

CHO KABUKI

“TOWA NO HANA HOMARE NO ISAOSHI”

Introduction

Taking inspiration from classical Kabuki plays about the famous political upheaval that took place in Japan in the year 645, as well as from one of Hatsune Miku’s representative songs named ‘The Disappearance of Hatsune Miku’, this is an original work newly written for ‘Cho Kabuki’.

The play centers on the tale of the hero *Kanawa no Gorō Imakuni*, played by Nakamura Shidō, who defeats *Soga no Iruka*, a villain who plans to usurp the throne. In love with *Imakuni* is *Princess Odamaki*, played by Hatsune Miku, who joins him in opposing *Iruka*. Her true form is revealed as the story portrays her sad and ephemeral fate.

Following the conventions of classical Kabuki, the hero *Imakuni* wears red ‘kumadori’ makeup, while the villain *Iruka* wears blue ‘kumadori’, as they do battle in a spectacular ‘tachimawari’ fight scene. Other scenes include an elegant dance performed by a kimono-clad Hatsune Miku, something that can only be seen in Cho Kabuki, as well as a scene using the latest digital technology to show multiple avatars of a magic white fox that come to *Imakuni*’s aid. The struggle between *Princess Odamaki* and *Iruka* is also presented using 3D volumetric video technology. In this way, classical Kabuki and the latest ICT technology is fused together to create a work in which one exciting highlight follows another.

At *Imakuni*’s invitation, the audience will switch on their penlights so that the stage and the auditorium become one as the story progresses, another staging idea that is unique to Cho Kabuki.

