

京都からのインスピレーション

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I attended a program called Kyoto Inspiration from July 1 to July 13, 2019. The program took place in Kyoto, one of the most important cities in Japanese history, and had about twenty participants coming from all around the world. We stayed at Kyoto Seika University and spent most mornings attending lectures about Japanese traditional and popular culture. Most afternoons were spent off-campus, either sightseeing or getting hands-on experience on Japanese arts and culture. The program was conducted in English.



Kyoto Inspiration Participants

Kyoto Inspiration の参加者はほとんど皆、クリエイターだった。コミックス、アニメーション、ゲームデザイン、ファッションデザインなどで活躍している人々が、Inspiration を得に京都に来ていた。リベラルアーツの学生の私と違い、彼らは自分のやりたいことがよく分かっていて、怖がらずに自分の夢へ向かっているようにみえた。Inspiration を与える素晴らしい人達と出会えたのは、良かったと思えない。

Morning Lectures



Lecture on Manga by Sookyung Yoo

Topics included “Three Gates into the Realm of Manga,” “Crafts as a Mirror of Japanese Culture,” “The Spread of Japanese Fashion,” “Why Kyoto’s Gion Matsuri is So Cool,” “What is the Golden Rule in Anime Design?” “Independent Game Development in Kyoto,” and more. Some lecturers were Kyoto

Seika’s faculty. Kyoto Seika University specialized in arts and design and was best known for its Faculty of Manga.

Afternoon activities



Noh Workshop with Matsuno Hiroyuki

Activities included Noh dances and costumes, tea ceremony at Totousha, enjoying Kamishibai, Zen meditation, making Japanese sweets, test-pulling of Gion festival floats, and more. There were trips to places like Entsuji

Temple garden, Kyoto International Manga Museum, Sanjusangendo Temple, Fushimi-Inari Grand Shrine, Kinkaku-ji, and Ninna-ji.

Evenings were mostly free. Many people used these times to explore the Kyoto downtown and have fun.

Temple Stay



(Left) State of the Room Before We Left, (Right) Dinner at Ninna-ji

The highlight of the program for me was the ryokan stay at Ninna-ji. I got to wear a yukata, eat Japanese-style dinner and breakfast, enter a bath where everyone was naked, sleep on a futon in a six-person room and wake up to do Buddhist chanting. It was fun.

Kurama



(Left) Tengu Statue in Kurama, (Right) Beautiful Scenery in Kurama

Another highlight was Kurama in the north of Kyoto. It was not included in the program schedule, but my friends and I came here during our free time. The scenery was beautiful, and I went in an onsen where everyone was naked. It was an interesting experience.

Afterthought

It was my first time in Japan, and this program served as a perfect introduction for me. Kyoto was a beautiful, historic city with inspiring arts and culture. Through the context of this city, I learned about traditional Japanese culture and popular Japanese culture which I had always been interested in. I also made a lot of good friends with similar interests which made the trip even more memorable. There were still so many places in Japan left for me to explore. This trip to Japan would not be my last.



The Famous Gion Matsuri in Kyoto