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Cultivating mutual understanding by promoting interpersonal interaction through the universal medium of culture



▲ Ogoura Kazuo, President
The Japan Foundation.

The Japan Foundation serves as a catalyst for international communication in such fields as arts and culture, Japanese-language education, overseas Japanese studies and intellectual exchange, with the aim of contributing to world peace by promoting dialogue and interaction between Japanese and other peoples through the medium of culture. It is the only organization in Japan engaged in international cultural exchange in every region of the world.

Ever since it was founded in 1972, the Foundation has promoted people-to-people exchanges by implementing international cultural exchange programs. Having made a fresh start as an independent administrative institution in October 2003, it has lately been striving to conduct its programs more effectively by reforming its structure, personnel, and programs.

One of our new initiatives is the development of medium- to long-term regional strategies. In 2005 we formulated five-year plans for cultural exchange with China and South Korea and established planning offices to implement them, with the aim of alleviating friction between Japan and these countries. We also established a fund of ¥10 billion to facilitate new exchange programs with China. In one of our projects in the Middle East, meanwhile, children's books were donated to Iraqi children as a way of encouraging deeper understanding of Japan in a broad sense.

We have also begun implementing a new vision of cultural diplomacy in which cultural exchange is utilized to promote peace. As part of our new efforts to Japan to extend cultural assistance to regions undergoing reconstruction, we invited potters from the Istalif district of Afghanistan, a renowned center of ceramics production, and provided them with opportunities to observe Japanese ceramics arts and techniques, and to exchange opinions with representatives of the Japanese ceramics world.

One of the Foundation's longer-term challenges is to strengthen its overseas network. We are striving to respond flexibly to demands from around the world by making effective use of our limited resources.

This annual report outlines the programs conducted by the Japan Foundation in fiscal year 2005, as well as providing financial, organizational, and statistical information. It is my sincere hope that through this report, readers will gain a fresh perspective on how the Foundation undertakes a wide range of activities transcending time and space in all corners of the globe.

Overview of 2005 Programs

In 2005, YOKOHAMA2005: International Triennale of Contemporary Art was held for three months starting from the end of September, with the city's Yamashita Pier serving as the main venue. A total of 71 works by 86 artists from 30 countries and regions were exhibited.

At the end of March 2006, the Japan Foundation organized a symposium entitled, "A Wild Haruki Chase," in Tokyo, Kobe, and Sapporo, inviting those from around the world who have translated the works of Murakami Haruki. More than 20 translators discussed the charm of Murakami, whose works have been translated into more than 30 languages.

In addition, three main anniversary projects in which the Foundation actively participated also took place in 2005.

▶ "Kaiin no Uma"
Performed by Dairakudakan in Seoul.
Photo by Fukunaga Koji



▶ "Cubism in Asia"
Poster for the exhibition in Seoul.
National Museum of Contemporary
Art, Korea.



Japan-Korea Friendship Year 2005 Fortieth anniversary of the normalization of Korea-Japan relations

During a visit to Japan in 2003 by Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun, the national leadership of Japan and Korea agreed to designate 2005, the fortieth anniversary of the normalization of Korea-Japan relations, as Japan-Korea Friendship Year. The special designation was seen to provide an opportunity for deepening mutual understanding, particularly among young people who will be the leaders of the next generation, by promoting exchanges in every field—culture, economics, and society—and to build a firm foundation for the two countries to advance together in the 21st century. Under this initiative, the Japan Foundation organized various events.



2006 Australia-Japan Year of Exchange

Commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the signing of the Basic Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Australia and Japan

▼ Hayashi Eitetsu and the "TaikOz" tour.
Photo by Kanamori Mayu



The 2006 Australia-Japan Year of Exchange was originally planned at a 2003 Japan-Australia summit meeting to further strengthen friendship, mutual understanding, and cooperation between the two countries, particularly at the grass-roots level. Opening events held in six Australian cities from February to March 2006 included performances by Hayashi Eitetsu, Japan's leading Japanese drummer, with TaikOz, an Australian group of Japanese drummers, shakuhachi (Japanese flute) player Riley Lee, and didgeridoo (Aboriginal folk instrument) performer Matthew Doyle.

