

# 歌舞伎—KABUKI

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# General Instructions

- Have breakfast/lunch before joining the tour.
- Food and drink can be purchased at nearby convenience stores, while buying bento and beverages at the shops in the theater is recommended.
- Seat yourself at the seat assigned by the ticket.
- Do not talk loudly in the theater.

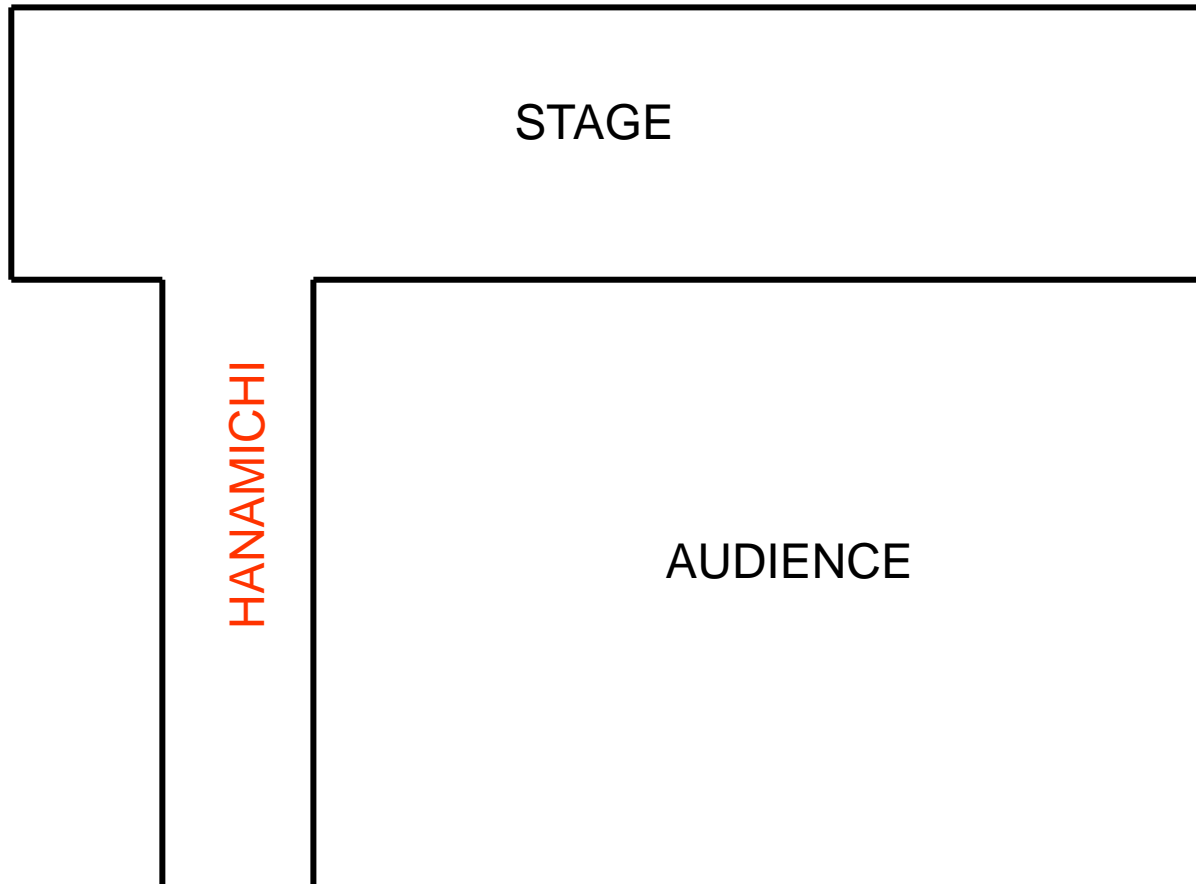
# Origin of Kabuki

- 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 date 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), and introduces 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 each actor can play are restricted by the stage names he 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)
  - Onoe Kikugoro: Otowa-ya!
  - Onoe Kikunosuke: Otowa-ya!
  - Onoe Shoroku: Otowa-ya!
  - Nakamura Tokizo: Yorozu-ya!
  - Nakamura Senjaku: Narikoma-ya!
  - Nakamura Shikan: Narikoma-ya!
  - Ichikawa Sadanji: Takashima-ya!
  - Ichikawa Ennosuke: Omodaka-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.
- Adaptation of contemporary stories is a Kabuki tradition.
- Final Fantasy, a popular video game, is adapted for Kabuki in March 2023.

