



Explore Japanese folk music through Hikaru's magical melodies and striking rhythms. The distinctive 3-string Tsugaro shamisen, powerful taiko drums, Japanese flute, songs and dance combine in a stunning performance that will carry you to the soaring mountains and rugged seas of Japan.



**Arts Midwest  
World Fest**

[www.artsmidwest.org/worldfest](http://www.artsmidwest.org/worldfest)

# HIKARU

## Stephens Auditorium

### Friday, October 4, 2019

### 10 a.m. & 7 p.m.

SUPPORT PROVIDED BY



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### Hikaru 飛香流 FROM JAPAN

#### Meet the Artists

Hikaru is a group of well-trained and studied musicians from different prefectures of Japan (similar to “states” in the United States). Each member of Hikaru has studied the deep traditions of their instruments and styles: the Tsugaru shamisen, taiko drums, and shinobue flute (see pg. 2).



**Nobuhito Yamanaka**  
(Stage name: Nobuto Yamanaka)

Nobuhito Yamanaka started playing the Tsugaru Shamisen when he was only 15 years old. He trained as an apprentice of the famous Tsugaru Shamisen player, Chisato Yamada in the Aomori prefecture. Yamanaka has played in 36 countries and is a nationally-recognized ambassador of the Tsugaru Shamisen.



**Takemi Hirohara**  
(Stage name: Takemi Kakizaki)

Takemi Hirohara is a highly respected performer of traditional folk songs, known as min'yō, from the Akita prefecture. She trained under master teacher and singer, Umewaka Asano, and is currently Japan's leading performer of Japanese folk songs. She has won numerous Japanese folk song competitions and travels the world as a performer and cultural ambassador.



**Tomoko Takeda**

Tomoko Takeda studied the shinobue flute under Yukihiro Issa, a famous Japanese musician well-known for his research and dedication to the instrument. Like the other members in Hikaru, Takeda studied with her teacher, Yukihiro Issa, for a long and focused period of time.



**Katsunobu Serizawa**  
(Stage name: Toen Hibiki)

Katsunobu Serizawa has performed as a solo drummer in Japan and all around the world since 1995. Serizawa trained extensively under Matsunaga, a highly respected master taiko teacher and stage director in Japan. He has been a member of Kodo, a famous taiko ensemble on Sado Island, and is known for honoring the traditional style of performing taiko.

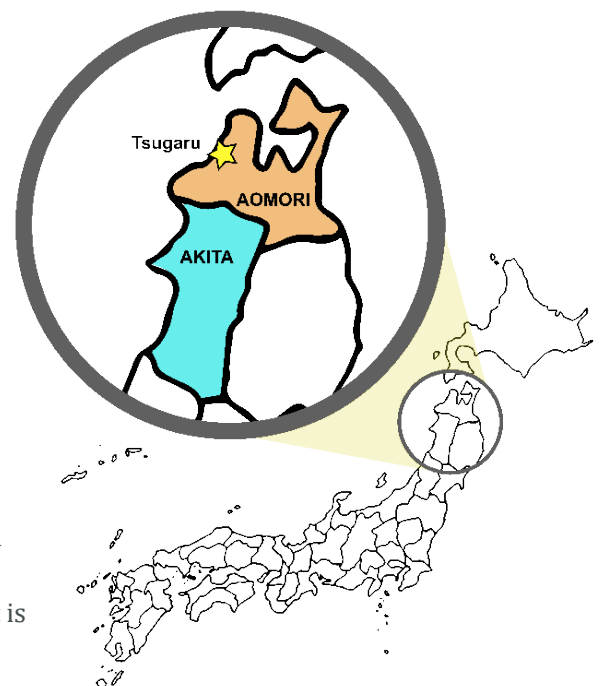
#### About the Music

##### Tsugaru-shamisen

*Tsugaru-shamisen* is a genre of shamisen music originating in the Aomori prefecture in the northernmost area of the Japanese island of Honshū. This style of music is popular throughout the entire country of Japan, although associations with the Tsugaru area of Aomori remains strong. This style requires a large shamisen (also called the Tsugaru shamisen) that has thicker strings than normal, and a small bachi, or pick, to pluck the strings. Tsugaru-shamisen is easy to recognize by its percussive quality: the pick strikes the body of the instrument with each stroke, creating a loud “smack!” The rhythms of Tsugaru-shamisen have a lilting quality to them, which creates interesting motion in the music.

