

OBJECTively

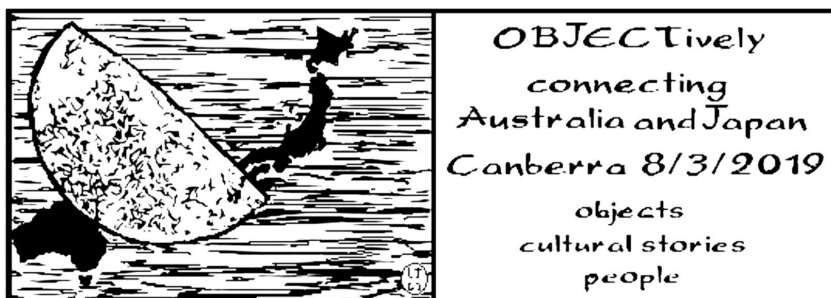


Australian
National
University

ANU COLLEGE OF
ASIA & THE PACIFIC

EDITED BY
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CONNECTING
AUSTRALIA AND
JAPAN: OBJECTS,
CULTURAL
STORIES, PEOPLE







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INTRODUCTION

Veronica Taylor

Objects as a mode of exchange, and their power to connect and transform people, is not a new idea. In OBJECTively we bring that perspective to the Japan–Australia relationship, with some inspiration from the British Museum’s ‘A History of the World in 100 Objects’.

We wanted our objects to be animated by the stories of their creation, acquisition or sharing. At the symposium that formed the basis of these essays, we asked speakers to do something very intimate—to share a material object and speak about why it is precious to them. Those conversations crossed generational, disciplinary and geographic divides. We heard about an Australia–Japan collaboration in poetry translation project and, in the same conversation, the story of an Australia–Japan race to strengthen native bee populations against a destructive disease.

In the following pages we encounter a Japanese high-powered telescope located on the island of Hawai‘i; the largest art glass installation in Japan; the sacred site Uluru; and exquisite objects such as lithographs and Australia’s most important private collection of Japanese lacquerware intro.

We also celebrate those who make, curate, collect or appraise these items. The symposium keynote speakers, Doug Hall AM; Professor Kazue Nakamura; Lesley J. Kehoe and Ryuhei Nadatani reflected on how they have intermediated Japan and Australia for different audiences. Other contributors spoke movingly about the life-changing moment of encountering the object of their passion.

We are delighted to share these personal histories with you in this format, and in doing so, uncover the hidden lives of both extraordinary and everyday objects that have shaped engagement between Australia and Japan.

Professor Veronica Taylor
Director, ANU Japan Institute
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AMBASSADOR TAKAHASHI'S ADDRESS

This collection, which grew out of the OBJECTively symposium I had the pleasure of attending on 8 March 2019, is a chance to explore, discuss and celebrate the uniquely close Japan–Australia relationship through art, science and culture. Discussions of our bilateral relationship often focus on our robust trade and economic ties as well as the cordial and long-lasting people-to-people linkages. However, as this collection demonstrates, the relationship between Japan and Australia has evolved into a deeper and multifaceted one. It is a relationship that goes beyond traditional ties to now include collaboration and exchange through art, science and culture. This collection is an unprecedented opportunity that will enable us to analyse and reflect on how tangible elements from our respective cultures have taken root in our everyday life; how different cultures can intertwine and fuse together; and how significant this is for the Japan–Australia relationship. The insight gained through this collection will no doubt enrich existing and emerging discourses on the cultural relationship between our two countries. I trust that the readers will enjoy learning from each author what special object for them embodies a connection between Japan and Australia.

Reiichiro Takahashi
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Australia



