

KIYOTSUNE & PAGODA

two noh plays

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Oshima Noh Theatre / Theatre Nohgaku

Classical and Contemporary Noh Theatre

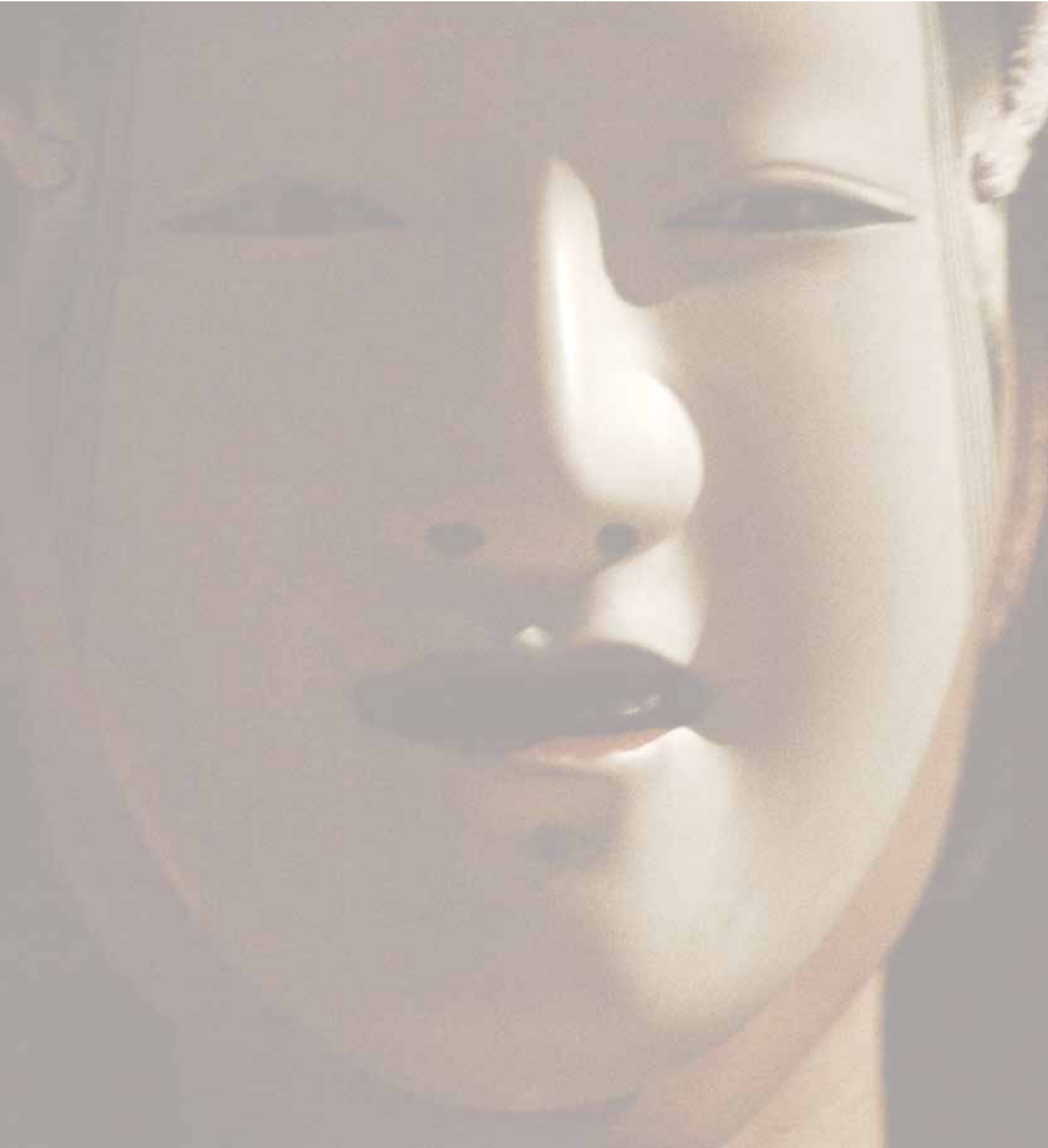
London • Dublin • Oxford • Paris

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ご挨拶
駐英国日本国大使
海老原 紳

MESSAGE FROM THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR TO THE UK

能は歌舞音曲、戯曲や詩歌の要素を高
度な審美的芸術形態に統合した日本の
古典演劇です。

この度、国重要無形文化財総合認定保
持者能シテ方大島政允師を中心とする大
島能楽堂と、英語能創作上演の第一人者
であろりチャード・エマート氏主宰のシア
ター能楽を迎えることができましたことは
喜びにたえません。両劇団は、修羅能「清
経」とジャネット・チョン女史による創作英
語能「パゴダ」を演じます。特に、「パゴダ」
は、初めて英国人劇作家が日本の古典
的能楽手法で創作した英語能として注目
を集めています。

