

PRESS RELEASE

TOKYO 2020 NIPPON FESTIVAL Co-hosted Programme
Mt. Fuji World Theatre Festival Shizuoka, featuring SPAC/MIYAGI Satoshi

Antigone

Honored at Festival d'Avignon in 2017; lauded as part of Japan 2019 in New York.
Selected by TIME magazine as 2019's sixth-best play production worldwide

MIYAGI Satoshi and SPAC's "Antigone" returns in triumph to Sumpujo Park in Shizuoka City from 2-5 May.



Photo : Stephanie Berger/ Park Avenue Armory, NY



Tokyo 2020 NIPPON Festival Official Partner

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In May 2020, Shizuoka Performing Arts Center's latest staging of the classical Greek tragedy "Antigone" will draw people from all over the world to Shizuoka City.

Directed by SPAC's General Artistic Director, MIYAGI Satoshi, it runs 2–5 May at a special open-air venue in Sumpujo Park (Shizuoka City) as a co-hosted program in the **TOKYO 2020 NIPPON FESTIVAL**.

The production was originally created by MIYAGI in response to an invitation from **Festival d'Avignon** for him and SPAC to stage the opening play of its 71st edition in July 2017 — the first time that honor was ever extended to a dramatist from Asia.

With the Honor Court of the Palace of Popes' 30-meter stone walls as a backdrop, MIYAGI exquisitely blended the titular heroine's refusal to label people as being good or bad with the Buddhist way in Japan of treating the deceased as equal souls for whom no bitterness remains.

Then in September 2019 it was staged at the Park Avenue Armory in New York in the Official Program of **Japan 2019**, a showcase of Japanese arts and culture organized by the Japan Foundation.

Visually, too, the production magically combined Japanese beliefs with Greek mythology, astonishing its largely European and American audiences with a shallow, boulder-strewn pond 40 meters across and 15 meters wide on which candles floated, and through which actors in white costumes moved slowly around — all beneath those massive ramparts onto which their immense shadows were projected.

Describing the production as a "*timeless and urgent ... blend of the classical with the contemporary*" in The New York Times, theater critic Laura Collins-Hughes wrote: "*The tableau is so tranquil that you might not even notice, as you take your seat, that you're already being drawn into the ethereal, meditative otherworld where Satoshi Miyagi's spellbinding 'Antigone' will unfold*". The play was selected by U.S. TIME magazine as *the sixth-best play that year* — another extraordinary accolade for an Asian theatre company.

Now, for the latest, upcoming production of MIYAGI's "Antigone", SPAC will create an open-air venue in Sumpujo Park almost the size of those in Avignon and New York.

It will run alongside SPAC's annual **World Theatre Festival Shizuoka** and its fringe relation, **STRANGE SEED SHIZUOKA** that happens around the city.

Altogether, it's sure to be an exciting time, and SPAC is looking forward to welcoming many people from around Japan and the world to enjoy the fine performing arts Shizuoka City has to offer.

◆ **Le Monde, 8 July 2017**

"More than a background, it is an aquatic temple for words and bodies, an incitement to reflect about good and evil. A soft and generous beauty..."

◆ **The New York Times, 26 Sept 2019**

"A Spellbinding 'Antigone,' Both Timeless and Urgent (...) Eye-popping design is what we've come to expect from shows at the Armory, and this Shizuoka Performing Arts Center production, with an 18,000-gallon expanse of water, does not disappoint. What's most extraordinary, though, is the visceral potency of Mr. Miyagi's staging. Its particular blend of the classical with the contemporary renders the play — about a young woman who risks her life to defy the cruel dictate of a reckless, power-mad king — both timeless and urgent. Without any political overlay, it speaks directly to our rancorous present."

◆ **VULTURE New York Magazine, 26 Sept 2019**

"Visually and musically gorgeous."

◆ **TIME magazine, 16 Dec 2019**

"Antigone" have been named TIME's list of "The 10 Best Theater Performances of 2019"

It sounds overwhelming: a Japanese-language version of Sophocles' nearly 2,500-year-old play, invoking elements of Noh theater and Buddhist philosophy, performed entirely in a pool of water. Yet it was spellbinding and probably the best concert I attended this year, thanks to mesmerizing accompaniment provided by world-class percussionists.

