

President's Message



December 2007
Ogoura Kazuo, President
The Japan Foundation

Today, the very existence of public service organizations, including independent administrative institutions, is being called into question more than ever before. Since being granted the status of an independent administrative institution in October 2003, the Japan Foundation has devoted efforts to implementing reforms in the content of our activities and our operating methods. These reforms have not merely been aimed at improving efficiency, but were born from the firm conviction that it is also necessary not only to further enhance our activities, but to redefine the role played by the Japan Foundation in international cultural exchange.

At the same time, it is clear from trends around the world, that the degree of interest in Japan remains as high as ever. For example, the number of Japanese-language learners has grown to 2.98 million people, a figure that continues to increase annually. In many countries, there is a pressing need to train and develop Japanese-language instructors, and the Japan Foundation is mandated to address this need. At the Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute in Urawa, we train overseas instructors of the Japanese language, and provide information and materials on Japanese-language education through the Internet. Furthermore, we administer the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test in countries and regions around the world, and aim to create international standards for Japanese-language education.

In addition, in order to deepen understanding of Japan overseas, from a long-term perspective, we recognize that it is essential to cultivate researchers in Japanese studies who will share their knowledge and, in so doing, bring about wider understanding of Japan. Through the Japan Foundation Fellowships as well as other means, we have helped nurture a great number of scholars and researchers. The beneficiaries of our support include individuals with leading roles in their various countries of origin.

Contemporary Japanese culture is the subject of widespread interest around the world, whether it is in the form of *manga*, animé, J-pop, modern Japanese culture, or youth culture. There are, also many individuals who maintain an interest in Japan's traditional culture, which is the source of many aspects of modern cultural phenomena. It has never before been so important to use culture and the arts as a means to respond to these people's interests and enthusiasms as they seek to discover the true spirit of Japan. I believe it is also our mission to foster common sources of creativity around the world, through international exchange activities.

Finally, culture is an essential factor in building peace. We will continue to treat with the utmost importance, the idea that cultural exchange can play a significant role in building global peace. Our efforts in the future will, as in the past, encompass

a variety of approaches. We will continue to implement cultural programs both to support conflict prevention efforts and to provide comfort to victims of conflict, thereby arousing hope as well as the desire to rebuild communities and countries that have experienced suffering. Also, we will extend cooperation in the protection of cultural assets in developing countries.

This Annual Report provides information on the progress we have achieved through our wide-ranging activities during fiscal year 2006.

We will continue to work with all of you in our endeavors to bring about a creative and peaceful world. I sincerely hope that you will continue to lend your support and understanding to our activities.

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Japanese names follow the practice of surname first. Romanization adheres to the Hepburn style with minor modifications; macrons indicate long vowels.

Sharing the Wonder of Japanese Culture with the World

The Japan Foundation is a Japanese public organization dedicated to implementing comprehensive international cultural exchange projects in every region of the globe. Through its activities, it contributes to the deepening of mutual international understanding and the building of peace in the international community. These activities are implemented in the following three areas.

Outline of the Organization

Around 1970 it was recognized that, given Japan's remarkable economic growth, more proactive efforts would have to be made to present the country and its culture on the international stage. It was for this reason that, in 1972, the Japan Foundation was established as a special legal entity under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since then, the Japan Foundation has continued to expand its activities as a public organization representing Japan in the field of international cultural exchange. In October 2003, it became an independent administrative institution. Currently, in addition to the headquarters in Tokyo and an office in Kyoto, it also operates two affiliated organizations (the

Purpose of the Japan Foundation

The purpose of the Japan Foundation is: 'to contribute to a better international environment, and to the maintenance and development of harmonious foreign relationships with Japan, through deepening other nations' understanding of Japan, promoting better mutual understanding among nations, encouraging

The Three Program Areas

Arts and Cultural Exchange

The Japan Foundation carries out arts and cultural exchange programs in order to develop deeper understanding of Japanese culture amongst the people around the world.



The Three Program Areas

Japanese Studies and Intellectual Exchange

The Japan Foundation supports Japanese studies overseas and promotes intellectual exchange between Japan and other countries.

Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa and the Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai) in Japan. Globally, the Japan Foundation's reach extends to 19 offices in 18 countries, and it has a number of active partnerships with external organizations.

Based on a financial foundation of government investment (¥111 billion), the Japan Foundation's operations are funded by revenues from investment income from this capital, by government subsidies and by donations from the private sector. As of March 31, 2007, the Japan Foundation has 229 staff members.

friendship and goodwill among the peoples of the world, and contributing to the world in culture and other fields through the efficient and comprehensive implementation of international cultural exchange activities' (Loose translation of "The Law of the Japan Foundation Independent Administrative Institution, Article 3").



The Japan Foundation's Network

The Japan Foundation has 19 overseas offices in 18 countries around the world. This global distribution enables the Japan Foundation to develop its programs in a manner which meets the constantly-changing needs of each region of the world.

