

Bugaku (Web Text)

Bugaku court dance is characterized by stylized movements, ornate costumes, and distinctive music. It was once performed almost exclusively in the emperor's court. With a history of more than 1,200 years, *bugaku* is one of Japan's oldest performing arts.

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Bugaku developed at a time when elements of court culture were adopted from mainland Asia and blended with existing traditions. This gradually produced a new, distinctly Japanese art form that has been passed down for centuries, performed at events at the emperor's court, shrines, and temples. As part of the show, visitors can enjoy an abridged performance of *Ranryo'o* (Prince Lanling), possibly the most famous *bugaku* dance. It is based on the story of a handsome prince who donned a fearsome mask to inspire his troops and intimidate enemies, leading his army to victory.