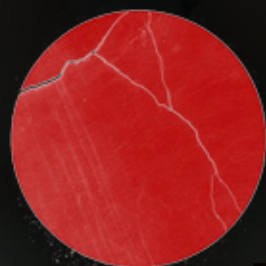


A BALLET PIXELLE PRODUCTION
A BENEFIT FOR OR THE JAPAN
EARTHQUAKE/TSUNAMI FUNDRAISER



SHUZENJI

BALLET PIRELLE PRESENTS

SHUZENJI

AN ORIGINAL BALLET BY INARRA SAARINEN

STORY, CHOREOGRAPHY AND ANIMATIONS -
INARRA SAARINEN
MUSIC, COMPOSITION AND RECORDING -
SOLARY CLARY

FEATURING

SAKURA – A YOUNG WOMAN

TOKAI – A YOUNG MAN

YUREI – A SPIRIT BOUND TO THE EARTH

OIRAN – COURTESANS

OBAKE – SPIRIT WOMEN

SET DESIGN -- INARRA SAARINEN

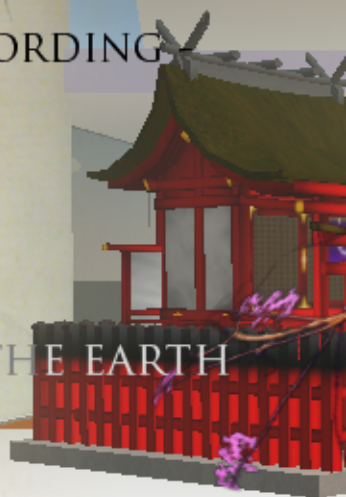
SET BUILDS -- MARK CASSINI & TIK MERLIN

THEATRE BUILD -- ESPRESSO SAARINEN

MCS -- SKIP FLOSSBERG - COORDINATOR

DIRECTOR -- INARRA SAARINEN

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON BALLET PIRELLE, VISIT
[HTTP://BALLETPIRELLE.ORG](http://balletpixelle.org)





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*Treasure every meeting,
for it will never recur.*

ICHI GO ICHI E



BALLET PIRELLE

THE COMPANY

AIYANA TRIPSA
ALEXA SIDEWAYS
AMELIE DIBOU
ANAIID DAVIAU
ASAMI LARSSON
CALIA CACHIN
CECILIA MISTWALKER
DERRICK PERL
DEYNA BROEK
DUBHNA RHIADRA
ESPRESSO SAARINEN
GEOFFREY UNSWORTH
GINKO FROG
HIROKO KIMONO
INARRA SAARINEN

LEKO LITTLEBIRD
LUCI YOKOSUKA
MARK CASSINI
MSMONEYPENNY PIXELMAID
NEENA BOTANICAL
PATROS ZIFER
SHERAINBOW MERLIN
SKIP FLOSSBERG
TIK MERLIN
TINKA BONDAR
VIVienne DARCÝ
WILLIS ROSSINI
XANTHI ORIDIUM
ZOOEY MAYNARD

