

“Japan Invades Capitol Civic Centre” (and we’re Happy!)

It’s apparent from conversations around town that due to the superabundance of negative campaign ads on radio and TV that the population is ready for this fall’s election season to be over. Tomorrow night by midnight it’s all be over but the shouting and complaints and recounts, but electioneering is what makes this the greatest nation on earth, so, on Tuesday, please exercise your right and responsibility to vote.

If you’re looking for a way to get a little fresh air instead of hot air in the near future, why not take a look and participate in the very interesting activities brought to all of us this week by the Capitol Civic Centre.

The inspiration for the landslide of intercultural activities planned at the CCC is the performance by “On Ensemble” on Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 in the evening.

“On Ensemble” is a production featuring musicians playing Japanese taiko drums, flutes, and koto – a form of Japanese harp. Don’t be fooled by the traditionally named instruments, “On Ensemble” is a high energy and very dynamic performance which will once again transform the Capitol’s stage into a mysterious place that seems far away from Manitowoc’s Eighth Street.

Being aware of Japanese elements in the production, The Civic Centre staff asked to partner with members of the Manitowoc International Relations Association, the city and members of our local Japanese community to highlight Japanese culture and our sister city relationship with Kamogawa, in Chiba Prefecture, Japan.

The result of this collaboration has been the creation of multiple special events, which will culminate, with the performance of “On Ensemble” on Saturday. (The word “on” by the way is Japanese for “sound”.)

Throughout the rest of this week, the Kadow Room of the Civic Centre will be open daily to the public. This space has been transformed into a most amazing museum of Japanese artifacts, many of them being the official gifts given to our City and our International Relations Association by the people of Kamogawa. These presentations range from a sculpture in full armor of the Warlord Satomi-san who, centuries ago, ruled over the area of Japan where our sister city is located, to a hand crafted Nipponese Mikoshi, or shrine, which, interestingly enough, will be carried in this year’s Lakeshore Holiday Parade. The collection is vast and deeply personal, including many pictures of the early delegations that traveled from Manty to Japan.

On Thursday evening from 5:30 until 7:00 those wishing to learn the ancient art of paper folding or “origami” will be instructed at no charge. The resulting paper origami will be used to decorate the Christmas tree in the Kamogawa Room at the Rahr West Art Museum for the Christmas in the Mansion display. The delicate art of flower arranging called “ikebana” will also be demonstrated along with fascinating Japanese children’s games.

Friday evening, in the same time slot, a very cool event entitled “Sake, Sushi and Sapporo” will be held in the Kadow Room. This event will be an opportunity for those

who always wished to sample sake (a brewed concoction made from rice), sushi (which is, by the way, not raw fish, but rice rolled in seaweed that might have a bit of raw fish or vegetable in the middle) or the famous Japanese beer, Sapporo, to finally have that chance.

While the other events are free, this event has a very low admission fee of \$5.00, to cover the cost of food and beverage, but is free to “On Ensemble” ticket holders. The highlight of Friday’s event will be the presence of the ensemble’s musicians who will discuss their craft and instruments and give a brief performance.

Pre-performance on Saturday evening, a tea ceremony demonstration complete with traditional koto music will be held in the Kadow Room beginning at 6:00PM.

All of these events are “must sees” and give the people of Manitowoc County a chance to participate in a true intercultural experience right in the heart of our own historic downtown.

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