



Joint Press Release

May 29, 2014
Star Gate Co. Ltd.
Tamawari Musical Office
AHS Co.Ltd.

[VOCALOID Teams Up with Bunraku Puppets](#)

[World Premiere of VOCALOID™ Opera Aoi to be Held in July at London's](#)

[Hyper Japan 2014!](#)

[July 25-27, 2014](#)

Tokyo, Japan — Star Gate Co. Ltd. (Setagaya, Tokyo, President & CEO Takao Kano) has announced that the world premiere of “VOCALOID™ Opera AOI with Bunraku Puppets”, a film produced featuring both VOCALOIDs and Japanese Bunraku puppets, will be held at main stage of the United Kingdom’s biggest Japanese culture show, Hyper Japan, in London, England (July 25-27, 2014).

“VOCALOID™ Opera AOI with Bunraku Puppets” combines digital songs created using the latest technology in singing voice synthesis with Bunraku puppets, a traditional Japanese art with over 300 years of history. The film captures the puppets acting and dancing in this never-before-seen performance.

The Bunraku puppets in this work are controlled by a team of five players who have inherited the culture, history, and tradition of the performance art. The group is led by Kousuke Yoshida, who has performed both inside and outside of Japan in venues including National Bunraku Theatre. Their performances are both fascinating and delicate, embodying a truly Japanese aesthetic.

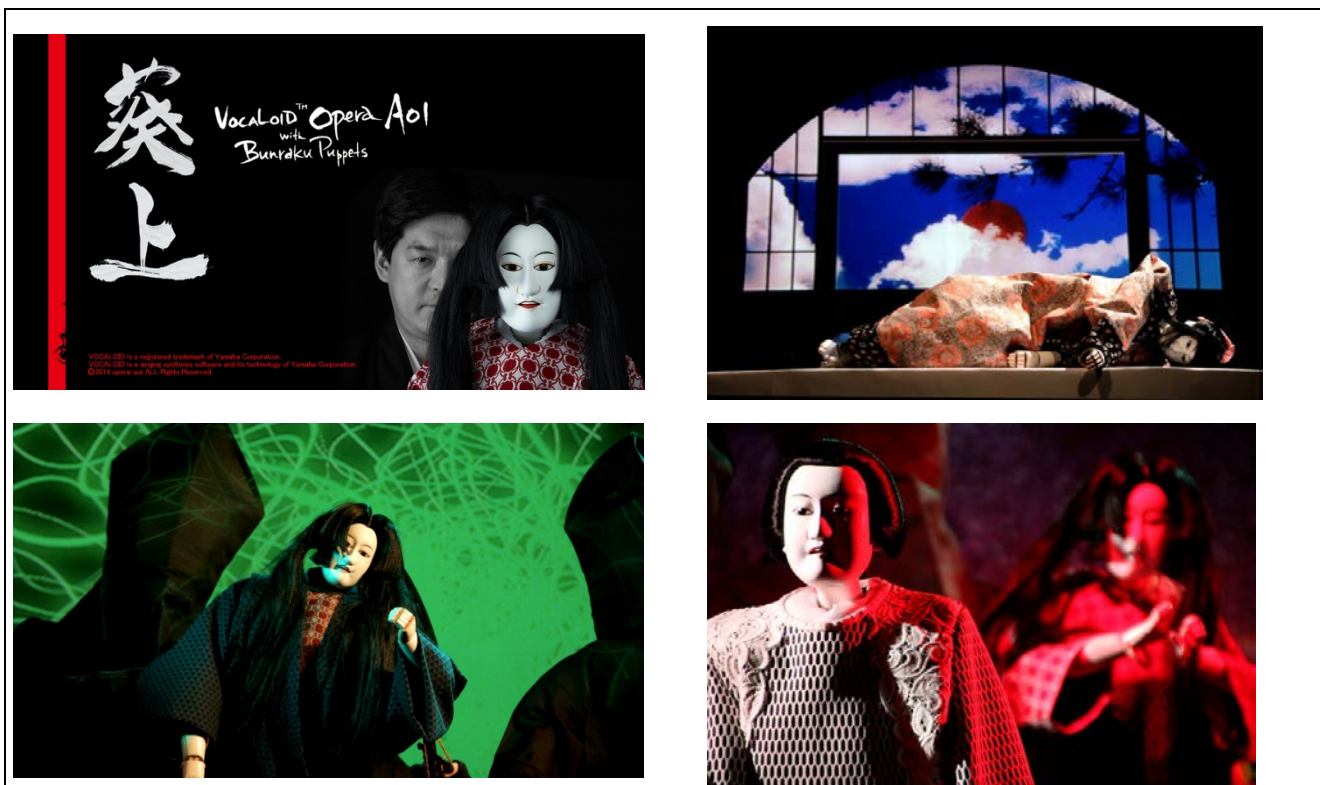
This film was inspired by the story “Aoi” from *The Tale of Genji*. All of the music in the film was specifically created for it, and these songs use VOCALOID technology to put forth songs beyond the capabilities of the human voice, bringing the audience into a new, different world.

