

NEWS RELEASE

September 8, 2011

Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE)  
The Tiffany & Co. Foundation

### **Winners Announced for the Fourth Tiffany Foundation Award**

The Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) and The Tiffany & Co. Foundation are pleased to announce the winners of the fourth annual Tiffany Foundation Award for the Preservation of Japanese Traditional Arts and Culture in Contemporary Society.

The Tiffany & Co. Foundation Award was established in December 2007 through a partnership between JCIE and The Tiffany & Co. Foundation of the United States. The goal of this award is to recognize organizations that have demonstrated exemplary achievement in promoting traditional Japanese culture and the revitalization of local communities, and to raise awareness across the country about such activities in each region.

During the nomination period for this fourth annual Tiffany & Co. Foundation Award, from December 2010 through January 2011, JCIE accepted nominations from the general public for the first time. In addition, as in previous years, experts and members of relevant groups were asked to directly nominate appropriate organizations for this award. Organizations with merit were also invited to nominate themselves. As a result, JCIE received 93 nominations, the most ever. After careful review, the following organizations were selected. These recipients will each be awarded a ¥2 million prize and a custom-designed trophy from Tiffany & Co.

*Taisho* Award (The Tiffany Foundation Grand Prize for Traditional Japanese Culture):

**Amawari Romance Society**, Uruma City, Okinawa

*Shinkosho* Award (The Tiffany Foundation Prize for Promotion of Traditional Japanese Culture):

**Taiguruma Revival Project**, Niigata City, Niigata

Organizations that met the following three qualifications were eligible for the awards:

- (1) Incorporate the heritage of traditional local culture into the activities of contemporary society by mobilizing the participation of a wide range of citizens in traditional activities;
- (2) Revive these activities with the purpose of fostering a sense of pride and contributing to the community;
- (3) Promote domestic and international exchange related to traditional arts and culture to reinvigorate communities and open them to the rest of the world.

Among qualified applicants, the *Taisho* Award is given to one organization that is nationally recognized and expected to introduce revolutionary or innovative elements to their field. The *Shinkosho* Award is conferred on an organization smaller in scale, but recognized at the community level as having great potential and/or an organization that has produced exemplary results in their region.

A selection committee comprising four independent experts evaluated and discussed the merits of all nominated organizations based on the following five criteria:

### ***Criteria for Selection***

1. Local Culture	Connects local traditions to contemporary society in ways that enhance the local community.
2. Artistic Value	Has outstanding artistic value with a rich visual element.
3. Self-Sustainability	Works to secure a wide range of resources and demonstrates breadth of involvement.
4. Cross-Sectoral Nature	Involves the participation of a wide range of local citizens from different sectors of society such as government, business, and civil society.
5. Impact	Has an influence beyond the local community and serves as a universal model.

### ***Selection Committee***

Chairman:	Fumio Nanjo	Director, Mori Art Museum
Members:	Kengo Kuma	Architect and Professor, University of Tokyo
	Yuko Tanaka	Professor, Hosei University
	Katsuhiko Hibino	Artist and Professor, Tokyo University of the Arts

### ***Previous Tiffany Foundation Award Winners***

<b>First year</b>	<i>Taisho</i> Award:	Mino Washi Akari Art Contest & Exhibition Organizing Committee, Mino City, Gifu
	<i>Shinkosho</i> Award:	Nishi-Shiogo Revolving Theater Preservation Committee, Hitachi-Omiya City, Ibaraki
<b>Second year</b>	<i>Taisho</i> Award:	Earth Celebration Committee, Sado City, Niigata
	<i>Shinkosho</i> Award:	Kurobei Project Team, Murakami City, Niigata
<b>Third year</b>	<i>Taisho</i> Award:	Kyo-machiya Revitalization Study Group ( <i>Kyo-machiya Saisei Kenkyukai</i> ), Kyoto
	<i>Shinkosho</i> Award:	Red Brick Club Maizuru ( <i>Akarenga Kurabu Maizuru</i> ), Maizuru City, Kyoto

### **Message from The Tiffany & Co. Foundation**

The Tiffany & Co. Foundation is proud to present the fourth “Tiffany Foundation Award for the Preservation of Japanese Traditional Arts and Culture in Contemporary Society.” The award is presented to organizations that have contributed to the protection of Japan’s heritage and traditional culture. As Japan rebuilds after March’s devastating events, the Foundation recognizes the timeliness of preserving the past while building for the future. In keeping with the goal of this award program, Tiffany & Co. honors the importance of cultural heritage and history through contemporary designs of timeless value.

The Tiffany & Co. Foundation was established in 2000 to provide grants to nonprofit organizations dedicated to the preservation of the arts and the environment. The Foundation has been actively engaged in activities that promote design, craftsmanship and innovation in the arts. Additionally, the Foundation works to preserve the natural world, which provides Tiffany & Co. with the beauty and inspiration to create our world-renowned collections as well as our gemstones and precious metals.

