

# The Carp Who Would Not Quit And Other Animal Stories

*By Reiko Ho and The HTY Ensemble*



**Performance Guide and Classroom Activities**

# Aloha

*From Artistic Director, Eric Johnson*



Aloha and welcome to the work of **Honolulu Theatre for Youth!**

We are delighted to share these resources with you and look forward to any questions or feedback you may have about the show, our company or these materials. We believe whole heartedly in the power of stories to bring us together across time and distance. When that happens we often find great similarities with our fellow humans that strengthen our sense of belonging, heritage and shared purpose. We also find profound differences which should be equally celebrated. Differences stretch our sense self and tickle our curiosity for what is possible. Coming from a place that is both geographically remote and culturally diverse, we treasure stories in our community and are deeply honored to share this one with you now. If you would like more information on the company or our work, please look us up at [htyweb.org](http://htyweb.org).

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# About the Show

## Show Synopsis

These re-tellings of traditional fables from Japan and Okinawa teach important lessons of persistence, respect and kindness. Japanese and Okinawan music, language, and culture are the heart of this performance featuring clever animals, puppets, and a whole lot of fun for our youngest audience members and their families.

(Recommended for Ages 3+)

## Playwright/Director

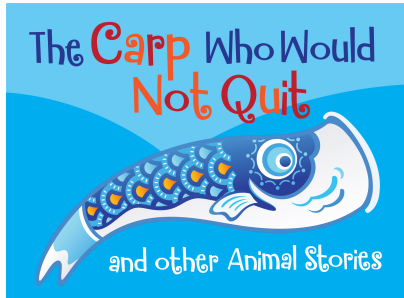


### Reiko Ho

“Sharing cultural stories is one of the most meaningful things I do as an Asian American theatre maker. I’m delighted to adapt a few of my own favorite childhood stories for the stage and introduce some of the beautiful performance traditions and aesthetics of Japanese and Okinawan culture.”

Reiko is a Hawai’i- based director, performer, and educator with a Masters degree in Theatre for Youth. Much of her directorial work in the last decade focussed on developing original works by emerging Hawai’i artists. Reiko is *yonsei*, fourth generation born and raised in Hawai’i, and she is especially committed to telling stories that speak to the diverse communities of her island home. She is currently an Artistic Associate with Honolulu Theatre for Youth, a member of CAATA, and on Board of Directors for TYA/USA.

## Production Credits



**Written by** Reiko Ho & The HTY Ensemble

**Directed by** Reiko Ho

### HTY Ensemble

Serina Dunham

Matt Mazzella

Junior Tesoro

### Design Team

**Sound and Music by** Matt Mazzella

**Set and Costumes by** Iris Kim

**Puppet Design by** Eric West

**Lighting Design by** Chesley Cannon

**Original Study Guide by** Daniel A. Kelin, II



(L to R) Matt, Reiko, Serina, and Junior

# Culture and Language

## Mukashibanashi

Folktales are an important part of Japanese culture and often teach important lessons. The five stories featured in *The Carp Who Would Not Quit* are part of the Mukashibanashi or the “tales of long ago.” Each story begins with “Mukashi mukashi aru tokoro ni” which means “long long ago in a place.”

The phrase is the Japanese equivalent of “once upon a time.”

The play includes six mukashibanashi:

### The Carp Who Would Not Quit

The story in the play is based the legend of the carp (koi) who swam up the golden waterfall and was transformed into a celestial dragon as a reward for his unwavering perseverance. This adaptation reminds us to “always do our best” and always encourage one another.

### The Crane Who Was Grateful

The adaptation in our play is based on folktale called “Tsuru no Ongaeshi”- *The Crane’s Return of a Favor*. The story tells of a crane who takes the shape of a human girl after being rescued by a poor woodcutter in order to show gratitude for his kindness. It is about the importance of love, family, and thankfulness.

### The Rabbits Making Mochi In the Moon

Japanese and most Asian cultures tell stories about rabbits in the moon. In Japan, the rabbits (usagi) are pounding mochi or rice cakes. Our adaptation includes fun music, choreography, and the use of onomatopoeia— which is found in many Japanese stories.

### The Mice and the Musubi

The story in our play is based on the folktale, “Omusubi Kororin”- *The Rolling Riceball*. A poor woodcutter shares his simple lunch of musubi (rice ball) with some mice and travels to their kingdom where his humbleness and kindness are rewarded. His greedy neighbor has a very different experience.

### The Shisa and The Sea Serpent

Stone lion-dogs are seen all over Okinawa protecting villages and temples. The story in our play is based on the legend of a Shisa coming to life and using his roar to defend a village and is based on the Okinawan Shishi-mai or Lion Dance. The Shisa represent bravery and the courage to defend loved ones from harm— important Okinawan qualities.

