

## Highlights of Horan Enya

### Songs

“Horan Enya” is also written “豊来栄弥” and “宝来遠弥”, with characters such as “fertility”, “wealth” and “prosperity”, showing earnest prayers for fertile harvests. The song is used to keep rhythm, and each of the five areas uses a unique tone and melody.

The chants of “Ho-oh-enya Ho-ran-ey-ye Yoyasanosa Ho-raranoranra” make a pleasant echo as they stay with you. If a change in rhythm is required the song can be altered. Some areas alternate between seven songs.



Kengai – Hero Dancer

### Dances

The dances by the *Kengai*, *Zaifuri* and Taiko team are known as *Kaidenma-odori*. Toward the end of the Edo period, fishermen from the village of Kaka learned them from the *Echigo* region (modern day Niigata) and they began to be included in Horan Enya. They were said to be very popular at the time. The heroic *Kengai* dances and the beautiful *Zaifuri* dances were said to fascinate the public. Dances, like the songs, differ between each village.



Taiko – Drums

Zaifuri – Female Dancer

### Clothes

The *Shimenawa* (Shinto “enclosing rope”) and beautifully embroidered aprons on the waist of the *Kengai*, is modeled after those worn by high ranking Sumo wrestlers. The feminine attire of the *Zaifuri* and Taiko team costume feature a *Yuzen* printed silk kimono over a traditional under-kimono called a *Nagajuban*. The Taiko team also wear cute hats called *Hanagasa* and *Eboshi*.

### Boats



The boats originally began their journey on the moats of Matsue Castle, around the Kitasomon Bridge, but as the moats grew smaller and the boats larger, it became necessary to depart from the Ohashi River. The *Mikoshibune* which carried the Divine Spirit and the escort of *Kaidenma-sen* and other boats form a link of 100 boats which stretches over one kilometre.

The dazzling colours which adorn the boats adds beauty to the festival.

## Matsue Horan enya Memorial Hall

### What is Horan Enya?



Horan Enya’s official name is “Matsue Jozan Inari Shrine Spirit Transfer Festival” and is a nautical Shinto Festival where the Divine Spirit of Matsue Jozan Inari Shrine is brought by boat to Adakaya Shrine in Higashi Izumo, roughly 10 kilometres away, to facilitate 7 days of prayer for stability and fertility in the Izumo region before returning to its original shrine.

This festival sees a parade of over 100 boats on the Ohashi and Iu Rivers once every 10 years. As one of the top boat festivals in Japan it is the pride of Matsue.

Horan Enya comprises of three festivals: the Togyosai, where the Divine Spirit is brought to Adakaya by boat; the Chuunichisai, the middle day of the week of prayers at Adakaya Shrine; and the Kangyosai, where the Divine Spirit is returned to Jozan Inari Shrine, again by boat.

### The origins of Horan Enya

In 1648, due to the unstable weather in the Izumo region, the harvest of rice and other grains was in danger. This deeply concerned the lord of the Matsue domain, Matsudaira Naomasa, so he had the Divine Spirit of Jozan Inari Shrine carried by ship to Adakaya shrine to pray for good harvest over a long period. This was the beginning of Horan Enya. The prayers were successful and the region was blessed with a bountiful harvest. The festival has continued for the 370 years since then.



Portrait of Matsudaira Naomasa



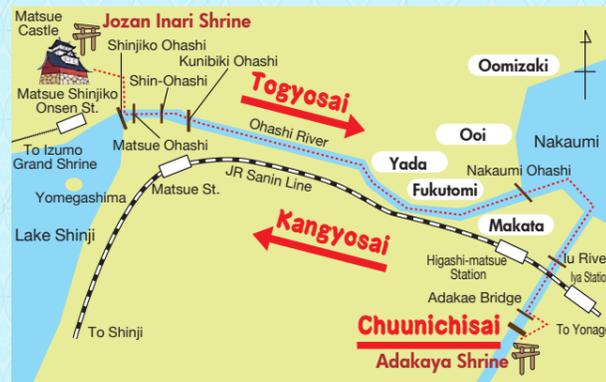
Jozan Inari Shrine



# The Five Great Areas of Horan Enya

The “Five Great Areas”, or *Godaichi*, refers to the villages of Makata, Yada, Ooi, Fukutomi and Oomizaki. When the 1808 festival was beset with rough winds and rain, fishermen from the village of Makata helped bring the boat carrying the Divine Spirit safely to Adakaya Shrine. In each festival since then, they continue to escort the Divine Spirit in boats called *Kaidenma-sen*. A number of other villages joined soon after.

The villages see their escort duty as a prime responsibility and each resident in each village contributes.



## 1st Boat Makata



## 2nd Boat Yada



## 3rd Boat Ooi



## 4th Boat Fukutomi



## 5th Boat Oomizaki



# Kaidenma-sen and their crews

*Kaidenma-sen* play an important role escorting and protecting the boat carrying the Divine Spirit. The crew is made up of exclusively male locals, who sing “Horan Enya” to Taiko drums while the *Kengai* and *Zaifuri* dance.

The chant-song “Horan Enya” is used to keep rowing rhythm and is thought to be the origin of the festival’s common name.



**Denma-chou – Boat Leader**

The Denma-chou is in charge of all activities on a *Kaidenma-sen*. They stand imposingly in the centre of the boat at all times and order the other crewmembers. They are responsible for the ship’s safety and smooth sailing.



**Ondotori – Rhythm Leader**

The Ondotori plays an important role keeping the rowers in rhythm. In their grand costume they hold their hands on their hips and sing “Horan Enya” from deep in their chests, helping the rowers and dancers keep in rhythm.



**Hayasuke – Pole Pilot**

The Hayasuke skillfully wields a long push pole and uses it to steer the boat away from other boats, etc., and ensure the *Kaidenma-sen*’s smooth sailing. Because they stand out in their position at the front of the boat, they wear creative costumes unique to each village.



**Nerikai – Rudder Pilot**

In some areas they are called Tomogai (stern rowers), they control the rudder of the *Kaidenma-sen*. The rudder of a *Kaidenma-sen* is a giant oar which the Nerikai grips with both hands and controls with their whole body to steer the boat according to the Denma-chou’s directions. They signal the movement of the boat with song.



**Kengai – Heroic Dancer**

Positioned at the front end of the boat, the Kengai masterfully wields a 1m long paddle imitating a sword (also called a Kengai) and performs a hero’s dance. Their appearance is based on that of classic kabuki actors and sumo wrestlers.



**Zaifuri – Feminine Dancer**

The Zaifuri are the stars of the show, well dressed in colourful female kimono. They dance while swinging their large bamboo batons called zai. They perform on top of barrels at the back of the boat while gracefully swaying their bodies and swinging their zai at the heavens.



**Taiko – Drummers**

The drummers wear colourful costumes and traditional hats called Hanagasa and Eboshi. This role is often given to elementary school children. They kneel in traditional posture and hold a serious gaze while assisting in keeping the rhythm.



**Kaikata – Rowers**

Kaikata are the rowers of the *Kaidenma-sen*. They make up about two thirds of the crew. They wear colourfully dyed festival clothes called Happi with collars and headbands and row with all their might while singing and chanting “Horan Enya.”