



**Rumiko Obata** is the MANOTSURU 5th generation Kuramoto, the owner of the Obata Sake Brewery in Sado Island, Niigata Prefecture. She graduated from Sado High School, and KEIO University, where she earned a degree in political science. Shortly after graduating from university, she worked for the movie company, Nippon Herald Films, as a Publicist and was in charge of promoting several English and Japanese films, such as 'Basic Instincts' and 'Leon'.

After 7 years with the movie company in Tokyo, she returned to Sado Island to take over the family business. In 1995, she married Takeshi Hirashima, who had been working for the publisher Kadokawa as the editor of the "Tokyo Walker" magazine. Together they took over the running of Obata Sake Brewery and she became the Executive Vice President of the brewery with him as the President of the brewery.

Since 2003 she has been working to expand sake sales to overseas markets, and now Manotsuru sake is exported to 15 countries. Rumiko has also worked with Takeshi on The GAKKOGURA Project, which transformed a 136 year old elementary school, which had closed in 2010, into a sake brewery.

In addition to her role at the brewery, Rumiko often delivers seminars and lectures on sake appreciation. In May 2017, she was chosen by Forbes Japan as one of the recipients of the Local Innovator 55 award. She is a SAKE MASTER and a member of the Japan Sake Association. She has also authored the book, 'Gakkogura-no-tokubetsu jugyo (Nikkei BP)', and appeared in NHK World's "Direct Talk" on December 2017.