

JFNY NEWSLETTER | March 21, 2025 □

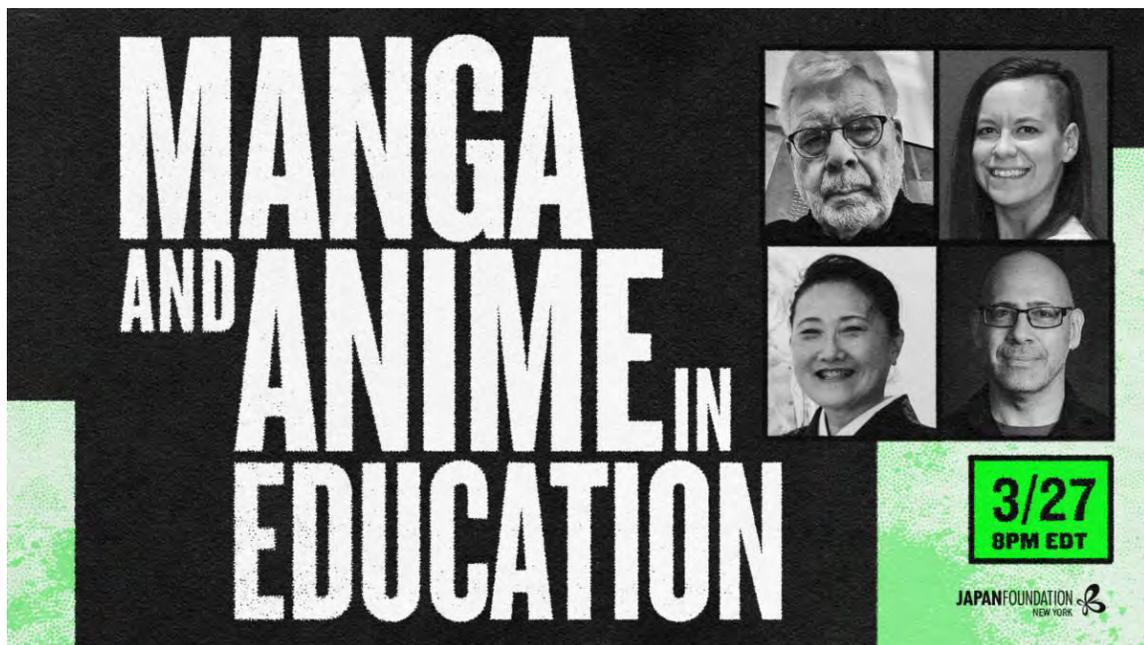
Welcome to peak cherry blossom season! Whether you can tune in from home or you're in the D.C. area, we hope you'll join us for tomorrow's National Cherry Blossom Festival Opening Ceremony, featuring Seiwa Bunraku, Ka-Na and Kazunori Kumagai.

Also coming up is our next online panel event! We hope you'll join us this Thursday (3/27) for The Educational Power of Manga and Anime.

Plus, the first of our videos from the LeSean Thomas series from November is now live, our latest JFF Theater & JF Library picks and more. Read below for more info!



From Us



The Educational Power of Manga and Anime

March 27, 8pm (EDT)

Online

We would like to thank everyone for their enthusiastic response to this online panel event! If you are an educator, librarian, or parent wondering how to channel children's passion for manga and anime into their education and development and haven't already, be sure to register and send in your questions. They might be answered live!

This Thursday, during this **FREE** online panel, experts will discuss the profound impact of manga and anime on learning and beyond, with real-world examples from the U.S. and Japan.

→[REGISTER HERE](#)



National Cherry Blossom Festival 2025 Opening Ceremony

March 22, 5pm (EDT)

Warner Theatre (Washington, DC) & Online

Tomorrow! Join us in celebrating peak Cherry Blossom season with three special performances as part of the Opening Ceremony for the Cherry Blossom Festival, co-presented with the National Cherry Blossom Festival, Inc. Don't miss these presentations by puppet theater organization **Seiwa Bunraku**, Gold record-selling J-Pop singer-songwriter and guitarist **Ka-Na** (Kana Uemura) and world-renown tap dancer **Kazunori Kumagai**.

For those unable to attend in person, the opening ceremony will be live-streamed. You can also visit CherryBlossFest on YouTube for the archive once the ceremony concludes.

→[LEARN MORE](#)



JFF Theater Spotlight: I am what I am

Available until April 30 (9pm EDT)

□ THIS EDITION'S FILM: *I am what I am*

Played by **Toko Miura** (*Drive My Car*), Kasumi, a 30-year-old aromantic asexual, doesn't have it easy—her mother pushes her to marry and the people around her say marriage is the only path forward. Through unexpected encounters and friendships, Kasumi slowly sheds her doubts and grows to fully accept who she is, even when others fail to understand.

