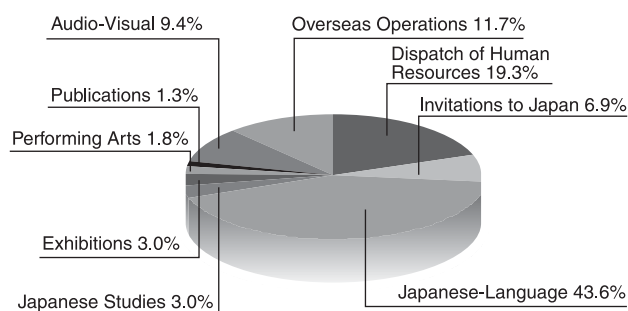


## Central and South America

### Abstract



Total amount of operations: 485 million yen

The amount of operation expenses for the Japan Foundation in Central and South America was around 485 million yen, around 4% of the total expense.

In Central and South America, the Foundation focused on people's exchange projects. The Foundation invited to Japan such persons as the chairman of the Guatemala National Symphony, the Director of the National Ruben Dario Theater in Nicaragua, the Director General of the Mexican National Film Archives and the Director of Planning of the Buenos Aires Municipal San Martin Theater and Movies, and offered them opportunities to exchange opinions with their Japanese counterparts.

These people's exchanges led to further projects. One example is the *Ship in a View: Central and South American Tour* by Pappa Tarahumara at the Cervantino International Festival in Brazil, which materialized from an invitation by a group of Central and South American festival organizers the year before. This year, the Foundation also supported the performance of the Condors in Chile and their participation in the International Benny Moré Music Festival.

The Foundation dispatched theatrical arts specialists to Honduras for the joint performance of *Kome Hyappyo (100 Sacks of Rice)*, which were extremely well received. The Foundation also dispatched specialists of a wide range of fields to "Japanese Culture Month" at each country. The "Kumamoto ArtPolis" exhibition, a "contemporary ceramics" exhibition and a "Sharaku Saiken" exhibition were held in Central and South

American countries where there are few opportunities to directly experience Japanese culture.

In media-related projects, the Foundation supported the Brazilian International Film Festival in São Paulo and the Anima Mundi International Animation Festival, and cooperated in the tour of the "Japanese Animation Film Festival" as well as a tour of the works by Director Mikio Naruse in Brazil and Argentina. The Foundation also conducted exchange promotion projects for TV programs and broadcast *Project X: the Challengers* in El Salvador.

As projects to introduce the cultures of Central and South America to Japan, the Foundation organized the participation of a contemporary Brazilian dance group in the Kyoto Biennale and Dance Summit 2003, and supported the participation of a Costa Rican dance group in the JADE2003 International Dance Festival.

As for Japanese-Language, teaching Japanese as a foreign language has started even in those countries where Japanese-Language had been taught to the descendents of the Japanese immigrants. The Foundation is proceeding to prepare the foundation for Japanese-Language that best suits the conditions of each country. The Foundation conducted surveys and established bases for Japanese-Language education through the dispatching of Japanese visiting professors and the donation of library books, and carried out projects to help train researchers and form a network in order to grasp the actual conditions of Japanese studies and plan more effective project developments in Central and South America.

The Foundation dispatched specialists of preservation of cultural heritages to the Copan Ruins in Honduras and the National Archeology Museum in Guatemala to cooperate with the efforts to preserve valuable cultural heritages in the Central America.

## ■ Report by overseas offices

### Mexico

The Japan Foundation, Mexico

#### 1. General

The ruling National Action Party was defeated in the midterm election in July 2003 and lost a large number of seats. Political management has become increasingly obstructed. The Fox administration presented a bill to the parliament proposing lowering of the consumption tax (IVA) from 15% to 13% and lowering of income tax, but imposing 8% distribution and wholesale tax as reform measures to counter the sluggish economy; however, the majority Opposition resisted and the bill was shelved. The political confusion continues.

At the WTO summit held in Cancun in October, there were remarkably large-scale rallies and demonstrations by antiglobalists.

In the cultural aspect, the scheduling of the Cervantino International Festival progressed slowly due to a shortage of funds, and the general introduction event scheduled for May was postponed until August. During this confusion, however, the invitees from Germany and France presented high-level performing arts. There was large media coverage on the performance of *Ship in a view* by the Japanese contemporary performing arts group "Pappa Tarahumara".

