

# ASIAN STUDIES U OF L NEWSLETTER

FALL 2024 - VOL. 10



**Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden hosted the 2024 Golden Maple Reception** on Sept 27 at the Lethbridge Sandman Lodge. Elder *Ninnaisipistoo* “Owl Chief” Dr. Francis First Charger opened the event with prayer and blessings. Then Japanese Canadian leader Dr. Art Miki read passages from his book *Gaman—Perseverance*, and answered questions from his grandson Jesse Miki in an engaging conversation. As former President of the National Association of Japanese Canadians, Art shared stories of the path to a just redress with the Canadian Government for the injustices Japanese Canadians faced in WWII. Some 200 people attended this event. (Continued to page 4)

## Recent & Upcoming Presentations

**Department of History & Religious Studies Colloquia**  
Fri, Oct 18, Dr. Ben Whaley (U of C) gave a talk on **"Japanese Video Games: Toward a History of Empathetic Engagement"** to an engaged audience. Copies of his *Toward a Gameic World* are sold at the U of L Bookstore. Thanks to New Media for their generous co-sponsorship!

**Mon, Nov 4 from 2:00 to 3:30 pm, Dr. John Harding** will present on **“Vehicles from East Asia Overcoming Western Bias: Mahāyāna Buddhism in North America and Europe”** Room AH 100 [Details here](#)

Feb 27-28, 2025, **Dr. John Harding** will give the **Annual Leslie S. Kawamura Lecture and Seminar**, at the University of Calgary (at the invitation of Dr. Wendi Adamek, Numata Chair in Buddhist Studies). Provisional lecture title, **“Transnational Statements and Local Circumstances: Early Japanese Temples in the U.S. and Canada”**

**Asian Studies** is an interdisciplinary program at the University of Lethbridge which seeks to understand the human experience in Asia and the Asian diaspora. We create opportunities for students to learn about Asia through courses, presentations, exchange programs, and faculty and student research. Thanks to our colleagues, Admin Assistant Jenny Oseen, students, International Office, Arts & Science, and President’s Office for your continued support!

## Asian Studies Courses in Spring 2025

**JPNS 1100 A Beginners' Japanese II & Lab 1**  
CRN 10692/ 10693 Abigail McMeekin  
MTF 12:00 - 12:50 C630

**JPNS 2020 A Intermediate Language II & Lab 1**  
CRN 10694/ 10695 Abigail McMeekin  
MTF 9:00– 9:50 FA W550

**RELS 2010 A The Hindu Tradition** CRN 11702/  
11754 Rutika Gandhi Days/Room TBA

**HIST 3290 A Japan, 1570-1890** CRN 10600  
Gideon Fujiwara TR 13:30-14:45 D631

**RELS 4110 A Zen Buddhism** CRN 11576  
John Harding F 12:00-14:45 D630

## The 2024 winner of the Michael Chan Prize in Asian Studies is Matthew Braisher

for his essay, **"Nationalism, Morale, and Endurance in Various Armies from 1850-1950."** Congratulations!! An MA History student under the supervision of Dr. Kristine Alexander, Matthew is working on a research-based board game on the First World War. He describes, "In this paper, I argue for the importance of nationalism in bolstering wartime morale, providing examples from 1850-1950 in the First Sino-Japanese War, Second World War, Russo-Japanese War, American Civil War, and the First World War. I conclude that while nationalism plays a major role in morale, it is a complicated concept that is influenced by many forces outside of nationalism."

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**Congratulations to Dr. Yeomi Choi (Kinesiology and Physical Education) on the publication of her journal article, "The Olympics, nationalism, and multiculturalism: News coverage of naturalized players in the Korean men's national ice hockey team,"** *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 2023, Vol. 58 (4), 666–684.

[Read the article here](#)



**Northern Lights above Lethbridge, Oct 9, 2024**

**Congratulations to Dr. Bonnie Lee (Faculty of Health Sciences — addictions counselling) for being selected as one of U of L's EDI Scholars for 2024-25!**

Dr. Lee will launch the *Student-generated Quick Cases: EDI Dilemmas from Students' Lived Experience* project. This competition invites upper-level and graduate health sciences students to create "Hollywood-style" vignettes based on their personal experiences with EDI dilemmas. The goal is to generate real-life scenarios for discussion and role-play, helping students explore various perspectives and compiling a valuable resource for future educational use.

"EDI issues are more complex than meet the eye," says Lee. "It's always instructive to consider these dilemmas from the standpoints of the various actors involved. We want to understand why people take the positions they do and get a deeper sense of what they feel inside."



**Chan Prize Winner** (cont'd) ...Our thanks to Dr. Ian MacLachlan and Dr. John Harding for serving this year as co-adjudicators. They comment on the winning essay: "Originally written for HIST 5040 – Nation and Nationalism in East Asia, we were impressed by the breadth and analysis of this wide-ranging discussion of the role of nationalism and morale in times of war." Many thanks to Prof. Bonnie Lee, founder and steward of the Chan Prize, and to the many donors whose generous support continues to recognize and encourage student excellence.

#### **Michael Chan Prize in Asian Studies**

**Value: \$1,000** Michael Wing-Cheung Chan (1952-2001) was a Chinese Canadian scientist and humanitarian known for his brilliance in mathematics and his passion in promoting Canada-Asia understanding. **Eligibility:** Continuing or graduating full-time undergraduate or graduate students in any degree program. Outstanding achievement in a course project or paper on an Asian topic. Submit your project to [gideon.fujiwara@uleth.ca](mailto:gideon.fujiwara@uleth.ca) as an e-mail attachment accompanied by a cover letter.

