

Reviews from the Selection Committee



Ms. IPPONGI Bang

To begin with, KAWAII and handsome guys are justice! So, from the moment I saw it, I was instantly drawn in and my heart was stolen by this rare animal-inspired work. The scene where the wild crows and birds free the heroine Kobato – a caged bird on display as a thing of beauty for human convenience – was truly moving.

Since the heroine Kobato never speaks in the story, I think readers might easily see themselves in her. Modern people, constrained by their jobs, circumstances, social roles, and mental states, will recognize themselves in Kobato. They'll think, "Couldn't the crow prince with his beautiful black feathers take me away to a free and open world?"

The overwhelming charm of the characters, combined with artwork that is both meticulous and dynamic, is truly striking. I'm grateful for the opportunity to encounter such a remarkable work. I'm eagerly and sincerely looking forward to the continuation of this work and the author's new creations!

"Winged" (Gold, Brazil)

This work features a boy who learns of a mysterious being dwelling in the river in possession of extraordinary powers. As he makes offerings to have his wishes granted, the narrative unfolds toward a horrific conclusion. The portrayal is meticulously layered: the boy, living in humble circumstances and worried about his sick mother, initially maintains his modest sense of integrity, yet he gradually succumbs to temptation, ultimately descending into the worst possible outcome. What was particularly striking was how the story reimagined the timeless theme of wishes and their price found in folklore across time and cultures into a dark horror tale without leaning too heavily on moralizing. The depiction of the village's damp, humid air also quietly intensifies the atmosphere of unease.

"Bông Bông Bang Bang" (Silver, Vietnam)



Mr. KISHIMOTO Kenji



Mr. HORI Yasuki

About ten years ago, I was invited to Taiwan by Shogakukan Inc.'s International Department. The reason given was, "Taiwan has many talented artists, but few editors able to guide them." Seeing the many talents who have since emerged in Taiwan – starting with Gao Yen – and established their own unique presence, I cannot help but feel how much times have changed. I believe this award-winning work, "The Nature Chef" (titled The Mountain Cook during judging), has gone beyond "technically advanced" or "international in flavor" and achieved "now that's manga!" status. The tense composition and direction in the opening scenes, the idea of advancing the main characters' conversation in Chapter 2 through shared bites of food, the consistent grasp of the relationship between Japan and Taiwan at that time throughout the work, and the restrained ending – all of these elements demonstrate remarkable artistic sensibility. If author 南南日 consciously works on differentiating their characters and making the timeline clear, they might become like KAWAI Katsutoshi (author of "Tighten Your Belt!").

"The Nature Chef" (Silver, Taiwan)

It's a masterpiece. I found it incredibly engaging. Young people becoming absorbed in games is a universal phenomenon. While depicting the escape into another world, it also portrays the harsh reality and tediousness of sacrifice required to achieve something, and this contrast is superb. I interpreted it as exploring the theme of "What does it mean to become an adult?" However, seeing how the story manages to draw you into the narrative lightly and enjoyably without ever imposing the author's viewpoint was truly educational. The artistry is also outstanding. If I could make one request, I noticed there were many close-ups of the characters. If both the other world and reality were shown in larger panels with longer shots, I think it would give the scenes even more depth. As I started to say, I could really relate to the protagonist, who was obsessed with games and escaping reality, experienced bittersweet moments in real life, and gradually grew up. It's a wonderful work that leaves you wondering, "What will happen next?" even after the story ends. I learned a lot. Thank you.

"Quarter Life Crisis" (Silver, Saudi Arabia)



Mr. MORIKAWA George

THE 19TH JAPAN INTERNATIONAL MANGA AWARD



The Japan International Manga Award aims to promote the spread of manga culture overseas and foster international cultural exchange through manga.

Every year since its establishment in 2007, the Award has honored overseas manga artists who have created outstanding manga works. This year saw a record 738 entries from 110 countries and regions.

Praise from the Selection Committee Chairperson

We received a total of 738 entries this year. A truly diverse array of dramatic worlds unfolded in two-dimensional form, bringing home the realization that "there is no world that cannot be depicted in manga."

"Winged" is a dramatic tale in which charming, anthropomorphized bird characters strive to establish their identities.

"Quarter Life Crisis" presents a thrilling story that explores the social theme of women's life choices.

"Bông Bông Bang Bang" is a thought-provoking work that directly confronts the struggles faced by young people in modern society, offering a very compelling read.

"The Nature Chef" conveys a quiet yet steadfast determination to preserve and honor the traditions of an ethnic minority community.

Though each work differs in genre and composition, they share a common thread: the author's passion.

As I led this year's Selection Committee meetings, I felt strongly that the Japan International Manga Award is a wonderful initiative that allows people from all over the world – despite differences in nationality, culture, and background – to share the same profound emotions.



Ms. SATONAKA Machiko

• Executive Committee

- Mr. MOTEGI Toshimitsu, Minister for Foreign Affairs [Chairperson]
- Mr. KUROSAWA Shinya, President, Japan Foundation
- Ms. SHIRAIISHI Saya, Professor Emeritus, Tokyo University
- Mr. SUGIYAMA Kotaro, President, LIGHTPUBLICITY Co.Ltd.
- Mr. Frederik L. SCHODT, Translator, Interpreter and Writer
- Mr. MARUSAWA Shigeru, Executive Managing Director, SHOGAKUKAN Inc.

