

Charlie Chaplin Statue

A statue of Charlie Chaplin (1889–1977) is located on Shirasagi Bridge in the center of Gero. The actor is depicted in a scene from *The Kid* (1921), seated with his arms folded, in his signature hat and mustache, a sullen yet playful expression on his face.

Chaplin was an English actor, composer, and filmmaker who was a major silent cinema star. His Japanese friend Kono Toraichi served as his chauffeur and secretary for nearly 20 years and accompanied him on his first visit to Japan in 1932. Chaplin's films were wildly popular in Japan in the Taisho (1912–1926) and early Showa (1926–1989) eras and even inspired Kabuki adaptations.

The Chaplin statue in Gero was sculpted by Willie Whitten, an employee of a Hollywood special effects company. Chaplin seated against the mountainous backdrop is at once familiar and strange, and provides a unique photo opportunity for passersby. The statue was unveiled in November 2001 as part of a municipal initiative to inject some movie magic into the streets of Gero.