このユニークな能公演の実現に寄与され
た方々に祝意を表しますとともに、ヨーロッ
パでの公演の成功を願ってやみません。

Noh is classical Japanese theatre which combines elements of dance, drama,
music and poetry into one highly aesthetic form of art.

On this occasion, I am delighted to welcome the Oshima Noh Theatre, led by
Masanobu Oshima, an Important Intangible Cultural Asset as designated
by the Japanese Government, and Theatre Nohgaku, led by Richard Emmert,
probably the West's greatest exponent of this traditional Japanese art form. The
two theatre companies will perform *Kiyotsune*, a classical noh play, and *Pagoda*,
which is a world premiere of a new play by Jannette Cheong. The latter piece is
particularly notable as the performance of the first English-language text written
in the noh tradition for performance by a British playwright.

I congratulate them on working hard to realise this unique production of noh
performance and wish them every success on their European tour!

Shin Ebihara
Ambassador of Japan to the UK

INTRODUCTION



The Oshima Noh Theatre of Hiroshima Prefecture, Japan, and Theatre Nohgaku, based in Tokyo and New York, present, for the first time, a joint production of classical and contemporary noh theatre in this European tour to London, Dublin, Oxford and Paris.

Dating back seven centuries, noh is a classical Japanese performance form combining elements of dance, drama, poetry and music, featuring elaborate costumes and masks.



This is a rare and unique performance of Japanese noh theatre featuring the classical warrior play *Kiyotsune* and the world premiere of *Pagoda*, a new English-language noh play. The production performs in London and Oxford as part of the Japan-UK 150 Festival celebrations, and in Dublin and Paris to complete this two-week tour to Europe.

Pagoda, written by Jannette Cheong, with music by Richard Emmert, founder of Theatre Nohgaku, is a multicultural theatre project that brings together a centuries' old Japanese theatre tradition and a contemporary British - Chinese story which investigates the themes of identity and migration. This will be the first time for a strictly English-language noh play to be written by a British playwright and produced in Europe as a fully realised noh performance.



The tour also includes 'Getting to Noh': a programme of public workshops, lectures, and educational activities to introduce the history, structure, dance, music, costumes and masks of noh.

The Oshima Family, through the Oshima Noh Theatre in Fukuyama, Hiroshima prefecture, has long carried out numerous activities to introduce 'noh' to



Richard Emmert and Kinue Oshima introduce noh to teachers and students in the UK as part of the Japan-UK 150 Celebrations (September, 2009)

a general Japanese public. Theatre Nohgaku, since 2000, has been striving to introduce English noh to international audiences.

In November 2007, Jannette Cheong went to Fukuyama with a friend, to see one of the regular Oshima Theatre noh performances and was invited to a post-performance party where she met the Oshimas. They, in turn, introduced her to Richard Emmert. Now, two years later, it is hard to believe that an idea discussed at that party has been realised in this unique programme. We are naturally apprehensive about this new venture because it has never been done before. However, much more, we are looking forward to seeing how this original new noh play will be received.

We are extremely grateful to the Agency for Cultural Affairs and the many companies and organisations that have supported us in realising this large-scale project. And we are also convinced that this programme will contribute to the prosperity of noh.

Finally, we would like to express our thanks to everyone engaged in the production for their hard work and cooperation.

Masanobu Oshima

Oshima Noh Theatre Director

Richard Emmert

Theatre Nohgaku Artistic Director

Opposite: The Oshima Family introduce noh to high school students in Hiroshima (2007), and to Swedish audiences in Stockholm (2009)



THEATRE COMPANIES

THE OSHIMA NOH THEATRE is based in the Kita school, one of the five main actor noh schools, and features members of the Oshima family, one of the Kita school's most active traditional noh families. Masanobu Oshima, an important intangible cultural asset as designated by the Japanese government, will head the production along with his two adult children, Kinue Oshima—one of the few yet highly respected professional female performers in the noh world (and the only female professional performer in the Kita school), and Teruhisa Oshima—an emerging new acting voice in the Kita school.