### The Mouse and Her Match

The final story in our play is based on the folktale, “Yomeiri no Nezumi”- *The Marriage of the Mouse*. In our re-telling a young mouse journeys to find the most powerful being in order to learn to be strong, but learns that sometimes all you need is to believe in yourself.

## Japanese and Okinawan Theatrical Conventions

The play also features performance conventions from traditional Japanese theatre forms. For example, the play includes a narrator and live percussion and music to accompany and accent actions being performed. The accompaniment is integral to the performance. At times the actors in the show will become “koken” or “stagehands that are visible who rearrange the set or props.” Koken are often dressed in black, although not in our show. Full-view manipulators or puppeteers who are completely visible, but not acknowledged by the audience or other actors, is a tradition from Bunraku, a form of Japanese puppet theatre.

## Language

Language is an important part of *The Carp Who Would Not Quit* and a gateway to understanding the cultures represented in the play. Here are some of the words and phrases that are used during the performance.

### Glossary of Japanese Words and Phrases

Japanese (Romaji)	English / Meaning
Koi	Carp
Tsuru	Crane
Usagi	Rabbit
Nezumi	Mouse
Neko	Cat
Shisa	Lion-Dog
Koto	National instrument of Japan. 13 or 17-stringed zither that is traditionally plucked with three fingerpicks worn on the first three fingers of the right hand.
Taiko	Drum. Also refers to the art of Japanese drumming.
Ganbatte	Do your best! Used for encouragement or to cheer someone on.
Konnichiwa	Hello
Sayonara	Goodbye
Arigato	Thank you
Tadainma	I'm back! Traditional phrase used when returning home.
Okaeri	Welcome home. The reply to "tadainma"
Ittekimasu	I'm going. Traditional phrase when leaving home.
Itterasshai	Take care or See you later. Response to "ittekimasu"
Mochi	Rice cake made of <i>mochigome</i> , a short-grain glutinous rice. The rice is pounded into paste and molded into the desired shape. Mochi can be sweet or savory and is often eaten to celebrate the new year.
Musubi	A ball of rice covered with <i>nori</i> (seaweed), to which meat or salted/fermented vegetables are often added.
Omiyage	A gift or token of remembrance often given as a "thank you" when returning from a trip.

## Post Show Discussion Questions

Do you remember the Japanese names of the animals in the play?

Are there any other Japanese words that you learned from watching the performance?

Most of the stories teach a lesson about an important quality or ideal.

What do you think the characters learned?

What lesson did you learn from each story?

Do you show or practice any of these qualities with your family or as a community?

How was music used to tell each story?

What instruments were used in the performance?

What was your favorite story or character? What did you like about that story or character?

Can you name some folktales that you know?

Every culture has stories and legends. Why do you think storytelling is important?

## Show Related Activities

The next few pages contain activities related to our performance. Some can be done prior to watching and others can be done after watching the performance.

Activities include:

**Reading: Connect Literature to the Play (p. 7)**

**Pre-writing: Imagining Stories (p. 8)**

**Story Dramatization: Bring a Story to Life (p. 9-10)**

**Imagination: Creative Activity (p. 11)**

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## READING - Connect Literature to the Play



There are many books on local library shelves that contain themes and ideas that are similar to THE CARP WHO WOULD NOT QUIT. Use your play-going experience to introduce and explore new books with your students and to discuss those themes and ideas.

### BEFORE SEEING THE HTY PLAY

READ *Peace Tales* by Margaret Read MacDonald

Talk about:

Respect: How do the characters in the story show or NOT show respect for each other? How does their attitude help or hurt their relationship?

Peace: Which characters want peace? How do the characters help peace happen?

### AFTER SEEING THE HTY PLAY

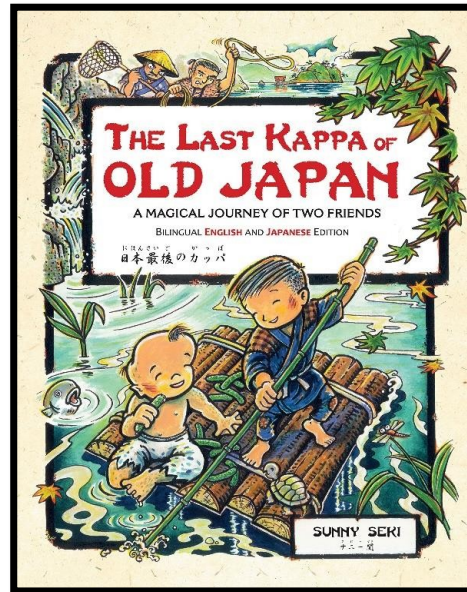
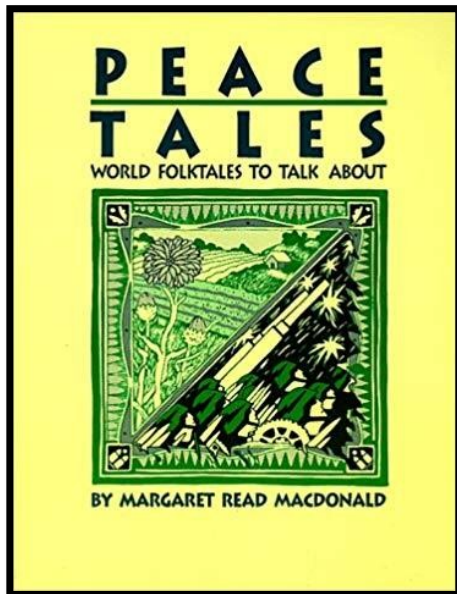
READ *The Last Kappa of Old Japan: a Magical Journey of Two Friends* by Sunny Seki

