

Foreword

AOKI Tamotsu

Commissioner for Cultural Affairs



Culture is indispensable for inspiring people, bringing joy to their lives, and allowing them to lead rich and fulfilling lives. As society ages and birthrates decline, meaning that conventional economic growth becomes more elusive, an attractive and refined culture can do much to help a country bolster its international position. When each and every citizen enjoys culture and uses the creativity developed in the process of such enjoyment, cultural activities revitalize society and stimulate the economy. In Japan's case, such activities will also strengthen its influence in international society.

Even as the world today experiences severe social and economic conditions, nations are striving to promote and introduce their cultures, to gain respect, and to culturally enrich their societies. The Agency for Cultural Affairs is taking action to heighten global understanding of Japanese culture by working on the basis of "The Basic Policy on the Promotion of Culture and the Arts" (Second Basic Policy), approved by the Cabinet in February 2007, to encourage policies aimed at introducing modern Japanese culture, such as the media arts globally recognized as "Cool Japan," and sophisticated traditional culture as attractive images of Japan.

Even local governments are appreciating community-based culture and traditions through preservation and utilization of cultural properties and initiatives such as the "City of Culture and Arts Creation" policy. They are also making efforts at regenerating local communities through the creative power of culture and the arts. Citizens and cultural and artistic organizations in these regions are enthusiastic participants in voluntary activities for the arts and culture. Moreover, corporate mécénat activities and cultural support programs run by culture-related NPOs are now making major contributions to promoting culture and the arts. Now, more than ever, I feel it is time for the people of Japan, each working in his or her own way, to come together to build a country with a magnificent culture.

The Agency for Cultural Affairs will continue to be committed to enhancing the "Power of Culture" and to realizing a "nation based on culture and the arts."

It is our hope that this pamphlet will contribute to a broader understanding of Japan's cultural policy administration and that it will facilitate your enjoyment of culture and the arts.

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Logo of the Agency for Cultural Affairs

In December 2002, the logo for the Agency for Cultural Affairs was designed with the aims of making use of an easily comprehensive and familiar image, promoting appreciation for the importance of culture and for cultural policies, and to broaden the impression of Japan's cultural policies both in Japan and overseas.

Following an open recruitment for possible logos, the logo below was selected by the Agency for Cultural Affairs upon careful review of 527 entries (submitted by 221 applicants).

Based on the motif of the character "bun" (文) in the Japanese name of the Agency for Cultural Affairs (Bunkacho), the three ovals respectively represent "the past, present, and future," "creation and development," and "preservation and dissemination." The three rings thus express the stance of people who strive to promote the creation of culture and the arts and to preserve and transmit traditional arts (= the Agency for Cultural Affairs) and the expansion of their activities. The chosen color of the logo is "cinnabar-red," which is a traditional color of Japan.

By displaying this logo at performances and other events organized or sponsored by the Agency for Cultural Affairs as well as on stationery, pamphlets, and other print matters, we will make use of this logo to contribute toward the building of a society that values culture. We hope that you will also patronize this mark.

