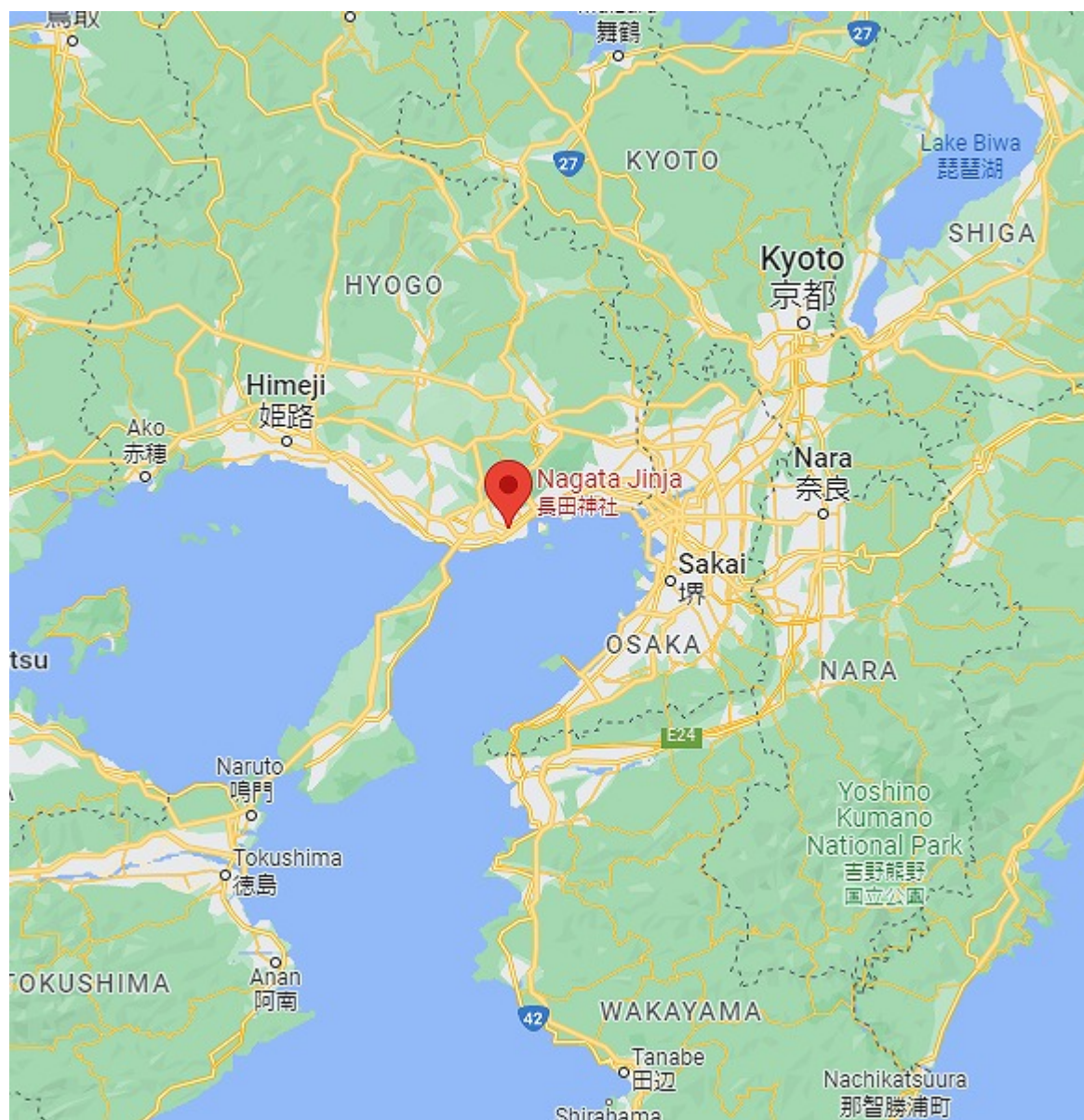
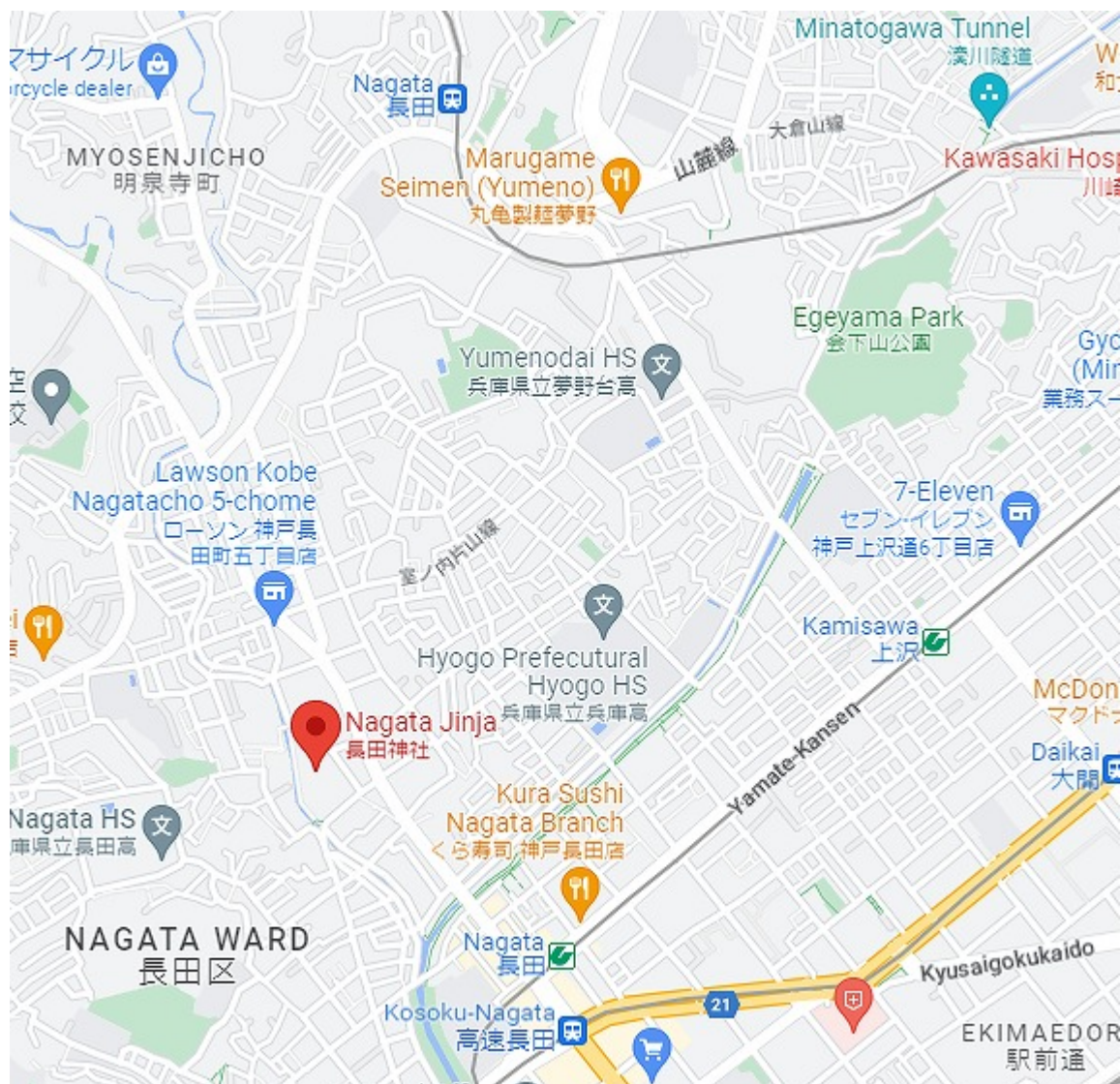


# Seven Oni bring happiness~ Setubun at Kobe





**Date:** 3 February

**Location:** Nagata Shrine 長田神社 3-1-1 Nagata-cho 長田町, Nagata-ku 長田区, Kobe, Hyogo prefecture

**Access:** For City Subway, Hankyu 阪神, Hanshi 阪神 and Sanyo 山陽 trains, get off at Nagata (Nagata-jinja-mae) Station and walk 5 minutes northwards from Nagata-jinja-mae Shopping Street.

For JR, change at Sannomiya 三宮/Kobe 神戸/Shinnagata 新長田 Station to City Subway, Hankyu, Hanshin or Sanyo and get off at Nagata (Nagata-jinja-mae) Station.

City buses, routes 3, 4 (JR Kobe/Hyogo Stn.) and 17 (JR Shin-Nagata Stn.), get off at Nagata-jinja-mae, respectively.

**prologue~ 3 points I recommend**





"Since I am in Japan during Setsubun, I want to see the

japanese Oni. But I can't go around a lot at once. So where is it good? I want to see many good things efficiently if possible. "

In such a case, this site recommend \*Setsubun at Nagata Shrine. The first point I recommend. It's easy to get to. It can't be helped, but there are many inconvenient places where traditional events remain. This shrine is about 30 minutes by train from central Kobe. Kobe is close to Osaka and Kyoto, and as a port city, Kobe itself attracts many tourists.

The second point. There are many Onis. It's not bad to watch only one Oni carefully, but you want to see many if possible. On that point, in this shrine, as many as seven appear at once.

The third point is that the mask is well made. There are many Oni events in Hyogo prefecture, and all of which are of good workmanship. This is probably due to the fact that a lot of skilled craftsmen came from Kyoto and Nara. Also, the technique was easy to convey. Kyoto and Nara are both ancient capitals and the birthplace of many Buddhist sculptures.

\*Setsubun originally meant a day to divide the seasons. And Tsuina Ceremony is an event to exorcise the bad luck of the year. These two were combined someday, and the current Setsubun event was born. Therefore, many people recognize February 3 as Setsubun, the day on which people throw beans at ogres to drive them away.

## **program of a ceremony**





On the day of the event, early in the morning, those who play



the role of Oni purify themselves on the beach. This is an important ritual that is performed from the day before. From around noon, the Oni actors and others involved parade through the town and arrive at the shrine. At 1 o'clock in the afternoon, the Onis' performance finally begins. A long podium on which the Oni walk is set up in the hall, and the audience is waiting in front of a bamboo fence. Taro Oni appears first, alone. Then the five Onis, including Taro Oni, appear in full force. Finally, the Mochi-Wari Oni and Shirikujiri Oni, regarded as the strongest Oni, appear. This is repeated twice. So by the end of the performance, the sun has completely set and a fantastic scene appears with torches blazing in the night sky.

## Oni and the Stage







Two large rice cakes are hung in the shrine. These are the symbol of the sun and the moon, and thus heaven and earth. Alongside them hang 64 rice cakes and sakaki (cleyera japonica) leaves. This represents the whole country, as Japan was called 64 provinces in the past. In addition, rice cakes and tangerines adorn the center of the worship hall. These represent the universe and the stars.

In this shrine, the Oni are not daemons. They are messengers who bring happiness to people instead of God. Therefore, there are no bean-throwing ceremonies, and there is no chanting of 'Oni wa soto' (meaning to drive out the ogres, the symbol of misfortune)

After the 30-minute ritual that begins at 1:30, it is time for the Onis to appear.



# Taro oni appear





At 2 pm, finally, the Oni appear. At first, the Taro oni appeared alone. Wielding a torch, he performs a vigorous preliminaries. He appears repeatedly three times. He will appear after this. He is the most frequent on this day.

## Five Oni on the stage



Aka oni 〇〇



## Uba oni 〇〇

This time, five Onis continue to appear on the stage. Besides Taro, they are Aka Oni, Uba Oni, Housuke Oni, Ao Oni. The scene of the five Oni lined up on stage is a spectacle. The presenter then adds witty commentary. For example, such as “This Oni is too good-looking to be wearing a mask” or “He is a veteran who has already played the role of the Oni ten times this year”. It is also said that if the Ao oni pats you on the head, your eyesight will improve.





Housuke oni 〇〇〇



Ao oni 〇〇

Aka and Ao mean the color, red and blue. The uba means an old



woman. The Housuke represents a stupid man, but he has the most fearsome face that does not look very like that.





# Mochiwari Oni and Shirikujiri Oni



Mochiwari oni □□□□





## Shirikujiri oni 𪛗𪛗𪛗𪛗

And last but not least, Mochiwari Oni and Shirikujiri Oni. These are the strongest Oni, holding swords and spears and wielding torches to shake off the evils of the world. The meaning of the Shirikujiri Oni is unknown, but the Mochiwari Oni means the Oni that breaks rice cakes (mochi). And as the name suggests, to smash the rice cakes with an axe is the climax of the event. By then, it was already nearly 6 pm.







*The baton is passed on*

Thus, the event, which continued during the day, comes to an end with the year's prayers.

