

Between the Stones

石の間に

プロジェクトレポート, 2020年6月

Project Report

June 2020

(Updated July 2023)





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Project Report

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Report prepared by Jannette Cheong

Editors: Paul Laikin, Richard Emmert and Nick Sanders

The *Between the Stones* project involved the creation of a new English language noh, plus a unique education and outreach programme *Getting to noh - from page to stage*.

www.betweenthestones.com

CONTENTS

Introduction & Background	5-7
Project Processes, Inputs and Outputs	8-13
Key Project Benefits and Delivery of Project Objectives	14-15
2020 European Tour	16-25
Education & Outreach: Cities of Peace Projects	26-31
Project Comments	32-45
Artists' Comments	46-55
Acknowledgements	56-58

Introduction

I was very much moved by the beautiful rendition of your text. It was wonderful to see how the various elements, which you and your collaborators have been working on with such passion and dedication, have coalesced so seamlessly.

Brendan Griggs, CEO Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation

I'm SO glad we squeezed this wonderful event in before the world closed down.

Joanna Cunningham, Director, Watergate Theatre, Kilkenny, Ireland

This report provides background to the *Between the Stones* project during the period 2018-2020. It lists the project processes, inputs, outputs and outcomes, and includes a selection of comments from those involved in the three project phases during the 2018-2020 period. In this revised edition there are a number of additions to bring us up to date (2023-24) with subsequent initiatives that have been inspired by the *Between the Stones* Project.

We were delighted to be able to complete the Phase Three European tour of the project as an official event of the 2020-21 Japan-UK Season of Culture.

However, in the light of the global events, that followed the European tour the poignancy of the *Between the Stones* story became very apparent. The COVID-19 pandemic had not been announced when the artists arrived in London on 27 January 2020. Happily, they all managed to complete the tour and return home safely. By the time the original report was written in June 2020, just four months after the tour was completed, the number of deaths from the pandemic around the world had soared. With all public events cancelled, or postponed, the timing of the 2020 tour proved to be more fortuitous than any of us could have imagined. However, our thoughts at that time were with those who had suffered, the millions who had lost loved ones and the impact the pandemic was having on people around the world.

The 2020 European Performance Tour was only possible with the support and encouragement of the Japan Foundation Performing Arts Japan Programme for Europe 2019-2020, Mitsubishi Corporation International (Europe) plc, Mitsubishi Electric Europe B.V. (London & Paris), the Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation, the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation, the Japan Society, the Embassy of Japan in London and our many other past and present collaborators and friends mentioned in this report. Our sincere thanks to all for their shared vision and incredible encouragement and support throughout the project.

Cover image: Iori Oshima performing his international debut as the Spirit of Winter Butterflies in Act 2 of the world premiere of *Between the Stones* at the Southbank Centre, London. 29 January 2020. Photography by Clive Barda





Background

Noh is a UNESCO-recognised classical theatre form, combining elements of dance, drama, music and poetry into a highly aesthetic art that has been performed continuously for over 650 years.

A common response to noh from non-Japanese, echoed by many Japanese, is that it can be difficult to understand. We wanted to help others understand the wonderful art of noh, and how it has been preserved and continuously performed for the past six centuries, and also to highlight that noh is a living art form that can reflect contemporary societies worldwide.

English language noh, developed over the last 40 years, has given particular focus to the latter while using the traditions that have been handed down over the centuries in Japan. Noh is a powerful art form that can be used to support how we learn more about each other - no matter where we come from in the world.

Themes explored in the new work and in the education projects looked to create and develop stories that relate to our time and, therefore, contribute to our own legacy, and help to cross cultural borders and celebrate human similarities and differences.

We aimed to reach a wide range of people to enable extensive discussion and an up-close understanding of noh. To achieve this we began the public engagement of the *Between the Stones* project in 2018 with our programme of outreach activities, 'Getting to noh from page to stage', and by sharing how we were developing a new noh in English using traditional noh techniques. We have reached out to almost 20,000 people in Europe across the various activities and through virtual resources up to the time of this report.

Art has the potential to provide a creative mirror through which we can reflect on our impact on society. The art of noh is an excellent vehicle for such challenges. It had been our hope that many more people would Get to *Noh* through the variety of project activities.

The development of the new English language noh drama *Between the Stones* by Jannette Cheong (author) and Richard Emmert (composer), formed the core focus for the project and its programme of education and outreach activities - 'Getting to Noh' over the period 2018-2020.

Our vision is that:

- Noh can continue to 'earnestly and brilliantly cross national borders'* both for, and beyond, the cultural activities organised around the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and the associated Japan-UK Season of Culture
- Noh can be appreciated both in terms of its classical traditions and contemporary relevance
- *Getting to noh 'from page to stage' – and beyond* will give a better understanding of noh for many
- Young and old alike can enjoy an engagement with noh, and key elements of noh can inspire and be transferred to other creative formats/genres
- The art of noh is an excellent vehicle for exploring our common humanity.

* Quote by Nishino Haruo in the Tokyo Shimbun, 3 July 2011 following the Asian premiere of *Pagoda* (also written by Jannette Cheong and Richard Emmert and a joint production with the Oshima Noh Theatre and Theatre Nohgaku) in 2011, at the National Noh Theatre, Tokyo.

Project Processes, Inputs and Outputs

Project Processes

We adopted a simple, yet challenging approach to the project. It was important from the beginning that, although connected developmentally, each activity should be of value in, and of, itself. The project was divided into three phases all focused on *Getting to Noh from page to stage*:

- **Phase 1 (2018-19):** To begin the public outreach work Jannette Cheong undertook 11 education and outreach activities in 2018.
- 2018 included an extensive student project with Jannette Cheong working with BA World Performance students at East 15 Acting School, University of Essex.
- The illustrated talks introduced the art of noh, plus initial readings of *Between the Stones* to 'test' public interest in the story and project; and to help others develop a greater understanding of noh, and for a wider range of people to understand and engage in discussion about how a new English language noh begins its journey 'from page to stage'.
- These *Getting to Noh* events included public outreach events and education activities, including the beginning of a two-year programme of work, on three peace projects, with 180 Coventry Young Ambassadors. Each peace project took one of the three the Japanese cultural icons involved in *Between the Stones*: (1) *furin* wind chimes and *tanzaku* poem cards; (2) aspects of noh theatre - the *michiyuki* travel song and the use of masks; and (3) *karesansui* dry landscape gardens.
- More than 900 people attended Phase 1 activities.
- The author also participated in a recorded TV interview for a French regional TV station which had over 10,300 viewings.
- The very positive reaction to the readings of the new piece, and to the project overall, gave us the confidence to move forward to the next phase.
- **Phase 2 (2019):** The key purpose of phase 2 was to undertake a four-day intensive development workshop in London. This was to help the *Between the Stones* creative team (Jannette Cheong, Richard Emmert, Kinue Oshima and Teruhisa Oshima) to decide how they could further develop and stage the new noh. The creative team shared the outcomes of their work at public talks focusing on the on-going journey 'from page to stage'.
- This was followed by a further reading, this time by actor and director Simon Callow, supported by Clementine Laikin, at the Embassy of Japan in London with additional *Getting to noh* education and education and outreach events in London, Coventry, Dublin and Paris.
- Phase 2 concluded with the making of a **podcast** which features Simon Callow and composer, Jonathan Dove in discussion with Richard Emmert and Jannette Cheong. The podcast is a lively, informal conversation focusing on the history, meaning, style, and contemporary relevance of the 650-year old Japanese art form. The



podcast was made available widely through Sound Cloud links to the Southbank Centre, the other theatre websites and the *Between the Stones* project website.

- Although the main activity for Phase 2 was the development work of the creative team, more than 450 people were also able to attend Phase 2 activities and over 300 people have listened to the podcast.
- **Phase 3 (27 January - 6 February 2020):** The final phase of the project was to complete the 'page to stage' journey with the 2020 European Performance Tour. The live performances included a han noh (half noh), of the classical noh, *Takasago*, and the complete new noh *Between the Stones*. Plus, more 'Getting to Noh' activities, focusing on using the performance tour to introduce audiences to noh through a closer look at the role and making of the masks with master maskmaker Hideta Kitazawa.
- The world premiere evening performance at the Southbank Centre (29 January 2020) was opened by Ambassador Yasumasa Nagamine. Mr Isao Kano, CEO, Mitsubishi Corporation International (Europe) plc gave thanks at the end of the performance which was followed by Iori Oshima presenting to Richard Emmert the specially designed book by Jannette Cheong as a tribute to his life and work and to mark his 70th year with tributes from around the world.

Simon Callow and Clementine Laikin read Between the Stones as part of the Phase 2 event at the Embassy of Japan, London (February 2019). Photography by Clive Barda





Project Inputs

- **Phase 1 (2018):** The main resource was the author's time. In Phase 1, Jannette Cheong was supported in reading the text and giving introductions to noh theatre, by different friends: David Hughes, Gina Barnes, Henrietta Heald, Paul Laikin, Clementine Laikin, Des Easy, Christopher Heltzel, Nick Sanders, Andrew McLenan and Margot Lydon.
- 12 collaborating partners (see list below) provided the invitations to speak and the venues.
- **Phase 2 (2019):** Four members of the creative team (Jannette Cheong, Richard Emmert, Teruhisa Oshima, Kinue Oshima) came together in London.
- Main collaborating partners who supported the creative team were the Embassy of Japan (London), the British Library, and the Mill Theatre in Dublin, plus education partners: the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and five Coventry primary schools
- A special reading of the developing *Between the Stones* text was presented at the Embassy of Japan by actor and director, Simon Callow and 10 year-old Clementine Laikin.
- The main funding support for Phase 2 that enabled three team members to travel from Japan to Europe was in the form of small grants from the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation & the Japan Society.
- **Phase 3 (2020):** 18 artists participated in the 2020 European Tour: 12 Japanese, including four Japanese Hayashi instrumentalists, five main actor members in the Kita School *Shokubun* (full professional) Association - four of which are designated as Important Intangible Cultural Assets by the Japanese government, and the only female professional main actor of the Kita School.
- The international debut performance tour of one of the Kita School's rising star child actors, 11-year old, Iori Oshima accompanied by his mother Suzuko Oshima (acting as chaperone and interpreter).
- Master maskmaker, Hideta Kitazawa, led educational activities throughout and also supported the touring production.
- Five members of the only international noh theatre outside of Japan (Theatre Nohgaku) participated in Phase 3 of the project.
- Collaborating theatre partners were the Southbank Centre, London; Watergate Theatre, Kilkenny; National Opera House, Wexford and the Musée Guimet, the National Museum for Asian Arts, Paris.
- Other collaborating partners were the British Library, Japan House, East 15 Acting School (University of Essex), five Coventry primary schools, Japan Society, Japanese Garden Society and Japan Society Northwest.
- Main funding support for Phase 3 was from Mitsubishi Corporation International (Europe) plc, Mitsubishi Electric Europe B.V (London & Paris), the Japan Foundation Performing Arts Japan Programme for Europe 2019-2020, Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation, and the Ireland-Japan Association.
- Podcast partners: Simon Callow, Jonathan Dove, Richard Emmert and Jannette Cheong with sound engineer Bill Cargill
- Producing partners: Unanico Group, Jannette Cheong and Richard Emmert.

Left: Iori Oshima performs the Spirit of Winter Butterflies at the Southbank Centre, London world premiere of *Between the Stones* (January 2019)

Right Top: Jublith Moore performing the waki role (*The Traveller*)

Middle right: Maskmaker Hideta Kitazawa at a presentation for primary school children in Coventry.

Middle left: Kinue Oshima as the maeshite (*Woman Gardener*).

Bottom: Chorus (Front): Shigenobu Uchida, Teruhisa Oshima, (Back) Laura Sampson, Richard Emmert, John Oglevee.

Photography by Clive Barda



Right: Ambassador Yasumasa Nagamine opening the *Between the Stones* world premiere performance at the Southbank Centre (29 January 2020). Photography by Clive Barda



Below: Isao Kano, CEO, Mitsubishi Corporation International Plc addresses the audience at the end of the world premiere. Photography by Clive Barda.

Right: The Tribute Book designed by Jannette Cheong to celebrate the life of Richard Emmert with tributes from around the world was presented by Iori Oshima at the end of the opening night of *Between the Stones* at the Southbank Centre to mark Richard Emmert's 70th year.



