



(Huile sur toile, 91 x 122)

安珍・清姫伝説 (Kiyohime)

Origin — The story of Kiyohime (pure princess) takes place during the reign of emperor Daigo (898-930). Mentioned since the 11th century by monk Chingen of the Enryaku-ji monastery (north-east of Kyōto) in the collection titled *Dai-Nihon Hokke-Kyō Genki* (1040-1043) and around 1120 in the *Konjaku Monogatari* (traditionally attributed to Minamoto no Takakuni), this story is transcribed in the early 16th century in two scrolls *Dōjōji Engi Emaki* kept at Hidakagawa (western coast of Wakayama prefecture), in the Buddhist temple Dōjō-ji founded in 701. The story of Kiyohime inspired the Nō theater (*Dōjō-ji*, around 1510, a play attributed to Kanze Kojirō Nobumitsu, the grandson of playwright Zeami), the Kabuki theater (*Musume Dōjō-ji*, a play created by Segawa Kikunojō I, performed for the first time at the Edo Nakamura-za in 1744), and a novel published in 1953 by the famous Mishima Yukio. Among the illustrations linked to this story, let us cite those by Toriyama Sekien (1780), Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1845), and Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1890).

Story — Kiyohime is the only daughter of Shōji Kiyotsugu, an innkeeper of the village of Masago (Chibaken prefecture). Every year during spring, a yamabushi Buddhist monk, whose name Anchin is for the first time mentioned in 1322 in Kokan Shiren's *Genkō Shakusho*, stops over at this inn during

his pilgrimage to Kumano, on the eastern coast of Kii peninsula. Anchin, described as a handsome young man, ends up, deliberately or not, arousing the desire of Kiyohime who, in 928, has now become a young woman. However, the monk explains his vocation does not allow him to accept her advances. Kiyohime becomes so furious that the poor monk, afraid, escapes from the inn, crosses the Hidaka river in a small boat, and runs to find shelter underneath a big bronze bell of Dōjō-ji shrine. Kiyohime, transformed into a dragon-snake while crossing the river to chase Anchin, guesses his hideout, and furiously wraps herself around the bell; the force of her rage and resentment emits such a heat that the bell melts, incinerating the monk who thought he was safe. Depending on the sources, Kiyohime either commits suicide in the Hidaka river or dies at the same time as the monk.



(Huile sur toile, 76 x 76)

ひとりかくれんぼ (Hitorikakurenbo)

Origin — Hitori Kakurenbo (playing hide-and-seek alone) is an urban legend that shows the possibility to play hide-and-seek alone with a ghost, invited to one's home via internet, based on a well defined procedure. Initially posted in April 2006 on the Japanese occult forum *2chan* (now *5chan*), it is a variant between Kakurenbo (traditional hide-and-seek during which a participant, appointed as *oni* after a random draw by rock-paper-scissors, counts up to a certain number while the others hide), and Otoko-yo (players are supposed to be kidnapped by ghosts). Hitori Kakurenbo has been the subject of many cinematic adaptations, among others by Kainuma Tomoya in 2008, Yamada Masafumi in 2009 and 2010, and Torii Yasutake in 2012.

Story — In order to play Hitori Kakurenbo, you must first get the following items: a stuffed toy, uncooked rice, a sewing needle, red thread, a kitchen knife, a cup of salt water and a nail clippers. The game must begin at 3.00 am exactly: remove all the filling of the stuffed toy and put rice into it, add some nail fragments that you just cut, sew the toy back up with the red thread. The remaining thread is used to tie up the toy which should now be given a name. You must then take the following steps in chronological order : 1) repeat three times to the toy : « First, I'll be it », 2) go to the bathroom and submerge the toy (bathtub or basin filled with water), 3) leave the bathroom, turn off all the lights but keep a white TV screen on, close your eyes and count up to 10, 4) take the kitchen knife and make your way back to the bathroom, 5) say to the toy : « I've found you (name of the toy) » and stab it with the knife, 6) next say : « Now you're it », leave the bathroom and hide in a closet; make sure you always have the salt water with you, 7) stay hidden and wait for the coming of the ghost. Some precautions should be taken: don't play the game for longer than two hours, don't leave the house while playing, don't turn any lights on, and end the game as soon as something feels wrong. How to end the game? Take a swig of the salt water (without swallowing it), pour the contents of the salt water cup over the toy and then the salt water from your mouth, and repeat three times: « I win ». Finally, the toy must be burnt.

