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## Liquid Crystals Today

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## Letter to Editor

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'Taking God to the fish'

**E**ach year the British Council, in conjunction with JISTEC it's Japanese equivalent, awards four scholarships to British research students in the fields of Science, Engineering and Technology. Their aim is to foster links between the East and West by giving the students a unique insight into Japanese industrial research. Last summer I was lucky enough to be awarded one of these grants and given the opportunity to spend 9 weeks near Tokyo, where I completed a short research project at Sony Corporation.

As a PhD student at the University of Manchester, studying with Helen Gleeson, my interest lies in the switching dynamics of ferroelectric liquid crystals. Specifically, we use time-resolved X-ray diffraction to investigate the layer deformations during switching. Working as part of Sony's FLC group in Yokohama I was able to complement this work by carrying out a study of molecular motion during switching using time-resolved FT-IR spectroscopy. The project was extremely successful and we are in the process of publishing our results.

During my free time I was able to

escape from the vast crowds of Tokyo and explore a more traditional Japan. I made the night-time pilgrimage to the summit of Mount Fuji to watch the sun rise through the clouds, I visited countless temples, pagodas and shrines in the cities of Kyoto, Nara and Nikko and hiked across the crater of a live volcano in Northern Japan. With only five days of language tuition behind me there were many times when communication was a challenge, and it was amazingly easy to get lost – but a friendly face always seemed to turn up in the end.

In one particular rural village I was invited to join in the local religious festival and help them carry their offering around the village to bring good luck the following year. In the photo you can see us 'taking God to the fish' as it was described, despite the fact I was too tall to be of any use to them they were quite happy to have me join in. Quite an experience !

GEORGINA K. BRYANT  
University of Manchester

## Letter to Editor

We are an university institute doing applied optical research using liquid crystal displays. Therefore, we are interested in new spatial light modulators for our holographic applications.

Our problem is that it is nearly impossible to get such LCDs (AMLCD, STN-L TN-LCD) on the German market or from the German distributors of Sharp, Hitachi, Seiko, etc. These displays are only delivered as OEM-products from company to company in large quantities. On the other hand, there are a lot of advertisements in electronic and optical magazines about the newest LCDs from Japanese, Chinese, and American companies or manufacturers. Unfortunately none of our telefax requests have been answered by a tender.

Could you please tell us their telephone or fax numbers. If their are other manufacturers or helpful contacts to our problem, please tell us of them.

We are mainly interested in LCDs with the following features:

- high resolution display, i.e.  $\geq 420 \times 250$  pixels
- screen size: smaller than 25 mm (diagonal)
- monochrome, 256 grey values
- high transmission rate
- digital addressability or VGA-driver (option for a video signal)
- planarity of the surfaces (for coherent experiments)
- range of phase modulation

Would you please kindly help us. Please communicate with us soon. Many thanks in advance.

Yours sincerely

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*Editor's Note: It seems that there may be many small markets for LC devices which are yet to be satisfied.*