



NY CITY







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Tokyo Bureaucrats Play Jazz at the Birdland

On Sunday night, a 21-piece big band stepped onto the stage at [Birdland Jazz Club](#) on West 44th Street and started playing a swinging version of the Cole Porter song “Love For Sale.”

Mr. Takahashi is a veterinarian for the city and Mr. Suzuki is a civil engineer.

This is the Tocho Swing Beats big band, which is made up largely of city workers at the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Office, known as the Tocho.

The band, now in its 60th year, was formed in 1948 was originally formed to cheer Japanese citizens after World War II and held rehearsals on the roof of the former Tokyo metropolitan government building in Yurakucho. Band members, who volunteer their time in the band, said they spend many evenings and weekend rehearsing and that they raised the money to travel to New York.

“The city of Tokyo is very proud of this band,” said Katsuya Abe, an entertainment producer who helped organize the trip. “It is almost like rooting for your own Olympic team.”

At Birdland, wives of band members sat at the bar near the bandstand and took photographs of the band, which was anchored by the booming trombone of Yasanori Tanaka, who works for the Tokyo Fire Department, and the piano of Hideo Murakami, a computer systems technician for Tokyo’s Office of General Affairs. Then there was the flashy trumpet work of Hiroshi Narumiya, who works for Tokyo’s Health Department.

Whether working for the finance division or the highway department, band members spoke most enthusiastically about their musical influences. Mr. Suzuki loves the trumpet playing of Art Farmer and Lee Morgan and Clifford Brown. Mr. Takahashi admires alto saxophone legends as Charlie Parker and Cannonball Adderley and Art Pepper.