ACT I

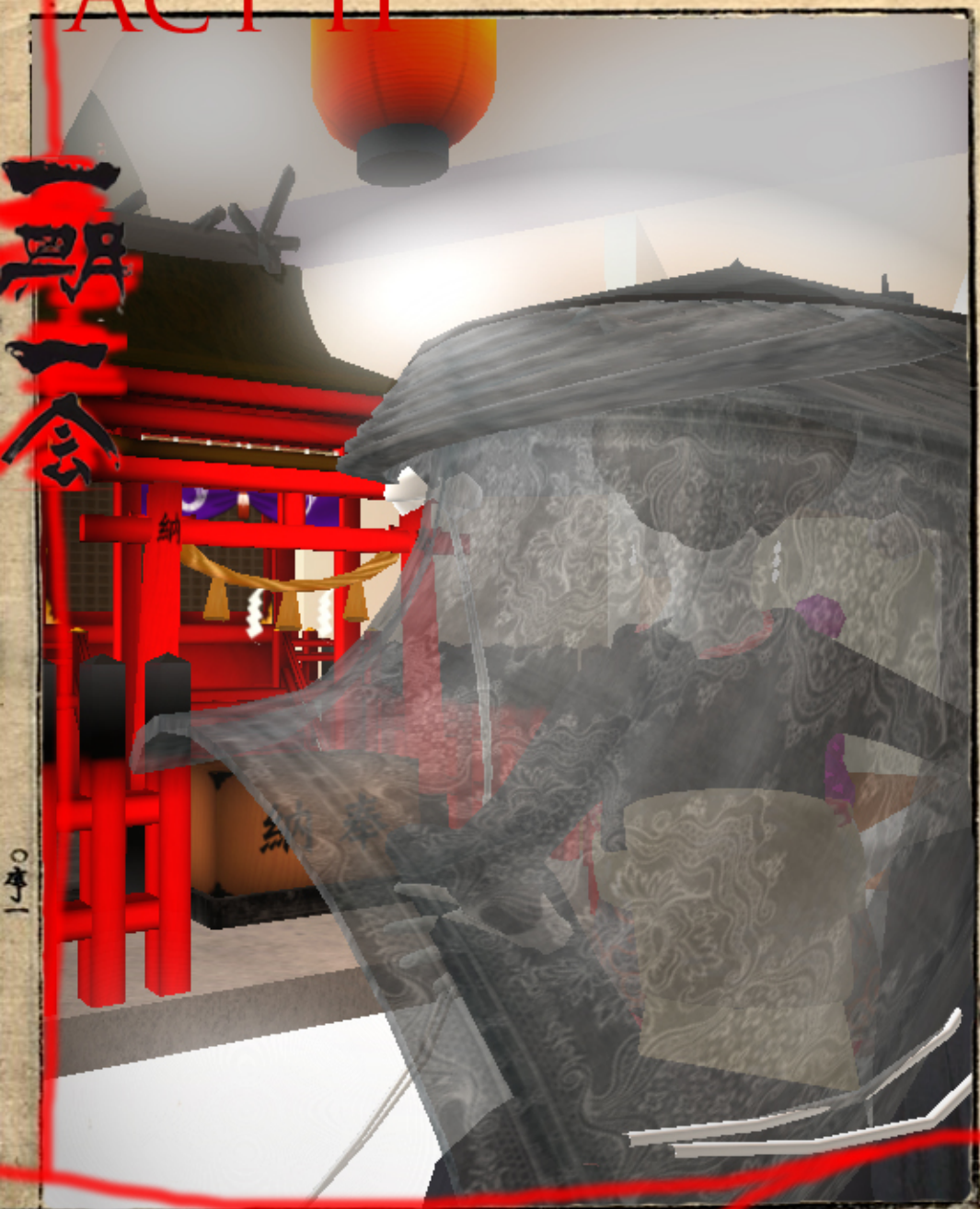
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TOKAI AND SAKURA ARE
LOCKED IN AN EMBRACE.
SUDDENLY, TOKAI IS SUR-
ROUNDED BY FOUR ENRAGED
OIRAN, OR COURTESANS.
THEY ARE JEALOUS OF THE
LOVE BETWEEN TOKAI AND HIS
LOVER, SAKURA. HE TRIES TO
FIGHT BACK, BUT IN A JEALOUS
RAGE THEY KILL HIM. SAKURA
SEES HIS DEATH AND HIS
SPIRIT LEAVE HIS BODY. HE
HAS BECOME A YUREI -- A
SPIRIT THAT IS TIED TO THE
PLACE OF A VIOLENT
DEATH.

ACT II

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SAKURA KNOWS TOKAI'S SPIRIT
MUST STILL BE AT SHUZENJI.
HER DEEP LOVE FOR TOKAI
CALLS HIS SPIRIT AND HE
TRANSFORMS INTO TOKAI IN
HUMAN FORM! THEY DANCE
IN LOVE AND DELIGHT. NOW
TOKAI'S SPIRIT IS FREE AND HE
CAN LEAVE THE PLACE OF HIS
DEATH, SHUZENJI. HOWEVER,
SAKURA CANNOT BEAR TO LOSE
HIM AGAIN. SHE KILLS HER-
SELF TO BECOME A GHOST
HERSELF AND JOIN HIM IN THE
AFTERLIFE.

