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The Times
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DOMO ARIGATO 100 TIMES OVER



CENTENARY SMILE: Members of the Koenji Kikusuren awa odori group share the stage with children from the Orlando Children's Home in Soweto during a performance at the home. This year marks 100 years of official relations between South Africa and Japan
Picture: THYS DULLAART

Japanese dancers hold Soweto children spellbound

VUYO MKIZE

THE COLOURFUL kimonos worn by Japanese dancers, the skilful interplay of dozens of hands in the air, and men with big brown drums hanging on their waists had 60 children at the Orlando Children's Home enthralled.

The children of the home, whose ages range from two weeks to 23 years, were treated to an exclusive performance by the Kikusuiren Awa dance group yesterday.

This year marks 100 years of official relations between South Africa and Japan. And, to mark the



EASTERN MAGIC. Japanese dancers perform at the Orlando Children's Home as part of the Japanese Embassy's outreach project. PICTURE: MATTHEWS BALOYI

centenary, half of the 30 dancers travelled from Japan to perform the Japanese dance Awa Odegi and to do a drum performance called Wadaiko at the State Theatre over the weekend.

The dancers visited the home in Soweto as part of their community outreach programme.

Togawa Hiroyuki, cultural second secretary at the Japanese Embassy said the embassy had enjoyed a long history with the home. In 1990, famous Japanese artist Katsuhiko Hibino had painted a mural there.

"We also have continued donat-

ing equipment to the home over the years," he said.

Miriam Mazibuko, director of the home, expressed her gratitude to the performers.

"We at the Orlando Children's Home have always considered ourselves great friends with the Japanese community. Every time people visit us, we feel special and that people care.

"The kids are so excited. Exposure to the international community and culture is so good for them - it broadens their minds to the outside world and educates them," Mazibuko said.



SILKY DRUMBEAT: A Japanese performance of a piece called *Awaodori*. Other pieces celebrate the delights of Japanese and other drumming.

Capital celebration of world's best at festival

TONIGHT REPORTER

THE ANNUAL Capital Arts Festival happening for the third time at the South African State Theatre is on from August 25 to September 7.

Boasting a cultural exchange of local and international productions and working with various embassies, this year the fest showcases talent from countries such as Italy, Argentina, Pakistan, India, Britain, America, Japan, Austria, Indonesia, Jamaica and China.

Highlights include *Conferenza Muta* from The Italian Institute of Culture in Pretoria. This is alternative theatre where the audience is plunged into complete darkness and the traditional experience of performance is altered, heightening hearing.

The resonance and beat of Taiko (drum) and Wadaiko (Japanese drum) has been regarded as the sound of the Japanese soul and has been a common feature of Japanese festivals since ancient times. The drumming group Tachibana Taiko "Hibikiza" will share the nature, history, culture and

heart of Japan in their performance.

Methapo Sounds from South Africa shares the stage with Charlie Vallow, a young jazz singer from Austria who grew up in Pretoria. Having trained her voice to classical jazz standards, she is now experimenting with new Afro-jazz rhythms and vibes.

The festival will also include the launch of *The Afghan Passage*, an honest and revealing debut work by Sandeep Kumar, a former consul of India, who wrote of his life-changing experiences and interactions as a diplomat in Afghanistan.

The 2010 Pula Concert will feature Sello Galane's *Free Kiba* repertoire, celebrating the 10 Years of Free Kiba in South Africa, as a symbolic celebration of rain, growth, prosperity and peace. Bring your own umbrella, or buy one at the door.

● There's loads more at the festival including inspired exhibitions and opera. For finer details and the full programme, go to www.statetheatre.co.za. Bookings at Computicket

www.movies@woodlands.co.za

012 997 6026

13 AUG - 19 AUG

STEP UP 3 (106min) 10 ML

SUN - THUR - 12h00, 14h30, 17h15, 20h00

FRID & SAT - 09h30, 12h00, 14h30, 17h15, 20h00, 22h05

CATS + DOGS 2 (82min) PG

SUN - THUR - 12h15, 14h30, 17h30, 20h00

FRID & SAT - 09h45, 12h15, 14h30, 17h30, 20h00, 22h05

GROWN UPS (101min) 10M

SUN - THUR - 12h15, 14h30, 17h30, 20h00

FRID & SAT - 09h45, 12h15, 14h30, 17h30, 20h00, 22h05

PREDATORS (107min) 16 LV

SUN - THUR - 12h15, 14h30, 17h30, 20h00

FRID & SAT - 09h45, 12h15, 14h30, 17h30, 20h00, 22h05

INCEPTION (149min) 13 LV

SUN - THUR - 11h30, 14h00, 17h00, 19h45

FRID & SAT - 09h15, 12h00, 14h45, 17h30, 20h15

KNIGHT+DAY (110min) 13 LV

SUN - THUR - 12h00, 14h30, 17h15, 19h45

FRID & SAT - 09h30, 12h00, 14h30, 17h15, 19h45, 22h05

SHREK 4 (92min) PGV

SUN - THUR - 12h00, 14h30, 17h15, 19h45

FRID & SAT - 09h30, 12h00, 14h30, 17h15, 19h45, 22h05

2010 Aug 23
Pretoria News

Embassy of Japan

East Meets Africa: Art Exhibition

This exhibition is inspired by the fascinating 15th and 16th century encounters between East Asia and Africa, and Japan and South Africa in particular.

Masako Osada presents East Meets Africa, a celebration of cultural diversity, showcasing her brightly coloured paintings with elements from different cultures blending together like old friends.

This exhibition will be accompanied by a beautiful Japanese flower exhibition

Drama Foyer
28 Aug until 5 Sept

Taiko and Awaodori

The resonance and beat of Wadaiko (Japanese drum) has long been regarded as the sound of the Japanese soul – like a beat of sunshine falling on the earth or a whisper from the blue ocean. It has been the heartbeat of Japanese Festivals since ancient times, and the drumming group Tachibana Taiko 'Hibikiza' will deliver the nature, history, culture and heart of Japan to the people of South Africa.

Drama Theatre
3 and 4 Sept at 20h00



2010 September

Foreign Exchange 外報



THE HAPPENING EXCHANGE

Japan beats drums



Beating the sound of the Taiko was Tachibana Taiko Hibikiza, a group of Japanese drummers who performed at the Capital Arts Festival at the State Theatre in Tshwane. They are from Miyazaki Prefecture located in Kyusyu Island, Japan's southern most island and are considered as one of the leading Taiko teams in Japan. The Taiko drum is an ancient Japanese instrument and was originally used for communication. Because the vibrating sound of Taiko touches the human heart, Taiko has traditionally played an important role in religious rituals and festivals. After experiencing the sheer power and energy of these drummers, it is easy to see why Taiko is gaining popularity internationally. Dancers performing Awaodori, a traditional Japanese dance form, also entertained the audience.