

CASE STUDY TWO:  
SCOTLAND AND



EXCHANGES ACROSS THE AGES

Momentum welcomed its first Japanese delegation in August 2015. The visit was designed to connect with key partners ahead of the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo. However, selecting appropriate delegates proved difficult and lasting connections did not transpire. In 2016 a new approach was followed with performing arts at its core. Through a programme that involved seeing work, exchanging ideas and aligning the ambitions of Scottish and Japanese funders, artistic collaboration began to grow.

These developments were further enhanced when Japan became a focus country for the British Council/Creative Scotland partnership, which supported a Scottish delegation to the 2016 Performing Arts Meeting in Yokohama (TPAM). Scottish arts organisations, festivals, companies and individual artists shared their knowledge and learning, and built upon relationships they had developed during Momentum to explore options for collaboration.



## ORIGINS

The Momentum partners selected Japan as a target country for 2016. There had been little prior engagement between the Scottish and Japanese cultural sectors, so the focus was on making connections ahead of Tokyo 2020. The delegation included Shunsuke Manabe, Assistant Director of TPAM; Hisashi Shimoyama, Director of the ricca ricca festival for young audiences in Okinawa; and Toru Hirai from Saitama Theatre, which includes The Gold Company, an organisation for actors in their 60s and 70s. It was designed to respond to the needs and strengths of Imagineate, Scotland's national organisation for theatre and dance for children and young people; and Luminare, Scotland's creative ageing organisation. In addition, the programme sought to enable discussions on co-production approaches and investment mechanisms for emerging projects.

Levels of awareness of the Edinburgh festivals and the Scottish arts sector varied among the delegates. Hisashi from ricca ricca, for example, knew the current and previous directors of Imagineate as fellow members of an international theatre association. For the others in the group, this was to be their first engagement.

The programme proved to be as important in developing existing relationships and ambitions as it was to seeding new collaborations.

**'Momentum has had a vital and valuable impact on Imagineate and our relationship with Japan. While Momentum did not initiate this relationship, it has enhanced and accelerated it. Having a strong delegation from Japan in Edinburgh has enabled Imagineate to create new relationships that will both extend the project through touring, and facilitate it by identifying new and alternative sources of funding. In fact, going into the Momentum programme with a pre-existing relationship and evolving project has made the experience far more powerful. The relationship with ricca ricca has given Imagineate a starting point for conversations with the wider Japanese delegation and has inspired far deeper and more fruitful conversations.'**

**Paul Fitzpatrick, Chief Executive, Imagineate**

Awareness of the depth and quality of work by Scottish companies, particularly for children and young people, increased as delegates engaged with the Edinburgh festivals. Sharing and exchanging models of practice and partnership was particularly valuable. Meetings and information sessions looked at the innovative approaches followed by Imagineate and Luminare, as well as their network roles and commitment to contemporary work. Creative Scotland's approach to diversity was another focus, as was the work of disabled artists such as Claire Cunningham. Ricca ricca's leading role in theatre for young audiences in Asia, and the development of its showcasing function, also led to rich conversations.

**'It was very useful for us to meet people from many different projects – social inclusion programmes, dementia-friendly work and intergenerational projects. These are truly rooted in Scotland. I am confident of continuing the collaboration with some individual artists and organisations.'**

**Kaori Nakayama, Japan Arts Council**

Momentum was critical in building the relationship with TPAM and for opening discussions about policy and practitioner exchanges.

**'Building personal relationships was almost more important than building strategic ones. Person-to-person contact and trust is crucial as an ongoing conduit for the exchange of ideas. This felt essential for the Japanese delegation to Scotland and the return visit to Japan.'**

**Lorna Duguid, Creative Scotland**

## FOLLOW-UP AND DELIVERY

Ricca ricca has since programmed work by the Scottish companies Catherine Wheels and Barrowland Ballet through its enhanced connections with Imagineate. This is part of a deepening collaboration, and the potential for investment is being explored as a direct result of engagement with Momentum.

Following constructive dialogue with the Japanese Momentum delegates, the British Council/Creative Scotland Partnership has committed to working with Japan as a focus country. As a result, a delegation of Scottish companies and artists attended TPAM in 2016. The group connected with networks linked into East Asia, and looked at ways to develop co-production partnerships for Scottish work in Japan and the wider region.

**'We are a small, project-funded company. Being invited to present to the Japanese delegation at Momentum, and being part of the scoping delegation to Japan, opened up a whole world of possibilities to us. We also got the time and space to build relationships with colleagues from Scotland. As a result Tricky Hat and Luminare are in the early stages of looking at a collaboration with a Japanese artist and groups of older people in Scotland and Japan.'**

**Fiona Miller, Tricky Hat**

**'As a direct result of the visit to TPAM, two Japanese programmers of major venues decided to attend Imagineate's Edinburgh International Children's Festival. Already one has come on board as part of the ricca ricca project.'**

**Paul Fitzpatrick**

## LINKS

**TPAM**  
[www.tpam.or.jp](http://www.tpam.or.jp)

**Japan Arts Council**  
[www.ntjac.go.jp](http://www.ntjac.go.jp)

**ricca ricca**  
<http://2017eng.nuchigusui-fest.com>

**Imagineate**  
[www.imagineate.org.uk](http://www.imagineate.org.uk)

**Luminare**  
[www.luminatescotland.org](http://www.luminatescotland.org)

**'We are both island nations with cultures heavily influenced by the sea and the landscape. We share strong oral traditions in music, storytelling and playwriting. We are also both nations that are sometimes reticent to express ourselves though creativity. Nevertheless we have found out that, although we are reserved on the surface, we can be wild underneath!'**

**Lorna Duguid**

## LEGACIES

The most significant project that grew from the Japanese Momentum delegation is a major showcase of four Scottish shows for children and young people at ricca ricca 2018. The festival is also working on a collaborative commission with Scottish director Gill Robertson, which is set to premiere at ricca ricca then tour Japan before coming back to Imagineate in 2019.

The Gold Company continued to explore setting up a festival of ageing in conversation with Luminare, working with artists and companies in Japan and Scotland to develop skills exchanges and projects. New connections have also been made between Scottish and Japanese policy makers, which have strengthened the foundations for future engagement with Momentum in the run-up to Tokyo 2020.

