



The magazine of The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan



NUMBER 1 SHIMBUN

October 2018 • Volume 50 • No. 10

Club with a View (and the final floor plans)



Parade from the Past
Remembering the move
to Yurakucho

Rumor Roundup
Alternative facts
about the new Club

Yoshiki's Battles
X Japan rocker
speaks out



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THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS' CLUB OF JAPAN

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- 1) Certificate may be issued for any new member whose application is received by the FCCJ office and whose membership is paid-in-full immediately after membership confirmation. 2) Only one certificate per new member will be issued. In case of multiple claims, reward may be split.
- 3) Certificate may be redeemed at Pen & Quill Dining Room, Main Bar and Masukomi Sushi Bar during the campaign period. 4) Certificate cannot be credited to member's account and is valid for one use only. 5) Any unused portion of the value is non-refundable. The certificate holder is liable for any amount consumed in excess of the value of the certificate.
- 6) Certificate valid for 6 months and is non-transferable.

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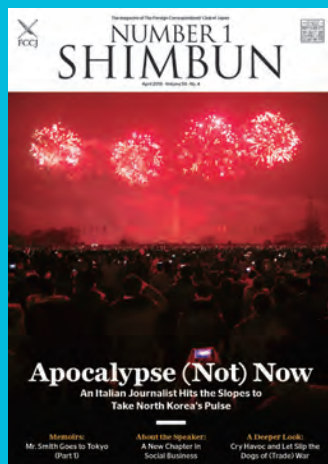
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From the President

Dear members,

In the absence of President Peter Langan and First Vice President Abby Leonard, I am writing the last President's Message to be issued from the Yurakucho Denki Building, home to the FCCJ since February 1976.

On Oct. 26, we begin the move into our new home on the 5th and 6th floors of the Marunouchi Nijubashi Building. Although we will lose our bird's-eye view of the Yurakucho cityscape and the Imperial Palace grounds, we trust the ambience of the famed Nakadori, as well as all the benefits of a spanking new facility, will more than compensate.

It is with great nostalgia that I write this, given the many memorable events that have taken place here (particularly as I was front row witness to many of them). Among the famous individuals who visited were Muhammad Ali, Gina Lollabrigida, Ronald Reagan, Willie Nelson, a young and surprisingly articulate Donald Trump, actor Roger Moore of 007 fame and assorted Nobel laureates and heads of state too numerous to mention. Among Japanese, some of the most influential people in the nation gave press conferences here, including Shintaro Ishihara, Hideki Matsui, figure skaters Mao Asada and Yuzuru Hanyu, actor Ken Watanabe, Tokyo governor-to-be Yuriko Koike, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, animation film director Hayao Miyazaki, and a host of others. Donald Richie and Ed Seidensticker introduced filmmaking and literary giants like Akira Kurosawa and Yasunori Kawabata, respectively.

Many members, I'm sure, remember the huge photograph of Marilyn Monroe in her birthday suit that occupied a wall in the old Stag Bar. There were villains, too: The Aum cult made several appearances at press conferences at the Club, pleading their innocence in the sarin attack of March 20, 1995, and

accusing the government of targeting them because of their religious beliefs. And there was grace: One great moment in our "*Denki Jidai*" took place on Nov. 29, 1985, when the Crown Prince and Princess Michiko danced together at the Club's 40th anniversary party in the Capital Tokyo Hotel.

During the Bubble Era, the world could not get enough news on Japan, and the journalists who frequented the FCCJ were in great demand - among them too many fascinating and diverse characters to name here. In the post-bubble era, however, as the Japanese juggernaut slowed and China's economic clout grew, the dawn of digitalization and the decline of print journalism, combined with yet another financial crisis in 2008, proved to be the kiss of death for many foreign bureaus and their reporters. Illustrious names such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, *US News and World Report*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Los Angeles Times* and the big TV networks: CBS, ABC and NBC downsized or closed their doors entirely, as a global readjustment in the news gathering industry transpired.

As the Yurakucho era comes to a close, we look forward to adding new and glorious

Press Freedom News:

Myanmar's Government Takes a Big Step Backward

by KIMBERLEY PHILLIPS

The conviction of two local Reuters reporters in Yangon, Myanmar, last month ignited protests in major cities and attracted scorching condemnation from foreign embassies and NGO's.

Wa Lone, 32, and Kyaw Soe Oo, 28, were arrested in December 2017, during their investigation into the military massacre of 10 Rohingya men at the height of the crisis that has plagued Rakhine State. On Sept. 3, after a nine-month trial, the pair were convicted under the colonial-era State Secrets Act and sentenced to seven years' jail time with hard labor.

Immediately after the ruling, 83 local organizations, including media groups and human rights activists, released a letter calling for their release and slamming the Aung San Suu Kyi-led government. The administration was accused of backsliding on press freedoms that had been expanded during the preceding quasi-civilian Thein Sein administration.

"We take this as a crackdown on the rights of access to information and media freedom, and an oppressive gesture towards all concerned people of Myanmar who aspire to build a society characterized by the rule of law, accountability, freedom and justice," the statement read.

Support for the pair is strong among local journalists, who say the verdict will have a chilling effect on investigative reporters. Freelance photojournalist Tin Htet Paing fears the police may target her and her work, saying, "Personally, it scares me. I try to be more secretive and cautious now."

She pointed to evidence against the Reuters duo that was cited by the ruling judge - the presence of ethnic army members' contacts in the two journalists' phones. The use of such "evidence," she believes, means that any reporter could now be targeted.

Outraged journalists launched an #ArrestMeToo campaign on social media shortly after the shock verdict was announced. The online campaign statement reads: "If a journalist was

arrested for the data and phone numbers they collected... arrest me too."

Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo's detainment and subsequent trial had become a landmark press freedom case under the National League for Democracy government. Observers expected the NLD government would prioritize press freedom, particularly given that many are former political prisoners, writers and poets. It was those credentials that helped propel the former opposition party to its landslide victory in 2015.

Reporter Aye Naing, who was arrested with two colleagues in 2017 after covering a drug burning ceremony held by the Ta'ang National Liberation Army, says journalists were safer under former president Thein Sein, who abolished newspaper censorship and ushered in the freest media climate in decades.

"Under the U Thein Sein government, Myanmar opened to the world, and foreign journalists could enter the country," he said. "The world praised the previous government. It did the right thing. And we expected press



chapters to our history in our new Marunouchi location. Stay tuned.

In other news, here are some highlights from the latest board meeting of Sept. 6, as provided by FCCJ Secretary Daniel Hurst:

The board endorsed our five-year business plan and action schedule so that the club has a clear direction for planning purposes. It moved forward with a review of membership categories and associated issues (the details will be refined at next month's meeting and then the proposal will be put to members for a decision). The board also approved a plan to build new mailboxes at the new premises and dealt with a few other details related to the move. Finally, by majority vote, the board approved plans to begin posting on a bulletin board in the club the names of members who are four months or more in arrears on their accounts. Members will be encouraged to talk to the club about any special circumstances that should be taken into account; and the board must authorize each time names are to be posted.

● Robert Whiting – 2nd Vice President

freedom would improve under the NLD government because we believed in our [the NLD] leaders. In fact, it has not been what we expected."

Both Aye Naing and Tin Htet Paing maintain that the government has wrongly charged domestic media with failing to protect the country's reputation. Deputy Information Minister Aung Hla Tun – himself a former Reuters correspondent – has frequently cited "safeguarding" the national image as a priority for reporters.

But Tin Htet Paing says Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo's actions are proof they are committed to Myanmar. "They did what they did because they care about this crisis, they care about wrongdoings that should not be allowed to continue," she said.

Reflecting on Minister Aung Hla Tun's warnings, Aye Naing went further: "If a journalist discloses a truth, it does not mean that they are betraying Myanmar. Disclosing the truth is good for the country. If journalists give priority to the truth, the country will project a good image to the rest of the world."

● **Kimberley Phillips** is a freelance multimedia journalist based in Yangon, Myanmar.