Be sure to watch the end credits and listen to the beautiful theme song, sung by Miura herself.

Watch for FREE today!

→ [WATCH NOW](#)

ICYMI: From Us



LeSean Thomas: Creating TV Anime In Japan

Online (YouTube)

We are pleased to announce the first of the videos from our **Foreign Exchange: Anime Inspirations & Visionaries with LeSean Thomas** multi-day series, co-presented with Japan Society and the Imagination Project Inc., is now available on our YouTube channel.

In November 2024, **LeSean Thomas**, a pioneering Black American in Japan's anime industry and the creator of Netflix's *Yasuke*, returned to his hometown to give several talks. He described his journey from growing up in the Bronx to collaborating with Japanese creators such as Shinichiro Wantanabe and Takeshi Koike, with the goal of inspiring the next generation of directors, producers, artists and animators.

Don't miss this insightful and eye-opening discussion on career development with LeSean Thomas, designed for local NYC high school students. Whether you're considering a career in the creative industry or another field or need motivation to keep with your current path, this is a must-watch.

→[WATCH NOW](#)

For Your (Virtual) Shelf



For Your (Virtual) Shelf: Dragon Ball and Dragon Ball Z

Welcome to another edition of For Your (Virtual) Shelf!

- MAR. VOL. 2 THEME: *Dragon Ball* and *Dragon Ball Z* series by Akira Toriyama
- MAR. VOL. 2 BOOKS:
 - ***Dragon Ball***
 - Tells the tale of Son Goku a young warrior and peculiar boy with a tail who is on an adventure to become stronger & gather all 7 Dragon Balls
 - ***Dragon Ball Z***
 - The story of Son Goku continues with a new family, new revelation of his origins, and new enemies

→[LEARN MORE \(Dragon Ball and Dragon Ball Z\)](#)

Not what you're looking for this time? There are plenty more books of all genres available. Visit the JF USA Digital Library today!

→[LEARN MORE](#)

You will need a library card to be able to borrow and place holds for the books in the digital library. Visit the Japan Foundation, Los Angeles website below for instructions on how to get your digital library card.

→[LEARN MORE](#)

For Your (Virtual) Shelf - Join the Giveaway!



Book Tree 2025 @ JFT Library & JF Canada/USA Digital Library Ongoing until March 29

Time's running out to take part in our Book Tree! Share your thoughts on library items (and refer your friends) to make the library's book tree bloom and for your chance to win various prizes!

How to participate:

- 1) Borrow ebooks/audiobooks at the JF USA Digital Library. Every time you borrow 5 or more items, you are entitled to enter a drawing for prizes.
- 2) Submit comments on (an) item(s) of your choice on the virtual Book Tree board on Padlet.
- 3) If you want to opt in for the prize lottery, please submit your information from the form available on the virtual Book Tree board.

This year, we're also offering a Friend Referral Bonus. If you learned about the Book Tree and/or the library services from a friend, write your friend's library card number in the form. Both you and your friend get an extra ballot worth chance for small prizes!

Prize winners will be notified directly in late April.

→[LEARN MORE](#)

From Our Grantees



On Education

Ongoing until August 17

Amant (Brooklyn, NY)

On Education brings together works by 35 international artists that approach education from unconventional perspectives. These works offer alternative, more productive methods of education in environments disrupted by endemic underfunding, spiraling culture wars, unsustainable debt, and the lasting impacts of racism and colonialism.

→ [LEARN MORE](#)



A Weekend of Ise Katagami

March 21-22

Asia Society Texas Center (Houston, TX)

This weekend, Asia Society Texas Center will host two unique events centering the traditional art of Ise Katagami, a distinctive Edo period Japanese paper stenciling technique. Master artisan **Yuichi Hirose** will perform two live demonstrations, showing the intricate techniques of traditional cutting and dyeing. After, guests will have a unique opportunity to create Ise Katagami stencils with guidance of expert artisans **Keiko Nasu** and **Yoko Maruta**.

Although both events are sold out, you can still visit the Ise Katagami exhibit until April 27.

→[LEARN MORE](#)

Image #7 Credit: Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, *Part Two (Constructing)*, 1992. Courtesy the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris.

Image #8 Credit: Installation view of *Stenciled Elegance: Ise Katagami and the Art of Textile Design*, on view January 23 – April 27, 2025, at Asia Society Texas. Photo by Alex Barber.

For inquiries, please contact: NY_info@jpf.go.jp

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