

April 1, 2019

NEWS RELEASE
for the press

ART COMPLEX GROUP

Breaking the Record for Longest-Running Performance in Japan: From the Kyoto Stage, GEAR Enters Its 8th Year Running!

Produced by the Art Complex Group (located in Nakagyo, Kyoto; managing director: Keito Kohara), which works in theater management and performance planning, the non-verbal performance GEAR, currently performed in Kyoto and billed as “**a first in and from Japan**”, embarked upon the eighth year of its long run on April 1st, 2019.



■ Fascinating the World from the Kyoto Stage

Even with a small theater limited to 100 seats, the number of audience members brought out by GEAR last December surpassed 200,000. As a Japanese performance that can be understood by anyone in the world, today it continues to bring in bustling crowds of visitors from in and outside Japan day after day, as it communicates the appeal of Japanese culture to the many tourists visiting Kyoto from overseas.

Without any lines, GEAR portrays the encounter between a Doll and Roboroids (humanoid robots) and their regeneration, along with a strong sense of narrative mixed with humor.

With the latest technology (including projection mapping), and finely polished, powerful physical performance, this original Japanese theatrical piece is brimming with grandeur.

■ A Completely New, Sustainable Long-Run System

In recent years, new works of non-verbal performance, which can be enjoyed across language barriers, have continued to be shown as the number of visitors to Japan rises. But while business is booming, many fail to bring in a consistent audience, and without the prospects for a long-running performance, they are forced to close, even within the space of less than half a year.

GEAR not only takes Broadway up as a model, but has also spent many years and months in trial and error, setting up a management structure with an eye toward a sustainable long-run system within Japan. On top of that, its crew has used 2-year periods of trial performances to carefully produce the show. Even now that the curtain has risen, they continue to improve upon the quality of their unique system.

In preparation for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and the 2025 World Expo in Osaka, and heading towards their upcoming tenth year, the crew behind GEAR will do their best to keep creating performances that will be long-loved by those from countries all around the world.

■ Commentary from General Producer, Keito Kohara

“Three years for peaches and chestnuts, eight years for persimmons.” This proverb cites the number of years it takes for trees to bear fruit to teach us that it takes adequate time and steady effort to accomplish something.

This year, GEAR approaches its eighth year.

Surpassing 200,000 visitors to a small theater of only 100 seats was also the fruit of the efforts of the cast and staff, as well as their passion, and trial and error day after day. I’m deeply grateful for the encouragement from the guests who have supported us in those efforts.

We’ll continue from here on out to aim for performances of even higher quality that can move people regardless of age or nationality, and continue in our constant research and improvement. I thank everyone in advance for their continued guidance and encouragement.

Representative Profile

From Hyogo Prefecture. Withdrew from Doshisha University. After wandering India, he practiced as a lighting technician in a wide range of settings, including the Takarazuka Revue, Shiki Theatre Company, and kabuki. Starting in 1992, he spent seven years working mainly in Paris as technical director for Susan Buirge, the mother of contemporary dance. After that, he launched Art Complex 1928, having renovated the Kyoto theater’s modern architecture, and shifted into the role of producer. Under the theme of “the complexity of art”, and in addition to producing for the theater, he continues his activities in improving the artistic environment—such as the establishment of a cultural support fund and the reclamation of a former shipyard site to build art space Creative Center Osaka. In addition to GEAR, which continues its exceptionally long run in Kyoto, he has continued to launch a number of projects connecting culture and art to the attraction and revitalization of the city.



Company Info

Company name: 1928 Co., Ltd. (Art Complex Group)

Address: 1928 Bldg. 3F, 56 Benkeishi-cho, Nakagyo, Kyoto

Business description: Theater management, event planning, production & management

Representative: Keito Kohara

Performance Info

Title: Nonverbal Performance GEAR

Dates & times:

Wednesdays & Fridays at 2 p.m. / 7 p.m.

Mondays, Saturdays, Sundays & public holidays at 1 p.m. / 6 p.m.

Venue: GEAR Theater (Art Complex 1928)

Ticket price: ¥4,200 for general admission (student & senior admission also available)

Ticketing services: Lawson Ticket, ePlus, etc.

Planning & production: Art Complex

Organizer: 1928, Co., Ltd.

Sponsored by: Ridge Creative Inc.

Supported by: Kyoto Prefecture, Kyoto City, Kyoto Board of Education, Kyoto City Tourism Association, Kyoto Chamber of Commerce, Kyoto Convention & Visitors Bureau, Kansai Creative Factory Management Council



Major Achievements

- 6th Culture Venture Competition in Kyoto: Kansai Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry Award
- Selection: Agency for Cultural Affairs Project to Revitalize Theaters and Concert Halls, etc.
- From TripAdvisor, the largest travel review website in the world: Certificate of Excellence Award, 4 years running
- Kyoto Creator Award (Art & Culture)
- Kansai Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry: Kansai Inbound Award