“VOCALOID™ Opera AOI with Bunraku Puppets” is an experiment both old and new that ties together Japan’s cutting-edge technology with its traditional performing arts. Scriptwriter, composer, theater director and stage designer Hiroshi Tamawari (Tamawari Musical Office) had this to say about the upcoming premiere:

“This 1000 year old story was first made into a Noh performance 700 years ago. As generations pass, those things that people wished to hand down through the ages may be washed away by new ideas and information. I first conceived of this work when I began to wonder, what kind of strange and interesting flower would bloom if I were to mix these seemingly-incompatible elements from the past and the present?”

After its premiere at Hyper Japan, “VOCALOID™ Opera AOI with Bunraku Puppets” is scheduled to be shown in Tokyo theaters this fall, giving viewers in Japan the opportunity to also experience its musical fusion of leading-edge technology and traditional performance arts.

Alongside the screening of the film, VOCALOID technology is scheduled to be introduced through daily on-site talk shows with voice actress Chihiro Ishiguro, the voice of VOCALOID3 Yuzuki Yukari. In addition to “VOCALOID™ Opera AOI with Bunraku Puppets”, VOCALOID will be introduced and sold at Hyper Japan through a booth at the event.



■ About This Work

“VOCALOID™ Opera AOI with Bunraku Puppets” is a video work produced by Star Gate Co. Ltd., and was created in partnership with AHS Co.Ltd., which sells VOCALOID software including Yuzuki Yukari.

■ About Our Live Talk Show

The recognition of VOCALOIDs as characters has continued to grow within the United Kingdom and Europe as a whole. However, only a small number have heard their “raw voices.” For this reason, Chihiro Ishiguro, the character voice of VOCALOID 3 Yuzuki Yukari, is scheduled to hold daily talk shows at Hyper Japan in order to teach fans more about VOCALOID.

※Event details, dates, times, and other information will be announced through the official website on a later date.

■ Overview

A 30 minute-length opera film, in which you will see no human beings acting. VOCALOID provides all the songs for the play. VOCALOID is a singing voice synthesis technology and the name of the application software based on that technology. All the actresses in the play are Bunraku puppets. Bunraku is one of Japan’s traditional performing arts with 300 years of history, designated a World Intangible Heritage by UNESCO. The trinity of lifelike puppet play, songs from VOCALOID and techno music using Japanese traditional musical instruments illustrates the deep complexity of the human psyche.

■What is VOCALOID™?

VOCALOID is a technology for singing voice synthesis developed by Yamaha that allows users to input melody and lyrics in order to synthesize singing, as well as the name of the application software based on it. VOCALOID uses its Synthesis Engine to synthesize singing voices using fragments of voices recorded from actual singers, called the Singer Library. By adding further expressive singing voice information to the score, such as vibrato, users are able to produce even more realistic singing voices. In particular, the element of breathing sounds especially natural in VOCALOID singing voices. In “Opera AOI”, three VOCALOID libraries; Yamaha’s “VY1V3”, AHS’s “Nekomura Iroha”, and “Yuzuki Yukari” have been used to create an enchanting mood.