On the Road to the White House



Then U.S. Vice-President George H. W. Bush being introduced at a Club press conference by FCCJ President Ed Reingold of *Time* magazine on April 24, 1982. Bush would again visit Japan as president in January of 1992, when he would make headlines following an acute case of intestinal flu that caused him to vomit in the lap of Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa at a state dinner (see pages 324-5 of our history book).

by CHARLES POMEROY

George Herbert Walker Bush was born on June 12, 1924, in Milton, Massachusetts, and married Barbara Pierce of Rye, New York, while he was still in the U.S. Navy. His rise to fame, which began in WWII as a Navy pilot fighting Japanese forces in the Pacific, was boosted over two post-war decades as he became a millionaire in the oil business. Transitioning into politics, he became a Republican Congressman in 1966, but lost a bid for the Senate in 1970. That effort, however, was rewarded by his being named U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. in 1971, where he served until recruited by Nixon in 1973

to become Chairman of the Republican National Committee during the Watergate scandal. In 1974 he was chosen to head the Liaison Office to the People's Republic of China, effectively acting as "ambassador" during a time when the U.S. still maintained formal relations with the Republic of China on Taiwan.

Bush was passed over as a candidate for the vice-presidency in 1976, and instead

became head of the CIA from January of that year until January of 1977. Then, after several years spent in business and academic roles as well as a director on the Council of Foreign Relations, he failed in his bid in 1980 to become the Republican nominee for President – instead becoming the vice-presidential running mate of the winner, Ronald Reagan. They won, and he went on to serve two terms as U.S. Vice-President from 1981 to 1989. Bush went on to win the presidency in 1989, and served one four-year term, being succeeded by Democrat Bill Clinton in 1993.

Of Bush's six children—four sons and two daughters—George W. and Jeb eventually became governors of Texas and Florida respectively, with George W. becoming the 43rd U.S. president in 2001. In addition to receiving many awards

and honors, the elder Bush set a number of records, including the longest marriage of a U.S. President of 73 years, that ended with the death of wife Barbara on April 17, 2018. He continues to be the longest-living former president at the age of 94.

● **Charles Pomeroy** is editor of *Foreign Correspondents in Japan*, a history of the club that is available at the front desk.

66
He continues
to be the longest-
living former
president at the
age of 94.
99

Total Recall

A personal look back at the Club's last move, which took place some 42 years ago.

by GEOFFREY TUDOR

Vietnam fell in April 1975, and with it came the return of many regular members who had been sent to cover the conflict. At the elections in June, the pugnacious Alvin "Al" Cullison finally succeeded in his bid for president, promising a more active Club, with an improved library, weekend operations, better promotion of events and brighter uniforms for the staff.

But a bombshell suddenly burst. The landlords, Mitsubishi Estate, wanted the Club to give up its space in the Chiyoda Annex Building for another client, and eventually offered alternative space on top of their new 20-story Yurakucho Denki Building. They sweetened the offer with a package of low rent, free furniture and other benefits... including spectacular views over the Imperial Palace grounds in one direction and the fabled Ginza in another.

Intense debate followed. There were loud voices against a move to the 20th floor, claiming that lunch business would suffer, as the club had always been a street-level 'walk-in' operation. Even the prospect of new hi-tech hi-speed elevators was unconvincing to some. But in October 1975 a GMM voted in favor of the Denki Building and plans were drawn up for the move. It was scheduled for Feb. 2, 1976, less than six months after Mitsubishi's announcement.

Early February is usually the coldest part of the year in Tokyo and the morning of the move was no exception. It was also cloudy, windy and wet; hardly the weather for a carnival pro-



Piper Eric Von Hurst and drummer Richard Beere led the parade.



Former presidents John Roderick (AP), John Rich (NBC), Mak Chrysler (USN&WR), and Max Desfor (AP) led the parade.

cession, but that did not deter a bunch of some 50 FCCJ stalwarts, regular members, associates and staff, from holding a celebratory march from the old Club premises to its brand new home.

The ancient Gods of Japan smiled on the FCCJ that day and just before the noon procession got underway, out came the sun to cast some watery but welcome light on the happy band of celebrants as the column made its way down Nakadori to the Club's fourth location in its then 30 years of existence.

The connection between 'Scotland the Brave' and the FCCJ was not entirely apparent but ace bagpiper Eric Von Hurst and his drummer colleague Richard Beere led the gala parade, wrote 'A Monkey's Uncle', the curious nom de plume of the *Number One Shimbun* scribe who covered the event.

Immediately behind the piper and drummer came FCCJ 'indignitaries' such as Max Desfor, Mack Chrysler, John Roderick, John Rich, Lee Chia and Al Cullison, bearing the Club's banner and holding high the Club's brass nameplate, for installation at the new premises.

As I recall from my location at the rear, the whole march took about 15 minutes, as the shrill notes of the pipes and the crisp rattle of the snare drum pierced the ears of the rather thin crowd of bemused Marunouchi salarimen



The cocktail party at the new club: Mas Ogawa (Japan Times), Yoshi Kawakita, Johnny Fujii (Fairchild), Ben Schranil, Jim Phillips and George Vajda.

and office ladies, only slightly distracted by the spectacle as they made their own march to lunch.

With the piper's tune changing to what may have been "Whyte and Mackay's Lament", the happy band entered the Denki Building by the ground floor entrance and made for the 20th floor and their new home.

The moaning of the naysayers and the fears of those who foresaw rot and ruin for the Club was quickly put to rest. The hi-tech hi-speed elevators whisked members and guests in safety and comfort. On the club's first day of business in the Denki Building, the Main Bar overflowed, while the Dining Room (now the Pen and Quill), served a record 276 customers.

● **Geoffrey Tudor** writes for *Orient Aviation*, Hong Kong.



The Schedule of the Move to the New Premises

These are the dates members should keep in mind when planning visits to the FCCJ - both at the old location and the new one.

<p>Tues., Oct. 16: The FCCJ takes possession of the facility in the new building. It will not be open to members or public.</p>	<p>Tues., Oct. 16 – Fri., Oct. 26: Completion of outstanding construction tasks, such as installation of phone lines, security systems, kitchen facilities and other items.</p>	<p>Tues., Oct. 16 – Fri., Oct. 26: Limited numbers of people will be invited to view the premises, test menu items, and prepare for events such as the gala opening.</p>
<p>Fri., Oct. 26: Last event at the Yurakucho Denki Bldg. premises, a correspondents' lunch.</p>	<p>Fri., Oct. 26, 15:00: Commencement of the move.</p>	<p>Fri., Oct. 26 – Sun., Oct. 28: The move will take place over this weekend.</p>
<p>Mon., Oct. 29: A soft open for lunch. During the soft open, the new Club will continue to operate with a limited menu as fine tuning continues.</p>	<p>Thurs., Nov. 8: The first official banquet at the new premises, and the beginning of full-scale Club operations. Members should keep in mind that the move is a huge operation and staff will be adapting to the new facilities.</p>	<p>Thurs., Nov. 22: The Gala Opening Party, a stand-up reception for members and guests.</p>

Some Popular Rumors (or make up some of your own)

A few of the rumors that we have heard about the new Club over the last year, which we can categorically state are false.

It is not true . . .

That the Club will close at 9pm, meaning fewer guests, meaning less revenue, meaning the Club will go out of business.

That books in the library will only be digital.

That work spaces will be equipped only with manual typewriters.

That Associate Members must stay in the "Economy Class" section of the Main Bar, with a menu limited to microwaved items.

That there will be a hot yoga room.

That a full-time employee will be stationed on the 20th floor of the Yurakucho Denki Building for six months to lead lost and confused members to the new location.

That there will be deluxe sleeping quarters for inebriated members.

That the Wi-fi connection will be directly connected to the Foreign Ministry.

That the menu will be vegetarian only.

That there will be no vegetarian choices on the menu.

That in order to maintain their status, all Regular Members must, while drunk, tell three stories about close calls with authorities to 5 Associate Members without any of the latter falling asleep or walking away.

That the restrooms are somewhere in Saitama Prefecture.

That the new Club is somewhere in Saitama Prefecture.

