

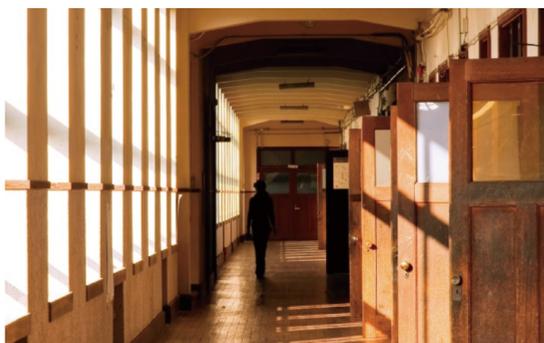
ALL MAP



Scan for a map of all events and places found in this issue!

ARCHITECTURAL SIGHTS ALONG THE KAIDO

On and around the *kaido* trails, there are numerous historical buildings that form narratives of their unique respective communities, and of historical lifestyles more broadly. Visit them to for sights and stories to lead your journey back through the pages of Japanese history.



OLD TOYOSATO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – AN ARCHITECTURAL GIFT WITH A UNIQUE HISTORY

This 1937 building was built as an elementary school through the donation of Furukawa Tetsujiro, a successful Omi merchant from the local area. The architecture has received great praise over the years as a pinnacle of school design, and a key work of the architect, William Merrell Vories, an American who lived and worked in Japan. Based in Shiga, his local works display an inventive blend of Eastern and Western aesthetics. The Toyosato school was registered in 2013 as a National Tangible Cultural Property, and now serves as a community center with various facilities. Believed to be the location model for the set of a popular anime series, it has also recently become a destination for anime fans.

Toyosato Elementary School Old School Buildings

TEL 0749-35-3737
ADDRESS 518 Ishibatake, Toyosato, Inukami District, Shiga
WEB <http://toyosato-kanko.jp/overseas/top-english.html>
OPEN 9:00am to 5:00pm
CLOSED Dec 29 - Jan 3
ADMISSION Free



KUSATSU-JUKU HONJIN – LARGEST PRESERVED ACCOMMODATION

Honjin were the most prestigious accommodation facilities of the *shukuba-machi* post towns in the Edo period. Most *shukuba-machi* had at least one *honjin*, reserved for the elite class such as *daimyo* lords, aristocrats, and government officials. Kusatsu-juku Honjin is among Japan's largest preserved *honjin* facilities, encompassing about 4,300 sq. meters and 39 rooms. As its original Edo Period appearance has been maintained well, it was designated as a National Historic Site in 1949. The facility also houses valuable records which document key historic figures who have rested or stayed here in the past.

Kusatsu-juku Honjin

TEL 077-561-6636
ADDRESS 1-2-8 Kusatsu, Kusatsu City, Shiga
WEB <http://www.city.kusatsu.shiga.jp/kusatsujuku/english/>
OPEN 9:00am to 5:00pm (admission until 4:30pm)
CLOSED Mondays (except ntl. holidays), day after ntl. holidays, Dec 28 - Jan 4, and irregular closings
ADMISSION ¥240. Students: ¥180 (college, HS), ¥120 (JHS, ES)



GOKASHO OMI MERCHANT HOMES – REVEALING THE LIVES OF THE OMI SHONIN

The preserved mansions of successful merchants offer spectacular examples of Omi Shonin residences built in Gokasho, an area known as the Omi Shonin birthplace. White plaster walls and wooden fences repurposed from ship planks are unique features of the houses here. The guest room building is more extravagant than the main living area. The Omi Shonin philosophies are reflected here, as well as early sustainable living practices such as stream water integrated into the kitchen space and traditional Japanese gardens. This area is now nationally designated as an Important Preservation District for Groups of Traditional Buildings.

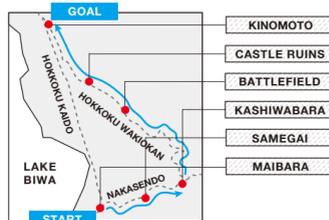
Gokasho Omi Merchant Homes

TEL 0748-48-3399
ADDRESS Kondochō Gokasho, Higashiomri, Shiga
WEB <http://www.higashiomri.net/watch/1995.html>
OPEN 9:30am to 4:30pm
CLOSED Mondays (except ntl. holidays), day after ntl. holidays, Dec 28 - Jan 4
ADMISSION ¥600 / ¥300 (child under 13) for three merchant residences: Tonomura Shigeru, Tonomura Uhei & Nakae Jungoro. ¥300 / ¥100 (child under 13) for Fuji Hikoshiro residence only.

