



Community

Connections

Encounters with old Japan, with some help

Mark McPhillips – February 2019

All the time in Hiroshima, there are all sorts of events going on targeted at non-Japanese people. In February, I took part in two of these.

OSAKE

Several activities to learn about Japanese culture at Hiroshima Art Museum

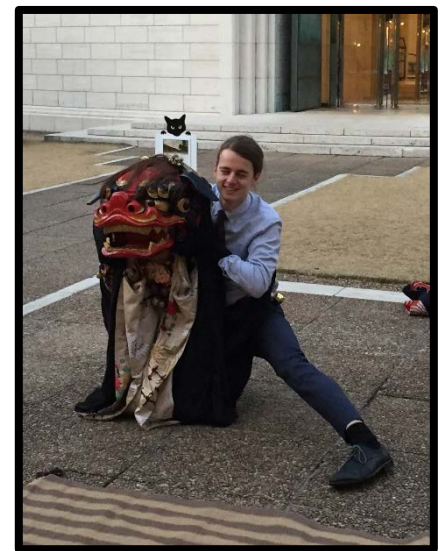
The first thing I did at this event was get a lesson in the Japanese lion dance from a pro. Although I'd never heard of the dance before, I thoroughly enjoyed jumping and roaring like a proud lion, while trying my hand at operating a puppet used in actual performances.



The second activity was being dressed in a gorgeous kimono, and this was when I really felt like I'd gone back to the Edo Period. I wore this for the rest of the event, looking around the museum before heading outside for the final activity, a tasting of local Hiroshima *sakes*,

complete with expert advice on how best to drink it.

OSAKE will run two more times, but instead of the lion dance there will be sessions on archery and playing the *koto* respectively.



An Evening of Kagura

Kagura with English subtitles at HPMCC

Kagura is a type of traditional Japanese theater which Hiroshima is particularly famous for. The Japanese spoken in *kagura* is so old that even most Japanese audiences don't understand it. However, at this recurring



event at the Hiroshima Prefectural Citizens' Cultural Center, not only did we get subtitles in very clear English, but after the show there was a Q&A session with the cast and a translator. So, by the end of the night, we may have understood the story better than some Japanese people. Lastly, we were allowed onstage to take pictures with the cast

and try on some of their costumes, which are heavier than they look!



You can find out more about OSAKE and An Evening of Kagura in the Seasonal Events section of Hiro Club News. There is so much going on in Hiroshima; we just need to keep an eye out!