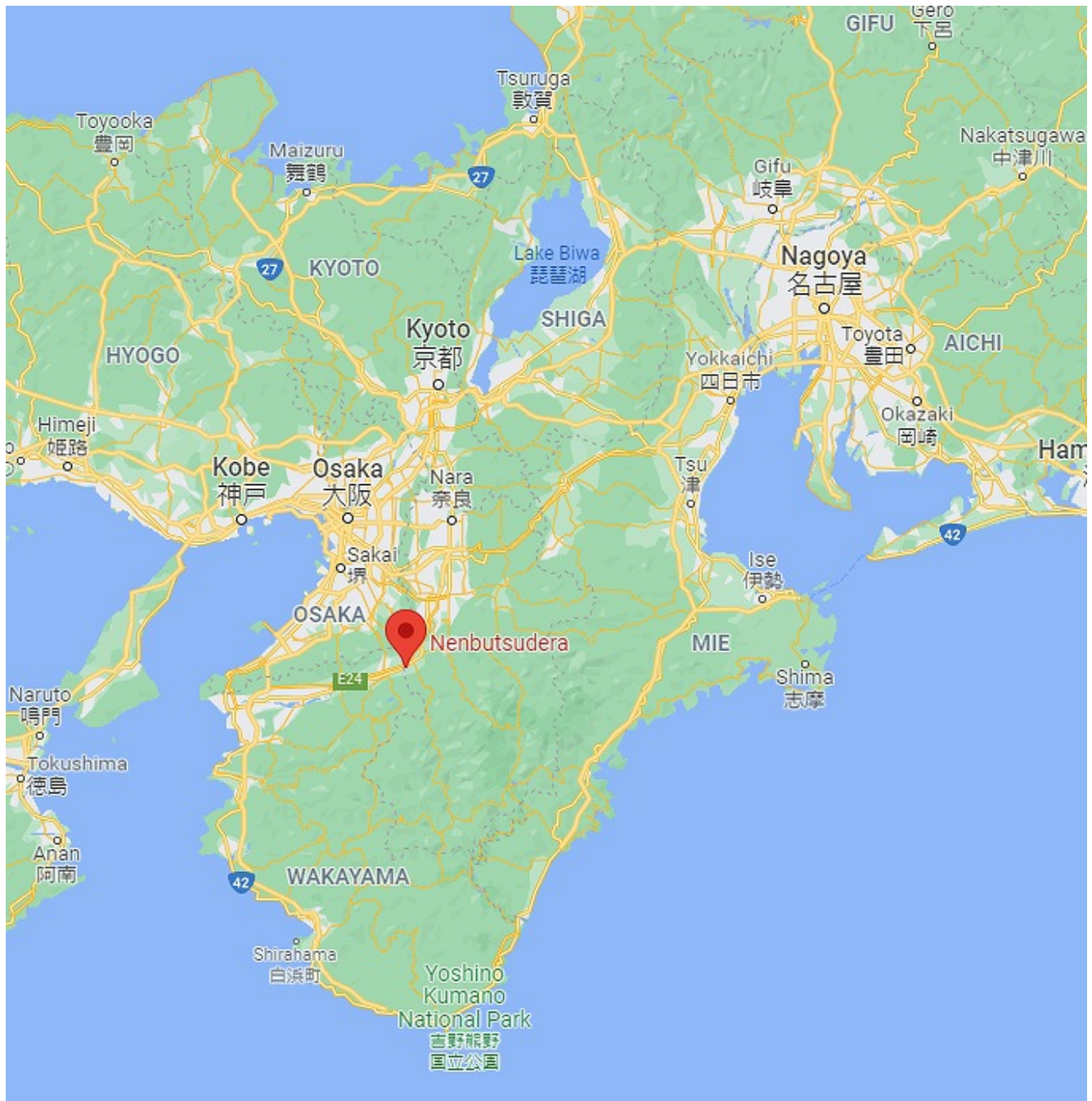
To be a Mochiwari Oni, one must have played the role of Oni at least seven times. In addition, the various people involved, including the Oni, must basically be born in the area. Despite these restrictions, fortunately, people who have played the role of oni once want to do it again and again, so there seems to be no need to worry about successors. The event has continued for more than 600 years, and I am not the only one who hopes that it will continue in the future.

Kobe is a major city along with Osaka and Kyoto. Its centre is Sannomiya 三宮. There is no shortage of sightseeing. Be sure to visit once when you visit the port city.

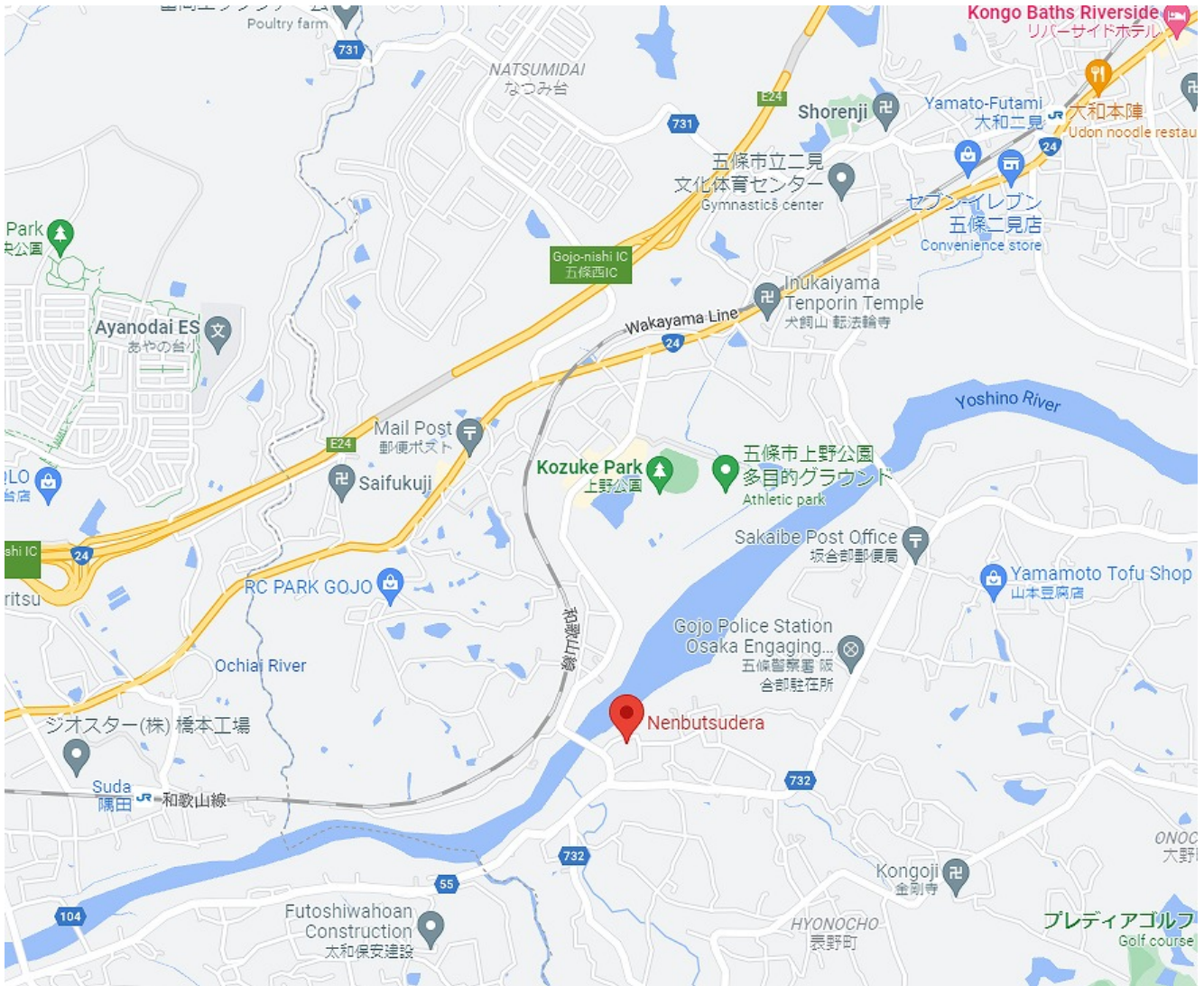
cf. <https://www.feel-kobe.jp/en/>



# Ogre runs with fire ~at Dada-do







**Date:** January 14th every year

**Location:** Otsu town 177, Gojo city, Nara prefecture

**Access:** 10 minutes by car from JR Yamato Futami Station, or 30 minutes on foot.

**What is the purpose of doing this?**





<https://ameblo.jp/ura-tom0/entry-11750814403.html>

Ogres with huge torches wielding fire. Such events are held at a place called Nenbutsuji Temple 念仏寺. It is a very inconvenient place. The official website even lists the last train schedule. Every year, they hold an event where ogres run with torches in the temple.

Part of an event called Shusho-e 正月会. Shusho-e is a Buddhist event held at New Year's to pray for a good harvest and to ward off bad luck. Here at Nenbutsuji Temple, we regard it as an event to rid ourselves of past sins and pray for happiness in the new year. The final day is Kechigan けちがん. Kechigan means "consummation of a vow period".





father and mother ogre



父王



子鬼面



鬼面（伝阿弥陀面）

kid and Amida

The masks used in the current event were made of cypress in 1961. However, the older masks were made in 1468, so we can assume that this event started at least around that time.

## Schedule of Events

4:00 pm. the event daytime

4:30 pm. throwing rice cakes

7:00 pm. Monks begin reading sutras

9:00 pm. main event starts



<http://yoshino-ohmine-koya.jp/information/2014/01/1684/>

Why don't we go to Dada-do? There are no foxes or raccoons there. If there are, we can go back. But then ogres appeared!

This time, the stage was the Dada-do だだど in Nenbutsu-ji Temple ねんぶつじ where such a children's song is handed down. It is roughly



divided into daytime and nighttime sessions. In the daytime, ogres appear and run around with torches as in the nighttime, but they do not set fire to the torches. It's like a kind of rehearsal. But it has the advantage that there are not as many people as at night. Also, since it is bright, you can see the gestures and masks clearly. In the past, people used to make the masks from a single tree made of Japanese cypress, which weighed about 4.5 kg, but now they use masks made of a single tree made of thatch.



[https://www.city.gojo.lg.jp/soshiki/bunka/1\\_1/1/3117.html](https://www.city.gojo.lg.jp/soshiki/bunka/1_1/1/3117.html)



However, the main attraction is still at night. Fire seems to have something that makes people's hearts flutter. Whether or not you've prepared well for the daytime session, the main event is the evening session.

The evening session begins at 9 p.m.

As the sound of sticks tapping on the wall rang out, the monks entered first, blowing hollow shells. Behind them are the ogres. The monks began to shout, and the sound of sticks and more bells rang out. It's time to begin. The sound of the bells was and still is used to warn people of fire. The sound of the bells quickens people's heartbeats and heightens their sense of danger. People also call tapping on the wall with a stick "Amitabha's shoulder tapping," a unique name. In Buddhism, Amitabha is the Buddha who saves all people.

In the meantime, the first person to handle the fire in the hall (called kätte) appeared with a large torch. He draws the Chinese character for water 水 in the hollow to prevent the fire from raging. Right behind him was a waterman named Kawase



with a bucket of water to put out the fire and clear away the sparks. When it was over, the demons finally made their appearance.



<https://www.pref.nara.jp/45519.htm>



[https://yamatoji.nara-kankou.or.jp/01shaji/02tera/04south\\_area/nembutsuji-gojoyo/event/qtx8lu3j2a/](https://yamatoji.nara-kankou.or.jp/01shaji/02tera/04south_area/nembutsuji-gojoyo/event/qtx8lu3j2a/)



A father ogre, a mother ogre, and a child ogre: there are three ogres in total:. It is said that the ogres here are not bad, but good, bringing good fortune to the people. That's why they have quite charming faces.

The assistants pass the burning torches to the ogres. The ogre puts it on his crotch and supports it with one hand. The torch is 70 centimeters in diameter and weighs about 60 kilograms. There are two pillars in the center of the hall, so when the ogres appear, they move one by one to the next. When the child ogre appears, the three ogres are all together, creating a breathtaking sight. In this way, the demon circled the hall three times before finally leaving the hall.

Anyone can play the role of an ogre, but once they do, they often continue to do so. They bathe in water for a week and avoid fire. It takes a lot of strength and energy to be an ogre, so when they become weak, they are passed on to the next person. The event ends with people trying to steal the paper strings from the ogres, as the paper strings that the ogres wear on their bodies is said to ward off evil.

Ends around 9:30 p.m.



