



# HIROSHIMA KAGURA PERFORMANCE

~ Hiroshima Prefectural Citizen's Culture Center ~



## Japan's Kagura

Kagura is a ceremony that conveys a feeling of gratitude for the bounty of nature. The ancestors of the Japanese people believed that everything that happened in the world was because of the gods. Therefore, in fall, harvested crops were offered in a holy place, preparations for festivals were completed, and the ceremony conveying gratitude to the gods came to be called "Kagura".

So, at the same time that Shinto Shrines were built around the country, Kagura spread as well, was continued by the Shinto priesthood and the local people, and has been preserved and passed on as a present day Japanese folk art in various places and forms.

## The special characteristics of Hiroshima Kagura

The Kagura you will see today is called "Geihoku Kagura"(Northern Hiroshima) and has been preserved and passed along in Hiroshima Prefecture through approximately 150 groups. Furthermore, numerous competitions have been held and at present, it is the type of Kagura gathering the most attention.

Though the performers have to study and work, they attend practice two to three times a week and perform at festivals and events on the weekends.

## Things to watch for

Please look carefully at the costumes with various embroideries on them.

The heavier ones can weigh up to 20 kg.

You will be able to take a close look after the performance during the commemorative photo session.

The Kagura musical accompaniment is performed by four Japanese instruments. However, there is no sheet music of the sounds. This is to ensure that every group's "sound" and "rhythm" are heard by the ears, remembered by the body and passed on.

## Photo Session

With players and costumes on stage from 8:45p.m.



**Join Us!**

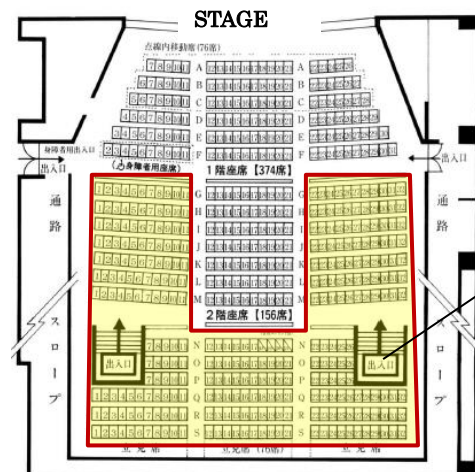
Post Kagura photos

you take and make Kagura more popular



※Only those who are seated at yellow zone can take photos

※No Flash



# 【Mizoguchi Kagura Troupe】

Kitahiroshima-town, Hiroshima-pref

## Story line of the first program “Modori-bashi”

### ◆Curtain up 7pm

During the mid Heian Period a demon appears at Ichijo Modoribashi Bridge in Kyoto every night, and annoys passersby. Minamoto no Raiko, commander of the Imperial Guard orders Watanabe no Tsuna, one of his four prominent retainers to vanquish the demon. Tsuna asks Abe no Seimei, an *yin-yang* master for some help. From Seimei Tsuna gets *Shikigami* which in case of emergency will protect Tsuna and goes to Modoribashi. He happens to see a lady there. She asks him to take her to Gojo-Omiya. When they set out, Tsuna sees the reflection of the lady’s figure on the surface of the river. That is a demon! The demon throws off its mask and attacks Tsuna. Thanks to the *Shikigami* given from Seimei, Tsuna succeeds in cutting off the left hand of the demon. The demon losing its left hand flees back to Oeyama.



### Intermission: 7:40pm~8pm

## Story line of the second program “Takiyasha-hime”

### ◆Curtain up 8pm

Taira no Masakado who calls himself New Emperor of the East Country is defeated by Fujiwara no Hidesato and Taira no Sadamori in Tengyo Disturbance.

Satsuki hime, daughter of Taira no Masakado prays for vengeance to the God at Kifune Shrine in Kyoto. The God transformed Satsuki hime into a sorceress. She changed her name to Takiyasha and goes back to Souma village (present Kashiwa) in Shimofusa (present Chiba) connected with her father. She plots further rebellion with her evil henchmen.

When news of her plans reaches the capital Mitsukuni, a specialist in Chinese mystical arts is ordered by the court to neutralize the threat. Mitsukuni and his team travel to Souma and confront Takiyasha. In the final scene the sorceress is banished from the stage, her power broken by the imperial envoys.