www.noh-oshima.com

THEATRE NOHGAKU is an international company comprised of Japan and North American-based members whose mission is to create and present English-language plays in traditional noh style complete with hayashi musicians, masks, costumes and stage sets. Founded and led by Artistic Director Richard Emmert who has spent over 35 years studying, teaching and performing classical Japanese noh in Japan, Theatre Nohgaku serves as a unique cultural and artistic intermediary between Japan and the English-speaking world.

www.theatrenohgaku.org



Oshima Noh Theatre & Theatre Nohgaku

present

KIYOTSUNE & PAGODA

Classical and Contemporary Noh Theatre
London • Dublin • Oxford • Paris

London: Southbank Centre, 2–3 December 2009

Dublin: Samuel Beckett Theatre, 5 December 2009

Oxford: O'Reilly Theatre, 7 December 2009

Paris: Maison de la Culture du Japon, 9–10 December 2009



KIYOTSUNE

A CLASSICAL NOH PLAY IN ONE ACT

Author	Zeami Motokiyo (1363-1443)
Artistic Direction	Masanobu Oshima
Libretto Translation	David Crandall (English) Jacques Montredon (French)
Cast	
Shite (Spirit of Kiyotsune)	Masanobu Oshima/Akira Matsui
Tsure (Wife of Kiyotsune)	Richard Emmert/Teruhisa Oshima
Chorus Leader	Akira Matsui/Masanobu Oshima
Chorus	Shigeru Nagashima Teruhisa Oshima Ryoji Terada John Oglevee James Ferner Matt Dubroff Tom O'Connor
Instrumentalists	Narumi Takizawa (Nohkan – flute) Mitsuo Kama (Kotsuzumi – shoulder drum) Eitaro Okura (Otsuzumi – hip drum)
Stage attendants	Shigeru Nagashima David Crandall



PAGODA

AN ENGLISH NOH PLAY IN TWO ACTS

Author	Jannette Cheong
Composition and Direction	Richard Emmert
Choreography	Kinue Oshima, Teruhisa Oshima
Costumes	Teruhisa Oshima, Yasue Ito
Masks	Hideta Kitazawa
 Libretto Translation	 Pierre Rolle (French)
	Ryoji Terada (Japanese)
 Cast	
Shite/Nochishite (Meilin/Spirit of Meilin)	Kinue Oshima
Waki (Young Traveller)	Jubilith Moore
Tsure (Daughter/Spirit Daughter)	Elizabeth Dowd
Ai (Local Oyster Fisherman)	Lluis Valls
Nochitsure (Bai Li/Spirit Son)	Teruhisa Oshima
Chorus Leader	Richard Emmert
 Chorus	 David Crandall
	John Oglevee
	James Ferner
	Matt Dubroff
	Ryoji Terada
	Greg Giovanni
	Tom O'Connor
	David Surtasky



Instrumentalists

Narumi Takizawa (Nohkan – flute)
Mitsuo Kama (Kotsuzumi
– shoulder drum)
Eitaro Okura (Otsuzumi
– hip drum)
Hitoshi Sakurai (Taiko – stick drum)



KIYOTSUNE & PAGODA PRODUCTION TEAM

Production

**Yasuko Oshima, Teruhisa Oshima,
Jannette Cheong, John Oglevee**

Technical Direction

David Surtasky

Photography

**Clive Barda, Jannette Cheong,
Sohta Kitazawa, David Surtasky**



Film

Christopher Chow

BIOGRAPHIES



JANNETTE CHEONG, *Pagoda* playwright, began writing poetry while an art student in London in the late 1960s. She worked with composer Gavin Bryars, filmmaker Steve Dwoskin, and poet Eric Mottram. Her career in education and international collaboration includes working with countries around the world, the OECD* and the World Bank. In early 2009 she facilitated a China-UK musical theatre forum at the Barbican Centre. She began writing lyrics in recent years with composer Adrian Payne. Her interest in noh developed after meeting the Oshima family in Japan and attending a Theatre Nohgaku writer's workshop led by Richard Emmert in Washington DC. She developed *Pagoda* as a noh play drawing on her heritage and experience of living in China.



DAVID CRANDALL, *Pagoda* chorus, began studying noh chant and dance in 1979 with noh master Sano Hajime of the Hosho school and worked on a professional level at the Hosho Noh Theatre in Tokyo from 1986 until moving back to the U.S. in 1991. He is active as a noh performer and workshop lecturer as well as a composer and playwright, with an output that includes noh-inspired dance dramas, film scores and children's musicals. As a founding member of Theatre Nohgaku, he has toured in Theatre Nohgaku's *At the Hawk's Well* and *Crazy Jane*, the latter which he wrote, composed and directed.



