Presenters:

Of the men who helped unify Japan at the end of the sixteenth century, Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598) has been the most widely re-imagined in literature and on film. Discourses on Hideyoshi in popular media have shifted over the last seventy years. He remains a popular hero figure in NHK historical dramas and manga and can be seen anywhere from mobile phone commercials to the department store displays, but his image has also become synonymous with Japan’s seeming unwillingness to properly atone for wartime aggression in East Asia. Whereas the trend in popular literature and television representations of Hideyoshi in the late 20th and early 21st century has been to remain silent about Hideyoshi’s un-heroic final years, museums and historical sites have worked to more fully address his complex legacy. At the Nagoya Castle Museum in Saga prefecture where Hideyoshi launched two failed invasions of Korea, the specter of Hideyoshi looms large even as he is barely visible in the exhibits. The state-of-the-art museum, with trilingual exhibits in English, Japanese, and Korean, chronicles the history of Japanese–Korean relations and seeks to promote better exchange between the two countries. Ironically, in bringing this history to light, Hideyoshi is all but erased in the museum. This paper will analyze the constantly-shifting nature of Hideyoshi’s legacy as it is mediated and consumed in popular literature and historical sites and highlight the contradictions inherent in recalling “heroes” from the past for a modern audience.

Zheng Guohe  Ball State University  “Hijikata Yoshi and Post-shingeki Modern Theatre Movement”  The history of modern Japanese theatre movement has often been divided into two periods: the shingeki period represented by the prewar generation with its artistic style of Russian realism and its leftist political tendencies, and the post-shingeki period represented by younger artists who, coming of age in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, rejected shingeki’s orthodox in politics and dramaturgy and created their respective theatres trying to better capture Japanese experiences. Such a narrative, however, implies a complete breakdown between the two periods. This paper presents an alternative narrative by examining the history of modern Japanese theatre
through the lens of memoirs by, and on, Hijikata Yoshi (1898-1959), one of the most important early leaders of shingeki movement. It proposes that there is evidence that suggests a logical connection between Hijikata and the post-shingeki modern theater movement.

Hotel: http://www.sonesta.com/
Sonesta Suites 2050 Featherstone Road, Auburn Hills, MI 48236  Oakland University rate $79/night. Reservations must be received on or before Jan 24, 2015. To reserve, call 1-248-322-4600; identify as part of OU Midwest Japan seminar Group.
From Metropolitan Airport, (it’s about 45 miles) take I94 toward Detroit, go north on I75 at Detroit; it’s about 30 minutes from Detroit north on I75; for the hotel, exit at M59 (West) and immediately exit on Opdyke Road, turn left and then right on Featherstone Road. This happens very fast since the hotel is just off I75. The hotel is on the corner of Opdyke and Featherstone.
Contact Lou for information on sharing rides from Metro Airport.

For some, Flint Bishop airport may be more convenient. Roy Hanashiro can give rides from there for 2-3 people. Please e-mail him (okuma@umflint.edu) for more info about hotels in Flint.

Travel instructions: Oakland University is located north of Detroit just east of I75 (exit at University Drive, the exit after Chrysler and soon after M59). Take University Drive (right/East) straight into the campus and the library is right in front of you as you go around the circle at the entrance to the campus. You can park in the lot as you go around the circle and then walk back to the library. (No parking fees.)
The hotel is just south of the University and on the other side of I75. From the university you go south on Squirrel Road (right in front of campus entrance) until you hit Featherstone, then go straight over I75 until you come to the hotel.

Map: http://www.oakland.edu/map/print

MJS Dinner: Makimoto (http://www.makimotorestaurant.com/1.html)

Local Contact: Jane Yamazaki (yamazaki@oakland.edu) 248-370-2154

Papers will be sent electronically (PDF File). Please indicate by e-mail to Lou Perez if you plan to attend and wish to join the group for dinner

FUTURE MJS SESSION:
April 25, 2015 Niagara University New York
HOST: Bob Kane
PRESENTERS: Eric Cunningham, Anthropology Earlham College
Meghen M. Jones  Art History, Alfred University

MJS Website: https://www.wmich.edu/japancenter/seminar
THE MIDWEST JAPAN SEMINAR IS MADE POSSIBLE BY A GENEROUS GRANT FROM:

THE JAPAN FOUNDATION