Furthermore, the Japan Foundation also benefits in its activities from the cooperation of Japan's diplomatic

missions. The Japan Foundation cooperates with various cultural exchange organizations overseas in its efforts to deepen relations, including the Goethe-Institut (Germany), the Japanese-German Center Berlin (Germany), Casa Asia (Spain), the Korea Foundation, and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). It has also overseas advisors in South Africa, Iran, South Korea, and Turkey.

The Three Program Areas

Japanese-Language Education Overseas

The Japan Foundation responds to a broad level of demands from overseas in such forms as the dispatch of specialists to overseas organizations involved in Japanese-language education and the training of local Japanese-language teachers.

The Japan Foundation China Center



In April 2006, the Japan Foundation established a China Center. The purpose of this initiative is to build a foundation for future Japan-China relations through exchanges with young people and others in communities throughout China. Three programs constitute the backbone of the activities implemented by the Japan Foundation China Center: the Invitation Program for Chinese High School Students, the Japan-China Community Network Improvement Program, and launching “Cultural Exchange Centers” in China’s regional cities.

Invitation of Chinese High School Students

In September 2006, the Japan Foundation welcomed 37 Chinese high school students as the very first participants in its new “Long-term Invitation Program,” an 11-month exchange program. In January 2007, the Japan Foundation brought an additional 40 high school students to Japan for a month-long “Medium-term Invitation Program,” featuring a variety of activities.

The focus in both of these programs is on giving high school exchange students a firsthand opportunity to get to know Japanese society and people, through their everyday experiences living in Japan and interacting with Japanese

students their own age. In 2007, the Foundation plans to extend invitations to 40 participants in each program.



Interim seminar in Hiroshima; interacting with high school students from Aki Fuchu High School

“Heart to Heart” Website

“Heart to Heart” is a new community website in Chinese and Japanese, launched in July 2006 for the purpose of promoting exchanges between China and Japan on a wide range of subjects. One of the site’s most popular features is the “Diary of foreign students in Japan,” in which Chinese exchange students living in Japan write about their day-to-day experiences. These “diary” entries

provide Chinese readers with insights into the students’ lives in Japan.

<http://www.chinacenter.jp>



“Heart to Heart” community website

Enhancing Japan-China Community Network

In addition to “Heart to Heart,” the Japan Foundation is also developing “Ryukanet,” a network for Chinese exchange students presently in Japan, students in China

who are alumni of Japanese exchange programs, and Chinese participants in training programs in Japan.

Centers for “face-to-face exchanges”

Information about Japan is not always available in the cities of China’s outlying regions. The Japan Foundation therefore plans to establish and operate a number of “Face-to-Face Cultural Exchange Centers,” where the latest Cultural information on Japan can be accessed. On April 10, 2007, we opened the first such center in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, where aspects of modern

Japanese life and aesthetics are currently featured under the theme of “Cool Japan.” We plan to open our second center in Changchun and Nanjing in the near future.



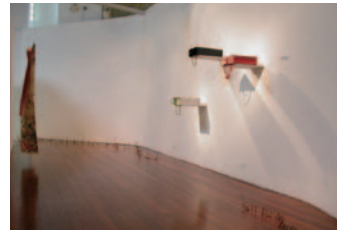
Opening of the “Face-to-Face Cultural Exchange Center” in Chengdu

2006 Australia-Japan Year of Exchange

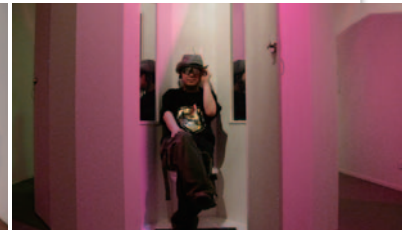
The 2006 Australia-Japan Year of Exchange took place in Australia and Japan to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the signing of the Basic Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Australia and Japan, and to promote more lively interaction between the two countries.

Rapt!—20 Contemporary Artists from Japan

The Japan Foundation collaborated with approximately 20 art institutions throughout Australia to organize *Rapt!—20 Contemporary Artists from Japan*, a program aimed at connecting young Australian and Japanese curators. The project explored Australian perceptions of contemporary Japanese culture. It focused on four processes: curatorial exchange; thinking; artist-in-residence; and, finally, exhibition.



"re:order" by Teruya Yuken



"Dr. Toilet's Rapt-up Clinic" by Ukawa Naohiro

A Group Invitation to Specialists in Multiculturalism

From January 18 to 30, 2007, the Japan Foundation hosted 4 specialists in multiculturalism, each of whom hold leading positions on the Community Relations Commission of New South Wales in Australia. Throughout their 13-day tour of Japan, the specialists were enthusiastically received at a variety of events organized by the Japan Foundation in Tokyo, Sendai and Nagoya, including forums and international symposiums, as well as discussions with local leaders and people interested in multicultural coexistence.

Today, Japanese society is deeply concerned about coexistence and harmony with other countries and cultures, and there is considerable interest in the social policies and supporting programs that Australia has implemented in its efforts to promote multicultural coexistence. This tour was an opportunity for the

specialists, local leaders, and citizens to exchange opinions in a lively manner.



