



# The Honolulu Advertiser

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PHOTOS BY REBECCA BREYER | The Honolulu Advertiser

Singer Yasuco Shimizu and her stage companions performed at Ala Moana Center yesterday, one of 120 groups from around the Pacific performing at free Honolulu Festival events this weekend. There's also a craft and product fair, Anime Corner and other activities.

## Festival

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The exhibition hall will again open with its head-spinning, head-scratching array of Asian and Pacific Rim food, products, services and exhibitions, featuring everything from locally produced hair conditioner to no-hands johrei energy-transfer relaxation therapy.

The festivities culminate tonight with the Waikiki Grand Parade, which will include the return of Daijyama, the Japanese fire-breathing dragon float from Fukuoka Prefecture.

Though relatively low-key, the scene at the convention center yesterday demonstrated the cultural diversity at the heart of the festival.

Outside, the Nihon Karatedo Shotokai Burarian troupe put on a martial arts demonstration for a rapt crowd. Inside on the main stage, removed from the aisles of vendors, dancers from Studio Pili Hawai'i Kokusai Kouryu performed hula. Also performing were Mānoa DNA, Leilani Hula Studio, the Kalayaan Philippine Dance Theatre, Taiko Kozo, the Alaska Native Heritage Center and Christ United Methodist Church Team Sun Classic Dance Korea.

Baldwin High School Japanese language teacher Rory Sato was there with 29 of his students to

accept the first-place prize in the Honolulu Festival Mikoshi Design Contest. The students, led by teacher Aki Summers and other teachers, won the contest with a mikoshi (Japanese portable shrine) adorned with Hawaiian fishhooks, ti leaves and a tiki on a surfboard.

Shawn Norris, 39, of Waikiki, was also there with his girlfriend, Connie Soga, and her 4-year-old daughter, Tiana. While Tiana got her picture taken with a blue anime mascot, Norris wistfully eyed the far end of the hall, where Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Polynesian foods sat at the ready.

"I like this because it shows all the different cultures of the area," Norris said. "That's what interests me, learning about all the different people who live here. It's a big melting pot."

Like many of the attendees yesterday, the Askews waited for the rains to subside before making their way to the center. Once there, they found their attentions torn between the action on the main stage and the interactive exhibits throughout the hall.

"My eyes are here," said Phyllis Askew, pointing down a row of vendors. "But my ears are over there. When I hear music I like, I move over there."

"We come every year for the cultural exchange. You can take part in the activities, so it's not just look and see."

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## Honolulu Festival packs in a lot of fun

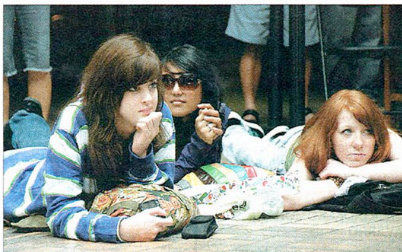
From Japanese arts to Alaskan performers, it concludes today

BY MICHAEL TSAI  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Savvy Honolulu Festival veterans that they are, Jack and Phyllis Askew knew to expect the unexpected when they left their Liliha home for the Hawai'i Convention Center yesterday, but even they probably couldn't have predicted that they would spend the late afternoon learning the ways of the Japanese blowgun.

"The thing is to blow without reacting to the blow," said Jack, 86, exhaling powerfully for effect.

The Askews, who split their year between Nevada and Honolulu, were among the more than 8,000 people who yesterday explored the multicultural offerings at the Ennichi Corner at the craft fair in the center's Kamehameha Exhibition Hall.



Teens from Kelowna, British Columbia — from left, Morgan Berna, Pooja Anand, and Kristin Arney — listened to a festival performance yesterday at Ala Moana Center. There's more happening today; check out [www.honoluluadvertiser.com](http://www.honoluluadvertiser.com).



See more photos of the festival at [HONOLULUADVERTISER.COM](http://HONOLULUADVERTISER.COM)

Now in its 15th year, the festival features performances by 120 groups (up from 90 last year) hailing from China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Australia, Tahiti, the Mainland and Alaska.

"A lot of us come from different cultures and ... (the festival) is a great opportunity to explore not only your own culture, but (that of) your friends and neighbors because we live in that kind of society here,"

### HONOLULU FESTIVAL

**What:** Cultural performances and exhibitions from the Pacific Rim and Asia

**Where:** Hawai'i Convention Center, Ala Moana Center, Waikiki Beach Walk, Waikiki Shopping Plaza

**When:** 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Cost:** Free

**Parade:** Waikiki Grand Parade along Kalākaua Avenue starts at 4:30 p.m.

said Honolulu Festival spokeswoman Arlyne Hurlley.

The three-day festival concludes today with music, dance and martial arts performances at the convention center, Ala Moana Center, Waikiki Beach Walk and the Waikiki Shopping Plaza.

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