



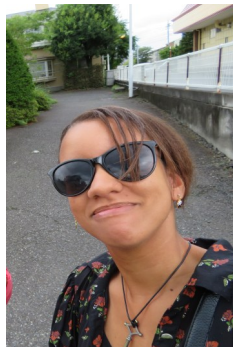
「Japan, take two...」

— Paige Frankson —

During my last stay in Japan, a student gave a speech on the history of kyudo and the significance of the phrase *kake gae no nai* (かけがえのない). The student explained that every archer's *kake* gradually wears down and moulds itself to the wearer, making each one unique. That phrase has stayed with me, shaping how I think about my time in Japan. Every experience, every challenge or accomplishment, becomes something irreplaceable.

Hello, or as we say in South Africa, *howzit!* My name is Paige Frankson, and this is my second time working as an ALT in Japan. I'm from Durban, a seaside city on South Africa's east coast. The summer weather there is very similar to Miyakonojo, although I must admit the humidity here is on another level! Still, I've managed to adapt, even if I do complain about the heat.

Even if it's just with small examples, like the weather, I love finding connections between Japan and South Africa, because honestly, there aren't many. For many Japanese people, South Africa is best known for rugby. In 2015, Japan pulled off one of the biggest upsets in rugby history by defeating our Springboks – one of the best teams in the world – at the Rugby World Cup. It's a match no South African will ever forget! Luckily, the Springboks later redeemed themselves by winning the 2019 Rugby World Cup here in Japan, a victory that made us incredibly proud.



My own connection to Japan began with anime, as it does for many people. A friend gave me a copy of *Spirited Away*, and that single gift sparked my interest Japanese culture, art, and history. That interest, combined with my studies in English literature, eventually led me to pursue a master's degree focusing on Japanese works translated into English, especially those by female authors.

The films and novels I studied gave me glimpses of everyday Japanese life, which only deepened my curiosity and encouraged me to apply to become an ALT.

My first ALT placement was in Nagasaki. I hadn't specifically requested Kyushu, but I was thrilled to be placed in such a historic city. More than simply learning about Japanese art and culture, I became deeply interested in the Japanese way of life. Concepts like *omotenashi*, *mottainai* and *ikigai* were fascinating to study in theory, but it was experiencing them in daily life that changed my perspective on a number of things, not just in Japan, but in general. These are things, I believe, that must be lived, not just read about.

When I returned to South Africa, I had so many stories to share with my family and friends. My one regret was that I hadn't been able to experience much of Kyushu outside of big cities like Nagasaki and Fukuoka. That's why I feel so grateful for the chance to live and work in Miyakonojo. Miyazaki Prefecture has already surprised me with its beauty, history, and charm. I can't believe it isn't spoken of more often, both in Japan and internationally, given its rich culture and stunning natural landscapes.

Although I haven't been here long, I can already see myself becoming an enthusiastic ambassador for Miyakonojo. This city has a quiet, natural beauty that sets it apart from larger cities. The people are warm and welcoming, and I was lucky to experience that firsthand when I joined the dancing at Bonchi Matsuri. Despite being nervous about dancing publicly only three days after arriving in the city, it was an incredible experience. I'm excited to take part in many more events and cultural exchanges in the future.

I'm certain that all my days here in Miyakonojo will come together to form another truly *kake gae no nai* chapter of my life. More than anything, I hope that I can share not only my experiences and culture, but also learn from the people here, building memories that I will carry with me forever.



Movies info

C-Plaza Cine-port (Tel: 0986-24-2571)

17-9 Nakamachi, Miyakonojo, Miyazaki Map-Code (GPS): 117 488 540*55



- Karada Sagashi THE LAST NIGHT
- Karate Kid: Legends
- Sore Ike! Anpanman Chapon no Hero!
- Jurassic World: Rebirth
- Elio

- The Troops Under the Trees (Ki no Ue no Guntai)
- Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba – The Movie: Infinity Castle
- Hero's Island (9/