The opening event of the Australia-Japan Dance Exchange 2006 (AJdX2006) was held in February 2006 in Yokohama. This initiative was coorganized by the Japan Foundation, the Japan Contemporary Dance Network, and the Australia Council for the Arts to support the production of international performing arts and the exchange of young choreographers and dancers.



▶ "Underneath"
Australia-Japan Dance Exchange 2006
BATIK x DANCE NORTH/SPLINTER GROUP.
Photo by Non Takagi





2005 EU-Japan Year of People-to-People Exchanges

At the eleventh EU-Japan summit meeting in 2002, Japan and the European Union agreed to declare 2005, the halfway point of a decade of EU-Japan cooperation, as EU-Japan Year of People-to-People Exchanges. The Japan Foundation organized a variety of projects in the arts along with cultural, intellectual, and citizen exchange programs including “YOKAI: Bestiary of the Japanese Fantastic” in Paris, “CHIKAKU: Time and Memory in Japan” in Austria and Spain while also supporting other private initiatives.



- ▲ “YOKAI: Bestiary of the Japanese Fantastic” held at the Japan Cultural Institute in Paris traced the origin and transformation of images of supernatural beings, monsters, and spirits of Japan (*yokai*), mainly through Edo-period artworks such as *ukiyo-e*.

Bessekaiikan (Scroll of Another World) by Nichosai. Middle of the Edo period.
© Kansai University Library, Osaka

- ▶ “Sakamoto Kazunari, Houses: Poetics in the Ordinary”
This exhibition introduces Kazunari Sakamoto’s major works on residences and collective housing estates over the last 30-plus years, from 1969 until now.



- ▶ “Hinoki-ya, the traveling band”
Hakodate-based Japanese music group on their European tour.
Photo by Emoto Hideyuki



- ▲ “JIKI: Japanese Porcelains 1610-1760” held in Brussels and Paris. Introduced in this exhibition are porcelains produced between the 1610s, when the first Japanese porcelain was made, and the 1750s when its export was most active. Octagonal large jar with underglaze cobalt-blue and overglaze polychrome enamel design of phoenix and peony. © Kyushu Ceramic Museum



- ▶ CHIKAKU: Time and Memory in Japan
“La charme” by Kasahara Emiko.
Photo by André Fraga



▶ Festival International Cervantino, "Natsu no Tobira" (The Summer Door) performed by Ishinha at the most famous art festival in Latin America (Mexico). Photo by Fukumaga Koji



▶ The 46th International Speech Contest in Japanese. The contest was held in Tottori prefecture on June 18, 2005, with participation of foreign people chosen from all over Japan.



▶ "Hidajimbo" performance in Eastern Europe. Japan's leading percussionist unit "Hidajimbo" gave a performance tour in Eastern Europe.



▶ "Proposals for YOKOHAMA 2005" by COUMA, under the overall theme of "Art Circus". YOKOHAMA 2005: International Triennale of Contemporary Art.

▶ "Mother's 2000-2005: Traces of the Future" by Ishiuchi Miyako, in the Japanese pavillion. With large-size photographs displayed in a marble-floored room, this approach was both effective and well-received.



▶ Japanese-Language Proficiency Test. This year the tests were held at 116 sites simultaneously on December 4, 2005, including the newly-added countries of Switzerland, Denmark, Finland, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.





●●● Aspiring to Bring a Richness and Resonance to the World

As Japan's only organization that undertakes comprehensive international cultural exchange projects in every region of the globe, the Japan Foundation is working to build a future of harmonious coexistence for the people of Japan and the world.

Outline of the Organization

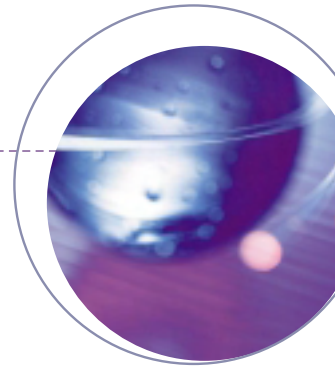
The Japan Foundation was established in 1972 as a special legal entity under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to undertake Japan's international cultural exchange and was subsequently reorganized as an independent administrative institution on October 1, 2003.

