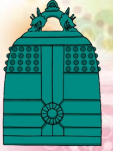


The Legend of Maiden Dojoji



Meiden Dojoji is one of the most famous programs in Kabuki and Japanese dancing, based on the well-known folklore in Japan.

The Folklore “Anchin & Kiyohime

In 929 (in Heian period), a pilgrim monk whose name was “Anchin” (安珍) was traveling in the southern area of Kii Peninsula, about 100 kilometers south of Kyoto.

He stayed at a house, where a beautiful woman lived. She was called “Princess Kiyo” (清姫). They fell in love with each other and he promised her to come back again and left the village.

However, Anchin never went back to her. Kiyohime realized that she was deceived and chased him desperately. Such her anger was that she turned into a serpent and kept chasing.

Anchin ran into the temple called Dojoji and asked the priests for help. The priests hid Anchin in the bell of temple. Kiyohime, turning into a serpent, smelled him and noticed that he was in the bell. She coiled around the bell and gave fire, killing him in the end.



Dojoji Temple



Please read the QR code to visit the website of Dojoji temple in Japan



The synopsis of the play

“Meiden Dojoji” is a masterpiece in the tradition of Kabuki dance called *onnagata* (female roles) *buyo*.

A dancer as a female performs solo for nearly one full hour. The title is normally abbreviated as “Musume Dojoji” or simply “Dojoji”.

The story opens with the arrival of a *shirabyoshi* dancer (a female dancer who wears a male costume) named Hanako. She is visiting the temple to dance during the dedication ceremonies for a new bell.

While performing a series of dances, she suddenly jumps into the bell and reappears as a serpent. Because the dancing expresses various images of women desperately in love, the routine is divided into several parts.

Kabuki theatre contains numerous *dojoji-mono* (Dojoji temple plays), originally derived from the Noh drama “Dojoji”. All feature women visiting a temple to perform at bell dedication ceremonies who jump into the bell.

Dojoji-mono plays date from the Genroku Period (1688-1704), with “Kyogonoko Musume Dojoji” considered the supreme collection of the numerous versions. It was first performed by the Kabuki actor Nakamura Tomijuro I in 1753.



Performed by Wakayagi Kiku Asuka