Traditional Japanese crafts have also provided design inspiration for Tiffany & Co. In the nineteenth century, Tiffany & Co. designers created sterling silver masterpieces based on exquisite Japanese bird paintings. Tiffany’s “Japanesque Style” remains unsurpassed in the history of American silver design.

This year, the Foundation is pleased to witness the success of the award’s open application process, allowing for recognition of exemplary organizations from across the country. The Foundation is also thrilled that the internationally-acclaimed architect Kengo Kuma has joined the selection committee of renowned experts. The Tiffany & Co. Foundation is pleased to contribute to the positive relationship between Japan and the United States by supporting traditional Japanese art through this award.

Fernanda Kellogg  
Chairman of the Board, The Tiffany & Co. Foundation

### **About The Tiffany & Co. Foundation**

Established in 2000, The Tiffany & Co. Foundation provides grants to nonprofit organizations dedicated to the education and preservation of the arts and environmental conservation. Guided by the belief that a successful company has a responsibility to the greater community, the Foundation awards grants to institutions that preserve traditional artisanship. Support is also given to cultural institutions that foster the decorative arts. In addition, the Foundation assists organizations dedicated to conservation of natural resources from which the company draws the materials and inspiration that are at the heart of Tiffany design. For more information on The Tiffany & Co. Foundation, please visit [www.tiffanyandcofoundation.org](http://www.tiffanyandcofoundation.org)

## Message from JCIE

The Tiffany Foundation Award was established in 2007 as a partnership of the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) and the Tiffany & Co. Foundation. The goal of this award is to honor the organizations that support Japanese traditional culture in present-day Japan and that have made notable contributions to local communities.

For more than four decades, the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) has worked with numerous corporations in their philanthropic efforts. The introduction of American philanthropy to Japan over 30 years ago was the beginning of today's corporate social responsibility programs. Since then, JCIE has devoted itself to the promotion of charitable activities of corporations and other organizations that contribute to society.

The Tiffany Foundation Award is one such effort. It was through serious discussions between JCIE and Tiffany & Co. as well as The Tiffany & Co. Foundation that this award was established.

This year was the first time that an organization from Okinawa, the Amawari Romance Society, was selected for the Taisho Award. The society has been acclaimed for enabling young people to learn about their cultural roots via traditional Okinawan theater. The Shinkosho Award was presented to the Taiguruma Revival Project, in Niigata, Japan, for reintroducing a local tradition and handicraft with humor and warmth. The *taiguruma* (a traditional festival float representing the *tai*, or sea bream, a fish that symbolizes "congratulations" in Japanese culture) has been reborn as part of a great tradition.

In this fourth year of the Tiffany Foundation Awards, we launched open nominations and were honored to have the distinguished architect Mr. Kengo Kuma participate in our Selection Committee. The award has reached a new stage, and we will do our utmost to ensure that it becomes ever more meaningful. I respectfully ask for your continued support.

Tadashi Yamamoto  
President, JCIE

## About JCIE

The Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) was founded in 1970 as an independent, nonprofit organization to promote mutual understanding and cooperation between Japan and other countries on issues related to international affairs, as well as political, economic and social matters. Responding to the international exchange needs in this new era, JCIE administers international dialogues and research on policy issues, as well as exchanges and studies that strengthen the nonprofit sector. In addition, JCIE has supported the philanthropic efforts of corporations and foundations both within Japan and abroad, and for over 20 years has fostered international cooperation for the benefit of local communities. In recognition, the Imperial Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon (*Kyokujitsu Chu Jusho*) was this year conferred on our founder and chairman, Tadashi Yamamoto.

For more information on JCIE, please visit [www.jcie.or.jp/japan/](http://www.jcie.or.jp/japan/)

## About the 2011 Tiffany Foundation Award Winners

### **Tiffany Foundation Grand Prize for Traditional Japanese Culture** (Taisho Award):

Amawari Romance Society (*Amawari Roman no Kai*), Uruma City, Okinawa  
Kiyohiro Hasegawa, Chairman

The Amawari Romance Society produces and stages contemporary versions of *Kumi-odori*, a traditional form of Okinawan theater with dance and song. Its production of *Kimutaka-no-Amawari*, performed by middle and high-school students from Uruma City, Okinawa, portrays the life of the 10th-generation Lord of Katsuren Castle and incorporates modern dance and music.

This activity was initially directed by the Katsurencho (now Uruma City) Board of Education. In 2000, the local Parents Association took over the production of *Amawari Roman no Kai*. The performances were initially staged at the ruins of Katsuren Castle, but were later staged at the local civic auditorium, Kimutaka Hall. Since then, the group has established a center where young people may discover their shared heritage.

