

Heritage and Creation

The Magic of Kongo Dance

An English audio guide
is available for free.



Application Form

※ Please refrain from taking pictures or making any kind of recording during the performance.

Friday,
February 23
2024
at 1:00 p.m.



Work 《WAVE -infinite-》 by Makoto Ofune Photo by Masatomo Moriyama

Venue : South Hall, ROHM Theatre Kyoto

13, Okazaki Saishoji-cho, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto City

Access : <https://rohmtheatrekyoto.jp/en/access/>



Noh “Shakkyo” : Hisanori Kongo / Tatsunori Kongo
Maibayashi “Midare” : Tatsunori Kongo
Maibayashi “Yuki” : Hisanori Kongo

■ Tickets (Reserved seating, Tax included)

Seats on 1F: ¥5,000 / Seats on 2F: ¥4,000 / Youth (25 and Under): ¥3,000 / 18 and Under: ¥1,000

*Proof of age is required for Youth and 18 and Under tickets.

*No pre-school children will be admitted.

■ Ticket Inquiries (on sale from Saturday 18 November 2023)

ROHM Theatre Kyoto Box Office: 075-746-3201

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

Kyoto Concert Hall Ticket Counter: 078-771-3231



■ Storylines

* Maibayashi—A long excerpt by an actor in formal wear accompanied by the musical ensemble and chorus, it features the main dance to the ensemble of flute and drums.

Maibayashi “Midare”

Long ago in China, a man called Kōfū, who was very devoted to his parents, lived in the village of Yōzu at the foot of Mount Kanekin. One night, he had a dream which advised him that he would become rich and prosperous if he sold liquor at the market in Yōzu. Following the dream, he began to sell liquor and became richer and richer. A mysterious customer came regularly to the market where Kōfū ran his liquor stall and no matter how much he drank, he never became drunk. Wondering about this, Kōfū asked his name, and the man revealed that he was Shōjō, who lived in the ocean.

Later, Kōfū went to the beach of the Yangtze River carrying liquor and waited for Shōjō to appear. When Shōjō appeared, he was delighted to see Kōfū and drank and danced. He praised Kōfū and presented him with a jar of liquor which would never be used up. When Kōfū woke from his dream, the magic jar was still there, and his family enjoyed prosperity for a long, long time. This is a truly happy story. A variation of the play “Shōjō,” the dance called “midare” highlights graceful and unexpected gliding movements on tiptoe as Shōjō mimes his joy as he drinks and dances.

Maibayashi “Yuki”

A traveling monk is on his way from Mutsu to Noda in Settsu Province on his way to Tennoji Temple when suddenly the sky turns cloudy and snow begins to fall. As he waits for the snow to stop falling, a woman appears. When the monk speaks to her, she replies that she does not know who she is, saying, “Please clear away my doubts.” The monk tells her she must be the spirit of snow and her appearance means she will be saved from her illusions by the power of the Buddhist Law. The woman then praises the merit of the sutra and dances describing her attachment to the world. After asking the monk to pray for her, she dances with her sleeves of snow, disappearing into the distance, rising with the eastern clouds as dawn breaks. “Yuki,” unique for the silent stamps by the snow as she dances, is performed only by the Kongo school.

Noh “Shakkyo”

Monk Jakushō (also known as Ōe no Sadamoto before he renounced the world) is traveling around China and India visiting the places associated with Buddha. One day he arrives at a stone bridge in Mount Shōryōzen in China (located in the present Shanxi Province). A boy woodcutter appears. The boy exchanges words with Jakushō and tells him that the land beyond the bridge is the Pure Land belonging to Monju Bosatsu (Manjusri Bodhisattva) and that crossing the long, narrow bridge arching over a deep gorge is not easy for humans (indicating the difficulty of Buddhist ascetic training). The boy predicts that the monk will see a miracle if he stays at the bridge, and then he disappears.

From the other side of the bridge there comes to the waiting Jakushō, a lion (or lions), messenger of Manjusri Bodhisattva. The lion plays among the gorgeous, fragrant peony flowers. After dancing a lion dance, the lion returns to his designated position, as a protector of Buddhism who is depicted carrying Manjusri Bodhisattva on its back. The vigor of the dynamic, and even acrobatic, lion dance is especially representative of Kongo Dance.

■ Profiles

Hisanori Kongo

Born in 1951, he trained from childhood with his father, Kongo Iwao. In 1998 he succeeded his father to become the 26th head of the Kongo school of shite-kata, or main actors. He has received many awards from Kyoto City and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology for his efforts in contributing to the advancement and development of noh theatre. In 2023 he was designated a Living National Treasure representing Noh as an intangible cultural property. Of the heads of the five noh schools, he is the only one who is based in Kyoto.

Tatsunori Kongo

Born in 1988, he studied under his father, Hisanori, as well as his grandfather. He graduated from Doshisha University and is a part-time lecturer at the Kyoto City University of Arts. He has received awards from Kyoto City and Kyoto Prefecture for his efforts in promoting noh. He has been recognized as a Representative of an Intangible Culture Property.

Makoto Ofune

Born in 1977, he graduated from the Department of Fine Arts of Kyoto University of Education in 2000 specializing in Japanese-style painting. Using traditional materials, he creates unique experiences through the interaction of his works, spaces, and people. He has held many exhibitions, receiving acclaim both in Japan and internationally.