

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 Sumpu Castel Park in Shizuoka City from 2-5 May 2021.



Photo : Stephanie Berger/ Park Avenue Armory, NY



Tokyo 2020 NIPPON Festival Official Partner



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公益財団法人東京オリンピック・パラリンピック競技大会組織委員会

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MIYAGI Satoshi and SPAC’s “Antigone” masterpiece will finally return in triumph to Sumpu Castel Park in Shizuoka City in May 2021 following the tremendous worldwide acclaim that greeted its performances at the prestigious Festival d’ Avignon and in New York. Over 2,500 years, the prayer voice by Antigone has touched our hearts strongly.

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.

Ahead of the trip to Provence, as part of SPAC’s annual Open-air Performing Arts Festival under Mt. Fuji in May 2017, it presented a preview version at a venue in Sumpujo Park.

Then two months later, in the Cour d’honneur du Palais des Papes in Avignon with the palace’s 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.

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.

Visually, too, the production magically combined Japanese beliefs with Greek mythology, astonishing its largely European and American audiences with a shallow, boulder-strewn pond 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.

Described as a “timeless and urgent ... blend of the classical with the contemporary” in The New York Times, the play was selected by U.S. TIME magazine as the sixth-best production of 2019 — another extraordinary accolade for an Asian theatre company.

Now, for the latest, upcoming staging of MIYAGI’s “Antigone,” SPAC will create an open-air venue in Sumpu Castel Park almost the size of those in Avignon and New York. The play will run alongside SPAC’s annual World Theatre Festival Shizuoka and its fringe relation, STRANGE SEED SHIZUOKA, that happens around the city.

◆ **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, Sumpu Castel 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, OOTAKA Kouichi, ABE Kazunori, AKAMATSU Naomi
IKEDA Makiko, ISHII Moemi, OUCHI Yoneji, 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
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: 27 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)

https://spac.or.jp/antigone_2021



Photo : Stephanie Berger/ Park Avenue Armory, NY



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What is SPAC

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 beyond. 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 Bourbon. 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.



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★ 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 – 5 May 2021

at Shizuoka Performing Arts Park, Sumpu Castel Park and more...

It’s time to enjoy unique and wonderful arts experiences once again at open-air venues across the Shizuoka City area during Golden Week.

Because of Covid-19, the World Theatre Festival Shizuoka, which SPAC (Shizuoka Performing Arts Center) had held annually for 20 years, was restricted last year to an online-only format titled the World Theatre Festival on the Cloud 2020.

In line with its slogan of “Fujinokuni (the Mt. Fuji region) and the world are connected through the performing arts,” SPAC is renowned for presenting a wide and diverse range of cutting-edge programs from Japan and abroad at venues in Shizuoka City.

So, when the regular weeklong festival had to be canceled for the first time ever, SPAC instead streamed 49 different programs in its World Theatre Festival on the Cloud 2020.

Among the lineup were talks between SPAC’s General Artistic Director, MIYAGI Satoshi, and several foreign dramatists who had been scheduled to present works but were unable to come to Japan due to the pandemic.

In addition, a piece titled “*Theatre absence of Mary Poppins with her Upside-down Umbrella*” aimed to highlight the loss of live productions as SPAC live-streamed its deserted open-air UDO theatre in the hills for each of the three, two-hour periods when KARA Juro’s play “*Mary Poppins with her Upside-down Umbrella*” ought to have been presented there.

Now, though, things have changed and SPAC is all set and delighted to be welcoming audiences and artists back again during Golden Week in 2021 to its annual World Theatre Festival Shizuoka after what has seemed to be such a long wait.

<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 Sumpu Castel 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 Sumpu Castel Park and at several locations in the central area. No reservations are required. Admission is free

<http://www.strangeseed.info/>

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