

GREETING AND INTRODUCTION

We are very grateful to welcome you here. We are introducing to you the Kagura, which is one of Japan's entertainments.

We hope you to appreciate the Kagura which is performed on the stage from now.

The kagura you are going to enjoy has been handed down from the old-time Japanese people.

The Kagura you are going to see is not the entertainment that Japan's upper-class and nobles had enjoyed. Therefore, we add "Sato" meaning "Local" to the word of Kagura, which will be then called Sato-Kagura.

The Kagura which is performed on the stage here today has three characteristics. In the Kagura, there are masque drama, mime and mythological drama. We would like you first of all to comprehend the above.

Next, we would like you to understand the Kagura is performed on the sacred stage of Kagura-Den in the precinct of a shrine at the time of festival. The Kagura is the presentation in which the performers welcome the Kamisama deities who visit on the day of the festival. At the same time the performers wish the people who take part in the festival to feel cheerful.

Accordingly, you will comprehend this is the very special day of putting on the drama even when it is neither a day of festival nor a place of no advent of Kamisama deities.

Today, the performers think of you as Kamisama deities, and wish you to enjoy the Kaugara. The name of presenting team is Kakizawa Shachu Troupe. Kakizawa is a family name. All the Kakizawa family practice and perform the Kagura.

However, just the family members are entirely insufficient in order to perform the Kagura. Then, the Kakizawa family invite the persons who want study the Kagura, and together with them practice the Kagura. Then, the persons with the Kakizawa's appear on the stage to present the Kagura.

Shachu is the company compiled by the members who study the Kagura, and who learn the arts and techniques (for instance, playing the instruments and dancing). However, the Shachu's leader is called "Iemoto," "Motojime," or "Oyakata," and is overwhelmingly occupied by the father of the family.

The Kakizawa family began as a headmaster who has handed down the Kakizawa's role approximately since 100 years ago. The present Shachu's leader is the third-generation.

Next, we introduce to you Kagura's repertoires and contents in today's public presentation. There are two presentations in the day-time and in the evening-time. However, the repertoires in the day-time and the repertoires in the evening-time are different.

○DAY-TIME PRESENTATION

《KOTOBUKI・SHIKISANBASOU・TSUKI・GONINBAYASHI》

KOTOBUKI (Congratulations) ・SHIKISANBASOU(Deity's Dance) ・GONINBAYASHI(Five Musical Dancers) are performed in the first place. You will please feel relieved, because even Japanese cannot guess the contents judging from the long-name repertoire. This repertoire is always performed in the first place whenever the Kagura is presented.

With purifying the stage and the area when the Kagura is presented, the joyous feeling of the festival coming is expressed. Stumping on the stage vigorously is interpreted into sending a message to the local Kamisama deities.

《 Lecture And Performance 》

Orochi Taiji or Conquering the Giant Serpent

The next repertoire is a program for the purpose of studying the Kagura. We call this lesson "Lecture and Performance." The idea is to comment on the Kagura a little, and after that the actual Kagura is performed. The most popular repertoire in the Kagura is Orochi-Taiji, or Conquering the Giant Serpent.

While Orochi Taiji is being performed, the attractiveness of Kamisama deities is commented on.

《Ama-no-Iwato, or the Gate of the Celestial Rock》

The last repertoire in the day-time presentation is Iwato.

Iwato is meant by huge rock gate. This repertoire is presented on a special day (for instance, on the day when the aged shrine is destroyed, and the new shrine is constructed).

Today, September 9 is the ceremonial day when you probably

come to see the Kagura for the first time, and so some celebrated repertoires, are prepared.

The drama's story is that the deities make the goddess hidden in the rock cave (actually Amaterasu Sun Goddess) out of the cave, and make the pitch-dart world return to the bright world. Tajikara-ono-Mikoto, or Herculian Diety plays an active role. The mighty deity stages in order to do open the huge rock.

Generally, the origin or the Kagura is said to have been derived from this repertoire whose meaning is the revival of the Sun Goddess.

○EVENING-TIME PRESENTATION

《Shinji-Mai, or Shintoic Dance (of hands and upper body)》

In the Evening-time Presentation, the solumn Shinji-Mai is presented in the first program.

We find a dramatical element in the Kagura, but we see no dramatical element in the Shinji-Mai, only Mai(of hands and body)

Since Shinji-Mai is played among the repertoires in the ceremonial Kagura, people in general have few opportunities of viewing it. You will please comprehend it is the original root of the Kagura. Shinji-Mai is only Mai-dancing. Occasionally, you feel like sleeping. It is not a wrong thing : just think that Kamisama deities have possessed you. Kagura repertoires never fail to prepare for Mai, because it is the original root of the Kagura.

《 Men-Shibai, or Mask Drama 》

Next, Men-Shibai is performed. Men is meant by a mask. Shibai is meant by a theatrical show.

This Shibai, or show is a little special one. This Kagura is mime, no Serifu or lines are spoken. Also, this Men-Shibai was adopted from mythological drama, and turned into the Kagura. However, Men-Shibai was not adopted from mythology.

Also, Men-Shibai is not a mime, and the performers with their masks on speak the lines steadily.

In the past, Men-Shibai was popular, but at present you cannot see it. So, this is a very rare style of the Kagura. The repertoire's name is Momijigari. A Samurai met with a beautiful woman,

drank sake with her, but actually she was Kijo, ogress.

The Samurai got drunk, fell asleep, and then woke up, fought against Kijo, or ogress, and finally gained the victory over the ogress. This might be a good lesson for heavy alcoholic drinkers. What to see in this dramaturgy is that the beauty quickly changes her mask for Kijo's mask.

《Neno-Kuni-Shiren, or Trials in the Kingdom of the Dead.》

The next Kagura, most known in Japan is what happened to the young deity called Ohkuninushi-no-Mikoto when he was young. Ohkuninushi-no-Mikoto's previous name was Ohnamuchi.

Ohnamuchi-no-Mikoto visited the Ne-no-Kuni, and met Suzeri Hime who was sagacious and beautiful.

The princess loved him at first sight. The two wished to marry each other. Susanou-no-Mikoto, princess' father saw Ohnamuchi weak, and decided to give him trials. The play is how the young man was growing up.

《Kotobuki • Shishimai (Congratulatory Lion • Mai-dancing) , Daikoku-mai(Daikokumai-Dancing), and Ryoumen(Double-faced Dancing)》

The last program in the evening presentation is not included in the Kagura repertoires.

Shishi, that is , a lion dances with its hand and upper body. Also, Daikoku is a deity that invites fortune. When you contact Daikoku, you become rich. Ryoumen is a dance danced by the performer with double-faced mask on. It is a humorous dance.

Viewing this repertoire makes you go home with happy feeling.

Postscript

This public presentation commentary program is compiled so that you may make use of this for a long time as a text by which you understand the Kagura. Next, you will hopefully appreciate the Kagura by all means which is performed in the shrine festivals.