

# **EAJC Council Election 2017**

## **Candidates' Self-introductions and Statements**

**Dr Till Weingärtner**

### **Statement**

Today, nine years after attending my first EAJC conference in Lecce, I feel very honoured to be nominated as a candidate for an EAJC council member position. I have been lucky to have had the opportunity to work in Japanese studies within varied academic contexts in three European countries, including Germany, the UK and Ireland. Much of this experience was made possible through EAJC, which gave me the chance to network and learn from my fellow colleagues. As a grateful member, I would be delighted to share my passion and my experiences with the EAJC community and contribute to the international collaboration on and development of Japanese studies across the continent.

As an EAJC council member, my priority would be to emphasise the relevance of collaboration between different academic levels – between high-end undergraduate programmes and top-end research, for example – as well as the relevance of offering Japanese language classes through secondary education and leading outreach activities in local communities. I would also work to bring EAJC activities, such as the PhD workshop, to Ireland. With respect to my current position and location, I am also very interested in tackling the challenges posed by the difficult financial situation that many international universities and departments face and by recent political developments within the EU and their impact on international academic collaboration.

### **Curriculum Vitae**

I am a lecturer within the young and small Department of Asian Studies at University College Cork (UCC) in Ireland, where I represent Japanese Studies and serve as director of the Irish Institute of Japanese Studies. Since I began teaching at UCC two years ago, I have doubled the number of weekly Japanese language classes offered to students and extended the choices of Japan-related content modules for students within our Asian Studies programmes. I studied Japanese Studies and German Literature at Freie Universität in Berlin, where I received my MA in 2006 and my PhD in Japanese Studies in 2012. Between 2006 and 2008, I worked as a research student at Kansai University, during which time I focused on researching contemporary Japanese comedy and became part of the Japanese comedy myself by playing the stooge in the manzai duo Altbayern. These experiences greatly influenced and informed my research and my thesis. I began teaching at Freie Universität Berlin in 2008. I then spent three semesters teaching as a contemporary lecturer in Japanese Studies at the University of Manchester. I commenced my permanent lecturer position at UCC in 2015.

I have received several awards for my research, including the 2010 International Society for Humour Studies award for my graduate research, Freie Universität Berlin's 2013 Ernst Reuter Prize for outstanding PhD dissertations and the JaDe Foundation's JaDe Prize for my contribution to German-Japanese cultural and academic collaboration. My research interest continues to focus on Japanese popular culture, particularly in the area of comedy, media and performance, as well as cinema and literature. Currently, I am working on an English-language monograph on contemporary Japanese comedy that re-evaluates the findings of an earlier German publication. Contributing to cultural events is important to me in both my professional and personal lives. I regularly organise professional rakugo-storytelling performances in Europe and actively perform as an amateur storyteller myself, performing in German, Japanese and English, most recently at the Experience Japan Festival in Dublin. As an Irish Association for Asian Studies committee member, I maintain the committee website and am organising the 2017 conference in Cork.

### **List of Selected Publications**

2013

*Comedy-Boom in Japan: Performative und mediale Rahmung von Humor in der aktuellen Populärkultur*. München: Ludicium.

2014

'Performative Aspekte des Rakugo-theaters [Performative aspects of rakugo theater]'. *Bunron Zeitschrift für literaturwissenschaftliche Japanforschung* 1: 131-143.

2016

'Black cat mansion'. In: Salvador Murguía (ed). *The encyclopedia of Japanese horror films*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield: 22-23.

2016

'How Japanese wallflowers turned into celebrities: Self-mockery and self-revelation of the female comedy duo Harisenbon'. *Social Semiotics* 26(3): 283-297.

2016

'The Gods of Rakugo: Commemoration in Japanese comedy'. *Irish Journal of Asian Studies* 2: 36-46.