##### Min'yō

The term min'yō refers to traditional Japanese folk songs. Min'yō from the Akita prefecture is known for its humorous lyrics, accompanied by instruments like the shamisen and shinobue flute. The verses of Akita min'yō use a 7-7-9 beat structure, a system of organizing rhythms that is unique to this particular prefecture.



### Hikaru 飛香流 FROM JAPAN



Photo of shamisen by  
kay. (CC BY NC 2.0)

#### Shamisen

The word *shamisen* means, “three flavor strings.” It is a traditional Japanese stringed instrument that sounds similar to the American banjo. The shamisen has been used in Japan since the 16th century, and nowadays are played at arts and culture festivals, musical performances, theatre, and dance shows. The shamisen is about the size of a guitar, but its neck is much slimmer and does not have frets. Its drum-like body, known as the *dō*, is rounded, rectangular-shaped, and is covered front and back with a drum skin. The three strings are traditionally made of silk, but nylon is a common and preferred substitute. The shamisen is played with a large weighted pick, or *bachi*, that is made of either ivory,

Ask the artists:

**Where do the stories in your songs come from?**

#### Shinobue Flute

The side-blow bamboo flute, or *shinobue* flute, is one of the most iconic instruments of traditional Japanese music. The word *shino* refers to a type of bamboo native to Japan, and the instrument is heavily influenced by Buddhist principles. To play the shinobue, one must position the flute to either their left or right side, and blow a focused stream of air to the far edge of the blowhole. The shinobue is used as a part of an ensemble to accompany dance-songs, festivals, and theatre shows.



Photo of 7-hole shinobue by  
Yasuhiko Sano. (CC BY NC 2.0)

Ask the artists:

**What languages do you speak?**

#### Taiko Drum

Taiko has existed for over a thousand years in a variety of forms, as the word *taiko* translates to “fat drum.” In traditional Japanese music and theater, the taiko drum is responsible for providing rhythm and groove to traditional Japanese music, as well as representing various natural elements – like rain and thunder – that occur in storytelling. There are many sizes and types of taiko drums, from small, high-pitched drums to very large drums with deep resonance. Some are even the size of small cars!



Photo of Okedo Daiko by  
Taiko-Kaiser-Drums (CC BY-SA 3.0)

#### Additional Resources

Watch Nobuhito Yamanaka perform Tsugaru-shamisen:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhXM6\\_kiJ\\_0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhXM6_kiJ_0)

Kids Web Japan:

<https://web-japan.org/kidsweb/explore/culture/q3.html>



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## Japan COUNTRY & CULTURE

### Geography and History

Japan is located in the North Pacific Ocean, off the coast of Russia and the Korean peninsula. The area of Japan consists of four main islands—Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu—in addition to more than 4,000 smaller islands. A modern railroad system connects the major islands, with Japan's high-speed Shinkansen train connecting major urban areas.

The islands of Japan are located in an area known as “The Ring of Fire” in the Pacific Ocean. This is an area with many earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. Japan is seismically active with over 1,500 earthquakes per year. In 1923 the Great Kanto Earthquake killed more than 143,000 people in the Tokyo area. Tsunamis are often generated from these devastating earthquakes. Most recently, in March of 2011, the Tōhoku earthquake was the most powerful ever recorded in Japan, and triggered tsunami waves that reached heights of up to 133 feet!

Japan is mostly mountainous terrain, with less than one-fifth of the land suitable for settlement. Even with such little land suitable for cultivation, Japanese farmers remarkably grow about three-fourths of the country's food. They use modern farming technologies and have developed improved varieties of rice, the main food crop. Japan's fishing fleet, one of the largest in the world, provides another staple of the Japanese diet.

The country's chief resources are its people and a culture that allows for change. Early in its history, Japan borrowed heavily from China, adopting religions such as Buddhism, philosophies such as Confucianism and Taoism, as well as ideas about writing, art, and music. Most Japanese today observe Buddhism along with Shintoism, Japan's own ancient religion.

Two centuries of isolation under the rule of military governors called *shoguns* ended in the 1860s. Japan sought out Western ideas and technologies in order to modernize the country and establish Japanese industry. The desire for raw materials spurred Japan to conquer countries in the Pacific. Japan emerged from defeat in World War II to become an industrial giant within only a few decades.

