

Hello, I am Erlina, and I am a student from Indonesia. At that time, I went to Japan to study for three months at Kyoto Prefectural University. This writing is about what I felt while participating in the Karakuri Workshop. I'm really grateful that my friend invited me to join the activity because it became such a fun and memorable experience for me.

### 1. What do you remember most from the Karakuri workshop?

This workshop was such a fun and memorable experience for me. I enjoyed every moment of it. The weather that day was pretty cold, and my hands even felt a little frozen, but the warm atmosphere of the workshop made me forget about it. During the Karakuri workshop, I met many new people, and everyone was so friendly and welcoming. It was also my first time learning about Karakuri dolls, which made the experience even more exciting. We were taught how to make our own Karakuri dolls, and honestly, my favorite part was when everyone shared the story and personality behind their creations.

Listening to each participant's explanation made me realize how limitless and unique human imagination can be. Every doll had its own character and meaning. I created a doll inspired by Miyo Saimori from My Happy Marriage ("Watashi no Shiawase na Kekkon"). Besides making Karakuri dolls, we were also introduced to Kobe Ningyo, which I found very unique and adorable. The doll could move as if it was eating a watermelon, and I thought it was really fascinating to watch.



### 2. How did you feel about the support from the CYT student and young staff members?

I felt that everyone was really helpful and friendly, which made the atmosphere even more enjoyable. At first, I was worried that things might feel awkward, but my worries turned out to be completely wrong. The whole activity felt fun and comfortable from beginning to end.

### 3. Compared with just talking, what was different about communicating while making something together?

I once read in a book that people can communicate more easily and become closer when they have something to do together. In my opinion, interactions can feel more difficult when people only talk without doing any activity together, and that can create an awkward atmosphere. For some

people, talking to someone new can feel stressful because they keep trying to think of interesting topics so the conversation does not become awkward. But instead of making things more comfortable, forced conversations often end up feeling even more awkward and unnatural.

That is why I really liked the concept of the Karakuri Workshop, where we could chat while making Karakuri dolls together. It made the interactions feel much more natural, and the conversations flowed easily on their own, which made the whole experience more enjoyable.



**4. Did you learn or feel anything new about Japanese culture or Japanese making/engineering through this workshop?**

Joining the Karakuri workshop gave me a new and memorable experience. It was my first time learning that Karakuri dolls have actually existed since the Edo period. That fact really amazed me and made me think about how fascinating it is when mechanical technology and art come together to create such unique and interesting dolls.

**5. Do you think this kind of international hands-on making activity should be continued in the future? Why?**

In my opinion, this activity was very interesting, and it would be wonderful if it continues in the future. I hope more people around the world can experience the same fun and memorable moments that I had. I also think this activity can become a great way to introduce Japanese culture to international communities while also creating opportunities for people to connect and interact with new friends.

