

Arts and Cultural Exchange

Arts and culture has the power to break through barriers of language or cultural difference and speak to our common humanity. Positive experiences of Japanese culture can leave long-lasting impressions and lead people to develop a greater interest in and feelings of closeness to Japanese culture, and may ultimately serve as the basis of true understanding of Japan. Aspiring to create such a basis, the Japan Foundation actively communicates the appeal of Japanese arts and culture both traditional and contemporary, working in partnership with young people, grassroots organizations, artists and professional arts and cultural organizations.



Towards the shared future of *KITA* (“ours”) —Project on “50 years of diplomatic relations between Japan and Indonesia”

“KITA!!: Japanese Artists Meet Indonesia” was an ambitious art project involving a number of Japanese artists in variety of fields such as contemporary art, music, fashion, food, dance, and manga. The project progressed through a research trip into the condition of the Indonesian arts community in March 2007, and the preliminary research trip for the artist in July 2007, before culminating in a one month residency period from April to May of 2008 when the artists resided in the regional cities of Bandung and Yogyakarta, leading workshops and making works of art before holding an exhibition. This aspiring project originated from a concept developed by curators Toyoshima Hideki and Takahashi Mizuki:

The title of the project “KITA” means “we,” or “us,” in Indonesian. However, without knowing the Indonesian meaning, Japanese would immediately think of the identical Japanese word “kita,” which is the past tense of the verb “to come.”

For an exhibition like this – where the underlying theme is to shift the focus from objects to people, and to create an alternative form of international artistic exchange - having each side interpreting the title in their own language is in some ways self-defeating. That was the reason that one of the curatorial objectives was to bridge this gap that existed between kita (us) and kita (came). It was important for the artists who “came” to Indonesia from Japan to share with the local people the joys of self expression and creativity, and thereby think of each other not in terms of “Indonesians” and “Japanese” but simply as “us.”
(Quoted from: *KITA!! The Document*, p.157)

2008 was the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Japan. The two curators needed to organize a project that took into consideration the history of art exchange between the countries and also pave the way for another 50 years of good relations. In other words, the brief required something special - something that would elevate the project beyond the level of a one-off celebration. As an answer, the curators decided to send over Japanese young people as they are today, in order to incorporate the culture of Japanese young people as it is today. They also added in the popular elements of music, fashion and manga. And thus it was that no less than 60 Japanese artists set foot on Indonesian soil.

Prompted by the encounter with the earnest activities of alternative art spaces and museums in their nascent stages in Indonesia’s regional centers, the curators made another decision to hold the project’s exhibitions not in the capital of Jakarta where larger crowds could be expected, but in the secondary centers of Bandung and Yogyakarta, where the local arts and communities seemed to be more deeply ingrained in the social fabric. At the end of the whole project, there were approximately 10,000 visitors all together.

Considering the local attitudes and customs regarding art were very different to those of Japan, it goes without saying that the more ambitious the curator’s plans, the

more challenging it became for Japanese young artists. However, although it was the first time in Indonesia for most of the artists, they displayed surprising adaptability. Epitomized by the touching opening of the exhibition by Yodogawa Technique who made a giant Arowana fish out of rubbish with locals who lived by a river, the artists were warmly received in the local community and gained all kinds of intangible benefits in the process.

The power of the performing arts also could not be underestimated. The unique dancing by the Strange Kinoko Dance Co. and performances by Chanchiki Tornade especially seemed to resonate with the locals, as the excitement generated from these live performances thrilled the crowds in ways not possible with an exhibition alone.

The KITA!! project was comprehensively documented in book and DVD, and published as exhibition document/catalog.

