

Organized by : Kyoto-based volunteer Noh performers

Co-organized by : The City of Kyoto , ROHM Theatre Kyoto(Kyoto City Music Arts and Culture Promotion Foundation)
The Japan Foundation Kyoto Office

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Noh Charity Performance

Prayers from kyoto for Reconstruction of Japan's Disaster-affected Regions

Thursday ,
August 25
2022

Venue : ROHM Theatre Kyoto , Southhall
13 , Okazaki Saishoji-cho, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto City
Access : <https://rohmtheatrekyoto.jp/english/access/>

【Part 1】 at 10:30 a.m Noh“Tamura” Kyogen“Kakiyamabushi” Noh“Shoki”

【Part 2】 at 6:00 p.m Noh“Ukon” Kyogen“Shatei” Noh“Kuramatengu”

Play synopses will be presented in English.

Admission tickets are ¥1,500 each for Part 1 and Part 2

(* Open seating ; no refunds)

Ticket Inquiries (on sale from Saturday, June 1)

ROHM Theatre Kyoto Ticket Counter : Box office or telephone reservations 075-746-3201

ROHM Theatre Kyoto Ticket Online : <https://rohmtheatrekyoto.jp/english/tickets/guide/>

Kyoto Concert Hall Ticket Counter : Box office or telephone reservations 075-711-3231

Kyoto Kanze Nohplay Theatre : Box office or telephone reservations 075-771-6114

< Part 1 Storylines >

Noh play: Tamura

In this story, a monk comes across a boy sweeping the Kiyomizu temple precinct. The boy tells him that the temple was founded by Sakanoue no Tamuramaro. The boy tells the monk about some popular local spots as the sun gradually sets, until moonlight shines on the spring flowers nearby. The two recite a poem together as they appreciate the precinct's cherry blossoms. The boy rejoices in the beauty of the view and dances, then disappears into the temple's Tamura-do Hall.

(a facility dedicated to the founder)

A local man then arrives and tells the monk more about the temple's origins. Upon hearing about the boy, he concludes that it must have been the ghost of Tamuramaro and advises the monk to pray. After the man leaves, the monk begins to chant the holy Lotus Sutra, whereupon the ghost of Tamuramaro dressed in armor appears. He recounts how he conquered the enemy of the government and received an imperial order to protect the national land there. He tells the monk how he led a force to visit Kannon (the Deity of Mercy) to pray for divine support, which helped him defeat rebels from the eastern area. He attributes the victory to the spiritual power of Kannon, and then disappears.

Kyogen play: Kakiyamabushi (The Persimmon Thief)

In this story, a hungry mountain priest returning from years of training comes across a persimmon farm. He helps himself to a persimmon and climbs a tree to eat it. Spotting him in the branches, the farmer decides to play with him, first saying that he sees a crow in the tree a monkey. then a kite, thereby making the priest imitate the sounds of these animals. The farmer says that a kite should be able to fly, and the priest tries to oblige but falls and hurts himself badly.

How does the story end? Watch this fun piece to find out!

Noh play: Shoki

In this story, a man from the foot of Mt. Shunan in China is heading to the capital for an audience with the emperor. On the way, the ghost of a shady fellow called Shoki appears, and reveals that he committed suicide after failing the civil servant entrance exam. He asks the traveler to tell the emperor that he has sworn to defeat demons and protect national territory to gain his favor, then disappears in a display of his supernatural powers, vowing to reveal his true self later.

Another man from the foot of Mt. Shunan comes along, and upon hearing the story advises the traveler to pray.

As the traveler chants sutras to console the spirit of Shoki, the ghost re-appears and demonstrates himself fighting demons with a treasured sword. Now a Taoist deity, he lauds the emperor's peaceful reign.

< Part 2 Storylines >

Noh play: Ukon

In this story, a priest from Kashima Shrine is visiting Ukon no Baba (a horse-riding ground where the courtier Arihara no Narihira used compose poems to ladies) at Kitano-Tenmangu Shrine in Kyoto, where the cherry blossoms are in full bloom. Some noble women enjoying the blooms from a oxcart approach, and the priest exchanges Narihira poems with one of them. She shows him around the scenic spots of the shrine and identifies herself as a cherry tree deity tasked with protecting the emperor. She disappears behind the flowers with a promise to perform a *yokagura* nighttime sacred dance later.

The priest waits. and the deity duly appears. She performs an imperial protection dance expressing gratitude for world peace with parallels to a flower-filled spring, then ascends to heaven.

The deity's appearance here in the city's blooming Kitano area symbolizes peace and the blessings of the emperor. Today's performance features the second half of the play to highlight the beautiful goddess's nocturnal dance in blooming spring surroundings.

Kyogen play: Shatei (Little Brother)

In this story, a boy asks a wise man why his big brother always calls him *shatei* (meaning "little brother"), not knowing the meaning of the word. The man teases him by saying it means "thief," and, offended, the boy argues with his brother about it.

Today the word refers to someone who isn't actually a little brother but is treated like one. Watch to find out whether the brothers make up!

Noh play: Kurama Tengu

In this story, a monk is viewing cherry blossoms with a group of children when a mountain priest turns up.

When the monk takes the kids home, a boy called Ushiwaka somehow gets left behind. He and the priest transfer together, viewing the mountain blossoms. The priest reveals that he is actually the great Tengu (a kind of Japanese goblin) of Kurama, and flies away with a promise to come back the next day and teach the boy the art of warfare.

As Ushiwaka, now clad in armor, waits the next day, the great Tengu appears. He tells the boy about the history and importance of the art of war in great China and promises to protect him, then disappears into the night sky.

Tengu are usually depicted wearing red headpieces, but the white *shirogashira* type seen here emphasizes the strength and sinister air of the aged goblin.