ELIZABETH DOWD, *Pagoda* tsure, has acted, directed, and taught for 31 years with the Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania. After spending 1992-93 in Japan on a grant from the Japan-US Friendship Commission, she co-founded with Richard Emmert a U.S. base for his Noh Training Project which just completed its 15th year. A founding member of Theatre Nohgaku, she has toured in Theatre Nohgaku's *At the Hawk's Well* and *Pine Barrens*. She has also been an adjunct professor at Bloomsburg University and a panel review member for the Fulbright Senior Specialists program.

*Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development



MATTHEW DUBROFF, *Kiyotsune* and *Pagoda* chorus, has studied noh chant and dance with Richard Emmert, Omura Sadamu and Akira Matsui, taiko with Mishima Gentaro and hand drums with Mitsuo Kama. He teaches theatre at Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia, and also teaches Alexander Technique and the Wu Style of Tai Ji. He is a founding member of Theatre Nohgaku and has performed in Theatre Nohgaku tours of *At the Hawk's Well* and *Pine Barrens*.



RICHARD EMMERT, *Kiyotsune* tsure and *Pagoda* composer and chorus leader, has studied, taught and performed noh in Japan since 1973. A certified Kita school noh instructor, he is also a professor at Musashino University and directs an on-going Noh Training Project in Tokyo. In summers, he leads the intensive three-week Noh Training Project in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania. He has co-authored a series of Noh performance guides published by the National Noh Theatre in Tokyo. He has also led extended Noh performance projects in Australia, India, Hong Kong, the UK, the US, Canada, and most recently at the University of Hawaii, has composed, directed, and performed in eight English noh performances, and has released a CD entitled *Noh in English* by Japanese Teichiku Records. He has also performed in and/or directed several Asian multi-cultural performances. The founder and artistic director of Theatre Nohgaku, he has led performance tours of *At the Hawk's Well* and *Pine Barrens* and also toured in *Crazy Jane*.



JAMES FERNER, *Kiyotsune* and *Pagoda* chorus, has lived in Tokyo since 1991 and studied noh chant and dance with Kita school actor Omura Sadamu since 1996. A kotsuzumi and otsuzumi student of Mitsuo Kama, he also studies under taiko drummer Sakurai Hitoshi. He has been the general music and assistant drumming instructor at the Noh Training Project in Bloomsburg since 2004. A founding member of Theatre Nohgaku, he has performed in Theatre Nohgaku tours of *Pine Barrens* and *Crazy Jane*.



GREG GIOVANNI, *Pagoda* chorus and assistant stage manager, has been a director, playwright, and performance artist in Philadelphia for over twenty years. Recently, the Painted Bride Arts Center in Philadelphia hosted a retrospective of his major works. He began training at the Noh Training Project in Bloomsburg in 1998. A founding member of Theatre Nohgaku, Theatre Nohgaku toured his noh play *Pine Barrens* and he also toured in Theatre Nohgaku's *Crazy Jane*. He recently scripted *Haunted Poe – A Walk-though Fun-house*, and began a collaboration with San Francisco's Theatre of Yugen on his *NOHKids Cycle*.



YASUE ITO, designer of *Pagoda* waki and ai costumes, studied under Japan's well-known stage designer, Asakura Setsu. After studying in New York in 1987-88 on an Asian Cultural Council grant, she formed the Mew Design Company in Tokyo and has designed for numerous Japanese theatre companies. She later received a Japan Ministry of Culture grant to study in London. She now is an associate professor of stage design for Showa Music University. Some of her recent major productions include those for Watanabe Productions (Le Teatre Ginza), Caramel Box (Sunshine Gekijo) and Toho Theatre (Teatre Creé).



MITSUO KAMA, kotsuzumi shoulder drummer, began studying noh chant in 1967 with Kita School performer Tani Daisaku. Later he studied the kotsuzumi hand drum with Kamei Shun'ichi and then the otsuzumi hip drum with Living National Treasure Kamei Tadao. In 1985 he began teaching professionally and established the Sanko-kai, a group comprised of his amateur drum students. He also has taught since 2003 for the Noh Training Project in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, has toured with Theatre Nohgaku in *At the Hawks' Well*, *Pine Barrens* and *Crazy Jane*, and performed in *The Gull*, the first Canadian English noh play produced in Vancouver in 2006.



