

# JAPAN PRIZE NEWS

THE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
FOUNDATION OF JAPAN (JSTF)

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## German and British Scientists Awarded 1992 (8th) Japan Prize

Recognized for Scientific Achievements in Science and Technology of Material Interfaces and in Science and Technology for Biological Production



Prof. Dr. Gerhard Ertl

Two Professors from Germany and the United Kingdom were awarded the 1992 (eighth) Japan Prize, the most prestigious and honored prize in the fields of science and technology, at a presentation ceremony held at the National Theatre in Tokyo on April 27.

The Prize is presented annually by The Science and Technology Foundation of Japan to scientists and researchers who have made substantial contributions to the advancement of science and technology and to the peace and prosperity of mankind.

The categories of this year were Science and Technology of Material Interfaces and Science and Technology for Biological Production. Top scientists and academics around the world submitted 657 nominations, 361 for Science and Technology of Material Interfaces and 296 for Science and Technology for Biological Production.

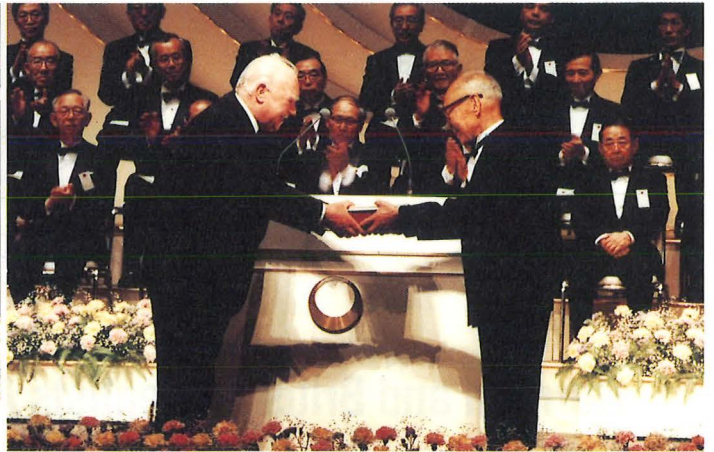
Prof. Dr. Gerhard Ertl, Honorary Professor at the Free University Berlin and at the Technical University Berlin and Director of Fritz-Haber Institute, Max Planck Society, received the 1992 (eighth) Japan Prize in the category of Science and Technology of Material Interfaces. Prof. Dr Ertl is credited for his contributions to the new development of the chemistry and physics of solid surfaces.

In the category of Science and Technology for Biological Production, the prize went to Prof. Ernest John Christopher Polge, Scientific Director of Animal Biotechnology Cambridge Ltd., who is credited for his discovery of a method of the cryopreservation of semen and embryos in farm animals.



Prof. Ernest J. C. Polge

## JAPAN PRIZE



### **Their Majesties The Emperor and Empress Attended The Presentation Ceremony**

Their Majesties The Emperor and Empress attended the presentation ceremony at the National Theatre in Tokyo on April 27, 1992. Some 1,000 prominent guests attended the ceremony, including the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Minister of Education, the Minister of the Science and Technology Agency, the Governor of Tokyo, numerous ambassadors to Japan, eminent scholars and researchers, and representatives from other fields including politics, finance, industry and the media.

The ceremony began with a rendition of Minoru Miki's Overture Japan, a work composed specially for the ceremony and performed by the Tokyo City Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Hiroshi Ishimaru. Foundation Chairman Dr. Masami Ito made the opening address and Dr. Jiro Kondo, Chairman of the 1992 Japan Prize Selection Committee, introduced the two winners and their achievements. After the chairmen of the two selection panels presented the reasons for their selections, Foundation President Dr. Kisaburo Yokota presented the winners with their certificates of merit, commemorative medals and cash awards of 50 million yen for each category.

In his acceptance speech, Prof. Dr. Ertl said, "I consider the recognition of one's achievements by the judgement of peers to be the most satisfying reward for all efforts. Prof. Polge expressed his appreciation, saying, "I am sure many good friends in Japan share with me the pleasure that this award recognizes the contribution not only to the progress of science and technology but also to the peace and prosperity of mankind."