10

Things to Know About the New Premises

Among the many new and improved facilities for use by Club members, the new Club location will feature:

1. 2 Discounted Parking Spaces for use by members, along with 5 bicycle parking spaces
2. Dedicated elevators from Parking area and 1st floor
3. Underground access from all nearby subway stations
4. Accessible restrooms to accommodate people with physical disabilities
5. Use of a Sports gym nearby
6. IC chip in membership card
7. A balcony terrace
8. Almost twice as many (and bigger) work spaces
9. Studio for audio recording and small photography work
10. 4 taps at the bar for craft beers



Feature

5F



Welcome to the Club:

A GUIDE TO THE FACILITIES AT THE NEW FCCJ PREMISES

At the time of going to press, much of the interior work has been done, but work on the details and operations is still underway. Here, we offer the most up-to-date look at the new premises along with a map of the various facilities that will be available for Club members and their guests.

1. Dedicated elevators

Two dedicated elevators will connect the Club to the Parking and Lobby levels. The building is also connected underground to all nearby subway stations (Mita, Yurakucho, Hibiya, Chiyoda and Ginza lines), as well as to an underground passage that leads to Tokyo Station and Otemachi.

2. Entrance

The Reception Desk will be immediately visible to visitors exiting the elevators, where members and guests will be greeted by the familiar faces of the FCCJ Reception staff. Comfortable seating and a selection of publications will also be available. Unlike the previous facilities, the Club will also have a dedicated coat check area.

3. Reception

The Reception area will feature four television screens broadcasting a selection of news stations. The right-hand side of the area will have digital screens highlighting the daily and upcoming schedule of events held in the function rooms.

4. PAC Office

The PAC Office will be located next to the Reception area to allow PAC staff to be immediately available to Regular Members and featured speakers.

5. Storage Room

This is one of two major storage locations in the Club (the other being on the 6th floor).

6. Heritage Hallway

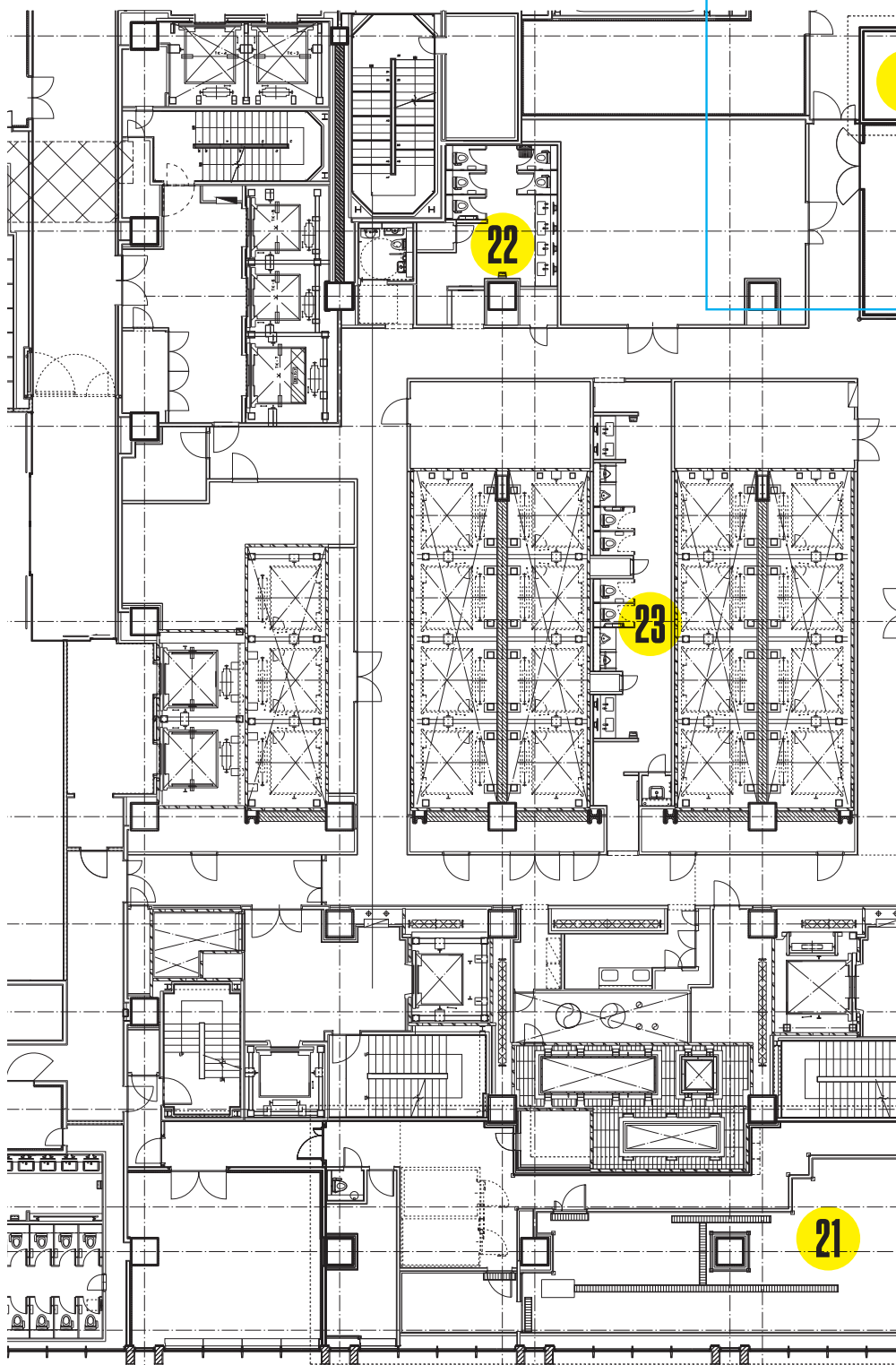
This space will greet members and guests with images and mementoes from the history of the Club. Tokiko Shinoda's historic artwork will be displayed at the junction of the Heritage and Gallery hallways.