Phase	Period	Project Outputs 2018-2020
1	2018-2019	<p>PHASE ONE Eleven illustrated readings/talks/educational projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 Feb 2018: Royal Holloway University of London • 18 May 2018: Marie Curie Hospice Hampstead in aid of National Dying Matters week (opening address by Minister Shinichi Iida) • 18 Aug 2018: Oriental Museum, Durham University • 19 Aug 2018: Cragside House • 21 Sep 2018: Coventry Schools introductory talk (Project 1 begins) • 23-24 Sep 2018: Dublin (RHA) and Kilkenny (Liberal Studies Group), Ireland • 24 Oct 2018: School of Oriental & African Studies • 27 Oct 2018: International House, Manchester, organised by Japan Society Northwest • 4 Dec 2018: British Library, London • 15 Dec 2018: Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford • 22-25 Jan 2019: Education project with BA World Theatre, East 15 Acting School, University of Essex.
2	31 Jan-11 Feb 2019	<p>PHASE TWO week-long development workshop, including five performance demonstration talks, one illustrated reading/talk and a podcast discussion</p> <p>London development workshop for creative team (Jannette Cheong, Richard Emmert, Kinue Oshima and Teruhisa Oshima). Student performance workshop at Guildhall School of Music & Drama, and major lecture demonstrations presented by creative team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Feb 2019: British Library, London • 6 Feb 2019: Embassy of Japan, London • 7 Feb 2019: Coventry Young Ambassadors, Coventry (Project 2 begins) • 8 Feb 2019: Mill Theatre Dundrum, Dublin • 10 Feb 2019: Association de Recherche des Traditions de l'Acteur (ARTA), Paris • 16 Mar 2019: Japanese Garden Society talk, Birmingham Botanical Gardens
	25 Nov 2019	<p>PODCAST: SIMON CALLOW & JONATHAN DOVE IN DISCUSSION WITH RICHARD EMMERT & JANNETTE CHEONG</p>
3	27 Jan to 7 Feb 2020	<p>PHASE THREE 2020 European Performance Tour. Five live European performances, six noh mask presentation talks, one performance highlights presentation and two educational activities related to noh masks.</p> <p>LONDON</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 Jan 2020: British Library - <i>Getting to Noh Masks</i> with Hideta Kitazawa. • 29 Jan 2020: Southbank Centre, Purcell Room. World Premiere Performance: <i>Between the Stones & Takasago</i>. Opened by Ambassador Yasumasa Nagamine. Closed by Iaso Kano and special tribute presentation to Richard Emmert • 30 Jan 2020: Japan House - <i>Getting to Noh Masks</i> with Hideta Kitazawa. • 30 Jan 2020: British Library - <i>Getting to Noh Performance Highlights</i> • 31 Jan 2020: Southbank Centre, Purcell Room: <i>Between the Stones & Takasago</i> Performance • 31 Jan 2020: <i>Getting to noh masks</i> workshop presentation with BA World Performance students, East 15 Acting School, University of Essex <p>KILKENNY: 1 Feb 2020 - Watergate Theatre - maskmaking talk followed by main performance programme</p> <p>WEXFORD: 2 Feb 2020 - National Opera House - maskmaking talk followed main performance programme</p> <p>PARIS: 4 Feb 2020 - Musée Guimet - maskmaking talk followed by main performance</p> <p>COVENTRY: 6 Feb 2020 - Coventry Young Ambassadors - <i>Getting to Noh Masks</i> with Hideta Kitazawa, Kinue Oshima, Richard Emmert and Jannette Cheong.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribute Book to celebrate the life and work of Richard Emmert
	June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film of <i>Between the Stones</i> Paris performance • Audiobook of actor Hugh Quarshie reading <i>Between the Stones</i> • Audio recording of bass-baritone opera singer Piran Legg singing the <i>Courage Song</i> from <i>Between the Stones</i>

Project objectives

- Contribute to the development of new audiences for traditional and contemporary noh
- Foster a better understanding of the key elements of noh internationally (as well as in Japan) from 'page to stage'
- Improve international cultural relations and development through cross cultural artistic engagement
- Highlight the creative connections between noh, and other forms of art, culture and society
- Give focus to noh as not only a continuously performed theatre art but also one that is continuously developing and expanding its reach.

Key Project Benefits and Delivery of Project Objectives

- The project has reached almost 20,000 across all events and virtual resources. It has introduced new audiences to noh theatre in London, Birmingham, Manchester; Durham, Coventry, Oxford, Southend, Kilkenny, Wexford, Dublin and Paris through readings, talks, presentations, demonstrations, discussions, and for London, Kilkenny, Wexford and Paris, a han noh (half noh) performance of *Takasago* and the full performance of *Between the Stones*. New audiences have been gathered through the project's website and other virtual resources such as the subtitled film of the Paris performance, the Podcast discussion, the audiobook reading of the new noh by Hugh Quarshie, and an audio recording of the *Courage Song* by opera singer, bass-baritone Piran Legg.
- Opportunities were created for audiences to strengthen their understanding of the 'page to stage' process by phasing the project over two years and running, in parallel, an extensive programme of education and outreach work for public audiences and students from the BA World Performance course at East 15 Acting School (University of Essex), and from the BA Acting course at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama.
- Intercultural relations between Japan and the UK have been strengthened. There was senior representation from the Embassies of Japan in London and Dublin in Phases 2 & 3. Minister Iida opened the Phase 2 event at the Embassy of Japan in London in February 2019 at which Simon Callow presented an early reading of the new noh. In January 2020 Ambassador Nagamine opened the world premiere performance of *Between the Stones* at the Southbank Centre, and Ambassador Kitano attended the performance at the National Opera House in Wexford. The project helped forge creative connections between noh and western theatre (between Théâtre du Soleil and the Oshima Noh Theatre), and links between Hideta Kitazawa and others outside of the noh world.
- The project has given focus to the creative connections between noh and other art /cultural forms especially when working with the Coventry Young Ambassadors who learned about Japanese *Furin* wind chimes and wrote *tanzaku* poem cards that were exhibited at Coventry Cathedral (2018). They also gained an understanding of writing noh travel songs and presented this work at Coventry Cathedral on Hiroshima Day (2019). The final outcome of the work will be the creation of a real *karesansui* garden inspired by the Coventry children's work with Jannette Cheong. All three peace projects were inspired by the story of *Between the Stones*. In addition, Jannette Cheong worked with students on the BA World Performance Course, East 15 Acting School who created their own highly imaginative short productions using their understanding of writing for noh. There has also been the development of an opera vocal rendition of the *Courage song* from *Between the Stones*, by opera singer Piran Legg who had worked with us in 2017 on the *Noh time like the present* programme at LSO St Lukes. Finally, actor Hugh Quarshie, has completed a reading of *Between the Stones* in support of the victims of COVID-19 and their families.

- Professional noh actors, including the youngest generation of the Oshima family theatre, Iori Oshima, contributed to the development of the new noh working closely with Richard Emmert and Jannette Cheong. Creating a new noh demonstrated how noh is not only a continuously performed theatre art, but also is continuously developing and expanding its reach with stories from our own time.
- The work of the project continued to inspire Jannette Cheong and Richard Emmert throughout the COVID pandemic period and beyond, and as of July 2023 have worked on a substantial book of Kitazawa's noh and kyogen masks (2020-2024), and in designing an exhibition about noh theatre also planned for 2024.



Above: Kinue Oshima performs the Spirit of the Silent Waves (Between the Stones, Act 2). Photograph overleaf: Jubilith Moore performs the Traveller (waki) role (Between the Stones, Act 1). Photography by Clive Barda



2020 European Tour



The 2020 European Tour of *Between the Stones* was part of the final phase of this two-year 'from page to stage' not-for-profit international arts collaboration project.

The tour brought together the skills and talents of the Oshima Noh Theatre of Hiroshima Prefecture, Japan, and Theatre Nohgaku, based in Tokyo and New York, with author Jannette Cheong, for a second joint production of classical and contemporary noh in 11 years. The production was also a second co-production with Unanico for Jannette Cheong and Richard Emmert.

This unique production featured a 'han-noh', of the fourteenth century noh *Takasago*, and the premiere of *Between the Stones*.

The 2020 European tour programme opened with two performances at the Southbank Centre, London, including the world premiere of *Between the Stones* (29 January 2020), and a special performance highlights event at the British Library. These were followed by two performances in Ireland at the Watergate Theatre, Kilkenny, and the National Opera House, Wexford, with a final performance in Paris at the Musée Guimet. The 2020 Tour featured the third phase of the '*Getting to Noh from page to stage*' education and outreach programme, which included an extensive programme of events with master maskmaker, Hideta Kitazawa in all of the performance locations.

Takasago (Act 2): Akira Matsui performs the main actor role (Nochishite)
Photography by Clive Barda





Unique aspects of the tour

- English language noh performance is relatively unknown and few performances have toured to three European countries
- Sell-out world premiere performances in London at the prestigious Southbank Centre
- Participation of 10 professional noh artists from Japan along with five members of the only international noh theatre company
- Key main actor roles performed by professional Japanese noh artists in English
- Only the second time for members of the Oshima family to participate in the development of, and perform in, a new English noh
- International debut tour for 11 year old lori Oshima who sang in English for the first time
- The most prolific composer of English noh who has composed numerous new works (to date 14), and uniquely, three with the author of *Between the Stones*
- The only British writer who has written three noh-related pieces, working with professional Japanese noh performers
- Completion of the two-year 'Getting to noh from page to stage' education and outreach programme as a central component of the project, including audiences of all ages from primary school children, to students and the wider general public at major theatres and museums in Europe
- Programme of demonstration-talks from a master noh maskmaker, and other activities that have reached out to others throughout and way beyond the tour
- The BTS Project went on to support the development and opening of the world's first Children inspired Japanese karesansui Garden of Peace opening in 2021 by the Major of Coventry and the Japanese Ambassador, which in turn inspired the development of the UNESCO Arts & Culture for Peace Initiative launched by UNESCO UK in June 2022
- The BTS Project also inspired the development of a substantial book about Kitazawa san's work (developed from 2020-2024) by Jannette Cheong and Richard Emmert, and an exhibition about noh theatre with the Japanese Embassy in London planned for Autumn 2024.

2020 European Tour Team

TAKASAGO - CAST

Akira Matsui (*nochishite - God of Sumiyoshi (Act 2)*)

Chorus/Koken: Ryoichi Kano, Teruhisa Oshima, Shigenobu Uchida,
Richard Emmert John Oglevee

BETWEEN THE STONES - CAST

Kinue Oshima (*Woman Gardener (Act 1), Spirit of the Silent Waves (Act 2)*)

Jubilith Moore (*waki - The Traveller*)

Iori Oshima (*nochikokata - Spirit of Winter Butterflies*)

Ashley Thorpe (*ai-kyogn*) Priest

Chorus: Richard Emmert (*Chorus leader*), John Oglevee, Teruhisa Oshima,
Laura Sampson, Shigenobu Uchida

Koken (*Stage Attendants*): Akira Matsui, Ryoichi Kano

HAYASHI (Instrumentalists)

Narumi Takizawa - *nohkan* (flute)

Naoko Takahashi - *kotsuzumi* (shoulder drum)

Eitaro Okura - *otsuzumi* (hip drum)

Kiyoshi Yoshitani - *taiko* (stick drum)

PRODUCTION TEAM

Masks and props	Hideta Kitazawa
Costumes	Oshima Noh Theatre
Photography	Clive Barda
Interpretation/Chaperone	Suzuko Oshima
Additional interpretation	Richard Emmert, John Oglevee, Paul Laikin
Translation (<i>Between the Stones</i>)	Satoko Shibata (Japanese), Odile & Annie Pujol (French)
Production	Jannette Cheong, Richard Emmert, Paul Laikin
Design	Jannette Cheong
Editing	Richard Emmert, Paul Laikin, Nick Sanders, Jannette Cheong
Film editing	Jannette Cheong



Takasago

by Zeami Motokiyo (1363-1443)

Synopsis

Takasago deals with the legend of the twin pines of Sumiyoshi and Takasago personified in the first half of the play by an aged couple. Sumiyoshi and Takasago are located across from each other on the Osaka Bay. According to legend, the spirit of the Sumiyoshi pine travels nightly to visit his wife, the Takasago pine, in a bond that defies age and time.

The twin pines are also symbolic of the two great poetic anthologies, the *Man'yōshū* and the *Kokin Wakashū*, and by implication suggest the prosperity of the land due to the observance of the high moral and aesthetic principles exemplified in these two poetic anthologies.

