

Speech by Ambassador Takata
At the “Jewels of Kyoto” event held at Victoria University of Wellington
2:30 PM, Saturday 5th March 2016

Vice-Provost Allison Kirkman
Mayor Ray Wallace
Members of Parliament
Excellencies
Distinguished guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

Kia ora Koutou tama riki ma

It is my pleasure to welcome you all here this afternoon and thank you all for coming.

The Embassy of Japan, having organised this event in cooperation with the Japan Foundation would like to extend our gratitude to the Office of the Deputy-Vice Chancellor (Engagement) and Victoria University, in particular the School of Languages and Culture for allowing the use of their theatre for this event.

Today you will see two apprentice geisha, known in Japan as maiko, who have travelled all the way from Kyoto in Japan. Interestingly one of the maiko, Ms Tomitsuyu spent four years studying in New Zealand as a student. However this is the first time that maiko have visited New Zealand on an Oceanic tour supported by the Japan Foundation.

Maiko are highly skilled in the traditional arts such as dancing, flower arrangement, and playing the Koto (Japanese style guitar). This afternoon you will have the pleasure of experiencing these amazing traditions.

I am sure that this will be a highly entertaining performance and it is my hope that you will leave this theatre having learned some enchanting facets of refined Japanese culture.

Thank you and I hope you enjoy the show.