

Biography:

The Comiku Girls, Akiko Meigetsu & Li Izumi, are not your typical otaku... Or at least they like to think so. Each has had a pencil 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. They write the webcomic Comiku Girls, which centers on convention life from the inside, & the occasional life in between. 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. Currently, she is a Master's student in Japanese Studies. None of which explains their sense of humor.

Credentials:

Education: Akiko has studied Brush Painting with a Chinese master and is a watercolor painter.

Li has a B.A. in East Asian Studies and is a Master's student in Japanese Studies at 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.

Costume Awards: Judge's Award, Performance Anime Boston. Second place, performance, Connecticon. Judge's Award, Craftsmanship, Anime Mid Atlantic.

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

Beautiful -- Japanese shopkeeper in Baltimore about our yukata.

Where we've been:

Comiku Girls have more years of experience than they'll admit attending the convention circuit in the artist's alley & as cosplayers. Comiku Girls became panelists in 2004, when they debuted their popular Japanese Tea Ceremony Panel at Connecticon. The following year, they introduced the Kimono & Yukata panel. Since then they have become popular panelists and guests at conventions along the eastern sea board.

Invited Guests

Another Anime Con 2008-9
Bakaretsukon 2006-8

Invited Artists

Providence Anime Conference 2008

Invited Panelists

Another Anime Con 2007
Anime Mid-Atlantic 2007
Connecticon 2007-9

Panelists

Animazement 2005
Anime Boston 2006-9
Connecticon 2004-6

Webcomic Artists

Connecticon 2005-2007
Pi-con 2006

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

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

Program Guide:

Japanese Tea Ceremony ~ 1 hr

By far our most popular panel, the Japanese Tea Ceremony has been performed to standing room only crowds at most conventions. It is an interactive demonstration of a traditional Japanese Thin Tea Ceremony, including a discussion of its symbolism, history, and its roots in Zen. Li Izumi studied Tea Ceremony in Akita, Japan. Panel participants will be able to sample the Japanese Green Tea at the end of the demonstration, and several participants will be able to act as 'guests' during the demonstration.

Special needs: Clear floor space or an elevated stage with space for 4-6 people to sit. 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 painting.

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

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

A Brief History of Japan : The Early Years ~ 1 hr (*New Panel!)

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 (*New Panel!)

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!

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: Dvd player and projector

Ball Jointed Dolls ~ 1 hr (*New Panel!)

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 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.

Webcomics ~ 1 hr

From serialized comic books to one panel gags, from epic stories to bathroom humor. There are hundreds of kinds of webcomics out there. In this panel we'll talk about how to start one. It won't tell you how to become a Sluggo Freelance.

How to Draw – Chibi Style! ~ 1 hr (Updated Panel!)

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 be able to 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 (*Updated Panel!)

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:

Victorian Japan –History & Politics of Japan in the Victorian era.

Obon Matsuri Dance – Participants will learn about the traditional Japanese folk dances related to the Obon Festival.