**Next submissions due Aug 20, 2025.**

Learn more at [Michael Chan Prize](#)

**Left: Autumn colours in the Coulees**





**The U of L hosted the 53<sup>rd</sup> Conference of the International Society for Comparative Study of Civilizations**

May 21-24, 2024. Bringing together an international set of participants from North America, Europe and Asia, the conference theme *Health, Healing and Civilizations* was inspired by Dr. Bonnie Lee from Health Sciences as the Conference Chair. The President of the Society, Lyn Rhodes, deemed this conference to be “a resounding success” with a pre-conference workshop on Indigenous Ways of Healing and a post-conference visit to two UNESCO sites – Heads Smashed in Buffalo Jump. Many of our U of L colleagues contributed to a stellar set of presentations and the field trip, among them were John von Heyking, Gerlinde Metz, Sheila McManus, Jean Baptist-Leca, Gideon Fujiwara, Mark Slomp, Kevin McGeough, Shawn Bubel and Bonnie Lee. Students, past and present, also presented papers and posters, making this an exciting and truly interdisciplinary four-day event!

As a sequel to the connections formed at the conference and those interested in the issues of civilizations at this turning point in human history, the ISCSC is sponsoring the first Online Book Club series (October – March) on the book *From Third World to First* (2002) by Singapore founding prime minister Lee Kuan Yew. The book is a fascinating blend of history, leadership lessons, and geopolitical reflections from one of the 20th century's most influential leaders. For more details, email [bonnie.lee@uleth.ca](mailto:bonnie.lee@uleth.ca). Members and guests welcome!

**Dr. Aki Kinjo is 7th from the left. Credit: Hilary Hulsey**

For the past decade the **U of L** has enjoyed a special partnership with **Gakushuin Women's College (GWC)** in **Tokyo**. A pillar of our ties has been the highly innovative and popular course ASIA 2020 Japan, Asia, and the World which connects professors and students from both universities to learn from one another about our societies and cultures. At the heart of this course is **GWC's Prof. Aki Kinjo**, a business historian, who visited us in May to attend the ISCSC conference and to meet his U of L students and many colleagues for the first time in person. Both Aki and Gideon Fujiwara have been co-teaching this highly interactive course ASIA 2020 this term.

At the conference, Aki presented on a panel on “Japanese state reform, corporate museums and poetry as healing methods” along with Robert Bedeski (UVic), Hitomi Sano (Keio U), and Gideon Fujiwara. Yong-Chool Ha (UWashington) offered comments as discussant. We enjoyed several days of stimulating discussion and sharing laughs.



(Golden Maple cont'd) Many generations in the audience were inspired. There was applause throughout, as well as laughter at the banter between Art and Jesse. Art signed copies of his books while conversing with members from the community.

During their visit, Phil Fontaine, former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations and his partner Kathleen Mahoney, Professor Emerita of the University of Calgary, drove down to see their good friends Art and his wife Keiko. Chief Fontaine and Prof. Mahoney led negotiations of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, and they spoke of how Dr. Miki had shared insights from his experience with Redress which helped inform their negotiations on the settlement over the tragedy of the Residential Schools.

We all toured Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden and the Bunka Centre (pictured to the right).

We appreciated Consul-General of Japan Takehiko Wajima and U of L President Digvir Jayas bringing greetings, and the strong support from our campus and local communities. Our thanks for the generous co-sponsorship from the Southern Alberta Council on Public Affairs, the Nikkei Cultural Society of Lethbridge and Area, Nikkei Memory Capture Project, Centre for Oral History and Tradition, and the University of Lethbridge.

Read more about Art's visit here:  
[Interview of Art Miki](#)

See Chief Fontaine and Prof. Mahoney's recent series, *Understanding Indigenous History* here:

[Episode 1: Understanding Indigenous History](#)



A new interactive exhibit is now available in the Dr. Robert Hironaka Room in the Bunka Centre at the Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. The **"Mel Murakami: Exploring Historical Racism"** exhibit is a collaborative project between the Garden and the Nikkei Memory Capture Project, led by Dr. Darren J. Aoki, Dr. Carly Adams, and their team.

[Mel Murakami Exhibit](#)

**Enjoy the Winter Light Festival at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden**, which runs from late November through February 2025, 4 to 9 pm. See the website in advance for schedule, ticket info, and other details:

[Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden](#)



**Coordinator's Desk:** This edition highlights exciting courses offered in Spring 2025, recent and upcoming events, and success stories of our students and colleagues. Thank you for reading! **More details on our website:**

[Asian Studies at U of L](#)

Email questions to the Coordinator at [gideon.fujiwara@uleth.ca](mailto:gideon.fujiwara@uleth.ca)

U of L Students, are you interested in learning about Asia's societies, cultures, and histories? Want to make your degree international? Considering traveling Asia or pursuing work with ties to Asia?

**If so, declare your Minor in Asian Studies!**

**Required courses:** ASIA 1000 Introduction to Asia plus 5 courses with at least 1 at the 3000/4000 level.

**Consider structuring the Asian Studies Minor into one of the following combinations:**

Major/Minor; Major/Double Minor; or within a General Humanities/Social Science degree. Be creative!