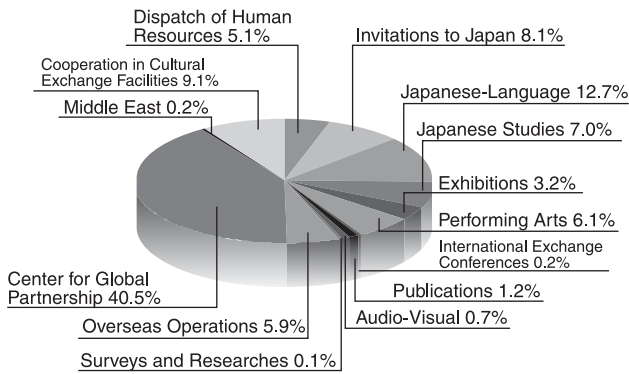


North America

Abstract



Total amount of operations: 1,274 million yen

The expenditure for operations in North America in FY2003 was around 1,274 million yen. The expense for projects in the United States occupies the largest ratio in the total amount of expenses of the Japan Foundation. The expense for the operations in Canada remained about the same as in the previous year. FY2003 was the “150th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Japan and the United States” and the “75th anniversary of the amity relations between Japan and Canada”.

In the intellectual exchange field, the Foundation held “Redefinition of the Japan-US Alliance” jointly with the Japan Society, New York, and the “Commemorative Symposium for the 75th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between Japan and Canada” jointly with the University of Toronto.

The Foundation also conducted the educational project “Snapshots from Japan: profiles of seven high school students”, which develops lesson plans to deepen the understanding of Japan in social studies classes using multimedia teaching materials.

In the Japanese studies field, the Foundation is improving the program with assessments and advice from the American Advisory Committee (AAC), and conducted a grant project for Japanese studies institutes jointly with the Association of Universities in Canada. The Foundation will conduct a survey on Japanese studies in North America this year, in order to improve effi-

ciency of its operations.

In culture and arts exchange, the Foundation hosted “Early Buddhist Art of Japan and Korea” jointly with the Japan Society, New York and the Korea Foundation, expanded cooperation with local cultural and fine arts institutes, and supported the “Art of Oribe and the Momoyama (late 16th century) culture” at the Metropolitan Museum of Arts. The Foundation also held music performances and lectures on animation films by dispatching experts to several locations. In an open invitation program for the United States entitled “Performing Arts Japan”, “Nomura Mansaku and his Mansaku-no-Kai Kyogen Company” and 6 other groups toured to 25 cities in the United States, which attracted over 20,000 people. The Foundation also conducted six joint projects including the collaboration between the Berkeley Symphony and Karen Tanaka.

The 21st joint conference of the Japan-US Cultural Education Exchange Conference (CULCON) was held in Sendai in November. The Foundation also conducted a symposium with the theme “The Role of Citizens in Dialogs Between Civilizations”.

Report by overseas offices

Canada

The Japan Foundation, Toronto

1. General

The year 2003 saw Canada facing several challenges, starting with an epidemic of SARS. The economic slump worsened, and Air Canada, the largest airline company in Canada, applied for the Company Rehabilitation procedure under the Bankruptcy Protection Law. Mad cow disease was found in Alberta, which resulted in a ban on the import of Canadian beef in Japan. In the political scene, Paul Martin assumed office as the 27th Prime Minister, replacing Jean Chretien who had been in office for ten years. Prime Minister Martin formed a new cabinet with three major promises: reinforcement of the social foundation, restructuring of the economy, and establishment of the role of Canada as a contributor to the international community. The GDP growth rate remained at 1.7%, 1.6 points below that of the previous year. In the cultural scene, Canadian films made remarkable achievements



“Early Buddhist Art of Japan and Korea”



“Art of Oribe and the Momoyama (late 16th century) culture”

in this year. *The Barbarian Invasions* directed by Denys Arcand won the Best Screenplay Award and the Best Actress Award at the Cannes International Film Festival as well as the Oscar for the Best Foreign Language Film. *Seducing Doctor Lewis* and *The Corporation* won the Drama Audience Award and Documentary Audience Award at the Sundance Film Festival.

