

## Arts and Cultural Exchange

Japanese arts-fine art, music, theater, literature, and films-and everyday culture such as food and fashion inspire interest in Japan. They give insights into how Japanese people think and act, and communicate feelings and emotions without needing to understand Japanese. The Japan Foundation creates opportunities for encounters with Japanese art and culture, running programs for international contact between practitioners.

# Arts and Cultural Exchange

## Linking Japanese Arts and Culture with the World

The Japan Foundation organizes arts and culture programs designed to encourage an understanding in Japanese values. Working in the four principal fields—visual arts, performing arts, films and publications, and culture and society—it promotes greater cultural links between Japan and the rest of the world.

## Information Services and Networking

Effective sharing of information and vibrant networks of artists are the keys to successful cultural and artistic exchanges. The Japan Foundation supports both by providing resources and opportunities. It offers the latest information on performing arts, literature, and films through its website and newsletters, and coordinates exhibitions and trade fairs.

### Visual Arts

The Japan Foundation works with domestic and international museums to produce both major exhibitions with an extensive display, and small-scale traveling exhibits with individual themes like contemporary art, photography, craft, and architecture. It also promotes Japanese art and artists by participating in international exhibitions, funding Japanese art exhibits held abroad, and organizing exchange programs for artists and art professionals.

### Performing Arts

The Japan Foundation introduces overseas audiences to various Japanese performing arts, from the traditional such as Kabuki and Bunraku, to the more modern like pop and folk music, contemporary dance, and theater. It works on international collaborative projects, support artists and art organizations by providing grants and networking opportunities, and manage the website *Performing Arts Network Japan*.

### Culture and Society

The Japan Foundation organizes lectures, demonstrations, and workshops abroad designed to give people a first-hand experience of Japanese cultural practices rooted in daily life, such as the tea ceremony, Ikebana, and cooking. It also administers programs to assist cultural development in other countries, including sending experts to share their expertise on the preservation of cultural property or dispatching sports and music practitioners.

### Films and Publications

The Foundation's work aims to inspire interest in Japan through visual media and includes broadcasting Japan's TV programs overseas, providing grants for foreign-made films on Japan, holding film festivals, and supporting the screening of Japanese films at international film festivals. To promote Japanese literature, it publishes a newsletter, finances the translation and publication of Japanese books, and participates in international book fairs.

### China Center

Established in 2006 to facilitate youth exchange, the China Center manages three programs: the Long-Term Exchange Program for Chinese High School Students, in which Chinese students experience life in Japan for 11 months; the Center for Face-to-Face Exchanges, a resource for the latest youth information; and the *Heart to Heart* Community website, a platform to exchange views on blogs and message boards.



1. A workshop by the Shigeyama Kyogen Theater for University of Sao Paulo's theater students. [Sao Paulo, Brazil] / 2. Film director Sai Yoichi at the "Ware Ware! Korea-Japan Film Festival" [Seoul, South Korea] / 3. The stage of *Shakkyo* (Stone Bridge) from the "Kabuki: Encountering a 400-year Heritage" tour [Mexico] / 4. "JAPAN: Kingdom of Characters" exhibit which toured China, Italy, Hungary, and Australia [Budapest, Hungary] / 5. A presentation by a Middle Eastern curator who was invited to Japan / 6. Japan-Turkey contemporary music collaboration project "Sound Migration" commemorating Japan Year 2010 in Turkey [Turkey, Egypt, Hungary] / 7. Jean-Baptiste Andrianarimanana, the famed Valiha player, and his band Zamba were invited to Japan / 8. Kanazawa's Kaga cuisine demonstrated for the Local Cuisine Lecture and Demonstration Series at the Japan Cultural Institute [Paris, France] / 9. The modern Japanese craft exhibition "Les arts décoratifs japonais face à la modernité 1900-1930" [Paris, France] Photo: C.-O. Meylan

## Exhibitions and Programs to Foster a Deeper Understanding of Japanese Arts and Culture

### ■ “Manga Realities: Exploring the Art of Japanese Comics Today”

The Japan Foundation hosted an exhibition presenting today’s manga and its distinct art form with a spotlight on nine titles that became popular after 2000. The modern manga that developed in postwar Japan is a unique art form that continues to evolve today. Held at an art gallery, the show created by the curator Takahashi Mizuki and the space designer Toyoshima Hideki conceived to transcend the traditional exhibition format and presented the worlds depicted in manga works in 3D installations.

