

Global Network

Introduction to activities undertaken at the Japan Foundation's overseas offices



The Japan Foundation, Seoul

In the field of graphic arts, the Japan Foundation, Seoul opened a poster exhibition featuring the work of Nakamura Makoto, the long-time artistic director of Shiseido, the cosmetic company.

In performing arts, the Kijima Daiko Drum Troop – a group of junior and senior high school students who won the Tokyo International Taiko Contest 2006 – was invited to South Korea, where the troop gave 6 performances in Ulsan and Kwangju. In March, third-generation Korean resident of Japan, Shofukutei Ginpei was invited to

perform *rakugo* (traditional comic storytelling) in the Korean language, in Seoul, Kwangju, and Pusan.

In the areas of research and intellectual exchange on Japan, the authors of *The Power of Japanese Culture* – which was supported by the Japan Foundation's assistance for the publication of Japan-related books – came to Korea in March for a lecture series.



Performance by Kijima Daiko Drum Troop (Ulsan)

The Japan Foundation, Beijing

In order to strengthen cooperation in China, the Japan Foundation, Beijing moved its office to new premises, located at the Central Business District in the eastern part of the city, and improved its facilities and functions.

In FY 2006, the long-term and mid-term invitation program for Chinese high school students started to further promote youth exchanges between China and Japan. In addition, an exchange hub “Face-to-Face Exchange Center” was opened in Chengdu, Sichuan Province in April 2007. “Hub” is a kind of small-scale

information center where visitors can enjoy Japanese latest music CDs, DVDs, magazines and books, etc. This is the first Hub to open, but more are planned to follow.

In March 2007, the Rin' Concert Tour visited Beijing, Shanghai, and Xi'an, and was well received particularly by the younger generation. The “Ryukanet,” a network of Japanese students studying in China launched in FY2005, continues to expand steadily.



Rin' Concert Tour

The Japan Foundation, Jakarta

A number of events took place in Jakarta over the course of the year, including a fashion design exhibition titled *Iketeru (Hip and Happen') Harajuku* and a performance of *Tokyo Note* by the Seinendan theater company, which was written and directed by Hirata Oriza. In addition, various activities to assist children in central Java have been implemented, along with a painting contest.

In language education, the Japan Foundation supported a variety of training and study groups for Japanese-language teachers. In June, the 1st Southeast Asia Japanese-Language Summit was held in Bandung, and

the Japan Foundation, Jakarta has also held a Japanese speech contest and offered intermediate and advanced Japanese-language courses.

In the area of Japan studies, the Japan Foundation, Jakarta held colloquiums with Islamic intellectuals, as well as a joint seminar in the capital with the Indonesian Association for Japanese Studies, to which the President of the National Defense Academy of Japan, Dr. Iokibe Makoto, was invited.



Tokyo Note, performed by Seinendan in Jakarta

The Japan Foundation, Bangkok

To commemorate the 120th anniversary of diplomatic ties between Japan and Thailand, the Japanese drum performance by two drum groups, Tokyo Dagekidan and Hono-O-Daiko, was shown in Bangkok. A lecture and demonstration on the famous series of poems known as the *Ogura Hyakunin Isshu*, and on *Karuta*, the card game based on those poems, was also held. Participants experienced an actual game of competitive *Karuta* at the demonstration.

In the area of Japanese language education, a joint project with the Thai Ministry of Education was resumed, giving

an intensive 10-month training of Japanese-language and the method of teaching the language to high school teachers who are willing to convert to Japanese-language teachers.

With regard to Japan-related research, the Japan Foundation, Bangkok held a seminar to introduce the development of Umaji Village in Kochi Prefecture, a local community in Japan.



“Hyakunin Isshu Karuta” lecture and demonstration

The Japan Foundation, Manila

To celebrate the Philippines-Japan Friendship Year in 2006 and to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the two countries’ diplomatic relations, a variety of events were held in the Metro Manila area and throughout the Philippines. Popular contemporary dance group The Condors performed, while in the traditional arts, a cast of students from the University of the Philippines staged an ensemble performance of a *Noh* play under the guidance of a master from the Kanze School of *Noh* drama. In

modern drama, a horror-comedy musical directed by Chong Wishing was devised and performed to great acclaim.

A photographic exhibition “The World Heritage in Japan” was held in 16 venues around the country, attracting a total of 24,000 visitors.