2. Cultural Exchange with Japan

Japanese pop culture enjoys continuous popularity, and the interest in traditional culture also remains high. A large scale project for 2003 was the Kyogen lecture demonstration, which toured eastern Canada (Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto). A group led by Katsura Utamaru performed rakugo in Toronto. Eve Egoyan, a leading pianist of Canada, gave the premier concert of new compositions by Jo Kondo and Mamoru Fujieda. Contemporary Japanese literature is also actively introduced. Kaori Ekuni attended the Annual International Authors Festival in Canada, and Gen-ichiro Takahashi participated in the reading series. A corner dedicated to graphic novels was set up in large bookshops, where translations of Japanese comic books are displayed in rows. Furthermore, the movie *Spirited Away* was broadcast on cable TV, the *Cowboy Be-bop* was released in movie theaters and a total of 39 Japanese films were shown at the three major film festivals of Canada (Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto). At the Toronto Film Festival, *Zato Ichi* directed by Takeshi Kitano won the best movie award in the popular vote.

3. Activities of the Japan Foundation, Toronto

<Activity policies>

Canada has a vast land area 27 times larger than Japan, in which the French-language region around Quebec and the surrounding English-language regions co-exist. The country also holds a multicultural policy and promotes co-existence of various ethnic cultures. The Foundation endeavors to carry out its activities effectively, with consideration given to those characteristics, and with cooperation from public halls and institutes of Canada. In arts and culture exchange, the Foundation focused on projects with high propagation effects, in cooperation with Canadian cultural and art institutes. In Japanese-Language and Japanese studies, the Foundation focused on projects that would contribute to the development of human resources and to the formation of a network of specialists across Canada. For special projects in Japanese studies,

the Foundation worked jointly with the Association of Universities in Canada to match the projects to local needs.

<Examples of FY2003>

● Kyogen lecture and demonstration (September 23, 2003, The Japan Foundation, Toronto)

The Foundation conducted a Kyogen lecture and demonstration by Kaoru Matsumoto from the Shigeyama Kyogen Association at York University jointly with the Japanese Consulate in Toronto. At the opening speech, Matsumoto defined Kyogen as the traditional art of “humor”, and stated that the role of Kyogen is to introduce the power of laughter, which is a different aspect from the Japanese culture that is often understood as the beauty of silence. He invited several people from the audience, coached them on the basic postures, walking style, motions and speech, and performed *Nasu no Yoichi* and *Saru Uta*. The 170 attendees, most of whom were seeing traditional Japanese performing art for the first time, were fully attentive throughout the two hour event.

● Drama reading of *Tsuki no Misaki* (January 9 – 10, 2004, The Japan Foundation, Toronto)

The Foundation commissioned a production from the Crow’s Theater to read the translation of *Tsuki no Misaki* (English title *Capemoon*). This event was held in a new style in which actors perform with a scenario in their hands on a simple stage, but the director boldly exploited the limited space and dramatized the poetic atmosphere of the original work in an easily understandable manner, and it was well-received by the audience. Many in the audience commented that the performance was interesting because it presented the problems of the characters and distortions in daily life, but instead of leading to simple solutions, conclusion was left to the audience.

● Symposium commemorating the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Canada (March 1, 2004, Munk Center, University of Toronto, Toronto)

The Foundation and the Munk Center of the University of Toronto jointly conducted this symposium, which discussed three central themes: aging society, architecture and urban planning in Japan and Canada, and films and literature of contemporary Japan. A total of 8 researchers of Japanese studies gave presentations. The audience commented that it not only introduced present-day Japan and its social problems but also hinted at their relevancy with which they could compare with the social problems of Canada.



Kyogen lecture and demonstration



Reading of *Tsuki no Misaki*

United States

<General>

The military action taken against Iraq by the United States and its allies in March 2003 resulted in the collapse of the Hussein government about 2 months later. After President George W. Bush's declaration of the end of the war on May 1, 2003, there was expectation that the diplomatic measures of the United States government would enter a new phase and regain stable support from the general public. However, frequent terrorist attacks in Iraq and failure to discover the weapons of mass destruction forced the United States to navigate in difficult political situations both domestically and internationally throughout the year.

The US economy grew steadily in 2003, but this has not led to increased employment. At the presidential election on November 2, 2004, diplomatic measures including the restoration of Iraq, as well as issues of employment, pensions, medical welfare and other domestic economic policies are expected to be heavily debated.

