

## Information Service and Cooperation with Other Organizations in Japan

In addition to implementing programs in three major areas, the Japan Foundation provides information on cultural exchange activities in Japan and abroad, engages in collaborative projects with the private sector, and works with universities to conduct research on international exchange.



JFIC Lounge

Photo: Masuda Tomoyasu

### Information Center

#### **Wochi Kochi Web Magazine and Information Service Events**

The Japan Foundation Information Center (JFIC) provides information on international cultural exchange activities through public and media relations, the web magazine *Wochi Kochi* (Near and Far), its annual report, website, blog, twitter, and e-mail newsletters. We also implement collaborative programs with organizations in Japan, operate the Japan Foundation Awards and the Japan Foundation Prizes for Global Citizenship (see p.8), and manage the operation of the JFIC space comprised of the JFIC Library and the Event Space. Moreover, we welcome and offer tours to students.

*Wochi Kochi*, the only periodical in Japan on international cultural exchange, was re-launched as a web magazine in August 2010. It serves as a door to a wide range of reports and resources and as a digital archive of past articles. It features a cover story every month. Stories included in the fiscal 2010 issues were "The Future of International Cultural Exchange," "Cross-Border Literature," "Music Links Japan and Africa," "Manga as a Way of Expression," "Cultural Heritage Lives on Today," "Spellbound by Japanese Cinema," and "The World Meets Butoh."

The JFIC organized a series of new events in various genres, including "Cultural Meeting Point" that provided cultural affairs officers of foreign embassies in Tokyo with information on the cultural environment, a talk session and mini concert by two leading Japanese guitarists, Ohagi Yasuji and Shomura Kiyoshi titled "To the World, with My Guitar," and seminars for young artists called "Air! Air! Improve Yourself Overseas."

Furthermore, in celebration of the renewal of the *AIR\_J* website,



Left: Talk session by Ohgaki Yasuji and Shomura Kiyoshi

Right: *Wochi Kochi* web magazine <http://www.wochikochi.jp/english/>

which is dedicated to disseminating information on Artist-in-Residence programs across Japan, a forum called "Artist-in-Residence and Creative Core in the Cities" was held.

The Japan Foundation Supporters Club stopped recruiting new members in fiscal 2009. Yet, until its termination at the end of January 2011, the club continued to publish a newsletter and e-mail magazine, and organized five events such as the talk session entitled "Kinoshita Keisuke, Great Master of Japanese Film" and an exhibition of Kirigami (paper cutouts) works by a Japanese artist who visited Russia, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

The JFIC library held small theme exhibitions from its collection. From June to September 2010, guidebooks on Japan in the Meiji and Taisho periods were exhibited, and from October 2010 to January 2011, books of photography in the Meiji period. Visitors enjoyed the opportunity to view these precious collections up close.

## Exposing Young People Overseas to Japan through Design

The Office for Project Development and Corporate Partnership carried out the "Packaging Design Exchange Project of Japanese-Korean Students," more generally known as the "Happy Cube Award," to promote exchange between young people in Japan and Korea in collaboration with individuals, companies, and organizations such as the Japan Package Design Association, the Korea Package Design Association, Lotte, and Dai Nippon Printing Co., Ltd. The project is a packaging design competition in the categories of sweets, drinks, and cosmetics/toiletry for students of design in both countries. Among the 560 entries from Japan and Korea, the best designs in each category were exhibited in both countries. Under this project a design forum was held in Japan, and Korean students were invited to Japan for training. After interacting with companies and professional designers in the competition, the participants commented that "getting thumbs up on my work from a professional gave me confidence" and "now I understand differences in design between Japan and Korea." To maintain the ties built through this project, a follow-up event will take place. Moreover, the second International Furoshiki Design Contest for Students was held. Students in Germany, Indonesia, Australia, Canada, the U.S., Brazil, Russia, Vietnam, and Singapore submitted



Exhibition of award-winning designs in the packaging design competition

designs that represented a fusion of Japan and their countries. Four award-winning designs were put on sale as JF original Furoshiki. Likewise, the "Furoshiki Design Competition for Turkish and Japanese Students" took place on the theme of the imagery of fusion of Turkey and Japan. The two best designs were turned into commercial products.

The office also works with overseas units of Japanese companies to promote international cultural exchange through social activities. In fiscal 2010, we published a report of a survey conducted in 2009 on corporate responsibility of Japanese firms in China and Vietnam.

## Joint Research Institute for International Peace and Culture

### Holding Seminars and Symposiums to Disseminate Research Results

The Joint Research Institute for International Peace and Culture is operated in partnership between the Japan Foundation and Aoyama Gakuin University with the aim to expand international exchange through conducting academic research, analyzing and evaluating international exchange activities, developing methods for international exchange, and feeding back the research results to society.

In fiscal 2010, the institute held symposiums on themes like "fostering peace through cultural initiatives" and "comparative studies on international cultural organizations," and published the research bulletin *Peace and Culture*, Vol.3 No.1.



Round-table discussion on peace and culture held at the Japan Foundation, New York  
Website of the institute <http://www.jripec.aoyama.ac.jp/english/>

## Kyoto Office

### Collaborating with Various Partners to Introduce Japanese Culture

The Kyoto office is developing a network with various partners in the Kansai region to introduce Japanese culture to students and researchers from abroad.

To this end the office holds hands-on events such as making Japanese sweets, visiting sake breweries, and touring brocade mills, as well as events with bilingual commentary, including performances of Noh and Kyogen and screenings of Japanese movies. An "Evening of Noh and Kyogen" started in 1974 and marked its 37th anniversary in 2010. The event attracted an enthusiastic audience of 380 people. The Kyoto office also organizes lectures, seminars, and gatherings of Japan Foundation research fellows to provide them with opportunities to meet and talk with local citizens interested in international cultural exchange. The fiscal 2010 fellow seminar

included a lecture covering "the image of Japan in Russian newspapers during the period of the Sino-Japanese War" by Marina Kovalchuk.



Left: Kyogen *Suo-otoshi* (Dropped Gift) by Shigeyama Sengoro  
Right: Noh *Funa-benkei* (Benkei in the Boat) by Katayama Kurouemon Photos: Takahashi Akio