

Email Newsletter from Mayor of Okayama City (71) August 30th, 2016 Issue

【How to produce cultural and artistic activity】

Hello, I'm Mr. Omori, Mayor of Okayama.

As a reference for building a new cultural and artistic facility (new civic hall), I went for an inspection to Kitakyushu Performing Arts Center in June and Kanagawa Arts Theatre, 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art. Kanazawa, and Kanazawa Citizen's Art Center in August.

I received detailed explanation from directors and other staff members at each facility and Mr. Kitahashi, Mayor of Kitakyushu, kindly came to see us when I went there. I would like to give my sincere thanks to the people concerned. I was able to gain many precious hints towards preparing and constructing a facility in both hard and soft aspects in this inspection.

As for the hard aspect, I was surprised with a movable fine hall that is equal to various performances. It was striking for me that the directors at every facility consider how important the studio is that is for independent programs by the facility. Although there are various restrictions including the cost when we build the new civic hall, we would like to build one that is suited for the needs of the citizens as much as possible.

And furthermore, I would like to fulfill more of the soft side. Firstly, we

have to invite attractive performers from outside of Okayama. I heard that the performance by Shiki Theater Company was held for a few months this year in Kanagawa but it took 2 to 3 years for negotiation and preparation in advance.

The cultural and artistic performance at civic level including “Seishunza Theatre Company” with 70 years of history is active in Kitakyushu City. It nicely fits the urban planning that the city is promoting but it takes time to boost those independent programs.

To make the cultural and artistic work held at the new civic hall accepted by many people, it is important to balance the performance by invitation from outside of Okayama and the independent programs by the citizens. It is essential to have a producer who can plan and produce various performances and lead the civic-level artistic activities. Through this visit, I keenly felt that “people” are the most important thing.

However, come to think of that the very first performance at the new civic hall is at the beginning of fiscal year 2022, there are only 5 and a half years left. The clock is ticking.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to think together with the citizens what we should do to boost Okayama’s culture and art.

* “A new cultural and artistic facility (new civic hall)” is a tentative name. I would like to decide the new name soon imagining the performances and programs that will be held.