

Global Network

The Japan Foundation has established offices and facilities in 21 locations in 19 countries.



The Japan Foundation, Seoul

FY2007 as a year for film exchange

Ongoing programs and efforts continue to be highly praised

In cultural and arts exchange, the Japan Foundation, Seoul has made particular efforts in the area of film. At the 11th Seoul International Cartoon and Animation Festival (SICAF), which focused on Japanese animation, renowned directors Shinkai Makoto and Hosoda Mamoru were invited to attend. Furthermore, with a view to promoting cooperation with external organizations, screenings of Japanese films were held in cooperation with the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) and CineQuaNon Korea (CQN). In the area of intellectual exchange, a symposium was held entitled “Korea and Japan’s Approach to Aging Society – Dialogue on the Movie *Oriume*.”

In addition, efforts were made by the Japan Foundation, Seoul to promote local exchange through the long-running annual graphic design poster exhibition, which this year was entitled the “Yokoo Tadanori Poster

Exhibition,” and performances by the *Wadaiko Matsumura-gumi*, a Japanese drumming group, as part of Japan Week activities implemented all over Korea.

In terms of community leaders and youth exchange, the Japan Foundation, Seoul provided assistance for a reunion organized by former participants on the Lee Soo-Hyun Memorial Program for inviting Korean youth to Japan, and also implemented exchange activities among Japanese and Korean NPOs that are engaged in employment support for young people. A program was also implemented to dispatch native speakers of Japanese studying in Korea to junior-high and high schools in Korea as guest Japanese-language teachers.

In terms of publications, The Japan Foundation Poranavi Award for Literary Work/Translation was established and the award for the first year went to animation researcher Kim Jinman.



Director Shinkai Makoto (background), signing autographs for visitors to SICAF

The Japan Foundation, Beijing

In May 2007 the Japan Foundation, Beijing moved to new, expanded premises in the central business district of eastern Beijing (Guo Mao district)

Designated the Japan-China Exchange Year of Culture and Sports, the year 2007 has given impetus to an enthusiastic approach to exchanges, with at least 300 officially-recognized events being held in conjunction with the Exchange Year. The Japan Foundation, Beijing carried out a variety of activities during the course of the year, for the purpose of introducing young Chinese people, in particular, to contemporary Japanese culture. In April 2007 the first hub for promoting Japanese culture, the “Face-to-Face Cultural Exchange Center” was opened in Chengdu, Sichuan Province. The “Face-to-Face Cultural Exchange Center” features an all-white cutting-edge design, and visitors can access the latest Japanese magazines, manga and DVDs. In July, “J-Meeting Beijing 2007” took place, at which a lecture on anime music, a live music event by anime singers

(Jyukai and Makino Yui), and an exchange party were held. In addition, from September 2007 to January 2008, an exhibition entitled “Beautiful New World: Contemporary Visual Culture from Japan” was held in Beijing and Guangzhou, providing a comprehensive introduction to Japanese modern art. The exhibition attracted more than 70,000 visitors.

In FY2007 more than 200,000 persons in China took the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test, demonstrating the enthusiasm for Japanese-language learning in the country. The Japanese-language instructors at the Japan Foundation, Beijing visited educational institutions in various regions of China, where they provided training and advice.



Scene at exhibition “Beautiful New World: Contemporary Visual Culture from Japan”

Southeast Asian Bureau (Bangkok)

For further strengthening the relations of Japan and Southeast Asia

Establishment of Southeast Asian Bureau

The Southeast Asian Bureau was established in Bangkok in April 2007. Its aims are threefold. The first is to formulate, plan and coordinate policy for the Japan Foundation programs from a regional and comprehensive perspective. The second aim is to promote cooperation with related organizations and build networks, and the third is to engage in information collection and survey analysis concerning trends in international cultural

exchange in the region.

In its first year of operation the Bureau has formulated a proposal that will form the basis for a “Five-year Plan for Japan-Southeast Asia Cultural Exchange,” setting out guidelines for the promotion of the Japan Foundation programs in Southeast Asia. In addition, the Bureau has provided cooperation for a survey regarding the launch of the Singapore Creative Center and preparations for holding an international workshop for the Network of East Asian Studies (NEAS) (held in Bangkok in March), as well as conducting surveys in neighboring countries.