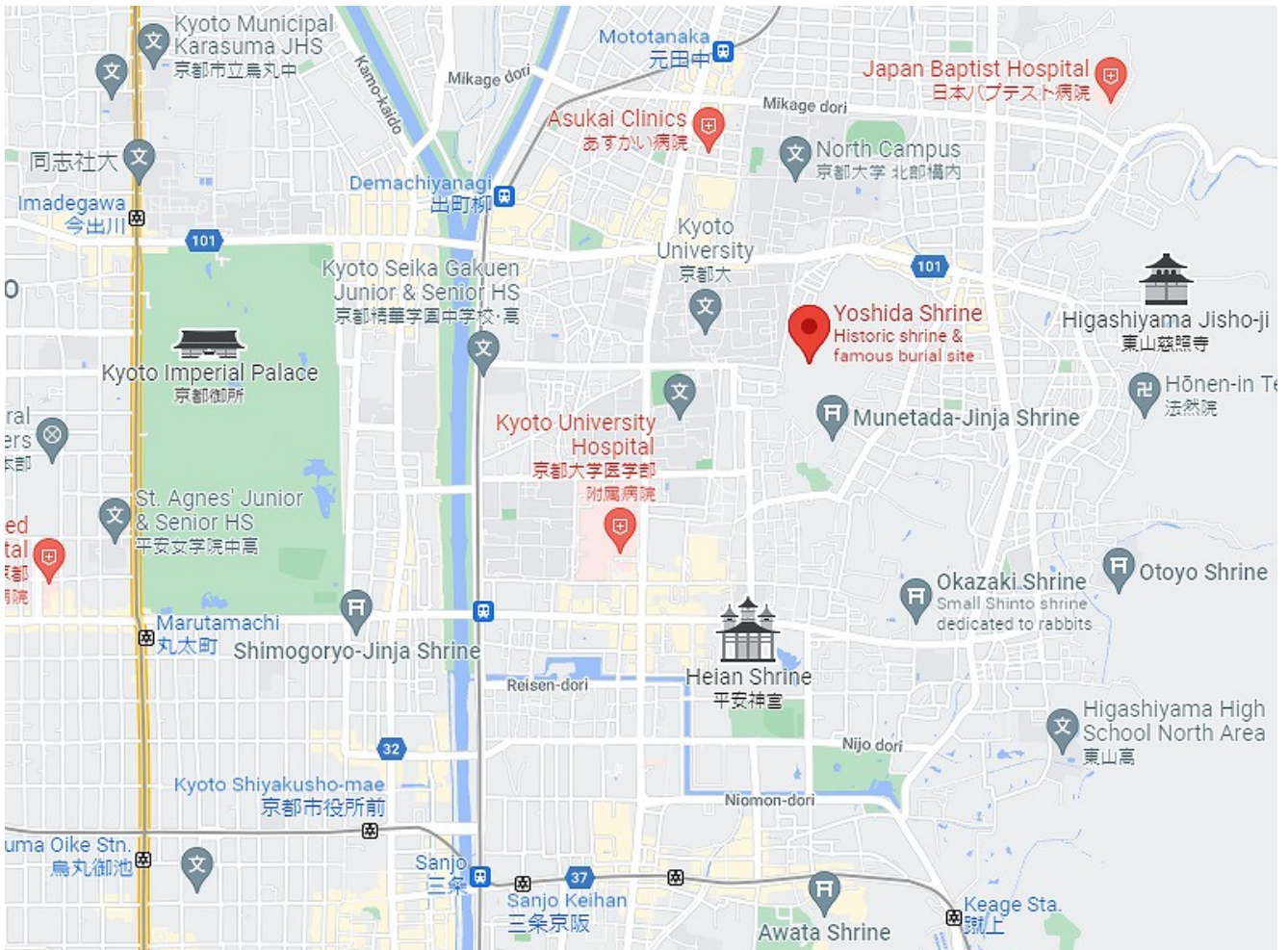
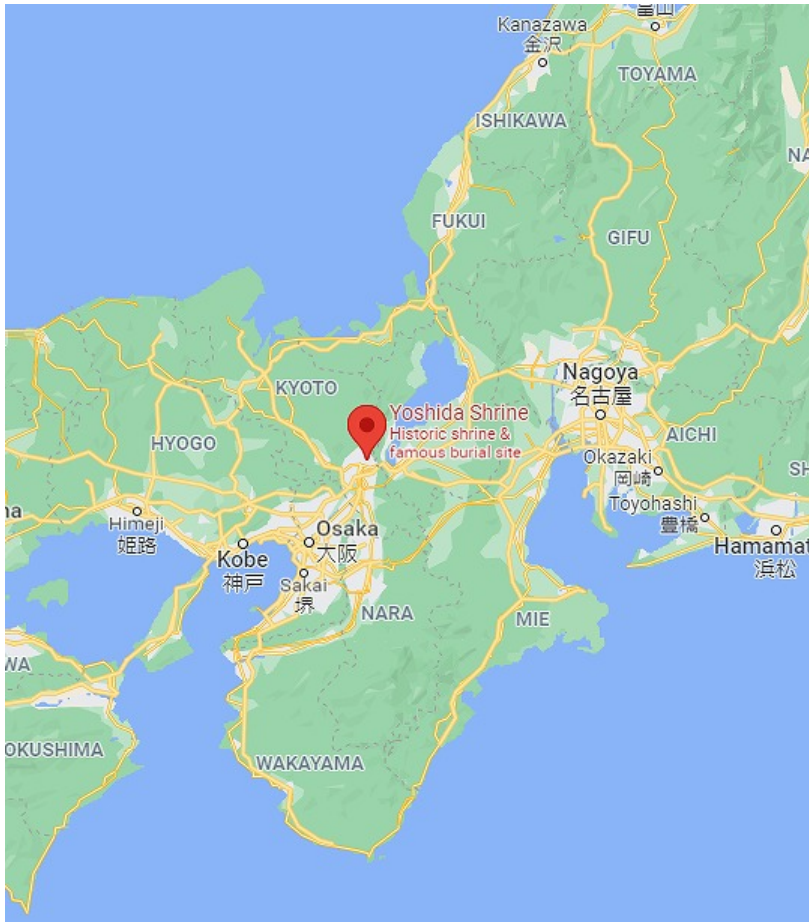
The nearest town, Gojo, is a traditional building preservation district where the streets of olden times remain intact. If you have time, you should definitely take a stroll.



[http://yamatoji.nara-kankou.or.jp/03history/02old\\_house/04south\\_area/shimmachidori-gojoshi/](http://yamatoji.nara-kankou.or.jp/03history/02old_house/04south_area/shimmachidori-gojoshi/)

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**Ogres vs four-eyed superman~  
Setsubun at Yoshida shrine**





**Date:** February 2nd of every year

**Location:** 30 Kaguragaoka-cho, Yoshida, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto-shi, Kyoto

**Access:** A 20-minute walk from Demachiyanagi 〇〇〇 Station on the Keihan 〇〇 Railway. Or take the 206 bus from Kyoto Station, get off at "Kyodai Seimon -mae 〇〇〇〇〇 (the main gate of Kyoto University), and walk 5 minutes.





Setsubun rituals\*<sup>1</sup> are one of the most popular winter traditions held across the country. Although it is becoming less common, people still perform it at home, at shrines and temples, and at schools. Basically, it is held on February 3rd, but in Hyogo and other prefectures, people often hold it in January, and in Hiei-zan\*<sup>2</sup>, they do it on New Year's Eve. Here at Yoshida Shrine, although the day is orthodoxly set for the 3rd, a performance takes place on the night of the 2nd. This performance is not particularly unusual, as they do it everywhere. It is just that the number of visitors here is tremendous. The approach in front of the shrine has about 800 street vendors. The next day, the shrine held a lottery where the first prize was a car. This website has yet to find out why Yoshida Shrine was the only shrine to hold such a large Setsubun event. However, considering that this kind of event would not have been possible outside of Kyoto, it makes me realize the power of Kyoto as a city.

\*1:Setsubun 〆〆 A concept introduced from China, the word means



to divide the seasons. It also refers to the events that take place at that time. Nowadays, however, Setsubun is used only for the border between winter and spring, and people are not aware of it in other seasons.

\*2: Hiei-zan A holy place of Buddhism opened by Saicho 最澄 after he finished his studies in China in the 780s. It is located on the border between Kyoto and Shiga prefectures. This place is the center of Buddhism in Japan, along with Koya-san 高野山, which Kukai 空海 founded at the same time. In both cases, temples line the entire mountain (about 100 in the case of Hieizan).

## Origin of the Ceremony

Kyoto became the center of Japan in both name and reality around the 780s. The Setsubun Festival at Yoshida Shrine is also famous for its ability to pass on to the present a large number of events from that time. This is supported by the existence of “Hosou-shi 四目鬼”. This is a ritual that has been passed down from China, where it is believed that a kind of demon called “Hōsōu-shi” is able to exterminate evil spirits. The Chinese thought that in order to contain the demons, they needed a kind of psychic who also had the power of demons. That’s when they came up with the idea of “Hosou-shi”. The Japanese people imported it directly from China to Japan. Hence, the “Hosou-Shi” has four eyes. And he appears in a red costume, accompanied by a child. The color red has the meaning of protection against evil.



Houso-shi 〇〇〇





**On the day**





On the day of the event, the ceremony began at 6:00 p.m. First of all, three demons appear and rampage in front of the audience who stand inside the ropes in order to keep them from going out near the demons. However, they only waved their golden sticks around and shouted “Oh, wow! Then came the “Hōsōu-shi” with their children in tow. The demons resist. However, they are not the enemy of the overwhelmingly powerful “Hōsōu-shi”, and they repeatedly take a stance and get hit. In this way, they go around the building called Maidono 三門 three times. When the demon has left, the “hoosou-shi” strikes the shield he is holding and declares that he has driven away the evil spirit. Finally, the men in charge draw the bowstring. They believed that this sound would complete the protection against evil spirits.



<https://www.sankei.com/photo/story/news/190202/sty1902020016-n1.html>





<https://www.nippon.com/ja/guide-to-japan/gu900080/>

**Actual situation**



<https://www.sankei.com/photo/story/news/190202/sty1902020016-n1.html>





<https://www.nippon.com/ja/guide-to-japan/gu900080/>

In fact, around 5:00 p.m. (when it is already dark) the area around the shrine is filled with people on their way to the shrine. The approach to the shrine looked as if it might be the site of a big concert. Steps are slow and unsteady. When you enter the shrine, the first thing you see is a place where you wash your hands and purify your mouth with water to cleanse yourself. There was already a long queue here. Naturally, the area in front of the dance hall is roped off, and it becomes so packed with people that there is no room to move. Reluctantly, people go to the slope of the mountain at the back. Like an outdoor concert, the slope got filled with people. From the top of the mountain, you cannot see the important part of the ceremony. The path leading to the maidono is also crowded with people, so even the people here cannot see the ceremony. The people who have secured the front row have already been there since around three in the

afternoon. And the actual performance lasted less than an hour. If you want to know how scary Kyoto can be, you should definitely try it out. But only if you have plenty of time to spare.



[https://ja.kyoto.travel/event/single.php?event\\_id=3939](https://ja.kyoto.travel/event/single.php?event_id=3939)

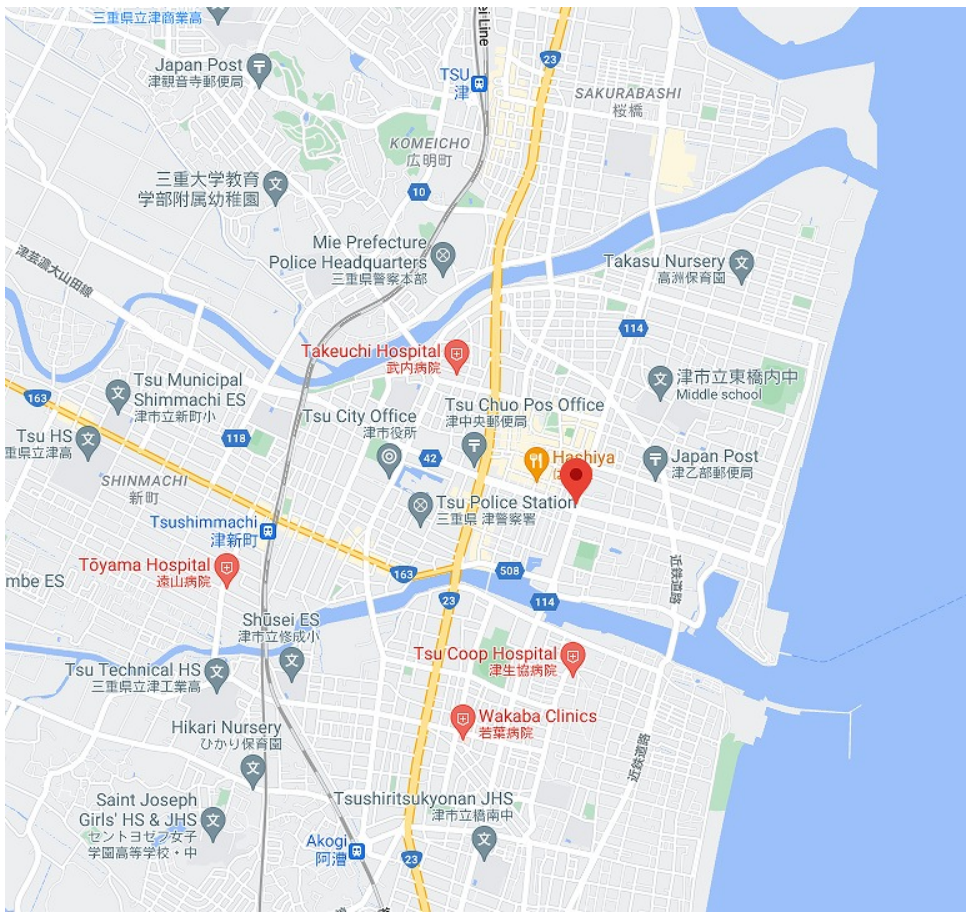
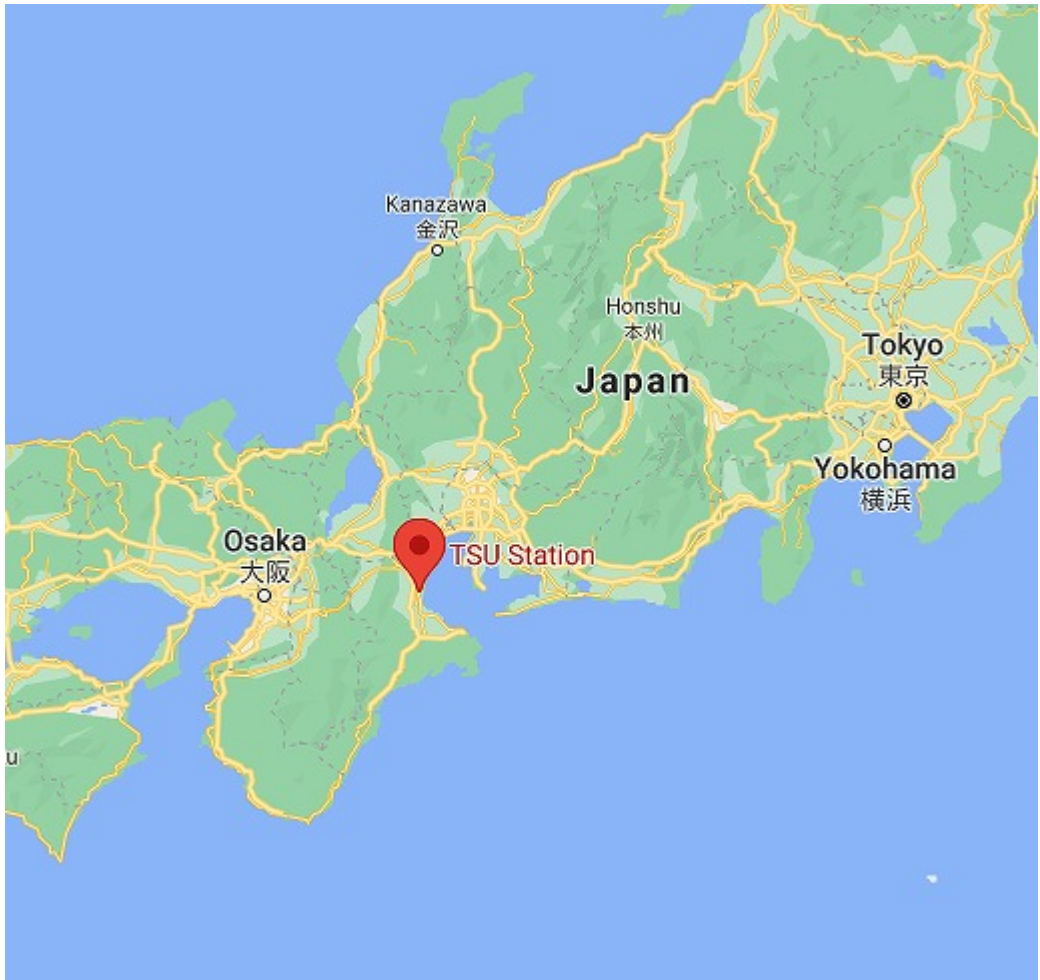




<https://www.nippon.com/ja/guide-to-japan/gu900080/>

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## Strange characters in “Tsu festival”





**Date:** Saturday and Sunday around October 10

**Location:** around the castle, Phoenix Street, etc.

**Access:** Just over an hour from Kintetsu Nagoya to Tsu Shinmachi

## Tsu, the city and the port

The present Mie Prefecture used to be called “Ise 伊勢”. Its center is Tsu 津. There is an old saying, “It is Tsu that supports Ise, and it is Ise that supports Tsu.” The shortest name in Japan, “Tsu,” means port. And when we think of Ise, we all think of Ise grand shrine. In the 17th century, when travel became popular, paying a visit to the Ise grand shrine became an excuse to travel. The previous phrase means that Tsu prospered as a gateway because of the Ise grand shrine, and the Ise shrine prospered because of the port of Tsu.