BIWAICHI

-Cycling the Kaido – Nakasendo and Hokkoku Kaido Trails-

"Biwaichi-Plus" are side routes exploring inland areas off from the main Biwaichi route, Shiga's larger course that circles Lake Biwa. One Biwaichi-Plus route follows the historic Nakasendo trail, and an offshoot trail, the Hokkoku Wakiokan Byway, which leads to the Hokkoku Kaido trail. Starting from JR Maibara Station, explore the charming townscapes of *shukuba-machi* in Samegai-juku and Kashiwabara-juku. Then pass through Sengoku Period medieval battle sites such as Ane-gawa Battlefield, and Odani Castle ruins, of the former warlord, Azai Nagamasa. Discover deep tradition and historic heritage on this fun and interesting ride.



BIWAICHI BEST SHOT!!



QR codes for Biwaichi Cycling Navi, Biwaichi Rental Cycle, and Biwako Visitors Bureau. biwaichi-cycling.com/en/ en.biwako-visitors.jp

FREE volume 6

COOL SHIGA

CULTURAL INFORMATION GUIDE

KINOMOTO-JUKU - BREWERY TOWN THAT THRIVED ON THE KAIDO

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EVENT SCHEDULE

Kinamoto storefront of soy sauce brewery, Daiko Shoyu, with large cedar brewing barrels on display.



The primary kaido routes around Omi Province (above), and antique signs from an old pharmacy on the kaido (below).

KAIDO ANCIENT TRAILS TRANSPORTING CULTURES

As the early January snow flurries begin, hidden away inside a *kura* warehouse that's over 200 years old, the seasonal brewing of soy sauce is also just getting started. The humble rustic aesthetic of such traditional towns often transports visitors back to a bygone era.

Shiga, historically known as Omi, long served as an essential junction point for a number of old trails connecting various key regions of Japan such as Edo (old Tokyo) and imperial Kyoto. This vital role led to an old saying, "Whoever rules Omi, rules the country."

Such trails, or *kaido*, gave rise to many *shukuba-machi*, known in English as post towns or lodging towns, including many Omi towns such as Otsu-juku, Kusatsu-juku and Kinamoto-juku. Offering past travelers rest and comfort along their journey, these towns had unique identities that reflected the crossing paths of diverse people, commodities, and information. Merchant shops and industries such as breweries thrived in some such towns, adding their own local products into the wide array of goods moving around Japan along these routes. The buildings, streets, and scenery in some of these towns still summon images of the past, with some historical businesses still operating even today and passing down their traditions.

continued inside →

ABOUT SHIGA

Shiga Prefecture is located just northeast of Kyoto, at the center of Japan's main island. We're home to Japan's largest lake, *Biwako*, or Lake Biwa, and a community of unique culture and traditions that developed over time in harmony with the nature that sustains our local cuisine, industry and lifestyle. Scenic lake views and abundant nature have been a continual source of inspiration for artists. As a junction between East and West Japan, Shiga is also a land of many historic sites such as temples and castle ruins, as well as many enchanting traditional towns.

Easy Access from Kyoto!

- BY SHINKANSEN
- Kyoto Sta. to Maibara Sta. in about 20 min.
- Nagoya Sta. to Maibara Sta. in about 27 min.
- BY JR TRAIN
- Kyoto Sta. to Otsu Sta. in about 9 min.



KINOMOTO-JUKU

BREWERY TOWN THAT THRIVED ON THE KAIDO

KINOMOTO TOWN (木之本町)



An Atmosphere Evoking the Old Shukuba-Machi

Along the historic *kaido* trails, *shukuba-machi* arose to welcome road-weary travelers. These districts held lodging facilities, yet they also served as post towns, used by couriers and merchants. As hubs of travel and trade, these towns were bustling with a colorful variety of guests exchanging goods and information.

Kinomoto-juku is one such *shukuba-machi* in Nagahama, Shiga, where some of the centuries-old traditional businesses are still in operation today. Two of the town's sake breweries, Tomita Shuzo and Yamaji Shuzo are among the ten longest-running sake breweries in Japan. Breweries for products like sake and soy sauce particularly thrived here thanks to the abundant source of pure

underground water from the Ibuki Mountain Range, as well as long cold winters ideal for sake production, and the *shukuba* trade hub provided ready access to local ingredients.

