

Looking Back on 2011/2012

The Japan Foundation promoted a wide variety of programs and projects in fiscal 2011, introducing Japanese arts, theater, publications, audio-visual works, and lifestyle of Japan to the world, programs designed to deepen the understanding of Japan through the Japanese language and to foster Japanese studies overseas and intellectual exchange. The following photos are parts of the Foundation's activities during the year.



Participating in International Art Festivals

Photo: Ufer! ©Tabaimo/Courtesy of Gallery Koyanagi and James Cohan Gallery

The Japan Foundation has organized Japanese presentations at international arts/architecture festivals. The Japan Pavilion at the 54th Venice Biennale Art Festival featured Tabaimo.



Japanese Technologies through Japanese Culture

Opening event for "JAPAN: Tradition. Innovation" at the Canadian Museum of Civilization. The exhibition illustrated how Japanese cutting-edge technologies and designs owe their roots to traditional culture since the Edo period. Courtesy of Embassy of Japan in Canada



Experiencing Japanese Culture through Citywide Exchange

Participants of a program at the Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai at a local autumn festival. Various programs have been carried out for better understanding of Japanese culture and society.



Hybrid Music with Traditional Instruments in the Middle East

Wadaiko drum player Shuichiro Ueda, violinist Wasei Suma, and saxophone player Masahiro Tamura performing in Kuwait and Jordan. Audiences were delighted with the exciting performance of the Wadaiko drum, having the similarity with the sound of the Arabian tabla.



Learning Japanese through the Culture

A scene from Japanese-language courses provided in Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. Participants furthered their understanding of the Japanese language and culture by appreciating the beauty of Japanese characters demonstrated by a calligrapher.



The Charm of Local Cuisine

Ayaka Yamamoto, expert of Okinawan cuisine, gave demonstrations in Paris, Augsburg, and Stockholm. The unique dishes from a subtropical land garnered much interest.



Discussing the Future of Asia

For the 10th anniversary of the Future Leaders Forum: China-Japan-Korea, a special forum was held to discuss future relations among the countries.



Advocates of Japanese Literature

Yue Yuankun, winner of the 18th Noma Award for the Translation of Japanese Literature, has a promising future as a scholar of Japanese studies.



Japanese Learners in the Speech Contest

At the 52nd International Speech Contest in Japanese, 12 finalists gave accounts of their thoughts and feelings in humorous and moving episodes.



Exchange with Literary Fans Abroad

Koji Suzuki, author of the internationally popular *Ring*, graced non-fiction, Moscow's annual international book fair, giving lectures and answering interviews with local media.



Japanese Artists Collaborating with Artists Abroad

The Wall Art Festival 2012 was held at the Niranjana School in the rural area of Bihar, India. Energetic Japanese and Indian artists demonstrated the power of art to the villagers and children. *Mirai e no zo* (Elephant for Future) by Ichiro Endo and Yusuke Asai. Photo: Kenji Mimura



Introducing the Charm of Tohoku through Folkloric Performing Arts

Tohoku is a region rich with folkloric performing arts. Concerts were performed in eight cities in the United States, France, and China, with folk performance groups—Wakumizu Kagura of Tono City, Kuromori Kagura of Miyako City, and Usuzawa Shishiodori of Otsuchi Town of Iwate Prefecture—and music by Ondekoza & Musicians with Wadaiko drum players and musicians transcending genres. Above: Usuzawa Shishiodori in Guangzhou in China; bottom left: Kuromori Kagura at the Lycée International de Saint-Germain-en-Laye in Paris; and bottom right: Wakumizu Kagura in Los Angeles.

Japan Foundation Initiatives after the Great East Japan Earthquake

The Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011, devastated large areas in the Tohoku region. Though it is now more than 12 months on, the search still continues for the missing, and many are forced to live in temporary housing. The Japan Foundation would like to once again pray for the souls who perished in the disaster and offers its heartfelt sympathy to the disaster victims.

During the past year, the Japan Foundation had been involved in initiatives for recovery, organizing cultural exchange projects all over the world, including performances, exhibitions, and screenings of films/documentaries, as well as lectures, symposiums, and talks by taking advantage of its networks

and experiences of past projects in disaster recovery and prevention. These are all efforts to introduce the Tohoku region as a place blessed with nature, and with strong community ties, while expressing thanks for the warm support offered from abroad, and showing how the Japanese people are determined to make a successful recovery. The disaster made the world take notice of the spirit and culture that support Japanese society today. The Japan Foundation continues to contribute to recovery efforts by introducing the attraction of Japan, sharing the disaster experience with people abroad, and encouraging cultural exchange between Japan and the world.



President's Special Prizes to Three Groups

The Japan Foundation Prizes for Global Citizenship President's Special Prizes were awarded for their recovery efforts through international cultural exchange to Rikuzentakata City International Exchange Association, Tomodachi in Natori International Relations Association, and The People (Fukushima Pref.).



"Genki Mail" from Children in the United States

American journalists visited Japan bringing messages of support written by elementary school students in the United States for children in the impacted areas. They had the opportunity to witness the devastation and listen to survivor stories. Photo: Kenichi Aikawa



Film Screening: the Earthquake and Tohoku

Films about the region and how people were coping with the aftermath were screened in 138 cities in 86 countries. The films made impressions on many audiences.



Architectural Approaches for Disaster Recovery

Architects were among the first to go to the region and examine the devastation. An exhibition showcasing their approaches for recovery was held in Paris.



Bridging Japan and the United States

American high school students visited the region to honor the two American JET teachers who died in the disaster and attend a training program at the Kansai Institute.



TOHOKU Photo Exhibition Held in Beijing

The exhibition consisting of 10 photographers' works highlighted different aspects of village life, rituals and festivals, and nature. The event attracted more than 2,000 visitors.



Prayers for Japan around the World

A man in New Delhi mourning the victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake. Prayers were offered all over the world on March 11, 2012, a year from the earthquake. Photo: aki



Memorial Fireworks for the Earthquake Victims

In August 2011, the LIGHT UP NIPPON project launched fireworks in 10 locations devastated by the tsunami to remember the victims and express hope for recovery. The Japan Foundation produced a documentary film of the event to introduce how the young people are engaged in recovery activities. This film was broadcasted and screened worldwide. Photo: Kenichi Aikawa