

PRESS RELEASE #01

October, 2020

Japan Council of Performers Rights & Performing Arts Organizations [GEIDANKYO]

Enjoy a tour around history and a new type of traditional performing arts live set in “Japan heritage”.

Online streaming will start from November 1st this year.

"NOBODY KNOWS" is a project to develop a new form of tourism called "Tourism of Traditional Performing Arts Live" by combining folk performance handed down to local regions and performances from professional traditional performing arts at Japan Heritage^{*1} across all over the country. Organized by Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan, Japan Arts Council, Japan Council of Performers Rights & Performing Arts Organizations as "Japan Cultural Expo" project^{*2} since 2019.

"NOBODY KNOWS" in 2020 will start from November 1st. Under COVID-19 outbreak, online programs where visitors can enjoy history and culture of local regions and traditional performing arts live will be available instead of tours to the sites this year. Enjoy a trip to charms of hidden areas and Japanese traditions.

*1 Japan Heritage: An initiative by Agency for Cultural Affairs that certifies stories that tell Japanese culture and traditions as "Japan Heritage" through history and charms across the nation. The purpose is to revitalize regions and promote tourism by packaging tangible and intangible cultural properties in each region related to the story. As of June 2020, 104 locations have been certified.

*2 "Japan Cultural Expo" project: Projects, deployed throughout Japan, to promote Japanese cultural arts and spread its diverse and universal appeal in anticipation of fostering momentum for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics and increasing foreign tourists.



[**Development background:** Local cultures and folk performances have faced a threat of extinction unless they aren't handed over to the next generation. Thinking about the future of tourism and the way of folk performance arts live in COVID-19 pandemic.]
The spread of the new corona virus has kept Matsuri (festivals) in various places

cancelled and it hard to control events that attract many people regarding infectious prevention.

While it is challenging to hold the same format of tour as last year, "NOBODY KNOWS" will deliver online programs making "before and after the travel 100 times more fun", where viewers can enjoy atmosphere of the live, in addition to learning about history. The first program highlights Japan Heritage from Yamagata and Kanagawa, with the theme of "faith in nature" born from the lives of Japanese people.

While exploring new business possibilities from challenges that both industries of "travel and tourism" and "Folk Performance" have faced since the surge of COVID-19 infection, "NOBODY KNOWS" challenges the online programs, which connects to the visiting programs next year onward.

[Characteristics of the 2020 "NOBODY KNOWS" online program]

- ▶ Virtual travel through the beautiful scenery from the local areas and images of the rites and festivals.
- ▶ Trial on sightseeing experience of some inaccessible "Japan Heritage" in Japan.
- ▶ Deep comprehension of the story with fun about "Japan Heritage" through folk performance handed down in each area and traditional performing art by professional.
- ▶ Guides and performer to give you clear understanding on charms of "Japan Heritage" that might be missed by visiting without them.
- ▶ Opportunities to enjoy local foods by joining the online program. *Only available for some contents

[1st Program ①]

1st November (Sun) 2020 at Tsuruoka, Yamagata Pref.

An Online talk show among Dewa Sanzan Shrine senior priest, Noh performer and Yamabushi



[Talk Guest]Yoshizumi Toshiki (senior priest of Dewa Sanzan Shrine), Yamai Tsunao (Noh performer), Sakamoto Daizaburo (Yamabushi)

[MC]Asano Sho (Tsugaru Shamisen player)

The three mountains of Dewa (Mt. Haguro, Mt. Gassan, and Mt. Yudono) in Yamagata Prefecture respectively represent the present, past, and future. The journey through the three mountains has come to be known as a passage through death to life, "a pilgrimage of rebirth", since the Edo period. Even now, Yamabushi training (called shugendo) is being carried out, and you can see a group of Yamabushi in white costumes climbing the three mountains and soliciting donations throughout the city in the fall. This "Matsuno-Kanjin" is one of the mountain trainings in the winter that is held for a hundred days from September 24th. The Shoreisai festival, which is held on the final day of December 31st at the summit of Mt. Haguro, is said to have originated from containing an epidemic and various rituals are performed. Yamabushi is an entity that absorbs the spiritual power of nature through trainings and provide that power to people through prayer and performing arts.

There are Yamabushi, who gains skills of coexisting with nature through the trainings, and Noh performer who trains daily and embodies the world of the supernatural. Why do they embody the power of nature? A talk show by the spiritual seekers living in the present will be broadcasted online from the field. *In February 2021, an online tour will be available which introduces the video of "The Shoreisai Festival" and Buddhist vegetarian food.

