Yukio Mishima was arguably the most internationally famous Japanese celebrity of the last century: an author prodigiously talented and dazzlingly prolific, but also a showman who found time to be a movie actor, martial arts devotee, body builder, political campaigner and world traveller. He was described by Yasunari Kawabata, the first Japanese winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, as the kind of genius who comes along every 300 years. When Mishima died in the spectacularly dramatic manner possible on November 25 1970, the entire Japanese nation screeched to a halt in jaw-dropping, collective disbelief. The extraordinary circumstances of that death - known as 'The Mishima Incident' - would become Japan’s defining JFK event, when every Japanese alive could instantly recall where they were when they heard the shocking news. Trying to fathom the meaning of 'The Mishima Incident' is a subject which has gripped the Japanese nation for the last 44 years. Why did Mishima have to die? Who or what was it that caused his death? And what meaning does his extraordinary life and death still hold for modern Japan? In this talk, we will uncover the real story behind the most unforgettable day in modern Japanese history.