

## **English Rakugo Speech by Senior Consul Tomoko Dodo, August 29, 2013**

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls.

Well, I am not a comedian, but a government official. So I can't make you laugh and I'm sorry you'll have to bear with me for the next 10 minutes of formal remarks. No, I'm only joking.

The Consulate General of Japan is happy, with sponsorship from the Japan Foundation, to be co-presenting with JCCCW and HBCC this special event celebrating 50 years of the Washington State-Hyogo Prefecture sister state relationship.

We've all heard the saying "laughter is the best medicine." Well, I think we will go home a little healthier today. Laughter isn't just good for our health, it brings us closer together, too. So while we enjoy this performance of Rakugo in English, let's also appreciate another blend of East and West: the strong bond between our peoples.

Now let's all have fun with Katsura Sunshine's comedic mastery and enjoy this rare opportunity to experience English Rakugo in the Emerald City.