Date: 1300-1430, 1st November (Sun), 2020

Fee: Free (video is available until 31st December, 2020)

Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUijQum5WevbXbHQ3OoIFKA>

[Profile]



Yoshizumi Toshiki

Chief director of Ceremonies at Dewasanzan-jinja Shrine and the general manager of Planning and Public Relations Office. He conveys Haguro group old mountaineering asceticism to the present. Head of Myokoin, the ascetic lodging at the foot of Haguroyama mountain.



Yamai Tsunao

A Komparu school Noh player. Engages in the Noh spread and the enlightenment of "the heart of Japan" under the faith, "Noh is the world's best art." Holds many workshops for beginners and performances in schools. Holder of Important Intangible Cultural Asset. Director of Nonprofit foundation "Association of Noh", the 2014 cultural ambassador of the Agency for Cultural Affairs. Performs overseas and costars and make original works with other genres artists. Challenges new possibilities of Noh.



Sakamoto Daizaburou

Born in Chiba prefecture in 1975, a Buddhist monk based in Tohoku region. Also as an artist, participated in "Yamagata Biennale," "International Art Festival 2016 in Seto," and "Reborn-Art Festival 2019." Active as a writer focusing on the connection between man and nature. His main writings include "Buddhist monk and I" (little more), "Buddhist monk notebook" (Gijutsu-Hyohron), "Gods of the mountain" (A&F).



Asano Sho

Born in Miyagi prefecture, 1990. When he was 14, he was the youngest person to win the highest rank A level of the All-Japan Tsugaru Shamisen Contest and won for three consecutive years up to 2006, recognized in its Hall of Fame. While passing on folk song by oral tradition, he collaborates with many artists inside and outside Japan. With his astounding performance skills and natural charm, his power to convey the fascination of Shamisen music stands above the rest.

[First program (2)]

Tuesday November 3rd, 2020 to Sunday January 2021, at Isehara (Kanagawa Prefecture)

An editor and an alpine photographer talk about the Mt. Oyama Pilgrimage and traditional performing arts.

A virtual tour to “NOBODY KNOWS”.

[Cast]Lucas B.B (PAPERSKY), Miyake Gaku (Alpine Photographer),
Shimura Isao (Guide)

[Performer]Hanayagi Genkuro (Japanese Classical Dance) ,
Kineya Katsujuro (Shamisen)

[Video Production] Hisamatsu Shinichi (Theo Inc.) ,
Sugawara Kota (KOTA SUGAWARA PHOTO STUDIO)

Free videos, the world of the Japanese heritage "Destination for the Faith and Leisure of Edo's Commoners: the Mt. Oyama Pilgrimage with a large wooden sword", will be uploaded which are depicted from a couple of perspectives, worshiping and performing arts. Enjoy nature, history and traditional performing art that have been passed down through the ages.



○ Faith (walking in the mountains)

Mt. Oyama is also known as "the rainy mountain" and has long been a place for praying for rain and huge harvest. During the Edo period, it became very popular destination for a short trip since it is closer than Mt. Fuji, and it was said that one-fifth of the population of Edo visited every year. Ukiyoe shows stylish Edo's citizens worship with a wooden sword by funding from a local community and a group of professionals to form a "Ko (a group of pilgrimage)". They purified themselves in Mt. Oyama's waterfall, prayed in the accommodation at the foot of the mountain and finally headed to the summit.

This time, Mr. Lucas, an American creative director and editor-in chief of Perpersky Magazine, Mr. Gaku Miyake, an alpine photographer, and Mr. Isao Shimura, a guide, ascended the mountain while talking about history and nature.



○ Traditional Performing Arts (invitation to the Edo period)

A special performance of Japanese classical dance, "Nihon-buyo" and shamisen associated with the Mt. Oyama's pilgrimage at the teahouse "Sekison" with splendor of a view in the precincts of the Ohyama Afuri Shrine. How did the appearance of the stylish Edo citizen, the samurai and elderly women climbing up Mt. Oyama look like? Playing multiple roles which is unique to Japanese classical dance is staged and a flavor of the four seasons is unfolded on the emotional tone of the shamisen, which was loved by the citizens during the Edo period.



[Date] 3rd November (Tue) 2020 to 31st January(Sun) 2021

*English subtitles will be available after December

[Fee] Free

[Questionnaire] 3rd November 2020 to 31th January 2021

From those who watched the video and answered the questionnaire, thirty people will be drawn at random each month to win prizes of Mt. Oyama's "Charabuki (local food)" and "A brochure for Mt. Oyama pilgrimage".

