

## **Masks (Omote-sama)**

The masks used in *kagura* are called *omote-sama*. They are revered as an embodiment of the *kami* deities themselves and are treated with the utmost respect. Each *omote-sama* has its own expression and history, and some are said to date back to the beginning of the *kagura* custom over eight hundred years ago.

## ***Kagura* Paper Decorations (Erimono)**

Paper is used in a number of Shinto rituals. For the *kagura*, special Japanese paper is cut into various designs called *erimono* to fence off and adorn the *koninwa kagura* stage. Each local area uses different numbers and decoration styles of *erimono*, all with distinct meanings.