### Climate

The climate of Japan varies considerably depending on the region and season. Summer is usually very hot and humid, known in Japan as *mushisatsui*. From mid-July to mid-August, there is a rainy season. Winters are usually mild, with the northern areas of Japan receiving snow. Spring and autumn are usually sunny with mild temperatures. Cherry blossom season is widely celebrated in Japan. The beautiful flowering trees indicate the coming of spring, as well as simply being delight to admire!

### Watch

Children's Introduction to Japan:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C\\_ryYJPOx5w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_ryYJPOx5w)



**Map of Japan**

Area: 145,936 square miles

Population: 127,000,000

Capital City: Tokyo

Official Language: Japanese



The size of Japan compared to the United States of America.

Image by [www.thetruesize.com](http://www.thetruesize.com)



At 12,388 feet, Mt. Fuji (also an active volcano) is the highest mountain in Japan. It is located just west of Tokyo. This photograph also shows the Shinkansen commuter train in the foreground.

## Japan COUNTRY & CULTURE

### Language

The literacy rate in Japan is nearly 100%. In addition to the Japanese language, many also have some ability in writing and speaking English, as it is a mandatory part of the curriculum in the Japanese educational system. Japanese uses four different writing systems; Kanji (Chinese characters), Hiragana (phonetic alphabet for native words), Katakana (phonetic alphabet for foreign words), and Romaji (western alphabet used to write Japanese). Japanese vocabulary has been strongly influenced by loanwords from other languages, with most loanwords coming from Chinese and English.

### Anime

Anime, also sometimes called Japanimation, refers to hand-drawn or computer animated media from Japan, involving many colorful graphics, vibrant characters, and fantastical themes. In Japan, the word *anime* means 'animation,' and thus refers to all forms of the art. In English, anime is more often used to describe the distinct style of animation created in Japan. *Dragon Ball Z*, *Pokémon*, and *Cowboy Bebop* are a few examples of popular anime.

### Practice Origami

Origami (*oru* meaning "folding", and *gami* meaning "paper") is the traditional Japanese art of paper folding and has been practiced since the Edo era (1603-1867). The goal of this art is to create a representation of an object using geometric folds and crease patterns usually using a single, square piece of paper.

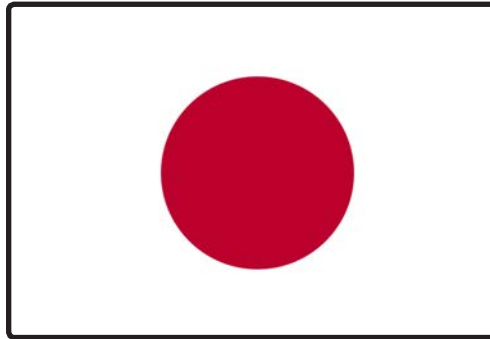
Origami only uses a small number of different folds, but they can be combined in a variety of ways to make intricate designs. The most well known form is probably the Japanese paper crane. Step-by-step instructions for making a paper crane can be found online at <http://www.origami.org.uk/bos>.



Anime poster showcasing a variety of series at once.  
Photo by Kami Sama. CC BY-NC-SA 2.0



Perfectly folded paper cranes in a variety of different papers and sizes.



The Japanese flag is a white background with a red circle in the center that represents the sun. In Japanese, it is called Hinomaru, meaning "circle of the sun."



The Yin and Yang symbol depicts the intertwined duality of all things in nature, a common theme in Taoism.

### Additional Resources

World Factbook: Japan

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ja.html>

About Japan from the Japan National Tourism Center

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/about/overview/index.html>

Kids Web Japan - Educational and fun facts for students

<http://web-jpn.org/kidsweb/index.html>



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## Haiku POETRY FROM JAPAN

### About haiku

Haiku is a form of short poetry that originated in Japan several centuries ago and gained national popularity, thanks to master poets such as Matsuo Basho and Yosa Buson. In the mid-twentieth century after World War II, it became popular in Western culture and all over the world. Traditional haiku poems are often rooted in natural history and the seasons. A traditional haiku poem also typically features an image, or pair of images, meant to depict the essence or mood of a specific moment in time.

