

# Tokyo Opera City

Tokyo Opera City is voor mij de mooiste plek in Tokyo. Het is niet alleen een plaats waar men van muziek, concerten, opera, musea en tentoonstellingen kan genieten, maar het is in het luidruchtige en gejaagde Tokyo ook een oase van stilte en rust : alles is relaxerend. Men kan er van vele dingene genieten: er zijn alle soorten van restaurants en koffiehuisjes. De gebouwen zijn majestueus. In en rond de gebouwen vindt men kunstwerken, landschappen van water en stenen en zitplaatsen. Men kan er wandelen als in een andere wereld, ver van het alledaagse. Wat hieronder volgt zijn getuigenissen en indrukken van mensen die ervan genoten hebben. Ik heb getracht fotos bijeen te brengen die iets van de sfeer kunnen weergeven in de fotogalerie

*Hieronder indrukken van bezoekers:*

## **A CITY WITHIN A CITY: SIX THEATERS, TWO ART MUSEUMS AND RESTAURANTS UNDER ONE ROOF**

---



*An outside view of Opera city*

Tokyo Opera City is promoted as one of the greatest theater complexes in the world and this is may be no exaggeration. With its six theaters, two art museums and around fifty restaurants, you could spend a week in Opera City without bothering with the rest of Tokyo.

For anyone interested in the arts, it's a paradise. There are regular performances of classical music, opera and ballet, all staged in state-of-the-art halls and theatres. These include the Concert Hall, used for performances by the Tokyo Philharmonic and orchestras from around the world, and the Recital Hall, used for chamber music and solo recitals. The first concert at Opera City took place in 1997, when the conductor was the legendary Seiji Ozawa. Since then the Opera City Cultural Foundation has collaborated with internationally renowned composers and conductors like Simon Rattle, Esa-Pekka Salonen and Kent Nagano.

In addition to concerts by some of the brightest talents in music, there is a focus on education and innovation. Each year the Toru Takemitsu Composition Award culminates in Composium Week, where the works of young composers are showcased and judged.

*Singing man*



This year French composer Tristan Murail was one of the judges and the Composium was complemented by performances of his compositions.

Elsewhere in the complex, there is the New National Theatre Tokyo (NNTT), a place which really demands a separate article to befit its status as the leading venue for opera, ballet, dance and drama in Japan.

The Opera City complex highlights visual as well as performing arts. Indeed the building is something of an artwork itself, with its 54 storeys rising above the Tokyo metropolis offering excellent views. There are restaurants, cafés and bars on the top floors to help you enjoy these views.

Opera City also has its own major art gallery featuring work from local and international artists. There are regular special exhibitions, often focusing on international art, so from August to December there is a look at Belgian painting 'From Ensor to Magritte.' As well

as the Special Exhibitions, the gallery runs the Project N series, showcasing work by emerging local artists.

Art works by some of the world's greatest artists and sculptors are also strategically placed around Opera City. As you arrive at the Sunken Garden via the subway you cannot miss the giant Jonathan Borofsky sculpture "Singing Man. Listen and you will discover that the figure appears to be doing exactly what its title suggests!

*Gormley sculpture*



Take the escalator up a floor and in the foyer you will find another sculpture, this one by the renowned British artist, Anthony Gormley. Placed in front of the escalators, the open-armed, nude figure stands in direct contrast to the suit-clad salarymen and women who pass in the opposite direction on their way to the elevators, then their offices in the floors above.

These offices are an important part of the mix at Opera City. In the evening they empty out and the bars and restaurants fill up. The majority of them are concentrated in the B1 and 1st floor areas and you get a good blend of Japanese and international eating options. On the B1 floor, there is the Japanese yakitori (grilled chicken) restaurant Han, the impressive Indian restaurant Ganges and a British Style pub named Hub, just behind the Borofsky sculpture. There is also a selection of cheap chain establishments like Excelsior and Subway.

Unsurprisingly, the 53rd and 54th floor restaurants, which come with the nice views, are a bit more pricey. There is the Japanese bar and grill Hokkaido, serving seafood dishes and a sushi restaurant Sushi Shimotakaido. Café 53 is probably the best place to go if you don't want to fork out too much for a meal but just want to enjoy the views with a drink.

There is information in English on the website about concerts and exhibitions at the gallery. An ideal day trip would take in an evening show with an afternoon visit to a gallery, a meal and a stroll around the impressive complex.



## Tokyo - Tokyo Symphony Orchestra

My favorite part of our visit to Tokyo was hearing the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra. Joe and I bought tickets almost 3 months ago, when we were planning this trip.

We saw the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra at Tokyo Opera City - one of their smaller performance halls. It was in a beautifully modern complex.



Inside the building, there was this beautiful art sculpture hanging from the ceiling. I thought it was kind of funny --- many performing arts halls have some sort of ceiling art!





I snuck a few photos inside the hall. It was beautiful!!! We saw behind the orchestra, so we had an unusual view. The concert was a Latin-American program - with music by Villa-Lobos, Piazzolla and Ginastera. I loved it!

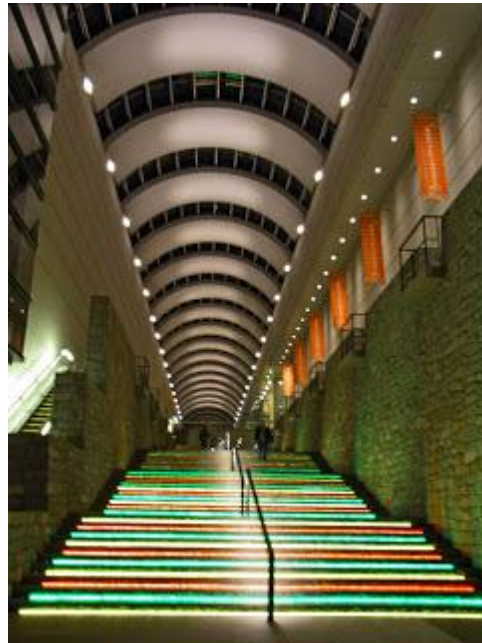


**Tokyo Opera City is an art spot where you can experience a wide range of art for yourself. It continues to let the world know about new talents, with exhibitions and musical awards aiming to assist young artists.**

## Christmasfitting Tokyo Opera City



Tokyo Opera City, a cultural arts complex in Hatsudai, one station over from Shinjuku. Completed in 1999, the complex still has the appearance of a new construction, perhaps even more so because vast spaces appeared unused.



If you can take a photo like this on a Tokyo weekend, a warning sign should go up. Didn't expect this to happen at night.





If this man has to look up, it must be a mighty tall tree.

## HUB Tokyo Opera City, British Pub



Come down and enjoy our relaxed atmosphere with great drinks, food and friends at the HUB. Taken from the words 'Public House' - HUB is your home away from home! Conveniently located close to the station the HUB is a perfect choice for casual drinks or large parties. We look forward to serving you at the HUB!



Fish & Chips



Guinness - 1 pint



Roast Beef



**Hours**

11:30am - 11:30pm (Mon - Sun), HAPPY HOUR: 5:00pm - 7:00pm, 4:00pm - 7:00pm (Sat, Sun & Holidays)