The Plot

Three priests from Aso Shrine in Kyushu are on their way by boat to visit the capital and decide to stop off at Takasago to visit the famed Takasago Pine. There they meet an old couple sweeping the pine needles and ask them why the Takasago Pine is considered a twin pine of the Sumiyoshi Pine which is far away. The old couple tells the legend of the pines before they reveal that they in fact are the spirits of the two ancient pine trees. They invite the priests to visit the Sumiyoshi Shrine to see its pine as well. In the second half, the Priests visit the Sumiyoshi Shrine where the young vigorous god of the shrine appears to them and dances.

Takasago is one of the best-known plays in the noh repertory and, due to its auspicious nature, is popularly performed in the first month of the new year or for special felicitous events.

During this European tour Akira Matsui (left) performed the felicitous and quick second half dance of the God of Sumiyoshi.

Photography by Clive Barda



Finding inspiration - *Between the Stones*

The seeds of inspiration for *Between the Stones* came from the author's many visits to the temple gardens of Kyoto which are wonderful places for reflection. In 2013, soon after the death of Jannette's younger sister, Dianna - she recalls:

'A typhoon began the day I arrived on one visit to Kyoto, but I was compelled to visit the gardens nonetheless. Rather than wait for the rain to ease I began to walk towards the bus stop. Within seconds I was drenched in the torrential rain. I hesitated and thought I should turn back. Then, a kind taxi driver seemed to appear from nowhere who not only took me to the temple gardens, but also gave me an umbrella on arrival and said I should take as long as I needed and that he would wait for me. His was the only car in the car park.'

When I entered the temple I had to first pass the 'Mirror lake' with its rain-drenched water lilies. I stood by the lake and was full of sadness as I remembered my sister.

I remember thinking that the image of the distant water lilies drenched in the rain reflected the depth of my inner-most feelings. I took out my camera and struggled with tears and rain. Then, I extended the lens and as the water lilies came closer they no longer looked bedraggled in the heavy rain but took on their true beauty.

Finding beauty in sadness was one of the enduring memories of that day... and as I sat for a while reflecting by the stone garden I felt the importance of this grow in the solace of the stones and the space... It is this essence that I have tried to convey in 'Between the Stones'.

The characters in the noh may be based on real people, and the gardens may be based on real gardens, but they become the essence of something universal. The noh creates symbolic representations of real life experiences trying to draw on this essence - and the seeds of the reflections that may be found in, and between, the stones.

Noh has a strange capacity to be specific and vague, real and unreal, close and yet distant, vulnerable and somehow strong all at the same time.'





Between the Stones



Introduction

The noh-related works written by Jannette Cheong reflect universal themes. In light of the 2020 global pandemic, the poignancy of her new noh drama, *Between the Stones*, with music and direction from Richard Emmert, is very apparent. This new work is about the transformative power of gardens to heal following the tragic loss of loved ones. *Between the Stones* also draws on the author's reflections about 'limits' and the following thoughts:

On grief

- *Tragic loss is likely to be felt, at some time, by everyone, but it can be hard to share intense grief. It is something deeply personal, inward facing and debilitating, especially when loved ones are lost. Reconciling the only fact that can be predicted about human beings – that they will die – with the process and consequences of death itself, is one of the greatest challenges for the living.*

On friendship and mentors

- *Someone who becomes a lifelong friend and mentor takes trust and support to the highest level. They are not unearthly, nor are they faultless, but they have an ability to find you when you think you are lost, and they can join you on those sections of life's journey when you need a companion.*

On gardening

- *The first time the rake was pulled across the gravel the author knew this was to be an intense physical activity and quite contrary to the engagement with the overall aesthetic of the finished fully raked garden. But she was to discover that this was one of the crucial points of engaging in such gardening – or any gardening for that matter.*

Everyone may appreciate a garden by taking a stroll through it, or admiring its beauty, but gardeners do something else. Gardening is a total physical experience for mind and body, emotions and feelings, creative abilities and talents and also immensely pragmatic and of this earth. This applies to all gardens whether big or small; whether plant life is plentiful, or (as in karesansui gardens) almost non-existent.

Synopsis

Between the Stones is set in two gardens.

Act 1

In the middle of a typhoon a traveller, full of sadness, grieving for lost loved ones, visits the beautiful Ryoan-ji temple stone garden in Kyoto. The traveller meets a woman gardener. The gardener understands the traveller's sadness and helps her appreciate the nurturing properties of the garden and how the art of raking the gravel enhances the beauty of the garden and evokes a peaceful soul. The gardener then disappears.

Ai (Interlude)

A priest arrives to close the garden after hearing news of devastation caused elsewhere by the storm, including two children reported missing and the body of only one found. When the traveller mentions the woman gardener the priest is mystified and says women gardeners do not rake the garden. He mentions the garden's other mysteries and that perhaps, while meditating, the traveller felt the spirit of the garden.

Act 2

The ancient garden inspires the creation of a simple *karesansui* garden a few years later on an island in the West. This is the setting for Act Two where the woman gardener reappears and reveals she is the spirit of the garden - the *Spirit of the Silent Waves*. The traveller is reminded of her visit to Ryoan-ji and speaks of the pain felt after losing loved ones and the courage of those who face death. The *Spirit of the Silent Waves* appears to question what such courage means, then describes the beauty of the final release before death '*like winter butterflies in a silent breeze...*'. Then, the *Spirit of Winter Butterflies* emerges representing the memory of departed loved ones.

The noh draws on the '*setting of the stones*' - the creation of gardens - and the solace and space they provide for reflection.

The traveller realises that two gardens far apart share a legacy of enduring peace, beauty and love.



Oshima Noh Theatre

The Oshima Noh Theatre is part of the Kita school, one of the five main actor (*shite*) noh schools. Within the Kita school there are now 34 actors from 20 different families who hold the title of *shokubun* indicating their position as professional noh performers of the highest level within the Kita school.

The Oshima family line began in the late 19th century with Shichitaro Oshima, a vassal of the Fukuyama fiefdom, which was a part of the feudal system that ended with the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Shichitaro was a disciple of Kita Roppeita, the 14th head of the Kita school. Shichitaro popularized noh in the region around the city of Fukuyama, which had become the main city in the eastern part of Hiroshima prefecture. His son, Hisataro, built a noh stage in Fukuyama in 1914. The third generational head of the Oshima family was Hisami Oshima who rebuilt the noh stage after it was destroyed in World War II. In 1971, he built a full-scale noh theatre and began a regular programme of performances and expanded classes for amateur students, and performed all the major noh plays in the repertory. The Oshima Noh Theatre is thus the only privately held noh theatre of the Kita school and one of the few such theatres in the noh world.

Hisami Oshima passed away in 2004 and was succeeded by the present family head, Masanobu Oshima. Masanobu's son, Teruhisa Oshima represents the fifth generation and he in turn has a son, Iori, who represents the 6th generation of Oshima performers. Kinue Oshima is Teruhisa's sister, and is the only female professional noh performer in the Kita school. Both Teruhisa and Kinue are highly respected performers within the noh world. Their younger sisters, Fumie and Norie, also are involved in various noh activities throughout Hiroshima prefecture.

www.noh-oshima.com



Small insert photos left: Iori Oshima performing a shimai in 2014 (age 6), and shimai for a new year celebratory performance (2020).

Small insert photo below - three generations of the Oshima family (Masanobu, Teruhisa and Iori Oshima). Photographs courtesy of the Oshima Theatre and the Oshima family,

Top: Kinue Oshima performing nohishite, the Spirit of the Silent Waves, with nochi kokata, Iori Oshima, as the Spirit of Winter Butterflies in Act 2 of Between the Stones. from the world premiere of Between the Stones at the Southbank Centre, London. January 2020. Photograph by Clive Barda.



Theatre Nohgaku

Theatre Nohgaku is an international company comprised of Japan, North America and Europe-based members who share a passion for noh, training in traditional noh theatre techniques, and a conviction that noh has profound power for audiences today. Theatre Nohgaku has created English-language noh in traditional noh style complete with hayashi musicians, masks, costumes and stage sets, as well as noh-influenced works. Theatre Nohgaku has performed original and traditional noh in Japanese and English in collaboration with Japanese noh masters. It strives to educate audiences, students and the general public about the arts of noh and provide training in its techniques.

Theatre Nohgaku was founded in 2000 by Richard Emmert and a group of English-speaking performers trained in the demanding techniques of noh. Its English-language performances thus far include *At the Hawk's Well* (2002), *Pine Barrens* (2006), *Crazy Jane* (2007/2010), *Pagoda* (2009/2011), *Blue Moon Over Memphis* (2013-2018), *Sumida River* (2014-2016), *Zahdi Dates and Poppies* (2016), *Gettysburg* (2018-2019) and *Emily* (2019), *Between the Stones* (2020). Its classical Japanese performances in association with the Noh Training Project in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania include *Kurozuka* (2004), *Funabenkei* (2009), *Atsumori* (2012), *Takasago* (2014) and *Hagoromo* (2014).

Theatre Nohgaku at present leads a summer Noh Training Project Tokyo (www.theatrenohgaku.org/noh-training-japan) in association with the Kita school and several of its performers. In the UK, it leads the Noh Training Project UK in association with Royal Holloway, University of London (nohtrainingprojectuk.org/).

Theatre Nohgaku serves as a unique cultural and artistic intermediary between Japan and the English-speaking world. www.theatrenohgaku.org

Top left: Theatre Nohgaku (TN) Members: Ashley Thorpe (performing the Ai-Kyogen (Interlude) as the Priest), and Jubilith Moore (as the Traveller).

Top right: The Chorus (Left to right front) Shigenobu Uchida, Teruhisa Oshima, (Back row - TN members: Laura Sampson, Richard Emmert (chorus leader), John Oglevee. Both pictures were taken at the world premiere of Between the Stones at the Southbank Centre, London. January 2020. Photography by Clive Baroda.

Unanico Group

Unanico is an internationally award-winning independent media company co-founded by Paul Laikin and Jason Jameson. Based in Central London, the head team are multi-cultural and multi-lingual, and bring decades of experience in the entertainment industry to projects and partnerships. Unanico Group has long-standing creative and financial partnerships in China and Japan, having professionally worked within Asia since 2009. Unanico Group is dedicated

to the production of animated content, feature films, documentaries, live events, and interactive products, and is creating a world-class portfolio of IPs and brands for the entertainment sector. Unanico Group co-produced with Jannette Cheong and Richard Emmert the 2017 *Noh Time Like the Present* event at LSO St Luke's and has worked with Jannette Cheong and Richard Emmert on the production of all phases of the *Between the Stones* project.



Education & Outreach

Cities of Peace Projects

The Coventry Young Ambassadors worked on three projects with the Between the Stones team supported by the Japan Society. The projects were called the Coventry Cities of Peace Projects building on Coventry's links with the City of Hiroshima. The three peace projects were all inspired by the Between the Stones story which involves three aesthetically related Japanese cultural icons: noh theatre, wind chimes (*furin*), and dry landscape (*karesansui*) gardens.

The final outcomes of all this work contributed to the Coventry Japan Season of Culture day (originally planned for 20 June 2020), but postponed until the Summer of 2021. It provided the inspiration for a full-size *karesansui* garden conceived by the Coventry Young Ambassadors: the 'Coventry Children's Islands of Peace Japanese Garden, which was designed and built by the Japanese Garden Society and Coventry War Memorial Park volunteers for the children and the people of Coventry.

The five Coventry primary schools led the Cities of Peace Projects: Howes, Broad Heath, Finham, Park Hill and Stivichall.

28



PROJECT 1 Autumn 2018

The children wrote peace poems on *tanzaku* poem cards, which were suspended from *furin* wind chimes made by the children from recycled bottles. They shared these with the people of Coventry on peace trees displayed at Coventry Cathedral on the 100th anniversary Armistice Day 2018 and at the Japanese Embassy, London in February 2019 at a special *Between the Stones* event.

Project 1 - Coventry Young Ambassador's Peace Poems Coventry Cathedral 2018

PROJECT 2 Spring-Summer 2019

The children began work on 'travel songs', an aspect of storytelling in noh theatre. This followed a performance workshop with professional noh actor, Kinue Oshima, Professor Richard Emmert and Jannette Cheong. Examples of the children's travel songs and a short noh-influenced play were performed at Coventry Cathedral on Hiroshima Day, 6 August 2019.



