

# 歌舞伎—KABUKI

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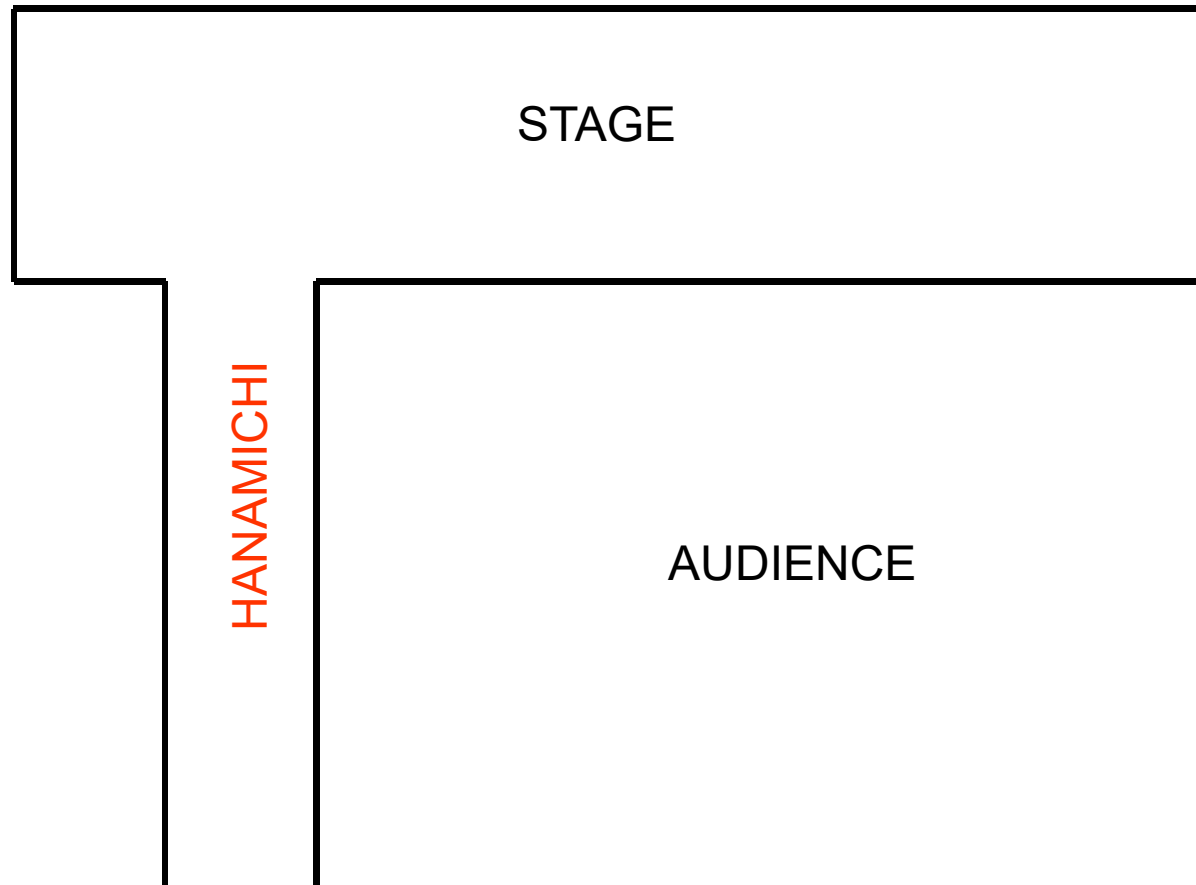
# Origin of Kabuki

- Kabuki dates back to the performance of a female group led by *Izumo-no-Okuni* in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, at the beginning of the Edo period.
- On the early stage of Kabuki, female dancers-actress dance and play drama.
- But soon stage performances by women are banned by the Bakufu, because they are considered to disturb public moral and discipline.
- Women are temporarily replaced by young-adult boys.
- Finally Kabuki has become an all adult-male affair.

# What is Kabuki?

- Kabuki includes both plays and dances, performed in the traditional music of Japan with *Shamisen*, *tsuzumi* (drums), *yoko-bue* (flute), and voices.
- Many Kabuki plays were written in Edo and early Meiji periods, under the influence of *Bunraku* (puppet plays) and *No-Kyogen* (Greek tragedy-like plays)
- Tsuruya Nanboku and Kawatake Mokuami wrote many original plays.