Unlike other forms of poetry, a haiku poem focuses on patterns of syllables rather than rhyming, and is usually divided into three lines: the first and third lines each have 5 syllables, and the second line has 7 syllables. This creates a 5/7/5 syllable pattern. For example:

*Birds silently perch  
The slender branch of the birch  
Cradles their splendor*

As the form has evolved, many of these rules—including the 5/7/5 practice—have been routinely broken. However, the philosophy of haiku has been preserved: the focus on a brief moment in time; a use of provocative, colorful images; an ability to be read in one breath; and a sense of sudden enlightenment and illumination.

### Write your own haiku

When crafting haiku, think of a group of words that present an observation in a way that appeal to the senses. Use sight, touch, sound, smell, taste, or other sensations like pain or movement. Be as specific as possible, and write in the present tense. Try to describe your feelings as you write the poem. When writing about an event, present it as an image. Because your haiku poem must be a total of 17 syllables, each word in the poem needs to be selected carefully. Use a thesaurus or dictionary to help!

Haiku #1

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Haiku #2

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### Suggested Activities

For libraries or individual classrooms, how about a haiku party in anticipation or celebration of Hikaru's visit? Find a few good haiku examples at your local library or online and read them together with copies on the board or in-hand. Review haiku composition and content options as above and then use the instructions below to write your own haiku. Everyone reads their best haiku over a cup of Japanese tea. Perhaps there are categories for haikus about nature or pets or history. Have random objects on hand for people to write haiku about to make it fun, challenging, and competitive. If Hikaru should have time to stop by the classroom or library during the week, perhaps the best haikus could be shared with Hikaru or publicly displayed at the public concert. Or perhaps a prize like a ticket to Hikaru's public concert could be made available by your local organizer.



No. 26 Japanese woodblock print by Katsushika Hokusai from 36 views of Mount Fuji.

### Sources

<https://poets.org/text/haiku-poetic-form>

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/learn/glossary-terms/haiku-or-hokku>

<https://iaforhaikuaward.org/what-is-a-haiku/>

Learn more at [www.artsmidwest.org/worldfest](http://www.artsmidwest.org/worldfest)



# THEATER ETIQUETTE

We are delighted to have you as our guest and want your experience to be an enjoyable one. Attending a live performance is very different from watching television or going to the movies. You are not simply watching what is happening on the stage; you play an active role. The artists have worked very hard to prepare this performance for you, so please remember the golden rule:

***Treat others the way you would like to be treated.***

**Here are a few guidelines to help you—and your fellow audience members—enjoy the performance:**

## Be Prepared

- Arrive early. Please plan to arrive at the theater at least 15 minutes before curtain time. Be generous in your estimation of travel and parking time.
- Plan ahead to meet anyone in your group who travels separately. Once inside the theater, 'saving seats' for friends will only prove frustrating to all involved.
- Remember to turn off all beepers, cell phones, and watch alarms before entering the theater (And then double check!) and leave all laser pointers, cameras, etc. at home.

## Be Courteous

- Walk, don't run, when entering or leaving the theater. The term "break a leg" means good luck to the performers not the audience!
- Do not take food or drink into the theater, and please – NO GUM!
- Please take children out of the theater if they become restless and disrupt other's ability to listen.
- Actors love to hear applause—it shows how much you enjoyed the performance. If you like something, applaud— if not, don't. It's rude to boo or whistle.

## Be Aware

- It's ok to talk *quietly* with those sitting next to you before the performance; however, when the lights dim, it's time to be quiet and direct your attention to the stage.
- Practice the International Sign of "Quiet Please!" by **silently** raising your finger to your lips to politely remind a neighbor or friend. You communicate your wish for quiet without adding to the distraction. Excessive noise or motion can disturb not only other audience members, but the performers as well.
- Take everything you brought with you when you leave. Once the cast has taken their bows and the house lights come up, check under your seat for any items (coats, backpacks, etc) you might have placed there.

## Be Open

- A good audience member is open to new sights and sounds. Enjoy!



# GETTING TO AMES

Stephens Auditorium is part of the Iowa State Center located at the corner of University Boulevard (formerly Elwood Drive) and Lincoln Way in Ames, Iowa. Plentiful parking is available on all sides of the building. Please follow traffic directors' instructions if you are asked to park in a specific location. Handicapped-accessible and limited-mobility parking is available on the west side of the auditorium.

