



The Secret Garden Dance Spectacular NOV 23
TOKYO

Japan's and the world's best belly dancers will come together for one night of magic. We want your dance company to join us our theatrical dance production! But this isn't a normal belly dance show.

Participating belly dance companies will have 90 days to to build brand new choreography, costumes, and stories for the Secret Garden.

Do you think your dance company has what it takes?

Register
info@secretgardendance.com
www.secretgardendance.com

Deadline
May 31 for Japanese dance companies
July 20 for international dance companies

Sponsored by Amelia of Tokyo and Elisabeth of Atlanta

Secret Garden Dance Spectacular: Overview for Prospective Dance Companies

November 23, 2017 // Move Machiya Theatre, Tokyo, Japan

[Facebook](#) // info@secretgardendance.com

In the Secret Garden, experience the beauty of Japan's and the world's best belly dancers for one night of magic.

What is It?

To celebrate the bonds dancers find within belly dance troupes and the creativity they spark, Amelia and Elisabeth are hosting a unique competitive and collaborative event to bring the best of Japan's belly dance companies together with international dance companies to create a theatrical dance performance project.

Unlike other belly dance productions, this show will feature only professional dance companies who are challenged to build brand new choreography, costumes, and stories for the Secret Garden in 90 days. Do you think your dance company has what it takes? [Register here](#) or email info@secretgardendance.com to register your interest. All semi-professional or professional dance companies where members have at least five years dance experience are invited to apply.

Learning and building new bonds is also emphasized in the accompanying Secret Garden Dance Festival where dancers will learn from the best theatrical dance instructors, have the opportunity to meet dancers from other countries, and dance to live Middle Eastern music!

How it Works

The collaborative theatrical dance show's theme is "Secret Garden," and will be held at the beautiful Move Machiya Theatre, Tokyo on Nov 23 where the audience will experience the best that theatrical belly dance the world has to offer. Each scene in the show is a unique dance number by a different dance company, but there is a catch: each dance company only has three months to use a specific theme and a secret "twist" to create their piece and must create all new choreography and all new costumes using all their dance company members to bring their stories to life.

Dance companies with a reputation for innovative Middle Eastern, Oriental or belly dance performances in their communities, who push the limits of the stage and their audience's imagination, have been invited to take part. Dance companies have been invited from five continents, making this a truly international experience.

[Registration form launching by end of January]

The Rules

1. 3-10 dancers, can be any age, but should have at least five years level belly dance experience and have performed on stage before
2. Use no pre-existing choreography or costumes
3. Only the dancers in the group can contribute to choreography and costuming
4. Creativity is encouraged!

Learning and Cultural Exchanges

Many of us fell in love with belly dance and the cultures it and other Middle Eastern dances come from, although its roots are far from our homes. Now is your chance to broaden your cultural horizons even further and participate in a unique cultural exchange, strengthening ties and friendships between dancers, even across oceans! Successful dance companies will have the opportunity to:

- Participate in hosting or taking part in an "adopt-a-company" exchange

- Dance to live Middle Eastern music at a hafla featuring all participating dance companies
- Learn in workshops from some of the world's most innovative theatrical belly dance artists
- Dance two choreographies together with dancers from many different countries, sharing the common language of dance
- Enjoy all that Tokyo has to offer, from enjoying fresh sushi and people watching in the artsy neighborhood of Shimokitazawa, to enjoying a steam bath and massage at one of Tokyo's fabled hot spring baths, to wandering through the garden grounds of the Imperial Palace

Important Dates

- May 31: Registration deadline for Japanese dance companies
- July 20: Registration deadline for international dance companies
- Aug 24: Announce 10-12 participating groups and themes + twists
- Sept 24: Check-in with Amelia and Elisabeth and program information due
- Oct 24: Check-in with Amelia and Elisabeth, meet your host troupe and send choreography video

Fees

Secret Garden Dance Spectacular Dance Company Registration

- 60 USD per person

Secret Garden Dance Festival (open to the public, ticketing available soon)

- 60 USD per person for participation in a workshop
- 10 USD per person for entry to hafla Nov 24

Secret Garden Dance Spectacular Show (open to the public)

- 35 USD for ticket to entry to Secret Garden online pre-order
- 40 USD for ticket to entry to Secret Garden at the door