The group has given 168 public performances in Okinawa and in the Kanto and Kansai regions of Japan. A total of 180 middle and high-school students are currently participating.

### **Tiffany Foundation Award for the Promotion of Traditional Culture** (Shinkosho Award):

Taiguruma Revival Project (*Taiguruma Fukkatsu Project*), Niigata City,  
Niigata  
Motoyoshi Noguchi, Chairman

The *taiguruma* (a festival float in the form of a sea bream) originated in the Niigata area at the end of the Edo Period (1600-1867). The float is constructed of bamboo and *washi* (handmade Japanese paper), with fish scales of red wax. On midsummer evenings during the *O-Bon* festival, children in *yukata* and *geta* (wooden shoes) would pull these *taiguruma* along the roads, with the floats' red lanterns lighting the way. In the early Showa period (1925-1988), households owned as many *taiguruma* as they had children. The memory of the children's joy and the beauty of the illuminated floats stirs the hearts of many in that part of Japan.

The *taiguruma* custom waned in the 1960s. But in 2004, likeminded young people in Niigata launched the Taiguruma Revival Project that provides instruction in crafting the floats. The group conducts workshops in schools and civic centers, and holds a *Taiguruma* Show during *O-Bon*. In addition, local shopping areas have changed their address to Taiguruma Market Street and companies have developed products based on *taiguruma*.

## Comments from the Committee Members

### *Taisho Award: Amawari Romance Society*

#### **Fumio Nanjo, Director, Mori Art Museum (Committee Chair)**

This unique project has succeeded in involving young people in a local theater tradition. The fact that they derive so much enjoyment from their involvement in *Amawari* and the expectation that it will be handed down to future generations gave this project a high ranking.

#### **Kengo Kuma, Architect and Professor, University of Tokyo**

The *Amawari Roman no Kai* project has the power to create a new identity for the region that restores pride and confidence in the community. I was interested in the fact that it is performed primarily by secondary school students. A theatrical project such as this provides a very special learning experience.

#### **Yuko Tanaka, Professor, Hosei University**

I would like to express my respect for the way in which this project turned a local tradition into a work of art. It is gratifying to know that high school students are passing on a heritage to the next generation. Typically, cooperative groups provide a means for bonding and training youth in afterschool programs or at festivals, but this organization provides a new way to enlighten students while at school. Through the society's activities, the participants preserve a custom of Okinawa that is unique among Japanese traditions.

#### **Katsuhiko Hibino, Artist and Professor, Tokyo University of the Arts**

I am once again in awe of the power of a dramatic production to inspire an audience, as well as the actors on stage. In the course of a performance, a unique bond is established between these two groups. Everyone is the lead character in his or her own life. It seems to me that the appeal of a play is in what we might learn from a portrayal of life that is different from our own.

The question, "What can I play?" is a major theme of the *Amawari Roman no Kai* that separates it from other community projects. By making the lead character a historical figure who was not a hero, the play led to greater understanding of the past, demonstrating how the stage can alter perceptions. Over time, I think the staging of works like this could lead to a change in historical perspectives.

### *Shinkosho Award: Taiguruma Revival Project*

#### **Fumio Nanjo, Director, Mori Art Museum (Committee Chair)**

The *taiguruma* float is notable for its unique fish shape and for the festive spirit it generates. Considering the easy access to the materials required to make the floats, anyone can participate in the resurgence of this tradition. The project serves as a model for reviving folkcrafts in many areas of the country, and for that reason I rated

it highly. Based on the good results obtained so far, I am looking forward to future projects in Niigata.

**Kengo Kuma, Architect and Professor, University of Tokyo**

The *Taiguruma* project is a bold attempt to re-establish a cherished custom. There have been many such attempts, but this project succeeded because the organizers created a *taiguruma* with their own hands. Doing so paid tribute to earlier generations who relied on their own skills to provide the necessities of life.

**Yuko Tanaka, Professor, Hosei University**

The Edo Period was followed by an era that is remembered for its laughter and beauty. Happily, it has returned in the *O-Bon* holiday celebrations that represent a dialogue with the spirits through the light of the paper lanterns. In the wake of the March earthquake, our hearts are lifted by the Taiguruma Revival Project.

**Katsuhiko Hibino, Artist and Professor, Tokyo University of the Arts**

Over the past 30 years, there has been a notable increase in Japanese universities that specialize in the arts. It was there that the idea developed to reconsider the various traditions of regional cultures. The Taiguruma Revival Project is one highly successful example. High school students can now enter an arts university in Niigata and redesign artifacts such as toys that symbolize their personal history and that of generations before them. In giving individuals the opportunity to produce these treasures, the university assists in preserving a culture's legacy.

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