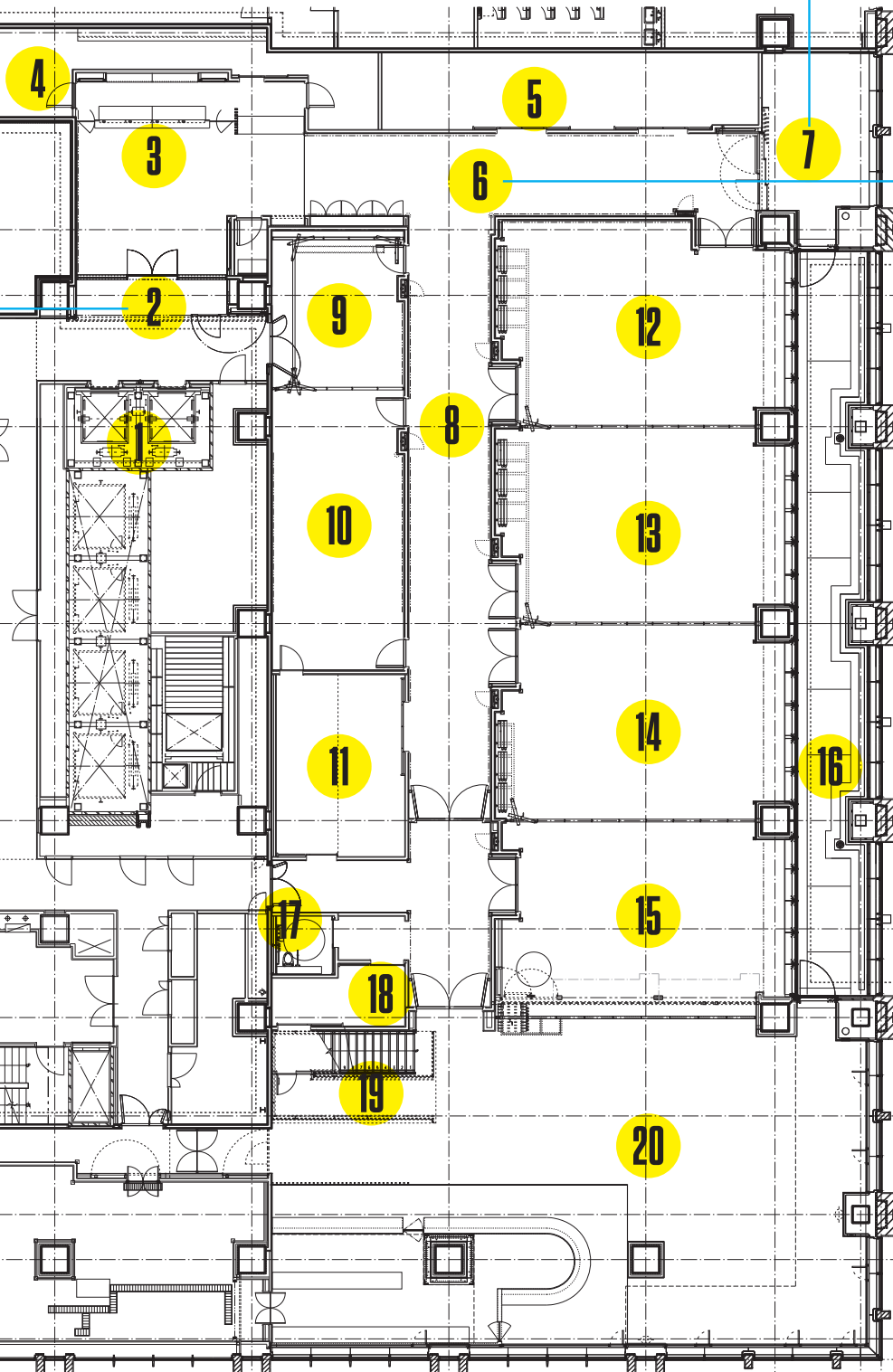
7. VIP Room

For hosting VIP speakers prior to their attendance at press events. This is also intended for use as a private dining room, and meeting room for seminars, etc. It is expected to be a popular room that can be used, for example, as a seminar/meeting room in the afternoon, and transform into a dining room for the attendees, with direct access to the balcony.

8. Gallery Hallway

This hallway features images meaningful to the Club as well as exhibitions of artwork from contemporary artists and photographers, and retrospective exhibitions of FCCJ photos.





9. Seminar Room 1

For use in holding smaller events, such as meetings, interviews, etc. Also for use in high security cases, for luminaries to be able to enter directly from the elevator. This room can also be joined with Seminar Room 2 to create a larger space.

10. Seminar Room 2

11. Pantry

This space has been designed to support food and drink service to functions and events up and down the Gallery Hallway.

12. Function Room 1

The four flexible function rooms can be rearranged to a variety of specifications, capable of holding events of all sizes. With all four rooms in use, up to 220 people can be comfortably accommodated, more for standing cocktail reception.

13. Function Room 2

14. Function Room 3

15. Function Room 4/ Pen & Quill Dining Room

When not needed for functions, this will be the fine dining area of the FCCJ, known as the "Pen & Quill." It is currently envisioned as being open to the Main Bar to create a lively "place to be seen."

16. Balcony Terrace

In comfortable weather, this terrace space will be open for members to enjoy some fresh air and a pleasant view of the Marunouchi business area with the Imperial Palace gardens in the distance. Weather proof garden furniture is being newly purchased for this space.

17. Accessible Toilet

To accommodate people with physical disabilities.

18. Storage Room

19. Stairway to 6th Floor

A distinctive grand stairway will lead up to the 6th floor library, Masukomi sushi bar and administrative offices.

20. Main Bar

The most popular area of the Club, the bistro-style Main Bar will feature a curved bar, floor-to-ceiling windows, black and white tiled flooring and the comfortable chairs and bar stools from the previous Club, refurbished and reupholstered to all their historic glory. There are 4 taps at the bar for craft beers. The horse shoe-shaped bar has been designed for guests to have views of outside and of friends and colleagues in the seating area. It is intended to be a more useful and lively bar space. The flooring in the Main Bar is a combination of tile formations, with wood flooring around the bar.

21. Kitchen

22. Women's Washroom

Like the previous Club, the washrooms (other than the accessible one) will be outside the premises. The floorplate in the new building is much larger than the previous building, so the public restrooms are further away.

23. Men's Washroom



6F

1. Stairway from 5th Floor

2. Entrance

This is the main junction for the 6th floor, which offers access to the library lounge area, the stacks, the studio, the administrative offices and the Masukomi Sushi restaurant.

3. Librarian's Office

4. Library

5. Library stacks

The custom-made library stacks are glass-enclosed to protect people with book dust allergies, and are able to hold all the books from the previous library.

6. Workroom

The new workroom is larger than the previous club and features 20 spaces, almost twice as many as formerly. The work space desks are wider and deeper to accommodate the use of computers, phones, tablets, etc.

7. Soundproof phone booths

Soundproof booths for privacy when using phones, Skype and other audio work.

8. Masukomi Sushi Restaurant

The renowned restaurant serves its popular menu items from new premises here on the 6th floor.

9. Studio

Soundproof studio for audio recording, video and interviews.

10. Administration Back Office

All administration functions except for the PAC office have been centralized in this space.