Origin — Hone Onna (the bone-woman) is a kind of ghost bound to the world of the living by a never-ending love. She appears in the evening, looking as if still alive, meets up with the man she loves, and leaves the following morning. Each of these encounters removes little by little the vital energy of the lover who finally dies. The most famous Hone Onna is the subject of *Botan Dōrō* (The Peony Lantern), one of the sixty-eight stories to have been compiled in 1666 by the Buddhist monk Asai Ryōi in his collection *Otogi Bōko*. Inspired by the Chinese legend *Mudandeng Ji* (The Peony Lantern) found in Qu You's collection *Jian Deng Xin Hua* (1378), the story of *Botan Dōrō* has been adapted to film by Makino Shōzō in 1914, Nobuchi Akira in 1955, Yamamoto Satsuo in 1968, and Isomura Itsumichi in 1990.

Story — Otsuyu, the only daughter of samurai Iijima Heizayemon, lives with her servant, Oyone, at Yanagijima, the weeping willow island. One day, Otsuyu is visited by the family physician Yamamoto Shijō, who is accompanied by handsome young samurai Iijima Heizayemon. They instantly fall in love and promise to meet again soon. However, the physician refuses to play matchmaker. Otsuyu thinking that she has been forgotten by Shinzaburō, dies of sorrow, followed by her loyal maidservant. On the evening of Obon, the festival of the dead, Shinzaburō sees two young ladies coming, one of them carrying a lantern adorned with peony flowers; Otsuyu and Oyone, who he had been told were dead, are back. They stay many nights with Shinzaburō and leave each morning. Tomozo, a domestic of the young samurai, is worried by the noises emanating from the house of his master. He decides to spy through the slits of the shutters and, horrified, observes that the woman he hears talking is actually

a skeleton. Threatened by Oyone who guesses his presence, he rushes to meet physiognomist Hakuodo Yusa for advice.



(Huile sur toile, 61 x 91)

骨女 (Hone Onna)

The latter, understanding the gravity of the situation, refers Shinzaburō to the great priest Ryoseki : a *Shiryō-yoké* (talisman) and a pack of *O-fuda* (religious texts written on narrow paper bands) to be stuck on each opening of the house should protect Shinzaburō against the death that lurks if he continues to meet this ghost. The amulets effectively prevent both spirits from entering Shinzaburō's house. However, Tomozo and his spouse Omine succumb to Oyone's threats and to the promise of one hundred gold ryo : Tomozo removes the amulets. The next morning, Shinzaburō is found dead, embraced by the bones of a skeleton.

Whether they carry on ancestral traditions (Oiwa, Okiku, Kiyohime) or have more recently taken shape in urban legends (Hitori Kakurenbo, Kuchisake Onna, Teke Teke), Japanese ghosts made their way towards the Western world, thanks, among others, to the writer Lafcadio Hearn. Etchings, literature, mangas, Nō theater, and of course cinema let us to explore their appearance, listen to their story, understand their fears, and respect their messages. Because the Japanese ghost may be much more a suffering being than a scary creature.

In addition to the legends illustrated in this brochure, the exhibition project also includes :

Hoïchi (耳なし芳一), the biwa virtuoso.

The game Hyaku monogatari (百物語).

Gaki (餓鬼), these strange *Hungry Ghosts*.

Kumo Onna (蜘蛛女), the spiderwoman.

Aokigahara forest (青木ヶ原).

The ghost mother Ubume (産女).

The horse spirit Sagari (さがり).

And many others...

Geneviève Dupont and Régis Olry want to express their special thanks to Jennifer Vuong-Nguyen (model for many paintings), Kurihara Noriko (Japanese calligraphy), and Stéphane Sobczak (photographs).

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幽霊

(Yūrei)

The world of Japanese ghosts



(Triptych, oil painting, 38 x 76)

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Painter

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Concept and narration