#### 2. Cultural Exchange with Japan

Japanese Culture Month "Presencia del Japon (Presence of Japan)" was held on a grand scale jointly by the Japanese Embassy and the Japan Society from August to November. Exhibitions, concerts, the Japanese Film Festival and approximately 30 other events attracted large crowds every day.

In commercial films, *Spirited Away* directed by Hayao Miyazaki, and *Dolls* directed by Takeshi Kitano, were released and met with favorable reviews. The Mexican National Film Archives held a special event for the works of director Akira Kurosawa entitled *Kurosawa and Shakespeare*. At the International Contemporary Film Festival (FICCO) planned and sponsored by Cinemex, a major Mexican cinema complex, Japanese works including *Shara-Sohju* (directed by Naomi Kawase), *Brilliant Future*

(directed by Kiyoshi Kurosawa), and *Ichi the Killer* (directed by Tadashi Miike) enjoyed favorable reviews. A large number of Japanese films are being introduced and a new boom is beginning to emerge.

The Carrillo Gil Museum held an exhibition of Ukiyo-e (Japanese woodblock prints of a "floating world") from its collection. This was a massive, high-quality exhibition with explanatory captions provided by the excellent research and survey on ukiyo-e by Garcia Montiel, who specializes in urban engineering and the urban culture theory of Japan.

#### 3. Activities of the Japan Foundation, Mexico

##### <Activity policies>

The Foundation reviewed the publicity function (periodical magazine *Patio* and a website) that had been established after 4 years of effort, and took measures for further strengthening. The magazine had been issued quarterly, but the Foundation changed the interval to 3 times a year, and to cover this reduction, the Foundation renewed the content, by adding a section that describes the conditions of Japanese-Language education in rural areas, a page for Japanese-Language by the Japanese-Language advisor, and the pages that feature events, the Japan Foundation projects and cultural exchange. The Foundation posted a bulletin board on the website to offer opportunities for information exchange among the Japanese-Language teachers and Japanese professionals residing in Mexico. Both the magazine and the website are utilized by the institutes engaged in Japanese studies and diplomatic missions in the Spanish speaking regions of Central and South America.

The Foundation planned and conducted seminars, workshops and surveys on Japanese-Language education, a field that is developing gradually in this region. An incorporated Japanese-Language teachers association in Mexico has been established and the examinees of Japanese proficiency tests has been increasing steadily.

##### <Examples of FY2003>

##### ● Sharaku Exhibition (May 6 – June 22, 2003)

The Foundation held an exhibition by "Sharaku", a unique ukiyo-e artist of Japan, in multi-angles at 2 shopping malls of the major corporation Plaza Inbursa. A performance in the image of Sharaku at the opening ceremony attracted a large crowd.



Sharaku Exhibition

- **Japanese Animation Film Festival (September 17 – 21, 2003, National Autonomous University of Mexico Cinema Jose Revueltas)**

The Foundation conducted the Japanese Animation Film Festival starting with the *Silent Mission* directed by Ryosuke Takahashi, followed by *Ghost in the Shell* directed by Mamoru Oshii, and other Japanese animation films. A large audience, mostly students and people in the film industry, attended the Festival every day.

- **Japanese Animation Film Lectures (March 11, 2004, National Polytechnic Institute Auditorium Manuel Moreno Torres)**

The Foundation conducted lectures on Japanese animation films entitled “Japanimation 1963 to 2004” by Ryosuke Takahashi and Eiji Shida. The auditorium was packed with students interested in Japanese animation films and culture. The lectures covered the history of the creation of animation films and the current conditions in Japan with films and photographs. The animation circles of Mexico interviewed the lecturers, and a friendly atmosphere remained in the auditorium throughout presentation.

## Brazil

The Japan Foundation, São Paulo

### 1. General

The trade balance of Brazil in 2003 was recorded as a black-ink entry of around 25 billion dollars, 89% greater than the previous year and the highest in the country’s history. This was due to the large quantity of raw materials and agricultural commodities exported to China, which is experiencing rapid economic growth. The close relationship with China flows over to cultural exchange, and Brazil is currently planning to provide financial support for the restoration of the historical cultural assets in Xi’an.

