

PRESS RELEASE —

Paris / Tokyo, April 7, 2026

Les 24 heures du roman — Japan Edition

L'écriture en mouvement, a French association dedicated to literary creation, announces the second edition of Les 24 heures du roman, to be held in Japan from October 22 to 25, 2026.

Conceived and directed by Anne Forrest-Wilson, the project brings together twelve writers — six French and six Japanese — aboard the MIZUKAZE, JR West's iconic and exclusive sleeper train. From Kyoto to Matsue, traveling through the heart of Japan, they will write an entire novel together in just 24 hours.

Translator-interpreters will ensure the circulation of texts between French and Japanese — true mediators through whom authors can share their words across languages.

Page after page, the novel takes shape along the rails, carried through the Japanese night.

Written on board in both French and Japanese, the text will then be translated into each language and published in France and Japan.

In Matsue, the authors will meet the public through a series of events, including the Salon du Livre Express. The journey will conclude in Tokyo with a final Salon du Livre Express, followed by a reception at the Institut français de Tokyo.

At the crossroads of two cultures and two languages, Les 24 heures du roman — Japan Edition is a literary adventure where movement sparks creation, and where a shared journey becomes a shared voice.

Anne Forrest-Wilson

A project born from a dream — a simple idea, almost improbable in Japan. And then, the magic: the MIZUKAZE, Matsue, twelve writers who said yes — and this October, a novel written in twenty-four hours on a train, somewhere in the heart of Japan.

JR West

Through the special operation of the TWILIGHT EXPRESS MIZUKAZE (“MIZUKAZE”) for this project, the JR West Group is pleased to offer its special cooperation. We believe that MIZUKAZE's unique premium environment, where the journey itself becomes a valuable experience, can provide an inspiring setting for cultural and artistic creation, while also helping to showcase the appeal of the regions along its route and promote cultural exchange between Japan and France.

Akihito Uesada, Mayor of Matsue City:

I am delighted that the city of Matsue will serve as the stage for Japan's first-ever "24 heures du Roman" event. It is my hope that this literary exchange will further deepen and develop the friendly ties between France and Japan. At the same time, I am confident this will be an ideal opportunity for people both at home and abroad to discover the authentic side of Japan that Matsue represents. From the historic atmosphere of our castle town centered around the National Treasure Matsue

Castle, to the refined "Chanoyu" tea culture popularized by Lord Matsudaira Fumai, and our celebrated culinary traditions such as *shijimi* clams and *soba*, Matsue offers world-class charms. The City of Matsue is proud to support the "24 heures du Roman" project.

Benjamin Lamberg, Senior Country Officer, Crédit Agricole CIB Japon

The Crédit Agricole Group has been active in Japan for over 80 years, with a long-standing commitment to strengthening ties between France and Japan by supporting trade and investment between the two countries. With *Les 24 heures du roman — Japan Edition*, the Group steps beyond its traditional financial role and joins a broader cultural dialogue between two civilizations that, in many ways, feel both rich and close.

KEY MOMENTS

Thursday, October 22 — Departure from Kyoto (24 hours of writing aboard the train)

Friday, October 23 — Arrival in Matsue

6:00 p.m. — Reception at the Shimane Prefectural Museum

Saturday, October 24 — Matsue

Salon du Livre Express, workshops and talks

Sunday, October 25 — Institut français du Japon, Tokyo

Salon du Livre Express with the authors and the public

AUTHORS

French Language:

Paul Fournel (Oulipo)

Hervé Le Tellier (Oulipo)

Frédéric Forte (Oulipo)

Richard Collasse

Jean-Christophe Grangé

Muriel Barbery

Japanese Language:

Ogino Anna

EnJoe Toh

Asabuki Mariko

Matsuura Hisaki

Kanehara Hitomi

Tsuji Hitonari

BIOGRAPHIES

Muriel Barbery

French novelist, author of *The Elegance of the Hedgehog* (2006), sold in over 12 million copies and translated into more than forty languages.

She lived in Japan for two years, an experience that profoundly shaped her imagination.

Her novels *A Single Rose* and *An Hour of Fervour* (Actes Sud) reflect this intimate relationship with the country.

