

# Komatsu hounen Shishiodori

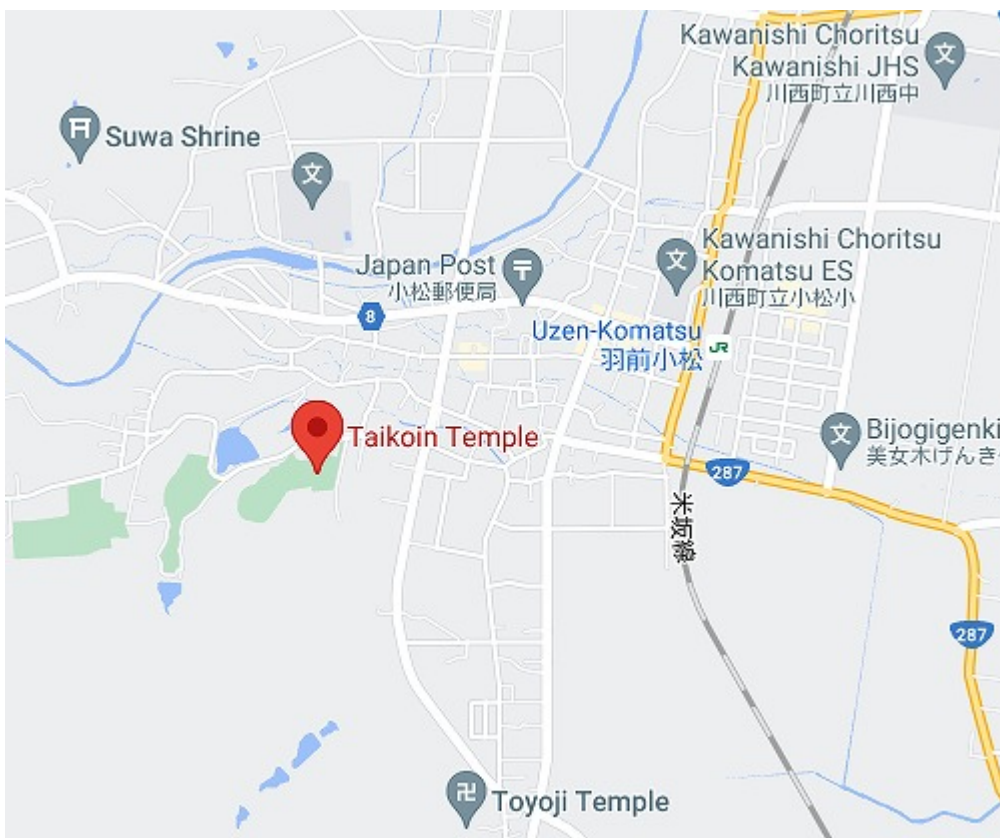
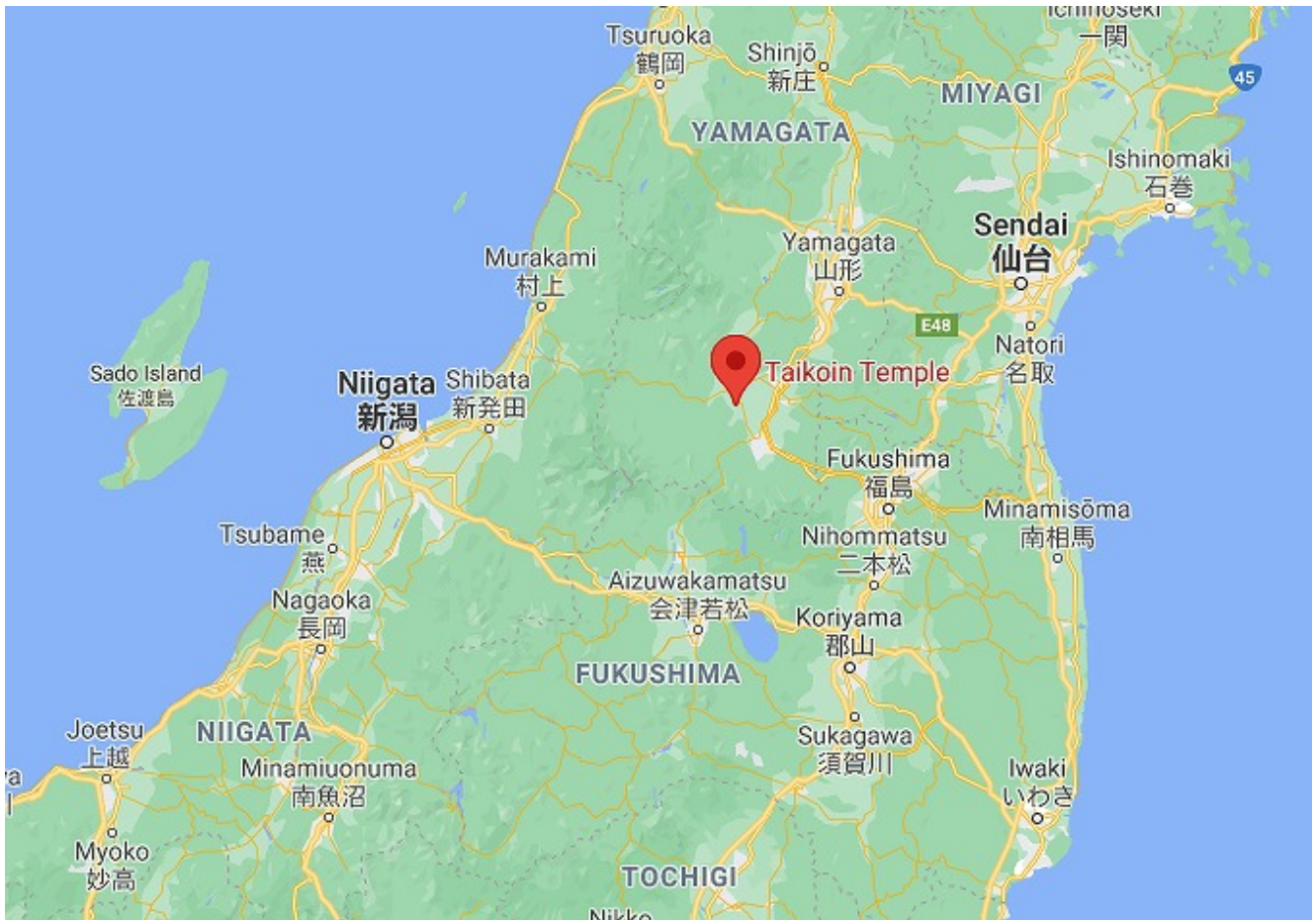


