

To members of the media

Japan Arts Council

July 29, 2022

Arts and Culture that Captures Everyone's Attention! Rediscover the Beauty of Japan through Cultural Experiences this Summer

—Japan Cultural Expo programs presented across Japan—

In recent years, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, people have refrained from various activities and opportunities to have contact with diverse cultures, such as traveling and attending events, have drastically decreased. However, because people still look forward to traveling and events, this summer might see many people traveling domestically, having taken measures against infections. In a survey about traveling that was conducted during the pandemic, "history and culture tourism" was among top 10 tourism activities in which people are interested (JTBF Traveler Survey), demonstrating that people have a renewed interest in culture in Japan. In addition, in an international World Economic Forum survey, Japan was selected as the most attractive country as a tourism destination, with its convenient transportation infrastructure and richness of nature and culture as highly evaluated elements, signifying a rising demand for cultural experiences at travel destinations.

Throughout the year, Japan Cultural Expo is presenting diverse programs for first-hand experiences of Japan's beauty, such as art exhibitions, theatrical performances, and art festivals. Programs this summer will cover many genres across Japan, ranging from a participatory event for all generations, to the Bon Dance festival for enjoying music, to an art exhibition for contemplating works of a renowned contemporary artist.

This newsletter features summer vacation programs for all generations, be it an experience at a summer travel destination or your kids' summer vacation research project. It would be a wonderful opportunity to rediscover the beauty of Japan through cultural experiences, which had been rather rare under the pandemic.



TNM Kids Day



Nishimonai Bon Dance (Japan Bon Dance Festival 2022)



Lee Ufan Exhibition

Newsletter Summary

Participatory programs for all generations to enjoy together

Featured here are programs for everyone, such as TNM Kids Day, offering the experience of original writing box paper crafting and rakugo, among other activities, at Tokyo National Museum, which is celebrating its 150th anniversary, as well as a festival featuring Bon Dance, one embodiment of Japanese culture.

Art exhibition programs to reflect on and appreciate art

Featured here are programs for contemplating art and enjoying the charm of Japanese culture, such as a large-scale retrospective exhibition of world-renowned contemporary artist Lee Ufan, an exhibition that lets you feel Japan's four seasons through masterpieces, and an exhibition featuring a water motif.

Message from Tanihara Shosuke, a Japan Cultural Expo Official Supporter, about charm of Japan's arts and culture

Tanihara Shosuke talks about finding one's way to experience Japanese culture and enjoy Japan's beauty.

Participatory programs for all generations to enjoy together

Although the general perception is that we should quietly appreciate arts and culture, they also create a space for many people to exchange, connect, resonate, and sympathize with others. Therefore, Japan Cultural Expo will present programs for everyone to enjoy, regardless of their age.

TNM Kids Day! Once Every Month!

Paper craft, rakugo experience, and workshops for parents and children to enjoy together

At Tokyo National Museum, which is celebrating its 150th anniversary, TNM Kids Day is held every fourth Sunday of the month, from April this year to March 2023. This program aims to offer parents and children the opportunity to experience the fun that the museum can offer, while fostering deep interaction with Japanese culture and performing arts. Programs include reading books to participants in front of the related artwork and printing out paper craft sheets which participants can design. Another program is *YOSE—Show RAKUZA—at TOKYO NATIONAL MUSEUM*, in which parents and children will not only appreciate rakugo, but also experience doing it firsthand. Show RAKUZA will also be held at other venues where people can enjoy it while sightseeing, including Tokyo Tower.



Workshop at TNM Kids Day



Show RAKUZA at TOKYO NATIONAL MUSEUM

At the *Family Gallery: Introducing Traditional Techniques of Japanese Art V*, which is held on the 2nd floor of the Japanese Gallery (Honkan), attention is directed not to cultural properties, but also materials and techniques used for lacquerware, pottery, and kimono, offering a new perspective on enjoying Japanese art.

[Dates and Venues]

TNM Kids Day

Sunday, August 28, 2022, at Tokyo National Museum (Taito City, Tokyo)

Family Gallery: Introducing Traditional Techniques of Japanese Art V

Wednesday, July 20–Sunday, August 28, 2022 at Tokyo National Museum (Taito City, Tokyo)

YOSE—Show RAKUZA—at TOKYO NATIONAL MUSEUM

Sunday, August 28, 2022, at Tokyo National Museum (Taito City, Tokyo)

*Tokyo Tower Show RAKUZA: Saturday, August 27, 2022, at Tokyo Tower (Minato City, Tokyo)

Japan Bon Dance Festival 2022

Presenting a new Bon Dance culture by fusing Japanese culture and world music

Japan Bon Dance Festival 2022 is Japan Cultural Expo's first participatory Bon Dance festival. Koshino Junko, a world renowned fashion designer and a Person of Cultural Merit, has produced this program, making it an embodiment of a "new Bon Dance culture." Fusing Bon Dance—a more than one-thousand-year-old tradition in Japan—and music across the globe, this festival offers an entirely new experience.



The program consists of a Day Part and Night Part. In the Day Part, Bon Dance from across Japan will be presented onstage with video and actual performance. Audiences will be invited to experience Bon Dance with instructions.