Talk about:

Friends – Who were the friends in the story? What did they do?

Caring – How did the friends care for each other?

Persistence – How did the friends work to help the world?



The Carp Who Would Not Quit



Wordless picture books can be a wonderful way to encourage students to understand characters and imagine and tell whole stories. Below is a list of several wordless books available in the local libraries.

**Select one or two and:**

- Show the entire story to students.
- Discuss with them what the story seems to be about. Who are the characters? What are they doing? What's a problem they might be having in the story? How do they make things better?
- Go back through the story slowly, encouraging students to help tell the story and talk like the characters.

**Wordless Stories**

- *Alligator's Toothache* by Diane de Groat: An alligator with a toothache is afraid of the dentist.
- *A Boy, a Dog, and a Frog* by Mercer Mayer: A boy's unsuccessful attempts to catch a frog.
- *Frog, Where are You?* By Mercer Mayer: A boy and his dog search for an escaped pet frog.
- *Do You Want to be My Friend* by Eric Carle: A mouse searches everywhere for a friend.
- *The Farmer and the Clown* by Marla Frazee: A farmer rescues a baby clown who's bounced off the circus train, and reunites him with his clown family.

The Carp Who Would Not Quit





The Carp Who Would Not Quit includes many stories in the play, including the story below 'The Rolling Musubi.' Read the story aloud for your students and then engage them in these simple drama activities.

### Drama Activities

**FREEZE:** Guide students to shape their bodies as each of the characters and then have them freeze in their poses/shapes. What does the character look like? (Freeze). What does the character like to do? (Freeze). What's something funny that the character likes to do? (Freeze).

**ACTION:** Guide students to walk about the room as each of the characters. How does the character feel? How fast or slow does the character move? What is this character doing as he/she walks about?

### STORY EXPLORATION

Narrate parts of the story, guiding the students to act out the moments as you tell them. Explore different parts of the story more than once each time, encouraging the students to try new ways of showing the action.

### STORY PLAY

Ask for or assign volunteers to portray each of the characters. Narrate the entire story, guiding students to play out each moment as you tell it. Repeat the experience, enlisting new volunteers each time until all of the students have a chance to perform.

### Omusubi Kororin: The Rolling Riceball

Long ago and far away across the wide blue sea, there lived a hard-working old man and old woman. One day, the old man went up into the mountains to gather wood. When he sat down to eat his lunch, one of his rice balls tumbled away. Down the slope of the mountain it tumbled until it finally rolled into a large hole. The old man chased after the rice ball and stopped at the hole. He bent down to look inside and from within the hole he heard a soft song.

The old man was very excited, so he climbed back up the mountain, picked up another rice ball and rolled it away. Down it tumbled into the hole. When he crouched down near the hole, he heard the song once more.

The old man peeked into the hole, but as he did, he overbalanced and tumbled right into the hole itself. As he tumbled, he heard another song.

In the hole was a mouse world, where hundreds of little mice were happily singing and making rice cakes. "Thank you for the rice balls, kind sir. We will treat you to a feast to repay your kindness. Come and join us in our song," they called. And so, the old man and the mice sang,

The old man had a wonderful time singing and dancing with the mice. "Thank you for the feast, but now it is time for me to go home," he said. "Wait, old man," said the smallest mouse, and he gave him a box. "Here is our gift to you." When the old man returned home,

*(The Rolling Riceball continued...)*

he opened the box and was astounded to find it filled with money and treasure. "There are enough riches to last us all our days," the old man said to the old woman. And they were very happy for the rest of their lives.

However, when the old man told his story to a greedy, old neighbor, the greedy old man thought he would do exactly the same thing, so that he, too, could receive a fortune from the mice world. He immediately went into the mountains and dropped two rice balls into the hole, then tumbled in himself.

