

THE STANFORD UNIVERSITY-J. F. OBERLIN UNIVERSITY
COMMEMORATIVE LECTURE SERIES

Eighth Lecture

***Conundrums of
Literary Translation***

Juliet Winters Carpenter

Translator and

Professor, Doshisha Women's College of Liberal Arts

Language: English (Q&A may be in Japanese)

Date and time: May 14, 2015 (Thursday), 16:10–17:40

Place: Sūteikan 6H, Machida Campus



Juliet Winters Carpenter (right) with Mizumura Minae

What is translation, and what is a literary translation? Are they somehow different? How does a translator recreate an author's voice in another language? What does it mean to be "faithful"? After a half century of translating, Professor Carpenter is still looking for answers to these and other questions, but she will share with us her insights gleaned from translating authors as diverse as Abe Kōbō, Enchi Fumiko, Watanabe Jun'ichi, Tawara Machi, and Shiba Ryōtarō, with particular emphasis on her recent prizewinning English renditions of one of the most provocative and brilliant writers on the scene today, Mizumura Minae. She crafted those translations—of *A True Novel* (Other Press, 2013) and *The Fall of Language in the Age of English* (Columbia University Press, 2015)—in full collaboration with the author.

Professor Carpenter began studying Japanese while in high school in the 1960s and continued at the University of Michigan, earning B.A. and M.A. degrees in Japanese language and literature under the direction of the brilliant translator Edward G. Seidensticker; she completed the 10-month program at the Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies in 1970. She is a two-time winner of the prestigious Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission Prize for the Translation of Japanese Literature— in 1980 for Secret Rendezvous, her translation of Abe Kōbō's Mikikai, and in 2015, for A True Novel, her English rendition of Mizumura Minae's Honkaku shōsetsu.

This lecture series was established under the auspices of an Agreement of Academic Cooperation between J. F. Oberlin University and Stanford University. Speakers are non-Japanese scholars who studied, earlier in their careers, at the Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies (IUC) or who are alumni or faculty of Stanford. The IUC, founded in 1963 and administered by Stanford University on behalf of sixteen U.S. and Canadian universities, is located in the Minato Mirai district of Yokohama.