In the Night Part, the special stage will be lit up brightly to present diverse Bon Dance from across Japan in an atmosphere distinct from the Day Part. The special performance stage will feature a fusion of Japanese Bon Dance and world music such as salsa, which will also feature participatory content for audience members to dance together.

[Date and Venue]

Date: Sunday, August 21, 2022

Venue: Ikebukuro West Exist Park Open-Air Theatre Global Ring Theatre (Toshima City, Tokyo)

Enjoy a Ballet Performance Featuring Cute Dancing Penguins at the New National Theatre, while Learning about Environmental Issues

Ballet for Children

In the summer vacation period, Ballet for Children at the New National Theatre will present *'Still Life' at the Penguin Café*, a popular work by the UK's renowned ballet dancer/choreographer David Bintley.

'Still Life' at the Penguin Café is a work with deep meaning, which in contrast to the animals' cute dance, delivers fierce messages that critique civilization. The penguins and other animals that dance to pop music are actually endangered or already extinct species. Prior to the performance, a pre-show talk about animals and the environment will be given. English simultaneous interpretation service will be available on July 27, 30 and 31.



Photo by SHIKAMA Takashi

[Date and Venue]

Date: Wednesday, July 27–Sunday, July 31, 2022

Venue: New National Theatre, Tokyo (Shibuya City, Tokyo)

Art and art exhibition programs to reflect on artworks and appreciate art

Japan Cultural Expo has organized opportunities to contemplate artworks, reflect on oneself, and discover a new perspective as well as the charm of Japanese culture, such as the retrospective exhibition of works by Lee Ufan, a world-renowned contemporary artist, and an exhibition that allows one to feel Japan's four seasons through masterpieces.

Retrospective of Lee Ufan, a leading figure in Mono-ha

The National Art Center, Tokyo

This summer, The National Art Center, Tokyo will host a large-scale retrospective of works by Lee Ufan, a contemporary artist who is a leading figure of Mono-ha, one of the most important art movements in postwar Japan.

He spearheaded Mono-ha, in which natural and artificial materials are combined in temperate manner. His works raise questions about the relationship between things as well as between things and people. The exhibition allows viewers to appreciate Lee's representative works thoroughly, including his earliest pre-Mono-ha pieces and *Relatum* series, which changed the concept of sculpture.



[Date and Venue]

Date: Wednesday, August 10–Monday, November 7, 2022

Venue: The National Art Center, Tokyo (Minato City, Tokyo)

Appreciate the Beauty of Japan's Four Seasons through Masterpieces!

Okada Museum of Art

The Beauty of Nature—Japan's Four Seasons in Masterpieces, currently running at Okada Museum of Art, is a special exhibition where visitors can feel the four seasons of Japan through Japanese classic paintings. Along with paintings, craftworks including ceramics and lacquerwares totaling 100 objects from both Part I and Part II, are on display, inviting visitors to enjoy Japan's four seasons depicted on each work.



Chrysanthemums
Ogata Kōrin
Early Edo period, beginning of the 18th century

Since ancient times, Japanese people with an affinity for nature have cherished the features of the four seasons, expressing their scenic beauty and bursting emotions in paintings and poems. The Part II (Autumn/Winter) of the exhibition features artworks that represent profound seasonal themes, such as autumn leaves and chrysanthemums—autumn plants that have long been loved—as well as snowy landscapes. Located amidst Hakone's abundant natural environment, the museum offers an experience of appreciating such artworks together with the actual transition of seasons.

[Date and Venue]

Date: Part II (Autumn/Winter) Saturday, July 16–Sunday, December 18, 2022

Venue: Okada Museum of Art (Hakone-machi, Ashigarashimo-gun, Kanagawa Prefecture)

Yamatane Museum of Art Holds an Exhibition with the Theme of Water

A refreshing exhibition fitting for summer

At the exhibition currently running at Yamatane Museum of Art, *The Shape of Water—From the War Between the Genji and Heike Clans* to Senju Hiroshi's Waterfalls Series, various Japanese artworks are exhibited under the theme of water. For people living on the island of Japan, water has been a familiar presence since ancient times. In *nihonga*, from landscape paintings featuring the sea, lakes, rivers, or waterfalls as their themes to historical paintings depicting waterside scenes, a broad range of works with water as a central motif can be found, regardless of period or genre.



Senju Hiroshi *Waterfall*

Yamatane Museum of Art

This exhibition presents masterworks impressively depicting the many faces of water. *War Between Genji and Heike Clans* (from the *Tale of the Heike*), produced during the Edo period, is set at the seashore. Utagawa Hiroshige's pictures of famous places on display include *A Hundred Famous Views of Edo: Evening Shower at Ōhashi Bridge*, famed as a masterly depiction of rain. Kawabata Ryūshi's *The Black Current* presents the ocean through a lavish use of azurite blue pigment. The exhibition also includes Senju Hiroshi's Waterfalls Series, which has become synonymous with that artist.

