

Stories from the Mother Lake

- Life, Arts and Culture of **Shiga** -



COOL
SHIGA

A collection of
COOL SHIGA articles
from 2018 to 2019



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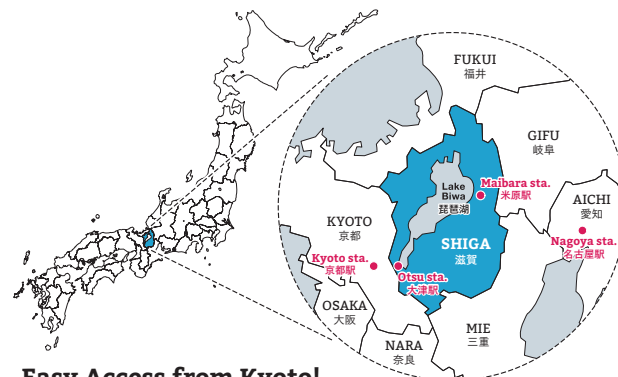
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Stories from the Mother Lake - Life, Arts and Culture of Shiga -

About Shiga 滋賀県について

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 to communities 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. Since long ago when Shiga was known as Omi Province, the area has been a junction between East and West Japan, now seen by its historic sites such as temples and castle ruins, as well as many enchanting traditional towns.

日本列島のほぼ中央、古都京都の北東に位置する滋賀県。日本最大の湖「琵琶湖」を有する滋賀県では、水と共に生きる人々の知恵から生まれた独特の食文化、産業、暮らしが古くから培われてきました。豊かな水と自然が織りなす美しい風景は多くの芸術家を魅了し、また交通の要所としても栄えたこの地には、歴史ある寺社や城跡など、情緒ある町並みが大切に保存されています。



Easy Access from Kyoto!

京都からのアクセスも便利！



By SHINKANSEN

- **Kyoto Sta.** to Maibara Sta. in about 20 min.
JR京都駅からJR米原駅まで約20分
- **Nagoya Sta.** to Maibara Sta. in about 27 min.
名古屋駅から米原駅まで約27分



By JR TRAIN

- **Kyoto Sta.** to Otsu Sta. in about 9 min.
JR京都駅からJR大津駅まで約9分



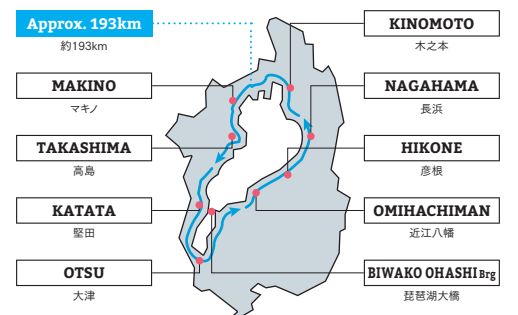
BIWAICHI

- Cycling around Lake Biwa -

ビワイチ ～自転車で琵琶湖をめぐる～

Biwaichi is a cycling route of approximately 200 km around Lake Biwa. In 2019, the route was designated as one of Japan's National Cycling Routes. According to the pace or level of cyclist, lanes are separated to allow a comfortable cycling journey while enjoying the scenery of the lake. There are also numerous points of interest along the route where you can dig deeper into local culture and history. Finishing the entire route in a single day is a good challenge, but spending 2 to 3 days at a slower pace is recommended for a more relaxing immersion into nature, or exploring more of the local food and culture.

琵琶湖の周囲約200kmを自転車で1周するのが「ビワイチ」。2019年、日本を代表する魅力的なサイクリングルートとして、「ナショナルサイクルルート」に認定されました。走行レベルに応じて低速・上級と、2つのコースに合わせた通行空間も整備され、琵琶湖を感じながら快適にサイクリングが楽しめます。沿道には昔ながらの生活文化が残る場所や貴重な歴史遺産も点在。湖畔を走るだけでなく、自然や文化、食など、滋賀県の奥深い魅力を体感しながらゆっくりと2～3日かけて走るのがおすすめです。

BIWAICHI
CYCLING NAVIBIWAICHI
Cycling around Lake Biwa Japan
<https://www.biwako1.jp>BIWAKO VISITORS
BUREAU
<https://en.biwako-visitors.jp/>

Chapter 1

Lake Biwa, the Origin of Shiga Life and Culture

At the heart of Japan, in Shiga Prefecture, lies Lake Biwa, the nation's largest lake.

It's been referred to as the "Mother Lake" since ancient times, as it nurtured both nature and culture. As this diverse culture grew and flourished in Shiga's rich natural environment, a deep connection with water became apparent in the unique development of everything from food traditions to religion, arts, and culture. For instance, the Lake appears as a recurring theme in all local art forms, as can be seen in local museums and performance spaces such as the lakefront art theater, Biwako Hall.

滋賀の中央に鎮座する、日本最大の湖、「琵琶湖」。

滋賀の人々は琵琶湖を「母なる湖」と呼び、ともに生きてきました。

滋賀県には、琵琶湖を中心とした豊かな自然やその琵琶湖によって育まれた食文化、水の信仰と深く関わる文化財があります。また、琵琶湖を望むびわ湖ホールで創造される舞台芸術や琵琶湖にまつわる美術作品などが多く生み出されており、過去から現在まで連なる多様な文化があふれています。



Okishima, among the rare freshwater islands of the world that are still inhabited by a community of residents.
世界でも珍しい湖上の有人島である沖島。

Life and Prayer with Water

水と祈りの文化



Spiritual gateway of Lake Biwa at the floating torii gate of Shirahige Shrine in Takashima.
琵琶湖上にそびえる神秘的な雰囲気のある「白鬚神社」の大鳥居です。



Mt. Ibuki in Maibara. Worshipped since long ago as a sacred mountain and home of water deities.
滋賀県米原市。雄大に佇む「伊吹山」には水の神が棲まうとされ、昔から崇拝されてきました。



Annual Buddhist ritual, Isaki-no-Saotobi, in Omihachiman is a unique ceremony with a history believed to date back nearly 1,000 years.
修行僧が琵琶湖に飛び込む「伊崎の掉飛び」。「再生」を願う行事として約1,000年続くと言われています。



The Shinto ritual, Yatsugasaki-shinji, of Hyozu-taisha Shrine in Yasu takes place annually in December.
毎年12月の真冬に行われる「八ヶ崎神事」は、野洲市五条にある兵主大社の伝統行事です。

Chapter II COOL SHIGA articles from 2019

Gastronomy
of Shiga

Unique geography and year-round humidity gave rise to the development of a rich local food culture here in Shiga since the historic days of Omi.