### **Brilliant Banquet Held with Their Majesties The Emperor and Empress**

Following the presentation ceremony, a banquet for the 1992 Japan Prize winners was held at Akasaka Prince Hotel in Tokyo on the evening of April 27, in the presence of Their Majesties The Emperor and Empress of Japan as well as 500 dignitaries including Japanese government officials, the German and U.K. ambassadors to Japan, other ambassadors and ministers, and celebrities from various fields. The brilliant celebration included music by the New Vivaldi Ensemble.

# JAPAN PRIZE

## Address by His Majesty The Emperor



On the occasion of the eighth Japan Prize Award Ceremony, it is a great pleasure for me to offer my sincerest congratulations to the two awardees: Professor Ernest John Christopher Polge and Professor Doctor Grerhard Ertl.

Professor Ertl has conducted research on the analysis of the level of atoms and molecules on the surface of solid materials in relation to heterogeneous catalysis, thereby opening the way for practical applications of the principle.

The studies pursued by Professor Polge have paved the way for the preservation of animal cells by deep freezing, and the method established by Professor Polge has given a great impetus to the livestock industry.

I am convinced that, in the fields of science and technology of both interfacial materials and bioproduction, their studies will lead to the further development of a wide range of applications contributing to the welfare of humanity. I would, therefore, like to express my deepest respects for the remarkable achievements of these two men.

At present, the world is confronted with such problems as over-population and our concerns regarding the preservation of the environment. It is my belief that science and technology have extremely important roles to play in helping to overcome these global issues and safeguard the peace and prosperity of humanity.

I sincerely hope that this year's Japan Prizes will contribute to the further advancement of science and technology and thus help to create prosperity around the world.



An opening address by the Foundation President Dr. Yokota was followed by dinner, after which His Majesty The Emperor honored the two laureates with a congratulatory toast. A second toast in appreciation of the laureates' wives was made by His Excellency Mr. Yuji Osada, President, House of Councillors, who represented the three branches of the Japanese government. The laureates' wives were then presented with bouquets.

Another toast was proposed by His Excellency Mr. Kanzo Tanigawa, Minister of Science and Technology Agency, who asked the guests in toasting to the Japan Prize's further contribution toward world peace and prosperity.

The banquet continued with congratulatory messages from Mr. Shunichi Suzuki, Governor of Tokyo, H.E. Mr. Fawzi Bin Abdul Majeed Shobokshi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, H.E. Mr. Wilhelm Haas, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Germany, and H.E. Sir John Whitehead, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The end of the banquet was highlighted by a performance by the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies Mixed Voices Cahor Soleil featuring songs of the universities and countries where the laureates spent their days as young students.

Prior to closing the banquet, Profs. Ertl and Polge gave speeches of thanks and brought this memorable banquet to its close.

## Japan Prize Week



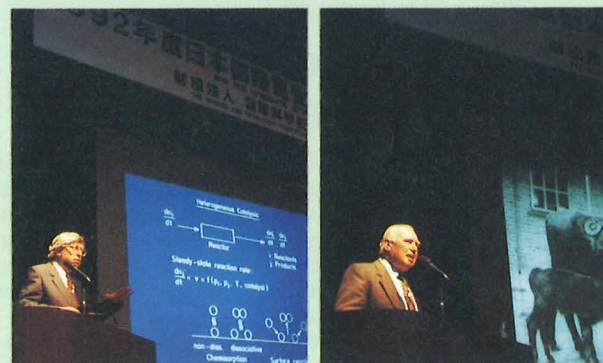
Courtesy call on the Prime Minister (April 23)



Press conference at the Japan Press Center (April 22)



Visit to the Science Council of Japan (April 22)



Commemorative Lectures in Tokyo, at the Nissho Hall (April 24)

# JAPAN PRIZE

## Exchange Activities

The Foundation has close relationships with the Nobel Foundation since its establishment. In 1987, it instituted a program to send two Japanese students to the annual Stockholm International Youth Science Seminar during the Nobel Prize Week. The seminar seeks to promote international exchanges among young scientists and is supported by the Nobel Foundation.