Curators: Toyoshima Hideki (Director, graf media gm), Takahashi Mizuki (Curator, Contemporary Art Center, Art Tower Mito)
Artists: Oishi Akinori, Kotaka Takuro, Tochka, Kondoh Akino, Shiriagari Kotobuki, Hachiya Kazuhiko, Takagi Masakatsu, Nishijima Daisuke, Nanpu Shokudo, Theatre Products, Chanchiki Tornade, SONTON, Namaiki, Asai Yusuke, Yodogawa Technique, Nishio Yasuyuki, Chim ↑ Pom, Strange Kinoko Dance Co., YNG (Yoshitomo Nara + graf), Tsuzuki Kyoichi, Shiga Lieko, Matsumoto Chikara, paramodel, Ujino Muneteru



Above: “Kinky Muff Land III—edible urban party jungle studio (free food forest foundation),” Namaiki, 2008
Below: Yodogawa Technique creating “Yogyakarta’s Arowana,” 2008
Photos courtesy of YUKARI ART CONTEMPORARY

Performing Arts Exchange

—Overseas Performance: China, South Korea

Cultural exchange with South Korea and China through music

Concerts by young Japanese musicians in South Korea and China facilitate interaction among young people.

Les Frères piano tour in South Korea

Piano concerts by a Japanese brotherly duo called Les Frères were organized in the three South Korean cities of Seoul, Busan, and Cheju, in October 2008. Prior to the tour, the two performed on a popular music program, which helped them to attract large live audiences, manifested in long lines of young Koreans waiting outside venues.

Inside the venues, huge screens showed close-ups of this fascinating four-handed performance, in which the two musicians sat at and played a single piano, adding a visual element that helped create a sense of intimacy with the audience. The tour served as a successful introduction to contemporary Japanese music to Korea. Les Frères are planning to expand their concert tour to other Asian countries.



Les Frères' live concert in Seoul © Yuu Kamimaki

Soothe concert tour in China

Soothe is a group of Japanese musicians trying to create music by their five instruments—tsugaru-shamisen, taiko drum, guitar, bass guitar, and drums. Their first tour outside of Japan in China attracted roughly 14,000 people, mostly young, to performances at theaters, universities, and clubs in the seven cities of Beijing, Harbin, Nanjing, Shanghai, Macao, Hong Kong, and Zhuhai. The group's innovative harmonies along with their shamisen, guitar and taiko drum solos won over the Chinese audiences. During the tour, the group enjoyed sessions with VJ (video jockey) group DaDaKingZ in Beijing and in Shanghai, a local band that incorporates the sounds of a Chinese *pipa* guitar, called Cold Fairyland (named after a book by Murakami Haruki).

Visual Arts Exchange

—Overseas Exhibition: Brazil

Exhibition of cultural hybridism —A collection of Brazilian and Japanese artworks

The Japan Foundation organized a contemporary art exhibition, “When Lives Become Form: Dialogue with the Future,” at the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo from April to June 2008, as a key project commemorating the Japan-Brazil Exchange Year.

Curated by Hasegawa Yuko, the exhibition covered a wide array of artistic practices, including architecture, fashion, design, video, and music, presenting the works of Japanese and Brazilian artists from the 1950s and 60s, and the 90s to the present.

According to Hasegawa, cultural similarities between Japan and Brazil can be seen in the way the two countries, geographically remote from the center of the global modernization process, were free to independently develop their own unique cultures based on their own local history and customs, as well as in the high levels of hybridism and acceptance of foreign cultures.

Selected works by 18 Japanese and 20 Brazilian artists were presented in thematic sections titled, “Proposal for living together,” “Geometry as a new order,” “Pop culture and art,” and “Poetic micro-politics.”

The exhibition space itself was buzzing with the energy and interest of the visitors, many of whom also participated in workshops led by the Japanese artists, creating a new dialogue between two countries.

Curator: Hasegawa Yuko (Chief Curator of Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo)

Artists:

Japan: Aoki Ryoko, Akasegawa Genpei, Adachi Kiichiro, ISSEY MIYAKE, Ito Zon, Odani Motohiko, Kojin Haruka, Koganezawa Takehito, SANAA, Takagi Masakatsu, Takano Aya, Tanaka Atsuko, Chim ↑ Pom, Teruya Yuken, Ban Shigeru, Mori Mariko, Yamaguchi Katsuhiro, Yoshioka Tokujin

Brazil: Assume Astro Vivid Focus, Isabela Capeto, Rogerio Degaki, Lina Bo Bardi, Lygia Clark, Lucia Koch, André Komatsu, Leonilson, Marepe, Ruy Ohtake, Tomie Ohtake, etc.