[**Register here!**](#)

What the Registration Fee Covers

The registration fee defrays the cost of rental of a professional theater, the house staff including lighting, sound and stage management, insurance, marketing and printing costs to make the Secret Garden Spectacular possible. The 10-12 successful dance companies chosen will benefit from the following:

- Participation in a professional theatrical belly dance show
- Professional photos and videos you may use for promotion from the Secret Garden performance
- Original choreography for opening and closing numbers
- Access to free studio space within Tokyo to rehearse in week leading up to show
- Specially designed belly dance Secret Garden t-shirt, listing the dance companies of all who participated
- Credit of \$30 for participation in one belly dance workshop
- Entry to Secret Garden hafla

Note:

- *All groups that registered for Secret Garden but did not make the final cut for the show will be refunded their registration fee and may be invited to perform at the hafla*

Keeping Tokyo and Secret Garden Affordable

Visiting Tokyo, like many world capitals, is a once-in-a-lifetime experience! However, Amelia and Elisabeth are committed to making participation and learning as easy for as many dancers as possible. Therefore, international dance companies who apply will have the opportunity to be hosted by a limited number of local dancers, and Amelia can offer recommendations for affordable lodging close to the studio and the theater.

There are also three stipends available that dance companies may apply for:

- \$400 toward defraying the cost of travel, accommodation and participation for one international dance company
- \$400 toward defraying cost of travel, accommodation and participation for one Japanese dance company from outside of Tokyo
- \$150 for a single dancer (either Japanese or international) can be nominated by others in his or her dance company to defray cost of taking workshops during the Secret Garden Dance weekend

Other ways of keeping Secret Garden affordable:

- Successful dance company directors are invited to submit workshop ideas for inclusion for the Secret Garden weekend and take 80% of the profits home with them
- Successful dance companies can be linked to contacts of other dance studios across Japan that may be interested in hosting workshops taught by dance company directors around the same time frame as Secret Garden

- Dance companies are also invited to bring items to sell during the hafla for a “mini bazaar” so that other dancers may benefit from buying costumes and accessories from around the world!
- Want to get some free workshops or theater tickets? We'll have volunteer opportunities available for local and international dancers, such as airport pickup liaison, door cover collector, backstage helper, marketer, and teaching assistant for workshop instructors. Email info@secretgardendance.com for an application

We also encourage you to explore holding your own fundraiser haflas, getting local sponsors to defray the cost of travel, using crowdfunding (i.e. IndieGoGo or Kickstarter), or developing a payment plan system to put away money for purchasing plane tickets as a team.

What to Expect

Before the Event

- Each dance company must register in advance of the event: international companies have a deadline of July 20 but Japanese companies must register early on May 31
- Amelia and Elisabeth will select 12 dance companies to participate, which will be publicly announced Aug 24 (international groups will have option of early decision to aid in planning)
- Each successful dance company will choose from a list of prompts for their dance number, which will include a “twist” which may consist of a prop or specific theatrical direction they will need to incorporate
- Each dance company will receive the music and video choreography to the opening and finale number of the show
- Upon request, each dance company may have a dance mentor assigned to them, who will act as a guide throughout the process and offer advice and logistical support to the troupe
- Access to secret Facebook page for planning, logistics, check-ins and support
- Sept 24: Check-in with Amelia and Elisabeth and program information due
- Oct 24: Check-in with Amelia and Elisabeth, meet your host troupe and send choreography video

Tuesday, Nov 21

- All dancers should arrive or already be in Tokyo
- International dance companies will be greeted at the airport!

Wednesday, Nov 22

- 12 PM-2 PM: Meet at local restaurant (location TBD) for welcome lunch
- 4 PM-6 PM: Run through choreography of opening number and finale
- 7 PM-10 PM: Run of show and dress rehearsal in studio

Thursday, Nov 23

- 9 AM-3 PM: Tech rehearsal with photos/video taken at theater space in early afternoon
 - 9 AM: Start stage setting, lighting, sound check, cover the stage with linoleum
 - 11 AM: other theater staff and dancers arrive
 - 12 PM: Staging and position check for each group
 - 2 PM: Full rehearsal in full costume
 - 5:30 PM: House doors open (audiences coming in)
 - 6 PM: Start show
 - 8 PM: Finish
 - 9 PM: Dance companies clear up and staff clear absolutely everything including stage artwork, every single decoration, lights etc and leave
 - 11 PM: Meet at nearby bar for well deserved late dinner and drinks

