

The Museum of Mechanical Musical Instruments

Thomas Edison's 1877 invention of the phonograph provided a remarkable turning point in the history of music recording and replay. As early as a hundred years prior to this epoch-making event, however, people had actually already begun to record music and play it back. The historical development of the music box can be traced over this hundred-year period during which we can discover the labors of the original creators of music reproduction equipment.

Automatic reproduction of simple tunes was first accomplished at the end of the 18th century. The next hundred years saw many ingenious designs and improvements leading to the development of a variety of mechanical musical instruments including cylinder boxes, disc boxes, automatic organs (street organs), player pianos, and more. These devices brought untold joy to all that listened over the years, until they were rendered obsolete by Thomas Edison's invention of the phonograph.

"Orugoru no Chiisana Hakubutsukan" offers an overview of the development of mechanical musical reproducers which were made from the end of the 18th to the 20th century. Visitors may enjoy demonstrations of antique musical devices accompanied by scholarly explanation.

Orugoru no Chiisana Hakubutsukan

3-25-14 Mejirodai Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo TEL (03) 3941-0008

Closed: Sundays, Mondays and New Year's vacation

Access: Subway Yurakucho Line, Gokokuji Station, Exit No.4, and 3-min. walk

Concert course (1F)

The magnificent sound. Please sit on a comfortable chair in the music hall, and enjoy the concert. You can enjoy the music by the mechanical musical instruments such as the disk music boxes, the cylinder music boxes, the organs, automata, and reproducing pianos. The staff will explain about them happily with explanation of their background.

Tour times : 1:00pm, 3:00p.m

Admission : General ¥1300 adult ¥600 children
Group ¥1100 adult ¥500 children
(groups of 20 or more)

Museum course (5F&6F)

(By advance reservation only. (15 persons max.))

Let's begin the tour. In the permanent exhibition room, please enjoy the sound of various music boxes. In the changing exhibition room, you can have the chance to meet unusual music boxes. And you will have a rare experience that your body will feel the vibration of the sound of the music box directly. In the café you can listen to the music by "reproducing piano" which revives the music of former famous pianists.

Tour times : 11:00a.m, 2:00p.m, 4:00p.m

Admission : ¥2,000

Curator course (Whole museum)

(By advance reservation only. (10 persons max.))

The tour that the curator guides. Many valuable exhibits is moved the enthusiast in this course.

Admission : ¥3,500