The exhibit opened in Japan and South Korea in fiscal 2010. In South Korea, where manga is popular and Korean translations are readily available, we held a symposium focusing on manga’s socio-cultural aspects, and an art magazine ran a feature story describing the show as original. While manga and anime have attracted much attention recently and are often regarded as soft power representatives of contemporary Japanese culture, they are received in different ways in different countries. We may see yet another reaction in the upcoming exhibitions in Hanoi and Manila scheduled for fiscal 2011.

[Contemporary Art Center Art Tower Mito, Japan, August 14 to September 26, 2010; Artsonje Center, Seoul, December 4, 2010 to February 13, 2011]

### ■ Modern Japanese Craft Exhibition—“Les Arts Décoratifs Japonais Face à la Modernité 1900-1930”

The Japan Foundation hosted an exhibition at the Japan Cultural Institute in Paris showcasing some 70 pieces of modern crafts produced between 1900 and 1930, including ceramics, textiles, and lacquer ware. The early 1900s was a period when modern art movements like Art Nouveau and Art Deco were at their peak in Paris, attracting artists from all over the world. The artifacts produced in Japan around this period

dexterously combined and developed designs influenced by Western modernism and the traditional techniques of Yuzen (dyeing), lacquer work, and Shippo (cloisonné). The show, visited by French Minister of Culture and Communication Frédéric Mitterrand on the opening day, attracted numerous visitors. To complement the exhibition, the National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto and the Japan Cultural Institute in Paris hosted the international symposium “Orient/Occident: Une Attraction Mutuelle,” which launched a new cross-cultural dialogue between France and Japan.

[Japan Cultural Institute in Paris, France, October 13 to December 23, 2010]

### ■ Curatorial Exchange Program

In order to encourage an interest and understanding in Japanese art, the Japan Foundation invites a group of curators from overseas to visit art galleries, museums, and art studios throughout Japan. The program also provides opportunities for our guests to interact with their Japanese colleagues and build a lasting network.

In fiscal 2010, we invited two groups of curators on a tour around Japan to visit and meet with Japanese art professionals. The first group consisted of four curators from Kuwait, Palestine and Lebanon, who visited from February 7 to 19, 2011. The second group comprised 11 curators based in the United States, who stayed in Japan from March 7 to 19, 2011. We received many comments on the program, with one curator comparing the visions and systems of the art museums in his own country with those in Japan. Another credited the program for linking them with Japanese curators, and commented on the importance of looking at Japanese art in the context of its history and society. Another reported how he now felt closer to Japan and more confident to work on exhibitions featuring Japanese art.



Above: “Manga Realities” exhibition in South Korea Photo: Myoungrae Park  
Right: Modern Japanese craft exhibition poster

## Performances at the Crossroads of Cultures: Spectrum Ranging from the Traditional to the Avant-garde

### ■ South-America Concert Tour: TRANS-CRIOLLA

A number of South American countries celebrated their bicentennial anniversaries in 2010 and 2011. As a mark of tribute to their music that has been a source of hope and comfort for the people throughout a sometimes turbulent history, we organized a concert tour featuring Japanese and local musicians as part of the celebration. The key trio of singer Matsuda Mio, leading Japanese percussionist Yahiro Tomohiro, and the famous Uruguayan keyboardist Hugo Fattoruso toured Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile. Folklore music, tango, candombe, and nueva cancion—music cherished by the local people—blended together with the sounds of the three artists, filling the concert halls with excitement.

A few months later the sounds of TRANS-CRIOLLA were replicated in Japan, strengthening the link forged by music as candombe drum group Rey Tambor from Uruguay and renowned singer Francesca Ancarola from Chile performed in Japan for the first time. The seeds of connection sown by these events continue to develop both in Japan and in South America, and are bearing fruit in various forms.