■What are Bunraku Puppets?

Bunraku is one of Japan’s representative traditional performing arts, designated a World Intangible Heritage by UNESCO in 2003. It is a trinity of narrative recitation (Tayu), shamisen (shamisen; three-stringed Japanese musical instrument) music and Bunraku puppets in performance. The origins of present-day Bunraku date back to the seventeenth century, when older puppet shows (ayatsuri ningyo) were integrated with the medieval narratives (joururi) and called ningyo joururi, “puppet narrative”. It affected the development of Kabuki, another representative Japanese traditional performance art.

Opera AOI uses 3 Bunraku puppets and puppet players for them. Those puppets are dressed in modern haute couture dresses. For more details of Bunraku Ningyo Joururi, please refer to the following website.

<http://www.bunraku.or.jp/about/pdf/english.pdf>

■About Hyper Japan

Hyper Japan is the UK’s biggest Japanese culture festival and Europe’s biggest celebration of Japanese food. Hyper Japan shows visitors the “Real Japan” and is held by the London-based Japanese media company Cross Media Ltd. It receives assistance from Japanese public institutions including the Embassy of Japan in the UK, JETRO, JNTO, the Japan Foundation, CLAIR, and others.

•Event Dates

2014: July 25 (Fri): 12PM – 8PM
July 26 (Sat): 9:30AM – 8PM
July 27 (Sun): 9:30AM – 6PM

•Location: EARLS COURT ONE (The largest event venue in West London)

[Address] Earls Court Exhibition Centre, Warwick Road, London SW5 9TA

•More Information about Hyper Japan (Japanese)

http://www.hyperjapan.co.uk/download/2014/HYPERJAPAN2014_PLAN_JAPAN.pdf

Hyper Japan Official Website

<http://hyperjapan.co.uk/>

■Information About AOI (Please visit the official website for more information.)

•Widescreen / 2K / Approx. 30 Mins.)

•Movie Director / Editor / Background Visuals: Shin Kano (Star Gate Co. Ltd.)

•Script / Music / Theater direction / Stage Design: Hiroshi Tamawari (Tamawari Musical Office)

•Cast: Kousuke Yoshida, Kanichi Yoshida, Monhide Kiritake, Tamase Yoshida, Kanjiro Kiritake (BUNRAKU-KYOKAI)

•Equipment Assistance: Blackmagic Design, KYOEISHA Co.Ltd

■Opera AOI Official Website

<http://www.opera-aoi.com/>

※A trailer for this work can be found on this page.

■About Star Gate Co. Ltd.

Since its founding in 1997, Star Gate Co. Ltd. has been responsible for the production of many video works. It has produced titles in a wide variety of fields, with a focus on commercials, corporate video packages, and promotional videos, as well as television programs, event video, web content, and more.

■About Tamawari Musical Office

The personal office of Hiroshi Tamawari. (Born in 1971. B.A., Department of Law, Faculty of Law, Keio University. Composer, lyricist.) After joining a game development company, Tamawari worked there as a sound creator on many games, where he was responsible for composition, arrangement, manipulation, and sound direction. He later left the company to work independently. Recently, Tamawari has created titles such as the sample song "Kirakira☆Vocalo" for Yamaha's VOCALOID, and "effanineffable," the official song of the VOCALOID "Mew."

■About AHS Co.Ltd.

AHS Co.Ltd. plans and sells a wide variety of software and hardware, including creative software such as titles in the VOCALOID™, Music Maker, and Movie Pro series, multimedia software such as the Clone series and analog video and record preservation software, and more. It also conducts work including OEM and license sales, as well as contract development, and aims to constantly offer products used not only in the Japanese market, but also around the world.

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ボーカロイド™ オペラ 葵上 with 文楽人形
VOCALOID™ Opera AOI with Bunraku Puppets

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