Exhibits at the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo
© Luigi Stavale, 2006

Introduction of Japanese Culture:
Portugal, Spain

Japanese cuisine as culture

The Japan Foundation organized lecture and cooking demonstrations on the theme of Japanese *Kaiseki-ryori* cuisine for spring in a number of cities in Portugal and Spain.

The combination of outstanding cooking skills demonstrated by our experienced guest chefs and their comprehensive presentations based on in-depth knowledge, made a significant contribution to increasing the understanding and popularity of Japanese cuisine as a form of culture.

Presentation topics:

- (1) Climate and customs: the four seasons and their associations, and characteristics of Japanese geography
- (2) History of Japanese cuisine: rice farming, salt production and the evolution of fermented foods, the establishment of *Honzen-ryori* style, and the influence from abroad
- (3) Tableware: earthenware, porcelain, lacquerware, wood tableware, metalware, glassware and their seasonal uses
- (4) Cooking tools: the different knives used in Japanese cooking
- (5) Key elements of Japanese cuisine: season, table manners and etiquette, nutritional facts, presentation, and *dashi* broth.



Demonstration at a cooking school in Salamanca, Spain

Introduction to Japanese Culture: Sweden, Norway, Finland

Discovering Japanese culture through animation



Lecture in Stockholm, Sweden

The Japan Foundation organized a lecture tour by Kon Satoshi, director of the animation films *Millennium Actress* and *Tokyo Godfathers*, in Sweden, Norway, and Finland. Along with screenings of his films, he talked about his work and production processes. The talk received fantastic response, providing audiences with a first-hand account of how he created his own original world and brought it to life. Some of the audience members even posed their questions in Japanese, which implemented the link between an interest in Japanese anime and the desire to study the language.

In Sweden, Kon delivered lectures on his production process to university students specializing in film production, and met with students interested in Japanese culture.

Performing Arts Exchange
—Overseas Performance: Romania, Austria

Opening event for the Japan-Danube Friendship Year —Nohgaku performances in two European countries



Noh play, *Aoinoue Azusanode* in Vienna
Lead actor: Takeda Yukifusa
© The Nohgaku Performers' Association

The Japan Foundation organized *Nohgaku* theatrical performances in Romania and Austria in February 2009, as one of the opening events celebrating the Japan-Danube Friendship Year in 2009, aimed at deepening the friendship between Japan and the countries along the Danube river.

The event consisted of a *Kyogen* play, *Obagasake*, and a *Noh* play, *Aoinoue Azusanode*, performed by 20 *Nohgaku* actors from the *Nohgaku* Performers' Association. Being the first *Nohgaku* performance in Romania, the players received a very enthusiastic welcome, with the Teatrul National București in Bucharest filled to its full capacity of over 1,000 seats at each performance over the two days. *Nohgaku* performers also led four-session *Noh* and *Kyogen* workshops, for local actors and dancers.

Performing Arts Exchange
—Overseas Performance: Singapore, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia, Thailand

UNIT ASIA Jazz Concert Southeast Asia Tour

With support from the Japan Foundation, a jazz ensemble named UNIT ASIA was formed and toured around five Southeast Asian countries for about a month beginning mid-October 2008. Consisting of members from Japan (Miyoshi Isao on guitar, Noritake Hiroyuki on drums and Ippon Shigeki on bass), Thailand (Koh Mr. Saxman on saxophone) and Malaysia (Tay Cher Siang on piano), the band began its tour following rehearsals in Malaysia, evolving its performance at each gig and developing a synergy and energy that had audiences thrilled. In February 2009, the group came together again to conduct a successful Japan tour, visiting Tokyo, Kyoto, and Nagoya.



UNIT ASIA in Manila

Cultural Cooperation: Afghanistan

Japanese potters support the rebuilding of a country's traditional culture following civil war

Since the summer of 2002, the Japan Foundation has been supporting the efforts of Istalif, a town in Afghanistan, to rebuild its traditional pottery industry and reinvigorate the area by inviting future leaders of the local industry to Japan. The program has been widely acclaimed for its contribution to restoring Afghan tradition and national pride.

