

### **Nagasaki Traditional Performing Arts Museum**

The Nagasaki Traditional Performing Arts Museum was built in 2004 as a place to display floats and items used during the Nagasaki Kunchi Festival. The museum also contains an exhibit with videos of the festival and a small gift shop.

### **Nagasaki Kunchi Festival**

The Nagasaki Kunchi Festival is held each year from October 7 to October 9. During the festival, representatives from each of several participating neighborhoods offer presentations at Suwa Shinto Shrine and then tour the city, stopping at various locations for performances. The festival is said to have been started in 1634 when two local women made an offering to the shrine in the form of a Noh performance. Since then, the festival has come to incorporate several cultural traditions and to feature a variety of presentations including dances and boat-shaped floats. The Dragon Dance originated in the Chinese community of Nagasaki, and the *oranda-manzai*, a stylized comic dance, began as a caricature of the Dutch residents of Dejima. Originally, 77 different neighborhoods in Nagasaki participated in the festival in rotating groups of 11, forming a seven-year cycle. The number of participating neighborhoods has shrunk since the nineteenth century, but the seven-year cycle continues to this day.