The participants in the 1991 seminar were Ms. Atsuko Inoue, from the Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Engineering, Sophia University, and Ms. Shizuko Ohe, from the Department of Forestry, Faculty of Agriculture, Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology.

Their memoirs are as follows:

On December 9, 1991, the day before the 90th Nobel Prize award ceremony, a reception was given at the Vasa Museum in honour of the past Nobel laureates. I was very lucky to have a chance to talk with some of the laureates.

In the museum, there was a large wooden ship called "Vasa" which had sunk on its first voyage placed. I felt an aura of the Vikings. Around the Vasa, many people from all over the world were talking cheerfully with the laureates.

I had a chance to talk with Dr. Elias J. Corey, the 1990 laureate in Chemistry and the recipient of the 1989 Japan Prize. I asked him his impression of Japan and the difference between American students and Japanese students.

It was rather impressive for me to see some laureates looking for their wives.

Many participants wore their national costumes of interesting and I enjoyed conversations with them, inquiring about such costumes.

Under the world's most prestigious Nobel Prize, people gather and the people's circles further expand.

My real feeling was, after attending the reception party, it might have been the intention of late Alfred Nobel that I could see people who were not usually available otherwise.

(by Atsuko Inoue)



Ms. Inoue (left) and Ms. Ohe, in Stockholm

A limousine came to pick us up at the hotel where we had been staying. I was the last one to get into the car as it took time to change into my furisode-long sleeved kimono.

In 1991, the Nobel Prize marked its 90th anniversary, and all the past prize winners were invited to the award ceremony to celebrate the occasion.

The City Hall where the ceremony was usually held was too small to accommodate all the attendees, so the 1991 ceremony took place in the Globen Convention Hall.

The Hall was filled with formally dressed up ladies and gentlemen, and I was amazed to see that there were lots of students with a white cap, perhaps more than half of the guests, invited to the ceremony. A white cap itself did not go with a white tie or a long evening dress, but every single student looked so proud of wearing a white hat.

The ceremony started. The Swedish Festival Music which has been played since the first ceremony in 1901 brought in the past Nobel laureates.

Among the laureates were elderly people, some in wheelchairs. I felt the dignity of the Nobel Prize history. The glorious atmosphere with consecutive musics and speeches gave a great impression on me. I will never forget this gathering of world-famous scientists.

(by Shizuko Ohe)

## Selection of Winners Begins for the 1993 (9th) Japan Prize

The categories of the 1993 (9th) Japan Prize are Safety Engineering and Disaster Mitigation and Molecular and Cellular Technology in Medicine. Candidates have been recommended through numerous letters of nomination received by the Foundation from around the world. The 1993 Selection Committee has been established and the process of selecting next year's winners is under way. Results will be announced publicly in December, 1992 and the presentation ceremony will be held in April, 1993.

## Monthly Science and Technology Seminars

The Foundation holds a series of free monthly science and technology seminars in Japanese for the general public. The seminars are aimed at promoting the comprehensive spread of information and development of ideas regarding science and technology.

Distinguished scholars, scientists, engineers and other recognized leaders in their fields give lectures in easy-to-understand language for the benefit of the public.

Seminars in the 1992 series have the yearly theme "Wonders of natural environment and lives—to rethink the starting points of science." Seminar titles will include: "Spawning of fishes—endless operations by fishes to live." (July 29), "Questions on genes—

elucidating the destiny of the origin of life." (August 26), "Mysteries of the inside of the earth—to explore the inner depth lying underbeneath of our feet." (September 24), "Living organisms under the environments of the utmost limits.—the wonders of living" (October 28), "The Big Bang—exploring the birth of the universe." (November 25).