11 & 12. Storage Rooms

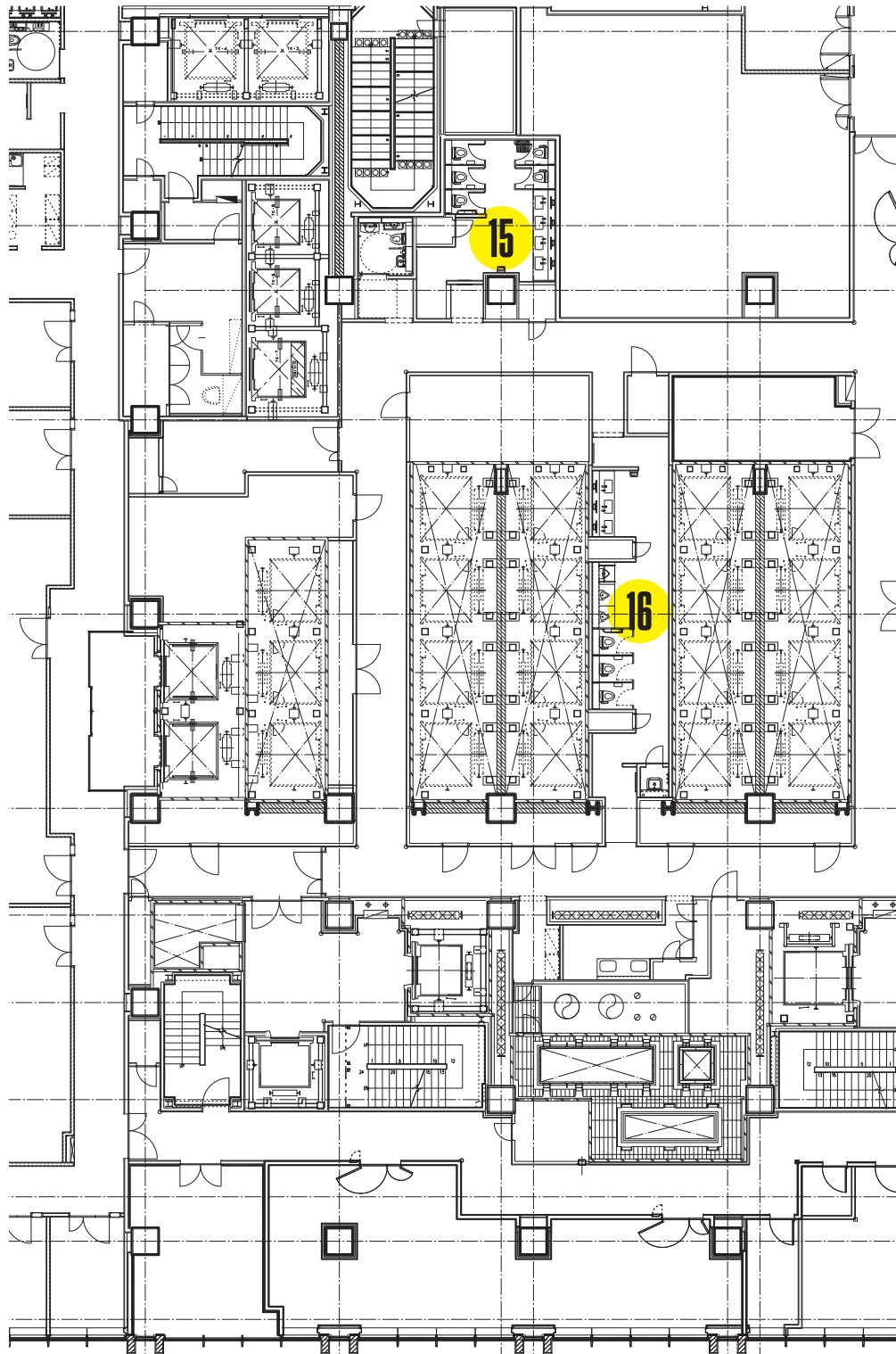
13. Women's Changing Room

14. Employee Cafeteria

15. Women's Restroom

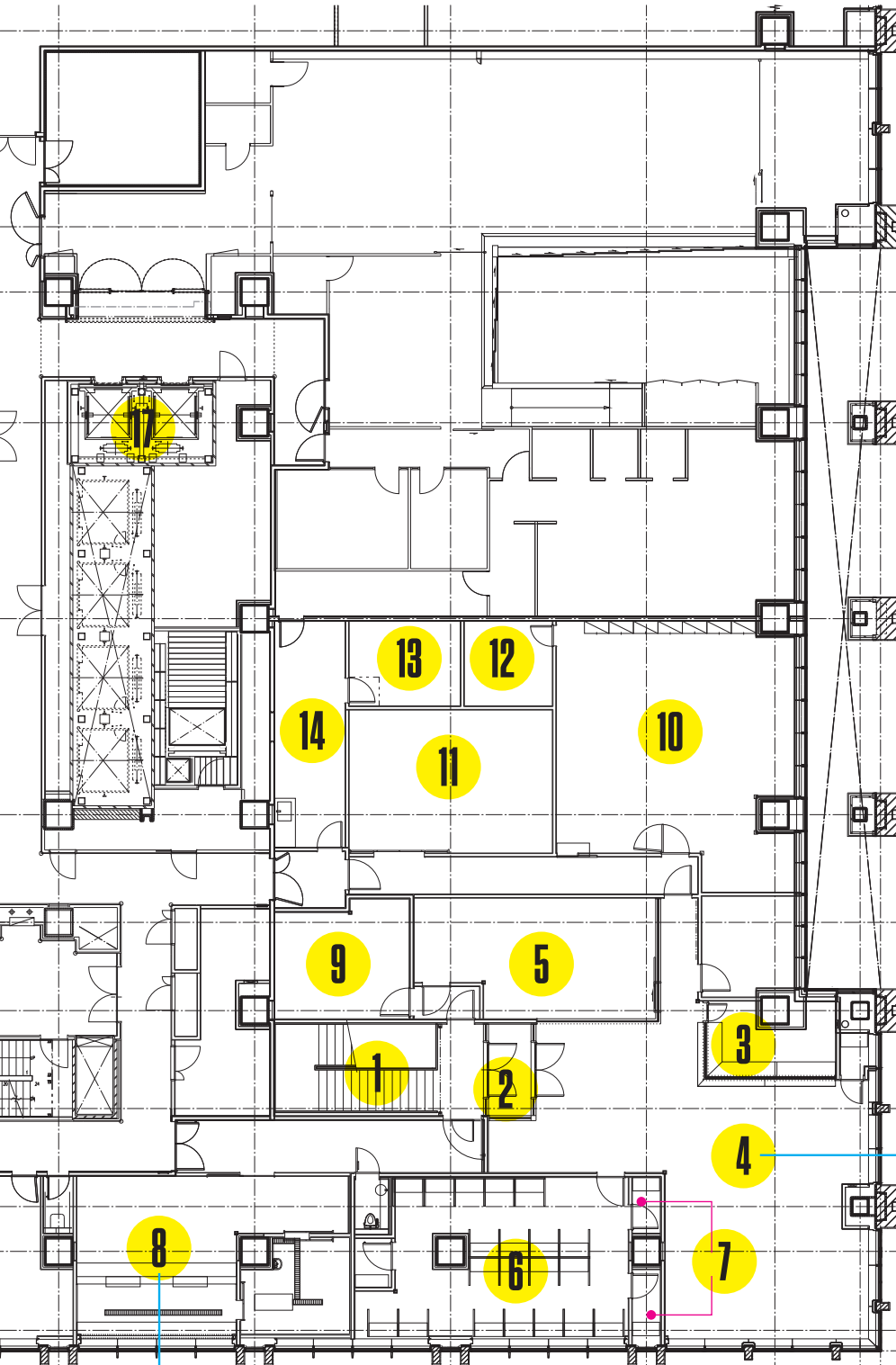
16. Men's Restroom

17. Dedicated Elevators



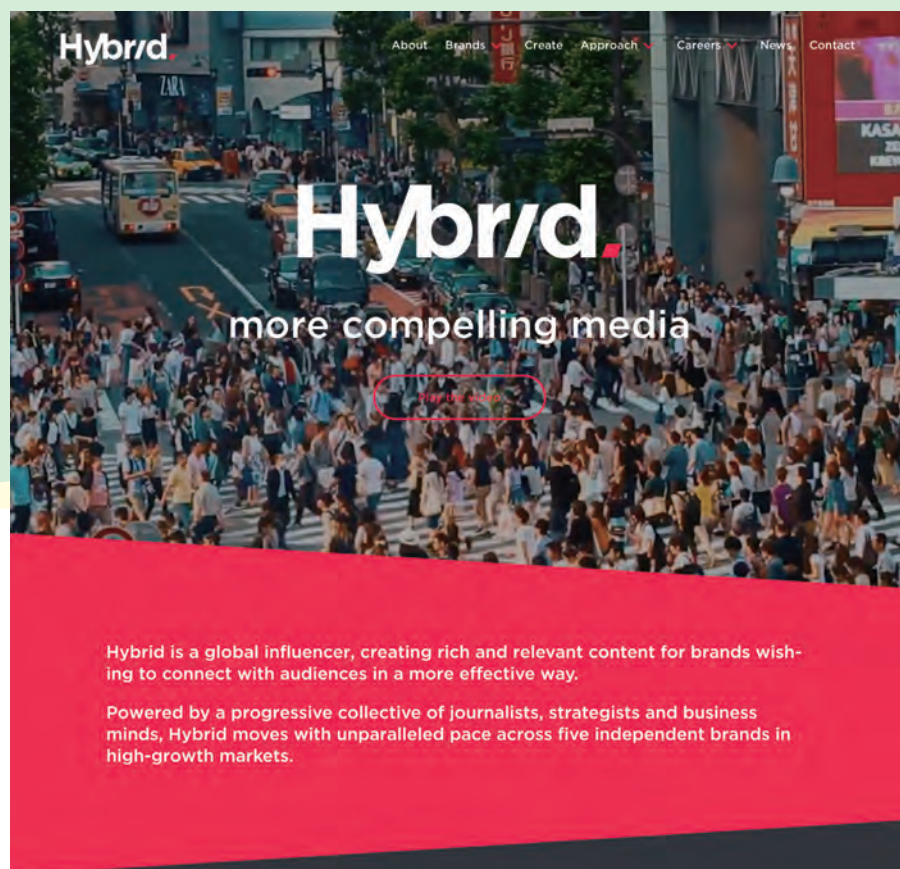
Off-site Services, New and Improved

- There are two parking spaces in the basement Parking Area dedicated to FCCJ members, available at a discount rate.
- Five bicycle parking spaces will be available for those members who choose to pedal their way to the Club. It is possible to increase the number to 10, if there is a demand for more.
- Members are also welcome to use the Tipness Marunouchi Style fitness club, located across the street from the Club on the 4th floor of the Marunouchi Brick Building.



The Marunouchi Nijubashi Building
2-3, Marunouchi 3-chome
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo




<https://hybrid.co>

Hybrid Goes Hyper

by SHAN WANG

An Asian company of targeted news sites recently passed 10 million unique visitors per month – and it's profitable

Which comes first, the readers or the content?

The sites in the portfolio of the modest media company Hybrid have been exacting about matching specific audiences to relevant news and information, and relevant advertisers to those relevant readers. It's a strategy that's easier said than done, but it's been executed faithfully across all Hybrid's news sites.