• Selection Committee

- Ms. SATONAKA Machiko, Manga Artist [Chairperson]
- Ms. IPPONGI Bang, Manga Artist
- Mr. KISHIMOTO Kenji, Former Editor in Chief
- Mr. HORI Yasuki, Former Editor in Chief
- Mr. MORIKAWA George, Manga Artist



外務省

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan



Japan International
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第19回
日本国際漫画賞

THE 19TH JAPAN INTERNATIONAL MANGA AWARD

Winged

Artist : Laica Chrose (Brazil)
Award ceremony participants : Laica Chrose
Artist profile :

Studied in Japan through the Japanese Government Scholarship and holds bachelor's and master's degrees in Design from Tokyo University of the Arts. Awarded 4 times in the Silent Manga Audition and Excellence Award Runner-Up from the 25th Comic ZENON Manga Taisho.

Story :

An ornamental dove is freed from her gilded cage by a crow haunted by the loss of his clan to humans. Together they journey through the outside world confronting her belief she's a burden and his fear of failure, in search of what freedom truly means.

Language : English

Copyright : Laica Chrose



Quarter Life Crisis

Artist : Meeda (Saudi Arabia)
Award ceremony participants : Meeda

Artist profile :

Artist, writer, and illustrator. Worked on several projects in the past and worked professionally in manga since 2021 with Manga Arabia.

Story :

Amal, a young lady in her mid-twenties, escapes reality in her virtual fantasy world to distract herself from her family and societal pressure to find a husband before her 25th birthday. How is she going to face the challenges between both worlds?

Language : Arabic

Copyright : Manga Arabia

Bống Bống Bang Bang

Artist : Lúong Minh Quang / Lang Huynh (Vietnam)

Original Author : Vũ Đình Lân
Award ceremony participants : Vũ Đình Lân

Artist profile :

I started drawing manga 15 years ago and had my first work published in 2014. Currently, I'm the founder of Light Comic studio, which has 20 manga & webtoon artists, and we produce thousands of manga and webtoon pages every year for our partners. At the same time, we also create many original works.

Story :

That day, An accidentally discovered a chilling secret about a classmate: beneath a stone bridge, there exists a mysterious force capable of bestowing wealth.

Language : Vietnamese

Copyright : Light Comic studio

The Nature Chef

Artist : 南南日 (Taiwan)

Original Author : 好旅文創 GoodTrip Creative (Taiwan)

Award ceremony participants : 南南日

Artist profile :

A comic creator who finds inspiration in observing and sketching people to capture the essence of the era. Exploring the world through diverse perspectives, they strive to create works that resonate deeply with readers.

Story :

During World War II, Panai, Amis cook Panai serves a Japanese family in wartime Hualien, shaping new comfort from scarce local foods. Her inventive dishes revive memories of home, and a seaside search for ingredients leads to a quiet bond with officer Shinsuke.

Language : Chinese

Copyright : ©The Nature Chef / Nananrih, GoodTrip Creative Ltd. / Gaea Books

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第19回
日本国際漫画賞



The Echo Before Dawn

Artist : 狼七 (Lang-Chi) (Taiwan)

Language : Chinese

Copyright : THE ECHO BEFORE DAWN™
© 2024, Lang-Chi, Fisfisa Media Co., Ltd.



THE 19TH JAPAN INTERNATIONAL MANGA AWARD



Anzuelo

Artist : Emma Ríos (Spain)

Language : English
Copyright : Emma Ríos



Perfeddion

Artist : Dani Bermúdez (Spain)

Original Author : Fidel De Tovar (Spain)

Language : Spanish
Copyright : Dani Bermúdez, Fidel De Tovar



Back to Tomioka

Artist : Michaël Crouzat (France)

Original Author : Laurent Galandon (France)

Language : French
Copyright : Retour à Tomioka / Laurent Galandon, Michaël Crouzat (c) Jungle, 2024



The Artifact Shop

Artist : Pacha (France)

Language : French
Copyright : © Pacha - KANA (Dargaud-Lombard s.a)



The Lord of Master-Li Bai (8)

Artist : 葉明軒 (Taiwan)

Language : Chinese
Copyright : ©葉明軒 2025 / KADOKAWA TAIWAN CORPORATION



DELIRIUM

Artist : goroweiko (Russia)

Language : English
Copyright : goroweiko



RKGK Buffalo love, buffalo hugs

Artist : Pichet Wattanawessakorn (Garun) (Thailand)

Language : Thai
Copyright : ©Garun



Dali Libreria

Artist : Pen So (China (Hong Kong))

Language : Chinese
Copyright : PEN SO ARTLAB



THE LIFE AFTER LIFE

Artist : CHO CHI HO-JERRY (China (Hong Kong))

Original Author : CAI JIE-JACKY (China (Hong Kong))

Language : Chinese
Copyright : Jerrycho Workshop Limited & JACKY CAI WORKSHOP LIMITED



Trio

Artist : Linus Liu (China (Hong Kong))

Language : Chinese
Copyright : Liu Kwong Cho