117

ACT III

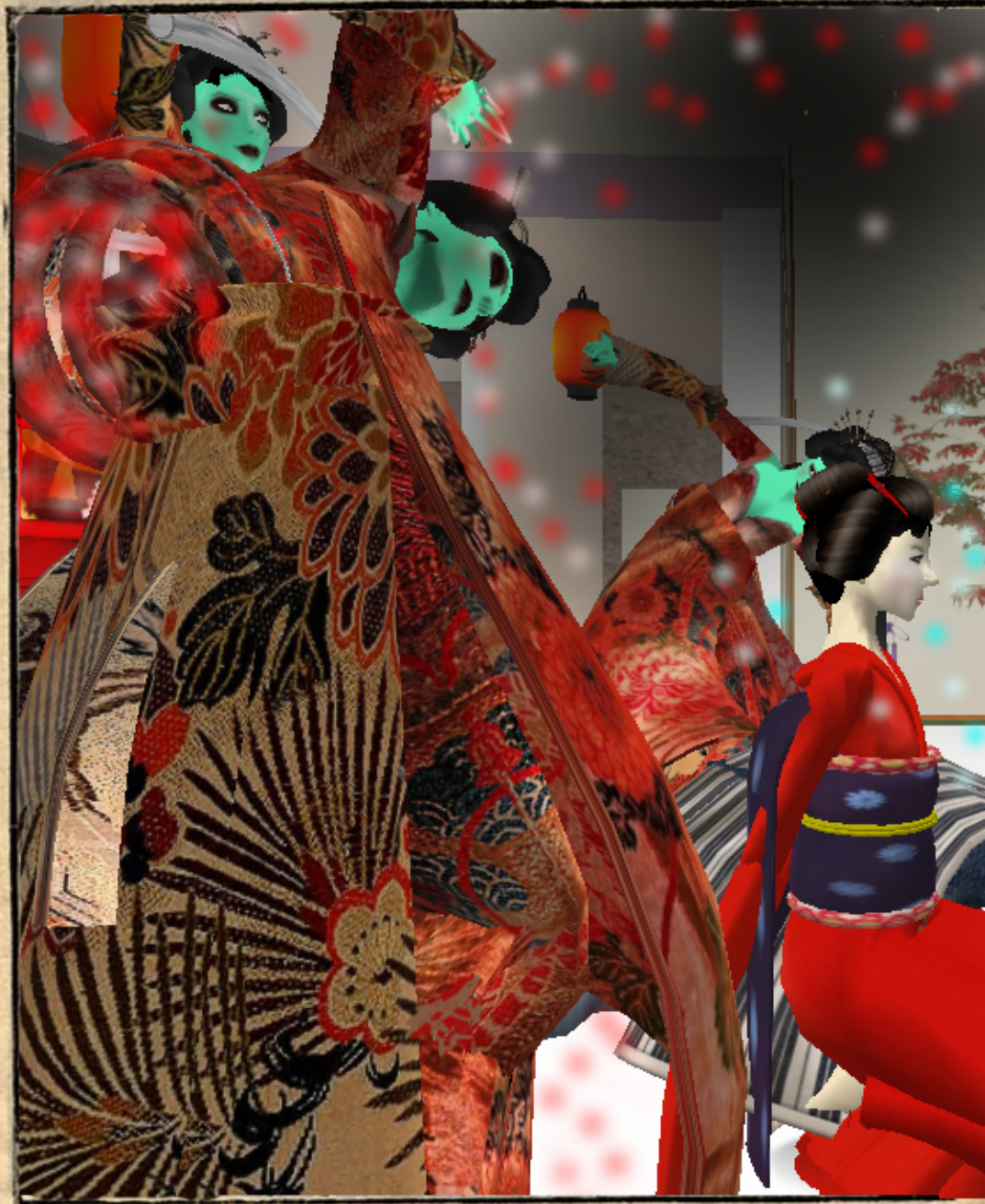
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NOW THAT SAKURA AND
TOKAI ARE RELEASED FROM
THEIR EARTHLY BONDS,
THEY UNITE IN THE SPIRIT
WORLD -- A PLACE OF UN-
LIMITED SOULS. SUR-
ROUNDED BY OBAKE
WOMEN, THEY MARRY IN
THE SPIRIT WORLD AND
ARE TOGETHER FOREVER IN
UNENDING LOVE. THIS IS
THE TALE OF SHUZENJI.





