

The Japan Foundation Awards 2022 Go to Robert LEPAGE, Korean Japanese Association, Goenawan Mohamad

The Japan Foundation (JF), which celebrated its 50th anniversary this year, is proud to announce the recipients of the Japan Foundation Award 2022.

Since 1973, the Foundation has presented the Japan Foundation Awards to individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to promoting international mutual understanding and friendship between Japan and other countries through academic, artistic, and other cultural pursuits.

For 2022, which marks the 49th time of the Awards, the three recipients listed below have been selected after the screening of 74 applications nominated by experts and the general public. The awards ceremony will take place on October 19.

■ Robert LEPAGE (Actor, Playwright, theatre and movie Director) [Canada]

In addition to being an actor, Robert Lepage is a director, playwright, filmmaker and the artistic leader of Ex Machina (Latin for "from the machine"), a creative collective he founded in Canada with activities spanning the domains of theater, opera and multimedia shows. Ex Machina is particularly known for its unique productions that boldly incorporates the latest technologies. The company is wide acclaimed throughout the world for its approach that defies conventional wisdom.

Lepage has a long history of relationships with Japan, such as the performance in Japan of his work *The Seven Streams of the River Ota*, about Hiroshima, and had many collaborations with Japanese artists through which he has had a significant influence on the Japanese performing arts. These activities have contributed to the promotion of mutual international understanding. Accordingly, we present him with the Japan Foundation Award to encourage his future endeavors.

■ Korean Japanese Association [Korea]

The Korean Japanese Association was founded in 1971 to promote friendship, goodwill, and mutual prosperity between Korea and Japan. In the 50 years that have passed since that time, the organization has focused on the area of Japanese language education, the foundation of mutual understanding between Korea and Japan, to steadily carry out future oriented activities for youths. The organization has worked on programs to discover and train young talent, such as a Japanese language studies achievement contest for Korean middle and high school students, a Japanese language translation contest for university students, and the annual hosting of the Lee Soo Hyun Memorial Program. The organization has also worked to support the careers of young people through their Japan Education and Career Fair.

In this way, the organization has contributed to the mutual understanding, friendship, and goodwill between Korea and Japan and to human resource development through their many years of diverse exchange activities for youths. Accordingly, we present the Japan Foundation Award to the Korean Japanese Association to encourage their future endeavors.

■ Goenawan Mohamad (Poet, Writer and Painter) [Indonesia]

Goenawan Mohamad is one of the intellectual giants of his generation in Asia. With his achievements as a journalist, civic activist, poet, and playwright, he is Indonesia's leading intellectual with wide ranging talents. Among those achievements, Goenawan launched the weekly magazine *Tempo* in 1971 through which he continued to stress the importance of freedom and democracy in Indonesia. His wide-ranging activities and versatility covered the fields of poetry, drama, the fine arts, and writing, each in which he exercised his talents and through which he made a contribution to art in general. Goenawan came to Japan under the Asia Leadership Fellowship co-sponsored by the Japan Foundation and the International House of Japan, and he has expanded his intellectual exchange with Japan in a variety of domains since that time. Goenawan Mohamad's presence in intellectual exchange between Indonesia and Japan within a global perspective focused on Asia will remain significant moving forward.

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■ Robert LEPAGE (Actor, Playwright, theatre and movie Director) [Canada]



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Actor, director, playwright, and filmmaker Robert Lepage is recognized as one of the most important performing artists of this century, displaying rare talent in any field he is active in.

Born in Quebec, Canada in 1957, Lepage studied at theater school in his hometown before traveling to France for an internship with Alain Knapp. After returning to Canada he became known for *The Dragon's Trilogy* in 1986 and undertook the artistic direction of the National Theatre of Canada in 1989. At a young age he went on to attract worldwide attention as first North American to direct Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at London's Royal National Theatre in 1992. He then founded his production company Ex Machina in 1994 whose creative approach is to incorporate numerous complex devices and props that leverage the latest technology resulting in spectacular performances which continuously entertain

viewers throughout the world with their Lepage magic.

In 1995, he produced an epic dramatic poem in seven parts, totaling seven hours, entitled *The Seven Streams of the River Ota*, mostly inspired by Hiroshima. The work received great acclaim throughout the world, including a performance in Japan and is still touring throughout the world today. Lepage's tendency to create long works is based on his belief that theater is the art of memory. In 1999, he directed the well acclaimed opera *La Damnation de Faust* at the Saito Kinen Festival. In 2005, he staged *KÀ*, a permanent Cirque du Soleil show in Las Vegas. In 2010, he directed Wagner's opera *Der Ring des Nibelungen* which proved to be a major hit at the New York Metropolitan Opera. For all of these works and many others he has been the recipient of numerous awards such as Chevalier de l'Ordre de la Légion d'honneur de France, the Hans Christian Andersen Award, and the Europe Theatre Prize, to name a few.



