

Afterword

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Ten years after the publication of *20 Years of the Chihiro Art Museum* (a 24-page pamphlet printed in B5 format), this booklet has added coverage of ten additional years at the Chihiro Art Museum Azumino and now numbers 80 pages in A4 format. It records the current state and future plans of the Chihiro Art Museum as well as the road the museum has traveled up to this point.

The idea for the Museum began with letters from fans calling for the creation of a place where people could experience Chihiro Iwasaki's pictures. The Chihiro Iwasaki Memorial Foundation was established using the works, documents, and copyrights left by Chihiro Iwasaki. Funds were raised by publishing collections of illustrations and books in cooperation with various publishing companies, and the Museum came into being in a corner of Chihiro's home three years after her death.

The Museum was designed based on the expectation that up to five people might visit each day; however, since welcoming 400 visitors on its first day, the Museum has demonstrated just how many people are attracted to the works of Chihiro. Countless visitors have found peace of mind and the courage to face the next day at the Chihiro Art Museum.

It wasn't until our seventh year that we came to understand fundamental things such as the need to rotate exhibitions, the need for staff to operate a museum, the need for space to organize and study artwork, and the need for public-relations activities. In that year, we held the exhibition "From Yumeji to Chihiro: A History of Illustrators Who Preserved Their Childlike Hearts," planned by our first director, Tadasu Iizawa.

In its 15th year, the Museum turned its eyes toward other artists from Japan and abroad who have done wonderful work in the field of picture books. That year, we began working on planned exhibitions as well as on collecting, preserving, researching, and displaying works of art. In its 20th year, the Museum opened the Chihiro Art Museum Azumino to further its activities as an art museum specializing in picture books and to display such works as part of a permanent collection.

In the ten years that the Museum has occupied the two facilities in Tokyo and Azumino, it has spread its wings broadly, enhancing its collection of Picture Book illustrations from around the world, implementing educational and promotional activities in close cooperation with local communities, and further carrying out international-exchange activities. The Museum is now readying itself to play an even more active role in society, and we are truly grateful for the invaluable support people have given us over the years.

30 Years of the Chihiro Art Museum

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