The foundation employs a total of 229 staff members (as of March 31, 2006) and consists of a head quarters in Tokyo, a branch office in Kyoto, two Japanese-language institutes (Urawa and Kansai), and 19 overseas offices in 18 countries.

Based on a financial foundation of government investment (¥111 billion), our operation is funded by revenues from government subsidies and investments, and donations from the private sector.

Purpose of the Foundation

The purpose of the Japan Foundation Independent Administrative Institution (*Dokuritsu Gyōsei Hōjin Kokusai Kōryū Kikin*: hereinafter called the "Foundation"), is to contribute to the improvement of a good international environment, and to the maintenance and development of the harmonious foreign relationships with Japan, by the efficient and comprehensive implementation of activities for international cultural exchange, which will deepen other nations' understanding of Japan, promote better mutual understanding among nations, and contribute to cultural and other fields in the world. (*The Law of the Japan Foundation Independent Administrative Institution, Article 3*)



● ● ● Deepening Mutual Understanding through Cultural Exchange

Three Program Areas of the Japan Foundation

Arts and Cultural Exchange

We communicate the diverse cultural contributions of modern Japan to the world, including both our traditional culture and contemporary culture that is now capturing global attention. We are also creating new exchange forums for artists, and people engaged in cultural activities at home and abroad. In addition, we are promoting international exchanges through production activities in various areas, including the visual arts, performing arts, and publications.

Japanese-Language Education Overseas

To further support and encourage Japanese-language education abroad, we operate comprehensive Japanese-language support programs, including the overseas dispatch of Japanese-language experts, the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test, and offering training opportunities to foreign teachers of Japanese, as well as developing and supplying teaching materials.

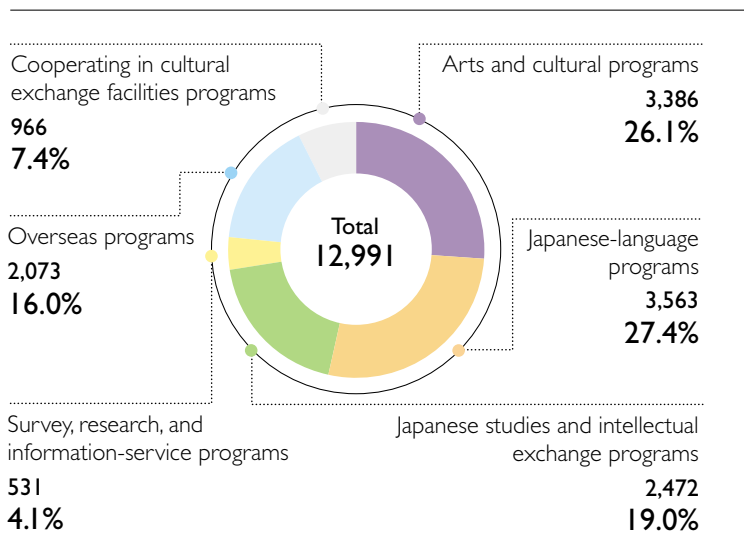
Japanese Studies and Intellectual Exchange

To foster better understanding of Japanese society, its culture, and customs and manners, we support the pursuit of Japanese studies abroad. We also are communicating the actual state of Japanese society through the promotion of international dialogues and research. We are also facilitating networks for tackling global issues as well as supporting dialogue between civilizations.

Japan Foundation Information Center (JFIC)

JFIC serves as our communications nexus in publicizing our message on the Internet and in print. This is also a site for information gathering and research on Japanese studies, international exchange, and cultural policies.

Breakdown of 2005 expenditures by program area (Unit: millions of yen)



Representative Efforts

▼ China

In our Japan-China exchange programs, the Japan Foundation implemented the programs involving the sending and inviting of academics and journalists with the cooperation of organizations such as the Japan-China Friendship Association and the Chinese Political Consultative Conference. Additional related lectures and discussions were held. We created “My Opinion” a website for directly posting opinions of academics from various fields in both Japan and China. The site became very popular and was used as a source of news by various Chinese media.



▲ The Japan Foundation, Beijing.

