

Program No.2

“Okoto – A Starry Sky Concertino”

with female chorus accompanied by orchestra or piano.

Playwright/director: Rintaro Dainichi

Composer: Masatoshi Hasebe

[Summary]

This work is based upon the legend of the weaver maiden and the cowherd boy of the Tanabata Festival. It is a fantasy music drama with music performed by guitars, Kagura drums, a baritone opera singer, and a women’s chorus. It takes as its axis the tragedy of Guadalcanal Island and Nagasaki, with the final scene showing the hero conquering and rising above the wounds in his heart—an anti-war tale in which prayers for world peace are directed at the starry sky.

Okoto is the name of the heroine and the term “concertino” means a small-scale concerto.

The Tanabata Festival is one of the lyrical summer traditions of the city of Sendai. This play is also an homage to his hometown of Sendai by Rintaro Dainichi.

Plot: In July 1945, on the evening of an air raid, a harp was wrapped in flames. The owner of the harp was a young man who aspired to become a composer. He was a Japanese army combat medic named Mitsuo Misawa, who was involved in the war on the southern front. He was miraculously able to return to Japan alive, but he was so shocked at having lost everything that he valued in the air raids that he found himself unable to compose any music. On the night of the Tanabata Festival, Mitsuo hears strange sounds coming from a burnt-out well. He plunges into the well and swims to the palace of the stars where he sees a group of beautiful women performing the Tanabata dance. A woman named “Okoto” appears in front of him. She is actually the spirit of a certain woman who is a Taiwanese who has been searching for many years for her brother who died in Nagasaki. She always carries a small bell from the stars to prove that she is her brother’s real younger sister. And Mitsuo finds that the other bell, identifying him as her brother, is in his pocket. Mitsuo and Okoto are dashed about by the vicissitudes of a strange fate, and finally the miserable war experiences of the two is made clear. . .