## Tsu festival



<https://tabiiro.jp/leisure/s/201416-tsu-tsumatsuri/>



<https://tsumatsuri.info/>

In Tsu, there is a very strange performing folk art that uses masks. Tsu holds a folk performing art that is rare in Japan. These are “Shagouma” and “Tojin Odori”. They are performed at the Tsu Festival.

The history of Tsu festival dates back to the early 17th century. The lord who ruled the area moved the Hachiman shrine in 1632. Five years later the festival began. And the feudal lord himself donated money to the shrine, and the festival began to be held with the interest from that money. Since the fall of the samurai regime in the 19th century, the festival has continued to be held, although there have been some changes in the offering. In the old days, there were many masquerade parades and floats. Today, it is a place for the Daimyo processions (the feudal lords’ processions) and various entertainment performances. World War Ⅱ burned down all the floats and decorations. Among them, the ones we will introduce here are “Shagouma” and “Tojin Odori 〇〇〇〇”.

## Shagouma 〇〇〇〇





<http://tokowaka-tsucity.jp/www/tokyo/contents/1536022099733/index.html>

“Shagouma” is a folk performing art that resembles a mounted warrior. Originally, it was an actual mounted warrior who walked as a guard at festivals. They disappeared with the end of the samurai era, but somehow they have remained as a folk art until now. They wear a wig made of red dyed yak hair on their heads. It is said that the purpose of this wig is to gain divine power through this hair. Then they put on a jinbaori (a traditional cloth worn) and a demon mask. Jinbaori is a special jacket worn by samurai during wars in the past. In spite of their shabby appearance, they wear papier-mâché in the shape of horses on their bodies as if they are swimming floats. They look like children playing at an amusement park.





[https://tsu-mingei.net/h30\\_shago/](https://tsu-mingei.net/h30_shago/)



[https://tsu-mingei.net/r1\\_shago/](https://tsu-mingei.net/r1_shago/)

The horses have reins attached to them, and while holding these reins, with the sound of hora shells they move with a



vigorous jumping motion, accompanied by the sound of drums and vigorous shouting in the background. Sometimes they attack children. This is why all the children living in this area are afraid of "Shagouma". Therefore, parents in this area scold their children when they misbehave, saying, "If you misbehave, Shagouma will come. They are so scary to the children, but the citizens love them. During the festival, they go around the city and perform in front of stores. Then they receive a congratulatory gift.

There is no similar art form in the whole country. It is a folk art unique to Tsu.



<https://www.asoview.com/spot/24201be2220092453/>



## Tojin-odori (Chinese dance) 唐人舞

### Joseon missions

“Tojin 唐人” represents the old Chinese dynasty “Tang”, so the word Tojin originally meant Chinese. However, since the Tokugawa shogunate didn’t allow most foreigners to enter in the 17th century, it also became a name for foreigners in general.





<https://www.asahi.com/articles/photo/AS20171031000937.html>



### **Reenactment by people from Japan and Korea**

[https://www.chugoku-np.co.jp/blog/article/article.php?comment\\_id=6861&comment\\_sub\\_id=0&category\\_id=1104](https://www.chugoku-np.co.jp/blog/article/article.php?comment_id=6861&comment_sub_id=0&category_id=1104)

For this reason, the “Tojin odori” here at Tsu Festival refers to the Korean envoys. Because the Tokugawa Shogunate severely restricted trade with foreign countries, there were few opportunities for ordinary people to see foreigners. However, only the Korean delegation occasionally visited Japan and met the shogun. During the Tokugawa Shogunate, there are records of 12 visits. The foreign knowledge and culture they brought



was very important to Japan. They marched in a procession from Kyushu to Edo (Tokyo), which became a very popular topic among the common people. As a result, many people began to imitate them. The "Tojin Odori" of the Tsu Festival is said to be an imitation of this.

## Outline of "Tojin-odori"



<http://furusato-shinbun.jp/2013/04/04-30.html>





<https://www.info.city.tsu.mie.jp/www/contents/1001000000009/index.html>

Tojin-odori consists of 23 people in total. A flag bearer, a dancer, a general, and a bow and arrow bearer. They are accompanied by flutes, drums, and, unusually, buglers. Each one uses a different mask, so there are 23 different types in total. Some are smiling, some are angry, and there is a lot of variety. The clothes are also different, but only the dancers wear white. The dancer raises both hands upward and brings them together, then dances as if jumping while looking up to the sky. It is a strange dance, but people call it the “Dance of Joy” because of its appearance. The Tojin-dance also marches through the town during the festival, giving performances from time to time. Over the course of two days, they visit about 300 houses and receive congratulatory gifts. There is a museum in Wakebemachi wakebemachi, the birthplace of the dance, where you can see the masks and costumes at any time.

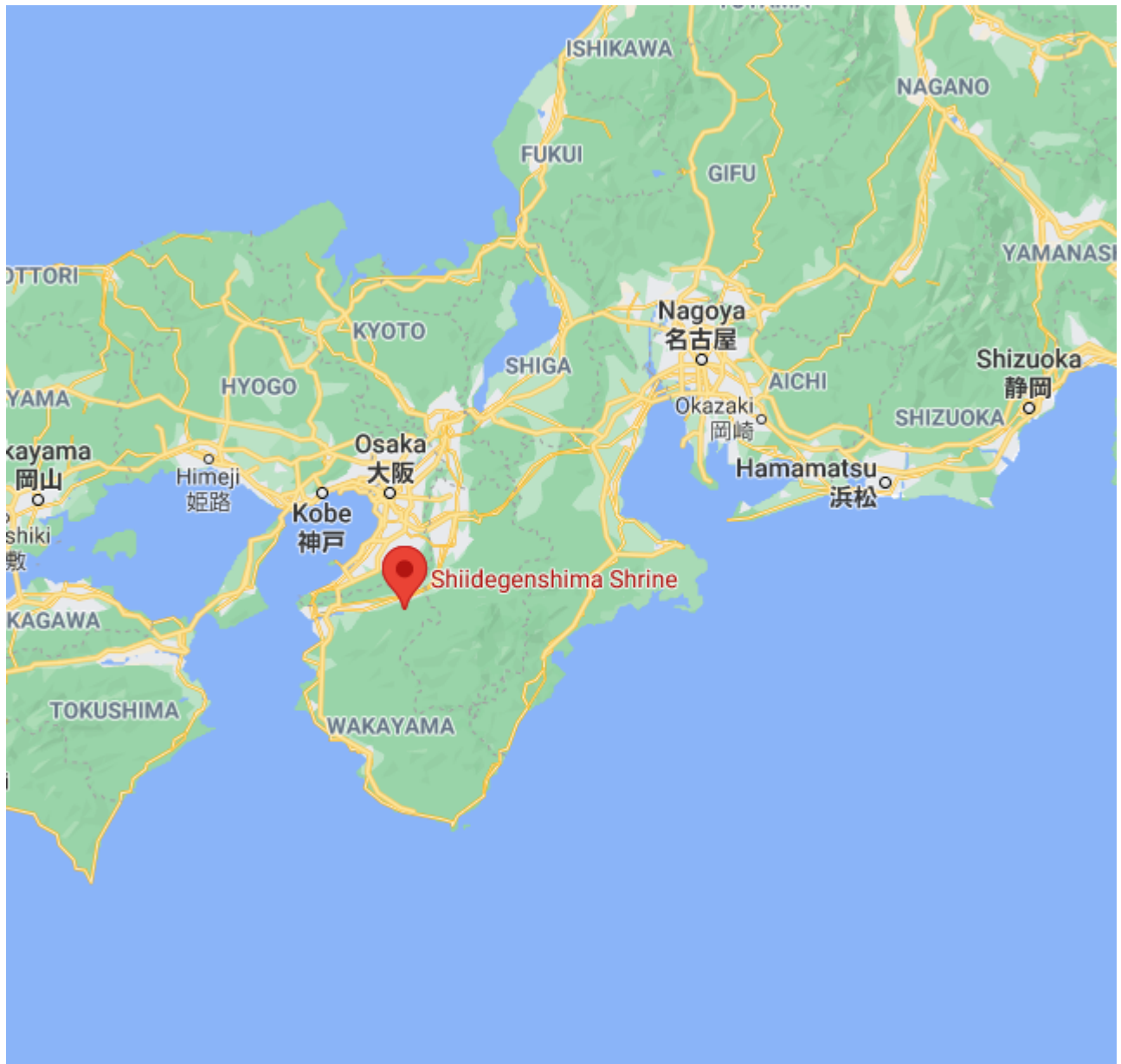


[https://ooishiyou.hateblo.jp/entry/2015/10/22/%E6%97%A5%E6%9C%AC%E3%81%A7%E5%94%90%E4%BA%BA%E8%B8%8A%E3%82%8A%E3%81%8C%E6%AE%8B%E3%81%A3%E3%81%A6%E3%81%84%E3%82%8B%E3%81%AE%E3%81%AF%E3%80%81%E3%81%AA%E3%82%93%E3%81%A8%E3%80%81%E4%B8%89%E3%81%8Bcf. http://www.searchnavi.com/~hp/tojin/eng/](https://ooishiyou.hateblo.jp/entry/2015/10/22/%E6%97%A5%E6%9C%AC%E3%81%A7%E5%94%90%E4%BA%BA%E8%B8%8A%E3%82%8A%E3%81%8C%E6%AE%8B%E3%81%A3%E3%81%A6%E3%81%84%E3%82%8B%E3%81%AE%E3%81%AF%E3%80%81%E3%81%AA%E3%82%93%E3%81%A8%E3%80%81%E4%B8%89%E3%81%8Bcf.%20http://www.searchnavi.com/~hp/tojin/eng/)

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## Shiide Ogre dance







**Date:** 16th August, every year

**Location:** Shiide 3, Kudoyama town, Ito district, Wakayama prefecture

**Access:** 5 minutes walk from Koyacho station (Nankai line).

## A place called Kudoyama

There are two places where the entire mountain is lined with temples, making it a major religious city. Mount Koya 高野山 and Mount Hiei 比叡山. Both were built in the 10th century. Both are legacies that cannot be fully visited in one day (although they are still in operation).

At the foot of Mount Koya, there is a place called Kudoyama 九度山.

At the end of the 16th century, The Tokugawa clan, who were in power at the time, imprisoned the father and son of a warlord



who fought against them here. This is such a place. It is deep in the mountains, and the surrounding area is still dotted with uninhabited stations. There is still a ogre dance here that is said to have a history of 600 years.

## People performing the Ogre dance





A total of 11 people perform the ogre dance. In addition to the ogre, there are ten other people: one drummer, two flutes, seven singers, and one person who holds the drum. They are called the “ten men”. They are chosen from those who are 16 years old or older in the community. In the past, it was an honor just to be chosen. The chosen ones purify themselves in a nearby river and bring back three stones each. Then they go through a ritual and join the performance. It is customary to keep the name of the ogre actor secret until the performance is over.

## Performance





This is held as a festival of Itsukushima Shrine. At the appointed time, the group departs from the nearby Jizoji Temple, beating drums as they go. The ogre slowly moves forward, drawing a circle with a long stick in one hand. For every three beats of the drum, the ogre takes only one step

forward. The path is about 30 meters long, so it takes about 30 minutes to complete the journey.

When they arrive at the precinct, the ogre is released from the restriction of the drums and is free to move around. Parents and children gather in the precinct, hoping to be touched by the ogre. It is said that if the ogre touches the child, the child will grow up in good health, and if the ogre touches the painful part, the pain will go away by the power of the ogre.



Eventually, the ten men leave the grounds, leaving only the ogre behind. The remaining ogre grieves, and even rampages through the precincts in anger. He then prays to the shrine for a good harvest and for rain. Why does the ogre suddenly start praying? Originally, several people, including an old man, appeared on stage to warn the ogre and ask for their prayers. However, due to lack of staff and the trend of the times, that part was cut off about 120 years ago.

Finally, the ogre goes on a rampage again and the festival ends.