# Hanamichi



# Hanamichi 花道

- *Hanamichi* is a passageway through the audience to the main stage which joins the stage at the right angle.
- The appearance of an actor or actors on the *hanamichi* passageway obscures the demarcation between the stage and the audience seats.
- The performance on *hanamichi* makes the audience feel that they are part of a Kabuki drama and familiar with the actors before them.

# Actors 1

- All Kabuki actors are male.
- Female roles are played by male actors called “onna-gata”.
- Each Kabuki actor has a stage name, which is inherited from their ancestors.
- Some prestigious stage names dates back to the early Edo period.
- If a prestigious stage-name is succeeded by an actor, he promotes a special tour (襲名興行), when he presents himself on stage (口上).

# Actors 2

- Most of the famous stage names are assumed to be inherited from fathers to their sons.
- Roles symbolize the reputation of some famous actors in the long tradition.
  - Sukeroku for Danjuro
  - Kumagai Naozane for Kichiemon
- The roles you can play are restricted by the stage names you inherited.

# O-Mukoh

- In Kabuki, the audience call the actors' house name (*yago*) in a loud voice in order to encourage their vigorous performances.
- *Yago* is different from the stage name.
- (Examples)
  - Nakamura Jakuemon: Kyo-ya!
  - Ichikawa Sadanji: Takashima-ya!
  - Onoe Kikugoro: Otowa-ya!
  - Sakata Tohjuro: Yamashiro-ya!
  - Kataoka Nizaemon: Matsushima-ya!



# *Ear-phone Guide*

- The "Earphone-Guide" provides comments and explanations relating to the plot, music, actors, properties and other features of Kabuki & Bunraku which may be difficult for non-Japanese visitors to understand.
- Comments are perfectly timed to the action on stage.
- The guide is in Japanese only at Hakata-za. Sorry.



# Kabuki in the new age



- “One Piece” one of the most popular anime is adapted for a Kabuki play.
- It was on stage in Tokyo, Osaka, and Fukuoka.
- Adaptation of contemporary stories is a Kabuki tradition.





# Program Today

- Kurumabiki (Drawing the Car)
  - In the Heian era, there were triple brothers. Umeo-maru and Sakura-maru work for Sugawara Michizane, while Matsuo-maru works for Fujiwara Shihei, Michizane's political enemy, who trapped the innocent Michizane and exiled him to Dazaifu.
  - one day, Umeo-maru and Sakura-maru attacked Shihei on the street in Kyoto, but they were blocked by Matsuo-maru.
  - The brothers promises to meet again on the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday of their father.
- Fuji-musume (Wisteria Maiden)
  - a dance by the wisteria fairy.

# The Keya Village

- One day, Rokusuke, a great swordsman, met a samurai Mijin-danjo, who requested him to yield the winning of the upcoming match, of which the winner is supposed to be hired as the sword master of the local daimyo.
- Rokusuke decided to lose the match to help the samurai who wanted to make his old parents happy.
- In the match, Rokusuke manage to lose and the samurai is hired by the daimyo.
- After the match, Rokusuke is visited by a young woman and her mother. He is wondered by the woman who claims that she was engaged to marry him when she was a child, and she has trained herself to avenge for the assassination of her father.
- Their story reminds Rokusuke that the samurai was the enemy who killed the father of his fiancée.

# Kouchi-yama

- Soshun is a kouchi-yama, a low rank priest who works in the Edo castle to serve tea to the daimyos.
- One day he visited a merchant to borrow money and knew that a daughter of the merchant was working for a daimyo Lord Matsue, who requested her to become his mistress.
- Soshun contracted to rescue her for the considerable reward the merchant offered to him.
- On the other day he visits the mansion of Lord Matsue. He pretends to be a high rank priest sent by the Prince of the prestigious Kan-eiji temple. He successfully persuades the Lord to return the daughter.
- On the return at the entrance of the mansion, his identity was uncovered by Kitamura Daizen, a retainer of the lord, who remembers seeing him at the Edo castle.
- However, Soshun cleverly suggests that this scandal might threaten the reputation of Lord Matsue, who finally decides to let Soshun go.