The Japan Foundation, Bangkok

An event-filled year celebrating the 120th anniversary of Japan-Thailand diplomatic ties

The year 2007 marked the 120th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Japan and Thailand. A wide variety of commemorative events took place, including: Opera Theater Konnyakuza’s “Pinocchio” performance tour, which visited Bangkok, three cities in north-eastern Thailand, and Laos; performances by the Japan Contemporary Dance Network (JCDN) of “*Odori ni iku ze!*” (We’re Gonna Go Dancing!); and performances by the Sawai Soukyokuin. In January, the Japan Film Festival was held over an eight-day period, at which 10 famous films from the 1950s and 1960s were screened.

Around 70,000 persons are studying Japanese in Thailand. Of this figure 30,000 are students in secondary education and 20,000 are in higher education. The Japan Foundation, Bangkok has provided training and seminars for Japanese-language teachers and has offered assistance programs for the development of

educational materials. As a result of an intensive 10-month training course for Japanese-language instructors, held jointly in 2007 with the Thai Ministry of Education, 12 new Japanese-language teachers graduated.

More than 100 people attended the first general meeting of the Japanese Studies Network (JSN), which connects Japanese studies scholars throughout Thailand. In terms of intellectual exchange, a seminar was organized entitled “Experience of Minamata: Community Revitalization and Environmental Restoration,” to which three people from the city of Minamata, including the former mayor, were invited. The participants from Minamata spoke about their efforts to overcome the problems caused by environmental pollution and how they aim to become an environmental model city for the world. The seminar resonated strongly with Thai participants, who are dealing with their own serious environmental issues.



“Experience of Minamata: Community Revitalization and Environmental Restoration” seminar

The Japan Foundation Center for Cultural Exchange in Vietnam

New office opens in Hanoi

On March 10, 2008 the first event commemorating the 35th anniversary of the establishment of Japan-Vietnam diplomatic relations was the opening ceremony of The Japan Foundation Center for Cultural Exchange in Vietnam. The ceremony was attended by government representatives from Japan and Vietnam, notable persons of culture, researchers, educators and members of the mass media. The ceremony was also attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education and Training Nguyen Thien Nhan, and Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism Hoang Tuan Anh, demonstrating the Vietnamese government’s strong interest in cultural affairs. Both ministers expressed their resolve that

Japan-Vietnam relations should expand not only in the political and economic arenas, but also in cultural ones.

At the ceremony, musicians Minegishi Issui and Thien Tam performed pieces on the one-stringed zither (ichigenkin).

The Japan Foundation Center for Cultural Exchange in Vietnam will continue to develop its activities to promote mutual understanding between the people of Japan and the people of Vietnam, with a focus on assistance for Japanese-language education.



Photo exhibition of works by Katsuo Megumi

The Japan Foundation, Jakarta

A balanced introduction to ancient Japanese traditions and modern Japan

A number of touring performances took place in Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries, including “Pinocchio” by Opera Theater Konnyakuza, performances by the Japan Contemporary Dance Network (JCDN), and the jazz pianist group, Satoru Shionoya Jazz Group. The start of 2008 marked the beginning of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Indonesia and it began with performances in Jakarta and Makassar of the Tsugaru Shamisen, a solo performance of Manri Kim of the Taihen Performance Troupe, and kabuki demonstrations and lectures. In addition, there was an exhibition of Japanese toys and an exhibition entitled “Counter-Photography: Japan’s Artists Today.”

In the area of language education, support was provided for improving the quality of local Japanese-language teachers, with active assistance for various workshops and study groups targeting instructors. In addition, a five-year project started in 2003 to develop Japanese-



“Japanese Language Text Book 1,” and “Japanese Language Text Book 2.”

language textbooks for secondary schools in Indonesia was finally completed in June 2007, with textbooks entitled “Japanese Language Text Book 1,” and “Japanese Language Text Book 2,” being distributed free of charge to each high school.

In Japanese studies, a joint one-day seminar was held with the Indonesian Association for Japanese Studies (ASJI) in Jakarta, at which four young Japanese studies researchers delivered presentations.

The Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur

A variety of events, including performances and exhibitions, were held to commemorate Japan-Malaysia Friendship Year 2007

Starting with “Forest of Remembrance” (Hutan Kenangan), a joint performance by Japanese and Malaysian persons with disabilities, a wide variety of events were held to commemorate Japan-Malaysia Friendship Year 2007. Other events included: “Pinocchio” by Opera Theater Konnyakuza, “Three Sisters” (Pappa Tarahumara), “Not Quite Right” by Strange Kinoko Dance Company, “Rakugo in English” (including Ohshima Kimie), “Flute Festival” by professional and amateur flautists from Japan and Malaysia, “Okinawa Traditional Dance and Music Concert” (Okinawa Culture Association), “Koto Orchestra Concert” (Sawai Soukyokuin), and a concert by Satoru Shionoya Jazz Group. In addition to the performing arts, exhibitions included “*Tokitsumugi* - The Grain of Strands from Some Moments,” an exhibition of kinetic sculptures by Tanaka Masato, the “Asia Manga Exhibition,” “Japan-Malaysia Children’s Picture Exhibition,” and “Counter Photography” by photographic artists from Japan and Malaysia. The annual Japanese Film Festival and Japanese Speech Contest were held as usual, and Japanese Kite Workshops were convened



A performance by Strange Kinoko Dance Company in Malaysia

along the length of the Malay Peninsula. In total, the Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur, organized or jointly hosted over 70 events this year.

In the area of Japanese-language education, the second group of students on the course to train Japanese-language teachers for secondary schools, which is being jointly implemented with the Ministry of Education of Malaysia, completed their course and graduated. Together with the first group of students, these teachers are now engaged as interns in secondary schools in every region of Malaysia.

The Japan Foundation, Manila

Active efforts to enrich the Japanese-language education environment

Japanese-language education has enjoyed great popularity in the Philippines for a number of years and there is a serious lack of Japanese-language instructors. In July 2007, the long-hoped-for library and classrooms were opened and these are now being used for human resource development activities through a variety of training programs. In addition, given that interest in Japanese pop culture is increasing, the library also features 900 manga volumes, with the hope being that they will serve as a hub for promoting information on pop culture.

The annual “*Nihongo* Fiesta” (held in February 2008) began as a means of expanding the various ways in which students of Japanese, in particular, can be introduced to Japanese culture. This year’s Fiesta was held in a Metro Manila shopping mall, and incorporated a variety of events, including Japanese-language speech and performance contests, and Japanese *wadaiko* drumming performances. There was also an exhibition of the station lunch boxes popular in Japan and a national contest to create a lunch box using ingredients found in Filipino cuisine. More than 70,000 people attended



Nihongo Caravan

the Fiesta. Furthermore, in order to elucidate Japanese-language educational needs among young people, there was the launch of the “Nihongo Caravan,” which travels to high schools offering a package of mock lessons and introductions to Japanese culture.

In locations outside Manila, the Japanese Film Festival was held in Cebu, in Iloilo on the island of Panay, and in Iligan on the island of Mindanao. An exhibition of modern ceramics was held in the northern Luzon city of Baguio and Dumaguete city on the island of Negros Oriental. A program was also implemented to invite university students from Mindanao to Japan, and support was provided for community leaders and a youth exchange project in which a forum for female Muslim leaders was convened.

The Japan Foundation, New Delhi

Energetic introduction to Japan in rapidly developing India

The year 2007 was designated as Japan-India Friendship Year and at the Japan Foundation, New Delhi, vigorous efforts were made to introduce Japan to the people of India. In August 2007, former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe paid a visit to India and in conjunction with the visit a Japanese film festival was held. From October to December an exhibition entitled “Vanishing Points: Contemporary Japanese Art” was held in New Delhi and Mumbai, and was highly praised by the people of India, along with numerous cultural performances. Examples of the many events include a *rakugo* performance by *rakugo* master Katsura Utamaru, readings of *haiku* poems, performances by soprano singers, *koto* performances by the Sawai Soukyokuin, and a performance of the *Tsugaru shamisen*.