Friday, Nov 24

- The morning is free for visiting dancers to see Tokyo's sights!
- 4:00-6:00 PM: Two workshops (topics TBA) to be held at nearby dance studio
- 7:30 PM-10 PM: A hafla is scheduled for Friday night as a low-key performance and social networking opportunity for dancers, including a "mini bazaar" of merchandise available for sale. Each successful dance company has two dance slots in the hafla where they can perform whatever they'd like. Eat, drink, be merry!

Saturday, Nov 25 (Optional)

- 9 AM to 6 PM: Workshops are held throughout the day around theatrical dance themes for dance troupe members and the general public by dance company directors (times, topics and locations TBA)
- Free night in Tokyo! Possibility of a group outing to see Japanese dance, music or theater performance, a karaoke night or a nighttime guided tour pending interest

Sunday, Nov 26

Touristing or traveling home. :(Til next time, you crazy dancers!

About Amelia and Elisabeth

Amelia and Elisabeth first danced together on a dusty polo field in Zambia in 2016, when Amelia was visiting for a few weeks on a work trip. Soon, Amelia became an adjunct member of Zambelly, Zambia's first belly dance company that Elisabeth founded, dancing at restaurants, clubs and joyful family celebrations alongside Ramya, Hildah, Mazyanga and Julia--an Indian-American, two Zambians, and a Russian--making for a truly international belly dance company and the only belly dance company for nearly 2000 kilometers in any direction! Zambelly inspired Amelia and Elisabeth to build the Secret Garden concept together!



Amelia started her dance career at the age of 6 in classical ballet. Throughout her ballet experience, she particularly loved “Arabian Dance” from the famous Nutcracker. Later in her life, she became to know that there exists a dance style called “oriental dance” (or so-called belly dance). After many years, she started belly dancing in Zimbabwe where she was staying at the time and has been dancing in Tokyo since 2007. She specializes especially in Egyptian style, but also she performs various styles, particularly Tango Oriental, Flamenco Arabe, and fusion style featuring fan veils. Amelia has been dancing in and organizing various shows and events in Japan and recently she teaches “Ballet Essence for Belly Dancers”. Although she is passionate about stage performances, Amelia also believes that this beautiful art form can help in a healing process not only psychologically but physically.

Elisabeth fell headfirst into Middle Eastern dance in high school, and when she moved to New York for college,

danced in odd places such as the New York subway system, art museums and on stages in New York and New Jersey and as part of Bastet, a student troupe at Bellyqueen, with Desert Sin, and as part of Shazadi Dance Project in New Jersey. She has appeared in off-off Broadway show “Ankhst” and performed in theatrical dance projects including Dena Stevens’ “9 Lives,” Bellyqueen’s “Journeys on the Silk Road” in Milan, and Shimmy for Shelter in Sascha’s Shimmy for Shelter event in Windhoek. She wrote and co-produced and co-directed the critically acclaimed holiday production “Spicebox.” She has won belly dance competitions painted green, taught dance class in classrooms with no glass in the windows in urban Lusaka, danced on ships cruising through the Suez Canal, led workshops in Marrakech, brought Zambia’s first dance company to Cape Town, and eaten pizza at Aunt Rocky’s dining room table in Brooklyn, listening to Morocco’s living history of Oriental dance in America. She believes belly dance is about giving people joy, no matter where they are in the world. Elisabeth currently performs for Arab and Georgian audiences that call Atlanta home at Babylon Cafe and Imperial Fez. So much to learn and dance, so little time! Her dance website is elisabeth.dance.

APPENDIX

Coming soon: details about the stage, dimensions and technical specifications, choreography notes and video for opening and closing numbers

Sample Budget for an International Dance Company (pp)

Assuming per person, traveling Nov 20 and returning Nov 25. Prices researched on Jan 9. Numbers are very rough and should be used as a guideline only!