Her latest novel, *Thomas Helder*, was published in 2024.

Hervé Le Tellier — OULIPO

Novelist, poet, playwright, trained as a mathematician, and President of Oulipo since 2019.

Winner of the Prix Goncourt 2020 for *The Anomaly*, translated into Japanese by Hayakawa.

His work moves across genres with the same ironic precision, from short forms to novels.

He took part in the first edition, in Canada.

Paul Fournel — OULIPO

A writer of many forms — novels, poetry, theatre, essays, cycling chronicles — and a member of Oulipo

since the 1970s.

Editor, President of the Société des gens de Lettres, Director of the Alliance Française in San Francisco.

La Liseuse, his novel about publishing in the digital age, has been translated into Japanese.

A writer for whom a well-chosen constraint sets everything free.

Jean-Christophe Grangé

Before turning to fiction, he was a field reporter — writing for *Paris Match*, Reuters and *National Geographic*.

From reportage to thriller, the same raw material: the world, its fractures, its violence.

With *The Crimson Rivers*, he established a taut, high-tension style, translated and read around the world.

Living between France and Japan, he continues to write novels where investigation tips into vertigo.

Frédéric Forte — OULIPO

Poet and member of Oulipo since 2005, deeply influenced by Raymond Queneau.

He explores fixed forms with the nonchalance of a jazz musician — he began on the electric bass.

In *Le Matricule des Anges*, he was once compared to Buster Keaton.

His work, mainly published by P.O.L, includes *Nous allons perdre deux minutes de lumière* (2021).

Richard Collasse

A graduate of Langues O and Harvard Business School, he settled in Japan in 1979 and never really left.

Forty years of intense professional life, notably with Chanel, alongside a literary work published in French and Japanese.

His *Dictionnaire amoureux du Japon* (Éditions du Seuil) expresses better than any essay what it means to love a country at that depth.

For him, Japan is an inner language that runs through all his writing.

Anna Ogino

Born to a Japanese mother and a Franco-American father, educated at Keio University and the Sorbonne.

She moves humour between Japanese and French with an ease entirely her own.

Winner of the Akutagawa Prize (1991), the Yomiuri Prize (2001) and the Itō Sei Prize (2008).

A body of work in which parody and irony blur the boundaries between author, narrator and text.

Toh EnJoe

Trained as a physicist, he turned to writing in 2007 to continue destabilising structures.

Winner of the Akutagawa Prize (2012) and the Special Prize at the Nihon SF Taishō the same year.

He received the Yomiuri Prize in 2025 for *Code Buddha*.

A body of work where science fiction, language and theory turn vertigo into something strangely pleasurable.

Mariko Asabuki

She writes in silences — the spaces others leave blank.

Educated in Japanese literature at Keio University.

Winner of the Bungei Deux Magots Prize (2010) and the Akutagawa Prize (2011) for *Kikotowa*.

A style attentive to the slightest shifts of memory.

Hisaki Matsuura

A specialist in Baudelaire, educated in Tokyo and at the Sorbonne, a poet before becoming a novelist.

Winner of the Akutagawa Prize (2000), the Yomiuri Prize (2004) and the Tanizaki Prize (2017).

Professor emeritus at the University of Tokyo, essayist on literature, cinema and architecture.

A body of work where desire, memory and perception take shape in a language of rare precision, always on the edge of sensation.

Hitomi Kanehara

She was twenty and had no intention of softening anything.

Her first novel *Snakes and Earrings (Hebi ni piasu)* explores the body, pain and identity with radical frankness.

Winner of the Subaru Prize (2003), the Akutagawa Prize (2004) and the Tanizaki Prize (2021).

For more than twenty years, an uncompromising body of work that has never sought to please — and that may be precisely why we read her.

Hitonari Tsuji

A major figure in contemporary Japanese literature, he has developed over nearly forty years a body of work shaped by solitude, love, memory and exile.

Winner of the Subaru Prize (1989) and the Akutagawa Prize (1997).

The White Buddha (Le Bouddha blanc) received the Prix Femina étranger in 1999.

Now based in Normandy, he remains a rare figure of literary dialogue between Japan and France.

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