滋賀の食文化

独特の地形と年間を通して湿度が高いという特徴から、滋賀県には、古くより発酵文化が根付いています。



FUNAZUSHI

A Genesis of Sushi Born from Lake Biwa

The etymology of the word “sushi” first meant “sour rice,” and the cuisine itself has roots in a primitive form of sushi called *narezushi*, made of raw fish fermented with rice and salt. Shiga’s delicacy, *funazushi* (“carp sushi”), is the dominant local variety of *narezushi*, and is a version made with *funa*, or carp, caught from Lake Biwa. In recent times, funazushi has increasingly drawn attention at home and abroad as both a power food and local delicacy.

寿司の元祖、鮒寿司

「寿司」の語源は「酸っぱい飯」で、米を発酵させて酸っぱくした「なれずし」を意味します。「なれずし」の中でも琵琶湖でとれたフナを米と塩で漬け、熟成させて作る「鮒寿司」は滋賀県の風土が生んだ珍味。近年では美容と健康に良いパワーフードとして世界中で知られ始めています。



During the funazushi-making process.
鮒ずしを漬け込んでいる様子。



A pastoral landscape.
暮らしのそばにある田園風景。

Eaten as a Festive Dish and Local Delicacy

The taste of funazushi can vary from year to year or even across containers within the same batch, depending on slight changes in weather, storage location, etc. since the fermentation is activated by bacteria in the air.

In spring, carp are caught from the lake and pickled with salt, and in summer are put into tubs with steamed rice. Fermentation is complete before the year's end, so it became a local area tradition for people to put out a spread of funazushi at the feast during the New Year family gathering.

ハレの席で食べる鮒寿司

鮒寿司は空気中の菌等によって発酵が進むため、環境の違いでひと桶ごとに味が変わります。春に琵琶湖でとれたニゴロブナを塩漬にし、夏にごはんに漬け込む。それをお正月の家族が集まるハレの席で食べるのが昔からの習慣です。



Funa (carp) caught from Lake Biwa in early spring.
春先に琵琶湖で獲れるニゴロブナを用意。



Funazushi making process:
stuffing carp with steamed rice.
手作業でニゴロブナにお米を詰めている様子。

OMI RICE

Grown with Blessings of Clear Water and Fertile Soil

Thanks to the abundance of water from the lake and surrounding mountains, as well as rich soil filled with nutrients, the Omi Rice of Shiga has put us among the leading regions of rice production in Japan. Rice farming in Shiga practices pesticide reduction and organic farming methods, not only for quality improvement but also for environmental conservation, under the slogan, “Eat Eco Shiga,” which encourages the consumption of these eco-friendly agricultural products to support the Lake Biwa ecosystem.



清らかな水と大地の恵み「近江米」

周囲の山々からの豊かな水と、養分をたっぷり含む肥沃な土壌に恵まれた日本有数の米どころ滋賀県。「食べることで、びわ湖を守る」をキャッチフレーズに、減農薬や有機栽培など、品質向上と環境保全を目指す米づくりにも力を入れています。

OMI BEEF

Top Wagyu Brand with a Long History

Omi Beef is acknowledged as one of the three finest wagyu beef varieties in Japan. It has a long history stretching back nearly 400 years, when it was prepared as a specialty for shogun and daimyo nobles of the medieval era. Many Shiga restaurants serve delicious Omi Beef in a variety of dishes and styles such as steaks, sukiyaki, and shabu-shabu.



日本で最古の歴史を持つブランド和牛「近江牛」

日本三大和牛のひとつ「近江牛」。約400年前より、かつての将軍や大名に献上されていたといわれる銘品。県内のレストランでは、近江牛をステーキ、すき焼き、しゃぶしゃぶなど様々な味わい方で提供しています。

The Origin of Tea in Japan

Arrival and Growth of Tea Culture

Did you know the first tea plant was planted in Shiga? The story of tea in Japan dates back around 1,200 years. Saicho, the founder of the Tendai Sect of Buddhism, brought tea seeds back from China and planted them somewhere near his Tendai monastery at Mt. Hiei, which is now part of Otsu City, Shiga. This planting became recognized as the moment that tea was first introduced to Japan, and local tea farming has thrived here to this day, now called Omi Tea, which is some of Japan's finest green tea.

日本茶のルーツ

実は、日本で最初にお茶が植えられたのは滋賀県でした。お茶が日本に伝わったのは約1,200年前。当時の日本は仏教を学ぶ留学僧を中国に派遣していました。その中で、のちに天台宗の宗祖となる最澄が中国から茶の種を持ち帰り、滋賀県にある比叡山の麓に植えたのが日本茶の起源と言われています。

SHIGARAKI

Agriculture and Art from Ancient Soil

良質な土に恵まれた、お茶と陶器の町「信楽」

Vibrant tea fields of Asamiya Tea, Shigaraki.
信楽の茶畑。

Asamiya Tea

Premium Tea from a Perfect Environment

Asamiya Tea from Shigaraki Town, in the southern region of Shiga, is a specific variety of Omi Tea known for its superb quality and aroma, enabled by its ideal growing environment on mountain farms where the temperature drops down at night and fresh clear water passes down through the granite rock. Asamiya has recently drawn international attention allowing more tea lovers worldwide to enjoy this local specialty.