The main objectives of the program in fiscal 2008 were to provide technical guidance to the next generation of craftspeople, develop a human network, and promote understanding of the culture of pottery in Japan. To achieve these aims, we invited the two youngest potters from the group that visited Japan as part of our 2005 program.

To provide the training, we invited Shirakata Yasuhiko of Hachi-zui Kiln, a master potter in the traditional *Tobe-style*, and Nagaoka Yasunori, an pottery artist working in the Joseon Dynasty style, both of whom had participated in this program in the past: Shirakata visited Istalif for fieldwork and workshops in 2003 and Nagaoka conducted research in Japan into the clay and glaze used in Istalif pottery in 2006. The two instructors made it possible to lead more specialized training such as making gas-fired kilns, casting using plaster molds, and making large pieces.

The program was supported by number of Japanese and international organizations*, particularly by the partnership with the Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park.

* National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan, Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park, Yogyo Vocational Training Institute of Aichi Prefecture, Mizunami City Ceramic Industrial Technical Laboratory, Ena City Kushihara Junior High School, Association of Shigaraki Ceramic Company, and others.



Learning about glaze at Yogyo Vocational Training Institute of Aichi Prefecture



Istalif ceramics, 2007
Photo by PAO Corporation

Visual Arts Exchange—International Art Exhibition

Yokohama Triennale attracts over 300,000 visitors



"Baby Marx," by Pedro Reyes, 2008;
photo by Ueno Norihiro
Courtesy of the artist and Yvon Lambert Gallery



We organized the third Yokohama Triennale, an international contemporary art exhibition, which was held from September 13 to November 30, 2008.

Including three main sites in the Shinko Pier area, the exhibition was spread over seven Yokohama City venues selected for their character and visited by more than 300,000 people over 79 days.

The theme of the exhibition was "Time Crevasse," a concept minted by the exhibition's artistic director Mizusawa Tsutomu. In accordance with the theme, which aimed to "provide an opportunity for a thrilling experience to peer at the edge of 'time crevasses' which tend to pass unnoticed in the everyday life overloaded with information," the exhibition was characterized by the selection of the artists with site-specific works and performances.

The exhibition was enlivened by numerous weekend events. These included a series of "National Days," co-organized by the Tokyo embassies of the participating artists' home countries and other international exchange organizations, and "Ring Dome events," which consisted of talk events, music and dance performances staged by young Japanese artists at the "Ring Dome," which was itself one of the artworks on display. This diversity of the related programs and site-specific works attracted large visitors, giving the Yokohama Triennale a distinct and unique appeal.

The increased international attention was another notable feature of the 2008 exhibition. With the cooperation with major biennales in Asia region (Shanghai, Kwangju, Singapore, and Sydney) and invitation of foreign journalists to the event, international media coverage increased fourfold over the last Triennale.

Artistic director: Mizusawa Tsutomu

Curators: Daniel Birnbaum, Fang Hu, Miyake Akiko, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Beatrix Ruf

Artists: Ono Yoko, Nakaya Fujiko, Herman Nitsch, Teshigawara Saburo, Douglas Gordon, Matthew Barney, Paul Chan, Cao Fei, etc.

Communication and networking among NGOs striving for a sustainable society

We invited 15 young NGO workers from seven countries to share their experiences and knowledge and create networks in the field of education for sustainable development (ESD). During the 12-day tour, participants from Brazil, Mexico, Ecuador, Indonesia, Laos, Kenya, and South Africa visited various environmental education initiatives in Tokyo and Okinawa to learn about their operation. They also participated in the International Forum on ESD 2008, organized by UNESCO and others, to obtain a better understanding of international ESD trends and Japan's efforts toward creating a sustainable society.