Date and Venue

Date: Saturday, July 9–Sunday, September 25, 2022

Venue: Yamatane Museum of Art (Shibuya City, Tokyo)

For inquiries about this newsletter, please contact:

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[Other Japan Cultural Expo programs scheduled for this summer]

Program titles	Prefecture	Venue	Dates
<p>National Theatre Summer Vacation Family Program</p> <p>*Some performances have only a small number of tickets left. For details, please check the National Theatre Ticket Center Website. https://ticket.ntj.jac.go.jp/</p>	Tokyo Osaka	National Noh Theatre National Bunraku Theatre	<p>Kyogen for Families August 6 (Sat) National Noh Theatre (Tokyo)</p> <p>Noh for Families August 27 (Sat) National Noh Theatre (Tokyo)</p> <p>Summer Vacation Bunraku Performance Part 1: Family Summer Holiday Show July 16 (Sat)–August 4 (Thu) National Bunraku Theatre (Osaka)</p>
<p>NNT Drama Studio Reading Performance “Himeyuri”</p> <p>*English subtitles service is available for the performances on 12&13 Aug.</p>	Tokyo	New National Theatre, Tokyo	August 11 (Thu)–14 (Sun)
Yoichi Ochiai & Japan Philharmonic Orchestra Project VOL.6 “Sound of Omnipresence”	Tokyo	Suntory Hall	August 25 (Thu)
Outdoor Opera Performance -Jikukan Emaki- “Pagliacci”	Yamanashi	Gekkōji Temple	August 20 (Sat)
THE HEROES—Chronicles of the Warriors: Japanese Swords x Ukiyo-e from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston	Shizuoka	Shizuoka City Museum of Art	July 2 (Sat)–August 28 (Sun)
ECHO TOMORROW FIELD—Food and Art	Kyoto Hyogo	Takano Shrine (Kyoto) Taiza Studio (Kyoto) Kinosaki Onsen Mikiya (Hyogo)	July 22 (Fri)–August 21 (Sun)
Independent Study for Kids & Adults: ○△□× for Crafting Crafts	Ishikawa	National Crafts Museum	July 5 (Tue)–September 4 (Sun)
<p>Beauty of Ryukyu —Passing On and Promoting Traditional Performing Arts of Okinawa</p>	Okinawa	National Theatre Okinawa	<p>Promotional Performance Kumiodori Appreciation Class for Parents and Children “Manzai Tekiuchi” August 6 (Sat)–7(Sun)</p> <p>Promotional Performance Tones of Okinawa Various Okinawa Musical Instruments August 20 (Sat)</p>

Message from Tanihara Shosuke, a Japan Cultural Expo Official Supporter, about the charm of Japan's arts and culture

Having continued from the Jomon period, Japanese culture has produced various beautiful arts. From sculptures such as statues of the Buddha and traditional performing arts such as kabuki, through ukiyo-e to kimono, each art form represents a wonderful symbol of Japanese beauty. As a Supporter of Japan Cultural Expo, I'm very happy to contribute to such a great project to disseminate Japanese beauty.



Although many programs have had to be canceled because of the novel coronavirus(COVID-19) pandemic, we are seeing that an increasing number of programs can now be implemented. This summer will see diverse programs happening across Japan, such as Bon Dance, in which everyone is invited to join, workshops for families to make a memory of summer vacation, and art exhibitions for thoroughly appreciating artworks. "Appreciating Japanese art and culture" may sound intimidating. Yet, I believe your own way is the best way. For the summer vacation season, why not embark on a journey to rediscover the beauty of Japan and Japanese culture?

Reference

About Japan Cultural Expo

Japan Cultural Expo is project to invite domestic and international audiences to rediscover the charm of Japanese culture by experiencing "The Beauty of Japan" through exhibitions, performances, art festivals and so forth across Japan.



The Japan Cultural Expo features

- The finest celebration of culture with the best elements from diverse fields
- Programs for rediscovering regional charms by combining regional cultural resources and other elements such as food culture
- Cutting-edge virtual experience using advanced technologies such as metaverse
- Future-forming programs with young talents by inviting everyone to join
- Programs presented in collaboration with international artists and overseas cultural facilities

Japan Cultural Expo <https://japanculturalexpo.bunka.go.jp/en/>

Enjoy Japanese Beauty Online! Japan Cultural Expo's VIRTUAL PLATFORM

In addition to "real" experiences at physical venues across Japan, Japan Cultural Expo presents diverse digital content such as the VIRTUAL PLATFORM, a digital gallery, and YouTube videos. Launched in 2021, the VIRTUAL PLATFORM allows you to experience "The Beauty of Japan," represented in diverse forms such as art exhibitions, stage performances, nature, and art festivals, by freely exploring the metaverse and through videos, VR, and images.

Moreover, we opened a special exhibition in June, in collaboration with *Spinning Crocodiles*, Tamura Satoru, a solo exhibition of contemporary artist Tamura Satoru running at the National Art Center, Tokyo. The crocodile monument appears at the Japan Cultural Expo's virtual space and visitors can appreciate actual works' 3D CG.

Japan Cultural Expo VIRTUAL PLATFORM <https://japanculturalexpo.bunka.go.jp/en/vp/>