Ichi go ichi e





CULTURAL & CAST EXPLANATIONS

SHUZENJI

ONE OF THE OLDEST STRUCTURES IN EASTERN JAPAN, THE TEMPLE DATES FROM SOME 1200 YEARS BACK. FOR NEARLY FOUR AND A HALF CENTURIES, THE TEMPLE WAS USED FOR THE SHINGON, THEN ZEN, AND THEN RINZAI SECTS. THE TEMPLE FEATURES PROMINENTLY IN THE HISTORY OF THE TOKUGAWA SHOGUNATE.

NOTE: SHUZENJI IS A CURRENT, AND REAL, TEMPLE IN THE IZU PENINSULA IN JAPAN. I HAVE USED IT HERE AS A NAME OF A SHINTO SHRINE. NO IMPLICATIONS ARE INVOLVED. NONE OF THE STORY OR ITS CHARACTERS REPRESENT ANY HISTORY OF SHUZENJI TEMPLE.

SAKURA

THE CHERRY BLOSSOM IS VERY IMPORTANT IN JAPANESE CULTURE BECAUSE IT EXEMPLIFIES SPRING, FEMININE BEAUTY, AND THE EPHEMERAL NATURE OF LIFE. THE TRANSIENCE OF THE BLOSSOMS, THE EXTREME BEAUTY AND QUICK DEATH, HAS OFTEN BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH MORTALITY.

TOKAI

THERE IS A PART OF CENTRAL JAPAN'S CHOBU REGION CALLED, TOKAI, BUT NO REFERENCE TO THAT REGION IS INTENDED.



OIRAN

OIRAN WERE HIGH-CLASS COURTESANS IN JAPAN. THE WORD "OIRAN" CONSISTS OF TWO KANJI, MEANING "FLOWER" AND "LEADER" OR "FIRST." THE OIRAN AROSE IN THE EDO PERIOD, 1600 - 1868. AT THIS TIME, LAWS WERE PASSED RESTRICTING BROTHELS TO WALLED DISTRICTS SET SOME DISTANCE FROM THE CITY CENTER. IN THE MAJOR CITIES THESE WERE THE SHIMABARA IN KYOTO, THE SHIMMACHI IN OSAKA, AND IN EDO (PRESENT-DAY TOKYO), THE YOSHIWARA. THESE RAPIDLY GREW INTO LARGE, SELF-CONTAINED "PLEASURE QUARTERS" OFFERING ALL MANNER OF ENTERTAINMENTS.

YOUKAI

YOUKAI ARE "APPARITIONS", "SPIRITS", OR "DEMONS", A CLASS OF, OR EQUIVALENT TO, OBAKE. THESE ARE CREATURES IN JAPANESE FOLKLORE RANGING FROM THE EVIL ONI TO THE MISCHIEVOUS KITSUNE OR SNOW WOMAN YUKI-ONNA. YOUKAI GENERALLY HAVE A SORT OF SPIRITUAL OR SUPERNATURAL POWER, AND SO ENCOUNTERS WITH HUMAN BEINGS TEND TO BE DANGEROUS. YOUKAI ALSO HAVE DIFFERENT MOTIVES AND AGENDAS FROM HUMAN BEINGS, WHICH ARE OFTEN COMPLETELY INCOMPREHENSIBLE.



YUREI

YUREI ARE JAPANESE GHOSTS. THE NAME CONSISTS OF TWO KANJI, (YUU), MEANING "FAINT" OR "DIM", AND AND (REI), MEANING "SOUL" OR "SPIRIT." ALTERNATIVE NAMES INCLUDE (BOREI) MEANING RUINED OR DEPARTED SPIRIT, (SHIRYO) MEANING DEAD SPIRIT, OR THE MORE ENCOMPASSING (YOKAI) OR (OBAKE). THEY ARE THOUGHT TO BE SPIRITS KEPT FROM A PEACEFUL AFTERLIFE. THEY REMAIN NEAR THE PLACE OF THEIR SUDDEN, SHOCKING, VIOLENT, OR EMOTIONAL POWERFUL DEATH.