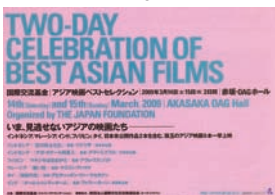


Visit to the Umi-no-Mori (Sea Forest) site, a project to transform a landfill site into a forest

Two-Day Celebration of Best Asian Films

In March 2009, we organized an event dubbed the “Two-Day Celebration of Best Asian Films—a collection of not-to-be-missed Asian films” at OAG Hall in Akasaka, Tokyo. Since our first Asian film festival in 1982 featuring masterpieces of South Asian movies, the Japan Foundation has continued to introduce Asian cinema created from fresh and innovative perspectives. For the latest event, we selected six films from Indonesia, Malaysia, India, the Philippines, and Thailand, depicting Asia today, including the Indonesian movie, *Rainbow Soldiers*. Attracting more than 1,300 people, the film festival was a great success with some programs completely sold out. Audience were

impressed with the diversity and cultural depth of the films and their detailed and sincere portrayals of contemporary Asian society and daily life, and reported getting a sense of an emergence and burgeoning of a new type of film.



The 18th Kaiko Takeshi Memorial Asian Writers Lecture Series



Do Hoang Dieu, Writer

The Kaiko Takeshi Memorial Asian Writers Lecture Series was started in 1990, funded by an endowment from the family of the late Kaiko Takeshi. Each year as part of this program, a writer or other member of the Asian literary community, who would otherwise have little chance for exposure in Japan, is invited to present a lecture at various locations in Japan. The selected recipient in fiscal 2008, the 18th year of the program, was up-and-coming Vietnamese novelist Do Hoang Dieu, who gave a lecture titled “Between the Vietnam War and Doi Moi,” in Hakodate, Sendai, Tokyo, and Osaka. Coinciding with her visit, we published the first Japanese translation of her best known work, *Bong De* (“Incubus”), translated by Kato Sakae, associate professor at Daito Bunka University. We also arranged a meeting between Do Hoang Dieu and Takagi Nobuko, a Japanese writer who is very active on the Asian literary scene.

Participation in Book World Prague 2008



Czech translation of *The Tale of Genji* (in four volumes)

In April 2008, the 14th International Book Fair and Literary Festival—Book World Prague 2008, took place at the Palace of Industry in Prague. The Japan Foundation, in cooperation with the Publishers Association for Cultural Exchange and the Japanese Embassy of Czech, represented Japan with our own booth. Opportunely, the final volume of Karel Fiala's Czech translation of *The Tale of Genji* (published by Paseka Publishers with support of the Japan Foundation) was released just prior to the exhibition in February 2008, an event that garnered a great deal of attention in the country, coinciding as it did with the 1000th anniversary of the original publication of this Japanese classic masterpiece. The translator Fiala had listeners in rapt attention when he gave a special talk on the merits of the book in an area adjacent to our booth.

Summary of Arts and Cultural Exchange Programs

1—Cultural Presentation Abroad

The Japan Foundation organized lectures, demonstrations, workshops abroad, sending specialists in 15 fields of Japanese culture such as animation, literature, architecture, craft work, cuisine (p.9), and martial arts: Yokota Masao (President of the Japan Society for Animation Studies), Ito Hiromi (poet), Tanabe Shochiku (bamboo artist), in addition to the aforementioned Kon Satoshi (p.9) (24 projects in 69 cities in 45 countries). We also provided a total of 52 arts and cultural grants.

2—Invitation Program for Cultural Leaders

Distinguished overseas cultural figures, including President of Universitas Indonesia Gumilar Rusliwa Somantri, U.S. writer Stuart Dybek, and Russian film director and theatrical producer Kirill Serebrennikov, were invited to Japan to engage in research and participate in discussions with their Japanese counterparts (27 people from 25 countries).

3—Cultural Cooperation

We organized two-way exchange programs to support training for Afghan potters (p.10), the documentation of the production of cultural properties and historical records in Bhutan and Russia, and the conservation and restoration of historical ruins in Vietnam (4 projects in 4 cities in 4 countries), as well as providing a total of 10 grants in this area.

4—Cultural Exchange at the Grass-roots level

We invited 15 young NGO members active in the field of education for sustainable development (ESD) from seven countries including Brazil and Indonesia to Japan (p.11), as well as six film students from three Middle Eastern countries, including Afghanistan, to make documentaries about Japan. We also provided a total of 79 grants in this area.

In addition, as part of the Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths (JENESYS) Programme, we invited young NGO/NPO staffs and primary and secondary school educators working on environmental issues and environmental education (48 people from 15 countries) to participate in a project with the theme of "Environment:Symbiosis with Nature and a Sustainable Society."