"We saw an opening in Asia, where it seemed like there was a mixing pot of individual bloggers saying what they wanted to say, in the middle of a lot of mainstream media that was at the time – and still is – owned by rich people who

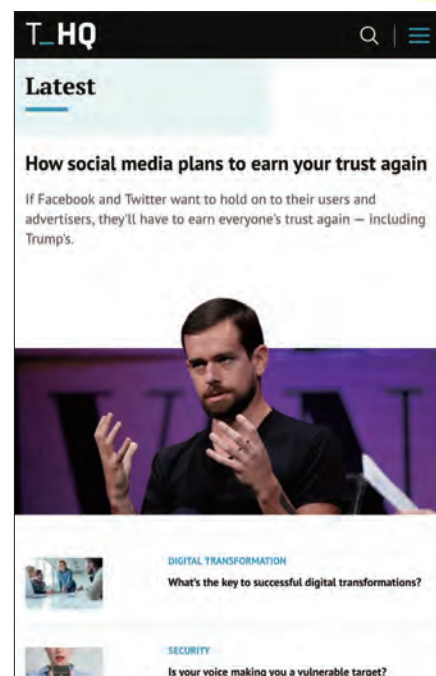
wanted influence. What started as a blogging project got bigger," James Craven, Hybrid's managing director, said. "We had a vision for a young, upwardly mobile audience, who we'd try to inform with independent and hopefully compelling content." Craven, who grew up in Australia, has lived and worked across Asia, the U.K., and the U.S.

Asian Correspondent – the original site in Hybrid's collection, focused on news and current affairs (e.g., "Everything you need to know about the Cambodian election") – launched in 2009 and continues to reach a primarily Asian audience that is concentrated in 14 countries in the region.

"We thought it was banks who'd knock on our doors to advertise, but it was universities – the University of Queensland, the University of New South Wales – that were trying to reach this international student diaspora. It helped us to find our desired target: A young 18-to-35-year-old audience, from undergrad to postgrad, uncovering a whole niche we didn't think existed from a commercial perspective," Craven said.

Study International spun up a few years later, providing news, university and visa information, and advice for a more dispersed global audience of students who study abroad ("Trump travel ban: What will happen to international students' visa status?"). Then came *Travel Wire Asia*, which covers buzzy stories on travel and lifestyle in the Asia-Pacific, attracting a majority of its readers from outside Asia. *Tech Wire Asia*, which followed, covers tech and business in the region, and reaches professional audiences in major hubs like Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Taipei, and Tokyo.

Hybrid's newest site, *Tech HQ*, first launched in beta earlier this year and is the company's first site focused on a majority U.S. readership. In aggregate, the sites have passed 10 million unique visitors "consistently in the last six months," according to Craven.


<https://techhq.com/latest-tech/>

The company currently consists of about 65 people spread across its three offices: Bristol in the U.K., Kuala Lumpur, and Sydney. It'll grow to about 80 by the end of the year, Craven said. The staff is split roughly into thirds – editorial, product and analytics, and advertising and campaigns. A single editor-in-chief, Clara Chooi, oversees the journalists for all five sites, most of whom are based in Kuala Lumpur. Each site has about four to five dedicated writers. *Asian Correspondent* publishes eight to twelve articles per day; *Study International* around six to eight; *Tech Wire Asia*, five, *Travel Wire*, three to six, and *Tech HQ*, four to five. The

sites sometimes cross-publish. Most stories across the sites aren't exactly robust features or investigations, though they aren't all pure aggregation either.

The process is by now well oiled: Monday meetings that bring in the analytics team to discuss high-performing stories and why they succeeded, updating leaderboards that rank by unique readers and pageviews, daily numbers for the writers to aim for, and occasional branded content assignments – if the branded content team is overwhelmed. The team leans on monitoring tools like NewsWhip Spike, and a “campaign hub” developed by Hybrid’s chief digital officer Chris Cammann, which tracks how both editorial and sponsored content pieces are performing across the web.

“We actually give our writers as much exposure as possible and let them see what makes the money and what drives readership. They’re all very versatile, able to write tech, travel, and politics,” Chooi said. “And maybe I am blessed with a very good team, but any competition is healthy, and I don’t see anyone chasing clicks. I know sometimes giving people numbers can be crippling, that it encourages someone to write for popularity. If I ever hear ideas or see copy that is anywhere near being too much like low-hanging fruit, we’ll walk it through together.”

What the writers are chasing exactly, varies site to site, as does how readers come to the site. *Asian Correspondent* sees the most direct traffic and a high proportion of regular, loyal visitors “who come to check up on what’s happening in the news, not just one story,” according to Cammann. *TravelWire*

is, unsurprisingly, more driven by social referrals; *Study International* gets social and organic traffic; *TechWire* is a mix. (Judging from CrowdTangle, these sites’ Facebook pages have, like everyone else’s pages, seen marked declines in interactions in the past few months: “We definitely started monitoring after the algorithm change, but we didn’t see too much of a change in terms of traffic coming from Facebook,” Cammann said.)

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We’re not going to hire 50 reporters and a whole video crew and pump in all these resources and not have the revenue to support it.”

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“We look at whether stories get actual engagement: time on page, bounce rate, will a reader come back to us organically afterwards, are they engaging with our social platforms outside of any targeting, are they really reading the content on the site, or can we tell they just have the tab open?” Cammann said. “*TravelWire* can be more fickle, by the nature of travel. Sometimes the trigger is more image-based, or they might have an interest in a location that brings them to the site, and then they skim through other posts we have. It would be different from a piece on *Study International*, that’s, say, an extensive guide about applying to an American university, which is something that would be read again and again and again.”

The recent Malaysian election, Chooi said, put their editorial strategy to the test. “Hundreds of publications around the world were parking themselves here, with their reporters, TV crews, videographers,” Chooi said. “Since the elections were mostly *Asian Correspondent*-related, I couldn’t even take all the Asia-based journalists on our team to cover the races. And we have 220 parliamentary seats.”

Instead, Chooi divided the newsroom into six teams, one of which stayed in the office while other reporters went out to interview

voters and cover specific seats (they scheduled some stories for the other Hybrid sites in advance). *Asian Correspondent* then ran a liveblog that everyone on its editorial team had access to; the team based at the office helped with editing and publishing. Later in the day, the writers scoured other news coverage and social media activity from other journalists, politicians, NGOs, and voters to supplement the live blog.

“I think we were the second highest Google search in the morning. It showed us that even if you’re a tiny newsroom, you can still cover a big event like this comprehensively,” Chooi said. “Our strategy lets us pretty much cover every topic we want to cover.”

Choi said she has aspirations for longer stories (particularly for *Asian Correspondent*) which currently require more reporting time away from the day-to-day tasks than its sites can spare, as well as bigger trend reports on, say, migration of students and mobility. Reviving video and trying podcasting have also been on her mind: “One day, when we grow bigger!”

At the beginning of 2018, the company was advertising among Boston-area universities for interns who would train three months in Bristol and nine months in new Boston offices. But “we just got very busy on a couple of large contracts that took resources away from it,” said Craven, the managing director. He estimates a February 2019 launch instead. “We’re sowing the seeds for our Boston future. We still have aspirations to become a higher education media in the U.S.”

“We’ve always been profitable,” said Craven, “though not always hugely profitable. But we always funded our growth organically. We’ve never had big backers. Now we’ve got nice sustainable revenues from a lot of longterm contracts, which we didn’t have a couple of years ago, and that makes it a lot easier to plan for employment. We’re not going to hire 50 reporters and a whole video crew and pump in all these resources and not have the revenue to support it.” He estimates Hybrid will bring in roughly £4.8 million in revenue this year, about three-quarters of which come from advertising on the sites, including branded content, and the rest from the Hybrid digital agency’s long-term contracts with clients.

● **Shan Wang** was a staff writer at Nieman Lab, where she reported on innovation in global journalism. She’s currently the editor for newsletters at *The Atlantic*. This article is reprinted with the permission of Nieman Lab.

