

Kuniko Yamamoto

Teacher Resource Guide

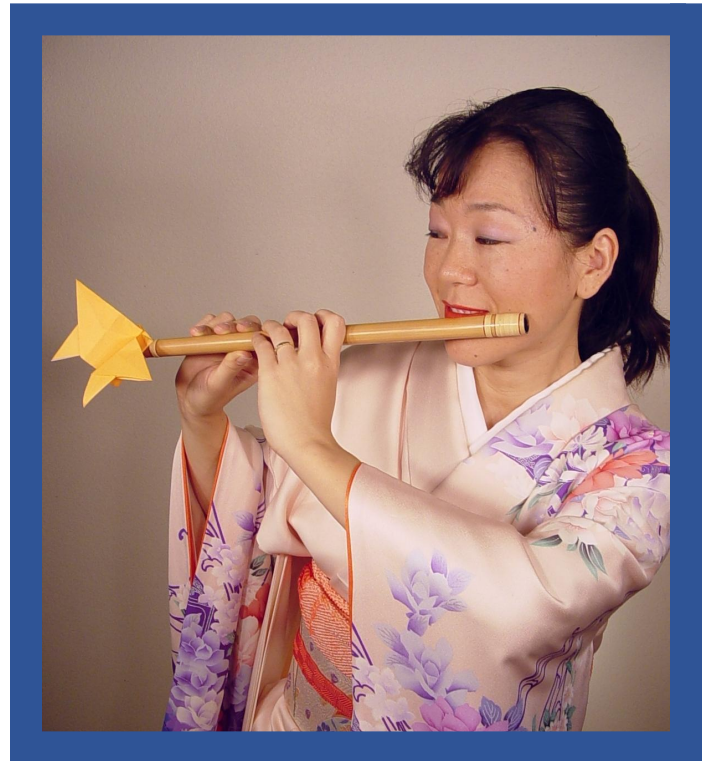
Lotus Blossoms 2023



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About Kuniko Yamamoto

A native of Japan, Kuniko Yamamoto received her Bachelor of Psychology from Otani University of Kyoto, Japan in 1983. She began performing professionally in her hometown of Osaka, where she grew up studying traditional dance, music and theater. In 1985, she received national exposure performing Japanese Storytelling at the Silk Road International Exposition and on Kansai National TV. The following year, Kuniko traveled to the United



States to study with Tony Montanaro, a highly respected mime and actor. She toured with Leland Faulkner Light Theater where she helped present lavish stage illusions and brought ancient tales to life with shadows and magic. For the past 20 years she has presented her programs throughout the United States. Kuniko has performed in numerous venues of note including The Kennedy Center (Washington DC), Disney Epcot Japanese Pavilion, Seattle's International Festival, International Children's Festival in Canada, and the National Storytelling Festival. In 2015, she built Origami Air Art Studio as a creative hub, where she collaborates with local artists in Sarasota, Florida.¹

¹ <https://www.siegelartist.com/kuniko-yamamoto>

Japanese Storytelling with Origami and Music

Kuniko's performance is dramatic Japanese Storytelling of myths and fables plus social ideas designed to educate and entertain. The combination of traditional Japanese music, hand-crafted origami, highly stylized movement, and a touch of magic make this performance appealing to all grade levels. Origami is performed with audience interaction and participation. The stories are carefully selected to portray the culture and moral perspective of Japan. Students are encouraged to compare Japanese and American tales, arts, and the cultural elements.

Check out an example: [Preview Japanese Storytelling](#)



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More details about Kuniko's work can be found at:
<https://www.origamiair.com/>

² https://vimeo.com/736232259?embedded=true&source=video_title&owner=117902305

Japanese Traditions

Origami

Origami represents one of the prime elements of Japanese traditional arts: the art of simplicity. A few creases evoke an animal, a flower, or a face. Origami is a short imaginative leap from a mere figure to an essential character. Over many generations, the Japanese developed and refined a small repertoire of models stylized for ceremonial use³.

Japanese Folktales

These tales are about commoners and kings, castles and fairy lands, good folks and bad folks, funny women and funny ogres, animals, birds, sky, and the unlimited realm of the imagination. The stories share universal morals such as honesty, royalty, respect, and humbleness as they send messages of love and kindness.

Kimono

The Kimono is an article of Japanese traditional clothing. The origin comes from prehistoric time and countless designs were developed according to time and people. In the beginning of the 20th century foreign products began to enter Japan and western clothes made an almost immediate impact on the kimono. Today Japanese people wear western clothes for everyday life and the kimono is only regarded as a ceremonial costume.⁴



³ <https://www.britannica.com/art/origami>

⁴ <https://web-japan.org/kidsweb/virtual/kimono/kimono01.html#:~:text=Kimono%20as%20we%20know%20them,%2C%20or%20one%2Dpiece%20garments.>

Haiku

Haiku is a short poem intended to express and evoke emotions with seventeen syllables, reflecting the Japanese virtue of simplicity. The poem is an unrhymed poetic form consisting of syllables arranged in three lines of 5, 7, and 5 syllables respectively.⁵

Japan

Prime Minister: Fumio Kishida

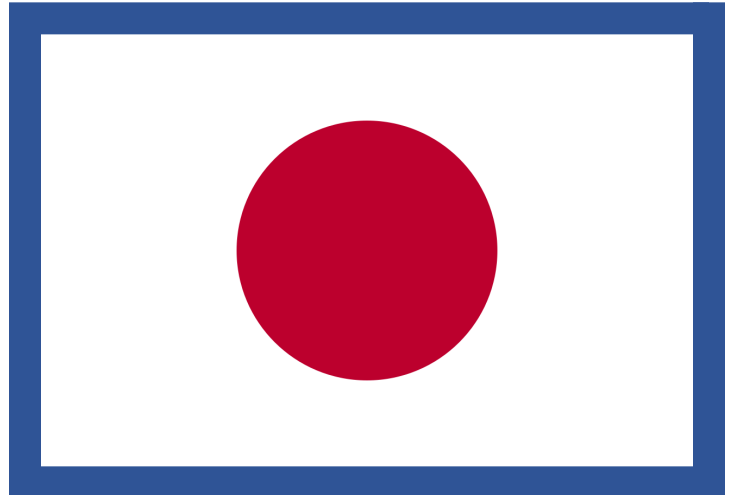
Capital: Tokyo

Currency: Yen

Population: 124,285,000 (2023)

Japan is an Island country located In East Asia. Its made up of four main islands which are:

- Hokkaido
- Honshu
- Shikoku
- Kyushu



For more information about Japan, visit:

- [Japanese Geography](#)
- [Japanese Cultural Life](#)
- [Japanese History](#)

⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/art/haiku>

Helpful Links & References

- [Kuniko on Facebook](#)
- [Kuniko Website](#)

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