# Mount Koya

Nearby is one of Japan's major religious centers, Koyasan 高野山, which was founded in the 10th century and has 19 important buildings. A ropeway takes you up to the town. There is a school and a bus service. Numerous temples line the streets, and at the far end is the largest sacred site, the Oku-no-in 奥の院. Even now, the monks who gather here make daily offerings to Kukai 空海, the founder of the temple, as if he were still alive. As you walk through the dense trees, you will feel as if your daily worries will disappear.



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# Iga Ueno Tenjin Festival



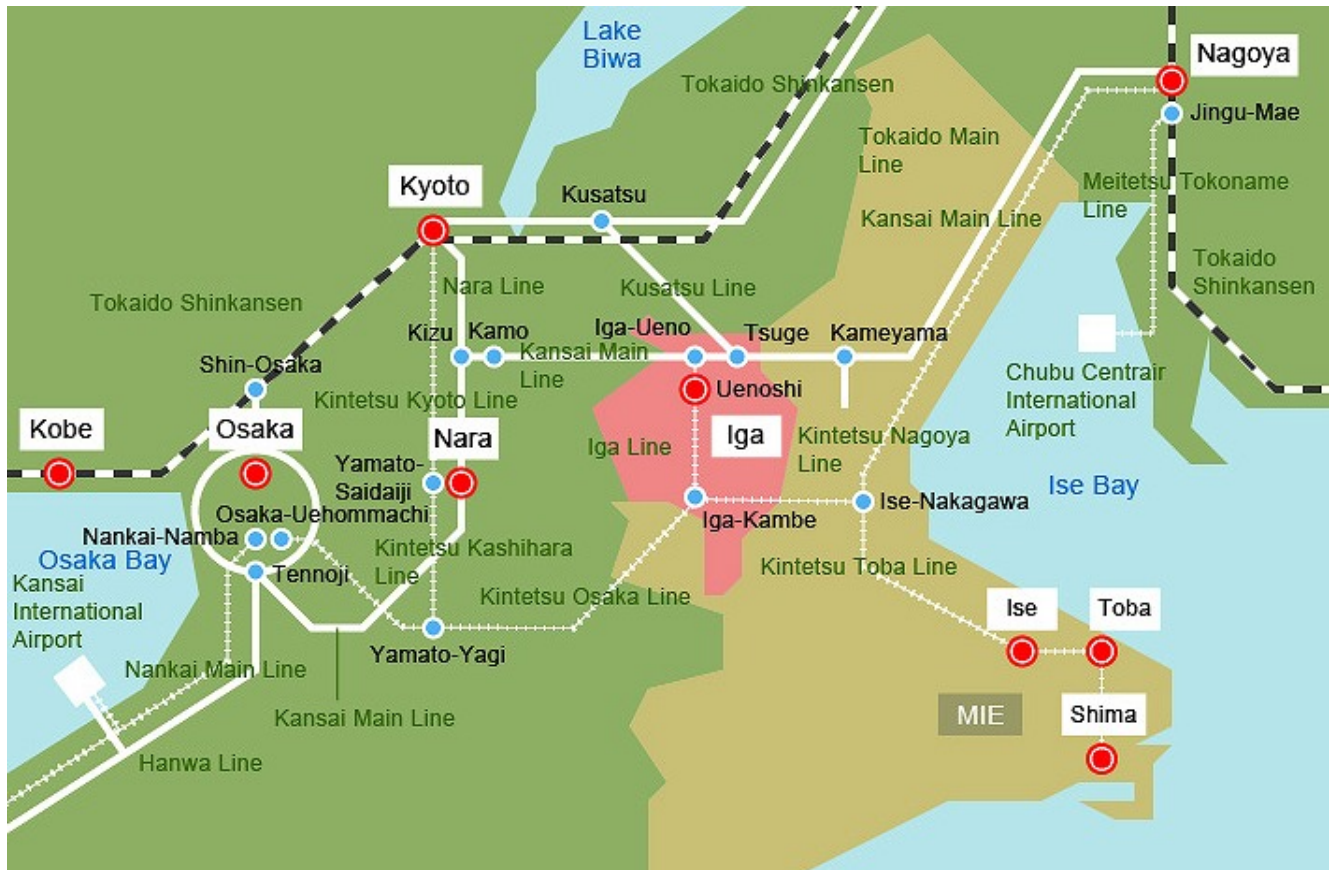


<https://igakanko.net/?p=173>



wide area map



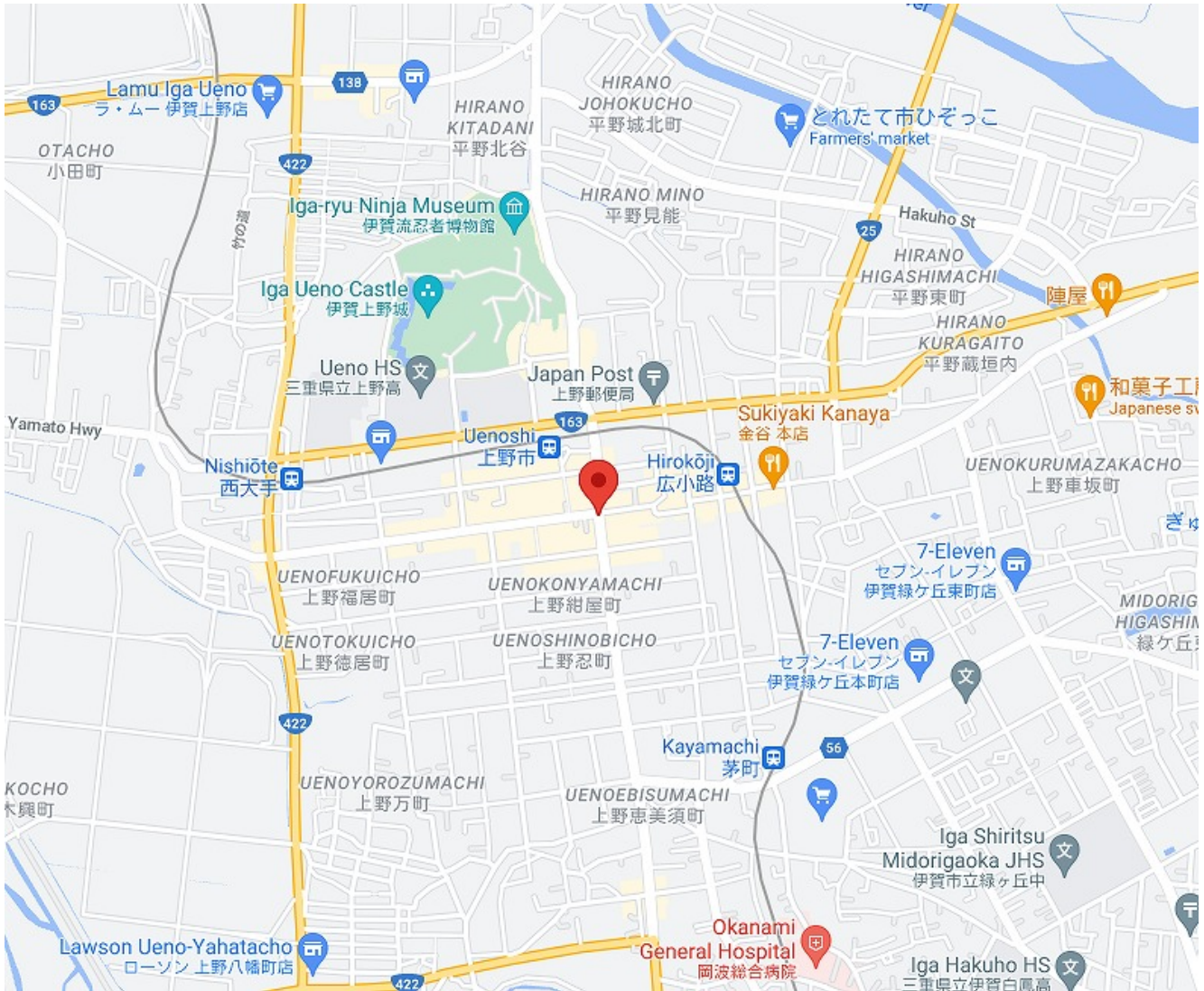


## transportation

**Date:** the Friday through Sunday closest to the 25th of October

**Location:** Iga Ueno city, Mie prefecture

**Access:** From Osaka or Kyoto, take Kintetsu or JR to Iga. Take the Kintetsu or JR train from Osaka or Kyoto to Iga, then change to the Iga Line to Iga-Ueno. It takes about two and a half hours. There are also direct buses from Tokyo, Nagoya and Osaka.



area map



route



# Outline

Recently, “ninjas” have become overwhelmingly popular among visitors to Japan. The “Iga Ueno Tenjin Festival” is held every autumn in this ninja village. In this festival, floats called “danjiri” and masked parades proceed through the town. The festival is held for the Ueno Tenjin Shrine. It has a long history, although there is a record that the festival was revived in 1660, it is not clear what happened before that. In the past, the people of the town performed Noh, Kyogen and other entertainments, which were watched by the lords from the castle. It was not until 1802 that the castle took on its present form. Today, there are nine floats (danjiri) and a procession of ogres (Oni) parading through the town.

## Schedule



**Danjiri through the town**

[https://www.kankomie.or.jp/event/detail\\_5285.html](https://www.kankomie.or.jp/event/detail_5285.html)



### night scene

<https://www.asoview.com/spot/24206ba2210131709/>

All events begin at the shrine during September. People determine the order of the Danjiri.

On **Friday**, people pull out and decorate the Danjiri in each town, and at night turn on the lights and begin to play the music, heightening the festive atmosphere.

On **Saturday**, a procession of ogres takes place from 2:00 to 4:00 in the afternoon. The Danjiri floats start at 1:00 pm and cruise around the town until 4:00 pm. They return to the shrine, the four units are in series, except that they proceed separately from west to east.

On Sunday, the festival takes place in the morning and afternoon, with the oni (ogres) parade, followed by the danjiri parade, cruising through the town all day long.

## Ogres procession





<https://www.ueno-tenjin-matsuri.com/>



<https://www.igaueno.net/?p=1224>

We cannot leave out the Oni parade. It is these demons that distinguish this festival from others and make it special. In all, about 100 demons walk. Sometimes the children don't wear

masks, but most use masks of some sort. There are many different types of masks, including traditional Noh and Kyogen masks as well as many unique masks. The procession is divided into two parts. The first is the part centered on the En no gyoja 延吉. The other part is centered on Minamoto no Tametomo 源朝朝. 源朝朝.

## En no gyoja group

En no gyoja, whose real name is En no Ozunu 延吉, is a real person, active in the latter half of the 7th century, and is considered to be the founder of today's Shugendo (Japanese mountain asceticism incorporating Shinto and Buddhist concept). However, he is too much of a legend to be a mysterious figure. To begin with, even in the actual history books authorized by the country, there are descriptions of him using demons as his minions. Once upon a time, the first lord of this area suffered from eye disease in his later years. It is said to be a memorial to the time when shugenja (mountain ascetics) went to the holy land of Shugendo to pray for his recovery.







<https://igakanko.net/?p=426>

And the most famous of all are the “hyorotsuki oni (their legs are wobbly)”. They carry large objects on their backs and move left and right. Children will be amazed and adults will laugh. They are also meant to keep the spectators in line at the edge of the street.



<https://igakanko.net/?p=426>



<http://www.tougeizanmai.com/tabitetyou/016/17tenjinmaturi.htm>







<http://www.tougeizanmai.com/tabitetyou/016/17tenjinmaturi.htm>

## Minamoto Tametomo group



Minamoto no Tametomo 源朝満

<https://www.ueno-tenjin-matsuri.com/>

The Tametomo Group is a procession led by Minamoto Tametomo.

In the past, the samurai were largely divided into the Taira 平 and Minamoto 源 clans. Minamoto no Yoritomo 源頼朝 was the one who later opened the first samurai government. His uncle was Tametomo. He is also a man of many legends, and is said to have confronted the demons that appeared to him with impunity.



<https://igakanko.net/?p=173>



<https://www.ueno-tenjin-matsuri.com/>

## Ending

Iga-Ueno is an old castle town. Just walking around the town has its own charm. There is also a ninja museum nearby, where you can watch ninja shows. Whether before or after the festival, it is a good idea to experience the ninja.