Situated on the *Hokkoku Kaido*, meaning northern Japan trail, the town embodies a unique blend of cultures from northern and central Japan. For instance, *kuro-shikkui*, or black-plastered wall, and *dashiget*a, or extended roof rafters for more overhang of eaves to handle heavy snow, are examples of architectural features more often found in northern Japan. The buildings are long and narrow, with shop areas in the front along the main street, and residences in the back, behind the storefronts.

Culture Carried On by Clear Water and Community

Shoyu, or soy sauce, is a core element of Japanese cuisine and serves as the seasoning base for sauces, broths, cooking and much more. The ingredients of soy sauce are simple; soy beans, wheat and salt, which are treated with a fermentation culture such as *koji*.

In the town of Kinomoto, one of the local soy sauce breweries called Daiko Shoyu was established in 1852. Now in its 6th generation as a family business, Mr. Kensuke Osugi is the current successor, leading the brewery since he began managing production and sales 23 years ago.



Kensuke Osugi, 6th gen. head of Daiko Shoyu (top left), 3 varieties: *kokuchi*, *usukuchi* & *tamari* (top right), the clear spring well used for sauce (bot. left), and their charming traditional storefront (bot. right).

"We make soy sauce from scratch, starting from soy bean steaming, making *koji* malt, and everything to bottling by hand, all in-house. There aren't many strictly independent soy sauce producers left in Japan."

Ingredients are normally fermented and brewed for 2 to 3 years in barrels, and Daiko Shoyu uses barrels made of cedar. "At the major soy sauce factories, synthetic ones are generally used to accommodate mass quantities. We keep the traditional cedar barrel method because the cedar gives aromatic hints, but also lets more air in to enhance the fermentation process, which gives us



Guide post marking the Hokkoku Kaido trail (left), and the Kinomoto Jizo-in Temple a central symbol of the town (right).

a mild and deep sauce." He added that hundreds of kinds of yeast and bacteria cultures live on the beams and walls of their warehouse where the barrels are kept. "They've lived there since the foundation of our brewery. The microbes, climate, environment and the traditional methods all make up the taste and quality of our soy sauce."

The Daiko Shoyu building was built more than 200 years ago and has some unique structural features such as the support pillar rising up through the storefront. The building has been maintained well through a series of repairs and in November of 2019, it was designated as a National Tangible Cultural Property. Mr. Osugi added, "Most households on this street also had storefronts initially. Some closed, but breweries fared better. The area works well for breweries because of the good local natural spring water. With less mineral content, the water has a smoother taste, perfect for brewing."

There used to be a small stream running right along this street. Travelers' horses would commonly be seen tied to willow trees along the stream, as they stayed overnight at the inns. "Many people here are eager to preserve the town's original scenery as much as possible. I'm fortunate to be working with them as part of this effort."

The close-knit community here is key to the conservation of the town, as a variety of local festivals and events are held annually, such as *Akiba Matsuri* festival with prayers to the fire deity in spring, *Jizo-bon* Festival at Kinomoto Jizo-in Temple in summer attracting large crowds, and a unique New Year's morning event in which locals of a *yakudoshi* age (bad luck year) run to strike a temple bell.

Daiko Shoyu (ダイコウ醤油)

TEL 0749-82-2012 ADDRESS 1137 Kinomoto Kinomotocho, Nagahama, Shiga
EMAIL info@daikou-shoyu.com OPEN 9:30am to 6:30pm
WEB http://www.daikou-shoyu.com CLOSED Irregular

SHIGA CULTURE

SPREAD BY TRAVELERS

Otsu-e – Souvenir Art of Kaido

Otsu-e is a type of folk art from Otsu City that originated about 400 years ago. Created collectively by anonymous painters, the style gradually gained attention, and was eventually labeled as *minga* (lit. folk painting) by the famous Japanese art critic, Yanagi Muneyoshi, who started the *mingei* folk art movement of the early 20th century. Today, *Otsu-e* is the only form of *minga* painting still being created and commercially sold. *Ukiyo-e* woodblock print was another popular form of *minga*. These two *minga* are often cited as the predominant *minga* of the Edo Era, typically with the expression, "Ukiyo-e of East Japan, and Otsu-e of West Japan."

