

Gojinjo Daiko



Date: 31st, July and 1st, August (Nafune festival)

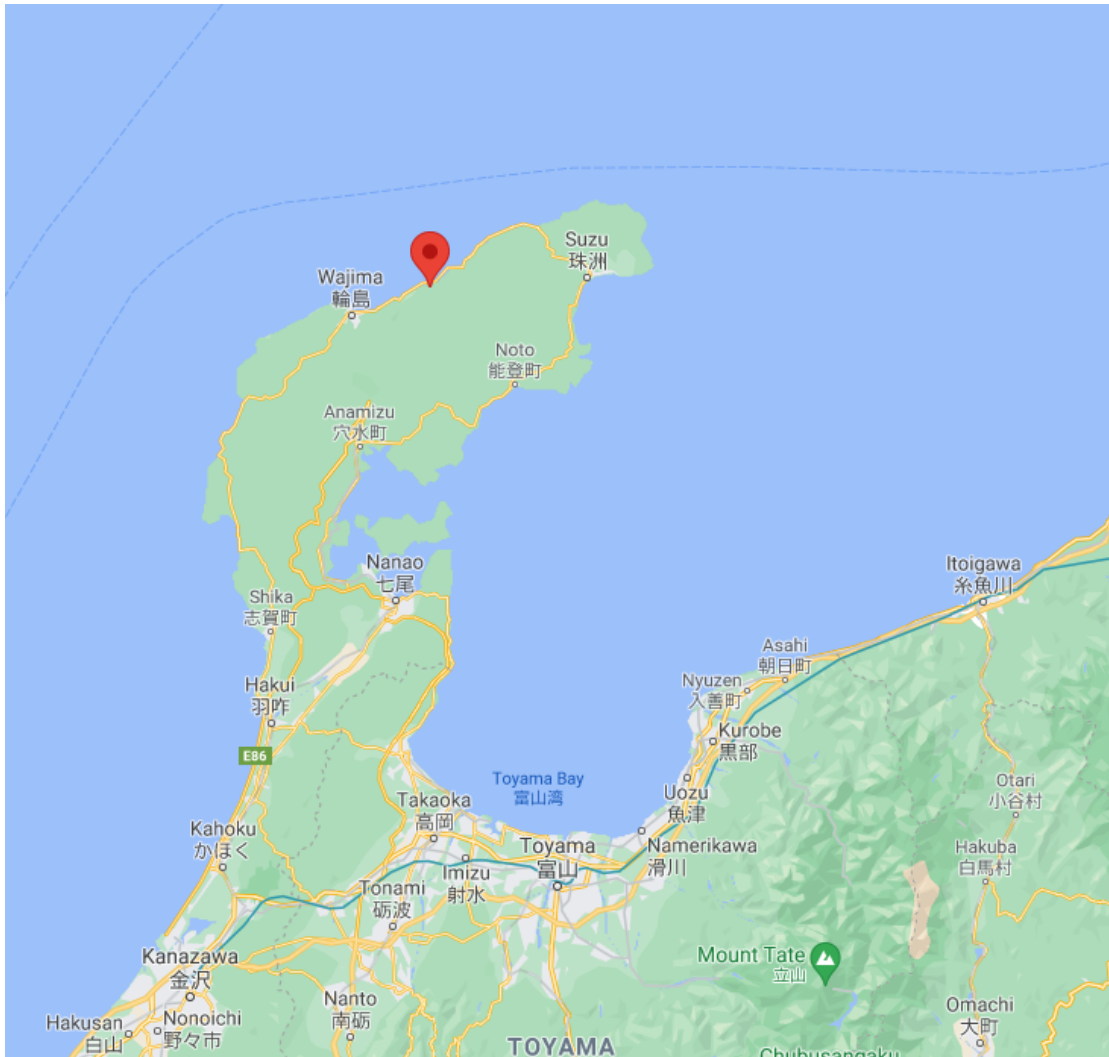
Location: Nafune town, Wajima city, Ishikawa prefecture

Access: About 1 hour by airplane from Haneda (Tokyo) to Noto Satoyama airport

or It takes 1 hour by JR Nanao line from Kanazawa to Wakura Onsen, and 40 minutes by Noto line to Anamizu