The Japan Foundation, New York (hereafter called "NY Office")

1. Cultural Exchange with Japan

In addition to the stable political and economical relations between Japan and the United States, the fact that the year 2003 marked the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Commodore Perry to Japan, resulted in various exchange projects and commemorative events.

In the fine arts field, Japanese contemporary artists were remarkably active this year and their activities were well accepted in the American arts industry. The "Wave UFO" exhibition by Mariko Mori and the photography installation by Hiroshi Sugimoto were held through the initiative of a major art organization in the United States. In September 2003, the huge installation "Reverse Double Helix" by Ryu Murakami was displayed at the plaza in front of the Rockefeller Center, arousing the public's interest in Japanese animation films and the *otaku* culture. These exhibitions owe greatly to the American curators and critics, who are interested in the contemporary culture of Japan. It has become increasingly difficult to invite artists into the U.S.A. because of heightened security measures against foreign visitors. Nevertheless, exchange of performing arts between Japan and the United States has

proceeded steadily. Several dance projects were carried out through joint cooperation of artists from both countries, such as in the collaborative performance of Attack Theatre in Philadelphia and Nibroll in Tokyo. The popularity of traditional Japanese arts also remains high, and the performances by Nohgaku Kyokai (Association for Japanese Noh Plays) in New York in March 2004 had full house turnout every day.

In the movie field, films that take up Japan, such as *Kill Bill*, *The Last Samurai* and *Lost in Translation*, were released one after another, and *Twilight Samurai* directed by Yoji Yamada was an Oscar nominee for Best Foreign Language Movie. In the autumn of 2003, 36 films directed by Yasujiro Ozu were shown as a retrospective at the New York Film Festival to commemorate the 100th year since his birth. Ozu's films were shown on the West Coast (Berkeley) as well, and his early works were presented, with narration, at the Chicago International Film Festival.

2. Activities of the NY Office

<Activity policies>

The NY Office provides support for Japanese studies, exchange of performing arts and promotion of friendly relations between Japan and the United States. The NY Office covers projects in the 37 states to the east of the Rocky Mountains and the Japan Foundation, Los Angeles (hereafter called "LA Office") covers the remaining 13 states. The LA Office is responsible for Japanese-Language throughout the United States.

Since the public's interest in Japan and the level of understanding differs by city and by region in the United States, the cooperation of diplomatic establishments in each area is essential. The NY Office also receive advice from committees and councils, as well as from specialists in relevant fields, to carry out projects which best suit the particular local situations.

The year 2003 was the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Commodore Perry offshore of Uraga, and the NY Office held various commemorative project, including film festivals and small-scale grants. The NY Office also collected information and provided assistance in planning and coordination of events.

<Examples of FY2003>

- **Japanese Film Festival tour at universities (January 18 – March 31, 2004, Ohio State University and 4 other universities)**

The NY Office, with the cooperation of the local universities, holds a film festival every year in locations where there are few

opportunities to introduce Japanese cinema. In FY2003, the film festival toured in Illinois (Illinois Wesleyan University), Missouri (Southeast Missouri State University), Ohio (Ohio State University) and Kentucky (University of Kentucky) in the Midwest.

With the central theme of “Women in film”, the festival presented *The Makioka Sisters* (directed by Kon Ichikawa), *The Eel* (directed by Shohei Imamura), *Maboroshi* (directed by Hirokazu Koreeda) and *Twilight Samurai* (directed by Yoji Yamada). As there was a valuable opportunity to see Japanese films seldom shown locally, each film festival received favorably by the audience and by media.

- **“Performing Arts Japan” (April 1, 2003 – March 31, 2004)**

This grant project aims to introduce outstanding performing arts of Japan not only in major cities but nationwide and to promote new joint projects between Japanese and American artists. In FY2003, grant was given to performances by 7 companies in 25 cities attracting over 20,000 people. “Dairakudakan” (contemporary dance at the American Dance Festival), “Dumb Type” (contemporary dance at the California Institute of the Arts), and “Mansaku Nomura and his Mansaku-no-Kai Kyogen” (classical performing arts of the Theatre of Yugen) were some of the major productions. There were also 6 joint projects, including contemporary dance pieces “Headlong Dance Theater”, Arrow Dance communication and Eiko & Koma.