**Iga Ueno castle**

<https://www.igaueno.net/?p=89>



<https://retro.useless-landscape.com/archives/10629>



<https://www.iganinja.jp/>





cf. <https://www.ueno-tenjin-matsuri.com/lang/en/> about  
festival official sight  
<https://igakanko.net/?p=173>  
[https://www.iganinja.jp/?page\\_id=837](https://www.iganinja.jp/?page_id=837) about Ninja Museum

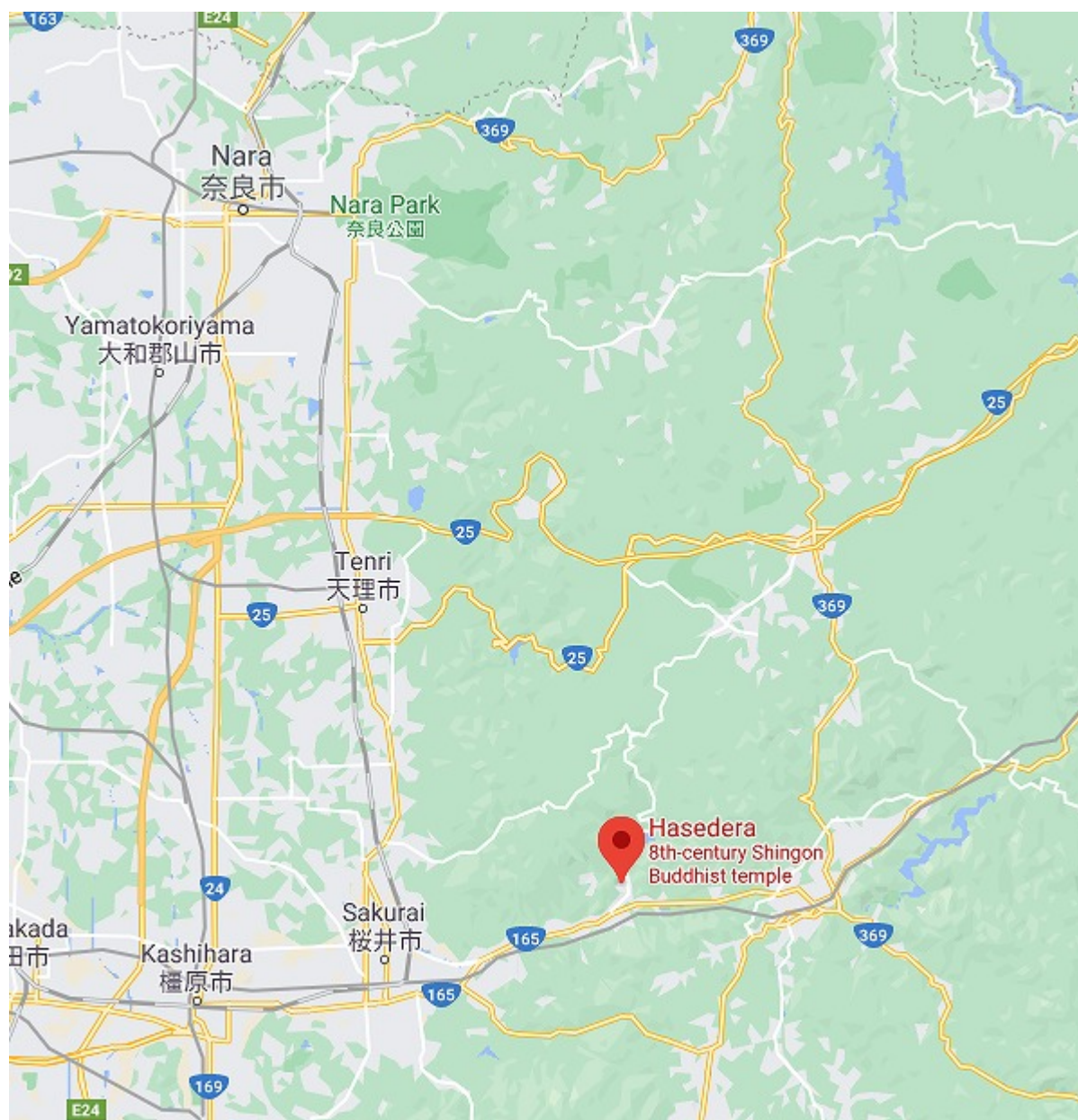
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# Dadaoshi at the Hasedera temple

**Date:** February 14th, every year

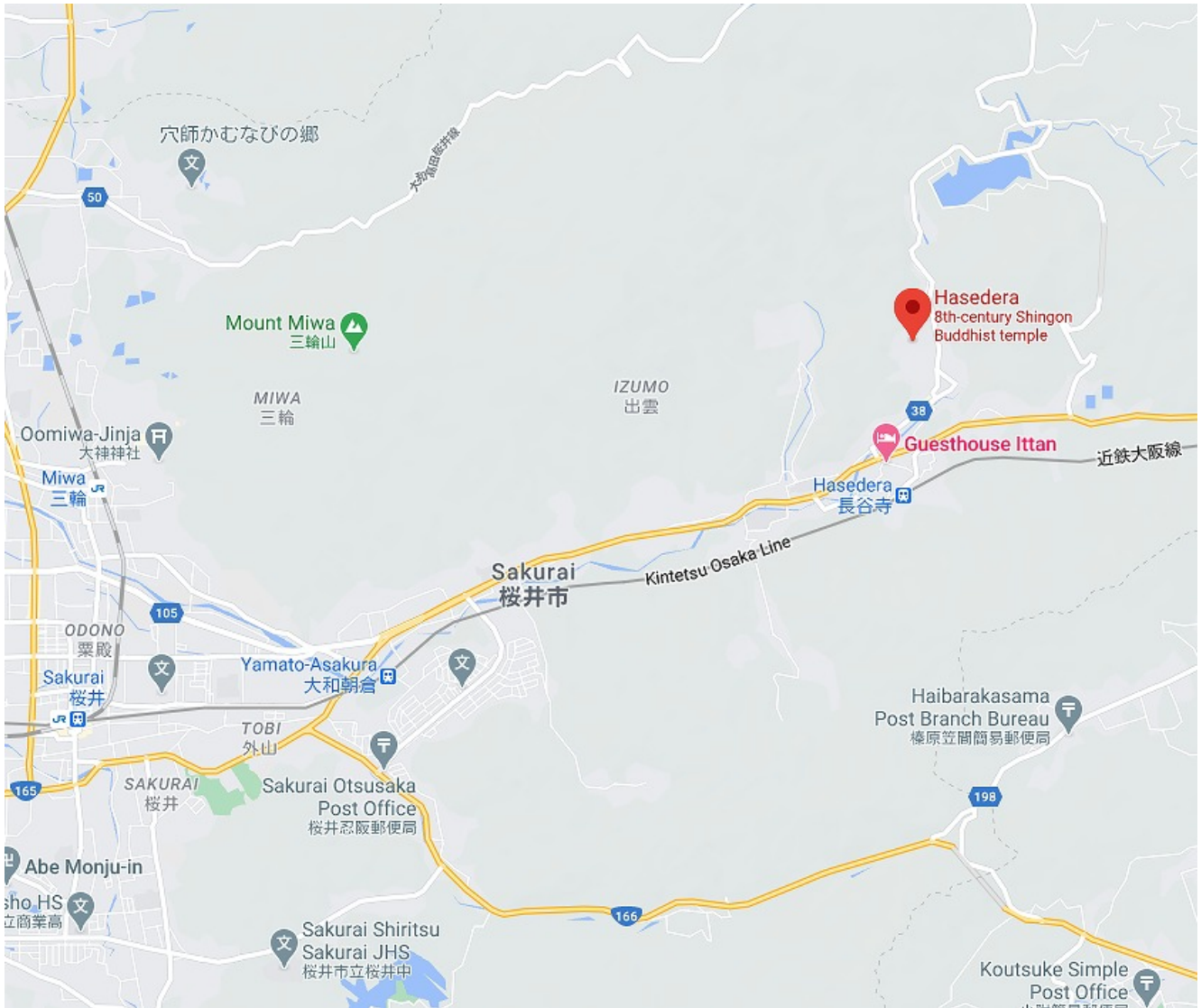
**Location:** Hatsuse 731-1, Sakurai city, Nara prefecture

**Access:** A 15-minute walk from Kintetsu Hasedera Station. Or take the JR Manyo Mahoroba Line to Sakurai Station. From there, take the Nara Kotsu bus to Hasedera Sando-guchi. It is a 10-minute walk from the bus stop.



from Nara





## around Sakurai city

Hasedera temple is located in a slightly out-of-the-way place in Nara. The temple was founded in 686. It is a very old temple. There are many temples and shrines like this in Nara. Todaiji temple, famous for the Great Buddha, was built in 741, so it is older than that. If Todaiji Temple is famous for the Great Buddha, Hasedera temple is famous for the Kannon (Goddess of Mercy), which is said to have been created in 727, but was destroyed by fire several times, and the current statue was rebuilt in 1538.



<https://www.hasedera.or.jp/free/?id=531>

Dadaoshi" is the final stage of the annual event, called "Shunie 神無" held at this temple in February to drive out demons.





<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/0mizutori>

Shuni-e is a Buddhist ritual that began in the Nara period (710-794), where people repent before the Buddha for the sins they have committed during the year without knowing. It is held in various places, but the most famous one is at Todaiji Temple. The ceremony, commonly called “Omizutori,” is held for two weeks from the first day of March, the most famous being the 13th. The most famous ceremony is held on the 13th, which usually lasts about 10 minutes, but lasts 45 minutes on this day. Because of the large number of spectators, admission is sometimes restricted. I won’t go into detail about it here, so please confer another site.

Cf.→<https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e4110.html>

Now, even though it’s not that big, the most famous one is “Dadaoshi”.

The Shuni-e at this temple started about a week ago, and the last day will be on the 14th. Around 3:00 p.m., monks bring the seven treasures in the main hall and the ceremony begins.

The monks run around the hall and so on. This does not mean they are being idle, nor are they pressed for time. This ritual is supposed to take place in the virtual world of the Buddha, called "tosotsuten," where things move hundreds of times faster than in the human world, so they are trying to catch up as much as possible. After four o'clock in the afternoon, the last treasure, called "Gofuda," is taken out. This is the most powerful talisman that the founder of the temple received from Enma, the king of hell, a long time ago. When it appears, the demons (ogres), who have finally lost their patience, come running out.



<https://www.hasedera.or.jp/free/?id=531>





<https://omatsurijapan.com/blog/dadaoshi/>

There are a total of three types of ogre masks. The blue and green masks are relatively recent, but only the red mask was made in the Edo period. The red mask is different from the other masks in terms of power. The red mask represents this event, so it is often seen on the posters. It is not only different in size, but also in carving technique and outstanding expressiveness.

Then, the Buddhist monk presses something called a “danda-in” on the forehead of the attendant. At this point, the demons, unable to take it anymore, run out toward the cloister. This Danda stamp is said to be the origin of the word “Dadaoshi.



<http://xn--54qt8q919aucg.jp/dadaoshi/>



<http://nara-tabikura.jp/960/>

The most powerful part is the big torch that follows behind



the ogres. A large torch is said to weigh more than 150 kg, and it takes four people to carry it. As a result, the torches swing left and right, and fire sparks fall on the audience each time. It is said that being exposed to these fire sparks will keep people healthy, but it is necessary to be very careful about how you dress. So, a firefighter sprinkles water right behind torches and chases after them. These can be viewed outside the hall, on the cloister side, for an entrance fee only, or you can watch the ceremony inside the hall by applying for a paid Goufuda.



<https://www.nara-np.co.jp/news/20210216093755.html>

And finally, the red ogre, the last boss, comes out. The people playing the role of the demons are said to have drunk sake to cheer themselves up before appearing on stage, so they wander around the corridors, scaring people.

The rhapsody lasts about 15 minutes. By 5:00 p.m., it was all over. After that, everything goes back to normal in an instant. People take the burnt-out torches home as a souvenir. When this ceremony is over, spring will soon arrive in the area.



<https://twitter.com/kotonomaakari/status/1360818739910909956>





<https://omatsurijapan.com/blog/dadaoshi/>

Surprisingly, this main hall is actually a national treasure. Hase Temple is also dotted with various other facilities such as a five-story pagoda, and it is also a temple of flowers where seasonal flowers bloom all year round. The long staircase leading to the main hall is the most beautiful part of the temple. It's worth taking a short walk to see. A different kind of Nara. A different kind of Japan. That's what you'll find here.







<https://www.youkamiuryu.com/blog/dadaoshi-2019-2-14>

**prefer:** <https://www.hasedera.or.jp/free/?id=345> official site

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## Report: Manbu oneri~The Luxurious World of Buddha at Dai nenbutu ji-temple

**Date:** 1~5th, May, every year

**Location:** Uemachi 1-7-26, Hirano district, Osaka city, Osaka prefecture

**Access:** Take the Midosuji subway line from Shin-Osaka or the JR Loop Line from Osaka to Tennoji. From there, take the subway Tanimachi Line or the JR Yamato Line to Hirano. It takes about 5 to 8 minutes to walk from each station.

## **Introduction~ In Japan, if ogres dance, so will Buddha**

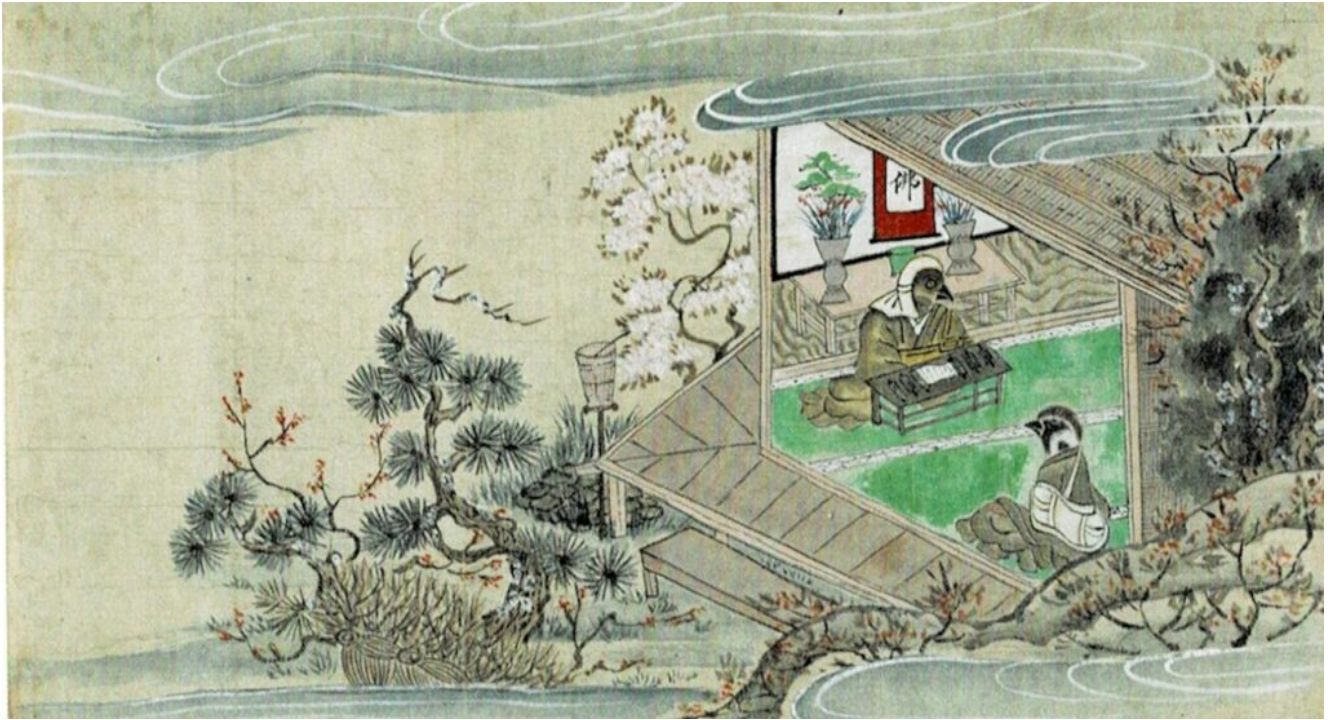
□In Japan, when ogres dance, Buddhas also dance. Although fewer in number than the ogres, there are also events in which Buddha appears.