Ishikawa prefecture



Noto peninsula



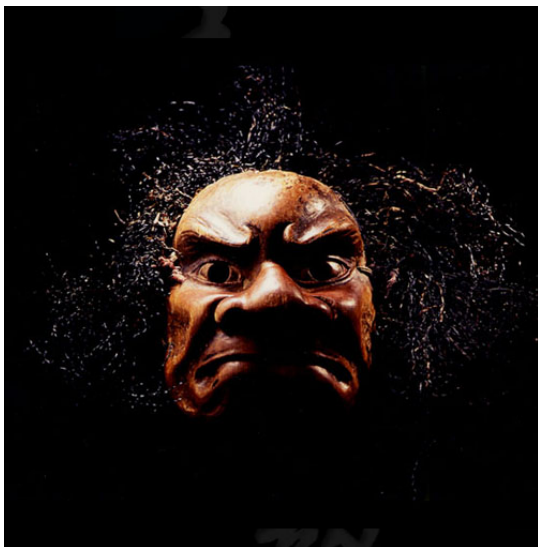
Yasha (female monster)



Jiji (aged man)



Jiji



Jiji



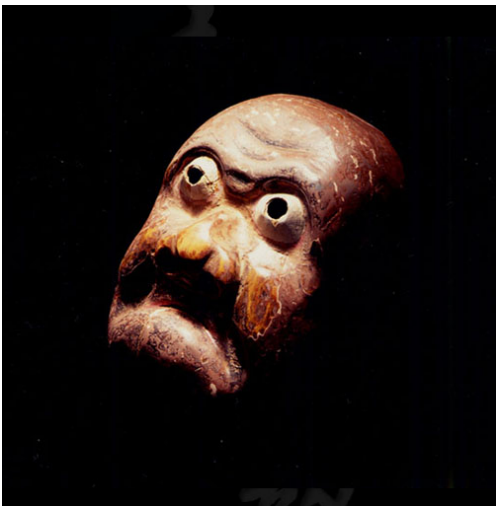
Otoko yurei (male ghost)



Onna yurei (female ghost)



Otoko yurei



Daruma (priest)

All images from http://www.gojinjodaiko.jp/en_top.html

Gojinjo Daiko (drums) 五井浄土太鼓 is the most famous traditional folk performance group in Noto region. Eight drummers appear one after the other to beat a single drum. All of them wear bizarre masks and their hair is made of seaweed or horse hair. They play a rhythm based on beginning, middle portion, and denouement. They repeat it over and over again. Sometimes they make strange noises, sometimes they strike menacing poses.

As for why they started using such strange masks, here is the origin. Once upon a time, there was a powerful warlord named

Uesugi Kenshin 上杉 謙信 who ruled the wide area including Niigata and Ishikawa prefectures. When his army finally invaded this area, the farmers, who had no defense, came up with a plan. They wore masks made of wood and hair made of seaweed, and played drums to intimidate them. The fearful army turned back. Since then, the performance has been passed down from generation to generation by the men who protect the area. Currently, they have formed a preservation society comprising about 20 members. All of them are from the town of Nafune. Only those born and raised in the area are allowed to carry on the Gojinjo-daiko tradition. Regardless of the restrictions, the rhythms of the taiko are complex and difficult to master unless one has grown up listening to them from childhood.

Since they are a popular group, they are invited to various events. However, one of the most prestigious and nerve-wracking events for them is a performance at the local Nafune Grand Festival.

This is a small village with only about 200 residents. More than 10,000 people gather for the festival. Even those who have left the village come back only for the festival.



Kiriko lines in festival
image from the site above



a image of Kiriko

At the Nafune Grand Festival, many people come to see the Gojinjo-daiko. On the first day of the festival, from around 9:00 p.m., a large number of people carrying kirikos pass through the shrine and head for the sea. Then the drums are performed. After that, people continue to enjoy late into the night. The next day, the festival starts in the afternoon.



<https://www.ent-mabui.jp/program/3332>

Even if you can't see it on this day, there are still many opportunities to see the Gojinjo-daiko. The easiest way is to go to the Wajima Kiriko Museum, where the Kirikos are displayed, and performances are held every day at a certain time. There are also other opportunities to see the performance at some hotels.

Summer in Noto is the summer of the Kiriko Festival. And Kanazawa, a popular tourist destination, is nearby. And of course, there are hot springs.



<https://wajimanavi.jp/event/gojinjitsu>



<https://www.hot-ishikawa.jp/spot/6009>