Project 2 - Above: (Left) Kinue Oshima gives a performance workshop to the Coventry Young Ambassadors (CYA). (Right) CYA (Imogen and Isabella) preparing to read their class travel songs at Coventry Cathedral for Hiroshima Day, 6 August 2019 with other presentations of the children's work.

PROJECT 3 Autumn 2019 - Summer 2020

The children began to study *karesansui* gardens. A Young Ambassadors' planning group worked with Jannette Cheong to inspire the design and creation of full size Children's Karesansui Garden.

Coventry Young Ambassadors Islands of Peace Japanese Garden

1. A children's planning group met with Jannette Cheong to discuss the proposal to build a full-size garden in the City of Coventry.
2. The children discussed the symbolic nature of *karesansui* gardens and how such a garden can reflect peace and respect nature. They agreed that this was an important connection to their Cities of Peace Project and its links with Hiroshima and Japan.
3. The children worked with Jannette Cheong in considering the following key messages for their garden: *understand and respect our fragile planet; create bridges rather than division; reflect on 'less is more'*
4. They also agreed the key elements for the garden design could reflect in some way that:
 - *our planet is made up of only 29% land mass (islands big and small) and 71% (mostly salt) water*
 - *being at peace with ourselves helps us be peaceful with others*
 - *the symbolic meanings of trees and nature in Japanese gardens, especially karesansui gardens*
 - *nature's beauty being complex and simple (we looked, for example, at the Fibonacci spiral in nature's forms).*
5. The children discussed the importance of people working together, despite living on islands big and small, to find solutions to our common challenges. Then, they explored ways in which these ideas might work in a *karesansui* garden design.
6. The children agreed the title *Islands of Peace* reflected the style of garden and the main message of the garden: *global communities can live peacefully with ourselves and our planet.*





Comments from the children:

'We have to have one bridge to symbolise that we are one world. We are all humans, so we need to get to know each other and understand each other.' (Taitum, age 10)

'The planet is fragile' If we don't look after it properly and clean it up, we won't be able to use it.' (Dylan, age 10)

'The world is fragile ... if there is damage in one part of the world it can impact on the rest of the world.'

'It is important ... we are all humans and if we fight then we will hurt ourselves, animals and the planet.' (Kiran, age 10)

'If there wasn't so much plastic lots of animals wouldn't be dying. 'less things mean a better life.' (Araya, age 10)

'The planet is fragile because anything can happen like global warming, air and water pollution.' I have chosen a 'heart' because happiness is in the centre. (Cameron, age 10)

'You can do little things to make bigger and better things.' (Jay, age 10)

'We have different ways of life, but a bridge unites us all.' (Hayden, age 10)

Summary of the children's key themes and ideas for the design of the garden:

- **A mindful space:** the children thought it was important that the garden can be a place for children and adults to use as a 'thinking', mindfulness space. The peaceful, serene quality of a *karesansui* garden creates such an environment.
- **A vast expanse of water** (the gravel symbolises water) to represent the oceans.
- **Seven islands big and small** represents seven continents. Include 'crane' and 'tortoise' stones - these are large tall and flat stones symbolic of longevity and peace in *karesansui* gardens. The limited plant ground cover will also symbolise the scarcity of land resources.
- **Beautiful representations of numbers in nature** such as the Fibonacci spiral.
- **A bridge** to symbolise the need to create bridges rather than division around the world
- **Ginkgo tree(s)** for a direct link between Coventry and Hiroshima as 170 ginkgo trees survived the atomic bomb. The *ginkgo* is also a link with the *Between the Stones* story, which inspired the Coventry Cities of Peace Project.
- **One heart** is the soul of the garden. Combining 'heart' with the 'bridge' (the flat horizontal line of the bridge resembles the kanji/character for the number 'one') creates 'one heart'. This was inspired by 10-year old Cameron's comment that 'happiness is at the centre, or core of the heart'. It also builds on the comment that having one bridge gives a strong focus to the fact that we are one planet.
- **Something special:** Taitum stated that, 'our garden should have something that makes it stand out from other *karesansui* gardens - something different'. So we thought the bridge might appear to be floating to emphasise the fragile nature of humanity's efforts to both protect our planet and create bridges rather than division around the world.



The kanji characters for 'one heart'

The building of a full-size Coventry Children's Islands of Peace Karesansui Garden in 2020-2021

The children's ideas from their Peace Project 3 work with the Between the Stones team was used to inspire the design of a full-size Japanese Peace Garden in Coventry. The Japanese Garden Society was invited to design and build the Coventry Japanese Peace Garden as a permanent full-size garden free and accessible to the people of Coventry. It is located in the Coventry War Memorial Park and was built with the help of volunteers from both the Friends of the War Memorial Park and the Japanese Garden Society. Sponsors of the Japanese Peace Garden include: Coventry City Council, the National Lottery Awards for All, the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation, and a number of supporters of the Between the Stones Project. The Cities of Peace legacy garden was also to be part of the celebrations to mark Coventry taking up the mantle as UK City of Culture for 2021.

More information can be found on the website:
www.betweenthestones.com/cya-peace-garden





Getting to noh masks

At the end of the *Between the Stones* 2020 European Performance Tour our master maskmaker, Hideta Kitazawa, professional noh actor Kinue Oshima, Richard Emmert and Jannette Cheong travelled to Coventry and spent a day with the children introducing them to noh masks and their role in noh theatre.

This was followed by the children creating their own characters on card masks with the support of the Japan Society.

*“As the Japan Society’s educational programme aims to inspire and engage students with creative teaching about Japan, we were delighted to work with *Between the Stones* to deliver a workshop about this lesser-known aspect of Japanese culture.”*

For more information please visit <https://www.japansociety.org.uk/onlineresources>.





Project Comments

I wanted to send my heartiest congratulations to you all for the amazing events you organised. The performances at the BL were very well received and the production at the Southbank was a real triumph.

Those who followed all three phases of 'Getting to Noh' really did get the chance to go on a journey from 'page to stage'.

Hamish Todd, Head of East Asia Collections at the British Library

An astonishing achievement. Very pleased to have been a (very small) part of it.

Simon Callow

PHASE I COMMENTS

It was really nice to meet you on Friday, Jannette, as well as your colleagues. It was also nice to meet the Minister. It was a fascinating presentation about something I really didn't know anything about. I was sorry that I had to leave at 4 to take a call. I gather the reading was wonderful. Thank you for sharing this with us.

— Jane Collins Chief Executive Marie Curie Care and support through terminal illness

We enjoyed your performance so much and the coincidences were simply amazing... Keep up the good work.

— Paul Murray, Former First Secretary to the Embassy of Ireland, Japan

I originally met Jannette many years ago through one of my best friends Farmor. And it was when Farmor was celebrating her 70th birthday in London that I attended Jannette's production of 'Pagoda' which was fantastic. Having then become enthusiastic about Noh, I went to London to see Jannette's last Noh-related production last year (2017), and of course, this year's Phase I talk at the RHA, followed by the one here in Kilkenny, to hear more about her new Noh collaboration *Between the Stones*.

I, like everyone in the audience was enthralled. The Liberal Studies Group in Kilkenny had never heard of Noh. We were so enthusiastic the hand clapping took a long time to stop! The Study Group want to know more and will happily travel to the Mill Theatre in Dublin in February 2019 for the second part!

— Eva Heltzel, Member of the Kilkenny Liberal Studies Group

The presentation on Saturday was excellent. Really informative and the reading of *Between the Stones* was beautiful and very moving. Thoroughly enjoyed it. Thank you!

— Joan Horley, Secretary of Japan Society Northwest

The author's interest, enthusiasm and mastery of the detail was apparent during the performance. The highlight for me was Jannette's reading of the play, when she showed the nuances within the story and the sensitive background. This brought tears to the eyes of some of the audience.

— Maurice Mealing

I attended this event on 24 October because I wanted to hear the text again spread across different voices. The density of the poetic text means that it repays being heard several times and even then will not, I suspect, give up all its meanings.

The introduction to Noh, which preceded the reading, was useful for those of us to whom the form is strange. The reading which followed gained considerably from the use of different voices for different character, particularly the part of the young child which Clementine made clear and sharply differentiated from the other characters.

I love the text and am looking forward to hearing it again at the British Library.

— Graham Marchant

Marie Curie Hospice, Hampstead 18 May 2018

Royal Hibernian Academy (Dublin) 23 September 2018

Kilkenny Liberal Studies Group 24 September 2018

Japan Society Northwest, Japanese Garden Society (Manchester) 27 October 2018

SOAS Japan Research Centre Seminar Series: 24 October 2018

**Coventry Young Ambassadors: Project
8-16 November
2018 Coventry Cathedral**



36 *Coventry Young Ambassadors' exhibit their home-made 'Furin' and 'Tanzaku Poem Cards' in Coventry Cathedral during the 100th anniversary of the Armistice in 2018.*

Each school has done a fantastic job. As we were putting it up members of the public and cathedral staff were asking for more information about the children's work. It will be on display until 16 November (2018). Many thanks for your help with this and we look forward to the next phases of the project.

— Rebecca Bollands, Deputy Head Teacher, Howes Primary School, Coventry

Wow! Stunning! So proud of all the contributors and all their hard work. Hoping to take my ambassadors down to see them next week. Thanks for all your hard work Howes when putting them together!

— Tracy Bailey, Deputy Head Teacher, Park Hill Primary School, Coventry

I went to the Cathedral this afternoon and the display was certainly getting some attention. I'm not surprised!

— Paul Vickers, Year 4 Teacher, Park Hill Primary School, Coventry

They look stunning and so many members of the public approached me while I was there and said how much they liked the display. Well done all and thanks Howes in particular for all your work!

— Becky Fuller, Stivichall Primary School, Coventry

These are amazing - massive thank you to all the work that has gone into getting the display co-ordinated and ready - it's a stunning thing - it really is!

— Richard Machin, Head Teacher, Finham Primary School, Coventry

What a wonderful achievement. Our Year 5s are very much looking forward to our visit next week. Thank you for all of your hard work every body. Coventry schools have a great deal to feel proud of.

— Karen Ferguson, Head Teacher, Stivichall Primary School, Coventry

**The British Library, London
4 December 2018**

Congratulations on a very special event, combining a great deal of fascinating information about Noh itself with the personal story of your play and its development. The play reading was deeply moving and I trust it will encourage the audience to come on the journey from Page to Stage. We are looking forward to hosting the next event in the series on 5th February 2019.

— Hamish Todd, Head of East Asian Collections, The British Library

**Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford
15 December
2018**

Jannette, thank you again for a wonderful talk at the Pitt Rivers on Noh theatre, and the reading of your new play, which I was very honoured to read a part for. It is really wonderful that we are able to continue what is now a long term partnership, which has included talks and presentations in the Pitt Rivers Museum, and the amazing residencies by the master carver Hideta Kitazawa. I really hope we can continue this partnership into the future.

— Andrew McLellan, Head of Education

PHASE 2 COMMENTS

I was astonished at what truly passionate, clear and moving work Jannette was able to draw from my World Performance students in her project on Noh: From Page to Stage. As both a scholar and lover of Noh I wanted my students to be able to engage with this exceptional art form, but I worried that the challenges of grasping both the Noh aesthetic and the structure of Noh plays might be more than could be accomplished in just a few days. However, Jannette's careful management of the tasks required provided the students with the tools they needed to create some marvellous pieces that used Noh and their own ideas and experiences to create six exceptional poetic performances. I hope that we can repeat the project with more time that will allow the students to go even further. The project has won over this group to Noh and many want to go on to pursue deeper study of the form, while others are finding it a useful tool in their own creative work as playwrights and theatre-makers.

— Dr Margaret Coldiron, Deputy Head, BA World Performance

Q1: To what extent do you have a better understanding of key elements in storytelling for both classical and contemporary noh-related works?
Student Graded Responses: 5, 4, 5 (Graded responses used 5 as the highest and 0 as the lowest)

Q2: To what extent have you been able to utilise your increased knowledge of noh to create a new piece of work?

Student Graded Response: 5, 4, 5

Q3: To what extent have you learned how a new noh in traditional style is conceived and created from page to stage?

Student Graded Response: 4, 4, 4

Q4: Which aspects of the Getting to Noh project made the greatest impression on you and why?

1. Student response: The reading of Jannette's poetry as it was very emotionally captivating and it made me connect to Noh more as I could actually enjoy the poetic side of it through language accessible to me. Also, the project was very well structured, consequently the whole process was very easy to follow.