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Event information

TOKYO 2020 NIPPON FESTIVAL Co-hosted Programme
Mt. Fuji World Theatre Festival Shizuoka, featuring SPAC/MIYAGI Satoshi

Antigone

Date & Time: 2 May at 18:45 / 3 May at 18:45 / 4 May at 18:45 / 5 May at 18:45

Venue: At Momijiyama Garden Square, Sumpujo Park, Shizuoka City

Conceived and directed by MIYAGI Satoshi, Written by Sophocles, Translated by YAGINUMA Shigetaka
Composed by TANAKAWA Hiroko, Space design: KIZ Junpei, Costume design: TAKAHASHI Kayo
Lighting design: OSAKO Koji, Hair and makeup: KAJITA Kyoko

Performed by SPAC / Micari, HONDA Maki, AKAMATSU Naomi, ABE Kazunori, ISHII Moemi, OUCHI Yoneji
OHTAKA Kouichi, KATO Yukio, KIJIMA Tsuyoshi, KONAGAYA Katsuhiko
SAKAKIBARA Yuumi, SAKURAUCHI Yu, SATO Yuzu, SUZUKI Mariko
DAIDOMUMON Yuya, TAKEISHI Morimasa, TATENO Momoyo, TERAUCHI Ayako
NAGAI Kenji, NOGUCHI Shunsuke, FUSE Asuka, MISHIMA Keita, MIYAGISHIMA Haruka
MORIYAMA Fuyuko, YAMAMOTO Miyuki, YOSHIUE Soichiro, YOSHIMI Ryo
WAKANA Daisuke, WATANABE Takahiko

Organized by the Committee of the Open-air Performing Arts Festival under Mt. Fuji
Co-hosted by the Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Game,
Shizuoka Cultural Program Promotion Committee, Shizuoka City

TICKETS Advance Tickets Sale begins: 8 March at 10:00

Prices [Non-reserved seating]:

- Individual ticket: 4,200 yen (for regular adult) · Pair Discount: 3,700 yen per person
- Senior Discount: 3,500 yen for seniors over 60 · Student Discount: 2,000 yen (University), 1,000 yen (High School and under)

How to Purchase

- Phone reservations from 10:00-18:00 at SPAC ticket center TEL: +81 (0)54-202-3399
- Online reservations can be made at <https://spac.or.jp/>
- Purchase at BOX Office SPAC ticket center (10:00-18:00)



Photo: Christophe Raynaud de Lage / Festival d'Avignon (2017)



Photo: Stephanie Berger/ Park Avenue Armory, NY

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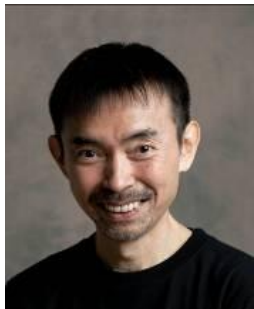
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What is SPAC?

Shizuoka Performing Arts Center (SPAC) was founded in 1995 by the Shizuoka prefectural government and commenced its full-fledged activities in 1997 under the direction of SUZUKI Tadashi, its first General Artistic Director. As a pioneer of publicly funded performing-arts organizations in Japan, SPAC retains its own staff of actors, technical and production staff, who are based at its own venues and facilities. The mission of SPAC is not only to create original pieces, but also to invite progressive artistic companies and creators to Shizuoka and to develop human resources seeking expression through the performing arts. Since April 2007, when he was appointed as the General Artistic Director, MIYAGI Satoshi has led SPAC in a buoyant new phase of development and expansion.

★ Official website= <https://spac.or.jp/>

MIYAGI Satoshi General Artistic Director of Shizuoka Performing Arts Center (SPAC)



Born in Tokyo in 1959, after studying aesthetics at Tokyo University under ODASHIMA Yushi, WATANABE Moriaki and HIDAKA Hachiro, he founded the KU NA' UKA theater company in 1990 and soon began staging plays overseas as well as in Japan. As a result, MIYAGI's work — in which he often fuses contemporary textual interpretations with physical techniques and patterns of Asian theatre — has long been acclaimed both at home and far abroad. Indeed, in 2004 he received the 3rd Asahi Performing Arts Award, and the next year the 2nd Asahi Beer Art Award.

