

### **Itsukushima Shrine: *Giboshi* for *Takabutai* Stage**

The Itsukushima Shrine *takabutai* is a square stage on the terrace directly in front of the main shrine building. Used for performances of *bugaku* (classical court dancing), it is enclosed by a fence with eight decorative copper finials on the posts, one in each corner and one on either side of the twin entrances to the stage. These finials, called *giboshi*, have adorned the *takabutai* since at least the sixteenth century and were donated to the shrine in 1546, as detailed in the inscriptions on their sides. The text, which is still clearly legible, describes how the *giboshi* were a gift from the head priest of Itsukushima Shrine. He was assigned to this post by Ouchi Yoshitaka (1507–1551), head of the Ouchi family and lord of Aki Province, which included Miyajima. The finials currently in use on the *takabutai* are modern reproductions.