Commemorative performance of *Noh* theater (July 24) Photograph © Joseph G. Uy, Jr.

The Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur

The Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur invited modern theatrical groups Seinendan, KUDAN Project, and Sankai Juku to perform and also organized a performing arts workshop by stage set and costume design specialists from Japan. In January, a Japanese drum performance opened the commemoration of Japan-Malaysia Friendship Year 2007.

To promote cultural events outside Kuala Lumpur, many events have taken place in cities around Malaysia. These have included demonstrations of ancient martial arts, film screenings, and lectures on Japanese themes by Professor

Tanaka Akihiko of the University of Tokyo.

In Japanese-language education, the Japan Foundation, Kuala Lumpur assists the Ministry of Education, Malaysia in the development of a new Japanese-language syllabus, textbook, and teachers for its secondary schools. Seminars for instructors and courses for intermediate to advanced Japanese learners continue to be implemented.



Performance by KUDAN Project, “*Yaji and Kita*”

The Japan Foundation, New Delhi

In September 2006, the Japan Foundation, New Delhi, moved to new premises. At the opening ceremony on December 4, guests were treated to a performance of the Okura School of *Noh* drama.

2007 is the Japan-India Friendship Year. In January, *Performing Women Medea Jocasta & Clytemnestra*, a theatrical collaboration involving Iran, India, Uzbekistan, and Japan, was performed, while in February the Oedo Sukeroku Daiko showcased their Japanese drumming

talents on tour in Chennai, Pune, and New Delhi. In March, a *Noh* drama of the Kanze School was performed, with master Kanze Kiyokazu.

Starting in FY2006, a Japanese-language course has been introduced into secondary schools, and the Japan Foundation has provided support in formulating curricula and textbooks.



Performance by Oedo Sukeroku Daiko in New Delhi

The Japan Foundation, Sydney

The crew of *WONDERBUS Japan* toured Queensland for two weeks in May 2006, with the aim of encouraging the children who live across the state to engage in cultural exchanges.

In the area of culture and the performing arts, *Tsugaru: Soul & Beat of Japan*, a performance of the Tsugaru shamisen, was held in 3 cities around Australia. *Rapt!—20 Contemporary Artists from Japan* offered an ambitious program of exhibitions, symposiums, and events introducing modern Japan. At the Japan Film Festival in Sydney, 19 films were screened for the public.

In the areas of Japan-related research and intellectual exchange, the Japan Foundation held a series of 4 Japan-Australia Forums as a way of stimulating international cooperation between Japan and Australia, and published a new academic journal targeting early career researchers, called *New Voices*.



Crew of *WONDERBUS Japan*

The Japan Foundation, Toronto

The Japan Foundation, Toronto hosted the exhibition *Shojo Manga! Girl Power!*, which explored the unique styles of female manga artists and their contributions to the development of *shojo manga*. More than 200 pieces by 23 cartoonists were exhibited. Performances of the ancient “kamigata” style of *rakugo* storytelling by Katsura Koharudanji, with English and French subtitles, were held in 4 Canadian cities, and garnered wide acclaim. In conjunction with the “Masahiro Mori Ceramic Design Exhibition,” the touring exhibition “Japanese Design Today 100” was staged at the Design Exchange. Akutagawa Prize-winning author Tawada Yoko, presented

a lecture and reading in Toronto. The Japan Foundation also supported the Kanze-style *Noh* performances at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto and the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau.

In the area of Japanese-language education, a Japanese-language teaching adviser was dispatched to the province of Alberta.



Traditional *rakugo* performed by Katsura Koharudanji

The Japan Foundation, New York

Writers Tawada Yoko and Kirino Natsuo gave lectures and readings in 5 East Coast and 5 West Coast cities, with the aim of introducing the splendor of modern Japanese literature to as wide an American audience as possible.

As the secretariat of Performing Arts Japan, the Japan Foundation, New York supported 5 touring performances, including a 12-city tour of North America by Sankai Juku, and provided grants for 5 joint creative projects, such as a collaboration between Trisha Brown and Okazaki Kenjiro entitled *I Love My Robots*. In addition, as part of the ongoing project to dispatch Japanese experts resident in

the U.S. to Central and South America, a total of 5 groups, including 3 performance groups active in the U.S., were dispatched to 14 cities in 8 countries across Latin America.

The Japan Foundation, New York has also worked toward the creation of a network of Japanese Studies scholars.