朝宮茶

信楽の「朝宮茶」は、朝晩の寒暖の差が厳しい環境と、地層から湧き出る良質な水に育まれ、香りが良く美味しい緑茶の最高峰として知られます。近年では茶葉の輸出も始まり、海外に住む緑茶ファンの間でも好評です。



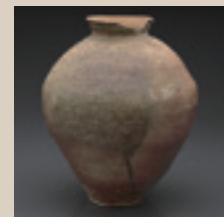
Some of the many uniquely designed tanuki statues.
作り手ごとに趣向を凝らしたたぬきの置物が並ぶ。

Shigaraki Ware

from one of the Six Ancient Kilns of Japan

日本六古窯のひとつ「信楽焼」

The fertile grounds which nurture the quality tea of Shigaraki are also at the heart of the town's other industry, pottery known as Shigaraki ware. This local craft began around 700 years ago when people made kilns by digging burn pits in the ground for large items such as pots and jars. Traditional Shigaraki ware is defined by a raw, earthy texture and warm scarlet glaze.



古くから良質なお茶を育み続けた信楽の土は、製陶にも生かされました。約700年前、地中に掘った穴に火を入れる穴窯によって、壺や甕（かめ）などの大物づくりが行われたのが信楽焼の始まりといわれています。信楽の土から生まれる温かい「緋色」が信楽焼の特徴です。

A DIVERSITY OF SHIGA CERAMICS

信楽焼以外にもある 滋賀の焼き物

While Shigaraki is undoubtedly Shiga's most famous producer of ceramics, it is by no means alone in the craft. With a long and vibrant history of local art, culture, and religion, Shiga has been home to many artists and craftspeople through the ages. Here are a few more of Shiga's notable ceramic styles.

古くから焼き物づくりが行われてきた滋賀県。地域ごとに異なる風土や歴史、信仰や生き生きとした暮らしの中から様々な焼き物が生まれました。



ZEZE WARE
WABI SABI MADE FOR TEA
膳所焼



SHIMODA WARE
POPULAR WARE FOR EVERYDAY USE
下田焼



KOTO WARE
A CASTLE TOWN'S LEGENDARY KILN
湖東焼

Ancient Trails Transporting Culture and Cuisine

Shiga, historically known as Omi, long served as an essential junction point for a number of old trails, or *kaido*, connecting various key pre-modern regions of Japan such as Edo (old Tokyo) and imperial Kyoto. Such trails gave rise to many *shukuba-machi*, known in English as post towns or lodging towns, including Otsu-juku, Kusatsu-juku and Kinomoto-juku. 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.

食・文化を運んだいにしへの旅路

かつて近江と呼ばれた滋賀県は、江戸と京を中心に全国に伸びる交通路「街道」が数多く通る交通の要所でした。木之本宿や草津宿、大津宿など旅の拠点となる「宿場町」では、日本中の人や物、情報が行き交い、様々な文化が形作られました。醤油蔵、酒蔵などの商家が栄え、近江の地を通じて全国に運ばれていきました。



Traditional townscape of Kinomoto, Nagahama, a former *shukuba-machi* post town.
長浜市木之本町 | 宿場町として栄えた情緒ある町並み。

KINOMOTO-JUKU

Brewery Town that Thrived on the Kaido

街道沿いで栄えた醸造の宿場町「木之本宿」



Shoyu

The Foundation of Japanese Cuisine

Kinomoto-juku is one of the aforementioned shukuba-machi, along the Hokkoku Kaido route in Nagahama, Shiga. Breweries for 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 brewing and the trade hub providing ready access to local ingredients.

Shoyu, or soy sauce, is the seasoning base for dipping sauces, broths, cooking and much more. The only ingredients for shoyu are soy beans, wheat, and salt, which are then fermented and brewed from active cultures such as *koji*.

Even today, annual preparations begin every winter in the *kura* warehouses of this historic town's local breweries.

日本食に欠かせない調味料「醤油」

滋賀県長浜市にある木之本宿。ここは、伊吹山系からの伏流水に恵まれた地です。冬の寒さが厳しく、街道沿いで原料が手に入りやすかったことなどから、古くから酒蔵や醤油蔵などの醸造業が栄えてきました。

日本の伝統調味料である醤油は、付け、かけ、煮炊き全てに使える万能調味料。大豆、小麦、塩を原料とする発酵食品で麹菌などのさまざまな微生物たちの働きによって熟成されます。情緒ある街並みの中、歴史ある蔵の奥で、醤油の仕込みが始まります。



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 made fortunes running stores in big cities such as Edo, Osaka, and Kyoto. Several of Japan's large corporations have roots in the Omi Shonin.

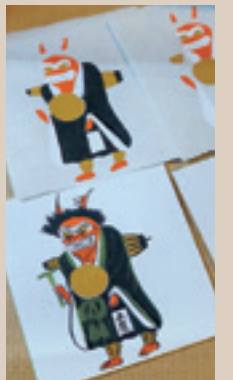
街道を知り尽くした「近江商人」

中世から近代にかけて、滋賀県から全国各地に通じる街道を縦横無尽に行き来し活躍したのが「近江商人」。天秤棒の両端に特産品を下げて売り歩くのが典型的な行商スタイルで、江戸、大阪、京都などに進出し、大商店を経営するほどの成功を収めました。現代日本を代表する大企業の中には、近江商人をルーツとするものも数多くあります。

OTSU-E

Souvenir Art of the Tokaido

Otsu-e is a type of folk art from Otsu originating about 400 years ago. Beginning as Buddhist art, the practice started as paintings of the Buddha which used printmaking techniques for mass production, making them more available to common people. As they were durable and easy to pack, they soon became popular souvenirs for travelers along the historic Tokaido trail.