2019年  
6月2日(日)初日  
→26日(水)千種楽

MINAMIZA

中村梅玉  
うちはマダム

うちはサスケ  
中村隼人

うずまきナルト  
坂東巳之助

南座新開場記念  
新作歌舞伎  
**NARUTO**  
-ナルト-

原作 岸本斉史 (NARUTO -ナルト-)  
監修 岸本 脚本・演出 G 2

製作 松竹

 市川猿弥	 市川笑三郎	 中村梅丸	 市瀬秀和	 嘉島典俊	 市川文也
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〒605-0075 京都市東山区四條大橋東詰  
お問い合わせは ☎075-561-1155  
松竹ホームページ <https://www.shochiku.co.jp>

新作歌舞伎  
流白浪耀星

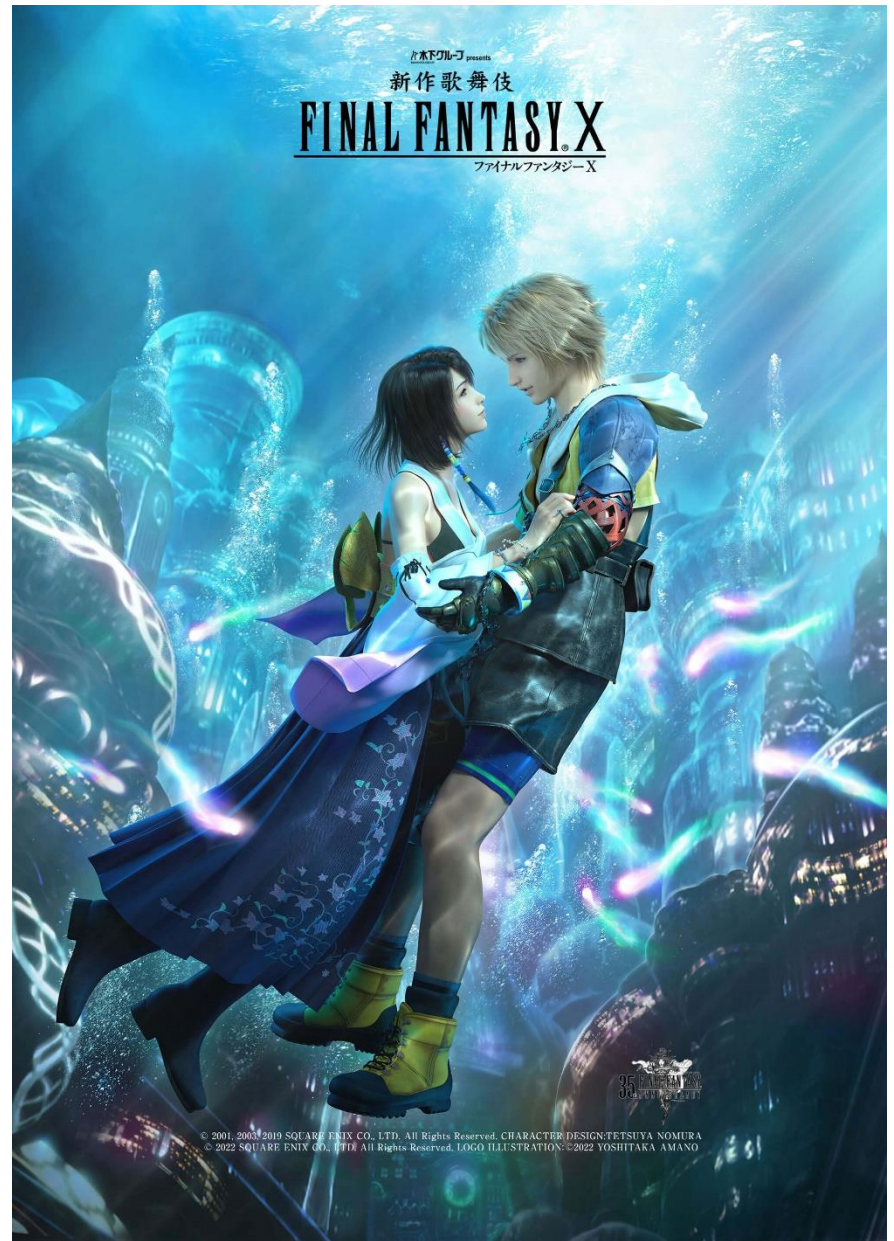
坂東彌十郎  
尾上右近  
中村鷹之資  
市川猿弥  
市川寿猿

市川笑三郎  
市川笑也  
尾上松也

製作 松竹

2023年  
12月5日(火)初日~25日(月)千種楽

新橋演舞場



Hakataza June 2024

# On Stage



- There are two semi-annual Kabuki performances regularly held at Hakata-za theater, in February and June.
- In this June, you will see a full stage show of *The Yotsuya Ghost*, which is adapted for Kabuki from the famous horror tale, originally written in the Edo era (in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century) by 鶴屋南北 Tsuruya Nanboku, a famous Kabuki writer.
- The leading roles are played by the two young actors of the new generation.
- The show starts at 16PM and finishes at 20PM.