The most representative of these is the “25 Bodhisattva Parade”. From the middle of the Heian period (794-1185), the belief in the Pure Land began to flourish. It was believed that the period of 10,000 years after the death of the Buddha was the “the Latter Days of the Law” and that the Buddha’s way of life would be disturbed. As a result, people began to yearn for the afterlife. The Pure Land teachings taught that if people recited the Nembutsu diligently, they could go to paradise. This is the Pure Land faith. And just before death, the “25 bodhisattvas” come to greet us with the Buddha. The “25 Bodhisattvas Parade” is an attempt to recreate that scene.

## **Interesting Japanese paintings reappear**

By the way, this site has previously introduced a strange painting called “*Choju Giga*” (Caricatures of Birds and Animals), and there are many other wondrous paintings that seem to be the genealogical descendants of this. Now, in such a world of wonder, we may be able to see something like the following scenes. So, let’s go and see the world of Buddha with the characters in those scenes (the sparrows in the wondrous paintings).





**Sparrow Kotota:** Mr. Owl, I heard that "Manbu Oneri" is held in Osaka, so I'm thinking of going there for a while."

**Mr.Owl:** That's a good point. Faith will save you.



**Sparrow Kotota:** Oh, that must be Dai Nenbutsuji-temple.

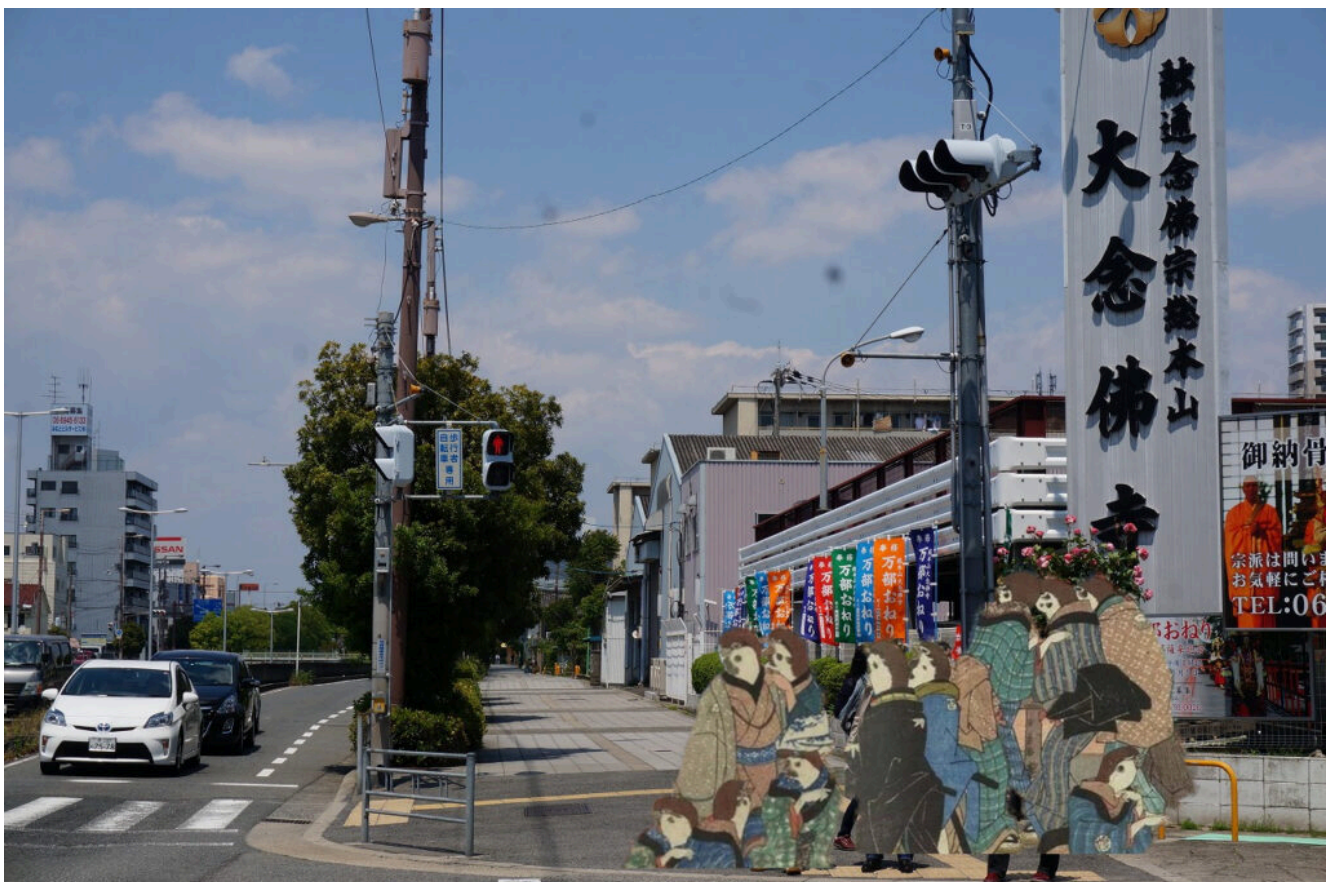
**Source:** "*Suzume-no Kotota* (sparrow Kotota's story) 〇〇〇〇〇〇"  
(16C) cf:

<https://www.suntory.co.jp/sma/collection/data/detail?id=635>





actual scene around the temple





## Dai-nenbutsuji-temple 大念仏寺

□The end of April and the first half of May in Japan is known as “Golden Week” because of the concentration of holidays, and people move around a lot. Seasonally, it is the transition from spring to summer, with good weather and the mildest climate. After this time, the rainy season arrives a month later. After mid-July, the summer season begins. Therefore, there are many events and activities. But it’s not all good. Unfortunately, the cost of transportation and accommodation goes up.

The procession of the Dainenbutsuji Temple will be held during this period. The temple was founded about 900 years ago, but it is said that the hall was built in its current location about 400 years ago. However, the procession itself is said to have been held about 700 years ago.



a sub gate



the main gate



the precinct of the temple





Because of its long history, the precincts are large. A vermilion-lacquered corridor circled around the main hall. This is where the Bodhisattvas go around. Inside, food stalls lined the streets, adding color to the festivities.

It's been less than an hour. I think I came a little too early. Oh, there are people gathering around the main hall. Let's take a look there.

The sky is clear in May. It's a bit windys, though.

**How crowded is this event?**





the corridor



the entrance of the main hall



Excuse me, I'd like to stay here for a moment.



**hurly-burly**

Please, come in. Sit down. It's free.



There are quite a few people here.

The festival lasts for five days, so it won't be too crowded.  
Take your time for a while.

## **Oneri (Procession)~The Buddhas Walking**

It's almost one o'clock. Oh, the music is starting to play.

It's the gagaku. It is one of the oldest musical forms left in Japan.







You don't have to lean over so much, it's still okay. At first



it's just the monks and parishioners walking by.

It takes about five minutes per lap.

It's 2:00. It's about to start. Here comes the first Bodhisattva







Fast. Much faster than before. It is so fast that I don't have time to listen to the explanation, isn't it?





There are twenty-five bodhisattvas, so I guess they would have



to do this in order to make it in time.

But this parade is the main event.

That's it. There are such circumstances in the world of grown-ups, aren't there? It's complicated, right?



















In this way, I guess the faces of the Bodhisattvas are all the same, just with different possessions.

There doesn't seem to be a broad scope of imagination when it comes to thinking about Buddhas and angels and other sacred things, does there?

































Finally, the monks came out again.

That's the end of the Bodhisattva procession, that was about half an hour.

Everyone is getting ready to leave.

If you have time, you can take a peek inside the main hall a little more. You can see the paradise.

Is that all right? I wouldn't mind to peek in.

I doubt we'll be able to get inside, but you can at least peek through the door. It's a wide entrance.

Thank you very much.

## **Paradise inside the main hall**

Kotota went to the door of the main hall as the former guest had told him earlier, and a number of people were peeking in. Inside, devotees are sitting and watching the ceremony. In the space where very beautiful and graceful music is echoing, he can see all the Bodhisattvas from earlier.





Here emerged a scene of the Buddhist paradise that the people long ago had imagined.







It seems that the Bodhisattvas are receiving something and carrying it over there, handing it back and forth...









It was already three o'clock. I've come in contact with Buddha today. I gained some good deeds and karma. Let's have a look around Osaka and go back home. Or I'm not sure yet, should I go to Kyoto or Nara? Oh right. I'll have to buy a souvenir for Owl.

In this way, Kotota went home satisfied. Happily ever after.

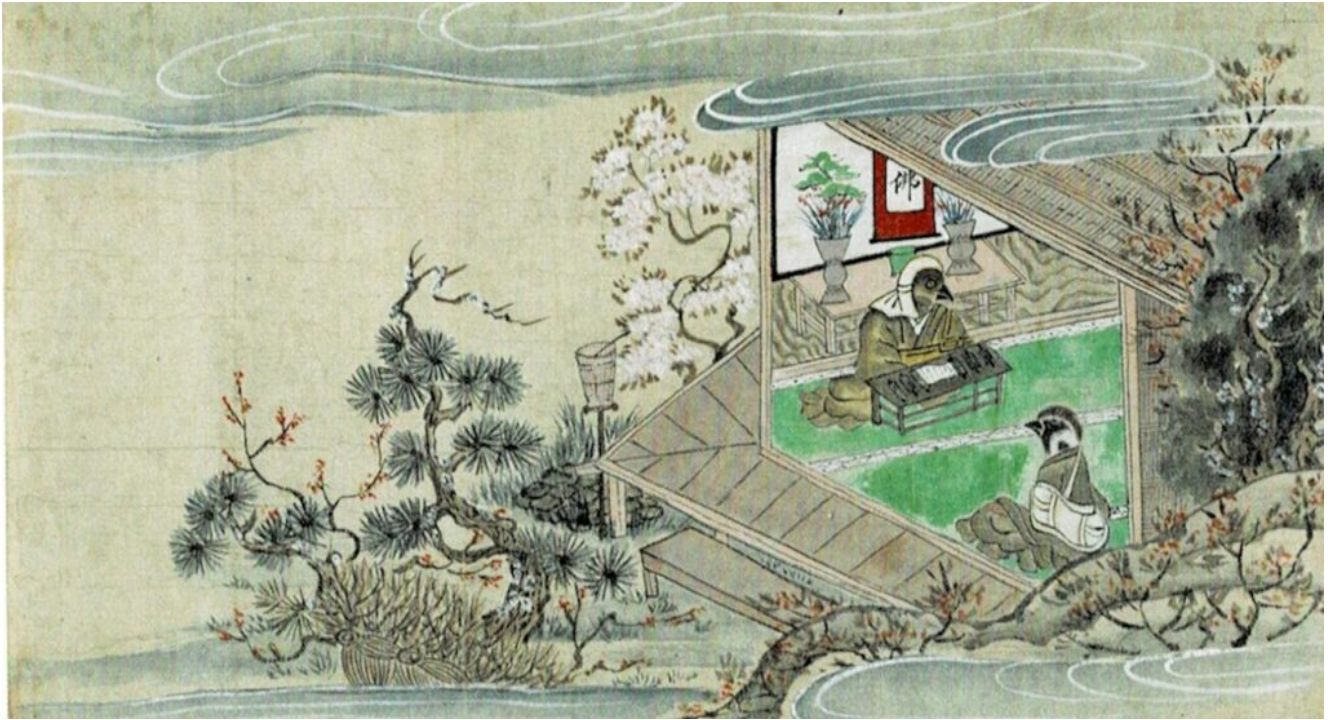
## □Reference

Dai-nenbutsuji-temple <https://www.dainenbutsuji.com/oneri/>

You can travel from Osaka to Kyoto and Nara within one hour by train. <https://matcha-jp.com/en/1918>

Paintings **source:**





**"Suzume-no Kotota (sparrow Kotota story) 鶯小太夫" (16C)**  
<https://www.suntory.co.jp/sma/collection/data/detail?id=635>

A picture scroll of the story of Sparrow Kotota, where he lost his child and became sad, but various birds gave him comfort, and finally he became a priest.





**"Suzume no shogakai 雀の将棋"** by **Kawanabe Kyosai 河内清酒** (1831~1889)  
<https://tokyo.digi-joho.com/attractions/arts-culture/7-kawanabe-kyosai-museum.html>



**"Satosuzume negurano kariyado 雀の将棋の部屋"** by **Utagawa Kuniyoshi 歌川国芳** (1798~1861)  
[https://www.fujibi.or.jp/en/our-collection/profile-of-works.html?work\\_id=9737](https://www.fujibi.or.jp/en/our-collection/profile-of-works.html?work_id=9737)  
<https://otakinen-museum.note.jp/n/na972c0728883>



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# Report: Shall we watch a sketch comedy in Kyoto?

## ~Senbon Enma-do Dai Nenbutsu Kyogen

□This time, we will go to Kyoto. One of the most popular cities in Japan. The No.1 sightseeing place that most tourists from other countries want to go to. I guess Kyoto is a kind of symbol of old traditional Japan. There are many tourist spots, temples, shrines, castles and old streets. Today we'll talk about another special sight. This sight introduces traditional folk performing arts with masked characters.