Since taking up his position with SPAC in April 2007, MIYAGI has staged many of his own works — including "Medea", the Hindu epic "Mahabharata", and "Peer Gynt" — and has invited artists from abroad to present pieces casting a keen eye on the modern world as they see it. In line with his aim to make theatre "a window to the world," he has also started a new SPAC-based project aimed at the youth of Shizuoka.

In 2014, MIYAGI was invited to the Festival d'Avignon, where he received excellent reviews for his open-air version of the Hindu epic "Mahabharata" staged in La Carrière de Boulbon. Following that landmark achievement, the festival extended the honor of inviting MIYAGI to present a Buddhist interpretation he created of the ancient Greek mythological tragedy "Antigone" as its super-prestigious opening program for 2017. On that occasion, which was the first time an Asian play had ever been selected to launch the festival, MIYAGI's exalted "stage" was the open-air Cour d'honneur du Palais des papes (the Honor Court of the Palace of Popes). By the play's end, those towering medieval stone walls were ringing out with long and splendid standing ovations welcoming the work's director and creator along with SPAC's actors and staff — while more than 60 European media all gave great reviews.

In 2018, he received the 68th Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's Art Encouragement Prize of Drama. Also he received "Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres" from the Ministry of Culture of France in 2018.

TOKYO 2020 NIPPON FESTIVAL is here to build energy towards Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020. The festival will be a welcoming place where various people and cultures from Japan and across the world interact in celebration of the Games. Regional towns and big cities, Japan and the world—just imagine what can happen when we reach beyond boundaries and unite together. Extraordinary cultures will bloom and flourish. The power and wonder of diversity will shine brightly. New cultures and inspiration will lead us toward an amazing future. And each one of us is the main player in this prelude. We are the stars, gracing the stages in each and every town across Japan. The excitement starts by uniting the passion and diversity of all corners of the country.

TOKYO 2020 NIPPON FESTIVAL. Opening new gateways, introducing new possibilities for Japan.

★ Official website= <https://tokyo2020.org/jp/special/festival>



What is the Advanced Program for Arts and Culture Shizuoka 2020 Festival?

Shizuoka prefecture is presenting 2020 as Festival year for arts and culture, "Advanced Program for Arts and Culture Shizuoka 2020". This festival aims to expand the range of cultural programs by working with art organization and the variety of locals throughout Shizuoka. SPAC's "Antigone" is a part of the numerous programs within APAC Shizuoka 2020.

★ Official website=<https://shizuoka-ac.org>



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What's going on alongside "Antigone"...

World Theatre Festival Shizuoka

25 April – 6 May 2020

at Shizuoka Arts Theatre, Shizuoka Performing Arts Park, and more



Shizuoka Performing Arts Center (SPAC) will hold its annual **World Theatre Festival Shizuoka 2020** from 25 April to 6 May, coinciding as usual with the national Golden Week holiday. In line with its slogan of "Fujinokuni (The Mt. Fuji region) and the world are connected through the performing arts," SPAC will introduce a wide range of cutting-edge theatre programs from Japan and abroad at venues in Shizuoka City and the surrounding, wonderfully scenic area.

In addition, this festival also features **STRANGE SEED**, which is to be held from May 2 to 5 May, comprising a wide range of fringe arts events being held around the city in cooperation with Shizuoka City's major project **ON STAGE SHIZUOKA**. Meanwhile, in the popular nedoco Project for Everyone, guest accommodation facilities run by volunteers will again be open during the festival period. In a nutshell, SPAC aims to present a joyous and inspiring the festival that remains deeply rooted in its home region of Shizuoka while also connecting to the wider world through theatre.

★Official website= <https://festival-shizuoka.jp/>

Shizuoka Street Theatre Festival

STRANGE SEED SHIZUOKA

With its multi-genre attractions spanning theatre, dance and street artists, the **STRANGE SEED** project will see the whole of central Shizuoka transform into a stunning performance area that will form the vibrant backdrop for this year's **World Theatre Festival Shizuoka**. Thanks to colorful and original events in Sumpujo Park and on the streets, the project will ensure that performing arts become part of residents' and visitors' daily lives alike — and will also allow everyone to discover a new Shizuoka for themselves in the process. The **STRANGE SEED** project runs from 2 to 5 May at Sumpujo Park and at several locations in the central area. No reservations are required. Admission is free

★Official website= <http://www.strangeseed.info/>



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