Tahiti Heiva in Japan
2026 Event Report



With its inception in 2005, this is Japan' s first full-scale Tahitian event—Tahiti Heiva in Japan. This year marks the 22nd anniversary of HEIVA I TOKYO which finally after seven years once again was held over a two-day period!
The first day opened with the awe-provoking Rahiri Ceremony. It was followed by the solo competition and group exhibitions. Day two was electrified by Japan' s premier competition, 'ORI TAHITI JAPAN CHAMPIONSHIP as well as by the group competition. The venue was constantly full of excitement!
We look back at the year 2026 beginning with the Tokyo and Fukuoka (also back after seven years) competitions, as well as our workshops and the release of an album of original drumbeats.

HEIVA I TOKYO

Event Outline



Date/Time
10/17/2026(Sat)
10:30 doors open, 11:00 performances began,
19:30 performances ended

10/18/2026(Sun)
11:30 doors open, 12:00 performances began,
18:30 performances ended

Venue Tachikawa Stage Garden

Entrance Fee Reserved seating ¥8,800 (¥9,600 at the door)



Events
'Ori Tahiti Japan Championship
Solo Competition
Group Competition
Group Exhibition
Garden Stage Mini Exhibition

Number of Spectators 2,000

Sponsored by
Air Tahiti Nui (airtahiti.com)
Tahiti Tourisme (tahiti-tourisme.com)
and three others



Under the Auspices of Hula & Tahiti (hula-tahiti.com)

Judges



Manouche Lehartel



Heremoana Maamaatuaiahutapu



Karl Brillant



Number of Participants 500
'Ori Tahiti Japan Championship: 90
Solo Competition: 230 (Finalists)
Group Competition: 4 groups
Group Exhibition: 1 group
Garden Stage Mini Exhibition:
4 groups and 3 dancers

Highlights

1. A Two-Day Event Returning After Seven Years



This year makes seven years since 2019 when the 15th competition was held over two days. Up until last year the solo preliminary contest and the announcement of the finalists took place on the same day in a venue bursting with energy.
This year once more, many dancers from the U.S., Taiwan, Mexico and other overseas countries participated. Tahiti Heiva in Japan has indeed become a cosmopolitan event, bringing us into a new era.

2. The Rahiri Ceremony





This traditional ceremony where leaves are presented by the dancers and are in turn accepted by the judges, represents a promise between the two parties. The dancers promise to show respect and to accept the decision of the judges. The judges in turn promise to give their respect as well and to be impartial in their judging. It was a very solemn and beautiful ceremony indeed.

3. Solo Competition and ʻOri Tahiti Japan Championship of Select Dancers





A solo competition boasting Japan's largest number of participants as well as Japan's most illustrious ʻOri Tahiti Japan Championship whose participation is limited to dancers who took first- to third-place in the last two years.
Each age group competed, and strict judging was done by a panel invited from Tahiti.

4. A Grand Finale Deciding the Grand Prize Winners!



A grand finale was held for the selection of the grand prize winners of the solo competition and the championship. The battles for the top were heated displays by the grand finalists, causing the heat of the entire arena to immediately shoot up as well! The solo competition grand prize went to Dana Montgomery and Soma Terauchi for the third time in three years. The championship grand prize went to Nagisa Takizawa for the fourth time in fore years !
The three grand prize winners were awarded round trip plane tickets to Tahiti.

5. Group Competition Divided into Large and Small Group Categories



This year, there were 4 groups—one large groups of 21 members or more and three small groups of 20 or less members. The groups were separated into the large or small category where they competed. To HEINĀRIʻI went the prize for best performance.

6. Additional Features



During the event, there was not only enjoyment of the dancing on the main stage, but there were also exhibitions taking place on the garden stage, as well as shopping at the various booths.