□There are three sketch comedies with masked characters, named "Nenbutsu Kyogen". "Mibu Kyogen", "Saga Nebutsu Kyogen" and "Senbon Enma-do Nenbutsu Kyogen". "Kyogen" is performed in the intermission of Noh performances. In contrast to Noh, they tend to be comedic. It means just a play, too. And "Nenbutsu" is a Buddhist invocation. So, "Nenbutsu Kyogen" is a play in which stories are based on the daily lives of average people to propagate Buddhism. Two of these, "Mibu Kyogen" and "Saga Kyogen" are pantomime, but only "Senbon Enma-do Kyogen" has dialogue.

### \*Reference

□Mibu Kyogen

**Date:** 3rd February, 29th April~5th May, 3 days around 10th October

**Location:** Mibudera-temple

refer→<https://www.discoverkyoto.com/event-calendar/may/mibu-kyogen-mibu-dera/> discover Kyoto

## **Saga nenbutsu Kyogen** 〇〇〇〇〇〇〇

**Date:** 1st Sunday & 2nd Saturday & Sunday April, The Sunday nearest 26th October

**Location:** Seiryoji-temple

refer→<http://www.greentour-kyoto.net/events/saga-kyogen/> green tour Kyoto

## **Senbon Enma-do Kyogen** 〇〇〇〇〇〇〇〇

**Date:** 3rd February & 1st~4th May

**Location:** Senbon Enma-do (another name, Injoji-temple)

refer→<https://kansaifinder.com/event/senbon-enma-do-nenbutsu-kyogen/> Kansai Finder

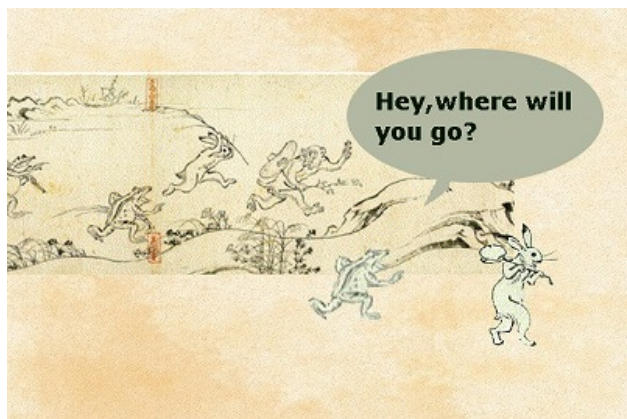
## **First, let to introduce today's guide**

Now, I'll call today's guides. They are the most popular characters in Japanese National artwork treasures.



**a part of National treasure “Chojyu-jinbutsu-giga”**

They seem to have come.



Hi, I'm a rabbit.

And I'm a frog. But, why have we come here today?

To guide “Senbon Enma-do kyogen”.



Why?

Because we are born in Kyoto. Oh, we should introduce ourselves before we guide people. We are characters appearing in “Choju-jinbutsu-giga”. “Choju” means birds and animals. “Jinbutsu” means people. And “Giga” means “caricature” in Japanese. It has nothing to do with the capacity of a hard disk, “gigabyte”.

I didn't know that at all.

Didn't you know even though you are the important character? Oh, well. Anyway I'll teach you, listen to me carefully. This is a picture roll which was painted only Sumi (Chinese calligraphy ink) without colors. It is said that this roll was painted about 800 years ago and the painter was Toba-sojo”. But that hasn't been investigated in detail. The contents are caricatures. Especially, in the first volume, many animals are active like humans. People say this is the beginning of Japanese cartoons (Manga). So, this roll is the most popular in Japanese National art treasures. The Kozanji-temple in Kyoto stores it. So, we know most about Kyoto's history from 800 years ago. Now, let's go to Senbon Enma-do.

**□□Now, let's go to the venue**

\*This article is written based on writer's experience at 4th, May, in 2018 and a booklet.



the **Kamo river**



the **center of Kyoto city**

There is the Kamo river. It always makes me feel good.

The center of the city is always crowded lately. Especially this week (from the end of April to the first of May) has consecutive holidays in Japan. There are many Japanese in addition many tourists from other countries. Hurry up. I can't stand here.

Won't you go to any sightseeing places? Kinkakuji-temple, Kiyomizu-temple, or Fushimi Inari shrine.

Where have you been? Are you a tourist? We have lived in this city for 800 years.



I think this is some nice occasion....



the entrance of the temple



the venue

This is the Injoji-temple, and another name is Senbon Enma-do.

What are we going to do? We have no money.

Don't worry. It's free.

Free? Sounds good. A little boy and a little girl are walking around people. What are they doing?

They are selling a description booklet for \ 500 (as of 2018).

I want one.

I'll buy you one.

Oh, why do you have money? Why did you pay ¥1,000?

The reason why I paid more than ¥500 is to make a donation. I want to support them. Oh, it's six pm. The first program will begin tonight.

This booklet has a description in English, too.

## “Dojoji-temple”



I am a monk of this temple. I shall hold a memorial service with a bell. So, I tell my apprentice monks to carry a bell



here. Ichiro-bo and Dabutsu-bo, come here. Are you here?

Here we are.

Here we are. This bell is too heavy.

I'm pleased that you came so quickly. I have not held a memorial service with a bell for long time. So, I want to hold the ceremony. Then, there is something important I have to tell you. Women can't come here. Do you understand?

Yes, my master.



**Dabutsu-bo**



**Ichiro-bo**

Why did the master tell us that we must never invite any

women?

I don't know. But we must be obedient to my master.



**silence**



**Shirabyoshi (dancer)**

Is anyone home?





Hey, Dabutsu-bo, get up. This is no time for sleeping. There is someone behind the door. Go check quickly.

Who will come at such a time? May I ask your name?

Sorry for contacting you at this late hour. I am a shirabyoshi dancer and I live near. I have heard a memorial service with a bell. I was wondering if it would be possible for you to dance for a bell?



Oh, what should I do? Hey, dear Ichiro-bo.

You are noisy. What happened?

There is a shiradofu at the door!

Shiradoufu? What?

Do you happen to know shiradofu? It's a dancer.

Stupid. If you said that, it would be a shrabyoshi.

Oh, my mistake. That is shirabyoshi. She is there.

No. We can't invite any women.

But have you met a living Amida?\*( like an angel in a sense)



Mmm...If you insist. It would be fine if dancing was all, but we have to return her as soon as possible after dancing.



**She began to dance**



**and beautiful sounds**





Oh, my gosh! What happened?

Oh, no. The bell has fallen down. Where has she gone? We have a situation! Go for Shisho-bo.







I thought so. The reason why I told you not to invite any women is that this bell is cursed by an ogre. Probably, The woman is an incarnation of an ogre. I shall break the spell.



Wow! An ogre really has appeared.

Help me Buddha!

An ogre! Drive it away!



Oh, no! An ogre has come here. Help me!





Help me!

Go away! Namu, Buddha.

Please Buddha! Namu Buddha! Namu ami dabutsu...

I won't let you go. Yarumaizo! Yarumaizo!

**“Botan-jishi” (Peony Lion)**



I am a Daimyo (Lord) living around here. Recently, I am in trouble because a Shishi (Chinese lion) has damaged the peonies in my garden. So, I will call my retainer, Taro-kaja and make him crush the Shishi. Are you here?

I am here.

I'm pleased that you came so quickly. Look at this garden.

How beautiful the peonies are.

Yes. But a Shishi came here and damaged the peonies. Catch the lion.

Yes, my lord.





This is difficult. I have to be patient.



It is stronger than I thought.





Yes. I'll try to catch the lion with this device. Oh, it is stronger than I thought. I'm no match for a Shishi.





Well, I wonder what am I going to do now? OK, I'll try to imitate the Shishi.





I wonder if he can catch the Shishi. How did it go, Taro-kaja?  
What are you doing? Why are you imitating the Shishi? Oh, no!  
Stop, this is me!

I won't let you go. Yarumaizo! Yarumaizo!

## Intermission



It has gotten quite dark. It still gets chilly at night  
although it is May.

How about the play?

Although the characters say lines, it is easy to get the basic  
idea. It is the same as a pantomime. But what does "Yarumaizo"  
mean?

This words mean “I won’t let you go” or “Anyone can catch him.”. It is set phrase in a Kyogen play.

## “Kanzaki watashi” (Kanzaki river ferry)



I am a tea house owner living around here. Would you like a cup of tea?

I would like to have a cup of tea. Anyway, is this the right way to go to Sakai?

Yes. You should take a boat on the Kanzaki river just ahead.



I have little money. How can I escape from here?



Hey! Where will you go? Wait! Yarumaizo!

I'm sorry. Please forgive me...

Do you have enough money? How will you cross the river?

I will walk around or swim across the river.

No. That river is not easy to swim across and it is very deep.  
OK. I'll teach you how to ride on the boat for free. The boatman loves cleverness and Waka (Japanese poems). So, you may say to the boatman that so and so....OK?



That's good to know. Huh? Oh no! I have forgotten the words.  
Things will work out. Hey, may I ride on the boat please.

I can't give a ride to such a poor monk.

I am with 3,000 people. Let's go! Thank you.

Are you alone? Where are the rest of the 3,000 people?

I told you that I am with 3,000 people, it means I'll pay for  
3,000 people. Right?

I see. All right.

Then, Mr. boatman. What do I see over there?

Ah, those are the human bones of people who didn't pay for the



boat ride.

I got myself into a mess...

What will happen to the little monk?

It's going to be a surprise. Please watch and see for yourself. The next program is the last.

## “Sennin-giri” (Saving a Thousand souls)



The last program is the conclusion. This is the end of this four day program.

□□Well, let's start getting ready

## to go home

It was interesting. It's already half past eight. Shall we stay in the city?

No. Don't you know how much it costs to stay in a hotel in Kyoto city this week? The capsule hotel usually costs about \ 3,000, but it costs over \ 7,000 this week.

What is a capsule hotel?

It is a kind of the lodging facility. It called a capsule hotel because the rooms are very small like capsules. Usually 2 capsule bed are loaded vertically and many of them are placed in a row. Only curtains or blinds separate the rooms from the corridor. It's a simple hotel just for sleeping.

I didn't know. Where do guests put their bags?

In the corridor in front of their bed.

Aren't their bags stolen?

No. If you worry about this, you should not stay there. Bedclothes, a light, alarm clock and radio are supplied in each capsule and the shower room is in another place, too. Anyway, if possible, I recommend you should stay in Nara city. Nara is within one hour by train from Kyoto, the accommodation cost doesn't change even in this week.

Nara! Sounds good. It's an older city than Kyoto. I want to go to Nara.

You're stupid. We live quite near. Let's go home quickly.

I think this is some nice occasion....Arrogant. Just you wait.





a part of “Chojyu-Jinbutsu-Giga”

Two guys!

We’re looking forward to you being our guide again if we have a chance. See you next time, bye!

☐☐\*Refer

### Kozanji-temple

You can see the scroll “Choju-Jinbutsu-giga” (Unfortunately, it is a replica, though. The original is stored in Tokyo and the Kyoto National museum.) and you can get many copies of these paintings. And, this temple is famous for its beautiful autumn leaves.

**Access:** It takes about 50 minutes from the center of Kyoto by bus, and 15 minutes on foot from the bus stop.

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# Report: ~ceremony to drive out evil sprits in Nara~In the case of Kofukuji-temple

# and Horyuji-temple Part 2

□□□Horyuji-temple 's case

## 2. Horyuji-temple's case

### Introduction

□Horyuji-temple is in a slightly remote place from the center of Nara. The nearest station is “Horyuji station” (JR line). It takes about 10 minutes from Nara by train. From Osaka, it takes about one hour. But, unfortunately, this station is far away from the temple (about 1.5 kilometers. It takes eight minutes by bus, over 20 minutes on foot), besides, the bus does not run after about 5 pm. The event begins at 7:30 pm every year. If you want to watch only this event, you should use the next station “Ouji” and you should take a bus.



Horyuji station





### **around the temple**

□In this season, when it passes 5:00 pm, the sun goes down. When you arrive at this temple, you will stand in deep darkness without many people. There are several Buddhist monasteries and long wall.

□When I arrived there past 6:30, I saw that scene. I felt lonely, I thought I had better return. Because I guessed that probably the ceremony would not to be performed for some reason that day. When I decided to return, I saw that several people came there. They seemed a family. So, I turned back and walked little and then several more people came in sight. They seemed to be waiting for somebody. It seemed there was a misunderstanding. This temple looked very quiet. The state was greatly different from Kofukuji-temple. I presumed the reason there was no ceremony. Of course, nobody got gifts. Perhaps this temple in a remote place. I didn't know whether this was right or not.





# Ogres and Bishamonten come out

□The event was held in front of “Seien-do hall □□□”. This hall is on the left side of the main hall and Five Storeyed Pagoda.  
□After 7:00, it was not crowded. A fence was built surrounding the hall, people had been waiting in front of it. Just before it start, people finally gathered. There were fewer it than I expected. At 7:30 pm, it started.





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## **Bishamonten**

□Three ogres and Bishamonten got on the stage. This style was the same as Kofukuji-temple's. A defferent is that the ogres and Bishamonten did not fight each other. Basically, nothing much happened. Ogres came out one by one from the right side of the hall and took torches. An ogre swung the torch and it powerfully to the fence. He did this three times. The next ogre did the same action.







□After the third ogre, Bishamonten came on a stage, he stuck a

long sword out powerfully severl times, shouting "Yah, Yah, Yah". This action meant throw out evil spirits. They went around 3 times.









□When the sparks spread, people cheered. Sometimes, a torch flew over the fence. However, generally it was silent without the voices of cheering and Bishamonten. No announce, no commentary, no noise. There was only some cheering and the sound of fire sparking.

□Before 8:00, the event was over. As soon as the ogres and Bishamonten left, several fireman got on stage.







□When I turned back on my way to the gate, only the Five



Storeyed Pagoda soared high in the soundless night like an illusion.