Among the designs, *Oni-no-kannenbutsu* (or *Ogre Reciting Buddhist Invocation in Midwinter*) has probably become the most well known since first appearing 300 years ago. The picture depicts a Buddhist monk in the form of an *oni*, or ogre, to suggest that superficial intentions may cause one to project a false impression. As it spread to other parts of Japan, however, it was interpreted differently and used for other purposes such as displaying in a house to ward off evil, or to stop babies from crying at night.

The other popular design, *Fuji Musume* (or *Wisteria Maiden*), is used on talismans at Tokyo's Senso-ji Temple and as a motif for their festival. Through the *kaido* trails, *Otsu-e* has spread far and wide, still being discovered and praised by new generations and integrated into new local cultures and traditions.



Ogre Reciting Buddhist Invocation in Midwinter.

Insightful Humor Favored by Acclaimed Artists

Shinsuke Takahashi, the 5th successor of Takahashi Shozan and only established active *Otsu-e* painter, said "Otsu-e emerged as the number of travelers on the Tokaido trail significantly rose. Because it was just one stop away from imperial Kyoto, this area was once one of the busiest streets of Japan long ago."

Otsu-e originated as Buddhist art, making paintings of the Buddha accessible to common people. But as they were durable and easy to pack, they soon became popular souvenirs. The number and variations of designs grew over time, so to scale up production, the designs were simplified and methods established such as dividing designs into simpler patterns to allow easier painting and many at a time. The *Otsu-e* aesthetic also developed, focusing on humorous characters. Takahashi added, "Many famous artists also liked *Otsu-e*. For example, *Fuji Musume* was painted by Ito Jakuchu, a notable Edo Era painter, and there are records of even Picasso and Miro owning personal copies of *Otsu-e*." The strong characters of *Otsu-e* may have also been precursors to anime, one of the most famous forms of contemporary Japanese culture.



Storefront capturing the historic feeling of the *kaido* (top). This building was relocated and reconstructed with its original materials (bottom). Shinsuke Takahashi using the 7 colors of *Otsu-e* pigments (right).

Otsu-e no Mise (大津絵の店)

TEL 077-524-5656 ADDRESS 3-38 Mideracho, Otsu, Shiga
WEB http://www.otsue.jp/english/ OPEN 10:00am to 5:00pm
CLOSED 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month

Omi Shonin - A National Legacy of Local Merchants

Omi Shonin were a group of Shiga-based merchants who traded and traveled throughout Japan from medieval to modern times. One iconic trade practice was tying goods to both ends of a long pole, which was then balanced and carried from place to place. Many of the merchants ran stores in big cities, such as Edo, Osaka and Kyoto and made fortunes. Several of Japan's large corporations have roots in the Omi Shonin.

They were also famous for the business philosophy, "sanpo yoshi," (lit. good for three ways) meaning "good for the seller, the buyer, and for society." This famous and respected motto was widely adopted, and is a guiding principle still today for entrepreneurs and businesses.



Omi Shonin depicting the famous saying, "Build a fortune with a single pole."

EVENT SCHEDULE

ALL MAP



Scan for a map of all events and places found in this issue!

CURRENT AND UPCOMING SHIGA EVENTS IN JANUARY, FEBRUARY, & MARCH, 2020

TOOLS FROM THE RECENT PAST 2020



In this exhibition, a series of old tools will be displayed to show how previous generations lived in Japan. These common and widely-used tools of bygone decades may evoke memories for older visitors and stimulate the curiosity of young ones.

DATE January 5th (Sun) to February 23 (Sun), 2020
TIME 10am to 6pm. Closed Mon & Tue, holidays, Jan 15, 24 and Feb 12.
PLACE Higashiomi Notogawa Museum (2225 Yamajicho, Higashiomi City)
ADMISSION Free
TEL 0748-42-6761
WEB <https://e-omi-muse.com/notohaku/>

TOKYO 2020 & JAPAN CULTURAL EXPO - DISABLED PEOPLE'S ARTS & CULTURE FESTIVAL GRAND OPENING



Iwami Kagura by Iwami-Welfare Society.

3-day event of arts and culture activities by people with disabilities. The range of activities presented include an art brut exhibition, stage performances, barrier-free movies and hands-on workshops.