街道のお土産「大津絵」

大津絵は、今からおよそ400年前に滋賀県大津市で生まれた民俗絵画。当時、高価で庶民が手にすることのできなかった仏像の代わりに、簡易な仏画を描いて売られるようになったのが大津絵の始まりです。腐らず壊れずかさばらない大津絵は、旅のお土産に最適でした。

SAKE IN SHIGA

A Reflection of Nature's Bounty

Shiga has historically been an important hub of Japan for both land and water transportation. Thanks to abundant clear water and an ideal rice-growing environment, many sake breweries also thrived here in lakeside towns and along the historic trails, Tokaido and Nakasendo. Some of the breweries still running today within Shiga have an operational history between 100 and 300 years long.

豊かな自然が育む近江の酒

滋賀県は、水陸の交通の要所でもありました。日本酒の主成分は「水」と「米」。古より湖岸の町や東海道、中山道沿いの宿場周辺に多くの造り酒屋が栄え、現在でも100～300年もの歴史を紡ぐ酒蔵が点在しています。



Sustainable Living Blessed by Pure Water

Cooling vegetables in a Harie District household kabata.
針江地区にて、かばたで冷やされている野菜。



Waterways fed by mountain waters, and shared by the Harie community.
山脈からの湧き水が流れる川。針江ではこの水が共同で利用されている。

The Harie District of Takashima

水への感謝から生まれた究極にエコな暮らし
— 高島市針江地区 —

This *satoyama* environment of life in harmony with nature offers a tranquil atmosphere and scenic views of traditional village life as you stroll down the street admiring the traditional *yakisugi* charred cedar siding, or the contrast of red *bengara* stained beams against white plaster walls. Clear channels of spring water flow through the town in a system designed for sustainable balance with the local ecosystem that has lasted centuries. The waterways also connect to each house with a *kabata*, or a basin for everyday household use which is fed by spring water supply and overflows back into the channels. The water keeps a steady year-round temperature of about 13 degrees. Residents use *kabata* for cooking, doing dishes, and cooling their farm vegetables. In the *kabata* overflow area, you will meet the other residents, the local carp. They play a part in keeping the water clear by eating algae and food residue.

スギの焼き板張りの黒い外壁、漆喰の白壁にベンガラ塗りの赤い柱が映える古い町並みが今も残される高島市の針江地区。透明な水で満ちた水路が町中を巡るこの地域には、湧き水を生活用水として使う「かばた」という昔ながらの文化があります。湧き水の温度は年間を通して13度。各家に一つずつあるかばたで、野菜を冷やしたり、調理をしたり、食器を洗ったりするのがこの町の日常です。飼われているコイは、食器を洗って出る残飯や水中の藻を食べてくれるかばたの掃除係。

People believe the deity of water resides in *kabata*, so the New Year begins by gathering fresh water from the *kabata*, offering it at their family altar, and then making the New Year's *ozoni* dish, a soup with mochi and vegetables. The outer portion of *kabata* connect to the water channels shared by all the households, so everyone is careful to keep the water clean for each other, especially those who are further upstream. The mutual trust and care between residents help to ensure a pure sustainable ecosystem. Residents in this village strive to preserve traditional lifestyles by coexisting with nature, which includes sharing the waterways, not only with each other but also with the fishes and creatures as the water connects with surrounding streams and rice fields. Therefore, washing in *kabata* is done only with environmentally-friendly detergents made from recycled biodegradable oils. Keeping the environmental balance sustainable for all life ensures preservation of other local traditions as well, such as making *funazushi* every year. Utilizing water and nature within the community while carefully ensuring a healthy local environment enables a sustainable balance for the people, and moreover, for all of the life in the area's surrounding ecosystem.

かばたには水神様が祀られており、毎年元旦には若水をここからいたいて、まず神仏に供え、お雑煮を作って1年が始まります。各家のかばたは水路で繋がっているのも、上流の人は次の人のことを思っているように水を流す、下流の人は上流の人を信頼して流れてきた水を使うという、お互いを思いやる暮らしが昔から変わらず続けられています。針江で暮らす人々は、田んぼや水路に魚の通り道を作り、天ぷら油を再利用した生きものに安全な洗剤を使い、人間とさまざまな動植物が共生できる場を作ることで鮒寿司のような伝統的な食文化も絶やさず守り続けてきました。美しい水や自然を守りながら利用し、そこで生きる命をつなぎ、自らもその循環の一部として暮らす。そんな人々の営みが、昔から今も変わらず続けられています。