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Lepage has a long history of relationships with Japan, and had many collaborations with Japanese artists through which he has had a significant influence on the Japanese performing arts. Early in his career Lepage stated that traditional Japanese arts and culture, such as *Kabuki* and *Bunraku* have inspired and influenced his work in many ways. Accordingly, Robert Lepage has made a major contribution to the promotion of mutual international understanding through the performing arts over 40 years, and to encourage his future endeavors, we present him with the Japan Foundation Award.

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■ Korean Japanese Association [Korea]



The Korean Japanese Association was founded in 1971 to promote friendship, goodwill, and mutual prosperity between Korea and Japan through academic, cultural, and youth exchange. In the 50 years that have passed since that time, the organization has focused on the area of Japanese language education, the foundation of mutual understanding between Korea and Japan, to steadily carry out future oriented activities for youths.

The Japanese language studies achievement contest for Korean middle and high school students has contributed significantly to the identification and development of young talent who will serve as leaders in a new era of internationalization while increasing the motivation of students to learn. In addition to an awards program for talented youths, the organization focuses on deepening mutual understanding such as by hosting a study trip to Japan under the Korea Japan Youth Exchange Program. This experience during a time when the receptivity and capacity to absorb knowledge of these middle and high school students is highest is irreplaceable, and the fact that the organization has continued this activity without interruption despite the changing times is worthy of high praise. The organization has also hosted an annual Japanese translation competition to increase the motivation to learn among students of the Japanese language at universities and to help train talented personnel. The organization has launched a blog in which past winners of the competition serve as members, providing them with a place to learn and interact, showing the organizations focus on continued exchange and development.

Meanwhile, the Lee Soo Hyun Memorial Program, which commemorates exchange student Lee Soo Hyun who lost his life while attempting to rescue another person while studying in Japan, offers numerous opportunities for mutual learning for the youth who will lead the future. In addition to these short-term training and exchange programs, the organization also works to support the future careers of youths, geared towards those aiming for long term stays in Japan for exchange studies and employment, by hosting the annual Japan Education and Career Fair. That this organization has steadily carried out diverse activities as a private organization that constantly strive for the co-prosperity not only of Korea and Japan but Asia overall are worthy of this award.



The organization has contributed to the mutual understanding, friendship, and goodwill between Korea and Japan and to nurturing students through their many years of diverse exchange activities for youths. In recognition of the achievements, we, therefore, present the Japan Foundation Award to the Korean Japanese Association to expect their future endeavors.

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■ Goenawan Mohamad (Poet, Writer and Painter) [Indonesia]



Goenawan Mohamad is one of the intellectual giants of his generation in Asia. With his achievements as a journalist, civic activist, poet, and playwright, he is Indonesia's leading intellectual with wide ranging talents.

Among those achievements, Goenawan launched the weekly magazine *Tempo* in 1971 through which he continued to stress the importance of freedom and democracy in Indonesia. *Tempo* magazine, which Goenawan founded, was loved by the people of Indonesia, but was banned by the Suharto regime over the magazine's coverage of the purchase of warships in 1994. Despite the setback, Goenawan did not bow to the pressure and continued his stance of resistance, establishing numerous organizations in pursuit of a free press. Finally, when President Suharto resigned and subsequently the regime changed in 1998, he revived *Tempo* magazine, ultimately launching an English language version as well as a daily newspaper focusing on news analysis.

For these and other activities, Goenawan was awarded the Louis M. Lyons Award for Conscience and Integrity in Journalism from the Harvard University Nieman Fellowship in 1997, the International Press Freedom Award from the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) in 1998, and the International Editor of the Year Award from the World Press Review in 1999.

As his work as a journalist became successful, he expanded his activities to include the fields of poetry, drama, and the fine arts, each in which he exercised his talents and through which he made a contribution to art in general along with his writings. This is demonstrated clearly by his foundation of the Komunitas Salihara Arts Center, a full-fledged center for the promotion of the arts based on Indonesian culture. He was also awarded the French Order of Arts and Culture and the Indonesian Order of Culture during this time.

Goenawan came to Japan in 1997 under the Asia Leadership Fellowship co-sponsored by the Japan Foundation and the International House of Japan, and he began intellectual exchange with the country from that time. He went on to participate in numerous programs related to the Japan Foundation, and received invitations from Japanese academia and numerous research organizations, thereby expanding his intellectual exchange with Japan. Goenawan Mohamad's presence in intellectual exchange between



Indonesia and Japan within a global perspective focused on Asia will remain extremely significant moving forward, making him suitable to receive the Japan Foundation Award.

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