DATE February 7th - 9th (Fri - Sun), 2020
TIME 9am to 7pm. Times vary depending on each program.
PLACE Lake Biwa Otsu Prince Hotel (4-7-7 Nionohama, Otsu City)
ADMISSION 3-day passport: ¥2000. Single program tickets: ¥500
 Interpretation device rental: ¥1000 (2 days) *Contact us for ticket details.
TEL 0748-46-8100 *Hands-on workshop held separately in Shigaraki, Koka City.
WEB <https://artbrut-creation-nippon.jp>

[ENGLISH BROCHURE](#) [ENGLISH SIGNAGE](#) [ENGLISH ASSISTANCE](#)

THE 28TH SHIMODA HARUMI BALLET SCHOOL RECITAL



The 28th recital of Shimoda Harumi Ballet School in its 43rd year since foundation. This year features all acts of *The Nutcracker* and small collections, performed by more than 100 dancers

including children and adults.

DATE February 2nd (Sun), 2020
TIME Stage start: 2pm (tentative)
PLACE Grand Hall, Otsu Civic Hall (14-1 Shimanoseki, Otsu City)
ADMISSION Free. Open seating, no ticket required.
TEL 077-516-1884
WEB <http://www.sh-ballet.com>

[ENGLISH ASSISTANCE](#)

59TH SHIGA PREFECTURE KAKIZOME CALLIGRAPHY EXHIBITION



About 5200 *kakizome* (the first calligraphy written in a new year) works by people of all ages from around Japan. A vast collection bringing together a wide range of works from unique and free-spirited child writings to intricate adult pieces.

DATE February 6th - 9th (Thu - Sun), 2020
TIME 9am to 5pm (Closes 3pm on final day)
PLACE Otsu City Museum of History (2-2 Goryochi, Otsu City)
ADMISSION Free
TEL 080-2543-0789
WEB <http://www.syodo.or.jp> (Shiga Calligraphy Association)

61ST SPECIAL EXHIBITION OMI IN THE AZUCHI-MOMOYAMA PERIOD COLLECTIONS OF THE MUSEUM OF SHIGA PREFECTURE BIWAKO BUNKAKAN



Kaiho Yusho, Cypress Trees. Shiga Prefecture Biwako Bunkakan.

The Museum of Shiga Prefecture Biwako Bunkakan plays an important role for the history and culture of Shiga. This exhibition features cultural properties and other works of the Azuchi-Momoyama Period from the museum's collections.

DATE February 8th (Sat) to April 5th (Sun), 2020
TIME 9am to 5pm (admission until 4:30). Closed Mon (unless holiday, then Tue).
PLACE Shiga Prefectural Azuchi Castle Archaeological Museum (6678 Shimotoira Azuchicho, Omihachiman City)
ADMISSION Adults: ¥600 (¥480). Students: college/HS ¥360 (¥290), JHS/ES free.
 *Prices in parentheses for groups of 20+
TEL 0748-46-2424
WEB <http://www.azuchi-museum.or.jp>

[ENGLISH SIGNAGE](#) [ENGLISH BROCHURE](#) [Wi-Fi](#)

TSUCHI-KARA-UMARETA "BORN FROM THE SOIL" EXHIBITION



Shinichi Sawada, Mask, 2014. The Museum of Modern Art, Shiga.

The fourth remote exhibition of the Museum of Modern Art, Shiga, while the museum undergoes renovation. This exhibition features "soil" as the theme for ceramic works covering the long history of arts activities by people of the prefecture's welfare facilities.

DATE February 15th (Sat) to March 22nd (Sun), 2020
TIME 9am - 5pm (admission until 4:30). Closed Mon (unless holiday, then Tue).
PLACE Omihachiman City Roof Tile Museum (738-2 Tagacho, Omihachiman City)
ADMISSION Adult: ¥300 (¥250). JHS and elementary students: ¥200 (¥150)
 *Prices in parentheses for groups of 10+.
TEL 077-522-2111
WEB <http://www.shiga-kinbi.jp>

[ENGLISH BROCHURE](#) [ENGLISH ASSISTANCE](#)

OHMI KYOGEN ZUKAN 2020



Kyogen is a traditional form of comedic Japanese theater. In this series by the Sengoro Shigeyama family, Shiga-themed plays are performed with wit and local charm. March 1st features "Bo Shibari" (Tied to a Stick), "Kagyu" (Snail) and "Azuchi-jo Himitsu Kaigi" (Secret Meeting at Azuchi Castle). March 7th features "Kusabira" (fungus), "Inabado" and "Azuchi-jo Himitsu Kaigi."