5—Group Tours Program for Secondary School Educators

With a view to giving young people around the world a better understanding of Japan and improving the understanding young Japanese people have of other cultures, we invited junior high school and high school teachers from around the globe (201 teachers from 55 countries) to visit schools and cultural facilities across the country. Participating schools include Iwate Prefectural Morioka Senior High School for Handicapped, Saitama Municipal Omiya Yahata Junior High School, and Kyoto Municipal Shinmachi Elementary School.

6—Kaiko Takeshi Memorial Asian Writers Lecture Series

Started in fiscal 1990 with an endowment from the family of the late Kaiko Takeshi, this lecture program for Asian writers marked its 18th year in fiscal 2008. This year we invited up-and-coming Vietnamese novelist Do Hoang Dieu to present lectures in Hakodate, Sendai, Tokyo, and Osaka (p.11).

7—International Exhibitions

We represented Japan at the 11th International Architecture Exhibition at the Venice Biennale 2008 (commissioner of

the Japanese pavilion: Igarashi Taro; artists: Ishigami Junya, Ohba Hideaki) and the 13th Asian Art Biennale, Bangladesh (commissioner: Uematsu Yuka; artists: Yoneda Tomoko, Suda Yoshihiro). At home in Japan, we organized the Third Yokohama Triennale (artistic director of the Triennale: Mizusawa Tsutomu) in cooperation with the City of Yokohama, NHK (Japan Broadcasting Cooperation), and the *Asahi Shimbun* (p.10).



Exhibit at the International Architecture Exhibition, Venice Biennale
© The Japan Foundation

8—Exhibitions Abroad

In addition to the aforementioned "KITA!!" and "When Lives Become Form" (p. 7, 8), we organized a number of original exhibitions, including "WA: The Spirit of Harmony and Japanese Design Today" in France, "Emotional Drawing" in South Korea, "What a Place Tells Us" in Thailand, and "Advertising Photographs Today" in Russia and Singapore (8 exhibitions in 9 cities in 7 countries). We also provided a total of 45 grants in this area.

Working with Japanese embassies and consulates as well as host museums, we also organized touring exhibitions around the world under 17 different themes, showcasing a wide range of Japanese culture ranging from traditional to contemporary including "Painting for Joy: New Japanese Painting of the 1990s," "Japanese Design Today 100," "The Dolls of Japan," "Japanese Pottery," and "The Spirit of Budo," (94 exhibitions in 94 cities in 53 countries).

9—Exhibitions in Japan

Aiming to introduce world-class art that is little known in Japan, we co-organized exhibitions with host museums. These include "Emotional Drawing," with the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo and the National Museum of Modern Art in Kyoto, and "Avant-Garde China," with the National Art Center in Tokyo, the National Museum of Art in Osaka, and the Aichi Prefecture Museum of Art. We also provided a total of 9 grants in this area.

10—Information Exchange in Visual Arts

To facilitate interaction among arts-related professionals, we organized programs such as the Fourth Asian Museum Curator's Conference in Japan to build a network of experts in the Japan-Australia Art Forum (4 projects in 16 countries).

In addition, as part of the JENESYS Programme we invited young artists, designers, and other individuals engaged in creative fields to produce artistic works and develop networks (22 people from 13 countries).

11—Overseas Performances

In addition to the aforementioned performances by Les Frères, Soothe (p.8), *Nohgaku* actors, and UNIT ASIA (p.9),

we organized performances covering various genres, such as jazz (Masaru Imada Quartet in France and Uzbekistan), contemporary Japanese-Western fusion music (Group BAKK Japan in Russia, Ukraine, and Lithuania), *Tsugaru-shamisen* (Yoshida Brothers in New Zealand and Fiji), contemporary dance (Shirai Tsuyoshi in Luxembourg), and *kabuki buyo* dancing and *Nishiki-e* art (Bando Kotoji, et al. in Indonesia and Thailand) (25 tours in 84 cities in 48 countries). We also provided a total of 105 grants in this area.

We also offered 28 grants through Performing Arts Japan, a grant program for non-profit organizations in the U.S. and arts and culture organizations in Europe to introduce top Japanese performing arts groups to local audiences.