<https://asiancorrespondent.com/ge14-liveblog-malaysia-general-election-2018/>



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Last Month in Photos

Club Members Share Their Best Shots

1. A visitor to the Tokyo Game Show shoots models with his smartphone on Sept. 21. It is the video game industry's biggest annual show in Japan and one of the few trade shows that still features scantily dressed women as attractions in most booths. Photo by Albert Siegel.

2. Capturing scenes of sunflowers at the Kiyose Sunflower Festival in Tokyo, Aug. 27. The festival, from Aug. 18 to 28, features some 100,000 sunflowers in full bloom. It's Kiyose City's largest tourist attraction and is held with the cooperation of local farmers and residents. Photo by Rodrigo Reyes Marin.

3. A mobile combat vehicle of the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Forces fires during the annual live fire exercise held at the Higashi-Fuji firing range in Gotemba, at the foot of Mt. Fuji, Aug. 26. Some 2,400 personnel and 860 armored vehicles took part in the drill. Photo by Yoshikazu Tsuno.

4. Same-sex couple Yuki Shimatani (right) and Reiho Ishibiki are all smiles as they are recognized as partners by blockchain technology at Tokyo's Shibuya Ward, Sept. 8. The event was part of "Social Innovation Week Shibuya," focused on innovation and diversity by the ward office and Nippon Foundation. Photo by Yoshikazu Tsuno.





Feature

Yoshiki is Still Fighting

Japan's legendary rocker opened up about his troubled past, his active present and his future dreams.

by JULIAN RYALL

Like all good rock stars of a certain age, Yoshiki has seen his share of life. In fact, the experiences of the 52-year-old drummer of X Japan, the country's most successful rock band in history, are legendary.

So legendary that when it was first suggested that his rock outfit become the subject of a documentary, Yoshiki's first reaction was that it would be impossible – in part, because so much seemed implausible. “As you may know, X Japan has a crazy history,” said Yoshiki at a press conference at the FCCJ on Sept. 13. “Almost too crazy to be true. Too sad to be true.”

His U.S. agent proposed the movie, but “it was so hard for me to open that door to the past,” he said. “First of all, there was the loss of my father. He took his own life,” he said. “Then there's the fact that both X Japan's guitar player, Hide, and Taiji, the bass player, have passed away. Then vocalist, Toshi, got brainwashed.” For 12 years, the singer was under the control of a cult called Home of Heart. “So it's like, if somebody tried to write the script, I thought it would be too much. I thought, ‘Hell no, I can't do that kind of documentary.’”

“I'd shut the door on those events and wanted to move forward,” he said. “But after several years of discussion, people convinced me that our story, what we went through and how we made a comeback, might be able to help other people's lives, may be able to inspire people who might have been suffering from depression. Eventually, I thought, ‘Okay, that might be a good reason to revisit those issues’ so we decided to do it.”

The documentary – *We are X* – was released in 2016. With contributions from Marilyn Man-

son, Gene Simmons of Kiss, Richard Fortus of Guns N' Roses and legendary Beatles producer George Martin, the 101-minute documentary won a Sundance Film Festival award and was broadly praised for tackling some of the band's more personal and difficult issues.

The raised profile did not, however, translate into X Japan cracking the U.S. market. Yet Yoshiki refuses to give up on that ambition, for other Asian bands as much as himself. “Thirty years ago,” he said, “it was impossible for Asian artists to do anything outside of Asia, especially in America or Europe,” he said. “But over the past 30 years, things have changed. The Internet has contributed to that and now a lot of artists from Japan, South Korea and even China have started performing throughout the world. I think that is amazing.”

He spoke about his efforts to spread his music beyond Japanese borders. “I moved to Los Angeles about 25 years ago when I had a dream that we were going to be the biggest rock stars in the world,” he admitted. “But 25 years ago, they were not ready [for us] at all. Finally, after all these years, the wall between East and West has become much lower.”

So he has no intentions of following in the footsteps of Tetsuya Komuro, the famed producer who announced his retirement from the music industry in January. In fact, he said he

phoned Komuro when he heard the news and talked about the continued struggle.

“Some people will say this industry is hard,” he said. “But any job in this life is hard. I don't think I have made it in the American market yet, I think I'm still a little unknown, but I'm still trying. And it's not just for me; it's for everyone in the world. I keep moving forward, I keep on fighting and that's part of life. Because when you stop, that's the time you die.”

The press conference was held to announce several concerts that will be held in Tokyo in November featuring classical treatment of his own compositions at the International Forum. This will be a follow up to two sold-out shows in New York's Carnegie Hall held last year. He also told the press that he'd just finished recording the band's latest album, though the release date has yet to be decided.

Yoshiki caught the onlookers by surprise by becoming visibly emotional behind his trademark dark glasses. “It's not easy to keep fighting for 25 years straight,” he said. “Sometimes I've wanted to come back to Japan and say ‘I did enough, it's time to sleep.’ But I am still trying to contribute to change the map. [Being a success in] America was part of the dream of the members of my band that died too, so I have a responsibility,” he added.

● **Julian Ryall** is Japan correspondent for the *Daily Telegraph*.

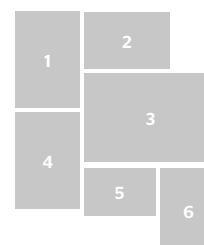
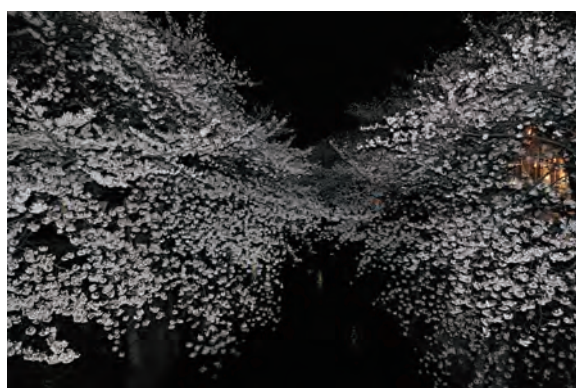




— exhibition in Main Bar from Sept. 29 to Oct. 21 —

MEIAN-Chiaroscuro Giapponesi

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALESSANDRA MARIA BONANOTTE



1. Notturmo
2. Sakura
3. Fuori i Demoni
4. Passaggio
5. Genesi-Teatro del Noh III
6. Riflessione



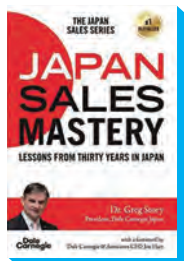
In recent years, Italian photographer Alessandra Maria Bonanotte has been fascinated by Japan, its nature, shrines and temples, festivals, crafts and artisans. In this exhibition, she focuses on Japanese spirituality expressed in the world of *MEIAN*, Japanese chiaroscuro.

Alessandra was born in 1979 in Rome, where she graduated in Natural Sciences at the University La Sapienza and studied photography. She worked as a photographer for the ONG Scuoladelsole, committed to the education of refugee children in Vienna in 2010 and collaborated with the study Fototeca of Tokyo in 2011. Since 2012, she has worked with the Hiro Gallery and Kyuryudo Art Publishing Co., Ltd. of Tokyo, as well as a number of art publications. Her capacity to capture artists' beauty while producing artworks is highly valued, as are her portraits of many great artists, including Fukumi Shimura, a living national treasure of dyeing and weaving.



New in the Library

1.



Japan Sales Mastery: Lessons from Thirty Years in Japan
Dr. Greg Story; with a foreword by Dale Carnegie & Associates CEO Joe Hart
Dale Carnegie Training Japan
Gift from Dr. Greg Story

2.



Haunted by Chaos: China's Grand Strategy from Mao Zedong to Xi Jinping
Shiori Ito
Sulmaan Wasif Khan
Harvard University Press

New Members

REGULAR MEMBER | TETSUYA NISHIMURA



has been working for the Japanese news agency Jiji Press for 33 years. Sent to Beijing in 1994, he covered China's politics including the death

of paramount leader Deng Xiaoping and the handover of Hong Kong from Britain to China in 1997. Nishimura took over as Beijing bureau chief and reported on the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003. After serving as the deputy editor of the foreign news desk in Tokyo, he covered the 2012 anti-Japanese demonstrations held in Guangdong and the Umbrella Movement by Hong Kong's pro-democracy protesters in 2014 as Hong Kong bureau chief. He returned to Tokyo the next year and became desk editor in April 2018.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

- Sergey Demin, Rosatom East Asia
- Chiyoko Asai, Otsuka Museum of Art
- Keisuke Hoshino, Mitsubishi Corporation RtM Japan Ltd.
- Chieko Kakinuma, K's International
- Kazuo Sato, Yamoto Naika Clinic
- Masaharu Takahashi, Toho Facilities Co., Ltd.
- Yoichi Tsuchiya, ACA Inc.