Chapter III COOL SHIGA articles from 2018

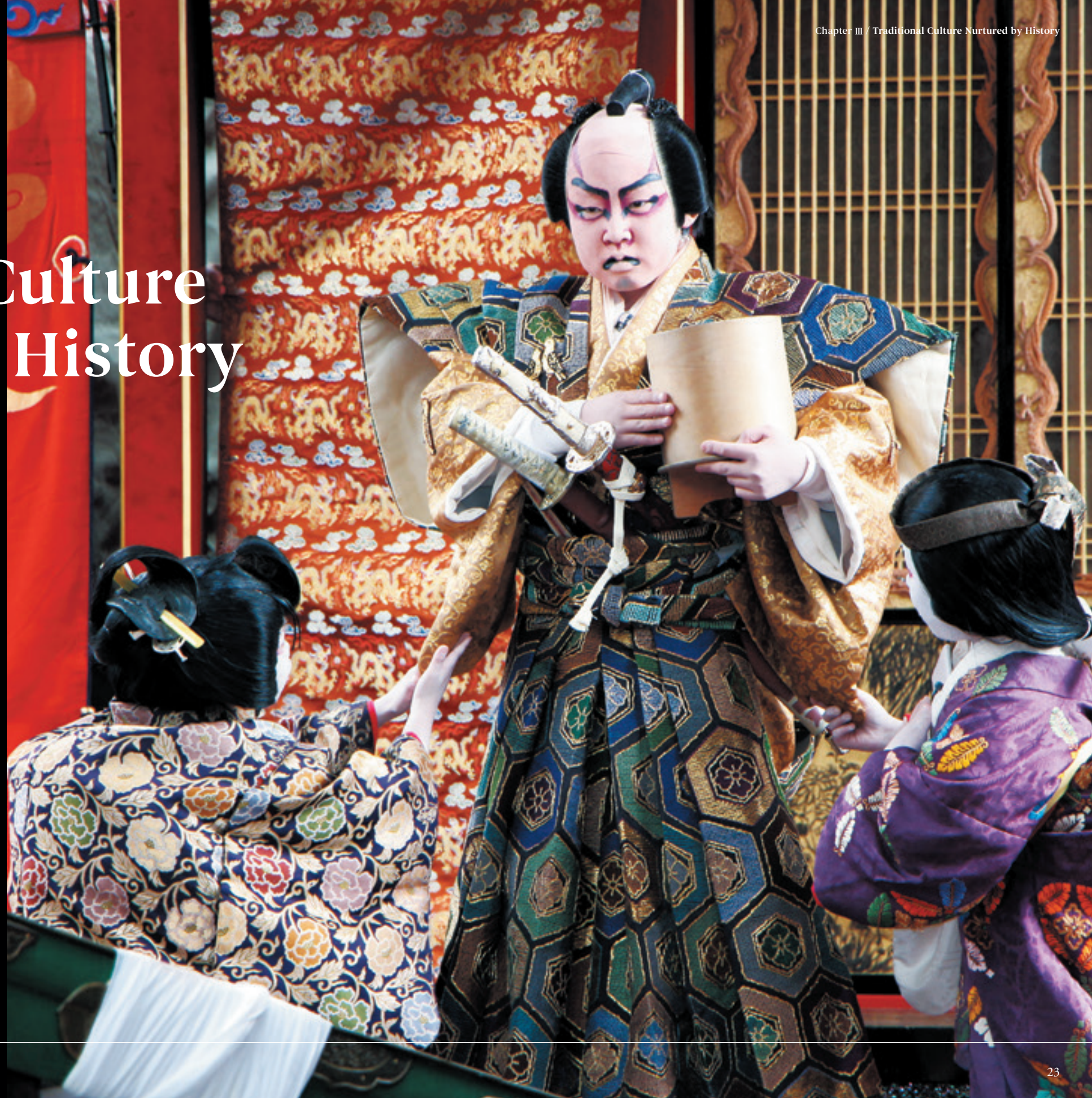
Traditional Culture Nurtured by History

Nagahama Hikiyama Festival of Children's Kabuki

Among Shiga's many ancient festivals, one of the oldest and largest is the Nagahama Hikiyama Festival which has been held in Nagahama City for over 450 years. It takes place every April at Nagahama Hachimangu Shrine, which enshrines the community's guardian deities. The ornate floats of the festival have been called "moving museums" as they showcase stunning Japanese craftsmanship through ornamental metalwork, wood carving and sculpture, and other traditional handcrafts. The highlight of the festival is seen on the float stages, where kabuki is performed by children aged 5 to 12.

滋賀の伝統文化「長浜曳山祭 子ども歌舞伎」

古くからの祭礼行事が多数残る滋賀の中でも、有数の歴史と規模を誇る行事の一つ、長浜曳山祭。長浜市の氏神である長濱八幡宮の春の祭礼に合わせて毎年4月に行われ、曳山と呼ばれる車輪付きの出し物が街を練り歩きます。飾金具や彫刻など日本の伝統工芸の技が結集され「動く美術館」と称される曳山と、5～12歳位の男児が演じる「子ども狂言（歌舞伎）」が見どころです。





Kuroda Kannon-ji Temple Hall, Nagahama.
長浜市「黒田観音寺」。



Nyoirin Kannon / Ishiyama-dera Temple.
如意輪観音半跏像（前立尊）石山寺所蔵。

THE VILLAGES OF KANNON

A Life with the Deity of Mercy

Bordering both Kyoto and Nara, the historic centers of Japanese Buddhism, Shiga is home to many Buddhist sites and relics. The Kohoku (lit. “lake north”) region of the prefecture in particular is known as the “Villages of Kannon.” These numerous small village communities have preserved their local Kannon statues depicting the Buddhist deity of mercy since ancient times. While monks are usually the ones acting as primary caretakers for Japanese temples, in these villages, that task has been taken on by the local residents themselves for centuries. An example of the region’s unique culture of Kannon devotion is seen in the medieval Warring States period, when the villagers removed their temples’ Kannon statues and hid them in river beds or underground to protect them from fires and looting.

滋賀の人々と仏「観音の里」

滋賀県には仏像が多数あり、中でも「観音の里」と呼ばれる湖北エリアは人々の生活の中に当たり前前に神仏が存在する全国でも珍しい地域。かつて戦乱の焼き討ちにあった際には、住職と村人たちが観音像を守るため川底に沈めたり、地中に埋めるなどして難を逃れてきたと伝わるほど、人々と仏との距離が密接です。



The Eleven-Headed Kannon statue at Shakudo-ji Temple,
Ishimichi Village of Nagahama.
長浜市「石違寺」の十一面観音立像。



Children walking home outside the Kannon hall of
Okamoto Shrine, Odani Yono Village of Nagahama.
長浜市「岡本神社」。人々の暮らしに信仰が根付く。

ISHIYAMA-DERA TEMPLE

Sacred Home to a Statue Seen Only Once Every 33 Years

Among over 3,000 temples in Shiga, Ishiyama-dera Temple is one of the oldest, having been constructed during the reign of Emperor Shomu (701-749). The temple’s principal deity, Nyoirin Kannon, is the only Buddhist statue to feature a *chokufu*, an imperial seal which requires permission from the Emperor before any public unveilings. The figure is an impressive 5-meter-tall statue housed in a small *zushi* shrine within the main temple hall. Public viewing only takes place once every 33 years, or in the year following a new emperor’s ascendance.

