

Obon Matsuri Dance ~1 hr (*New Panel!)

Japanese dance is more than just ParaPara. Obon Matsuri dances are traditional folk dances related to the Obon Festival. Participants will have the opportunity to learn some of these dances.

Victorian Japan ~1 hr

Inspired by Steampunk Culture, interest in the Victorian era is at a height. However, England wasn't the only country doing interesting things during that era. This panel discusses the history and politics of Japan in the Victorian era.

A Brief History of Japan : The Early Years ~ 1 hr

This panel talks about the history of Japan to the medieval times, so that fans can have a better sense of the historical context that has helped shape some of their favorite anime and manga. Find out why you too might like yayoi! Poetry for sex and politics in the Heian era! The rise of the Samurai!

A Brief History of Japan : The Later Years ~ 1 hr

This panel talks about the history of Japan from medieval times to the modern era so that fans can have a better sense of the historical context that has helped shape some of their favorite anime and manga. The Rise and Fall of the Class of Samurai! How the American Civil War saved Japan! The beginnings of anime and manga!

The World of the Shining Prince ~ 1 hr (New Panel!)

The Tale of Genji is the world's first novel, and the most famous work in classical Japanese. Learn about the court culture described in the novel and discover the rich and detailed world of the Shinning Prince!

The Poetry of Izumi Shikibu ~ 1 hr (New Panel!)

Discover the wit, talent, and beauty of the famously scandalous Heian poet, Izumi Shikibu. Hear readings of her 10/11th-century classic waka-style poems and their translations by Li Izumi

Beautiful -- Japanese shopkeeper in Baltimore about our yukata.

Biography:

The Comiku Girls, Akiko Meigetsu & Li Izumi, are celebrating their 10-year anniversary attending the convention circuit along the eastern seaboard and beyond. Each has had a pencil (or brush) in their hand since they could hold one, & have been telling stories since they could talk. At conventions, they are artists, cosplayers, & Japanese cultural panelists. In 2004, we debuted our popular Japanese Tea Ceremony Panel, and have continued to create unique panel options in the decade since. Akiko is an artist, working in both digital and traditional media (watercolor and Asian Brushpainting). Li has studied Japanese language & culture for over a decade, including a semester in Akita, Japan.

Credentials:

Akiko has a Ph.D. in Biology from Duke University. She has studied Brush Painting with Chinese master, Cong Yuan, and watercolors with artist Luna Lee Ray. She has been painting in water media for more than a decade.

Li has a B.A. in East Asian Studies and a Master's degree in Classical Japanese Language and Literature from University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She spent 4 months in Akita, Japan living and going to school, where she studied, among other things, how to wear a kimono, calligraphy, and tea ceremony.

Cosplay Awards

Judge's Award, Anime Boston (2004); Second place, performance, Connecticon (2004); Judge's Award, Craftmanship, Anime Mid Atlantic (2007); Special Recognition, Anime Boston (2010)

Invited Guests

Another Anime Con, Bakarertsukon, Steampunk World's Fair, Steampunk Industrial Revolution, Anachronism NYC - Visit to Edo

Invited Artists & Panelists

Another Anime Con, Anime Mid-Atlantic, Connecticon, Pi-con, Providence Anime Conference

Panelists

Animazement, Anime Boston, Connecticon

www.comiku.com

Comiku Girls



Your Japanese Culture Panelists!

Not only entertaining, but informative, Akiko and Li's Tea Ceremony was some of the most fun I've had at a convention panel! -Aaron of Radbu Productions

The Comiku Girls were great! They know so much, are so funny and were charming and hospitable to me and my family. – Lina

Program Guide:

Japanese Tea Ceremony ~ 1 hr

The Japanese Tea Ceremony panel is a demonstration of the Ryakubon ceremony, a traditional Japanese thin tea ceremony. The panel will also include a discussion on the history of tea in Japan, and the origins of the ceremony, its symbolism, and its roots in Zen. Li Izumi studied the tea ceremony in Akita, Japan and has been hosting the Japanese Tea Ceremony panel with Akiko at various conventions since 2004. **Note:** This is by far our most popular panel. It has been performed to standing room only crowds year after year. We've had participants drive from Canada to see us, and we even had a proposal at our panel! **Special needs:** Clear floor space or an elevated stage. Live Video Projection needed at larger cons.