Brazilian products attracted the attention of the design and fashion industries, represented by those by the Campana Brothers. In particular, the highly reputed “Favela Chair” made of scraps of wood from the eucalyptus tree, is shown as a collection at the New York Museum of Modern Arts. Brazilian beach sandals “Hawaiianas” are colorfully and cheerfully designed and prompted an international fad. Angela Hirato, International Department Director and a Japanese Brazilian explains that the origin of these sandals is the zori (Japanese straw sandals) brought into Brazil by Japanese immigrants.



Japanese animation film lectures

### 2. Cultural Exchange with Japan

The year 2003 was one of a Brazil boom in Japan, with the release of the movie *City of God*, performances by Nelson Freire (pianist) and Joao Gilberto (bossa nova) and a feature article on contemporary architecture of Brazil in specialized magazines.

In Brazil, ceremonies were held in commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the resumption of Japanese immigration to Brazil after WWII, and many governors and Diet members from Japan visited Brazil. The production of an NHK drama about Japanese immigrants in Brazil *Haru and Natsu: Undelivered Letters* was announced, and the Commemorating Ceremony Association was established in preparation for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary (in 2008) of the start of immigration from Japan to Brazil and invited proposals for commemorating event plans. There have been a remarkable number of exchange events this year based on the immigration to Brazil.

From a different aspect, the number of crimes committed by foreigners has become a social problem in Japan with the number of Brazilians arrested in violation of the Juvenile Crime Act in Japan occupying around 65% of the total. There is a tendency for Brazilians employed in Japan to stay longer and acquire permanent residence, and face many problems handling their children’s education and building friendly relations with neighbors. In Brazil, the Brazil-Japan Culture Association established the Committee of Education for the Children of Migrant Workers to solve the problems. There are also other significant movements in both countries to resolve these issues.

### 3. Activities of the Japan Foundation, São Paulo

The Foundation carries out projects to introduce Japanese culture, and also accepts project proposals by local artists and persons who are engaged Japanese and Brazilian cultural exchange. The Foundation is also recognized as the base for transmission of Japanese culture by cultural institutes in Brazil as well, and interest in the Foundation’s projects, requests for information on Japanese culture in general and advice given to the Foundations project policy have been increasing.

<Examples of FY2003>

- **“Buto no Kiseki (Wakes of Dance)” (September 2003, SESC (Social Service for Commerce) SESC theaters in Ancieta Theater, Araraquara in São Paulo State, Santo Andre, São Carlos, Ribeirao Preto)**

The Foundation presented a stage performance, panel discussion, workshop, photograph exhibition and video screening with the overall title “Buto no Kiseki” in an attempt to retrace the artistic achievements of the late Takao Kusuno, who came to Brazil in the late 1970s.

Keito Oono, Ei Kasai, Ismael Ivo (a Brazilian residing in Germany), Buto-sha Tenkei, Yukio Waguri, Mitsuru Sasaki (from Germany), and Marta Soares and Companhia Tamandua de Danza Teatro from Brazil participated in this international event. The seven-day event recorded a full house for each performance. The media carried detailed, favorable coverage of this event.

- **Pappa Tarahumara *Ship in a View* performance (November 2003 at SESC Villa Mariana Theater, São Paulo)**

While introduction of the Japanese performing arts tends to be limited to traditional art or dance, the unique expressions of this company were received by the audience as contemporary and universal.

The workshop by Hiroshi Koike, a representative of the company, was also favorably received. Dancers, actresses and actors from different genres received instructions ranging from basic movements to production of a small work.

In addition to the success of the performance and the workshop, this provided significant evidence that new possibilities have arisen to create joint performances between the company and the cultural institutes in São Paulo. This event is developing into a series and is expected to further strengthen relations in the future.

- **Animation film lecture by Director Yuki Tomino (February 2004, Rio de Janeiro State University, Rio de Janeiro, and March 2004 at the São Paulo Municipal Culture Center and The Japan Foundation, São Paulo Hall, São Paulo)**

The Foundation held a lecture in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo presented by Yuki Tomino who is noted for his *Mobile Suit Gundam* series. The Foundation also showed animation films with cooperation from Sunrise, and held simultaneous exhibitions of posters and figure model kits by the local joint partners. The theme of the lecture was “How robot animations were born in Japan”, but the talk went on to the historical background and the

development of the Japanese culture theory.

Brazil is no exception in the worldwide animation film boom. The number of fans who gather at major animation film festivals in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro is as large as in the tens of thousands, and expectations are high for realization of successful exchange projects in this area in the future.



Buto no Kiseki



Lecture on animation films by Director Yuki Tomino