

### **Ningyo (Japanese Doll) Town, Iwatsuki**

As *Hinamatsuri* (doll festival) celebrations continued to spread in the late Edo period, *ningyo* culture became popular in Edo when *hina* and *kabuto* (helmet) markets opened in Jikkendana, Nihombashi. As its' supply points, villages in Bushu (which today comprises of mostly of Saitama Prefecture) such as Konosu and Koshigaya began *ningyo* productions.

Although *hina ningyo* merchant shops existed in Iwatsuki which was a castle town under Tokugawa fudai daimyo control that prospered as a post station of Nikko Onari Kaido, *ningyo* production did not thrive until the Taisho period. As production volumes expanded, Iwatsuki became a major production base contributing to the *ningyo* industry during Japan's period of rapid economic growth after the WWII due to the influx of craftsmen which whom were affected by the Great Kanto Earthquake and war in Tokyo.

Even today, Iwatsuki is still filled with signages of *ningyo* companies and factories giving it a *ningyo-doll* town feel.

### **Aim to promote and raise awareness of *ningyo* culture**

The Iwatsuki Ningyo Museum is to be opened on February 22, 2020 in the *ningyo* town of Iwatsuki. Through developing and implementing various programs such as collecting and storing, researching, and exhibiting and advocating *ningyo* and its culture, the museum hopes more people would become familiarized with *ningyo*.

The museum aims to provide a facility where everybody can have fun and promote the beauty, history and depth of *ningyo* as a form of Japanese culture.

### **Collections**

Our extensive collection features various *ningyo* and toys from Japan and overseas belonged Tekiho Nishizawa (1889 – 1965) whom was a Japanese painter and *ningyo* toy researcher. Nishizawa, also served as an expert commission member of the Intangible Cultural Properties Protection Committee and judge for Japan Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition, saw the value in *ningyo* as artworks and cultural asset and introduced it to the world. The *ningyo* selected by the painter's aesthetic sense were introduced in various books both domestically and internationally, and known as a top-level private collection.

In addition, the museum also houses various *ningyo* collections; information on famous local *ningyo* and *ningyo* manufacturing; artworks and old books that tell the cultural background of *ningyo*.

**Location**

6-1 Honcho, Iwatsuki Ward, Saitama City, Saitama Prefecture 339-0057