



Website



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Bentenya (English)

# MICHIGAN-INDIANA-OHIO BENTENYA MIDWEST TOUR



## Chindonya, a unique promoter from Japan

Chindonya is a troupe of street musicians and performers who dress in elaborate costumes and are hired to attract customers to shops. While little is known to the public, chindon is a truly unique subculture of Japan. Its importance in Japanese history lies in its role as the root of popular culture in the advertising industry.

Chindon represents philosopher Tsurumi Shusuke's concept of Marginal Art which is closely related to the definition of popular culture as a daily cultural environment. The success of the first chindon man Amekatsu prompted the owner of a nearby Yose theater to hire him to bring people to his theater, thus giving an impetus to advertising in Japan.



## Bentenya is coming to celebrate Hinamatsuri at DIA.

Bentenya has been invited to perform at the Hinamatsuri event at Detroit Institute of Arts Museum. This will be the beginning of our 2025 Midwest Tour which will take place in Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio.

The tour schedule is:

**Sun, March 2** Hinamatsuri (Japanese Girls Day) @ Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, MI (10am-4:30pm)

**Wed, March 6** Bentenya Concert / Chindon Lecture @ The Studio Theater at Allied Solutions Center for the Performing Arts, Carmel, IN (7pm)

**Thur, March 7** Library Concert @ Deer Park Branch Library, Cincinnati, OH (4pm)

**Fri, March 8** Library Concert @ Cincinnati Public Library, Main Library, Cincinnati, OH (10am)

**Fri, March 8** Bentenya Concert @ Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, OH (1-2:30pm)

## What's Hinamatsuri?

Hinamatsuri, also known as Girls' Day or the Doll Festival, is a traditional Japanese celebration held on March 3rd. It is dedicated to wishing for the health, happiness, and well-being of young girls. The central feature of this festival is the display of ornate dolls (hina ningyo) which represent the imperial family and their court. These dolls are often arranged on a red multi-tiered platform that showcases the emperor, empress, attendants, and musicians in traditional Heian-period clothing.

Families with daughters usually set up these displays in their homes, and some communities hold public exhibitions. People also enjoy eating special foods and hishi mochi (triangular rice cakes), chirashi sushi (scattered sushi), and shirozake (a sweet, non-alcoholic rice wine).



## GET TO KNOW JAPANESE CULTURE!

### Friendship Dolls for almost 100 years

During December 2023 to June 2025, Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA) hosted a Friendship Dolls Exhibition, which loaned Japanese Dolls from other museums in US. The friendship dolls program will be further highlighted toward 2027, which is 100th year anniversary of the historical program. There are 48 Japanese dolls exist today in US which was initiated by 13,000 US dolls sent to Japan to maintain the friendship in 1927. A few Friendship Dolls exhibition are expected in US. DIA will show the "Friendship Dolls Story" in this coming Hinamatsuri event on March 2nd, 2025.



## Kokeshi

First created over 200 years ago in northern Japan, kokeshi are simple wooden dolls turned on a lathe and painted with distinctive designs. Beginning in 2024 The Kokeshi Project's exhibit and cultural programs highlighted traditional and contemporary kokeshi dolls. Visitors and participants learned about the rich heritage of kokeshi dolls and the creative energy and expert craftsmanship of the artists who create them. The Kokeshi Project is a partnership of two kokeshi collectors, three Japanese artists, the Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library and the Cincinnati Asian Art Society. The project continues in 2025. <https://kokeshidoll.org/>  
Photo: The Little Kokeshi created by Naomi Umeki



The Japan-America Society of Indiana is excited to welcome Benten-ya to Indiana, March 6!



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