Writer Tawada Yoko at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst

The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles

In the heart of Hollywood, the entertainment capital of the world, the Japan Foundation collaborated with the American Cinematheque and the Korean Cultural Center to promote an event entitled “Korean and Japanese Animation Today.” Anime films from Japan and South Korea were screened, and then discussed by a panel of directors, producers, and critics. The event was sold out two weeks before the opening and proved to be a tremendous success.

In addition, makers of traditional *washi* hand-made paper were invited from Kochi Prefecture to provide an

introduction to the world of traditional Japanese crafts. This event started in Los Angeles, and continued on to Idaho, Montana, and Colorado where there are starkly fewer opportunities to experience traditional Japanese culture.



Hosoda Mamoru, anime-film director of *The Girl Who Leapt Through Time*, and Bum-Jin Joe, director of *Achi & Ssipak*

The Japan Foundation, Mexico

In cultural and arts exchange, the Japan Foundation organized 3 touring exhibitions that visited 8 cities in Mexico, including the modern photography exhibition titled *Out of ordinary/extraordinary*. Screenings of the films of Shindo Kaneto was also held. In the fall, to increase the availability of Spanish-language information about Japanese arts and culture, the Japan Foundation launched a website called “Arte en Japón” (<http://www.fjmex.org/arte.japon/>).

The Japan Foundation, Mexico also dispatched specialists in the tea ceremony and flower arrangement to neighboring countries, cooperating in various programs

designed to introduce Japanese culture to the countries of Central America. We also made efforts to strengthen the foundation of Japanese-language education.

In the area of Japanese studies, we supported the establishment of the Latin American Association of Japanese Studies, aimed at promoting Japan-related research in Central and South America.



Introduction of Japanese books at the Guadalajara International Book Fair

The Japan Foundation, São Paulo

During FY2006, the Japan Foundation, São Paulo held a number of lectures centered around Japanese cuisine. These included an introduction to Japanese cuisine by Arnaldo Lorençato, editor of *Vêja São Paulo* magazine, a lecture on Japanese etiquette by table manners by Toyoda Rumi, a talk on immigrant history through food by Professor Mori Koichi of University of São Paulo, and dialogues with three chefs of Japanese cuisine: Murakami Tsuyoshi, Adriano Kanashiro, and Carlos Ribeiro.

Also launched were a variety of other programs and events. These included Japan’s participation in the 27th

São Paulo Biennale, with Shimabuku, and Atelier Bow-Wow (the architectural duo of Tsukamoto Yoshiharu and Kaijima Momoyo), along with lectures by Professor Hasegawa Yuko, as well as a debate concerning Japanese philosophy.

Furthermore, the Karaoke Caravan 2007, that traveled around Brasil, encouraged Japanese-language learners using the medium of song.



Karaoke Caravan 2007 prizewinners in São Paulo

The Japan Cultural Institute in Rome

The Japan Cultural Institute in Rome is dedicated to providing a balanced and effective introduction to various aspects of Japanese culture. Events in 2006 included an exhibition on Japanese paper (*Kozo*), an exhibition of *kabuki-e* works, and a Mario Verdone Selection Series of Japanese Films. A number of performances were also held, encompassing a broad selection of genres: *Kodan* traditional storytelling, *Zashikimai* traditional dance, a modern dance performance by the Condors, jazz by Watanabe Kazumi, classics by young Japanese musicians, and contemporary music composed by Hosokawa Toshio. A variety of participatory demonstrations were also held, including demonstrations of *Kodo* (the art of incense) and Japanese martial arts.

The Institute also developed collaborative relationships with cultural organizations in Fabriano, Busto Arsizio, Turin, Bologna, Cagliari, and Venice, in order to meet the increasing requests to hold events on Japanese culture in those locations.



Swordsmanship demonstration
Photograph © Mario Boccia

To make the Institute more accessible to the public, Saturday morning openings have begun, with a variety of programs including exhibitions, garden tours, library openings and voluntarily Japanese conversation meeting. Three new Japanese-language classes for beginners have also been added to provide more occasions.

The Japan Foundation, London

In the year 2006, a variety of events were organized, including a lecture by writer Natsuki Ikezawa, the film season "Move over, Ozu" the theme of which painted a picture of modern family life in Japan, and a performance entitled *Jupiter* by the dance company Condors.

