

Japan Directors Association  
Geinou Kadensha 3F  
6-12-3 Nishi Shinjuku Shinjuku-ku  
Tokyo 160-0023



Japan Directors Association



**The JAPAN DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION is the only organization for stage directors in Japan, founded in April 1960. Since the beginning, it has been open to both professional and amateur directors.**

The purposes of founding the association was to establish the social, economic and artistic status of professional directors in Japan, and to contribute to the growth of theatre in Japan by exploring ways of improving our artistic skills and aiming at mutual support between directors (both professional and amateur). It had been a private organization for a while and became a general incorporated association in 2013.

Most of the founding members were *Shingeki* (new drama/western-style theatre) directors, and the number of the association members was fewer than 200 at first. Not only *Shingeki* directors, but also a wide variety of directors of commercial theatre, *Angura* (underground theatre), *Shogekijo* (small theatre), children's theatre, etc. started to join us from the '80s, and now we have about 600 members all over the country.



## ▶▶ACTIVITIES

From the start, we've been publishing newsletters and holding workshops in order to deepen our interactions with each other. We also have been nominating upcoming directors for the Program of Overseas Study by the Agency for Cultural Affairs. In the 80s, we started international theatre exchange projects, such as holding conferences and workshops and inviting theatre productions, mainly interacting with China and South Korea hoping to solve the historical issues after the war. Receiving requests and financial support from the Agency for Cultural Affairs, we've been doing various projects for promoting the theatre industry in every part of the country and training new directors and actors from 1999 until today.

## >>>> International Department

## ▶▶TRAINING PROJECTS

We've been holding the "Theatrical University/Training Seminars for Directors", the "International Theatre Exchange Seminars", the "Japanese Drama Training Seminars" and the "Competitions for Young Directors". All the four projects are to offer places of learning that young theatre people all over the country, who will bear the next generation, are eager to have. Since 2018, we've been working on cultural and artistic activities by people with disabilities as a social inclusion project as well.

## ▶▶PUBLISHING PROJECTS

To record and share the history of theatre in Japan, we publish the "What Directors Do" series. The "Anthology of Foreign Plays" series are for allowing people all over Japan to read plays translated in Japanese from International Theatre Exchange Seminars. We also publish the "International Theatre Exchange Seminars Yearbooks" which record and summarize the seminars we hold every year for all the association members and other theatre people.

## ▶▶FESTIVALS

We held the "Japan & Korea Theatre Festivals" for a month at a theatre in Tokyo in 2009 and for a month in Tokyo, Osaka and Fukuoka in 2012. To get a lot of Japanese people interested in the events, we discussed the contents with the National Theatre Association of Korea, Korea Directors Association, and Korean theatre people, poets, artists, dancers and musicians living in Japan and had large-scale festivals.

## ▶▶PHOENIX PROJECT

Since the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, we've been working on this self-initiated project in order for all the areas affected by the disaster not to be forgotten. We try to be a help for their reconstruction by having theatre people, students and activists from the disaster-stricken areas speak about various issues not reported in the media, inviting theatre productions from the areas, producing stage readings and holding workshops.

We're an association that always discuss what our roles are in the society and explore possibilities of theatre.

## *Welcome to Japan Directors Association!*

*The Japan Directors Association has done various projects since it was founded and has made proposals to the society. However, there are still many issues to be solved.*

*We're now facing a question of what theatre can do in these hard times filled with various kinds of oppressiveness. No matter how difficult the times are, the only thing we can do is to send messages to the world through theatre from where we are at the moment using our free bodies and free words.*

*What the association board members plan to do are the following (We'd love to hear your opinions and ideas too):*

- To advance organizational renewal toward generational change*
- To create key departments across Japan where the association members can participate and collaborate more*
- To revise the projects (training, education, international, public relations) and expand the activities done by all the association's departments*
- To publish textbooks on theatre*
- To do more tie-up projects with public theatres*
- To continue projects for training actors*
- To discuss in detail establishing Japan Theatre Center (tentative name)*

*Please stop by our office in Nishi-shinjuku with your dream projects.*

*We look forward to seeing you.*

*Show Ryuzanji*

*Chairman*

