way to go," said Seiji Morimoto.

"Our registration has seen over 40 people. Unfortunately, we could take only 20. This is only the beginners' course. We are actually thinking further to hold advanced courses as part of our future vision. Our focus in the course will not only be restricted to writing but also on learning basic communication as well," he added. The twice a week class from 6 to 8pm will be taught by an Omani citizen who has mastered the language with an excellent grade. "His experience in the Japanese society will certainly play a role to the better understanding of the Japanese language and culture," said Morimoto. Seiji Morimoto also announced that the Embassy Film Club will screen the latest film *Departures* on November 10. "This film has won the best foreign language film in the 81st Academy Awards Ceremony."

Intensive Japanese language course at SQU from today: ambassador

By HasanKamoonpuri

MUSCAT — The introduction of an intensive Japanese language course begins at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) today, Seiji Morimoto, Ambassador of Japan, told reporters here yesterday.

The Embassy of Japan in association with the Oman-Japan Friendship Association and in co-operation with the SQU as a host will conduct Japanese language intensive courses for the beginners from today to October 27.

Seiji said the Embassy of Japan aims to deepen and enhance the understanding of the Japanese society and culture among young Omanis including university students, and to develop appreciation for other cultures and ways of living and thinking besides enabling the participants to learn and develop practical skills of the Japanese language.

The first lesson will start at 6 pm in room E-11 of SQU today. This twice-a-week lesson from 6 to 8 pm will be taught by an Omani citizen who has



mastered the language with an excellent grade, and his broad experience in the Japanese society will surely contribute to the better understanding of the Japanese language and culture.

The ambassador will deliver a short speech at today's inaugural course in the class to highlight the significant objectives behind conducting the courses at SQU.

Seiji said for a command over the Japanese language one has to learn around 2,000 letters and it's not easy. The current course will give a very

brief and basic introduction to the 20 participants.

He hoped this course will continue and new courses that are more advanced will be initiated for those who are keen to study the language more fully.

The ambassador also said the Embassy of Japan in co-operation with the Cultural Club would organise a lecture about the history of the Japanese Cinema entitled "The Root of the Japanese Cinema and Anime" on October 5 at 7 pm at the Cultural Club to be presented by Larry Greenberg,

CEO of Urban Connections and Digital Meme.

The lecture will provide a unique opportunity to the attendees to understand the narrative traditions in the Japanese culture as well as the initial history steps of the Japanese cinema and the personalities behind that.

The ambassador hopes this lecture will promote the bilateral co-operation in the field of intellectual dialogue and cultural exchange and further contribute to continuation of cultural exchange between the two countries.

Japanese language course from today

By A Staff Reporter

OMAN TRIBUNE

MUSCAT The Embassy of Japan and Oman Japan Friendship Association, in cooperation with Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) are starting a Japanese language course from Sunday. A series of cultural programmes has also been lined up for October.

The Japanese Language Intensive Course for Beginners is a 10-day course to be taught over a period of five weeks. There will be two classes in each of the five weeks. Initially, only 20 students will attend the

language classes. The course commencing on Sunday will conclude on October 27.

Mitsubishi Corporation, Mitsui and Co, Middle East Ltd. Misui OSK Lines Ltd and Sumitomo Corporation are some of the Japanese companies who are sponsoring the language programme.

HE Seiji Morimoto, Ambassador of Japan, told media persons that this Japanese Language Intensive Course for Beginners is being held because some Omani students have shown their interest in the language. He said that if

the experiment proved a success, then the embassy would work on launching a full-fledged Japanese language programme for Omanis.

He said that the SQU was considered the ultimate place for such courses as its language laboratory is fully equipped with most modern facilities for such training.

Morimoto said the Japanese language course was just the continuation of the efforts to further strengthen the distinguished friendly relations between the Sultanate and Japan.

He said this course

would deepen and enhance the understanding of the Japanese society and culture among young people including the SQU students.

In addition to the Japanese language course, the Embassy of Japan in the Sultanate in cooperation with the Cultural Club will organise a lecture on the history of Japanese cinema. Larry Greenberg, CEO of Urban Connections and Digital Meme, will deliver the lecture on 'The Root of the Japanese Cinema and Anime' on October 5.

Morimoto said the lecture would provide a

unique opportunity to the Sultanate's intellectual audience to understand the narrative traditions in Japanese culture. "The Embassy of Japan hopes this lecture will promote bilateral cooperation in intellectual domain and cultural exchange and further contribute to the continuation of cultural exchange between the two countries," said Morimoto.

On November 10, the Embassy Film Club will present an Academy Award winning film 'Departures.' The story of the film is based on re-incarnation."