MIKO

MIKO, LITERALLY "SHRINE MAIDEN", IS A JAPANESE TERM THAT ANCIENTLY MEANT "FEMALE SHAMAN, SHAMANESS; MEDIUM; PROPHET" WHO CONVEYED DIVINE ORACLES, AND CURRENTLY MEANS "SHRINE MAIDEN; VIRGIN CONSECRATED TO A DEITY" WHO SERVES AT SHINTO SHRINES. MIKO CONTINUE TO EXIST AND DANCE IN JAPANESE SHRINES TODAY.




OBAKE

A CLASS OF MONSTER OR SPIRIT IN JAPANESE FOLKLORE. LITERALLY THE TERM MEANS A THING THAT CHANGES, REFERRING TO A STATE OF TRANSFORMATION OR SHAPESHIFTING. THESE WORDS ARE OFTEN TRANSLATED AS GHOST, BUT PRIMARILY THEY REFER TO LIVING THINGS OR SUPERNATURAL BEINGS WHO HAVE TAKEN ON A TEMPORARY TRANSFORMATION, AND THESE BAKE-MONO ARE DISTINCT FROM THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD.

OKAME

THIS WHITE JAPANESE MASK HAS TWO NAMES, OTAFUKU AND OKAME. OTAFUKU LITERALLY MEANS "MUCH GOOD FORTUNE", AND OKAME MEANS "TORTOISE", ALSO A LUCKY SYMBOL FOR LONG LIFE. OTAFUKU REPRESENTS A LOVELY, ALWAYS SMILING JAPANESE WOMAN WHO BRINGS HAPPINESS AND GOOD FORTUNE TO ANY MAN SHE MARRIES.



The Making of a Ballet in Virtual Space

Inarra Saarinen

Creating Ballet Pixelle's (née Second Life Ballet) original ballets is truly an amazing experience. They take several months from concept to completion. Besides the normal artistic challenges there are also technical and logistic challenges.

I created Ballet Pixelle with a crazy idea, some fabulously talented and committed people, and a ton of perseverance.

STORY

Artistically, the stories are written and become more clarified over time and rehearsals. Part of the beauty of writing the story specifically for Ballet Pixelle is that I am able to utilize the unique aspects of Second Life to bring the story to life. For example, In Olmanen, I saw dragon-like creatures appearing in the air, a couple in love spiraling down and up, sprites flying, and a beautiful woman transforming instantly into an old woman while the man transformed into one of the evil beings. In Windows, I saw silhouetted women dancing in the air, teenagers doing slow aerial flips, and a dream sequence where a man transforms to his younger self and the lovers spiral up together.

PEOPLE

I find some wonderful collaborators in places all around the world, and we work live, something that would be very difficult in First Life. Our composer for our first ballet lives in London, our architect is in Australia, and our dancers and crew are from Austria, Denmark, East Coast of the U.S., England, Hawai'i, mid-West U.S., Netherlands, Portugal, and the West Coast of the U.S.

It was a challenge to find a costume designer, lighting designer, set designer, videographer, and stage manager at first. The dancers are also cross-trained in some crew positions. We also originally had a challenge keeping dancers because of First Life changes and commitments. Now, however, the understanding of the commitment is a part of the audition process. These dancers put in very significant dedication and work to Second Life Ballet and are a large part of why the ballet works. The entire cast and crew are volunteers that are interested in pursuing artistic movement and dance in Second Life.

ANIMATIONS

Technically, I used Avimator, Qvimator, Poser and others to create the animations. I began with some ballet animations and created quite a number over the course of the choreography. All in all, I now have approximately 400 original animations. The main difference between dance animations at clubs in Second Life and these ballet animations is that 100% of the ballet animations do not loop and run under the precise control (SL willing) of the dancer. The animations are put into gestures, which I make akin to musical phrases in ballet. This way the choreographer and dancers and composer are able to work in a normal First Life style. The gestures also allow very precise timing between animations (in tenth of seconds but, alas, not counting lag) and compound animations. That is, in a gesture if you do not add a "wait" step the two animations happen at the same time. The dancers map the gestures to function keys or use chat "/gesture_name" to activate the phrase. It is up to the dancers to rehearse and time the execution of each gesture in order.