Symposium at Nagoya International Center



WONDERBUS Japan 2006

To promote direct interaction with Australian children in outlying cities and towns where there are few opportunities for firsthand contact with Japanese culture, *WONDERBUS Japan* went on a two-week tour of Queensland in May 2006. Wherever they went, the volunteer crew engaged children in stimulating activities and workshops, including Japanese *taiko* drumming, Japanese dances, and *origami*. A total of 9,000 children took part over the course of the tour.



Tour route of *WONDERBUS Japan 2006*

Japan-India Friendship Year 2007

The year 2007 has been designated as the year for promoting friendship between Japan and India. Equipped with a multipurpose hall, the Japan Foundation's Japan Cultural Center in New Delhi opened in December 2006, and presented *taiko* drumming performances by the Oedo Sukeroku Taiko group: a befitting start to a year of friendship and cultural exchange.

Five-year Plan for Cultural Exchanges between Japan and South Asia

To strengthen cultural exchanges with South Asia, particularly India, the Japan Foundation has formulated a Five-year Plan for Cultural Exchanges between Japan and South Asia. As part of the plan's framework, the Japan Foundation signed an agreement of cooperation with the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) in December 2006.



Signing ceremony with the ICCR (Director-General Dr. Varma and Japan Foundation President Ogoura, with Dr. Singh, President of the ICCR, in attendance) © Seki Akira

Japan-Middle East Friendship Years (2004–2006)

To deepen mutual understanding between Japan and the Middle East, the Japan Foundation enhanced its efforts to promote cultural exchanges with that region.

Middle East Group Invitation: "Development and Education"

In order to give promising leaders an opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge of Japanese society and culture from various perspectives, the Japan Foundation invited young researchers, journalists, and NGO staff from the Middle East. In 2006, under the supervision of Professor Sakurai Keiko of Waseda University, 7 fellows participated in the program under the general theme of "Development and Education."

As many people are battling against poverty and cannot



Visiting and interacting with junior high school students in the city of Hiroshima

legislate into primary education, or young people facing difficulty to get a job is becoming serious social problems in the Middle East, the fellows expressed strong interest in Japan's economic vigor and technology. The participants produced a report on their stay and gave a presentation to a broad audience before leaving.

Tokyo International Arts Festival— Introducing Central Asia and the Middle East

In March 2007, contemporary theatrical productions from Uzbekistan, Tunisia, and Lebanon were performed at the Tokyo International Arts Festival, co-organized by the Japan Foundation and the Arts Network Japan, a nonprofit organization. The performances, each of which featured a high level of social commentary on politics and society in those countries, made a strong impact on Japanese audiences.



"How Nancy Wished that Everything Was an April Fool's Joke" directed by Rabih Mroué (Lebanon) © Matsushima Kohei



"Imitations of The Koran" directed by Mark Weil (Uzbekistan) © Furuya Hitoshi

The Japan Foundation Awards

Since 1973, we have annually presented the Japan Foundation Award to individuals and groups who have made an outstanding contribution over a period of time, while the Japan Foundation Special Prizes are presented to individuals and groups who have demonstrated rich creativity and a pioneering spirit with significant potential for future contributions. The Japan Foundation Special Prizes are presented in the three fields of arts and culture, Japanese-language education and Japanese studies, which represent the three pillars of the Japan Foundation's operations.

The Japan Foundation Award 2006



© Otsuka Toshiyuki/Omi Shigeharu
Photo courtesy of Shogakukan Inc.

Joe and Etsuko Price, Directors, The Shin'enKan Foundation (U.S.)

This year's Japan Foundation Award was presented to Joe and Etsuko Price for their many years of effort in building a remarkable collection of Edo-period Japanese art, and for their establishment of the Shin'enKan Foundation to present their collection and contribute to research. The Prices were also honored for their superlative contributions to Japan-U.S. cultural exchange and the study of Japanese art in the United States, including their work in the creation of the Pavilion for Japanese Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

The Japan Foundation Special Prizes 2006



Special Prize for Arts and Culture

Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival Organizing Committee (Japan)

This prize recognized the Organizing Committee of the highly acclaimed Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival, held with the participation of local residents, for its contribution to promoting international cultural exchange through this festival, as well as through regular film screenings throughout the year. The prize recognizes the committee's efforts toward international cultural exchange and serves as an incentive to continue developing the film festival.



Special Prize for Japanese-Language Education

Saint-Petersburg State University, Faculty of Asian and African Studies (Russia)

This prize was awarded for the university's fostering of talented human resources well-versed in the Japanese language. The Faculty, founded 150 years ago, was also recognized for its effectiveness in carrying on the three-centuries-long tradition of Japanese-language education in Russia, and encouraged to further develop its program in the future.



Special Prize for Japanese Studies

Dr. Kim Yongdeok, Dean, Graduate School of International Studies, Seoul National University (Republic of Korea)

This prize was awarded for Professor Kim's many years of leadership in the field of Japanese studies in the Republic of Korea, and for playing a central role in the establishment of the Institute for Japanese Studies at Seoul National University.