<https://www.kabuki-bito.jp/theaters/other/play/871>

# Story 1

- Oiwa and Osode are the daughters of Yotsuya Samon, a retainer in the Enya family of *Chushingura* fame. He has been masterless since the termination of Enya's household.
- Oiwa is the de facto wife of her father's former colleague Tamiya Iemon, and Osode is married to Sato Yomoshichi.
- Samon wants to take Oiwa back from Iemon, who has become a criminal. After a bitter fight, Iemon kills him.
- Meanwhile, Yomoshichi's servant Naosuke lusts after Osode. He resolves to kill Yomoshichi in order to win her for himself, but he unknowingly kills someone else.



# Story 2

- The mutilated body is wrongly thought to be the husband. The sisters agree to marry Iemon and Naosuke if they will avenge the deaths of their father and husband, respectively, without knowing that these are in fact the murderers.
- Osode starts to work as prostitute in order to pay their living costs. They meet accidentally at a brothel as prostitute and client in a comical scene.

# Story 3

- lemon and Oiwa are living together. Still weak after the birth of their son, Oiwa takes every opportunity to urge lemon to find and kill her father's murderer.
- lemon, having lost his master, makes umbrellas for a living. He is fed up with this poor life and is sick of Oiwa.
- He betrays her by becoming engaged with the grand daughter of the rich Ito family living next door.

# Story 4

- Oiwa receives what she thinks is medicine from the neighbors to help her recover. When she drinks it, her face becomes disfigured and grotesque, and she realizes that she was betrayed by Iemon.
- Her hair falls out in a gruesome **combing scene**, driving her mad. She eventually dies.
- Iemon brings his new bride from next door. But he has visions of Oiwa and mistakenly kills the bride.
- Having lost everything, he is haunted by Oiwa and the ghost of a man he murdered.

# Story 5

- When Iemon goes fishing, he overhears an old woman and her daughter at the river's edge talking about an unfortunate incident that happened to them.
- When Iemon realizes that they are the family of Ito, the man he killed, he pushes them into the river and kills them.
- The weather suddenly turns stormy, and with a strong wind, the doorboard with the dead bodies on it rises out of the river.
- Upon closer inspection, it turns out to be Oiwa's corpse. Also stuck to the back of the doorboard was the other man whom Iemon had killed.
- The scene involves numerous stage tricks, including the famous “**door flipping**” with corpses on each side.

# Story 6

- Yomoshichi reappears before Osode. She is now living with Naosuke and had thought him dead.
- Caught between her former and current husbands, she is killed by both, and Naosuke commits suicide. This scene might be skipped.
- Iemon escapes to a mountain hut with his mother's help, while he is haunted night after night by Oiwa's ghost in a bone-chilling scene using many amazing stage effects, including **hanging out of a lantern**.
- He escapes to a bamboo bush but is killed by Yomoshichi's gang, and Oiwa's anger is finally lifted.

# Background 1

- The *Yotsuya Kaidan* is a Japanese ghost story created based on an incident that is said to have occurred during the Genroku era.
- It is set in Zoshigaya Yotsuya-cho (now Zoshigaya, Toshima-ku) in Edo. The basic story is that a chaste woman, Iwa, was slaughtered by her husband, Iemon, and became a ghost to take revenge.
- It is said to be the most famous ghost story in Japan and has been adapted into stage plays, movies, and TV dramas many times, and many variations exist.

# Background 2

- Among many adapted versions, the motion picture film directed by Nakagawa Nobuo is the most horrible one.
  - <https://youtu.be/jXUpEF6Vs5w?si=YF6NOKKkRg-UA9CI>
- In the present Kabuki, the performance of Oiwa-san by Bando Tamasaburo is the most famous.
  - [https://youtu.be/VngX0LIZ13g?si=vdrPutKiem\\_hjQdP](https://youtu.be/VngX0LIZ13g?si=vdrPutKiem_hjQdP)
- Before making an adapted version, the producers, directors, and actors/actresses go to the shrine to comfort the soul of Oiwa-san, otherwise they might be involved with unexpected accidents.