

“The Japan Flying Saucer Association hopes to foster universal peace.”

ANTI MATTER

Kimichi Arai organized Japan's first UFO research group, the Japan Flying Saucer Research Association, back in 1955. Today he manages the association's library and museum, one of the most extensive collections of UFO books and artifacts in the world. Arai was interviewed for *Omni* by University of Hawaii sociologist David Swift.

Omni: How did you first become interested in UFOs?

Arai: In 1947 UFOs appeared over Washington State in the United States, and the event was reported in newspapers throughout Japan. I'd been a

radar specialist in the Air Force, and I knew about the mechanics and capabilities of airplanes. The flying objects reported in the newspaper were different from any known earthly airplanes, so I knew there must be aliens riding those objects. In 1955, during the Korean War, I told myself that if we knew for sure that the aliens were watching us, we would no longer fight. Therefore, I decided to see if I could prove that the aliens were real.

Omni: You thought, then, you could create peace on Earth.

Arai: Yes. With the help of aliens that's what I hoped to do.

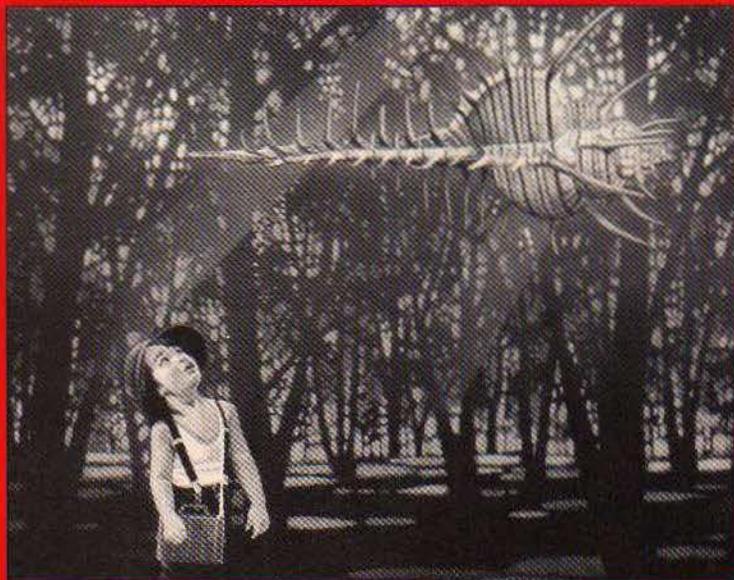
Omni: Was that when you started your association?

Arai: That was the starting point. By 1955 we had taken our first major step in a declaration of universal peace.

Omni: Who were the members of your group?

Arai: Believers, skeptics, and agnostics. It didn't matter. The common denominators were curiosity and a respect for the general methods of science.

Omni: Were you the only UFO group in Japan at that time?



Arai: Our activities encouraged others, including a very curious group called CBA for Cosmic Brotherhood Association. It was a group of believers, and the chief claimed that he had contacted aliens. He eventually collected large sums of money from members and then disappeared. That kind of group was growing, but serious groups like ours were not.

Omni: How did you react to the apparent lack of interest?

Arai: I vowed to reach the public, so in 1973 I arranged a symposium. The media attended, and, encouraged by my success, I began to publish a

UFO UPDATE

new magazine called *UFOs and Space*. In 1979 I opened the extensive library and museum you see here.

Omni: How many Japanese have an interest in UFOs today?

Arai: I estimate that one hundred thousand people are interested in UFOs, and among those, ten thousand are serious. Our magazine has a circulation of thirty thousand.

Omni: Which UFO cases should the public know more about?

Arai: Unfortunately, there are few interesting cases in Japan. One of my favorites occurred in France around 1954, when several people reported seeing a UFO and an alien.

Omni: Japanese citizens have a wonderful resource in your facility. Can you describe what they might find here?

Arai: We have about a thousand books—sixty or seventy percent of them in Japanese. We have trick UFO photographs, photographs of alleged aliens, and imaginary sketches of flying saucers. But as of now, we keep the museum open only two days a month. If too many people gathered here, it would burden the capacity of the room.