

Higan 2007

From March 16 to April 1 2007 Abano Terme,

**the most important Event dedicated to the Arts and Traditions of Orient
Pietro d'Abano Conference Theatre – Free entry**

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Higan, the most important event dedicated to the arts and traditions of the Orient, with a particular attention to Japan, blossoms again in Abano Terme after the success of the first edition.

The title of the event, Higan, is a Japanese word composed by two characters: hi, other, and gan, the bank of the river. Higan means, literally, "The other bank of the river" and wishes to emphasize the possibility to get closer to, or know better, another world which is different from ours.

For three weeks Abano Terme will be the grand stage of a cultural event which allows the audience to meet the Far East, in all its cultural expressions, creating an imaginary "bridge" which will lead the visitors towards "the other bank".

The event will last 17 days, following one main theme, "The Origins": three weekends host a intense programme of shows, conferences, demonstrations, exhibitions, lessons and workshops for a total of more than 800 hours of cultural offers structured in multi-level experiences, catching the attention of the curious visitors as well as suggesting specific in-depths to the experts.

More than 15,000 visitors are expected at this free Event.

The first week-end, from March 16th to 18th, will start with the opening of the Japanese house, the "House of the Peony in Bloom", an area projected by the architect Paola Trevisan respecting all the elements in Japanese architecture. There it will be possible for the visitors to dive into the domestic culture of the people of the Rising Sun. The theme of this first weekend is the aesthetics of the greenery: from Japanese gardens to Bonsai art.

Higan will host the Second Nippon Bonsai Sakka Kyookai Europe National Congress; for the occasion they will set up an exhibition of wonderful specimens of Bonsai and suiseki, and offer cultural conferences and technique demonstrations.

The Master Abe Kenichi, world famous expert in the Pentaphylla Pine, will be the guest of honour. The Euganea Bonsai Association, instead, will address its basic courses on the indoor Bonsai maintenance to the novices.

An introduction to the Japanese gardens will begin while entering the Teatro Congressi: all visitors will walk through a Japanese style garden; a karesansui (the traditional dry garden) will be placed inside the Japanese house; the photo exhibition borrowed from the Japanese Culture Centre in Rome will show examples of gardens in Japan to the visitors.

A special area will be dedicated to the most beloved amber-coloured drink in the world: tea. Japanese and Chinese tea guided tastings and short courses, conferences on tea origins and properties, a photo exhibition and a suggestive comparative demonstration of Chanoyu

(Japanese Tea Ceremony by the Master Kazuie Murayama of the Omotesenke School) and Chinese Tea Art (by the Master Yip Wing-Chi, President of the Hong Kong Tea Association).

On March 17th and 18th "Haru no Go" (Springtime Tournament), a Class A tournament of Go, the ancient oriental strategy game, will take place. The cuisine and sake tasting are not to be missed, for those who want to experience the real Japanese flavours.

The second week-end, from March 23rd to 25th, will be centred around the topic of psycho-physical health.

Professors of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Padova, doctors from the Matteo Ricci Foundation in Bologna and from the Ayurvedic Point in Milan will meet to discuss the scientific confirmation of Chinese traditional and Ayurvedic medicine, as well as of disciplines such as Taiji Quan and Qigong. Lessons and short courses of Shiatsu, Yoga, Aikitaiso, meditation, and free Shiatsu and Reiki treatments complete the cultural experience.

Furthermore, Tibet and India will be guest countries during this weekend, an "event within the event" organized in collaboration with the Tara Cittamani Centre. The traditional and cultural aspects of the countries which were the cradle of Buddhism will be highlighted in conferences and meetings.

Tibetan Buddhist monks will be creating a mandala for the whole weekend.

Inside the "House of the Peonia in Bloom" you will be able to feel the Japanese atmosphere with the traditional art demonstrations such as Chanoyu, the Japanese Tea Ceremony; the kimono wearing demonstration; basic language lessons; the yuzen, painting on kimono silk; origami and children games.

The third week-end, from March 30th to April 1st, will be dedicated to a special Event, "Manga and Anime", as a result of the collaboration with Kappa Editions. The publishing house based in Bologna, which has for years written Lupin III's new stories, will exhibit original drawings in three different thematic experiences, showing the visitors how comics can tell us about Japanese lifestyle and culture.

Writers and illustrators will be available to meet visitors and fans and for demonstrations, book presentations and workshops dedicated to the creation of comics.

Another interesting part of the weekend is dedicated to Japanese Martial Arts, within an experience which will explore its origins and subsequent evolutions.

Conferences, open lessons and in-depths about Kendo, Kyudo (Japanese archery), Aikido, Karate and Iaido will be offered to approach the curious newcomers and get those fond of martial disciplines involved.

The Master Keiichi Sugiyama, 8 Dan Aikido, Katori Shintoryu, successor of the Master Minoru Mochizuki; and the Master Kiyoshi Kanomata, 6 Dan Kyudo, Ogasawara-Ryu Yabusame will be our guests from Japan.

The fascinating Shodo art, or Japanese calligraphy, will be presented through a personal works exhibition by the Master Norio Nagayama, who received in 2002 the title of "No longer judgeable Master"; he will be helped by his Bokushin School in an in-depth workshop and a demonstration of different styles.

There are many shows offered during Higan, and many that are not to be missed, which will be performed by world famous artists coming from Japan and Europe: the Master Onoe Kazuhiko, artist and composer, will arrive from Japan exclusively for Higan to direct his opera: "Fujito" on March 17th.

On the opening day, March 16th, the composer and musician Mieko Miyazaki will perform a Koto and Shamisen concert, playing a variety of music genres.

Masa Daiko will be back to give us two powerful Japanese percussion concerts, on March 23rd and 24th. A traditional Bharata Natyam dance show will represent India; a tribute to Lupin III° manga's will be performed on March 30th and a demonstration of Japanese martial arts "From Jutsu to Do" will close the second edition of the Event on March 31st with the Master Sugiyama as a special guest, to show the visitors the evolution of the styles from war techniques to the way of the war.

Higan is an event organized by the Association Higan with the collaboration of Inartis S.r.l. and the Abano Terme City Council, the patronage of the Abano Montegrotto Terme Euganee Society, TermeEuganee Padova Tourism, the Province of Padova, and the Veneto Region, the patronage of the Japanese General Consulate and the Japanese Culture Institute in Rome.