The area of Japanese language education was also very active; in addition to strengthening our promotional activities, The Japan Foundation, London also developed a new program for fostering human resources, launching the volunteer program, StepOutNet. We also announced the publication of teaching materials set to syllabus

requirements for GCSE examinations.

Furthermore, we organized a reunion for active researchers and artists who had received Japan Foundation Fellowships, and who have played a vital role in Japan-UK exchange. This was not only an opportunity to strengthen our network but reaffirmed the importance of supporting advance research on Japan.



Reunion of Japan Foundation Fellows

The Japan Cultural Institute in Cologne

The Japan Cultural Institute in Cologne has held various attractive programs and events, including a photographic exhibition of Buddhist images, *Kugelblitz: Japan-German Comic Project* exhibition, an ensemble performance with traditional musical instruments from China, Japan, and Korea, and lectures and demonstrations on the art and history of the Japanese tea. The Institute has also participated actively in events like "Expedition Colonia," "Kölner Musiknacht," and "Lange Nacht der Museen."

Many other events, like a poetry reading by Japanese poet and scholar of modern German poetry Suzuki Shun and

Swiss poet Beat Brechbühl, and screenings of films by directors Naruse Mikio and Nakagawa Nobuo were also held in the Institute.

The Japan Cultural Institute in Cologne actively offers Japanese language courses from beginner to advanced level, and provides a useful reference service thanks to a well-stocked library of approximately 20,000 volumes.



Lectures on Japanese tea, in cooperation with Ippodo Tea Co. (February 2007)

The Japan Cultural Institute in Paris

(Maison de la culture du Japon à Paris)

The Japan Cultural Institute in Paris held various exhibitions, including one entitled *KATAGAMI-Paper Stencils and Japonisme*, and one featuring wood block prints and paintings of Munakata Shiko.

On stage, the Japan Cultural Institute in Paris hosted a contemporary dance collaboration by Kim Maeja and Ohno Yoshito, and a similar event with Mie Coquempot and Yoshizaka Ichiro. Other popular and groundbreaking performances were “Jazz in Japan ’06” with jazz musician Watanabe Kazumi, the first performance in France by dance group The Condors, and a staging of *From S Plateau*, written and produced by Hirata Oriza,

by his theatrical company, Seinendan.

In film, more than 8,000 people gathered respectively to enjoy retrospectives on the works of Naruse Mikio and a collection of the entire 36 works of Ozu Yasujiro.

A number of lectures were also held; particularly well received were a lecture on *The Tale of Genji* by the late Dr. Kawai Hayao, Commissioner of the Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan, and a talk on judo by the Olympic and world champion Yamashita Yasuhiro.



Exhibition *KATAGAMI: Paper Stencils and Japonisme*, Medium stencil showing peony scrollwork”© Takemoto Hayuji

The Japan Foundation, Budapest

A variety of events were held in FY2006, including the Japan Foundation’s participation in the International Book Festival, Budapest in April, performances of the Okura School of *Kyogen* in 3 cities in Hungary in June, and an exhibition of *ukiyo-e* paintings depicting *kabuki* artists at the Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest. Yoshimura Fumi also gave a traditional dance performance, and Örökmozgó Cinema was home to a twice-monthly screening of Japanese films.

As the Japan Foundation, Budapest has moved to new and more spacious premises, it is now able to hold a

Japan-related lecture by a Hungarian individual once a month in the reading room of the library. In November, this lecture was given by a popular comedian who had recently published a memoir of his time in Japan.

In addition, 8 Japanese-language classes were provided: each class was held twice a week, which substantially increased the number of students.



Lecture by art historian Dr. Petranyi (May 2006)

The Japan Foundation, Cairo

The Japan Foundation, Cairo held its Middle East Seminar on Japanese-Language Education, promoting the training of teachers in the Middle East and the creation of a language education network. It also launched a Japanese-language class in Egypt’s second city, Alexandria, with assistance from the private sector. To commemorate the launch of these language courses, a photographic panel “World Heritage in Japan” was exhibited in the Library of Alexandria.

In the area of arts and cultural exchange, a variety of joint concerts were held, including a performance of traditional

music on the *koto* and violin, and a joint concert by a Japanese flautist and an Egyptian violinist.

Moreover, as the Japan Foundation in Cairo serves as a regional base for cultural activities in the Middle East, it has implemented a Japanese film festival in Amman, Jordan’s capital, with the assistance of the Japanese Embassy in Egypt.



Japanese and Egyptian musicians of chamber music