33年に一度しか見られない石山寺の秘仏

滋賀県には3,000を超す寺院がありますが、中でも大津市にある「石山寺」は、聖武天皇（701-749）の時代に開創した歴史ある寺院。御本尊の如意輪観世音菩薩は、像高約5mある巨大な厨子の中に納められた秘仏で、日本唯一の勅封のため、開帳には天皇の許可が必要。33年に一度、または新天皇即位の翌年にのみ開帳されています。



Todaimon (East Main Gate) of Ishiyama-dera Temple, Otsu.
大津市「石山寺」の東大門。



The temple is located along the Seta River,
the only outlet of Lake Biwa.
琵琶湖から唯一外へ流れ出る瀬田川沿いに建つ。

HIKONE CASTLE

A Cultural Asset Boasting 400 Years of History

Hikone Castle has around 400 years of history since its construction to serve as the residence of the Ii clan, the daimyo feudal lords who governed the Hikone region during the Edo period (1603-1867). Although many Japanese castles were burned down in battles or dismantled, this castle is one of just a few that remain as they stood at their construction centuries ago. The *tenshu* (castle tower), *tsuke-yagura* (connecting tower), and *tamon-yagura* (hall turrets) are important cultural assets listed as National Treasures of especially high cultural and academic value. Together with other castles such as the World Heritage Himeji Castle, it is known as one of the five National Treasure castles of Japan.

400年の歴史を誇る文化財「彦根城」

江戸時代に彦根を治めた大名・井伊家の居城として築城され約400年もの歴史を持つ彦根城。戦で焼け落ち、解体される城が多い日本で、築城当時の姿を留める数少ない城。中でも、天守、附櫓と多聞櫓は、国宝に指定され、世界遺産の姫路城などと合わせて“日本の国宝五城”と呼ばれています。



A Castle Remaining from Ancient Scenery

Tracing the History of Hikone Castle

彦根城の歴史を辿る



Genkyu-en Garden of Hikone Castle.
彦根城「玄宮楽々園」。

In addition to elements shared by many Japanese castles, the construction of Hikone Castle is also replete with unique ingenious features to keep enemies out, such as *nobori-ishigaki* (vertical stone walls) and *ohorikiri* (dry moat). Down below the main keep is an annex to the castle, the Keyaki Goten Palace, once the residence of the daimyo, as well as the magnificent Genkyuen Japanese Garden, where you can be transported back in time to an enchanting life of daimyo luxury that came with the newfound peace of a unified Japan in the Edo period.

彦根城の造りは、日本の近世城郭の基本的な構造に加え、登り石垣や大堀切など敵の侵入を阻む工夫を随所に取り入れた秀逸なものです。また、下屋敷・榎御殿と広大な日本庭園・玄宮園を有する「玄宮楽々園」では、戦のない時代を迎えた藩主たちの優雅な暮らしぶりに触れることもできます。



10-meter-high castle wall.
10m以上に及ぶ石垣の上に築かれている。



Genkyu-en Garden tea house.
彦根城「鳳翔台」。



AKAZONAE

The Valor of the Ii Clan's Red Armor

武勇を誇る「井伊の赤備え」

Kacchu refers to the set of armor and helmet worn to protect oneself in battle. The Ii clan troops are known for their characteristic vermillion red armor, worn by all of the clan from the head down to the retainers. The uniform of red armor is known as "Ii no Akazonae" (lit. Ii clan's red armor). It continued unchanged through the Edo period (1603-1867), and the fully red Akazonae style was handed down to future ages as a symbol of strong troops.

敵から身を守るために着ける鎧や兜などの「甲冑」。井伊家の部隊は、当主から家臣まで軍装を朱色で統一した「井伊の赤備え」と呼ばれる特徴があります。江戸時代を通じて変わらず、後世に武勇の誉れの象徴として語り継がれました。

NINJA

—Masters of Skill and Knowledge—

忍者 — 技術と知識を備えたプロ集団 —

The basis of the modern *ninja* interpretation is the people called *shinobi* who operated in the villages of Koka in Shiga prefecture and Iga in Mie prefecture from the Muromachi period (1336-1573) into the Edo period (1603-1867). Their primary missions were to safely gather and retrieve information. Their true missions were to return home safely with information. They were elite groups, possessing skills and information-gathering techniques that far exceeded the everyday knowledge of the time. The villages were surrounded by highways that brought in information and goods, leading to cultural development, and many temples of Tendai and Shugendo religion that taught reading and writing. This allowed the villages to produce many people well versed in the pen and the sword, and the legends that they were active on battlefields near and far are still passed down today.

忍者の元となったのは、室町から江戸時代頃にかけて活躍した滋賀県甲賀と三重県伊賀の里の“忍”と呼ばれた人々。常識を卓越した技術や情報力を持つ精鋭集団で、彼らの目的は情報を持ち帰ることでした。里の周辺が、街道を経て情報や物資が集まる文化的に進んだ地であり、読み書きを教える寺院が多数あったことで、文武ともに優れた人材が多く育ち、各地の戦などで活躍したと語り継がれます。





A Sacred World Heritage Site Watching Over Lake Biwa

Hieizan Enryaku-ji Temple

Hieizan, or Mt. Hiei, covers vast slopes overlooking Lake Biwa to the east, and the city of Kyoto to the west. Atop this sacred mountain sits Enryaku-ji Temple, an important cornerstone of Japanese Buddhism. The temple's history dates back to 788, when Saicho, the historic monk and founder of Buddhism's Tendai Sect, built a thatched hut for his ascetic practices there.