Hundreds of mice were happily singing and making rice cakes. After the greedy old man entered the mouse world, he decided to chase away the mice and keep all of the treasures for himself. So, he pretended to be a cat and began to miaow. "Miaow, miaow."

The frightened little mice scattered every which way and disappeared. Just as the greedy, old man thought he could now take all the treasure, everything went black. He realized that the money and treasure had vanished with the mice and now he was left with nothing. Not even a rice ball. Only after a long time scrabbling around on his hands and knees in the darkness, was he able to find the entrance to the hole and leave the mouse world.

Since that time, no one has ever found the mouse world again. Although sometimes, if you are walking high up in the mountains of Japan, you may hear the mouse song carried by the wind.



The Carp Who Would Not Quit



## IMAGINATION: A Creative Activity

The Carp Who Would Not Quit is an imaginatively staged and presented play. The imagination is very important for artists and for the audience. Prepare for your HTY experience by experimenting with how objects can imaginatively change from one to another.

### OBJECT TRANSFORMATION, or Making the ordinary look magical

**Procedure:** Show a simple object, like a chalkboard eraser. Demonstrate the activity by transforming the eraser into something else by the way you use it (i.e candy bar, walkie-talkie, or telescope). Pass the object from student to student, guiding each to transform the object into something different than anyone else has done. The other students describe what they see.

If desired, also try the following. **ROOM TRANSFORMATION:** Together with your students, decide on a place you'd like to visit. A restaurant? The zoo? The beach? The mall? Guide your students to help transform your room into that imagined place by using objects and furniture in the room. First, decide what will happen in each part of your room. If a zoo, where will the elephants be? Where might the monkeys live? Where might there be a picnic table? Ask students to help 'design' the space. How can a table become a cage? A chair be a picnic table? How can you imagine the whole room in a new way?



The Carp Who Would Not Quit





Toilet Roll crafts are simply the best. Here we have some fabulous Toilet Roll Koinobori or also known as Japanese Flying Carp Fish. They are pretty and colorful and a great addition to any activity time that you may be planning!

### Materials



You also need a bit of white paper and black marker to make the eyes.

String or yarn can be used instead of twine. If you do plan to wave these around, consider using a hot glue gun for steps 8 and 9.

### Procedure

**1** In 3-4 colors, cut out several circles of tissue paper, approximately 1.5 inches in diameter, then cut those in half to make semi circles. Place a piece of double-sided tape around the bottom of your roll. Start placing the straight edge of each semi-circle on the double-sided tape, overlapping slightly so no roll shows underneath. Ensure the curved end of the semi-circle hangs off the roll so it isn't attached. This end will be the fish's tail. Complete all the way around.

**2** Leave a 2 inch gap and place another strip of double sided tape around the roll, repeating with the semi circles. The color order doesn't matter much, just do what you think looks good. You will have to overlap a fair bit and not all the ends will be taped down. Leave them. The next layer should cover them.

**3** Repeat all the way to the top, making sure you finish with the tape and half circles around the top of the roll. This is the head. At this point, if there are any half circles that are still sticking up, use double sided tape to stick them down.

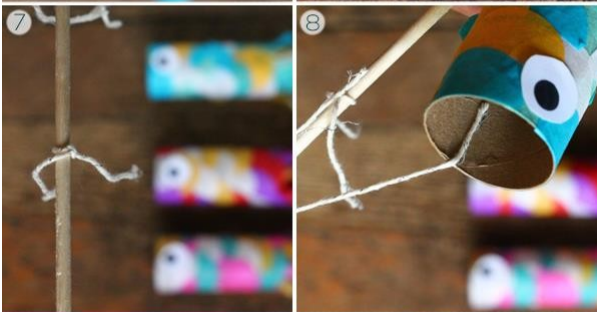


*(Japanese Flying Carp Fish continued...)*

**4** Cut out a circle with white paper (approx. 1 inch in diameter) then use a black marker to draw a large circle inside for the eye. Use double sided tape to stick onto the side of the head.



**5** Cut strips of tissue paper using the same colors as your semi circles. At the tail end, carefully place a piece of double-sided tape around the inside bottom of the roll. One by one, stick a long piece of tissue paper to the tape, going all the way around until it's covered.



**6** Trim any ends if necessary so they're about the same length. Repeat steps 1-6 to make two more carp.



**7** Cut three pieces of twine about 7 inches long. Double knot each one onto your dowel, making sure the ends are even.



**8** On the head side, place a piece of double-sided tape inside the roll, opposite the eye. Start with the top knotted twine on the dowel and secure the loose ends onto the tape inside the roll. If you plan to swing this koinobori around, use hot glue instead, or place another piece of tape on top the twine.



**9** Repeat on the opposite side, just behind the eye. Repeat for the next two carp.

The Carp Who Would Not Quit