- Traveling from Frankfurt, Germany
 - \$582 R/T with stopover in Helsinki, Finland
- Traveling from Johannesburg, South Africa
 - \$553 R/T with stopover in Doha, Qatar
- Traveling from New York, USA
 - \$579 R/T with stopover in Ghangzou, China
- Traveling from Seattle, USA
 - \$796 R/T with stopover in Seoul, South Korea

- 3*** or 4*** hotel room, split with one person: \$50/day (5 days)
- 2** or 3*** hotel room, split with one person: \$30/day (5 days)
- Being hosted (hostess gift and dinner): \$50
- Food: \$30/day (5 days)
- Travel: \$10/day (5 days)

- Tourism: \$100

Assuming \$600 for flight

For cheap, being hosted: \$950

For on-the-cheap in hotel: \$1050

For living-large in **** hotel: \$1150

Spread across 8 months = \$119 to 144 a month

Spread across 6 months = \$158 to 191 a month

What Every Dancer Should Bring

For the opening number, you will be loaned a costume to wear. Please bring the following to look dazzling on stage and ready to tackle any dance challenge!

- Yoga pants/leggings and a top that allows you to see your line for rehearsal
- All of your costumes (your dance company number, any costumes for hafla performances, etc)
- Coverup (preferably a kaftan you can easily take on and off when backstage or waiting to perform)
- Comfortable sandals (to wear when moving around backstage or in costume before performing)
- Makeup
 - Foundation
 - Concealer
 - Contouring kit
 - Mascara
 - Red lipstick and lip liner
 - Nude lipstick
 - Eyeshadow palette including nudes and smokey (+brights if you have specific makeup needs for your group number)
 - Lipstick for your group number
 - Black eyeliner
 - Eyebrow pencil
 - Blush
 - Makeup setting spray or powder
 - 2 pairs false eyelashes (black, long and full, no colors or embellishments like crystals or feathers)
 - Eyelash glue
- Nude-for-you fingernail polish (both toes and fingernails)
- Makeup remover towelettes

- Nude-for-you supportive convertible bra and matching clear bra straps
- Nude-for-you seamless underwear
- Small sewing kit (needles, strong thread, extra hooks and eyes, scissors, elastic, superglue)
- Safety pins

NOTE: The theater venue disallows glitter. Please don't bring glitter makeup or glittery costumes! At the hafla location, glitter is acceptable. :)

Tips & Tricks for International Travel

New to international adventures? Have no fear, Amelia and Elisabeth are very seasoned travelers, having danced and zoomed around the world for work. Here are a few tips to think about when planning and budgeting your international trip:

Before You Go

- Do some research in the wonders of Tokyo! A few resources include [Lonely Planet](#), [Trip Advisor](#) and [Time Out Tokyo](#)
- Have several people download apps on their phones that allow for usage of offline maps of Tokyo (which still use GPS, but no data) which will help you navigate, as well as Google Translate (with data) that allows you to translate based on a picture, or a Japanese phrasebook for easy reference
- Double check visa requirements for Japan; if you need letters of invitation or some pointers, Amelia can help you out. Be sure to apply for visas in plenty of time! If you are transiting through any other countries on way to Japan, double-check if you need transit visa through those countries as well
- Some embassies, such as the US embassy, have travel notification systems in place where you can file your travel plans so they can reach you in case of an emergency. We highly recommend you take advantage of these services
- Ensure a trusted family member or friend has all your travel details, contact information for you, your dance company director, and Amelia and Elisabeth and knows how to reach you
- Photocopy your passport and visa page, if applicable, and pack the photocopy separately
- Make sure one person in your dance company has either an internationally accessible phone number (please share with us before getting onto plane!), or has an unlocked phone and will buy a prepaid SIM on arrival, and share that information with us

Booking Flights

- Your dance company must be in Tokyo on Nov 21 and may depart Nov 24 (though we suggest Nov 25)

- Your flight will probably be your largest travel expense so it pays to shop around. Look at travel websites that aggregate search individual airlines websites including [Kayak.com](https://www.kayak.com) or [Google Flights](https://www.google.com/flights) and set price alerts for flights you might be interested in--sometimes prices will drop! Also, if you are flexible on travel dates, it could be the difference of hundreds of dollars! Additionally, look at nearby airports for cheaper prices or better connection times
- If booking for six or more people, consider using a reputable travel agent; they often have more flexible payment and travel terms than online websites and have access to group discounts you won't have booking online
- Book using your credit card that probably includes travel insurance (Visa and American Express, for example, automatically include some form of travel insurance), so do some research!
- Sometimes booking individual legs is cheaper than trying to do an easy round-trip search. (i.e. the flight from Atlanta to Tokyo is 200 USD less expensive if Elisabeth connects through Los Angeles, and about the same through Honolulu, which means Elisabeth may drink some Mai Tais before heading to Tokyo!)
- We highly recommend booking all flights at once to avoid travel mishaps, last minute changes and people being bumped off of flights