▼ South Korea

The Japan Foundation created the office for planning Japan-Korea cultural exchanges and developed a Five-Year Plan for Japan-Korea Cultural Exchange starting in April 2006 in collaboration with external experts to strengthen Japan-Korea exchange projects over the mid- to long-term. The plan particularly focuses on enhancing people-to-people exchanges and network building between the two countries.



▲ The Japan Foundation, Seoul.

▼ The United States

The Japan Foundation promotes intellectual exchanges and youth and citizen exchanges through the Center for Global Partnership. The Abe Fellowship Program is working to build a network and expand the ripple effects by holding meetings including workshops in which former fellows also participate.

In terms of Japanese studies, we conducted a survey for improving the Japan Foundation Fellowship program based on the recommendation of the American Advisory Committee. In the United States, 29 fellowships were awarded, the largest number for any single country.



▲ A lecture introducing *ukiyo-e* (Seattle).

▼ The Middle East

A mission of six experts was dispatched to Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Tunisia as the third Japan-Middle East Cultural Exchange and Dialogue Mission. A report and recommendations were compiled laying out cultural policy guidelines for the Middle East based on the results of the three missions and the report submitted to former Prime Minister Koizumi.

The Second Japan-Arab Intellectual Dialogue Agenda Setting Meeting was held in Tokyo in December 2005.



▲ Haiku poet Mayuzumi Madoka and poets from Middle Eastern countries (Bahrain).

Japan Foundation Award and Japan Foundation Special Prizes 2005

Since 1973, we have annually presented the Japan Foundation Award to individuals and groups who have made an outstanding contribution over a period of time, while the Japan Foundation Special Prizes are presented to individuals and groups who have demonstrated rich creativity and a pioneering spirit with significant potential for future contributions. The Japan Foundation Special Prizes are presented in the three fields of arts and culture, Japanese-language education and Japanese studies (intellectual exchange), which represent the three pillars of the Japan Foundation's operations.

In 2005, final decisions were made after deliberation by a separate meeting of experts in each field. The award ceremony was held at Hotel Okura Tokyo on October 4, 2005.

The Japan Foundation Award



▲ Howl's Moving Castle ©2004 Nibariki, GNDDTM.

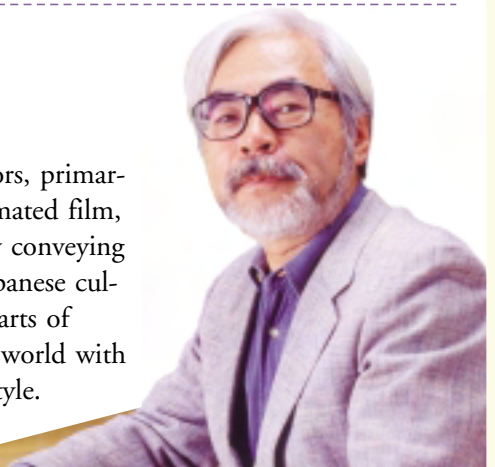


▲ Spirited Away ©2001 Nibariki, GNDDTM.

Miyazaki Hayao

Animated Film Director
(Japan)

Miyazaki's artistic endeavors, primarily in the medium of animated film, have succeeded in broadly conveying the universal appeal of Japanese culture and capturing the hearts of young people around the world with a distinctive storytelling style.



The Japan Foundation Special Prizes

Special Prize for Arts and Culture

Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA) (The Philippines)

PETA has been conducting educational and community-building efforts through its theatrical presentations and has undertaken collaborative initiatives with artistic and civic groups in many Asian countries, including Japan. It is also expected to play a key role in the formation of an Asian art network.



Special Prize for Japanese-Language Education

China-Japanese Education Association (China)

The Association has served as the central, coordinating body for Japanese-language instructors at various Chinese universities and has been a major factor behind the enhanced quality of Japanese-language instruction in China. It is expected to continue to lead as



Japanese-language education spreads throughout East Asia.

Special Prize for Japanese Studies

Dr. Tabassum Kashmiri (Pakistan)

Dr. Tabassum has significantly advanced the research of the Urdu language and Urdu literature in Japan and is expected to contribute to academic and cultural exchange between Japan and Urdu-speaking peoples, as well as to deepen mutual understanding between Japan and Pakistan.

