



Celebrating Japan-CARICOM FRIENDSHIP YEAR 2024

“JIUTAMAI”, Traditional Japanese Dance & Music Events 2024

In commemoration of Japan-CARICOM Friendship Year 2024, the Embassy of Japan in Barbados organized a series of events showcasing Japanese traditional dance and music from April 26 - 28, 2024.

On April 27, 2024, the Embassy of Japan, in collaboration with the Barbados Museum & Historical Society (BMHS), presented an evening of Japanese traditional dance and musical performances at the Walled Garden Theatre. The event began with opening remarks from the Hon. Kerrie Symmonds, M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and Senior Minister coordinating the Productive Sector, Ms. Alissandra Cummins, Director of the BMHS, and H.E. Ms. Kayoko Fukushima, Ambassador of Japan to Barbados. Each speaker underscored the longstanding history of collaboration between the nations and the deepening friendship between Japan and the CARICOM region. Following their remarks, the event featured performances of Jiutamai by Tokijo HANASAKI and Kanane HANASAKI and a Koto performance by Shogo HIYOSHI.



L-R Shogo HIYOSHI, Ms. Alissandra Cummins, Director of BMHS, Kaname HANASAKI, the Hon. Kerrie Symmonds, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, H.E. The Most Hon. Dame Sandra Prunella Mason, President of Barbados, H.E. Ms. Kayoko Fukushima, Ambassador of Japan to Barbados and Tokijo HANASAKI.

Among the over 200 attendees were H.E. The Most Hon. Dame Sandra Prunella Mason, President of Barbados, Senator Dr. The Honourable Shantal Munro-Knight, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office with responsibility for Culture, Dr. The Honourable William F. Duguid, J.P., M.P., Senior Minister in the Prime Minister's Office with responsibility for coordinating Infrastructural Projects and Senator John King, Government's Special Advisor on Culture and Heritage, other government officials, members of the diplomatic and consular corps and representatives from academic institutions. The Embassy's First Secretary, Shitau MIURA, served as the evening's Master of Ceremonies.



Shogo HIYOSHI performing "Isuzugawa - Matsuri no Taiko" on the Koto.



Tokijo HANASAKI performing a Jitumai dance entitled "Yamauba"

On April 28, 2024, the Embassy of Japan held a Japanese traditional dance and music workshop. This interactive workshop allowed the public to observe demonstrations and learn more about Jitumai and the Koto. 43 local dance and music instructors, students and enthusiasts gathered in the Ursuline Convent Hall, to participate in this first of its kind workshop in Barbados, led by Tokijo HANASAKI, Kanane HANASAKI and Shogo HIYOSHI.



Tokijo HANASAKI leading the Jitumai dance segment of the workshop



Shogo HIYOSHI demonstrating to attendees how to play the Koto.



Kaname HANASAKI assisting a workshop participant with Jiutamai's fan techniques.

Prior to these events, the Embassy of Japan held a press launch at the Accra Beach Hotel & Spa to mark the commencement of its weekend of festivities on April 26, 2024. H.E. Ms. Kayoko Fukushima shared opening remarks and expressed her hope that this cultural exchange would further enhance mutual understanding between Barbados and Japan. In attendance were three visiting Japanese performers, Tokijo HANASAKI, Kaname HANASAKI and Shogo HIYOSHI, along with Face Master, Mitsunaga KANDA and Costume Dresser, Yashiko SATO. The press launch featured an introduction by the Embassy's First Secretary Shitau MIURA, detailing the origins of the centuries-old Japanese dance and music styles being showcased, followed by musical and dance demonstrations by the artistes.



L-R Tokijo HANASAKI, Kaname HANASAKI and Shogo HIYOSHI



Japanese Jiutamai Dancer, Kaname HANASAKI providing a brief demonstration of the traditional dance.