During these times, I have tried working with both off-the-shelf and custom HUDs, but neither of them gave me all of the functionality that I needed. There were added lags in a HUD, for example, even though having buttons might have been convenient for the dancers.

REHEARSALS

Once the story begins to fall in place, I am able to animate most of my visions. What a wonderful release to be able to choreograph with dancers who have grand jete's that are full splits in the air, perfect "turn-out", and timely forever turns! This allows me to really produce many of the effects I want. Of course, these are real dancers, so there are always the "I thought said you wanted me to come downstage?" kind of discussions. The dancers are not scripted!

Rehearsals take place in almost exactly the same way a First Life rehearsal does -- except for the "I need you to hover up a bit" kind of directions.



STAGE

Our home theatre in Quat is where we first debuted. The theatre originally held 20, then 30, then 40 avatars, and then we could no longer hold our audience. So we investigated and researched plans for a more efficient, reduced lag, larger theatre. Eventually, we built a similar theatre to our home theatre hosted by IBM in the IBM sims . This theatre stretches across two sims -- the audience of 80 is in one and the stage and dancers are in another. Besides reducing lag, and allowing for a larger audience, security is enabled by simply putting different access restrictions on the stage sim.

COSTUMES

Because of the lack of a costume designer, we spend a significant amount of time finding and assembling off-the-rack costumes and AVs that fulfill the artistic vision, and then spend some time negotiating to make them "transfer ok". In this way, costumes can go out to the dancers and then are transferred back into Ballet Pixelle (née Second Life Ballet) wardrobe department. Our Wardrobe Department is an automated system that allows the dancers to "check out" costumes while letting everyone know who has what. Designers who contribute costumes are acknowledged in the playbill.

WHAT NEXT?

In closing, this is an exhilarating experience with an absolutely wonderful committed artistic team. We are learning an amazing amount of what Second Life can and cannot do, and what virtual and physical dance is and how it interconnects. We look forward to more exploration in the future.

If you have the chance to sit it out or dance, dance!

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:

SAKURA-ACT 1 AUTUMN LEAVES HIKIZURI (KIMONO)
SAKURA-ACT 2 SCARLET HEXAGONS HIKIZURI, AND
SAKURA-ACT 3 GOLDEN HEXAGONS (BLACK) HIKIZURI
FROM: FLOWER AND WILLOW-

[HTTP://SLURL.COM/SECONDLIFE/JAVA%20Island%20II/109/109/42](http://slurl.com/secondlife/JAVA%20Island%20II/109/109/42)

TOKAI-WANDERER-[GB]MATATABI SET

KATANA SWORD v1.2 (WITH ANIMATIONS)-- FROM: 2EXTREME
[HTTP://SLURL.COM/SECONDLIFE/PRIDE%20Isles/215/212/22](http://slurl.com/secondlife/PRIDE%20Isles/215/212/22)

SAKURA-ACT 2-MIDNIGHT CONE HAT (BLACK)
FROM: ORCHID DREAMS-TRADITIONAL JAPANESE FASHION AND ASIAN
ACCESSORIES [HTTP://SLURL.COM/SECONDLIFE/ASAGAO/54/33/22](http://slurl.com/secondlife/ASAGAO/54/33/22)

SHRINE MAIDEN KIMONO-AHEINW MISWNA- (KITSUNENEYA YA MIKO
TYPE 1 VER1.3Ho)--

SAKURA-ACT 3WEDDING KIMONO (KIMONO HAKKAKU) FROM: AO HARU
[HTTP://SLURL.COM/SECONDLIFE/AOHARU/112/125/23](http://slurl.com/secondlife/AOHARU/112/125/23)

TOKAI-ACT 3JAPANESE MALE WEDDING COSTUME FROM:
HOUSE OF SHEAE
[HTTP://SLURL.COM/SECONDLIFE/SAMURAI%20TOKYO/40/111/27](http://slurl.com/secondlife/SAMURAI%20TOKYO/40/111/27)

OIRAN & OBAKE- GENEROUSLY DONATED BY
FALLANGEL CREATIONS (116, 124, 106)

Ichi go ichi e