The main temple building still houses the holy flame, or "eternal light," which was lit by Saicho about 1,200 years ago, and has burned continuously without ever being extinguished. The temple and monastery encompass over 100 buildings and facilities around the entire mountain. Most of Japan's modern Buddhist sects branched off from the Tendai Sect, and many notable monks who founded such sects had first trained here. This is how the temple became known as the "mother mountain of Japanese Buddhism." In 1994, it was registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

琵琶湖を見守る世界遺産「比叡山延暦寺」

東には琵琶湖、西には京都の町並みを一望できる広大な山、比叡山。その山全域を境内とするのが日本仏教の聖地・比叡山延暦寺です。788年に天台宗祖の最澄が自身の修行の場として比叡山に草庵を結んだことから始まりました。本堂では、約1,200年前に最澄が灯して以来一度も消えない「不滅の法灯」が現在も大切に守り伝えられています。山の中には修行と折りの場である寺院やお堂が100棟以上も点在し、かつては日本仏教各宗派の開祖達もここで修行に励んだことから、延暦寺は「日本仏教の母山」と呼ばれるようになりました。1994年、延暦寺はユネスコ世界文化遺産に登録されました。



At this historic sanctuary of Japanese Buddhism, a variety of monastic practices are still observed today. We interviewed Saiyu Hoshino, a senior monk at Enryaku-ji Temple, about one of their key practices, *zazen shikan* (lit. sitting meditation to stop and observe), which has continued for 1,200 years.

歴史と伝統が色濃く残る延暦寺では、現在でも様々な形の修行が続けられています。その中でも1,200年続く「坐禅止観（ざぜんしかん）」について延暦寺の住職・星野最宥（さいゆう）さんにお話を伺いました。

- What is *zazen shikan*?

坐禅止観とはどういった修行法でしょうか？

Hoshino: Zazen shikan is a type of Buddhist meditation practice in which the flux of your emotions is halted as you look inward to balance your posture, breathing, and mind.

星野：身（姿勢）・息（呼吸）・心の3つを調えるため、浮き沈みする心を止めて、自分自身を見つめなおす瞑想法のひとつです。

- What exactly is the meditative state?

瞑想とはどのような状態でしょうか？

Hoshino: Imagine, for example, that you have a glass of muddy water. If you leave it for a while, the mud sinks down to the bottom and the water on top becomes clear. This is the image that we aim to achieve with zazen shikan meditation. To stabilize the sway of emotions, we sit with proper posture, stop the body's motion, and breathe smoothly.

星野：例えば、泥水はしばらく置いておくと下に泥の層ができて、上の方がだんだん澄んできます。そのようなイメージを目指すのが坐禅止観の瞑想です。心の揺れを止めるために、滑らかな呼吸で体そのものの動きを止め、理想的なフォームで座ります。

- How long does a meditation session last?

修行はどのくらいの期間おこなうのでしょうか？

Hoshino: Sessions for visitors last about 20 minutes, but as monks, we continue this practice for 90 consecutive days in solitude. We sit for the entire day, breaking only for meals and bathing.

星野：一般の方の坐禅体験は20分ほどですが、私たちはひとつの修行として90日間、お堂の中で一人っきりで取り組みます。食事とお風呂のとき以外はずっと座っています。



- And, this practice has continued for 1,200 years.

それが1,200年続く修行法なのですね。

Hoshino: Our sect has a saying, "place over endeavor." This means that endeavor is important for practice, but the environment is even more important. Our temple is on top of a mountain, so it can take half an hour just to get down. I think that this environment has allowed the practice to continue for 1,200 years.

星野：心を依り所にするための一つの手段として、場所や環境も大事と言う意味の「依心（えしん）より、依所（えしょ）」という言葉がありますが、延暦寺は比叡山の上で、下に駆け降りても20、30分はかかるお山です。そんな場所だからこそ、修行法として1,200年も守られてきたのではないのでしょうか。

Meditation may not be something that tangibly alters or improves your life. Rather, it may even be called unproductive; yet, it polishes your spirit by helping you devote time for yourself. According to Saiyu Hoshino, this simple goal may be the true essence of zazen shikan. Zazen meditation is considered to be the root of mindfulness, which has become a popular practice for refreshing the mind or improving concentration.

坐禅したからといって仕事が進むわけでもなくカタチがあるものでもない、坐禅とは非生産的なもの。しかし、「自分のためだけ」という非常に贅沢な時間を使って自分を磨いていく。そういう一つのきっかけが坐禅止観ではないかと話す延暦寺の住職・星野最宥さん。仏教の座禅はマインドフルネスの起源ともいわれ、現在ではリフレッシュや、集中力向上のために実践する人も増えています。



Chapter IV

Showcasing Shiga's Arts and Culture

Established in 1998, Biwako Hall is a lakefront theatre for the performing arts that hosts a wide array of magnificent performances including opera, ballet, classical music, and theatre plays. The state-of-the-art facilities feature exceptional acoustics and stage equipment, particularly for opera, and have received both domestic and international acclaim.

滋賀の文化芸術

1998年に開館した「びわ湖ホール」は、琵琶湖畔に建つ芸術劇場で、オペラ、バレエ、クラシックコンサート、演劇など、ジャンルを超えて多彩な感動のステージを届けています。特にオペラ公演では、細部にまでこだわり抜いた音響設備と舞台機構を有するなど国内外から高い評価を受けています。



Shiga Museum of Art Reopening

Extensive Collections Including Art Brut Works

「滋賀県立美術館」がリニューアルオープン！アール・ブリュットもある多様なコレクション

Formerly the Museum of Modern Art, Shiga, this museum, located in a lush park environment, will reopen on June 27th, 2021, after 4 years of extensive renovations. The diverse collections span an array of genres from modern, contemporary, and Art Brut to traditional Japanese painting, kimono, ceramics, and craft. The collection of American postwar modern art, featuring works of such artists as Mark Rothko, is a particular highlight, rivaling the quality of top national collections.

