

**Dynamic Noh play will be streamed with English subtitles  
for limited period, free of charge!**

**Noh Online: Funa Benkei  
Legendary Hero, Riding the Wave from Tokyo to the World**



Taira no Tomomori (From "Noh Online: Funa Benkei, Legendary Hero, Riding the Wave from Tokyo to the World" ) ©Satoshi Ohtsuki

Based on the theme "Approaching Tokyo Tradition", Arts Council Tokyo, Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture, offers diverse projects and programs for people who are not familiar with traditional arts and culture, as well as for people overseas and children to enjoy Japan's authentic traditional arts and culture.

We have created new video work of one of the most popular Noh plays, "Funa Benkei (Benkei in a boat)" with English subtitles, as a new attempt to reach mainly people overseas who are currently unable to visit Japan, due to the spread of the novel coronavirus(COVID-19) infection. It will be streamed free of charge for a limited period from January 29 to the end of March. It will be available on the official website of Tokyo Tradition and the official YouTube channel of Arts Council Tokyo.

Video work of traditional performing arts often focuses on reproducing the actual viewing in the theater from audience seats. In our new challenge, however, we dared to create a visual artwork which offers visual experience that is not possible in the actual viewing in the theater so that people who are not accustomed to the Noh plays can also enjoy it. In addition to filming from the audience seats, we have placed a camera on the Noh stage and filmed the performers in close proximity, as well as filming the performers coming towards the front of the camera, creating dynamic, movie-like scenes that will give you an unprecedented experience of Noh. Special Webpage of "Funa Benkei" has opened from today, January 12, on the official website of Tokyo Tradition in Japanese and English, introducing the characters, highlights, and making-of footages for first-time viewers.



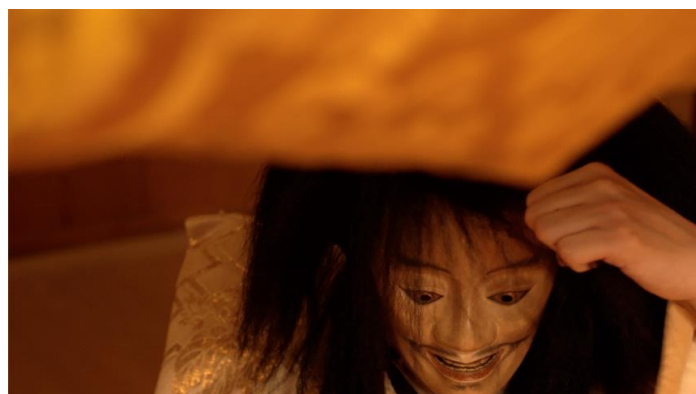
Shizuka Gozen



Yoshitsune and Benkei fight against Tomomori



Musashibo Benkei



Taira no Tomomori

## Outline of Experience and Appreciation Program

### Noh Online: Funa Benkei, Legendary Hero, Riding the Wave from Tokyo to the World

■ Online distribution Friday, January 29 – Wednesday, March 31, 2021 (scheduled)

■ Fee Free of charge

■ Title Noh "Funa Benkei" Shinnoden

■ Performers Takehito Tomoeda, Kinya Hosyo, Mansai Nomura, and others

■ Special Webpage, on the official website of Tokyo tradition

<http://www.tokyo-tradition.eng/2020/program/010/>

■ Arts Council Tokyo Official YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/c/Artscouncil-tokyoJp/videos>

#### ■ Story

It was the end of the Heian period. The long-running war between Genji and Heike clans was won by the renowned general of Genji, Minamoto no Yoshitsune. He, however, fell out with his elder brother Yoritomo and was forced to leave the capital, fleeing to the west only with his retainer Musashibo Benkei, his lover Shizuka Gozen, and a few companions. It is a lonely wandering journey that is a far cry from the splendor of winning a historic battle.

The highlight of the first half is Shizuka Gozen's dance. Shizuka, who has finally accepted Benkei's advice that she should return to the capital, chants and dances, hoping for Yoshitsune's safety and the day when he will come back to the front stage again. In the latter half of the scene, the group goes out to sea, but the wind and rain are getting fiercer, and the atmosphere around them is unsettling. Then, the ghosts of the Heike clan appears in the sea. The commander-in-chief is Taira no Tomomori, who committed suicide bearing a grudge in the last battle with Yoshitsune. The spirits attacked Yoshitsune's boat at once to sink it into the sea. In order to save his master, Benkei confronts the ghosts with the mythical power of Buddhism.

■ Organized by Arts Council Tokyo, Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture

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English subtitles, translated by Sam Bett \* Contents are subject to change without notice.