2. Student response: The writing of the script - I was unfamiliar with how they were meant to be formatted (for example, the journey song maps out key geographical points), so it was interesting to learn how these were created. The poetry that can come out of this is quite inspiring.

3. Student response: The Jo-Ha-Kyu structure is powerful in creating and sustaining action and has also been useful in other modules such as playwriting.

Q5: What aspects of the project development have you most enjoyed and why?

1. Student response: The part in which the story and poetry were created. In a fairly short time and by use of "deadlines" the groups managed to come up with a story quite quickly which allowed us plenty of time trying to fit the story into the Noh form which I found very interesting and enjoyable. Getting to know the form and trying to understand the place of the characters within the form gave me a new perspective of the function of characters within a story. Also, the main elements of jo-ha-kyu and less is more, although they are very universal concepts were not as prominent in my thinking while creating new works as they are now. Having worked with these concepts and purposely trying to use these concepts in the pieces we were making, re-introduced them in my mind which will be definitely helpful for future creations.

2. Student response: Adding music to our poems was interesting because it looked at how music could support the text in setting the scene or creating an atmosphere.

**East 15
Acting School,
University of
Essex
22-25 January
2019**

**East 15
Acting School,
University of
Essex
22-25 January
2019 (Students'
comments)**

3. Student response: I thoroughly enjoyed coming up with a concept for a Noh piece based around the theme of loss, and then creating a touching story about innocence and childhood. Writing a travel song for this story was an enjoyable process, as I liked researching the geography of our chosen location and intertwining it with the poetry.

Q6: What areas of learning presented the greatest challenge and what did you learn by working through the challenge?

1. Student response: Bringing page to stage was definitely the hardest part of the whole process. The main obstacle was trying to figure out how much of the visual Noh aspects we were going to use. What we learned, however, and this was initiated by the fact that we did not learn the Noh way of singing nor the very specific movements, is that by taking inspiration from the way of staging or use of space and artists we could fill this 'empty' form or silhouette and paint it in ourselves using our own skills.

2. Student response: I found that creating the narrative of the complete Noh play, as a means to better understand the poem we were writing, very challenging because I felt that the conventions we had to stick were not familiar to us. However, in the long run I feel pushing through this challenge lead to solid narratives with action instead of merely emotion were created.

3. Student response: The biggest challenge was trying to put the song/story on its feet due to the amount of time we were given, but through this I learned not to try and overcomplicate things and keep it simple, especially when given a short time-frame.

Q7: Do you feel you will be able to use any of this new learning in some way in the future? If possible, can you give some examples?

1. Student response: Definitely. The concepts Jo-ha-kyu and less is more are now one of the first thoughts I have when creating new works, especially when problems arise, they seem to help push the process forward again. Also the idea that a form is empty and with the understanding that one can fill it in themselves, is very useful as it gives you beacons or boundaries which will keep your feet on the ground as it were, it gives the creation a certain direction or grounding, while in the meantime recognizing the freedom of the space between gives you endless possibilities of creating without being completely lost. In general I think that is something useful to remember, it gives you guidance and support through your journey of ideas.

2. Student response: Adding music to our poems was interesting because it looked at how music could support the text in setting the scene or creating an atmosphere.

3. Student response: Writing poetry is not something I have a lot of experience in, so this project was a chance for me to explore outside my comfort zone. The aforementioned geography research and combining with song was a great experience, so this is definitely something I may try again in future."

— Three examples of anonymous student feedback (Graded responses used 5 as the highest and 0 as the lowest)



I want to thank you and your team most sincerely for the wonderful Noh workshop that you ran for our Guildhall students last Saturday. I had hoped that my students would gain an understanding of the discipline, presence and concentration of Noh actors, and the workshop delivered all of that brilliantly. For the students it was an inspiring event that, I'm sure they will draw on for many years to come.

— Dr Kenneth Rea

Just wanted to say I appreciated the workshop it was a great opportunity to learn and experience a skilled Japanese art form. I took away many things from that workshop but one thing I want to point out is how technical and kind of physically tiring it was to have stage presence which I want to bring to my work.

— Emanuel Vuso

Dear Ken,

Yesterday's workshop was lovely and a privilege. Thank you once again for always getting the best for us.

Regards,

— Chirag

It was so wonderful to watch the Noh actors perform and be welcomed to join in and learn from their process. I especially loved the dance/choreography we were taught as it helped me centre and focus my energy and concentration.

— Comments from students: Emanuel, Chirag and Lucy



Teruhisa Oshima working with BA Acting Students, Guildhall School of Music and Drama. February 2019

I just wanted to send you a note to thank you, Rick and the Oshimas for a wonderful event last night and to wish you 'good luck' for tonight!

— Hamish Todd, Head of East Asian Collections, The British Library

Thank you so much for inviting me to the moving *Between the Stones* Phase 2 event at the British Library. It was a great pleasure to be present at the first public performance of the play and to witness how beautifully it has developed since I heard the first reading some eighteen months ago. It was also a great privilege to be taught a few of the fundamentals of Noh by two members of a great Noh dynasty. The combination of your introduction to Noh, the demonstrations by the Oshimas translated so aptly by Rick, your reading of your play, and then finally the dance in the magnificent Noh kimono did much to enrich my understanding and enjoyment of Noh. Good luck with Phase 3. Phase 2 already stands as a memorable achievement in its own right.

— Lesley Hayman

The British Library
5 February 2019

**The Embassy of
Japan, London
6 February 2019**



*Kinue Oshima gives a presentation performance of the 'Courage Song' at the Japanese Embassy, February 2019.
Photography by Clive Barda*

“Brilliant!”
“An illuminating + brilliant event”
“Great show!”

“I believe very passionately that events of this kind greatly inspire and encourage human beings to learn and discover more about the beauty, history and culture of this wondrous world we live in
Wonderful evening!”

— Comments forwarded by the staff of the Embassy!

I thought the various elements came together very well and it was a pleasure to hear and see your moving text rendered so beautifully.

The whole project is coming together so well and we are delighted to have been able to offer some support. The education programme is exemplary.

Chapeaux!

p.s. how wonderful to see the Embassy Ballroom so full - and such an attentive audience!”

— Brendan Griggs Chief Executive The Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation

It was a privilege to be at the Embassy of Japan in London for the demonstration and performance evening which was a central part of Phase 2 of the *Between the Stones* project.

We saw Kinue and Teruhisa Oshima, working with Richard Emmert, give us a gripping demonstration of some noh techniques. We were spellbound as Simon Callow read the whole of the developing text of *Between the Stones*. And finally we had a first ever taste of what the work will look and sound like when it is put on stage, as the three performers gave us the world premiere of a scene which they had been working on together in London. Those of us who have been following the project since its first days could not have been more thrilled to see and feel its impact. Our warmest thanks are due to the Embassy and to the sponsors for enabling this event to take place, as a key step towards making a reality of this exciting project.

— Nick Sanders

Thank you so much for all your hard work involving us in the Noh project and for giving us such fantastic opportunities.

Firstly on behalf of myself and all the schools, thank you very much for inviting us to the Embassy event. It was a great honour to attend and we were thrilled at how interested everyone was in our peace poems.

Secondly, many, many thanks to you, Kinue and Richard for coming up to Coventry especially when you had such a busy schedule. The workshop with the pupils was absolutely fantastic. I had been curious to see the children's reaction to Noh and they were completely mesmerised. It was something so different to anything they have experienced before. I think that they will always remember the experience. In our busy lives as educators we sometimes need to stand back and let the children experience something totally different.

We are very excited about the next phase of our project and are meeting in a couple of weeks to plan how we are going to develop the travel songs. I'll keep you informed of our plans. I'll also start working with Afton on the gardens project so that it is ready for the summer.

Please pass on our sincere and heartfelt thanks to the Oshima family and Richard.

— With best wishes, Rebecca Bollands

Huge thanks for inviting me to the *Between the Stones* event at the Japanese Embassy - I found the whole evening to be continually fascinating, informative, and inspiring, and really appreciate the opportunity of having been there for it.

— Bhaskar Chakravarti

What a lovely evening! A marvellous venue, attentive staff, incredibly interesting demonstration of the Art of Noh – and a beautiful reading by Simon of *Between the Stones*. It was a most successful event.

— Joan Lane, Producer

I want to thank you so very much for the privilege of attending your wonderful event last night. It was such a wonderful revelation and insight into the beauty and richness of the Noh art form graced by such brilliant exponents of the art through the drama of your wonderful play. It was lovely to have Richard and Simon to further illuminate the play's action.

— Phil Starr



Teruhisa Oshima and Richard Emmert put the maeshite mask on Kinue Oshima during the presentation performance at the Japanese Embassy, London, February 2019. Photography Clive barda

I just wanted to write and say thank you for coming to speak to us on Saturday. I hope you enjoyed the day, I know that our members did. At lunch time I spoke to a couple who said that they'd never been interested in noh but you managed to keep them interested the whole way through! And another who said that they thought listening to your talk should be mandatory before watching any noh performance. Actually, I agree!

— Katie Croft, Japanese Garden Society

**Japanese
Garden Society,
Birmingham
Botanical
Gardens
16 March 2019**

PHASE 3 COMMENTS

Takeshi Ito
Minister for Public
Diplomacy and
Media
Director, Japan
Information and Cul-
ture Centre
Embassy of Japan in
the UK

Message from Minister Takeshi Ito, included in the tour programme

ご挨拶
在英國日本大使館広報文化公使
伊藤 毅

能は14世紀後半に誕生して以来、日本固有の風土や人々の生活文化を背景としながら、国を代表する伝統芸能として発展の歩みを続け、今や国境を越えてその価値を認められる存在となりました。

2020年東京オリンピック・パラリンピックを迎える本年、国重要無形文化財総合認定保持者5名を含む能楽師と、大島輝久率いる大島能楽堂、そして、リチャード・エマート氏主宰のシアター能楽を迎えることができたことは、喜びにたえません。11歳の若き能楽師、大島伊織の初の海外公演となる本公演に、私たちは伝統の確実な継承と新境地への挑戦を垣間見ることができるでしょう。

世界初演となるジャネット・チョン女史による英語新作能「*Between the Stones*」は、伝統が最も重んじられる能を世界に向けて発信する新しい取組です。この度の公演を通じて、日本の歴史に形作られた能楽の新たな可能性を是非ご覧下さい。

この公演の実現に寄与された方々に祝意を表すとともに、ヨーロッパ公演の成功を願います。

Noh, since its inception in the latter half of the 14th century, has developed as a performing art which takes as its basis Japan's spiritual and cultural essence, and yet now noh has crossed national and cultural borders to appeal to a broader international audience.

As we head towards the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, where the world's eyes will fall on Japan, it is our great pleasure to be able to witness performances by the Oshima Noh Theatre, led by Teruhisa Oshima, who is joined by four performers who, alongside Teruhisa Oshima himself, are designated as Important Intangible Cultural Properties to their respective arts in general by the Japanese government. They will be performing alongside Theatre Nohgaku, led by Richard Emmert. Also, for his first international tour, 11-year old Iori Oshima, a rising star of the Oshima family, will take the stage.

The world premiere of the Jannette Cheong's new English language noh *Between the Stones*, is the culmination of the *Between the Stones* project which was conceived with making accessible and spreading the art of noh theatre in mind. The performance is rooted in and reflects the history of the performing art, and presents the new possibilities for noh theatre whilst respecting these traditions.

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all involved in bringing this performance to the UK, and wish them every success on their European tour!



Left to right:
Kinue Oshima performs the
Maeshite, main actor (Woman
Gardener Act 1)
in the world premiere of
Between the Stones.

Middle: Iori Oshima (Spirit of
Winterbutterflies)

Right: Kinue Oshima performs
the Nochishite, main actor
(Spirit of the Silent Waves in
Act 2).

Below left: Jubilith Moore
(Traveller), and Ashley Thorpe
(Priest)

Photography by Clive Barda



Warmest congratulations on last night's success. Thank-you so much for the invitation. I was very much moved by the beautiful rendition of your text. It was wonderful to see how the various elements, which you and your collaborators have been working on with such passion and dedication, have coalesced so seamlessly. You must be very proud: it is an impressive achievement.

— Brendan Griggs, Chief Executive, The Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation

It was absolutely fantastic stage last night. Most of all I was so impressed by Ms. Jubilith Moore who is a recipient of the Japan Foundation Fellowship. I appreciate very much your effort to realize this project.

