

Jiutamai (Classical Japanese Dance) Ufo Furusawa

Tsugaru Shamisen (Japanese Tsugaru Style Three-String Instrument) Hiroyuki Kurosawa

Visionary World

Program

First Part:

- (1) Workshop of Jiutamai by Ufo Furusawa
- (2) Jiutamai, “Takasago,” by Yuzan Furusawa, Yuhina Furusawa:
- (3) Jiutamai, “Matsu,” (pine) by Yuri Furusawa:
- (4) Jiutamai, “Ume,” (Japanese plum) by Yuginu Furusawa and Yuhina Furusawa:
- (5) Jiutamai, “Yuki,” (snow) by Ufo Furusawa

<Description of Program>

(2) Takasago

This is a classical and happy song that sings about a ship departed at the same time as the moonrise arrived at Suminoe crossing the Naruto Strait without any problem. This performance is covered by some Yokyoku (singing) songs that are sung during weddings.

(3) Matsu (Pine)

This performance starts with the phrase that is sung “it is hard to wait.” This is a play on words in which the word “Matsu” (pine) is played on another word “Matsu” (wait). By singing about a variety of things related to Matsu (pine), from a small and cute princess, Hime Komatsu, the courtesans of the rank of Matsu (the highest ranked courtesans), to a pine tree in Suminoe that is a famous big old tree, this play unceremoniously implies human life.

(4) Ume (Japanese plum)

Ume (Japanese plum) is inseparable with Uguisu (spring birds). In this part the singing is about a primaveral faint love between a boy, symbolized as an early spring bird, and a girl, symbolized as a plum tree with small hard buds. This part is performed by two dancers in this show.

(5) Yuki (Snow)

Snow falling quietly. A woman heads toward a temple to become a Buddhist monk forsaking the affairs of the world. Tears are brought to her eyes as memories of her past love that comes to her mind. This part is considered to be one of the most important Jiuta songs.

Second Part:

- (1) A Presentation about Tsugaru Shamisen (Tsugaru-style Japanese three-string instrument) given by Hiroyuki Kurosawa
- (2) NITABOH Bushi Song by Hiroyuki Kurosawa
- (3) A Medley of Tsugaru Aiya Bushi Song by Hiroyuki Kurosawa
- (4) Improvisation of Tsugaru Shamisen by Hiroyuki Kurosawa
- (5) Yuki Tatematsuri by Hiroyuki Kurosawa
- (6) Genji Mai – Aoi no Ue – (The Dance of Genji – Chapter of Lady Aoi) by Ufo Furusawa and Hiroyuki Kurosawa

<Description of Songs>

- (2) NITABOH Bushi Song (NITABOH Song)

The only melody left by the originator of Tsugaru Samisen – Te-te-re-ko-ten

- (3) A Medley of Tsugaru Aiya Bushi Song

Songs are handed down when a Japanese trading vessel, The Kitamaebune, moved from port to port. This song was composed by means of a process in which the song was conveyed to Tsugaru (Aomori area) from the port of Niigata by visually impaired strolling female singers.

- (4) Improvisation of Tsugaru Shamisen

The Tsugaru Shamisen playing is originally an improvisational performance just as jazz. The famous Shamisen song, Tsugaru Jongara Bushi Song, is also performed impromptu. The playing of this song actually varies in style depending on the player or the locality.

- (5) Yuki Tatematsuri

It is said that Tsugaru (Aomori area) has seven different types of falling snow, such as powder snow and snow with large snowflakes like cotton. This song, originally composed by Hiroyuki Kurosawa, is a midwinter lyrical verse that depicts falling snow.

(6) Aoi no Ue (Lady Aoi) – Ufo Furusawa – Hiroyuki Kurosawa

This was covered from the episode of Aoi no Ue (Lady Aoi), which is one of the famous stories of Genji Monogatari (The Tale of Genji).

Lady Aoi, the principle wife of Hikaru Genji, has been confined in bed feeling under the weather since her pregnancy. She was tortured by a spirit of evil that appeared at her bed every night. One day, when a high priest visited her to perform a ritual with prayers, this spirit of evil revealed itself as the wandering spirit of Rokujo no Miyasudokoro (Lady Rokujo). After uttering numerous animosities against Lady Aoi, the spirit left her.

Lady Rokujo was a longtime mistress of Genji from before he took Lady Aoi as his principle wife. Lady Rokujo was also the widow of the previous prince, and she was considered to be the principle wife of Genji in the public mind. She was in a fateful relationship with Lady Aoi. In an incident known as Kuruma Arasoi (Battle of Carts), the cart of Lady Rokujo was ashamed after a fight among the lower servants.

The soul of Lady Rokujo, a sophisticated and beautiful lady, left her body while she was unaware and became a living soul, and then appeared in front of Lady Aoi every night.

* Ufo Furusawa produced the Dance of Genji in the traditional Japanese style of dance, based on all 54 chapters of the Tale of Genji.

This series of dance performances are accompanied not by Jiuta (classical chamber music), but by other musical instruments such as the Biwa (Japanese lute) and the Tsuzumi (Japanese hand drums), that are suitable for each play performed. She started the production of these dance performances in 2000, and completed them in 2008, which interestingly marked 1000th year anniversary of the completion of the Tale of Genji.