緑豊かな公園の中にある美術館が、4年間の改修工事を経て、2021年6月27日に再開館します。コレクションの特色は、日本の現代美術や日本画はもちろん、着物や陶磁器などの工芸、アール・ブリュットもあること。マーク・ロスコなどのアメリカの戦後美術については、日本国内でもトップクラスのクオリティを誇ります。



What is ART BRUT?

Essentially meaning "raw art" in French, the term Art Brut is used to describe an artform that relies on expression driven solely by internal impulse, without regard for expectations or convention. Shiga has continually been at the forefront of support for Art Brut artists and activities, with many local works being created in places such as social welfare facilities.



Shinichi Sawada, *Untitled*,
Undated, Shiga Museum of Art.
澤田真一《無題》制作年不詳
滋賀県立美術館蔵

アール・ブリュットとは？

フランス語で「生(き)の芸術」という意味のアール・ブリュットは、美術のスタイルや伝統、他者の評価や流行に左右されることなく、自身の湧きあがる衝動そのままに表現した芸術です。滋賀県では、先駆的な取組が進められ、福祉施設等における造形活動の中から多くの作品が生みだされています。

Shinichi Sawada, *Untitled*,
2011-12, Shiga Museum of Art.
澤田真一《無題》2011-2012年
滋賀県立美術館蔵

Distinctively Unique Art Museums of Shiga

個性的な美術・美術館



Many of Shiga's art museums also feature remarkable and unique architecture. For example, the MIHO MUSEUM (Koka City) has a "Shangri-La" inspired design, and the Sagawa Art Museum (Moriyama City) is often referred to as a "floating museum." A biannual international festival of contemporary art, the Biwako Biennale, also brings domestic and international visitors to Shiga for an exhibition where contemporary works are juxtaposed with the traditional Edo period *machiya* buildings in which they are displayed.

「桃源郷」をテーマに建築家のイオ・ミン・ペイが設計した「MIHO MUSEUM」（甲賀市）や、「水に浮かぶ美術館」とも称される「佐川美術館」（守山市）など、滋賀県内には特徴的な外観を持つ美術館があります。また、江戸時代の風情が色濃く残る町家などで2年に1度、開催される「BIWAKOビエンナーレ」は、国内外からも注目を集める現代美術の国際芸術祭です。



MIHO MUSEUM, designed by I. M. Pei. ミホミュージアム



Sagawa Art Museum 佐川美術館

Scenes of Culture in Shiga

滋賀発のカルチャー

The Sacred Place of Karuta

The Hyakunin-Isshu is an anthology of one hundred famous Japanese *waka* (a classical form of poetry), and it's also the name of a game that compiles these poems into a deck of cards. Since the Hyakunin-Isshu includes references to many locations in Shiga, Otsu City's Omi Jingu Shrine became known as the "sacred place of *karuta*." Each January, the national competitive karuta championships to determine the Meijin and Queen are held at the shrine's Omi Kangakukan hall. The shrine has recently attracted global attention for appearing as one of the main settings in *Chihayafuru*, an internationally-acclaimed anime about the world of competitive karuta. Subsequently, international tournaments also took place at Omi Jingu Shrine in November of 2018 and 2019, during which exciting matches were held between participants from all over the world.

かるたの聖地

百人一首かるたには滋賀県ゆかりの歌が多くあり、大津市の「近江神宮」は"かるたの聖地"ともいわれ、境内にある近江勸学館では、例年競技かるたの日本一を決める、名人位・クイーン位決定戦が開催されています。また、近江神宮は、競技かるたを題材として世界的にも人気となったアニメ「ちはやふる」の舞台としても知られています。2018年、2019年には、競技かるた世界大会が開催され、熱い戦いが繰り広げられました。



Shigaraki Pottery Workshops

In southern Shiga's Koka City, the pottery town of Shigaraki is known as one of Japan's six ancient kilns, producing Shigaraki ware, a distinctive earthenware recognizable by its simple textures and earthy tones. In addition to the town's many Shigaraki ware shops and galleries, there are also several pottery workshops available around the town, both with and without using a pottery wheel.

信楽焼の陶芸体験

滋賀県の南部、甲賀市信楽町で作られる信楽焼は、長い歴史を誇る技法と素朴な風合いが人気です。手びねりや電動ろくろでの作陶など本格的な陶芸体験が実施されています。





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街道の歴史を伝える建造物

**“Scenes from Shiga”
Postcards**



Komasaoka Magaibutsu
(Buddhist stone relief carvings), Ritto.
栗東市「狛坂磨崖仏」。



Autumn colors at Zensui-ji
Temple, Konan.
湖南市「善水寺」。



Wisteria at Sandai Shrine,
Kusatsu.
草津市「三大神社の藤」。

Postcard

Postcard

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Stories from the Mother Lake

- Life, Arts and Culture of Shiga -

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Cover Photo: Sannou style torii of Hiyoshi Taisha Shrine at the lakefront of Sakamoto, Otsu.
大津市坂本にある「日吉大社」の山王鳥居。



滋賀文化プログラム



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The floating torii gate of Shirahige Shrine, Takashima. 高島市にある白鬚神社の大鳥居。



Some of the attractions to enjoy when visiting Shiga. (photo courtesy of Biwako Visitors Bureau)
滋賀の様々な観光スポット。(写真提供:公益社団法人びわこビジターズビューロー)