— Eiji Taguchi, Director General, The Japan Foundation, London.

Until I saw *Between the Stones* in London in January 2020 I had never seen a Noh play. Through contact with Jannette Cheong in the months leading up to the performance, and by listening to the podcast on the South Bank website, I had some idea of what to expect. However the experience of seeing and hearing the Japanese and English-speaking performers – in English – was unforgettable.

I had attended the mask-making workshop with Hideta Kitazawa at the British Library the day before. I began to appreciate the artistry and craft skills needed to make and preserve Noh masks. I understood a little more about Noh conventions and the symbolic importance and meaning of the masked characters.

My own interest in body movement meant I paid particular attention the way the performers moved on stage. I was entranced by the young star Iori Oshima, and spellbound by his dance steps, costume and head-dress, as well as his poise and obvious talent for the art of Noh. By noticing the difference in movement between experienced Japanese performers and less confident English-speaking actors I could see in a very visible way how long it must take to learn the conventions and stylised patterns of Noh so they seem like second nature. The grace of Kinue Oshima each time she took the rake in her hands was beautiful to watch.

I was amazed by the scale and depth of the cross-cultural collaboration between writer, composer, maskmaker, performers, musicians and chorus.

This was not just a Japanese company performing in London but a real attempt to get under the skin of an important but difficult art form and extend its possibilities by crossing cultural boundaries. I may never see another play but the memory of the one that I have seen will stay with me for many years.

— Sheila Christie

**World Premiere
Performance
of *Between
the Stones*,
Southbank
Centre, London
29 January 2020**

**Japan House,
London
Following the
Mask Making
Presentation
30 January 2020**



For us, the Noh mask making event was a great success, and we are grateful to you for introducing us to Kitazawa-san. We were very happy to have been able to hold this event as part of our event programme at Japan House. There were around 110 attendees at the event and we received fantastic feedback in our questionnaire:

'Thank you for organising such an insightful event, it is amazing learning about Japanese culture and the craftsmanship into wood carving.'

'All in all it was an enlightening evening as well as being entertaining.'

'I was so excited after the session that I bought a ticket to the Noh performance (tomorrow) at the Southbank Centre. I will now become a regular.'

'The speaker was excellent and very entertaining it gave an insight into a part of Japanese culture I had no previous knowledge of.' *'The amount of work that goes into a Noh mask, I will look at them in different way from now on.'* *'The talk, demonstration and Q&A were all very interesting and informative.'* *'The demonstration of the making of the mask was fascinating and educational.'*

'The speaker was very charming and I saw features of the masks, like the roughly carved nose of Okina, that I'd not noticed before.'

— Comments forwarded by the Japan House London

44 **Watergate
Theatre, Kilkenny
1 February 2020**

I'm SO glad we squeezed this wonderful event in before the world closed down.

— Joanna Cunningham, Director, Watergate Theatre, Kilkenny, Ireland.

**National
Opera House,
Performance
of *Between the
Stones*, Wexford
2 February 2020**

Allow me to congratulate you on the production of a really creative English-written and English-performed Noh play of *Between the Stones*. I enjoyed it, since I love Ryo-anji very much. I went there almost ten times. It is one of my favorite places in Japan.

I found the performance impressive. All the performers, both Japanese and international, did a great work.

— Mitsuru Kitano, Ambassador, The Embassy of Japan, Dublin, Ireland

My colleague Elizabeth could say nothing but great things about both the talk and the performance.... She also spoke to lots of those in attendance, who thought it was exceptional.

— Aisling White, National Opera House, Wexford

Thank you for a wonderful night in Wexford... For everybody there, the performance was a great success!

— Lisbett Kickham

**Musée Guimet
Paris (National
Museum for
Asian Arts)
4 February 2020**

I must say I really enjoyed both performances. I thought the English chanting really worked. In a way it is nice seeing the two together because you can see that both are Noh.

— Brij Tankha (Retd.) Prof of Modern Japanese History, University of Delhi.

Un grand Bravo Jannette pour cette pièce très poétique et très intéressante dont tu es l'auteur !! C'est une belle performance que d'avoir pu la donner dans ce musée bien connu du Tout-Paris. Félicitations !! C'était très astucieux de montrer la confection des masques et d'avoir proposé au public de pouvoir poser des questions à la fin de la représentation. Cela donnait un intérêt supplémentaire très apprécié !! Et tu sembles être entourée de personnes extrêmement sympathiques (le presentateur du spectacle et traducteur entre autres !) Et je comprends mieux ton attachement à cette tradition japonaise dont tu es issue par tes grands parents !!

— Odile Sempe (friend of the author)

Many thanks for all your hard work in arranging such a fantastic experience for the schools. They have said that they really enjoyed seeing the maskmaker and that the mask making activity really helped the children improve their art skills.

This has really been an outstanding project and we all feel very privileged to have been involved. The garden will be a brilliant finale to everything we have achieved. We are extremely grateful to you for your commitment to our schools and children.

I hope that you will be able to rest a little after your exhausting tour. I'm sure that it will have been very rewarding. I'll keep you up to date with the garden.

— Rebecca Bollands, Deputy Head, Howes Primary School, Coventry

I have followed with great interest the development of the *Between the Stones* project from its inception to the final staging last month in the Southbank's Purcell Room. I was fascinated from the outset how a single visit by writer Jannette Cheong to the Japanese stone garden in the zen temple Ryoanji in Kyoto a few years back could act as such a powerful inspiration and catalyst for the whole project. As the project has unfolded I have seen so many people come into contact with noh for the first time and found the experience has resonated with them profoundly on different levels; from the gardeners attending Jannette's talk at the Japanese Garden Society in Birmingham to the actor friend I introduced to noh at the recent performance in the Purcell room. There were many highlights in the final staging including the immaculately controlled movements of the lead actor Kinue Oshima and the strong earthy voice of Jubilith Moore who was present almost throughout.

— Lesley Hayman, former Deputy Director British Council Japan

We were very pleased to have been able to lend some support towards the world premiere of *Between the Stones* at London's Southbank Centre on 29 January 2020, as part of the 2020 European tour, and which brought back together the Oshima Noh Theatre and Theatre Nohgaku. This was the culmination of many years of conviction and hard work, and the performance which I attended was a real testament to these tremendous efforts. The production was extremely well received, many in the audience had not had such an intimate experience of Noh, and many a heart was captured by 11-year-old Iori Oshima on his international debut. We were also delighted that you were able to hold associated events at the British Library, the Embassy of Japan, Japan House London and a range of activities and workshops in Coventry with the Young Ambassadors. We are full of admiration for all you have achieved through your unstinting hard work.

— Jason James, Director General, The Daiwai Anglo-Japanese Foundation

It's been an honour to be involved in Jannette and Rick's various superb Noh projects for several years. For *Between the Stones*, my wife Gina Barnes and I started in Phase I, for performances in northeast England. All phases were wonderful! Sincere congratulations to the whole team for their hard and impressive work.

— David Hughes, ethnomusicologist, SOAS, University of London

Getting to noh masks, all day event with the Coventry Young Ambassadors 6 February 2020

From 'Page to Stage' ...



Hideta Kitazawa, master maskmaker, presenting his masks to the Coventry Young Ambassadors. 6 February 2020. Photography by Clive Barda

COMMENTS FROM THE ARTISTS

Akira Matsui
Professional Noh
Actor



Akira Matsui as the shite main actor in *Takasago*, Southbank Centre, London. 29 January 2020. Photography by Clive Barda

十年前新作英語能を発表した劇場にて同作者の公演が行はれたことに感慨深い思いがあった。わたくしも数十年各国の能楽公演に参加し出演させていただいたが、なかなか同じ場所同じ舞台にて演じられることがなかった。このグローバル化されている世界であるにも関わらず能を始めとし文楽や歌舞伎がなかなか海外に進出できないのには、言葉という壁があるからだと思われる。しかし古典を知らしめる方便として今回の公演が世界にとっても日本にとってもいい機会であった。我田引水ではないが古典能を見せ、そのあとに新作英語能を見せられるという劇団が喜多流以外にあるであろうか。文楽も歌舞伎にしるあまりプロが英語で演じるのを見たことはない。能がオペラのようになるためにも今回の公演が世界に発信できたことは有意義であった。

Ten years ago I experienced a strong sense of emotion at the theatre venue when the performance of an English noh by the same author took place for the first time. I have already performed in noh plays in many countries for the last several decades, but it was rare to perform the same play in the same theatre. Despite our world becoming more global, the fact that noh, let alone bunraku or kabuki have made little headway abroad seems certainly due to the wall that language puts up. But that performance had been a means of making classical noh better known, and the most recent performances too were excellent experiences both for the world and for Japan. It's not simply due to our own interests, but I wonder if there is any other company or school, other than the Kita School, that has shown a classical noh piece followed by a new noh play in English. Whether bunraku or kabuki, I have never seen either performed by professionals in English. Perhaps if noh is ever going to approach opera in its ability to appeal around the world, the present performance tour's ability to do so was a significant step.

— Akira Matsui 喜多流能楽師 松井彬

Kinue Oshima
Professional Noh
Actor,
Oshima Noh Theatre



Kinue Oshima in Coventry working with the Coventry Young Ambassadors. February 2020. Photography by Clive Barda

英語新作能 *Between the Stones* について

英語能のシテを務めることは、私にとって今回が3度目の挑戦でした。

はじめての経験は、2009年の*Pagoda*。その後、能の古典作品である隅田川の英語バージョンを経て、今回の*Between the Stones*が3度目になりました。

英語の話を語ることについては、今までの経験がずいぶん私自身の助けになりました。ただし、今回は新作能なので、作品作りの段階では大変苦労がありました。それは作者のジャネットさんはもちろん、制作全部を担当されたリチャード・エマートさん、そして私も含めた演者皆が苦労しましたが、最終的にはとても良い舞台になったのではないかと自負しています。

苦労したことの一つの理由は、*Between the Stones*の大きなテーマである、竜安寺の石庭の美というものが、これほど人の心に影響を与えるものだと私自身今まで考えたことがなかったことにあります。おそらく多くの日本人が同じだと思います。たいていの日本人にとって、枯山水の庭は古いお寺には当たり前にあるものであり、特別な思いをもって眺めることはあまりないでしょう。もちろん、石庭の静寂や引き算の美学に裏打ちされた美しさに共感し、心が鎮まる経験をしたことはあります。しかし、*Between the Stones*において大切にしている、傷ついた心の再生、ということにまで思い至ることは今までありませんでした。

そのことをどのようにすれば能の舞台として表すことができるか、これが今回の作品についての最大のポイントだったと思います。今回のツアーで上演した形が完璧であるとは言えませんが、出演者全員で

最善を尽くして舞台を作り上げたことは、私自身にとっても意義のある大きな経験であり学びにを得ることができました。
今、世界中で新型コロナウイルスが猛威を振るっています。困難な状況で暮らさなければならぬ人々、そして大切な人を失ってしまった人々の心が悲しみから再生されることを祈っています。
そして改めて、ヨーロッパでのツアーを予定通り行うことができたことに、協力してくださったすべての皆さまへの感謝を申し上げます。

Concerning the new English noh play *Between the Stones*:

This was my third attempt to perform the main shite role in an English noh play. The first experience was in 2009 with *Pagoda*. After that I performed in the English version of the classical noh play *Sumida River* which has led to this third time with *Between the Stones*.

My past experience with singing utai in English was of course a huge asset in singing this time. However, this was a new piece so there was naturally a great deal of struggle. This was the case of course for the author Jannette Cheong, the director and composer Richard Emmert, and of course for all the performers including myself. But in the end, I am proud to say that the result was a very good performance.

One of the reasons for the struggle was that the theme of the piece was very large. I myself had never considered how the beauty of the stone garden of Ryoanji Temple had affected the hearts of people to this degree. I actually think that that is the case for many Japanese. For most Japanese, the existence of a dry stone garden in an old Buddhist temple is commonplace and so it doesn't necessarily encourage special thoughts as one looks at it. Of course, I respond to the stillness and the less is more aesthetic which underlies the stone garden, and I have also experienced its ability to calm one's heart. But I had never thought as far as to regard its ability to restore the pain in one's heart which is such an important theme in *Between the Stones*.

I think the main point of this piece is how to express that theme on a noh stage. It would be difficult to say that the performance of this tour was able to do this perfectly, but I do think all the performers did their best to express this and as a result I personally learned much from this huge and significant experience.

