

六月大歌舞伎の
見どころワンポイントご案内
英語版 2018.6.1.

Highlights for June Grand Kabuki at Hakataza Theatre

Matinee "*Date no Jyuyaku*" (The Ten Roles of Meiboku Sendai Hagi)

From 11AM to 3:20 PM

The main lead, Matsumoto Koshiro, will play the role of 10 male and female protagonists, while changing costumes over 40 times at an amazing speed. Audience can expect to see main features of Kabuki, such as chu-nori (Mid-air stunts) and danmari (Death battle in complete darkness).

At the start of the performance, using photo panels, Matsumoto Koshiro will explain the relationships that the 10 protagonists have with each other. A cunning servant of Ashikaga shogun family, Nikki Danjyo, plots against his master for the sake of resolving the grudge of his father who died in an attempt to overthrow the rulership of Ashikaga. Through the power of his dead father's spirit, Danjyo gains the ability to transform himself into a rat. He encourages the shogun, Ashikaga, to indulge in debauchery at the pleasure quarters, and poisons his successor, in order to take over the family.

On the other hand, Yoemon is sent for execution as his affair with the housemaid has been exposed. Fortunately, his lord, Ashikaga shogun, forgives him and pardons his life. In order to show his gratitude, Yoemon tries his best to stop Danjyo, but things do not go as planned...

The 1st act of evening show "*Shunkan*" From 4:20 to 5:35

It has been three years since three criminals were exiled to an abandoned island for attempting to overthrow the political regime. They all live their modest lives happily, and one of them marries a young lady who lives on the island. At this point, a messenger appears by ship, telling the three criminals that their punishment has ended. As they board the ship, the lady is told that she is not allowed to accompany her husband back to the city. Shunkan, the protagonist, offers his spot to the lady. As the ship departs, the protagonist's chest tightens as he starts to feel the torment of loneliness.

The 2nd act of evening show "*Kojyo* (Formal introduction)" From 6:05 to 6:20

This is a stage celebration of Matsumoto Koshiro succeeding the name Matsumoto Hakuo, and Matsumoto Koshiro succeeding the name Ichikawa Somegoro (The stage name is passed down through generations). The main actors will gather at the stage, dressed in *kamishimo* (Old ceremonial dress), and give a formal speech individually.

The 3rd act of evening show "*Sakanaya Sogoro*" (Fishmonger Sogoro) From 6:45 to 7:55

Sogoro's family is stricken by grief when they find out that his younger sister has been sentenced to death by her master, for having a secret affair with the servant (In the past, loyalty to the master had to be prioritized, and love relationships between servants were punishable by death). A co-worker of Sogoro's sister shows up to offer her condolences, and informs him that the affair is merely a false accusation. Upon hearing this, Sogoro breaks his abstinence from alcohol and returns to his old habit of heavy drinking. He gets drunk and breaks into the samurai's house to avenge his sister.

After finding out the truth about his sister's death, Sogoro breaks his vow to stop drinking. In his drunken state, Sogoro causes a huge scene. This is the play written by Mokuami, which shows the vivid lives of the citizens of Edo.

The 4th act of evening show "*Shungyo Kagamijishi*" (The Kagami Lion Dance) From 8:05 to 9:05

The story takes place during New Year, at a palace in the shogun's castle in Edo. Each year, *okagamihiki* is held as part of the New Year tradition. The shogun selects his favorite servant, Yayoi, to perform a dance that brings good fortune. Yayoi starts a lovely dance, and picks up the lion head (Mask used for lion dance) placed on the altar. As she resumes her dance, the spirit of the lion head takes over her body, causing Yayoi to disappear. Shortly after, the spirit of the courageous lion appears, and begins to dance wildly.

The stark contrast between dancing styles of a lovely woman, and a vigorous lion spirit forms the highlight of this magnificent performance.