[Profile]

Lucas B.B.



Born in Baltimore, USA in 1971 and raised in San Francisco. Lucas has been creating widescreen, inspirational and organic media since the age of 12. He came to Japan in 1993 the day after graduating from the University of California. He was quick to find freelance work writing culture and lifestyle pieces for TIME magazine, WIRED and the JAPAN TIMES. In 1996 he bought a straw hat; rolled up his A.P.C. shirt sleeves and published TOKION, the fabled magazine that put Japanese youth culture on the global map. In 2002 Lucas began to wear cycle caps, grew a beard and created PAPER SKY. Via Papersky's unique ethno-travel viewpoint he creates content that seamlessly blends and bends time, culture and nature into a fresh new flavor for the future. When Lucas isn't walking 30km a day along Old Japanese paths or riding his bicycle in rural Japan, he's probably relaxing in his garden and drinking mint tea.



Miyake Gaku

Born in Tokyo in 1964. Brought up in Fujino-cho (now Midori-ku, Sagamihara-shi), north of Tanzawa, and still resides there. Masters degree of Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology, department of environmental protection. A free-lance photographer after working at Yuzu Editing Studio, photograph department. He has photographed the Tanzawa mountains, Northern Alps, and Mount Nyukasa, and other mountains around Japan. At the same time, he enjoys photographing mountain-life, such as charcoal making. His main writings include "YAMAKEI Alpen guide Tanzawa" (Yama-kei Publishers), "Charcoal Making Travelogue" (Soshinsha), and others.



Shimura Isao

Isehara tour guide. Born in 1955 in Isehara city. Engaged in sightseeing promotion business at Isehara municipal office until retirement. As a second career, became the Secretary General of Isehara Tourist Association from 2018. Carries out history guides mainly for group tourists around Daisen and Hyuga area.



Hanayagi Genkuro

Born on 1981 in Nara. Graduated from Tokyo University of the Arts in 2003. Is known for his colorful and powerful performance style which fascinates people. Won the Incentive Award of the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in 2017. Received the new face award from Association of Dance Critics in 2013.



Kineya Katsujuro

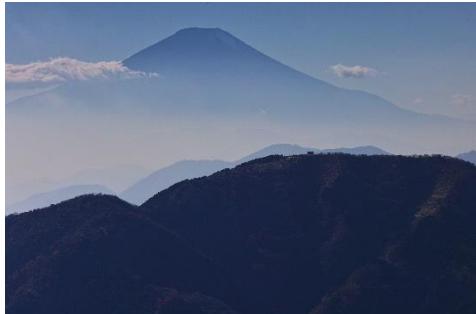
Born on 1978 in Chiba. Graduated from Tokyo University of the Arts. Has shiny sound and skillful technique. Plays in variety of performances such as Kabuki, Japanese classic dance, and other concerts. Has won awards in playing Tsugaru-shamisen as well.

[Related event]

3rd November (Tue) to 8th November (Sun), 2020

**Isehara and the Mt. Oyama pilgrimage exhibition
by NOBODY KNOWS@ Sta.**

A special menu with cooking ingredients from Mt. Oyama will be prepared at the restaurant.



An exhibition event which guides you to the world of NOBODY KNOWS will be held at the popular restaurant "Sta." in Shibuya. A tour to Isehara and Mt. Oyama will be reproduced by photographs and beautiful images by an alpine photographer Gaku Miyake. In addition, an exclusive video which contained the performance of "Nihon-buyo", Japanese classical dance, and shamisen with feels the Edo period will be screened. The restaurant will offer the special menu using the ingredients from Mt. Oyama. Come and enjoy a virtual trip to Mt. Oyama, which used to be illustrated alongside Mt. Fuji in Ukiyoe, its history and nature around it.

[Date] 3rd November (Tue) to 8th November (Sun), 2020, 14:00 to 21:00 (14:00 to 17:00 at November 8th)

[Venue] Sta. (11-7, Maruyamacho Shibuya-ku, Tokyo <https://online-sta.com/>)

The collaborative menu with Isehara will be provided at the upper restaurant during the exhibition (advance online booking is required).

[Fee] Admission free

As a countermeasure against COVID-19, hand antisepsis is done at the entrance as well as the number of visitors will be subject to be controlled depending on the situation.

NOBODY KNOWS

Organizer: Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan, Japan Arts Council, Japan Council of Performers Rights & Performing Arts Organizations

Co-organizer : The local governments of the Japan Heritage Recognition, etc

Support: Ministry of the Environment

<https://nobodyknows.tours/>

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