Presently, Covid 19 is wielding its menacing power throughout the world. I pray for all people who must live through these difficult times and that the hearts of those who lose someone dear to them will eventually be restored from their pain and sadness.

And I also wish to again express my gratitude to everyone who joined together to make the European tour happen according to schedule.

— Kinue Oshima 能楽師 大島衣恵

Left to Right: Kinue Oshima giving a performance presentation at Mill Theatre Dundrum, Dublin. Right: Kinue as the Nachishite, Spirit of the Silent Waves in Act 2 of *Between the Stones* world premiere performed at the Southbank Centre, London in January 2020.



Ryoichi Kano
Professional Noh
Actor

このたび*Between the Stones*の作者ジャネット チョン女史が前回に作られた*Pagoda*の2回目のツアーに後見として参加して以来、二度目の英語能ツアーの参加になる。

今回も後見として舞台に参加させていただいたのだが、まず、原作者のジャネット チョン女史の能の本質的な部分をとらえて抽象化されたテーマへのアプローチの方法は、前回よりも更に素晴らしい出来だと感じた。

リチャード エマート氏の作曲、演出の上に、シテ、ワキ、地謡、囃子、狂言、それぞれが舞台稽古から本番の舞台を通して良い意味でぶつかり合い、また融合しながら、能の特性である一回性の緊張の中、舞台がより良い姿になって行くことを感じられた。

通常の能の古典曲の場合、長い年月により作り上げられた稽古法があるため、それぞれの役がそれぞれで稽古を積み、当日の舞台でその業をぶつけ合い舞台を創造するのであるが、新作、ことに海外公演の場合、参加する全てのメンバーのチームワークが大事であると共に、各自が日頃培ってきたスキルを最大限に活用して舞台に臨むことが必要であると思う。その上で一つの能が形になって行く過程はとても素晴らしい経験であった。

後見の立場から、舞台全体を俯瞰して見ることができ、私自身の能役者としての貴重な時間であったことは言うまでもない。

今回のツアーに声をかけていただいたことに感謝の意を述べて終えたいと思う。

This was the second time that I participated in an English noh tour after having served as a koken (stage attendant) in the second tour of *Pagoda*, the first play of *Between the Stones*' author Jannette Cheong.

Having served as a koken again this time, first of all I felt that even moreso than the first play, the playwright Jannette Cheong's approach of finding the essence of the play and abstracting the theme was quite wonderful.

With Richard Emmert's composition and direction, the shite, waki, chorus, hayashi and kyogen together from rehearsals through performances, clashed with each other in a good way and then recombined to create a better performance within noh's characteristic performance by performance intensity.

The usual classical noh play has a rehearsal method that has undergone a long period of creation, as each role rehearses again and again and creates a performance in which each person's work clashes together. But in a new performance, in particular one in which the piece is performed abroad, not only is the teamwork of all the members important, but it is necessary for the skill that each person has cultivated is employed at the highest level in order to appear on stage. It was a wonderful experience to be a part of that process of making a noh come to life.

As the koken, I was able to have a view of the entire performance, and it was a very valuable experience for me as a noh performer.

Lastly, I wish to express my gratitude at being asked to be a part of this performance.

— Ryoichi Kano 狩野了一

Professional noh actor, Ryoichi Kano, performs the role of the Koken (stage attendant) seated behind Kinue Oshima, at the world premiere of *Between the Stones*, performed at the Southbank Centre, London. 29 January 2020. Photography by Clive Barda



まず、初めてロンドンに招待して頂いたこと、素晴らしい仲間に出会えた事に深く感謝致します。

Between the Stones

ジャネットさんが見事な複式夢幻能を完成させました。特に杜甫や李白などの詩を散りばめた所、形見の風鈴などのアイデアが素晴らしいと思いました。また、配役ならびに役者の感情のこもった謡も素晴らしく地謡に参加でき、大変光栄に思いました。

そして節付けをしたエマートさんにも感謝致します。大変だったと思いますがそのお陰で見事な能、*Between the Stones*が完成したと思います。

もし*Between the Stones*の再演がありましたら、是非また参加したいと思いません。

First, I would like to express my gratitude for including me in this wonderful performance.

As for *Between the Stones*, Jannette-san has created a splendid two-act phantasm noh. Especially, there were wonderful ideas with the scattered references to poems by Du Fu and Li Bai and the use of the wind chime as a keepsake. It was also a great privilege to sing in the chorus along with the wonderful actors of the various roles.

I also am grateful to Emmert-san and his composition. I am sure it was quite a challenge but it resulted in the splendid noh of *Between the Stones*.

If there is another chance to perform *Between the Stones*, I would most certainly wish to participate.

— Shigenobu Uchida 内田成信

エマート様

無事に帰国されたのですね。大変お疲れ様でした。

今回のツアー、私は地謡であり力になれなくて申し訳ありませんでしたが、伊織にとってはとても良い経験と思い出になったと思います。

『*Between the Stones*』は能としてとても良く出来ていると思います。とても能らしい曲です。

クセも勇気の段も、とても良い節が付いているし、まだもっと良くなる可能性を持った曲だと感じました。また再演の機会があれば嬉しく思います。

ありがとうございました。

Dear Emmert-san,

I am glad you arrived safely back in Japan. Thank you for all your hard work.

I am sorry that I wasn't more helpful for the chorus for this tour. But it was a very good experience for lori and will be a great memory for him.

Between the Stones is a very well made noh play. It is very noh-like. Both the kuse and the courage dan are very well composed musically, and overall, I think the piece has the ability to improve even more.

I would be very happy if there was another chance to perform the piece. Thank you.

— Teruhisa Oshima 大島輝久

Akira Matsui being dressed by Teruhisa Oshima (left), Ryoichi Kano (middle Koken) and Shigenobu Uchida (right).
Photography by Clive Barda

Shigenobu Uchida
Professional Noh
Actor

Teruhisa Oshima
Professional Noh
Actor, Oshima Noh
Theatre



Teruhisa Oshima preparing the headdress for his son, lori Oshima, who performs his international debut at the Southbank Centre, London as the Spirit of Winter Butterflies on 29 January 2020.

Iori Oshima
Child Noh Actor
Oshima Noh
Theatre



Iori Oshima as the Kokata child actor (the Spirit of Winter Butterflies) in Act 2. World Premiere, Southbank Centre, London. 29 January 2020. Photography by Clive Barda

[伊織の感想]

- 舞台の雰囲気はいつもと変わらないのに、出演者が外国の人達だったり、聞こえてくる謡が英語だったので、ずっと不思議な感覚があった。
- 自分の英語の謡は、初めは節を謡う事が出来るのか不安だったけれど、練習するうちにだんだんと慣れて来て、本番では上手く謡えたと思う。
- 地謡の英語が最後まで聞き取れなかったので、普段の舞台では謡に合わせて動く所を、囃子の手組みを聞いて動くタイミングを取っていた。
- 食事は外国の料理がどんな味付けなのか分からなかったので、自分の好みの味を見つけるのがちょっと大変だった。
- ロンドンの街並みやアイルランドの自然の風景が日本と全然違っていて、見られて良かった。
- Although the atmosphere of the performance was the same as always, there were many non-Japanese performing and the chant was in English, so there was always a somewhat strange sense about it.
- At first I was unsure whether I would be able to sing the chant in English but I became more familiar with it as I practiced, and I think I was able to sing it well.
- Since I couldn't understand the English that was being sung, instead of performing on stage while listening to the chant, I had to listen to the drum patterns to time my movement.
- I didn't know what the food would taste like in foreign countries, and so it was difficult to find something that I really liked.
- The streets in London and Ireland as well as outdoor scenery is quite different from Japan, so I enjoyed seeing it.

— Iori Oshima

Narumi Takizawa
Hayashi (Nohkan -
Flute)



Narumi Takizawa plays the flute (Nohkan) at the World Premiere of *Between the Stones* at the Southbank Centre on 29 January 2020. Photography by Clive Barda

Between the Stones ヨーロッパツアーに参加して

非常に厳しいスケジュールで、肝を冷やすようなハプニングもありましたが、それゆえ大変面白い旅でした。いかに他人に迷惑をかけないかという基本的な課題にも向き合う、学び多き旅だったと思います。

2年前、大切な存在を相次いで亡くして大きな悲しみの中にあった時に、作者であるJannette Cheong氏にこの作品の草案を見せてもらいました。Cheong氏は京都・龍安寺の石庭に感銘を受け、そこに「失うことの痛みを浄化する手立て」を見出していました。

今回完成された台本を読んで、亡き者が後に残すのは、ただただ美しい遺産だという考えに深く納得し、自らの痛みも和らぎました。

Between the Stones という作品で作者が表現しようとするところは、高い次元のものだったと思います。ドラマを見せる演目と違って、完全なる静けさと美しさの世界を描き出す作品なので、そこにどんな笛で入っていけるのか正直なところ恐ろしかったです。現地での準備期間がもう少しは少なかったです。初めて全員がそろったのは本番の前日でしたので、せめてあと三日ぐらい、体調や気持ちを整える意味でもリハーサル期間があったら有難いと思いました。

新作の英語能には今までに6作品ほど笛で参加させていただき、観客としてもいくつかの作品を観ていますが、そうした経験から思うことがあります。それは、哲学的な思想を表現するには英語能は大変適しているということです。あるいは感情を表現していても、なんとなく哲学的に思ってしまう作用が英語能にあるのかもしれない。特異な舞台芸術です。これからも注目しています。

Two years ago, I had lost in succession two people who I was very close to which had saddened me deeply. It was at that time that the author Jannette Cheong had sent me the first draft of the piece. She had been deeply moved by her visit to the stone garden at Ryoanji Temple in Kyoto which she had seen as a means of purifying the pain she had felt after the loss of a loved one.

Reading the completed text, I was able to deeply understand her idea that what is left behind after those who have passed on is a legacy of beauty, and that realization in turn is a means to help alleviate one's pain.

I think the author of *Between the Stones* was attempting to express a very high level perspective. Unlike a piece which is more dramatic, it is a piece which portrays a world of quiet and beauty. For me in fact that made it difficult in thinking about how to play flute. I had hoped that there would be more time to rehearse before performances. The first time the whole cast was together was the day before the opening so it really would have been nice to have about three days to give us time for both rehearsal and to allow our bodies to adjust.

I have now performed in six English noh productions, and have seen several other productions as well, and from that there is something that I have come to think about. English noh is very appropriate in presenting philosophical ideas. Or perhaps it is that even when revealing deep feelings, a philosophical tone is also present. It is a special kind of performance art. It will continue to be worth observing in the future.

— Narumi Takizawa 滝沢成実(笛)

この度はお世話さまになり大変有難う御座いました。

私の感想ですが、今回は今までと違い合わす時間が少なく着いてすぐリハーサルでしたので、事前にかなり仕上げて行ったのですがかなり緊張しました。

公演の方は回数を重ねる度に高砂も含めて皆の呼吸も合って最後は一番良かったと思います。

今回のピトウィーン ザ ストーンですが能の基本的な作りと同じで序破急もしっかりしている曲でしたので打ちやすかったです。子方の舞も良い雰囲気良かったと思います。

あと今回初めて喜多流のプロの方の地謡への参加でいつも以上に地謡に重厚感が増し力強くそして繊細な謡になっていたと思います。それは10年前のパゴダの時より、シテの衣恵さん、地頭のエマートさん、他、演者の日々の研鑽で実力が増しての事だと思いました。

10年後同じ曲をやったら皆もっと上手くなってもっと良くなっていると思います(笑) ではまたの機会に宜しく願い申し上げます。

有難う御座いました。

Thank you for all your efforts on our recent tour.

As for my own thoughts about the tour, unlike in the past, this time we had a lot less time to rehearse together and so it was much more nerve-wracking leading up to the performances.

The more we performed, both *Takasago* and *Between the Stones* improved and as a result I think the best performance was our last one.

Between the Stones is basically like a traditional noh performance with its sense of *jo-ha-kyu* and so it was easy to perform once memorized. The kokata's dance also created a good atmosphere.