- **“Publicity projects at the 47th Annual Members Conference of the Association of Performing Arts Presenters (APAP) (January 10 – 13, 2004, at the Hilton New York Hotel)**

At the annual conference of the APAP, the largest performing arts showcase in the world, the Japan Foundation carried out publicity projects on performing arts in Japan. During the conference, information was handed out at the exhibition booth. In a briefing with interested presenters, Hiroko Yamaguchi (The Asahi Shimbun, Arts and Culture News) and Kazuyuki Kajiya (Setagaya Public Theatre) described the latest developments in contemporary performing arts and contemporary dance, respectively, with videos of individual works and artists.



Publicity projects at the 47th APAP conference

The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles

1. Cultural Exchange with Japan

A large number of Japanese Americans live on the West Coast of the United States, and the largest Japanese community in the United States is in the Los Angeles area (estimated 250,000). Japanese Nisei (2nd generation) and Sansei (3rd generation) have played an important role in the succession of traditional Japanese culture, including tea ceremony, flower arrangement, Japanese dance and martial arts, and the younger people from the 4th generation on have become active in the relatively novel fields of Japanese drums, dances and animation films.

The interest in Japanese culture shown by the people living on the West Coast of the United States had generally centered on traditional performing arts, martial arts, history and literature, but today, there is a rising interest in animation films, video games, karaoke, pop culture, sushi and other Japanese foods as well as the fine performance of the Japanese baseball players in the American Major League. This clearly indicates that Japanese culture has permeated everyday life in America. Introduction of these pop cultures will contribute to the steady increase in the number of students of the Japanese-Language.

2. Activities of the LA Office

<Activity policies>

Since there are a large number of American specialists in major West Coast cities who are well informed on Japanese culture, the LA Office has provided indirect support mainly through small-scale grants to the art museums, theaters and movie theaters of their affiliation. In small and medium cities inland, the LA Office has proactively promoted projects to introduce Japanese culture jointly with the Japanese studies centers at universities and the Japan-US Association.

In the Japanese-Language field, the LA Office has continued to conduct workshops and other projects for the Japanese-Language teachers, as well as projects focusing on the students of the Japanese-Language through the issuing of magazines for Japanese-Language studies. Since the increase in the number of students learning the Japanese-Language has slowed down since the 1990s and the continuation of Japanese and other foreign language education is at the brink of extinction in a number of states due to deterioration of educational financing, the LA Office

has started on publicity projects at schools, education administration institutes and PTAs to popularize the Japanese-Language.

<Examples of FY2003>

● **Koto and Shakuhachi concert**

The LA Office held a koto and shakuhachi concert in San Diego, California and Phoenix, Arizona, performed by “East Current”, the duo of Dozan Fujiwara, a shakuhachi player and Mieko Miyazaki, a koto player. Lectures and a demonstration of the musical instruments, a performance of jazz music featuring the koto and shakuhachi, and other performances showing highly skilled techniques in a style free from tradition and formalities were extremely well accepted by the audience.

● **US Sumo Open 2004**

Since Commodore Perry had watched sumo one week before the signing of the Treaty of Peace and Amity between Japan and the United States on March 31, 1854, as a commemorative event for the 150th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and the United States, a sumo tournament for foreign amateur sumo wrestlers was held with special guest Musashimaru Oyakata, a former Yokozuna (grand champion) from Hawaii. The hall was packed with about 500 spectators and more than 200 people were unable to enter. The tournament was held in Little Tokyo, however, only a small percentage of spectators were Japanese or Japanese American. The local media took up this event with great enthusiasm.

● **Preparation and distribution of the advocacy kit for the K-12 Japanese-Language program**

The LA Office prepared 2,000 advocacy kits for the K-12 Japanese-Language program, each kit containing a booklet and a 17-minute videotape of actual classroom scenes as a countermeasure against the trend of reducing foreign language education. The kits, which had received favorable feedback from Japanese-Language teachers in remote areas in Australia, were distributed to educational institutes and diplomatic establishments in the United States.



Koto and shakuhachi concert



US Sumo Open 2004