

MARCH 15-19 » AUSTIN, TEXAS



## SXSW 2006 JAPAN NITE 10th Anniversary

### Japan Traditional Nite

~ **Everything about Shamisen** ~

(Shamisen = Japanese Banjo)

Led by the spread of Okinawa Music and the emergence of a young generation of Tsugaru Shamisen performers, Shamisen has stepped over the boundaries of "traditional instrument" to become recognized as a multi-genre instrument. It is apparent that Shamisen has grown into a familiar instrument for everyone. The image of "Shamisen" has also changed overseas. Many famous composers, such as Ry Cooder, David Lindley, Levon Helm (The Band) and David Byrne (Talking Heads) have incorporated the emotion and energy of Shamisen/Banjo in their songs.

Shamisen/Japanese Banjo began to fascinate the audience and simultaneously cultured people's respect towards traditional instruments.



The main theme of this proposal is to feature Shamisen as JAPAN NITE's 10th anniversary event to show the world the interesting and fascinating qualities that Shamisen and Japanese traditional instruments possess.

Texans naturally have a respect towards Roots music, and that combined with the world's largest music convention (and the flock of music fans that it lures) should cause a huge feedback. We predict that Shamisen will be the most talked-about event in SXSW, with its news quickly spreading nation-wide.



We intend to select traditional Shamisen performers, one from each style. We also plan on inviting ex-square member/gagaku player Haruhiko Senba's group to have a mixed lineup that will feature both traditional and contemporary styles.

Roukyoku player Kunimoto Takeharu and the bluegrass band he performed with in the states will also be a candidate. A session with an American traditional musician will be great.

We'd also like to think about the possibilities of having a concert in major US cities. Such concerts can be promoted by receiving comments from American artists that are fans of Okinawa music/Tsugaru Shamisen.

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