Kimono & Yukata ~1 hr

A demonstration of how to properly put on Kimono and Yukata, including how to tie the obi. In addition, we will discuss the differences between Kimono and Yukata and Japanese ideals of beauty. We will talk about how to make your own Yukata, including where to find patterns and fabric choices. Li Izumi studied how to properly put on a Kimono (a nearly hour long process) in Akita, Japan. Akiko Meigetsu and Li Izumi have sewn their own Yukata and Kimono.

Asian Brushpainting ~ 1 hr

An interactive demonstration of the brush techniques used in Calligraphy and Asian Brush Painting (in Japan, Sumi-e). We will relate painting to the meditation process and the history of these techniques, the roots of which originated in China. Workshop participants will have the opportunity to create their own brush paintings.

Special needs: Workshop room with table space (no tablecloths!).

I thoroughly enjoyed your demonstration of a Japanese Tea Ceremony. It was very informative, and cool to be able to participate in as well. I hope you guys come again – Lady Aliara

Written Japanese ~ 1 hr

An introduction to the Japanese written language, including the differences between the three main writing systems, its history and development from its Chinese origins. After the initial discussion, participants will have the opportunity to ask questions about the Japanese written language.

Special needs: Dry Erase Board or Computer Projection

Introduction to Jrock ~ 2 hr

An introduction to some of the big names in Japanese rock music. We will discuss and watch promotional videos and interviews from artists such as Gackt, L'arc en Ciel, Buck-tick, Pierrot, Penicillin, Malice Mizer, and more. Li Izumi has been interested in, and following the rock scene from Japan for more years than we will admit.

Special Needs: computer projection

Introduction to Ball Jointed Dolls ~ 1 hr

Either unbelievably beautiful, or unbelievably creepy (and sometimes both at once), increasingly, you see these dolls at conventions, but may not know much about them. This panel is an introduction to BJDs. We will talk about some of the different types of ball jointed dolls, where you can get them, and how you can customize the dolls to make them your own.

BJD Maintenance Basics ~ 1 hr (New Panel!)

Now that you've got your BJD, how do you care for it? This panel will talk about basic maintenance procedures for doll owners. We'll discuss (and demonstrate) stringing, suading, and wiring for posing enhancement.

Advanced Topics in Ball Jointed Dolls ~ 1 hr (New Panel!)

If you are comfortable restringing your dolls and feel ready for the next step of customization, this is the panel for you. We'll discuss various types of additive and subtractive modifications for BJDs, painting techniques and the required safety measures.

Doll Meet ~ 1-2 hrs

Here is an opportunity for doll owners and doll appreciators to get together. Come show off your dolls, see other dolls, and socialize with other owners and doll lovers.

How to Draw – Chibi Style! ~ 1 hr

We see it everywhere in manga and anime, from Fushigi Yuugi to Evangelian to Trigun to Dragon Half. In this panel we'll talk about the different ways to do chibi (super-deformed) characters, including different proportion rules and what makes them so damn cute! Participants will try their hand at the style.

Special needs: Dry Erase Board or Computer Projection

Artist's Critique Circle ~ 1 hr

Every artist wants to get better. This panel will give participants an opportunity to have their work critiqued by other artists. We will learn both how to ask for a critique and how to give a good critique to each other. It's more than just saying what is wrong! You don't have to be an artist to participate so long as you enjoy art. Panel participants are encouraged to bring work for critique.

Life Drawing for Anime Artists ~ 1 hr

Everyone says 'draw from life', but not everyone has access to life drawing classes. This panel gives anime artists the opportunity to draw from a live model as we discuss figure drawing techniques such as gesture drawings and sketching techniques. Participants should bring their own drawing materials.

Color Theory for Anime Artists - 1 hr

Why does everyone say skin tones 'have a lot of blue in them'? Red and blue make purple... but did you know red and green can make brick red? More than just a color wheel, this panel will talk about how to use color to help define a focal point in a piece using contrast and tone and how to use colors to create harmony (or dissonance) in a piece.

Special needs: Computer Projection

Panels under development:

The Natural World of Steampunk A discussion of the natural history of steampunk favorites: the kiwi, dodo, squid, air kraken and other organisms.

New England Maritime History: How we can use our local whaling and pirate history to inspire Steampunk.

Darwin, Wallace, and the Science of the Victorian Era