

For Immediate Release
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RIVER PARK SQUARE HOSTS JAPANESE CULTURAL CELEBRATION

SPOKANE, Wash. – A month-long celebration of the Japanese culture kicks-off at River Park Square in April. The community events feature traditional exhibits, stories, art and live music, with special international guests and performers. All events are free and open to the public.

April 6 - 30

Japanese Kimono Display

Two traditional Japanese wedding kimonos will be on display in the former Burlington building street-level windows (across Main Street from River Park Square). Each wedding kimono is an original hand-design using vibrant silk fabrics, elaborately embroidered with flowers and nature motifs. The Japanese wedding kimono originated in the Edo era (1600'-1800's) and was worn only by court nobles. The kimonos are part of a display from the Japanese Cultural Center at Mukogawa.

April 7 - 26

Japanese Edo Kites: Theater in the Sky

Images of traditional Japanese actors, recreated on 23 kites by contemporary kite master Mikio Toki Past, will hang in River Park Square's third-level Atrium Cafes. The 'Theater in the Sky' will showcase colorful portraits of actors in traditional costume, representing the Edo period in Japanese history. The kite display is on loan from the Drachen Foundation, a non-profit educational organization in Seattle.

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Saturday, April 16: 2 - 4 p.m.

Experience Japan through Stories, Music and Art

All ages will enjoy Koto Tales – traditional Japanese stories incorporating musical adventure - presented by award-winning American Koto master, Elizabeth Falconer of Seattle. Falconer began playing the Koto, an ancient 13-string instrument, about 25 years ago and has over 12 years of studies in Japan. She has recorded several CD's.

Time-honored Japanese music will also be performed by international students attending Gonzaga University. The group will perform selections using traditional instruments, including the shakuhachi, a bamboo flute.

The students will also lead a demonstration of Origami, the Japanese art of paper-folding. The public will be invited to make their own Origami art to take home.

Sunday, April 17: 2 – 3:30 p.m.

Deems and Seattle Groove Perform Live

A live concert with international jazz pianist, Deems Tsutakawa and his band, the Seattle Groove will be performed in the River Park Square Atrium. A Seattle native of Japanese decent, Tsutakawa has received critical acclaim for his original mix of rhythm & blues, pop and mainstream jazz. He has written and recorded eight albums and his hit singles are played throughout the world.