

Awards and Prizes

The Japan Foundation has established several prizes to honor individuals and groups who have made an outstanding contribution in the field of international exchange and still have much more to give. These are the Japan Foundation Award and the Japan Foundation Special Prizes. There were four recipients in 2004:

■ The Japan Foundation Award

Ms. Toshiko Akiyoshi

Jazz Pianist and Jazz Composer (Japan)

Not only does Ms. Toshiko Akiyoshi have a long list of accomplishments to her name as a jazz performer, composer, and bandleader, but she has also used her music as a medium to disseminate a message of peace and cooperation by asking hard questions about the state of humankind today. In 1999 she went on a performing tour of South America with the support of the Japan Foundation. In 2003 she gave a concert at the Lincoln Center in New York to mark the 30th anniversary of her Big Band, and in 2004 she visited Japan with her sextet.



■ The Japan Foundation Special Prizes

Special Prize for Arts and Culture

Mr. James Quandt

Senior Programmer, Cinematheque Ontario (Canada)

Through screenings of and publications on Japanese movies, Mr. James Quandt has made a significant contribution to advancing research on the Japanese cinema and introducing works to a wider North American audience. In charge of programming at Cinematheque Ontario since 1990, he visited Japan in 1991 at the Japan Foundation's invitation.



Special Prize for Japanese-Language Education

Professor Yi Dok Bong

Professor, Faculty of Foreign Studies, Dongduk Women's University (Korea)

Professor Yi Dok Bong, a pioneer of Japanese-language education, has mentored many distinguished scholars and practitioners in the field. Having held such prominent positions as the presidency of the Korea Association of Japanology, he has made a great contribution to molding his country's policies in the field of foreign language education. He has also done much to advance mutual understanding between the Korean and Japanese peoples. Since 2001 he has been a visiting professor at Meikai University.



Special Prize for Japanese Studies

Professor Kurayoshi Takara

Professor, Faculty of Law and Letters, University of the Ryukyus (Japan)

Professor Kurayoshi Takara has been a pioneer in the field of research in Okinawan history, placing it within its wider Asian context and building a research network that includes international scholars. His influence extends far beyond academia through writings and lectures that offer valuable insights into the future of Japan. Before assuming his present post, he served as head of the Okinawa Prefectural Museum and director of the Urazoe City.

