



Introducing *Tenshu Monogatari*—History, Diversity and Cultural Challenges of Japanese Performing Arts in a Democratic Context

Hiromi Sakamoto

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Friday, September 4, 2015

4:15—6:15 pm

Hagerty Hall, Room 180

1775 College Road



Hiromi Sakamoto is a theatrical producer, director, and Professor of Performing Arts at Kindai University, Osaka, Japan. He has produced and directed numerous stage productions, including *Harlem Symphony* (with veteran Broadway staff and cast), *Gajjin*, a 1995 collaboration with New York director Ping Chong, *Jazz Borello*, and a ballet stage at Godaiji Temple in Kyoto (with New York City Ballet dancers, including Benjamin Millepied). Hiromi Sakamoto is a translator of the original play and an advisory staff for Shadowbox Live's production of *Tenshu Monogatari: A Story of Love and Honor*.

Hiromi Sakamoto's talk will introduce *Tenshu Monogatari* by IZUMI Kyoka (1873-1939), its history of staged productions, and its theme. The play features the magical world of the White Heron Castle (Shirasagi-jo) in Himeji, Japan. Considered one of the masterpieces of modern play, it is filled with spiritual fantasy, Samurai fighting spectacles, human torment between honor, power and love. Its translation to English (by Sakamoto) and adaptation for a musical version—to be staged at Shadowbox Live in downtown Columbus October 7-25—promises to add another dimension to this modern classic.

Abstract: *Tenshu Monogatari* is positioned awkwardly between modern theater and traditional theater in Japan today. What makes this play modern? How traditional is the play? Why is this play considered by some scholars "shougyou engeki" (commercial theater) rather than an artistically meaningful play? Hiromi Sakamoto introduces his views on how theatrical works, such as *Tenshu Monogatari*, have been culturally and politically placed in the last hundred years in Japan. His lecture will also present eight students from Kindai University, who will perform excerpts from *Tenshu Monogatari* in both Japanese and English.

Co-Sponsors: Center for Languages, Literatures and Cultures (CLLC), Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures (DEALL), and East Asian Studies Center (EASC).

This event is sponsored in part by a U.S. Department of Education Title VI grant for The Ohio State University East Asian Studies Center.

Free and open to the public

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