In the area of Japanese-language education, the Japan Foundation, New Delhi provided assistance for the compilation of a curriculum text and instructor training for Japanese lessons at secondary schools in India. In addition, given the current situation in which the number of persons studying Japanese is increasing in India

– including at private schools and institutions of higher education, and in company training – this fiscal year the “Second National Japanese Language Liaison and Coordination Council” was held in cooperation with the Japanese embassy in New Delhi, building on the achievements of the previous year. The Japan Foundation also dispatched three Japanese-language advisers to India, where they provided support for Japanese-language education.

In the areas of Japanese studies and intellectual exchange, in addition to the dispatch of visiting fellows to Jawaharlal Nehru University and the University of Delhi, enhancement of library resources and visits to Japan by graduate students for training, other efforts to promote intellectual exchange between India and Japan were implemented, including support for a literary meeting held in October.



Opening ceremony for “Vanishing Points: Contemporary Japanese Art” exhibition

The Japan Foundation, Sydney

Building on the momentum from the Australia-Japan Year of Exchange to develop further programs

The Japanese Film Festival remains a popular fixture in Sydney. This year a total of 19 films were screened, from major studio movies to independent films, attracting 6,600 people in total. In addition, a variety of other events were held, using a diverse number of approaches to introduce Japanese culture, from traditional culture to modern art. These included a lecture and exhibition by the National Living Treasure of Embroidery Fukuda Kiju entitled “World of Embroidery,” a *Kazari Maki-zushi* demonstration, and the launch of “Facetnate!,” a public offering program for new visual artists, with a vision to expand cultural exchange between Japan and Australia through a contemporary arts exhibition.

In the area of Japanese-language education, in collaboration with the Art Gallery of New South Wales, educational resource materials aimed at secondary school students have been created to support Japanese-language teaching, based on the artworks held by the gallery, including Buddhist images and scrolls. Other efforts are being made to support Japanese-language education, including the development and launch of a third phase online Japanese class in which Japanese-



Training session for Japanese-language teachers

language teachers living in remote areas can participate, the implementation of training sessions for Japanese-language teachers, and Japanese speech contests.

The Japan Foundation, Sydney has also cooperated and offered support in such matters as the invitation of keynote speakers on the occasion of international meetings and symposia, including the annual meeting of the Japanese Studies Association of Australia. Support has also been provided for the promotion of research on Japan in Australia and the creation of a network of Japanese and Australian researchers.

The Japan Foundation, Toronto

Canada and Japan: introducing mutual points of interest through various artistic activities

The Japan Foundation, Toronto held an exhibition entitled “The Satoyama Story: Vivian Reiss in Japan,” which features work by the eponymous Canadian artist, who spent time living in a small hamlet in Japan, where, through interaction with the inhabitants together with interviews and sittings, she created a series of intensely personal portraits. In addition, as part of an exhibition entitled “The Spirit of *Budo*: The History of Japan’s Martial Arts,” Canadian writer Katherine Govier, who is fascinated by swordsmanship, gave a lecture entitled “My Musashi Pilgrimage,” about her visit to the final resting place of “sword saint” Miyamoto Musashi, and the items and images that she found on her pilgrimage. Also, an exhibition by Japanese artist Takeya Daisuke, who is resident in Canada, entitled “*kara*” was held. The exhibition sought to express the universality and various characteristics of the large cities of both Canada and Japan, by depicting them as viewed from a distance, from the air, or “*sora*” which is another reading of the character for “*kara*,” the name of the exhibition. These exhibitions demonstrated the various artistic activities in which Japanese and Canadian people are involved and were highly praised by Canadians, including those in the



Exhibition and concert with Vivian Reiss

art world.

Furthermore, the Japan Foundation, Toronto, jointly hosted or provided support for a variety of artistic events or film festivals in every region of Canada, and worked to introduce the diversity of Japanese culture through programs at the grassroots level. In the area of Japanese-language education, according to recent surveys the number of opportunities for learning Japanese in Canada – and accordingly the number of Japanese-language students – is rising. The Japan Foundation, Toronto has supported this trend across Canada, including through such activities as the dispatch of a Japanese-language teaching adviser to the province of Alberta.