12—Invited Performances in Japan

Aiming to introduce outstanding yet little-known overseas performing arts to Japan, we organized a percussion orchestra concert by Doudou N'Diaye Rose from Senegal. We also provided a total of 10 grants in this area.

13—International Performing Arts Co-production

For our Tosca Project 2008, theater groups from Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea worked together to create a new production of *La Tosca* by French playwright Victorien Sardou. The play was performed in South Korea and the Philippines. We also supported the creation of a contemporary dance work *Kokashita*, which was choreographed by Ide Shigehiro (head of idevian crew) and performed by Japanese and Thai dancers as part of the first Festival/Tokyo performing arts festival.

14—Information Exchange in Performing Arts

We worked continuously to facilitate information exchange among performing arts groups, presenters, festival organizers, theaters, and local public organizations. Key initiatives include the operation of a bilingual Japanese-English website Performing Arts Network Japan (<http://www.performingarts.jp>) which provides updates on performing arts in Japan, and co-hosting of the Tokyo Performing Arts Market 2009 (11 projects).

15—Translation and Publication on Japan

Through our grant program, we supported 65 publication projects for the translation of Japanese-language texts on subjects relating to the humanities, social sciences, and the arts, as well as for the publication of books on Japanese culture written in foreign languages. In fiscal 2008, two projects that had been ongoing since fiscal 2007—the translation into Arabic of *Meiji* by the NHK *Meiji* Project and *The Path Traveled by Japan as a Developing Country* by Ohno Kenichi—were completed. We donated copies of these translations to educational institutions in Arabic-speaking countries and arranged for one of the authors to present a lecture in Cairo.

16—Book Fair Support Program

To introduce Japanese publications and promote better understanding of Japan, we participated in the 53rd International Belgrade Book Fair at which Japan was the year's guest of honor, the 14th Book World Prague (p.11), and other international book fairs overseas (12 book fairs in 12 cities in 12 countries).

17—Promotion of TV Broadcasting Abroad

We provided support to overseas television stations to facilitate the broadcasting of Japanese television programs, including providing *Project X: Challengers* to Zambia's national broadcaster (22 projects in 20 countries).

18—Support Program for the Production of Film and TV Programs on Japan

To facilitate a better understanding of Japan in other countries, we provided financial support for the production of films and television programs that took some aspect of Japan as their subject, including a French documentary film *Astroboy in Roboland* (7 grants in 4 countries).

19—Film Festivals Abroad

In cooperation with Japanese embassies and consulates, local cultural organizations, and other partners, we screened Japanese films and co-sponsored film festivals around the world, including the "Nakadai Tatsuya series screenings" in New York and the "East Europe Travelling Film Festival" (51 projects in 45 countries). We also provided grants to facilitate the screenings of Japanese films at international film festivals abroad (49 grants in 22 countries).

20—Film Festival in Japan

With the aim of introducing Japanese audiences to foreign films that would otherwise not likely to be screened in Japanese theaters, we organized Two-Day Celebration of Best Asian Films (p.11). We also provided a total of 11 grants in this area.

21—Information Exchange in Film, TV and Publication

We issued a quarterly newsletter titled *Japanese Book News* for overseas publishers and translators, and a catalog providing basic information on Japanese films called *New Cinema from Japan*. The latter was published in cooperation with UNI JAPAN. We also presented the Japan Foundation President's Prize at NHK's international educational media contest JAPAN PRIZE 2008, in recognition of excellence in an educational program that contributes to mutual understanding among different nations and ethnic groups. We also recognized young South Korean writers and translators dealing with Japanese themes with the Japan Foundation BORANABI Award for author / translator.



Left: *Japanese Book News*, Winter 2008 Issue
Right: *New Cinema from Japan*, Autumn 2008 Issue

22—Support for the International MANGA Award and the Anime Ambassador project

We invited to Japan three winners of the Second International MANGA Award (organized by the International MANGA Award Executive Committee), including top prize winner Lau Wan Kit. We also cooperated in overseas screening events for Japanese DVDs subtitled in local languages, held as part of the Anime Ambassador Doraemon project (84 screenings in 61 locations).