

Hello Dustin (October 1, 2017): “Japan’s Wonderful Culture and Technology”
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Picture: Festival floats and *karakuri* puppets at Iwakura’s Cherry Blossom Festival

When I was growing up in Canada, there was a lot of Japanese culture and technology around me. At home, my brother and I enjoyed playing Japanese video games together and watching *anime* dubbed in English on a Japanese-made TV. My parents’ car, the first car that I drove when I was 16 and got my driver’s license, was also Japanese. And when I was in university, I enjoyed often going with my friends to sing at *karaoke*, which also originated in Japan. Now I have lived in Japan for 8 years, and I am happy to come in touch firsthand with a variety of Japanese culture and technology in everyday life!

It was when I went to Iwakura’s cherry blossom festival that I had the chance to see for the first time another Japanese technology: *karakuri* puppets! Iwakura’s *karakuri* puppets looked very human-like as they were doing many detailed movements and even flips, so they were very fascinating to watch. Afterwards, I learned that the *karakuri* puppets were made around 1780 and the festival floats were made around 1620, so it impressed me that they are still working now just like they did at those times. So I want to know more about this precious technology!

What Japanese culture or technology do you love? Please tell me! I want to know more about Japan! And please reaffirm how wonderful Japan is by teaching me!