DATE Pt.I: March 1 (Sun), 2020. Pt.II: March 7 (Sat), 2020
TIME Pt.I & II start 2pm
PLACE Pt.I: Watamuki Hall Niji (1661 Matsuo Hinocho, Gamo District). Pt.II: Tenbin no Sato Bunka Gakushu Center (583 Tatsutacho Gokasho, Higashiomi City)
ADMISSION Adults: ¥2000. Under 25: ¥1000. *Prices per single-day program.
 *March 1 is general admission. March 7 is assigned seating. *No children under 6.
TEL 0748-53-3233 (Pt.I venue), 0748-48-7100 (Pt.II venue)
WEB <https://www.biwako-arts.or.jp/rd/>

MASTERWORKS OF LACQUERWARE FROM THE II FAMILY COLLECTION



of the II family, Hikone's feudal rulers in the Edo Period.

Urushi lacquer has deep roots into the ancient past of Japanese life. In this exhibition, beautifully lacquered artifacts such as furniture, instruments, and horse harnesses are displayed from the collection

DATE March 7th (Sat) to April 7th (Tue), 2020
TIME 8:30am to 5pm (admission until 4:30). Museum may be occasionally closed. Exhibition may be partially closed. Nearby public parking only.
PLACE Hikone Castle Museum (1-1 Konkicho, Hikone City).
ADMISSION Adults and high school students: ¥500 Elementary & JHS students: ¥250. *Group discount available.
TEL 0749-22-6100
WEB <http://hikone-castle-museum.jp/en/>

[ENGLISH BROCHURE](#) [Wi-Fi](#)

SAGICHO FESTIVAL



Annual fire festival in Omihachiman where "Sagicho" floats are decorated with various food ingredients used to depict the annual Chinese Zodiac character on straw-covered logs. The floats from several of the town's districts are all brought together for a collision battle event (pictured). The festival ends by burning all of the Sagicho.

DATE March 14th & 15th (Sat & Sun), 2020
TIME 3/14: 1:00pm to 6:00pm. 3/15: 10:00am to 10:40pm.
PLACE Himure Hachiman-gu Shrine (257 Miyauchicho, Omihachiman City)
ADMISSION Free
TEL 0748-33-6061 (Omihachiman Sta. Tourist Information Center)
WEB <https://www.sagicho.net>

*Wi-fi & translation devices available at Hakuunkan Tourist Center.

[ENGLISH BROCHURE](#) [ENGLISH ASSISTANCE](#) [Wi-Fi](#)

BIWAKO HALL EVENTS



TEL 077-523-7136
ADDRESS 15-1 Uchidehama, Otsu City
OPEN 10am to 7pm
CLOSED Tuesdays (unless a holiday, then day after the holiday), Dec. 29 - 30, Jan. 1 - 3
WEB <https://www.biwako-hall.or.jp/en/>

2020.1.18	Theatre Art: "Nobody Knows" by Nitosha	Theatre
2020.1.19	Invitation to Early Music: The World of Elizabethan Era	Ensemble Hall
2020.1.25	Dance Performance: "ARC Hakumei Hakubo" by Sankai Juku	Theatre
2020.2.2	Orchestra Concert by BIWAKO HALL: All-Beethoven Program	Main Theatre
2020.2.11	Ballet: Alina Cojocararu Dream Project 2020	Main Theatre
2020.3.7,8	Opera Prod. by BIWAKO HALL: "Götterdämmerung" by R. Wagner	Main Theatre
2020.3.14	Theatre Art Training Program: Accomplishment Performance	Theatre
2020.3.21	Kyogen Performance: Mansaku Nomura & Mansai Nomura	Theatre
2020.3.22	Orchestra Concert for Children Vol. 16: "The Frontier of Music"	Main Theatre
2020.3.28	The 70th BIWAKO HALL Vocal Ensemble Regular Concert	Ensemble Hall



Biwako Hall Center for the Performing Arts is one of the only spaces in Japan equipped with a four-tiered quadruple stage main theatre, as well as a performing arts theatre, and smaller ensemble hall. A wide variety of wonderful performances take place here in state-of-the-art facilities featuring exceptional acoustics to offer immersive enjoyment for audiences here in our lakefront theatre.

Scan code for English Calendar of Biwako Hall Performances:
<https://www.biwako-hall.or.jp/en/performance/>

