**Teikoku Gekijō** (The Imperial Theatre), also known as Teigeki, is a Japanese theatre located in Marunouchi, Tokyo, owned by Tōhō.

Teigeki is the first Western-style theatre in Japan, founded by a group of Japanese businessmen including Masuda Tarōkaja, Shibusawa Eiichi and Ōkura Kihachirō. It was a multi-purpose Renaissance style theatre built in 1911 by architect Yokokawa Tamisuke as the key site to introduce Japanese traditional theatre for foreign guests, take leadership as the model of theatre management and develop Japanese theatre arts. Teigeki, contracted with Onoe Baikō VI and Matsumoto Kōshirō VII, staged *kabuki* and extended their repertoire to *shimpa*, Shakespearean and modern plays, and opera. The theatre became one of the symbols for leisure and consumption focusing on women consumers during the Taishō Period (1912-1926) as the first department store in Japan Mitsukoshi created the catchphrase “Today, Teigeki, tomorrow, Mitsukoshi.”

Since 1910, Teigeki staged the father of *shingeki* (modern Japanese drama), Tsubouchi Shōyō’s Association of Literary Arts’s productions of Western translated plays, in which one of the first actresses Matsui Sumako played the role of Ophelia in *Hamlet* (1910) and Nora in *Doll’s House* (1911). In 1912 Teigeki formed an opera company and invited Italian Giovanni Vittorio Rossi as artistic director and teacher. Students of Rossi’s opera company—such as prima donna Hara Nobuko—moved to Asakusa, sparked the Asakusa Opera boom and contributed to the development of light comedy in Japan. In 1918, Teigeki staged Takarazuka Girls Opera, which was its first production in Tokyo.

Actress and wife of the founder of *shimpa*, Kawakami Otojirō, Sadayakko opened the first acting training school for actresses in 1908, which became the Imperial Training Institute, funded by the Imperial Theatre. Actresses trained in the Institute performed in Actress Plays—*kabuki*-style comedy accompanying songs and dance—newly written by Masuda, one of the founders of Teigeki. In 1910 Masuda created an innovative adaptation based on Jules Verne’s *Around the World in Eighty Days*,in which Sadayakko acted the role of a Japanese woman traveler. Their hit *Which way?* (1917) was later named differently and performed in many other theatres, whose cover song *The Song of Croquette* made a big hit.

After the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake, Teigeki, rebuilt by the same architect Yokokawa after the destruction of the building, staged the Actresses Plays’s late hits, *High Speed Comedy* (1925-1929). Famous actress Mori Ritsuko acted in a modernist style, speaking the opening statement with high speed. This speedy style was adopted in other theatres in Japan.

In 1930 Shochiku acquired management of the theatre and used it as a film theatre. In 1940, when ownership was moved back to Tōhō, Teigeki shifted back its focus back to on theatre productions, tied with entrepreneur Tōhō’s owner Kobayashi Ichizō’s plan of building the amusement center in the Hibiya area. In 1942, Teigeki staged Tōhō Theatre of the Nation produced by Kobayashi. After World War II, in 1950, under the president Hata Toyokichi, Teigeki produced Teigeki Musicals, featuring prewar and postwar musical comedy stars – such as Furukawa Roppa, Enomoto Kenichi, and the former Takarazuka actress, Koshiji Fubuki. It led to the postwar boom of Japanese musicals.

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