[Auditorio Inmaculada Concepcion, Buenos Aires; Universidad Nacional De Córdoba, El lugar Facultad de Ciencias Físicas, Exactas y Naturales, Córdoba; Teatro Maccio, San José, Uruguay; Auditorio Nelly Goitino, Montevideo; Universidad de Valparaíso, Valparaíso; and Centro Cultural y Deportivo de Peñalolén, Santiago, August 6 to 14, 2010]

### ■ “Kabuki: Encountering a 400-year Heritage” Tour in Central America

In commemoration of the 400th anniversary of Japan-Mexico relations, the Japan Foundation organized a performance tour of Kabuki, which also boasts a 400-year history, in Mexico, El Salvador, and Honduras. The audiences were treated to a presentation explaining the meaning of Kabuki music and a demonstration of costumes and make-up

before the stage performances of *Sagi Musume* (Heron Maiden), a classic piece in which a male actor plays a female role, and *Shakkyo* (Stone Bridge), or lion dance, featuring 13 performers including actors Nakamura Kyozo, Nakamura Matanosuke and Ichikawa Kinosuke, singers of Nagauta, and players of traditional instruments such as Shamisen and Narimono. Kyozo and Mananosuke, who both have extensive experience in performing abroad, engaged the audiences with their humorous talk and elegant yet powerful choreography, and received warm applause in each country.

[Teatro de la Ciudad, Monterrey, Teatro de la Ciudad, Mexico City, Mexico; Teatro Nacional de San Salvador and Teatro de Santa Ana, El Salvador; and Manuel Bonilla National Theater, Honduras, October 8 to 21, 2010]

### ■ “Butoh—the Great Spirit”

To mark the 25th anniversary of the death of Butoh's founder Hijikata Tatsumi, who received tremendous acclaim in Europe and elsewhere, the Japan Foundation organized a Butoh performance tour in Russia and China. The stage performances by Kanazawa Butoh-kan, led by Yamamoto Moe (in Russia) and Waguri Yukio (in China), were accompanied by various programs that included film screenings, lectures, and exhibitions of posters and *Kamaitachi* photographs taken by the famed photographer Hosoe Eikoh. (*Kamaitachi* is a photographic series by Hosoe in collaboration with Hijikata.) The influence of Hijikata's Butoh extended beyond genre boundaries and inspired other avant-garde arts of the time, including fine arts, films, and photography. Presenting an overview of how Butoh originated and evolved in Japan as a reaction to the Western artistic expression, the tour had a significant impact on the two countries where contemporary art is beginning to attract interest.

[Litsedei Theater Chemiakin Foundation, St. Petersburg; Theater School of Dramatic Art, Moscow, November 20 to 28, 2010; Ullens Center for Contemporary Art and TNT Theater, Beijing, February 26 to March 6, 2011]



Above: The concert tour “TRANS-CRIOLLA”  
Right: “Butoh—the Great Spirit” tour in Russia and China



## Events to Encourage Interest in Japanese Films and Literature in Asia and Russia

### ■ 100th Anniversary of the Birth of Kurosawa Akira—Film Screenings Across Asia

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the birth of one of Japan's greatest film directors, Kurosawa Akira (1910-1998), the Japan Foundation organized a film screening tour in eight cities across five countries in Asia. We showed a total of 23 works, including his famous masterpieces *Rashomon* (1950) and *Seven Samurai* (1954). At the tour's first stop, the Korean Film Archive (KOFA) in South Korea, we had script writer Nogami Teruyo and actor Nakadai Tatsuya, two pivotal figures in any discussion about Kurosawa films, attend the event. Also at the showing were Ahn Sung-ki, one of the premier South Korean actors, and several other notable Korean filmmakers and actors, making for a glamorous opening.

There have been few opportunities in the past to introduce Kurosawa's films in Asia, but a total of some 39,000 viewers attended the screenings and enjoyed the world of director Kurosawa.