Packing

- Double and triple-check all weight restrictions for checked bags. If you are carrying truly valuable costumes, bring them as carry-ons, not as checked baggage!
- Make sure the correct name and address and phone number is associated with each piece of luggage; extra points if all luggage tags have one responsible person's name, email, destination address in Japan and internationally accessible phone number on them in case they get lost!
- For packing a lot into a small bag, follow these tips:
 - Shoes on bottom, limit to three pairs: flip flops, fancy sandals, nice but comfortable ballet flats
 - Then, fill shoes with socks and underwear
 - Roll all your clothing and pack, layer by layer
 - You can maximize on use of clothing and reduce the number of items by making sure you're packing multiple-use items such as tunic tops which can go with leggings or pants, work as nighties or swimsuit coverups
 - Leave extra toiletries, like body wash and shampoo, which you can usually find in a hotel or host home, at home
 - Bring a plastic bag to put your toiletries in to prevent explosions or to wrap wet swimsuit or clothing in
- Be sure to include all your costumes, your emergency costume kit (sewing needles, thread, fashion tape, hair pins, safety pins, etc), a full cover up (this is a must!) and appropriate shoes for backstage
- Pack a swimsuit!

Health, Safety and Security

- Double check your health insurance policy to ensure you're covered internationally in case of serious illness
- Although Tokyo is one of the world's safest cities, getting there and back involves a lot of luggage handlers. We suggest avoiding putting any valuables in your bag and getting it plastic wrapped if possible--you'll know immediately if someone has tampered with it
- Ensure you keep all medicines in their labeled prescription bottles and that you have plenty for your trip, even if there is a delay somewhere along the way, and that you pack them in your carry-on bag, not in your checked baggage
- Take the barest minimum with you in your purse. Take out extra credit cards, multiple forms of ID, and other extra items that you won't use in Japan
- Other medicines you may want to take just in case someone in your dance company feels ill is ibuprofen or aspirin, antacids, extra band aids, eye drops and skin itch cream

Flying

- If you don't have a frequent flyer number yet, get one so you can get credit on this long haul flight to Japan!
- If you have dietary preferences or are a grazer, bring snacks! (Pro tip: Japanese folks LOVE sweets from other parts of the world. Now you know what to do during all that extra time at the gate.)
- If you can, get a window or aisle seat--window if you want to be undisturbed and a bulkhead to sleep against, or aisle for quick access to the aisle and bathroom
- Drink lots of water and avoid caffeine or alcohol; wash hands frequently
- New to long-haul flights? Wear comfortable, nonrestrictive clothing, layer so you can stay warm or cool, pack warm socks, bring a pillow. Get up every so often and walk around the cabin and do gentle stretches to get blood circulation going. Natural remedies to help with falling asleep include taking a melatonin pill (or small drink or drinking a glass of wine). If you're worried about jet lag, try to adjust to Tokyo time before you leave for the airport and stay up late/go to sleep accordingly. You can also chew ginger or drink ginger tea to help adjust, and expose as much skin possible to light so your body realizes it's "day" and not "night"

What to Expect on Arrival

- The Tokyo Narita Airport is legendary for its showstopping modern design and efficiency. Once you clear border patrol pick up your luggage and clear customs, you'll be greeted by a friendly face with a Secret Garden sign with your dance company's name on it. He or she will whisk you to your accommodation and answer any questions you might have. We will make sure you will have an English-speaking (or-your-language-speaking) point of contact available for your whole stay

- Make sure your flight arrives with plenty of time to decompress, catch up on sleep and get adjusted to Tokyo
- If you want to reserve rehearsal space at a nearby studio to go over opening choreography, closing choreography and your group number, please notify us before you get on the plane ;)
- Yay! You made it! Now the fun begins!