

The LLL SIG Newsletter

English Rakugo Performed at JALT 2010: One spectator's review

Yuri Tajiri

To tell the truth, it was a few years ago, after I came back from a stay in Canada, that I got interested in Japanese culture and realized how lucky I am to be Japanese. Before living abroad, everything in Japan was too familiar to me and I did not care about Japanese culture very much. However, many people outside of Japan were very interested in Japanese culture and often asked me about it, so I inevitably came to think about it.

A few months ago, one of my friends who is studying about Japanese culture told me about English Rakugo by Mr. Katsura Shijaku, a famous Rakugo performer. His English was surprisingly natural! I have heard that some theatres have interpretation systems for Japanese Rakugo, but I was quite sure that this English Rakugo would be more interesting and could be understood easily by English speakers. I showed my British friend, and he liked it very much and said he would like to see a live performance. This is a good example of people making good use of English to introduce Japanese culture.

I was lucky to have a chance to have a chance to see another English Rakugo performer, Mr. Eiraku Kanariya, perform at JALT 2010 and enjoyed both Rakugo and his song with ukulele very much. There were also many people from several countries who were watching the performance with great interest, so it was also a good chance for me to realize that Japan has a nice traditional culture. I want to know more about not only Rakugo but also any traditional Japanese cultures which are historic and attractive. I would be happy if I could be one of the people who hand down it, like Mr. Katsura and Mr. Kanariya. I hope to see Mr. Kanariya's performance again and wish him

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the best of success.

Thank you very much!

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