

TAMAMONOMAE

～Synopsis～

【about 30min】



① Late in the Heian period (about 794~1185), there is a lady of the imperial court called Tamamonomae. She is very beautiful and clever. The retired emperor Toba loves her very much.



② Tamamonomae is an evil female fox that has a white face, gold fur and nine-tails. She is going to control Toba the retired emperor, so that she can change the world into evil spirits.



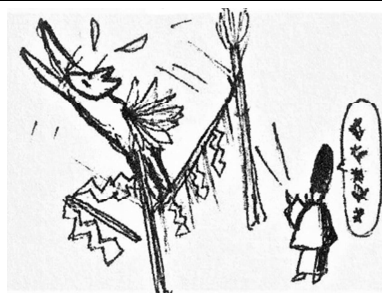
③ One day, an orchestral music party is held at the palace. A strong sudden wind blows all of the lights out at the palace, sending everyone into a panic.



④ The palace is very dark, but Tamamonomae's eyes shine on the palace, making it brighter than daytime.



⑤ Seeing Tamamonomae's eyes, Abenoyasunari, the master of Yin and Yang, finds out that she is evil.



⑥ Abenoyasunari prays to exorcise the evil, and Tamamonomae changes her figure to the fox and runs away to the Nasuno fields.



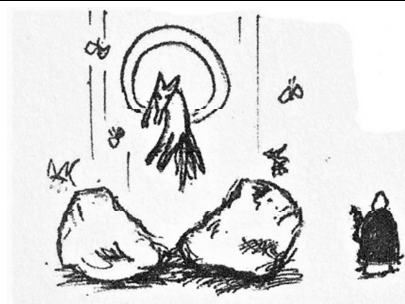
⑦ The emperor orders a Samurai, Miurakazusanosuke, to capture the fox. He goes to the field and shoots an arrow at the fox.



⑧ A rock becomes possessed by the fox's deep-seated grudge. The rock attacks people and animals that come near it.



⑨ About a hundred years has passed and a great Buddhist priest, Gennou, blesses the rock by hitting it three times.



⑩ The rock breaks into two pieces and the fox comes out and rises to the heavens.

Yame Fukushima no Tourou Ningyou 八女福島の燈籠人形

Changing costumes quickly is called *Sunuki*.
Tamamonomae performs *Sunuki*.

Do not miss the surprising ending.



Pay attention to the fox.
It changes shape several times.

The story of a nine-tailed fox can be seen in Japanese puppet shows, as well as Noh plays, readers and more. The story is known not only in Japan, but also in China, Korea, Vietnam and many other countries.

What role do the puppets on the stage play?

Tamamonomae

: Horizontally controlled puppet.
Tamamonomae is a beautiful and clever lady of the court. She is loved very much by a retired emperor, but she is actually an evil female fox with plans to change the world into evil spirits.



Abenoyasunari

: Decorative puppet on the stage.
Abenoyasunari is a master of Yin and Yang, and he protects the metropolis from evil using magic and prayer. He finds out that Tamamonomae is evil, and he exorcises her from the palace.



Female attendant

: Horizontally controlled puppet.
An attendant of Tamamonomae.



Buddhist Priest Gennou

: Sub controlled puppet.
Buddhist Priest Gennou is a great Buddhist priest who helps the fox rise to the heavens.



Miurakazusanosuke

: Decorative puppet on the stage.
Miurakazusanosuke is a samurai who shoots an arrow at the fox, on the orders of the emperor.



Kyuchudoji

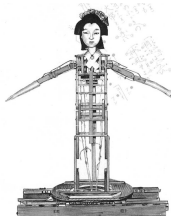
: Sub controlled puppet.
Kyuchudoji is a child who works at the palace.



What's going on inside the stage?

Japanese theater form (Kyogenkata)

Kyogenkata plays a role in matching the timing of the puppets' operating team with the musical accompaniment. Since the puppet operating team and the musical accompaniment do their roles on different floors of the theater they cannot make eye contact with each other. The *Kyogenkata* beat wooden clappers and the puppet operating team and the musical accompaniment match the timing by listening to the sound of the clappers. The *Kyogenkata* plays a very important role.



Songs · Musicians (Uta · Hayasikata)

Uta · Hayasikata is the musical accompaniment. The singer tells a story using the melody. The band is composed of *Shamisen*, a Japanese stringed instrument, *Tsudumi*, a Japanese hand drum, and *Taiko*, a Japanese drum. The singer and the band perform live, matching the puppets' performance.



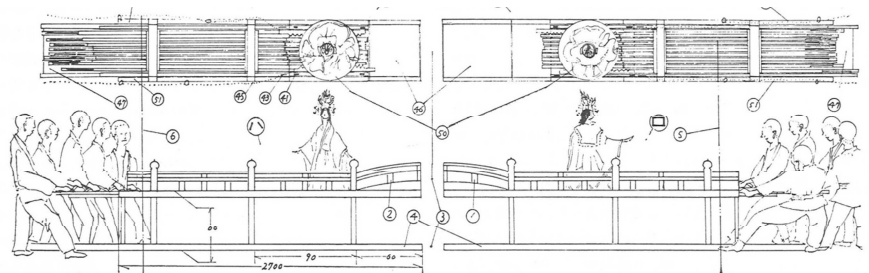
Guardians (Kokenyaku)

Kokenyaku are children who stay on the side of the stage during the program. They are used to take care of the puppets, doing such things as straightening out the puppets' costumes.



Costumes (Ishoukata)

Ishoukata is the team that takes care of the puppets' costumes. A puppet changes costumes several times during the program. Changing costumes quickly is called *Sunuki*.



Horizontal control (Yokozukai)

Yokozukai is a team that operates puppets from both sides of the stage. On each side, 6 person teams operate the puppet. It is quite difficult to operate the puppet from the sides. The highlight of the operation is *Okuriwatashi*. This means moving the puppet smoothly from left to right and from right to left. To perform a successful *Okuriwatashi*, the two teams must match the timing very carefully. Pay attention to the moment the puppets move from side to side.

Sub control (Shitazukai)

Shitazukai is a team that operates the puppets from below the stage. Since they are constantly looking up to operate the puppets from below, it is physically challenging work.