HEIVA I WEST (in Fukuoka, back after seven years)

Event Outline

Date/Time 4/25/2026 (Sat)
11:40 doors opened
12:00 performances began
18:20 performances ended

Venue SAWARAPIA (Fukuoka)

Entrance Fee Reserved seats ¥7,700 (¥8,500 at the door)

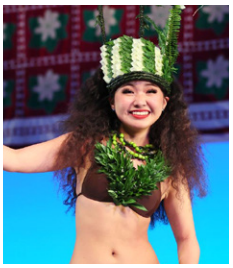
Events Solo Competition
Group Competition

Number of Spectators 600

Under the Auspices of Hula & Tahiti (hula-tahiti.com)

Judges Manouche Lehartel
Tumata Robinson
(online from Tahiti)

Number of Participants 250
(Solo Competition: 170
Group Competition: 8 groups)





Manouche Lehartel

Tumata Robinson

HEIVA SAKURA

Event Outline

Date/Time 8/20/2026 (Thu)
14:00 doors opened
14:30 performances began
18:05 performances ended

Venue Sakura Hall (Shibuya)

Entrance Fee Reserved seats ¥4,400 (¥4,900 at the door)

Events Solo Competition

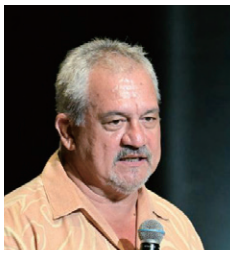
Number of Spectators 300

Under the Auspices of Hula & Tahiti (hula-tahiti.com)

Judges Manouche Lehartel
Heremoana Maamaatuaiahutapu
(online from Tahiti)

Number of Participants 80
(Solo Competition: 80)




Manouche Lehartel

Heremoana Maamaatuaiahutapu

Workshops

Planning and organizing workshops led by artists invited from Tahiti and award-winning artists from Japan.

From 2012 to 2025:
Moeata, Taiana, Teruria, Hinavai, Makau, Tahia, Tuarii, Tommy, Lesly, Aika Tanaka

2026:
Nagisa Takizawa



Movie Projects

Producing a video showcasing the technical excellence and artistic expression of Ori Tahiti in Japan to the world. Available on YouTube.



Season 1 (2020 - 2021) Five movies
HITIRA'A O TE MAHANA / ROMI / Miki Tiare Kinashi & Nina Kinashi / Anastase & Yoko / Mana Yoshida & Reira Matsunaga

Season 2 (2025) One movie
Nagisa Takizawa

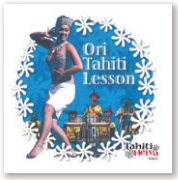
Season 3 (2026) Three movies
Nagisa Takizawa Documentary / Nagisa Takizawa / OTNC & World Championship

Production of Original CDs

Continuing our efforts to introduce the people of Japan to Tahitian music, we are assisting in the production of CDs of original instrumental music, as well as CDs of vocal music by various artists.

Ori Tahiti Lesson

A collection of short selections of drumming for Tahitian dance practice



Ori Tahiti Lesson



Ori Tahiti Lesson 02



Ori Tahiti Lesson 03



Ori Tahiti Lesson 04



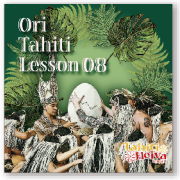
Ori Tahiti Lesson 05



Ori Tahiti Lesson 06



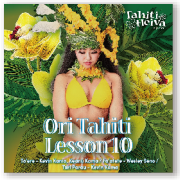
Ori Tahiti Lesson 07



Ori Tahiti Lesson 08



Ori Tahiti Lesson 09



Ori Tahiti Lesson 10



Ori Tahiti Lesson 11



Ori Tahiti Lesson 12



Ori Tahiti Lesson 13

Artist Series

Albums of live performances in Japan by Tahitian artists and CDs made in cooperation with Tahitian artists.



Sabrina & Grace Live in Tokyo



TEREHE (Sabrina)



To'u Fenua (Sabrina)



Hine Tapairu
(Maruarii ATENI)



O TAHITI TO 'U 'AI 'A HERE
(Maruarii ATENI)

Tahitian Drum Lesson Series

Instructive CDs for Tahitian drum practice (recordings done locally by artists invited from Tahiti).



Tahitian Drum Lesson vol. 1



Tahitian Drum Lesson vol. 2

TAHITI HEIVA V.A.

A compilation album of traditional Tahitian music.



Tahiti Heiva in Japan Series

Original albums of recordings done by artists invited over from Tahiti.



Tahiti Heiva in Japan vol. 1



FARA E
(Tahiti Heiva in Japan vol. 2)



TE REO
(Tahiti Heiva in Japan vol. 3)

Tahiti Heiva in Japan
3-9-15 Ebisu, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo, 150-0013, Japan Tel: 81.3.6277.1746 Fax: 81.3.6277.4458 https://tahiti-heiva.com