

# Arts and Cultural Exchange

The Japan Foundation introduces diverse aspects of Japanese culture to people all over the world, by promoting human exchanges that bring together artists and eminent persons as well as people at the community level. The Japan Foundation has promoted such exchanges through a wide range of cultural events and programs in the visual arts, performing arts, media, and publications. From traditional fine arts to contemporary art, these activities present the richness and diversity of Japanese culture, and in keeping with the true sense of international exchange, help to promote understanding among cultures in a borderless world.



## The Introduction of Japanese Culture, and International Cultural Cooperation

Wide-ranging activities are undertaken to introduce aspects of Japanese culture such as lifestyle and sports, in order to deepen understanding of Japan. These activities include inviting to Japan people and groups involved in the cultural field to promote exchange and a broad understanding of Japan, as well as workshops and human exchange programs.

In 2006 fiscal year, the Japan Foundation has undertaken 29 projects in which specialists were dispatched to 43 countries around the world to give presentations and demonstrations. The 56 individuals participating in these projects included specialists in judo, animé, Japanese cuisine, Japanese kite-making and various other arts. Besides its own projects, the Foundation also provided assistance for a further 60 projects during the past fiscal year.

Besides dispatching Japanese specialists and artists abroad, the Japan Foundation also invited 38 leaders in various cultural arenas from 27 countries to visit Japan, in order to observe and experience Japanese culture firsthand. These cultural leaders were able to meet and exchange opinions and ideas with their Japanese

counterparts and with specialists in a variety of fields.

In international cooperation for arts and culture, the Japan Foundation dispatched specialists to developing countries to help train local personnel in theater and sports. Karate specialists from a developing country were also invited to Japan to participate in seminars and training courses focused on pedagogical methodology. It has also dispatched specialists to Asia, Central America and the Middle East aimed at preserving the recipient countries' cultural assets and heritage. The Foundation implemented 9 projects in total in this field.

Besides its own projects, the Foundation also provided assistance for a further 7 projects.



### Invitation to Young Designers from Asian Countries

From December 6 to 17, 2006, five leading young fashion and textile designers from five Asian countries – Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, and India – visited Japan at the invitation of the Japan Foundation. During their stay, the designers had the opportunity to mingle with Japanese fashion and textile designers and engage in friendly conversation and exchange. Besides taking in the local fashion scene, the young designers were also able to observe firsthand traditional weaving and fabric dyeing.

With the co-sponsorship of the Sugino Gakuen Dressmaker Gakuin and the cooperation of Shiseido Academy of Beauty & Fashion (SABFA), the Japan Foundation conducted a fashion show to present their creations. Since returning to their respective home countries, the young designers have kept in close touch with each other and with the people they met during their stay in Japan, and they are now considering how to continue collaborating on fashion and textile design.

Back in their countries, each designer created an original T-shirt design featuring the Japan Foundation logo. These T-shirts are currently on sale in the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum Shop and other shops.



Young Asian designers invited to Japan ©Takagi Atsuko



Original Japan Foundation T-shirts created by young Asian designers



Enchanted by Bashofu, textile made from Musa basjoo, Japanese banana

Community Leaders and Youth Exchange

## Promoting Better Understanding of Different Cultures in Grass-roots Levels

To promote international mutual understanding at youth and citizenship levels, the Japan Foundation dispatches and invites individuals and groups in the field of culture to enhance dialogue and collaboration.

The Japan Foundation invited Australian specialists in multicultural coexistence, as well as persons from Korean community groups providing young people with job assistance, to take part in discussions and exchanges in Japan. We also sponsored four community youth exchange projects, including the dispatch of environmental specialists to Latin America. In the past year, in addition to its own projects, the Foundation also provided assistance to a further 82 Japanese exchange projects initiated and undertaken by community groups.

During the past year, the Japan Foundation also invited 205 junior and senior high school teachers from 55 countries to engage in school exchange programs all over Japan, and to visit important cultural institutions.

To promote the understanding and appreciation of different cultures, the Japan Foundation also held 12 public lectures.



Open dialogue by Asian cartoonists



Group tour of secondary school educators



## The 16th Takeshi Kaiko Memorial Asian Writers Lecture Series (Singapore)

With the endowment bequeathed by the family of the late Kaiko Takeshi, writer, who passed away in 1989, the Japan Foundation has been holding the “Takeshi Kaiko Memorial Asia Writers Lecture Series” since 1990. The annual series was established to introduce Asian literature to Japan by inviting Asian writers, poets, literary critics and other distinguished literary figures to lecture and take part in discussions in Japan.