REINSTATEMENT (Associate)

- Katsuhisa Miwa, Miwa Seiyaku Co., Ltd.
- Shigeru Tsujimoto, Ohba Co., Ltd.

Join the Film Committee ...

...on Tuesday, Oct. 16 at 7:00 pm for *Ten Years Japan*, the follow-on project to the surprise 2015 Hong Kong hit *Ten Years*, an omnibus by five young directors imagining the future of their homeland (the film was banned in China). Up-and-coming filmmakers Akiyo Fujimura, Chie Hayakawa, Kei Ishikawa, Yusuke Kinoshita and Megumi Tsuno were selected to explore their own visions of Japan in 2028 and beyond. In Fujimura's *The Air We Can't See*, a disaster has sent the population underground, but one lonely child finds a "place only kids can go;" in Hayakawa's *Plan 75*, longevity is a liability, and the government is implementing a solution; in Ishikawa's *For Our Beautiful Country*, a salaryman begins to rethink his job when he has to promote militarization; in Kinoshita's *Mischievous Alliance*, children disrupt the 24/7 monitoring systems that control their educations; and in Tsuno's *Data*, a young woman finds her mother's digital inheritance card, and is able to connect with her past for the first time. All five directors will be on hand for the Q&A session. (Japan, 2017; 99 minutes; in Japanese with English subtitles)

● Karen Severns



©2018 "TEN YEARS JAPAN" FILM PARTNERS



Heads Up! Advance Notice for "An American in Paris"

"An American in Paris" – the new musical which won four Tony Awards in 2015 – will be presented by Gekidan Shiki in Tokyo early next year. The musical, full of George and Ira Gershwin's fascinating music and lyrics, is directed and choreographed by Christopher Wheeldon. The show is inspired by the legendary 1951 musical movie in which Gene Kelly played Jerry Mulligan, an American painter in the starving artistic colony who fell in love at first sight with Liz Dassin (Lise Bouvier in the original film played by Leslie Caron). Your Special Projects Committee has reserved 30 of the best seats in the house for the matinee show on Jan. 26. Tickets, including a fabulous brunch with a glass of sparkling wine, will cost ¥16,900 per person. To reserve, contact the front desk.



20 Years at 20 Floors: SNL says “Sayonara”

Saturday Nite Live, the weekend live performance event celebrating its 20th year, will hold its last night at the Club's present space on the 20th floor on October 20th, titled, “Sayonara Old Digs Yurakucho Denki Building SNL.” Appearing will be bluesman Rambling Steve Gardner, who will be performing solo, and Peter Montgomery, who will perform with his band. “SNL is the Entertainment Committee's five-star event,” says committee chair Sandra Mori. “We've always tried to provide a wide variety of performers – in fact, we once had a Himalayan yak yodeler – but we're so happy to have Peter's jazz group, and Steve, who is not only a great performer, but has been our best supporter of the event over the years.”

In fact, Gardner was the first musician to play what became the SNL. “After working as a photojournalist and musician in Japan since the early 80's, the news that the FCCJ is moving has hit me like an earthquake,” says Gardner. “Thinking about all the photos of members past and present being boxed up along with all the photographs taken by correspondents during WWII, the Korean and Vietnam wars, I can't help but hum a tune sung by one of the toughest women of the blues, Koko Taylor. It's called “If Walls Could Talk,” because if these here could, the building just might burn down before we can move.” Come to the Club and you just might hear it.

ADVERTORIAL

Access Live News from Abroad Instantly

Portable News



Staying on top of world events as they unfold is critical for bringing accurate and insightful information to readers. Social media has created a steady stream of headlines and snippets, and digital distribution of television content has connected people across the globe. While it is possible to access these channels through individual websites and apps, wouldn't it be convenient if they were gathered in one place?

Portable News, a new app from SKY PerfecTV, puts the world at your fingertips while in Japan by bringing together live TV news from Australia, Congo, France, Germany, Indonesia, Qatar, and South Korea. Live streams from

channels such as Australia Plus from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, France 24 from France Médias Monde, Germany's Deutsche Welle, and Korean Broadcasting's KBS World, as well as euronews and Al Jazeera, are available through a simple one-screen menu. Content from North America and elsewhere in Asia is planned for a future update.

Depending on the channel, news is available in multiple languages,

including Arabic, English, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Turkish.

In addition to programming from abroad, Portable News provides multilingual informa-



tion during earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons, and other disasters in English, Korean, and Chinese (traditional and simplified).

Apart from giving visitors to and residents of Japan an easy way to stay connected with what is happening back home, Portable News is great for journalists who need a simple way to get immediate details from specific cities and countries during major events, before the information is digested and reported by other sources. Because the content is streamed through a mobile app, it can be accessed wherever you are, even if Wi-Fi is unavailable.



Portable News is available for iOS through the App Store and for Android through Google Play <https://app.portable-news.info/>



No. 1 Shimbun

The Journal of the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan



昭和47年3月28日 第3種郵便物認可

ol. 8 No. 2 The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan, No. 1 Shimbun Alley, Marunouchi, Tokyo 月刊毎月15日発行 ¥100 Feb. 15, 1976

CLUB MOVES UP



Photo by Mitsunori Chigata

Nihon Kisha Club Hantai? Not exactly. Not protesting but celebrating a move up in the world, FCCJ members paraded through Tokyo's financial district Feb. 2 to a brand new home atop the Yurakucho Denki Building -- the club's fourth location in 30 years of existence. Piper Eric Von Hurst and drummer Richard Beere led the gala parade, followed by press club indignitaries.

The move from the old to the new club taught this correspondent one valuable lesson in life: never underestimate the Japanese.

Shortly before the old club closed your correspondent harboured serious doubts as to whether we could complete the move over the weekend and open for business on Monday.

At the time this observer told Svend Andersen. "If the staff can get this one sorted out and open for business on Monday then I'm a monkey's uncle."

glasses were in place in the main bar and Shimbun Alley. The telephone switchboard was already functioning.

The staff's determined effort to get the club functioning by the target date, Monday, had to be seen to be believed.

This zeal was so amazing that Shimbun Alley and the main bar could have opened for business on Saturday night.

In fact they did. Your correspondent was the first member to have a drink over both Shimbun Alley and the main bar at precisely eight p.m. Saturday, January 31. Witness: Mae-san. Salutes to Washida-san and the staff.

Inside No. 1...

- Chris Reed's hilarious tale of a cat. Page 7
- Pictures galore! Last night in the old club, page 8, first day in the new club, page 2, lots more.

As Saturday dawned and truck after truck piled up outside the Yurakucho Denki building to offload chairs, tables, barstools, food, pictures, crockery and a mountain of other equipment our worst fears were confirmed. Chaos appeared to ascend into the life hall outside the club. Bags of onions, chairs, glasses, crates of whisky, pictures, books and bar stools piled up to block the door, the library cabinets had still not been installed and the vast mountain of books had to be stored in the main bar. The seats of the bar stools were still not installed, telephone technicians, electricians, sign-writers milled around with the furniture removers.

Little did this naive reporter know that Washida-san and the staff had planned the move with the precision of an army general. Every item, down to the dartboard, had been marked with code tags stating its exact location. Perspiring and moving like clockwork to a rehearsed plan each section of the staff took over from the furniture removers to assemble equipment in place. By noon it was evident that this was not chaos but a well thought out manoeuvre. By one p.m. Jimmy had the chairs and tables assembled and in place in the dining room. By two p.m. Saturday the chefs were already at their stoves cooking and an hour later liquor stocks and

by A MONKEY'S UNCLE