<http://www.e-okitama.net/?p=log&l=291894&m=kawanishi>

**Date:** 16th and 27th, August

**Location:** Oaza Kamikomatsu, Kawanishi city, Higashi-Okitama district, Yamagata prefecture (Daikoin-temple and Suwa shrine)

**Access:** 15 minutes walk from Uzen Komatsu station



Yamagata Prefecture has a wide variety of lion and deer (both



shishi) dances. Among them, in the southern region where this lion dance is performed, the three lion dances commonly seen in the Kanto region are popular. The faces of the shishi are Kanto-style, and the way "Hana-gasa (the flower hats)" accompanies is also very similar.. There is a reason why the lion dance of this small region is so popular among people. It is the performance jumping through the fire ring.



[http://okibun.jp/kawanishi\\_shishiodori/](http://okibun.jp/kawanishi_shishiodori/)



<http://www.shishiodori.net/muwfydlcj-14/>

# History and composition



It is said that the lion dance was started by the local people about 1,100 years ago to comfort a high priest who had escaped to this area after being defeated in his interpretation of a Buddhist doctrine at the capital. In the Edo period (1603-1868), the lords who ruled the area encouraged simplicity and frugality. Therefore, dancing was forbidden except in years of good harvest. So that is why “Hounen 年豊 (harvest Year)” was added to the name.

Ten people make up a group. All of them wear hanagasa (flower hat) and carry drums on their stomachs. They are called “nakadachi,” “saotome,” and “hanagasa”. Each of them has a different color costume. And one person called “Matoi-mochi (a person holding the “Matoi (a sign of a group) who does not take part in the dance) joins them. In the photo, the one in the pale purple costume is the “hanagasa,” and the one in front of them is the “nakadachi.

The dance is divided into three parts: the “introduction,” the “development,” and the “finale/climax,” and it takes about 50 minutes to go through the whole dance. Therefore, usually only



the “development” is performed. Most of the content is about farming. There is also a scene where a wild boar gets lost among the flowers. There is a scene in which a mother lioness loses sight of her child. In other words, the ring of fire is used to express the feeling of not being afraid of fire for the sake of the child.



source *Okitama* <http://okibun.jp/log/?l=329334>



[http://kawa1chu.blogspot.com/2014/08/blog-post\\_18.html](http://kawa1chu.blogspot.com/2014/08/blog-post_18.html)

# Jump through flaming hoop

On the day of the festival, performers will act at about five locations in the town. Not all of them involves the performance of jumping through the flaming hoop. Currently, junior high school students are learning the lion dance in order to preserve their town's traditional folk performing art. They will also perform, but for safety reasons, the junior high school students don't use the fire ring.



<http://okibun.jp/log/?l=329334> (from the same in the left



source)

It is always held on the 16th in Daiko-in, in front of the community center at night, and on the 27th at Suwa Shrine.



*from source Okitama*



[https://www.tohokukanko.jp/sozaishu/detail\\_1002944.html](https://www.tohokukanko.jp/sozaishu/detail_1002944.html)

It's not just about going through the hoops. The fire is on, so it's important to work in coordination with the person

holding the wheel. If the fire is about to shift even a little, the person holding the wheel must be able to instantly shift it to make up the subtle difference. It's also nerve-wracking not to hurt the performer's limbs because the place performer jumps to is either concrete or hard ground.



<https://www.town.kawanishi.yamagata.jp/kyoiku/bunka/komatsuhou-nen-shishiodori.html>