Also, with the addition for the first time of the professional noh performers in the chorus, it gave the chorus a much fuller, stronger and sensitive sound for the utai. Compared to the performance of *Pagoda* ten years ago, both Kinue-san as the shite and Emmert-san as the *jigashira*, along with the other performers gave the piece a much more polished

Eitaro Okura
Professional
Otsuzumi Player



Eitaro Okura performs at the Southbank Centre, London at the World Premiere of *Between the Stones*. 29 January 2020. Photography Clive Barda

performance which attests to the improvement of their abilities.
If we do this piece again in 10 years, I believe everyone would improve again. I look forward to another such opportunity.

Thank you very much.

— Eitaro Okura 大倉栄太郎

Hideta Kitazawa
Noh Maskmaker

今回のツアーには、新作能に使用した能面と小道具製作、及び能面製作実演で参加させていただきました。実演では実際に角材から彫刻を進めるところを見ていただき、日本の職人の道具や仕事のやり方など紹介したところが、聴衆の反応が良かったです。また原作者のジャネットさん、出演者のジョンさんが講演に協力してくれたので、能や能面についてより詳しく解説することができました。どの会場も大変お客様の反応が良く、このツアーに参加させて頂いたことに感謝しています。

I participated in this tour as the maker of the masks and hand props as well as being in charge of maskmaking demonstrations. In the demonstrations I generally showed how one starts from a block of wood and begins the act of sculpturing the mask as I introduced the tools and work process of a Japanese artisan. The audiences' response was very good. With the help of the author Jannette Cheong as well as John Oglevee, I think the audiences were able to have a deeper understanding of both noh and noh masks. The audiences responded well at all the venues and I was very glad to have had the chance to participate in this tour.

— Hideta Kitazawa

Master maskmaker, Hideta Kitazawa, (Left) presentation at Japan House, London. Photography by the Japan House (Right) presentation to 80 Coventry Young Ambassadors. Photography by Clive Bards



Writing this while sheltering-in-place due to the Covid-19 pandemic, I cannot help but see *Between the Stones* as a shining example of how the world used to be. I also cannot help but fear the world will not see that depth of intercultural exchange again for quite some time, if ever.

I believe *Between the Stones* was a thrilling accomplishment because as a new contemporary noh in English, it engaged noh where it begins, rather than where it ends. This was possible because of the immense mastery of the people involved and their shared history as well as their profound experience both in noh and in new noh in English.

Ten years ago I had the honor of working on Jannette Cheong and Richard Emmert's *Pagoda* which was remarkably instructive to my younger self and a real test of my developing noh muscles. Much of that instruction and exchange was possible because the personnel involved were master artists and generous cultural ambassadors. This combination of mastery and a genuine openness for meaningful exchange is special. *Between the Stones* was deeply informed by and indebted to *Pagoda* while also being a significant and logical next step in the history of new contemporary noh in English. I was touched by this opportunity to witness what is a normal aspect of a legacy tradition, but something that is basically unheard of in the West. For the *Between the Stones* tour Teruhisa and his sister Kinue Oshima-san led and represented the Oshima family. They easily stepped into the shoes of their parents, Yasuko and Masanobu-san, who so magnanimously filled those leadership roles on the *Pagoda* tour. In bringing 11-year old Iori they, and the entire creative team, graciously opened doors for this next generation of noh performers. I was honored to play a small part in this handing down of the legacy and I was especially touched as the piece was in English. That speaks volumes.

— *Jubilith Moore*

The opportunity to work alongside the Oshima Family and the other performers, old friends and new acquaintances, was a truly enriching experience. I learnt a lot about the practice of professional noh performance, the formality and etiquette of backstage preparations, and also how the performers took the highest professional care of each other whilst on stage. I am extremely grateful to Jannette Cheong, and to all those who helped her realize her vision for *Between the Stones*, for this rewarding experience. I was provided with a rare opportunity to participate in a full noh performance, be challenged as a performer, and to seek to grow in response to the demands of the project. It was an honour to be involved.

— *Ashley Thorpe*



Ashley Thorpe performing the role of the Priest in the Ai-Kyogen interlude of Between the Stones. Photography by Clive Barda

Jubilith Moore
Actor, Director



Jubilith Moore performs 'the Traveller' (waki) role at the Southbank Centre, London at the World Premiere of Between the Stones. 29 January 2020. Photography by Clive Barda

Ashley Thorpe
Senior Lecturer,
Centre for Asian
Theatre and Dance

Laura Sampson
Storyteller, Arts
Promoter

I feel incredibly lucky to have been part of the ensemble that performed *Between the Stones* in London, Paris, and Eire. As the least experienced of the performers in this project (having practiced noh for just under one decade) I had the most to learn, so it was a privilege to be allowed as a colleague into an ensemble containing so many people I had worked with in the past as a student. This was my first time working in professional theatre spaces with such a large group of full-time professional noh actors working as performers rather than teachers, and I relished the rare chance to watch them at work, backstage as well as on stage. I was pleasantly surprised, especially in the Ireland venues, by the warm reception we received from our hosts and audiences, and their appreciation of what many of us in the ensemble might forget is an art form almost completely unfamiliar to a western audience. I would have loved an extra day or two to rehearse with the rest of the group, especially since the piece was new to all of us – but having to work in an intense and focused way to make the play performance-ready brought us all together in a unique way that I will always treasure.

— *Laura Sampson*

54

John Oglevee
Theatre Artist

What a thrill to again tour an English noh to England, Ireland and France. The elements that make the collaborations between Jannette and Rick exceptionally successful are exactly what fails in 99% of other intercultural collaborations. Those elements being: commitment to the new work, the rules of the traditional art and taking the time to allow the noh to reveal itself. Noh is, more than any other performing art I've worked in, a deep cooperative collaboration. Every aspect is an essential piece of the whole, nothing succeeds unless everyone succeeds and everyone succeeds through all manner of help. Everyone in the room brings their own piece of expertise to the process and as a noh, either traditional or contemporary, comes to life, it is clear that everyone plays their part for the good of the piece. But the idea of the "piece" is particular to noh.

Each time a noh is attempted, those involved strive to maintain a concentration and focus in which everyone knows that if there are any mistakes, the others will be there to fix them before an audience feels a drop in energy. It is in this way that such a seemingly alien form of performance can have such an impact on audiences seeing it for the first time. The dedication of the performers towards the art is palpable from the audience, and they can feel that they are witness to a convergence of energies on stage with the goal of an egoless offering. There is indeed pride, but it's not fueled by a need for validation. The pride emerges from the years of training.

Having had many opportunities to work with the Oshimas on traditional noh, it is such a privilege to share the stage with them and the other Kita school professionals in a new English noh. Their willingness to collaborate with Jannette and TN members for a new noh in English is a testament to both Jannette's understanding of the noh's structure and Rick's ability to compose noh in English so that both professional shite-kata and hayashi-kata can jump in and feel comfortable doing so. It was clearly on the cusp of their comfort-zone, but that is the hallmark of great art, being on the cusp of comfort.

While most in the audience will experience noh as a bewildering entertainment, it is my feeling that noh is a practice for all involved, from the professionals down to the first time viewer. The more one engages with its multi-layered contextual components, the richer the experience. I am confident that our team was diligent enough to help highlight Kinue's prowess as a performer through Jannette's words and what audiences experience with this piece will inspire them to find out more about the art we call noh.

— *John Oglevee*



Between the Stones Chorus members: Laura Sampson, Richard Emmert (Chorus Leader), John Oglevee. 29 January 2020. Photography by Clive Barda



Above: Hayashi (Instrumentalists): Right to left: Narumi Takizawa, (flute) Naoko Takahashi (Shoulder drum), Eitaro Okura (Hip drum), Kiyoshi Yoshitani (Stick drum)



Acknowledgements

The *Between the Stones* project was the result of extensive collaboration and the positive vision and support of our collaborators and partners. It was a great pleasure to work again with professional Japanese noh actors Kinue Oshima, Teruhisa Oshima, Akira Matsui, all of the other professional Japanese artists, and Theatre Nohgaku members. We were delighted to be joined by Iori Oshima accompanied by his mother, Suzuko Oshima, for his debut international visit and tour, as we presented the final phase of the project.

It was a special pleasure to work with Simon Callow, who helped us deliver the main event at the Japanese Embassy as part of Phase 2 and who joined in a podcast discussion with composer Jonathan Dove, Richard Emmert and Jannette Cheong. Our thanks to Jonathan and Simon for their kind support and interest in undertaking this.

We were also pleased to add, Hideta Kitazawa, our wonderful maskmaker and friend, to the wide range of collaborative project activities in the final phase.

A network of partners and organisations have been involved - some throughout the three phases across the two years of the project covering a wide range of outreach and educational activities. These included (in alphabetical order - with those connected to events and sponsorship for Phase 3 highlighted in red):

- **British Library (Outreach, UK. Phases 1-3)**
- Cragside House (Outreach, UK Phase 1)
- **Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation (Key Phase 3 Sponsor)**
- **Coventry Primary Schools (Five) (Phases 1-3)**
- **East 15 Acting School / University of Essex (Education) (Phases 2-3)**
- **Embassy of Japan, London (Japan-UK Season of Culture organisers. Phases 1-3)**
- Graham Marchant (Key Phase 2 Sponsor)
- Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation (Key Phase 2 Sponsor)
- Guildhall School of Music & Drama (Education - Phase 2)
- Henrietta Heald (Key Phase 2 Sponsor in-kind)
- **Ireland Japan Association (Sponsor of Phases 1-3)**
- Japan Centre (Sponsor phase 2)
- **Japan Foundation (Key Phase 3 Sponsor)**
- **Japanese Garden Society** (will design and build the Coventry Children's *Karesansui* Garden)
- **Japan House (Phase 3 Public event)**
- **Japan Society (Education partner, & Key Phase 2, Sponsor)**
- **Japan Society Northwest (Outreach Phases 2-3)**

- John Lewis & Partners (Sponsorship-in-kind, Phase 1)
- Kilkenny Liberal Studies Group members (Outreach, Ireland, Phases 1-3)
- Marie Curie Hospice Hampstead (Outreach, UK, Phase 1)
- Mill Theatre Dundrum, Dublin (Theatre partner, Phase 2)
- **Moss Timber** (contribution to pillars and specialist wood for Hideta Kitazawa's demonstration talks)
- **Mitsubishi Corporation International (Europe) Plc (Key Phase 3 Sponsor)**
- **Mitsubishi Electric Europe B.V. (London & Paris) (Key Phases 2-3 Sponsor)**
- **Musée Guimet (Theatre partner)**
- **National Opera House, Wexford, Ireland (Theatre partner)**
- **London Digital Print Ltd (Key Sponsor Phases 1-3)**
- RED Partners (Sponsor - website development)
- Royal Holloway University of London Centre for Asian Theatre and Dance (Education)
- Oriental Museum Durham University (Outreach/Education, UK)
- Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford (Education, UK)
- **Sawin & Edwards (Sponsorship in-kind)**
- **School of Oriental & African Studies (Education, in-kind sponsorship)**
- **Southbank Centre (Theatre partner)**
- **Watergate Theatre, Kilkenny, Ireland (Theatre partner)**

We are extremely grateful for the kindness, engagement and support from many people, in particular: Kimiko Aoki, Gina Barnes, Rebecca Bolland, Katie Croft, Peter Donnelly, Hannah Eastham, the Eckersley family, Julien Ghomi, Ian Grotorex, Lesley Hayman, the Heltzel family, Hans-Joerg Hinkel, David Hughes, Jason Jameson, Isao Kano, Andrew King, Tsutomu Kimura, Clementine Laikin, Bethan Langford, Frank & Myrhad Lanigan, Rebecca Lee, Piran Legg, Graham Marchant, Mark McEvoy, Brigitte d'Ozouville, Eric Pellerin, Karen Peterson, Heidi Potter, Hugh Quarshie, Julie Rogers, Chris Rowe, Ieva Rubele, Kaoru Saiki, Nick Sanders, Satoko Shibata, Darina Slattery, David Surtasky, Alys Turner, Nora Twomey, Anne-Marie Winton, the staff at St Thomas' Hospital A&E department, and the many friends, colleagues and supporters of the project who have travelled all, or part, of our journey.





Above: Act 2 of *Between the Stones*. Iori Oshima performs the Spirit of Winter Butterflies, Kinue Oshima as the Spirit of the Silent Waves and Jubilith Moore as the Traveller at the world premiere of *Between the Stones* at the Southbank Centre 29 January 2020.

Backcover image: Kinue Oshima performing the role of the Nachishite - 'Spirit of the Silent Waves' at the world premiere of *Between the Stones* at the Southbank Centre, 29 January 2020.

Photography by Clive Barda