[South Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia, July 1, 2010 to March 20, 2011]

### ■ Participation in International Book Fairs (Russia and Thirteen Other Countries)

As part of our efforts to promote Japanese publications, in fiscal 2010 we participated in 14 international book fairs in as many countries in cooperation with the host country embassies and the Publishers Association for Cultural Exchange (PACE). In particular, the 12th Moscow International Fair of Intellectual Literature non/fiction held in Russia was a grand event with over 300 exhibitors representing 19 countries. Attracting a growing number of visitors each year, the fair drew over 33,000 people in 2010. The Japan booth that we set up jointly with PACE displayed 363 titles and 1,290 catalogues, and received

a huge turnout of about 2,000 visitors altogether.

On this occasion we arranged for the writer Kurokawa So to visit Moscow and sit down at the fair for dialogue with a Russian writer. He also lectured at the Japan Foundation in Moscow and took part in a roundtable discussion at St. Petersburg State University. In an event of this magnitude it is rare for an individual country to become the focus of attention, but Kurokawa's dialogue with Olga Slavnikova, who visited Japan in 2009 under our invitation program, attracted much local media attention. Their conversation was introduced in a prominent Russian state television cultural news program.

[Russia, December 1 to 5]

### ■ Grants for the Translation and Publication of *A History of Japanese Religion*

The Japan Foundation issues the quarterly newsletter *Japanese Book News* for overseas publishers and translators written in English. It contains information on recently published titles and the latest news from the Japanese publishing industry. We also manage a Japanese studies support program that funds part of the cost to translate and publish books about Japan or Japanese-authored books. The program accepts applications on an annual basis and is open to the public. In 2010, these support programs resulted in the publication of *A History of Japanese Religion* by Sueki Fumihiko through the Vietnamese publisher Alpha Books. An exceptional work of religious studies promoted in *Japanese Book News*, the book was also on our list of recommended works for publication abroad. The Vietnamese publication was a welcome outcome of the support programs.

Another novel introduced in our newsletter, *Shokudo Katatsumuri* (Restaurant Snail) by Ogawa Ito, was translated into Italian and received the Italian literary prize Premio Bancarella della Cucina in summer 2011.



Left: Kurosawa film screening poster  
Middle: Japan booth at a Latvian book fair  
Right: *A History of Japanese Religion*

## Grassroots Cultural Exchange Activities Covering a Broad Range of Topics

### ■ Therapeutic Robotic Seal PARO Visited Southeast Asia

We sent Shibata Takanori, the inventor of PARO and senior research scientist at the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology, on a four-country tour to present the robotic seal. The audiences were intrigued by PARO's therapeutic effects on the patients of nursing homes and hospitals, and after each lecture it was surrounded by a large crowd of curious attendees.

[Vietnam, Singapore, Brunei, and Pakistan, September 28 to October 9, 2010]

### ■ Introduction of Kanazawa's Kaga Cuisine to Europe

Of all our programs introducing Japanese culture, food is always a category of great interest to audiences. In fiscal 2010, we solicited ideas for our culinary lecture and demonstration series on the theme of local cuisine and selected Kaga cuisine of Kanazawa in Ishikawa Prefecture. The chefs of Tsubajin, one of Kanazawa's traditional restaurants, visited France and Switzerland where the audiences were introduced to the less known dishes of our cuisine through lectures on Kanazawa's historical and cultural backgrounds and cooking demonstrations.

[France and Switzerland, February 27 to March 13, 2011]

### ■ Judo Lessons by Yamashita Yasuhiro and Inoue Kosei

In July 2010, two of Japan's leading Judo practitioners, Yamashita Yasuhiro and Inoue Kosei, were sent to Israel and Palestine to give lectures and lessons. The boys and girls that attended their lessons worked up a good sweat while learning Judo. In December 2010, the NPO Solidarity of International Judo Education invited young men from the two countries to attend an international Judo tournament in Fukuoka. These activities linked future Judo competitors of the three countries and received wide media coverage.

### ■ Preservation of Prewar Historic Buildings in Sakhalin

In 2008 and 2009, we organized symposiums in

cooperation with Hokkaido University and the local government on the restoration and preservation of decaying historic buildings and other cultural heritage in Sakhalin built during the Karafuto period. In 2010, we sent a group of experts with expertise in such areas as architecture, painting, stone work, and tiling to conduct field research. Their findings were compiled in a report and presented to the local government in June 2011 for use in future preservation projects.

[Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, October 5 to 9, 2010]

### ■ Group Invitation of the Dramaturgs of German-Speaking Countries

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of Japan-Germany diplomatic relations, we invited six dramaturgs (a position within a theater company that deals mainly with research and development of plays) from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland to Japan. As well as meeting with Japanese theater professionals and artists, they took part in the seminar co-hosted by the Goethe Institut in Tokyo on the latest developments in German theater. The participants exchanged views on such topics as the decision-making process in theaters and the role of public organizations in supporting cultural activities.

[Tokyo, Nasu, and Kyoto, November 23 to December 7, 2010]

### ■ Japan-South Korea Blastbeat Project

We sponsored a bilateral social enterprise program called the Blastbeat project as part of the Japan-Korea collaboration campaign. In the project, the students of both countries organized themselves into a music company, planned and hosted a live music event, and donated their profits from the event to charity. During the three-month program the young entrepreneurs met in camps and communicated over Skype, held heated debates over various issues, and in the end successfully achieved their goals.

[Seoul and Tokyo, November 2010 to February 2011]



Left: Kaga cuisine lecture and demonstration  
Middle: Inoue Kosei giving a Judo lesson  
Right: Blastbeat participants at work

## Offering Multiple Opportunities to Promote the Understanding of Japan in China

### ■ Long-Term Exchange Program for Chinese High School Students

The China Center provides Chinese high school students with the opportunity to get to know Japanese society and its culture through an 11-month exchange program. It is designed to give students a first-hand experience of living and studying in Japan, and the opportunity to interact with many Japanese such as their classmates and host family. The program entered its fifth year in 2010. In July, we bid farewell to the 35 Chinese students who had stayed in Japan since last year and welcomed another 38 new students (10 boys and 28 girls) in September. Through taking part in various extracurricular activities and school events, and living with a host family, the participants became more independent and learned to cooperate with others. We are grateful to the high schools and the families that hosted the students; they played the vital role of embracing the students who will one day become the bridge between Japan and China. One of the host family members told us that the family and the student had a hard time communicating with each other in the beginning, but eventually, to her delight, they grew so close that they were able to talk about their inner feelings. Such stories illustrate how the deep sense of connection developed during their long-term stay in Japan will help forge strong ties between the two countries in the coming decades.

### ■ Heart-to-Heart Community Site

This website operated by the China Center under the domain [www.chinacenter.jp](http://www.chinacenter.jp) contains the latest information on Japanese and Chinese cultures and a blog with simultaneous translation that allows users to share their thoughts by posting

entries in either language. The purpose of the interactive website is two-fold: first, it serves as a platform of communication where students who have participated in our cultural exchange programs can keep in touch with their friends and host family, and second, it aims to help build the foundation of a lasting friendship between the two countries by promoting mutual understanding through open and direct communication. While the site primarily targets young people, it has also received encouraging responses from users of all generations. One user remarked, "Reading the comments by Chinese students on how they perceive Japan has given me a renewed sense of appreciation for our culture and its characteristics."

### ■ Center for Face-to-Face Exchanges

Located mainly in provincial cities in China where access to information on Japan is limited, the Center for Face-to-Face Exchanges provides local residents, particularly youths, with a window into contemporary Japanese culture. Visitors to the centers can get involved in various cross-cultural activities or browse through the library of Japanese magazines, books, CDs, and DVDs. In 2010, we opened new centers in Chongqing and Guangzhou, in addition to the seven already in operation in Chengdu, Changchun, Nanjing, Yanbian, Xining, Lianyungang, and Harbin by 2009. The centers hold many intercultural events; for example, the centers in Guangzhou and Nanjing hosted a student exchange event in March 2011 planned and implemented by Japanese exchange students. Also, under the Chinese Center Visit Program, some Japanese high school students visited the Chengdu Center and interacted with local students.



Left: Welcome reception for exchange students

Middle: Student blog on Heart-to-Heart Community website

Right: Mochi (rice cake) pounding at the Guangzhou Center

