

# Good Design Awards, 2011

In October 2011, the Japan Institute of Design Promotion (“JDP”) announced 1,112 Good Design Awards for the current fiscal year. For more than fifty years, the Good Design Award has been given to outstanding designs that make people’s lives, industry, and society more affluent. It pays tribute to objects created by people or human activities, including home appliances, automobiles, housing, services, software and regional development.

The Good Design Grand Award, which is presented to the design that most symbolizes 2011 from among all the designs winning the 2011 Good Design Awards, was won by Honda Motor’s information services for a car navigation systems. The service started out as a membership-based information service. It uses data received from the automobiles of members to rapidly provide members with accurate traffic information via a regular car navigation system. After the Great East Japan Earth-

quake, Honda made this service publicly available, free of charge, over the Internet, allowing people to

check on a map which roads were passable. This information was of inestimable help to rescue operations, the transportation of relief supplies and other relief efforts. JDP’s Jun Akimoto says, “The speed with which Honda decided to make this service immediately available to the general public and the way it fulfilled corporate social responsibility

at the time of the disaster earned high praise from the judges.”

This year, JDP waived Good Design Award entry fees for businesses headquartered in seven prefectures in the north-east of Japan for the purpose of supporting Japan’s reconstruction in the aftermath of the Great

East Japan Earthquake. Among such entries, twenty-seven product and architecture designs won awards, including a traditional *magewappa* (bent woodwork) bento box, a butter case, a bread dish from Akita Prefecture, and a Nambu ironware pot from Iwate Prefecture.

In June 2011, JDP also established the Design Center for Reconstruction Assistance and launched the Area Aid Design Project. This will provide financial assistance to a total of 100 participating designers and enterprises from the seven prefectures previously mentioned to help them take part in trade fairs worldwide and advertise on the Internet. Products were exhibited in design exhibitions in Taiwan in October and in Hong Kong in November, attracting a great deal of attention from visitors.

Akimoto says, “The exhibition in Hong Kong is expected to lead to a decision to export Sendai *tansu* clothing chests to Hong Kong. “Even after the Great East Japan Earthquake, Japanese products still seem to be held in high regard.”



Sendai *tansu* (73.4 cm x 56.3 cm x 37 cm)

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*Magewappa* butter case and bread dish