In 2006, Ding Yun, a Chinese writer from Singapore, was invited to take part in the series. During his stay in Japan, he lectured in Osaka, Tokyo, Sendai, and Hokkaido (with the cooperation of the Osaka International House Foundation, the Sendai Literature Museum, and the Hokkaido International Foundation) on the topic, “Sense of Loss and Drifting of Singapore’s Chinese.” University

of Tokyo Professor Fujii Shozo and writer Saeki Kazumi joined in a discussion on Mr. Ding’s writing and his view of literature. Mr. Ding spoke enthusiastically about his stay in Japan and said that he was eager to share his experiences in Japan with his colleagues and to incorporate them into his literary works.



Presentation at the International House, Osaka

## Overseas Exhibits, Exhibits in Japan, and Exchange of Information

The Japan Foundation not only sponsors its own planned exhibitions through cooperation with galleries and museums both at home and abroad, but also provides aid for outstanding exhibitions that introduces Japanese art and culture.

During FY2006, the Japan Foundation organized 4 art exhibitions with art museums and galleries overseas. Among these was an exhibition entitled “Cubism in Asia” in Singapore. The Foundation also conducted lecture and demonstration of *Karakuri* dolls as part of its intensive cultural exchange program focusing on the Middle East. Approximately 20 sets of Traveling Exhibitions toured 123 cities in 64 countries. The Foundation also gave assistance for 41 exhibits in 19 countries overseas.

The Japan Foundation also organized the exhibition “CHIKAKU: Time and Memory in Japan” in Kawasaki after its success in Austria and Spain. In Tokyo, the Foundation hosted “Parallel Nippon: Contemporary Japanese Architecture” before its departure to tour overseas locations. In addition, we provided assistance to 10 exhibits from overseas which introduced the arts and culture of other countries to Japan.

The Foundation also invited 7 Spanish art specialists to Japan, and dispatched 6 Japanese art specialists to Berlin and Dresden, Germany. Specialists also traveled to Seoul to participate in the “Asia Young Curators Conference.”

The Japan Foundation took part in the “10th International Architecture Exhibition” at the Venice Biennale, as well as the 27th São Paulo Biennale.



Exhibition catalog of the contemporary Japanese architecture

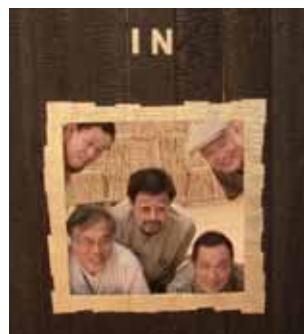


### The 10th International Architecture Exhibition at the Venice Biennale

The 10th International Architecture Exhibition at the Venice Biennale took place from September 10 to November 19, 2006. There, the Japan Pavilion introduced the works of Fujimori Terunobu, an architect and historian known for his research on modern Japanese architecture, in an exhibit entitled “Architecture of Terunobu Fujimori and ROJO: Unknown Japanese Architecture and Cities.” Mr. Fujimori, who was not previously well known outside of Japan, was appointed commissioner for the exhibit. In addition to his works, the exhibit also showcased the activities of the Roadway Observation Society, a six-person group led by Mr. Fujimori and including members Akasegawa Genpei, Minami Shinbo, Matsuda Tetsuo, Hayashi Joji, and the late Sugiura Hinako.

The Japan Pavilion, which adopted the overall theme of

“Cities. Architecture and Society,” received widespread coverage in the overseas media, and was highly acclaimed at the awards for the integrity of its forms and for the sheer pleasure it provided to the visitors.



Mr. Fujimori (lower left) poses with members of the Roadway Observation Society at the Japan Pavilion

## Performing Arts

## Performing Arts Abroad and Exchange

Japanese culture has given birth to many different arts. They constitute a rich heritage that ranges from traditional to contemporary forms, including dance, music, and drama. The performing arts exchange programs of the Japan Foundation respond to international interest in Japan's arts and culture by introducing those genres to overseas audiences. The exchange program also serves to introduce overseas stage arts that are relatively unknown to Japanese audiences. Aid is provided in the form of sponsorship and assistance extended to the private sector for carrying out such projects.

In FY 2006, the Japan Foundation has dispatched to 48 countries a total of 35 productions, including contemporary dance, Japanese drum, and jazz. The Foundation has also provided funding to performance groups to enable them to stage an additional 110 events.

In support of American non-profit organizations, the Foundation provided assistance to 10 productions on the basis of their applications for funding through an open recruitment process. The Foundation similarly provided assistance to 9 European festivals and presenters.

During the past year, the Japan Foundation also introduced to Japan comparatively unknown stage and performing arts of foreign countries. In 2006, the Japan Foundation sponsored 3 contemporary theater productions, including one by the Contemporary Theatre of Uzbekistan, and provided assistance for a total of 11

productions. Five international joint productions were also staged in Japan.

In addition, the Japan Foundation conducted or assisted 15 projects for promoting information

exchanges and building networks among performing arts groups, including "The Tokyo Performing Arts Market 2007." The Japan Foundation has also managed and operated the Performing Arts Network Japan website, which provides information about the performing arts in Japan.

<http://www.performingarts.jp/>



The Condors performance in Paris © Thomas Brémond



## Taiko group in the Middle East and Africa

In 2006, to mark the final year of an intensive, three-year cultural exchange program focusing on the Middle East, the Japan Foundation dispatched 4 groups of performing artists to the Middle East and Africa, where they performed and conducted workshops.

HA YA TO, a Japanese drum group, toured Senegal, Egypt, and Sudan from December 4 to 18, 2006. A second group, MUSA – featuring Japanese drums, Tsugaru shamisen, and koto – toured Iran, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, and Kuwait from January 14 to February 2. Yosoro, the third group, featured performers on Japanese drums, Tsugaru shamisen, the flute, and koto, and toured Kenya, Mozambique, and the United Arab Emirates for 14 days from February 8 to 21. The fourth group, Wasan Bom,

which performs on Japanese drums, — Tsugaru shamisen and shakuhachi, toured Turkey, Morocco, and Algeria for 14 days starting on March 1.



Yosoro performances during their Middle East and African Tour

## Support for TV programs, films and publications

The Japan Foundation distributes and provides Japanese TV programs, feature and cultural films and promotes participation in overseas international film festivals in support of Japanese film retrospectives. Additionally, the foundation screens foreign films and Japanese films with English subtitles.

During FY2006, the Japan Foundation provided assistance for the translation of outstanding Japanese works in the humanities, social sciences, and the art into foreign languages. The Foundation has also subsidized the publication of works on Japan originally written in foreign languages. In all, we provided assistance for the translation and/or publication of 48 works in 24 countries. In order to introduce Japanese publishing culture abroad and promote greater understanding of Japan, the Japan Foundation also participated in 12 international book fairs.

To promote the overseas broadcast of Japanese television programs, the Japan Foundation provided programs to 33 broadcast stations in 29 countries. The Foundation also provided assistance toward the cost of producing 6 films and TV programs about Japan, in order to promote foreign countries' understanding of Japan.

The Foundation played active roles in film festivals as well, organizing 58 events and providing grants for a further 54 events overseas. In Japan, we introduced films

from Asia and the Middle East, held film festivals and invited eminent persons from the world of cinema, and hosted lectures on Asian films. It also organized 2 film events, showing Japanese movies with English subtitles, and assisted in the presentation of an additional 10 seminars and film screenings.

The Japan Foundation also publishes *Japanese Book News* as a quarterly journal, as well as *New Cinema from Japan* jointly with UniJapan.

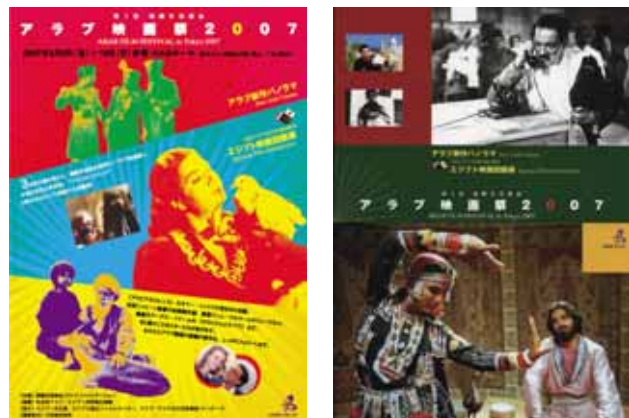


## TOPIC Arab Film Festival

The Japan Foundation presented its Arab Film Festival in Tokyo 2007 at the OAG Hall in Akasaka, from March 9 to 18, 2007. The annual festival – the third since its inception in 2005 – featured two themes, “An Egyptian Film Retrospective” (12 films) and “New Arab Cinema” (5 films), and attracted more than 3,400 viewers over the course of the festival.

For the “Egyptian Film Retrospective,” cinema masterpieces of every era from the 1930s up to the present were shown with the generous support of the Egyptian Ministry of Culture and the Egyptian Film Center. For the “New Arab Cinema” selection from the latest Arab cinema, the first domestically produced feature films from Saudi Arabia and Yemen, *Shadow of Silence* (2005) and *A New Day in Old Sana'a* (2005) were presented. The

energy of a new era in the cinema of the Arab world could be felt.



Poster and Pamphlet for the Arab Film Festival 2007