HIDETA KITAZAWA, *Pagoda* maskmaker, is a second-generation woodcarving artist from Tokyo. His traditional and contemporary noh and kyôgen masks have been exhibited and used in performance in Japan, Singapore and the United States. An affiliated artist with Theatre Nohgaku, he designed and carved the new masks for Theatre Nohgaku's *Pine Barrens*. His traditional shakumi mask was used in the recent English production of the classical play *Sumida River* by the University of Hawaii where he also conducted an intensive mask-carving workshop. His masks were also featured in a two-month exhibition at the East-West Center Gallery in Honolulu. In spring 2009, as a part of a Theatre Nohgaku residency he taught maskmaking at Southern Methodist University, and also exhibited for the Crow Collection of Asian Art both in Dallas.



AKIRA MATSUI, *Kiyotsune* chorus leader, studied under Kita School headmaster Kita Minoru and Oshima Noh Theatre's Oshima Hisami. In addition to regular Kita School and Oshima Noh Theatre performances, he has performed and taught noh abroad in over 20 countries. He has participated in intercultural collaborations with Kyoto's NOHO Theatre and performed in Teater Cahaya's *Siddhartha*, Eugenio Barba's *Ur-Hamlet* and Theatre Nohgaku's *At the Hawk's Well*. He has been designated an Important Intangible Cultural Asset by the Japanese government and is based in Wakayama City.



JUBILITH MOORE, *Pagoda* waki, is co-artistic director of Theatre of Yugen and has been with the company, and a student of Yuriko Doi, since 1993. From 1999, she studied in the Noh Training Project in Bloomsburg with Richard Emmert and Akira Matsui. In 2001 while under a Japan Foundation Fellowship in Tokyo, she studied with Kanze School noh master Nomura Shiro, Izumi school Kyogen master Ishida Yukio and kotsuzumi drummer Mitsuo Kama. A founding member of Theatre Nohgaku, she has toured in Theatre Nohgaku's *At the Hawks Well*, *Pine Barrens* and *Crazy Jane*.



SHIGERU NAGASHIMA, *Kiyotsune* chorus and stage attendant, originally from Fukuyama, studied from childhood with former Oshima Noh Theatre master performer and teacher, Oshima Hisami. Later he went to Tokyo to become a student of Kita school headmaster, Kita Minoru. He later became a shokubun professional performer with the Kita school and is designated an Important Intangible Cultural Asset by the Japanese government. He is based in Tokyo.



TOM O'CONNOR, *Kiyotsune* and *Pagoda* chorus, trained as an actor, but has also created original roles for dance-theatre artists including Maureen Fleming, John Giffin, and Rick Wamer, performing in New York, London, Edinburgh, Milan, and in regional venues within the US. He has also adapted several original physical theatre works, and has a number of professional credits as director and/or choreographer, including, most recently, choreography for the world premier of *Every Man Jack* with the Sonoma City Opera. He began training in noh in Japan in 2002 and became a member of Theatre Nohgaku in 2007. He has toured in Theatre Nohgaku performances of *Pine Barrens* and *Crazy Jane*.



JOHN OGILVIE, *Kiyotsune* and *Pagoda* chorus, is a theatre artist who has worked and performed in Europe, North America and Asia with Yoji Sakate's Rinkogun, Theatre of Yugen, Richard Foreman's Ontological Hysteric, The Wooster Group, Min Tanaka and Peter Schumann's Bread and Puppet Theater. He holds an MFA in Asian performance from the University of Hawaii and is a recent recipient of the Crown Prince Akihito Scholarship pursuing a PhD focusing on noh. Since being introduced to noh in 1996 by Richard Emmert, he has studied with Omura Sadamu, Mitsuo Kama and Akira Matsui. A founding member and the Managing Director of Theatre Nohgaku, he has toured in Theatre Nohgaku's *At the Hawk's Well* and *Crazy Jane*.



EITARO OKURA, otsuzumi hip drummer, is a 17th generation noh musician in a line descending from Okura Shichizaemon. He studied with his father, Okura Mitsutada, as well as with Yasufuku Tatsuo, a Living National Treasure of otsuzumi. He first performed on the noh stage at six years of age and now performs regularly in professional performances throughout the Tokyo area. He performed in the Theatre Nohgaku tour of *At the Hawk's Well* as well as the 2005 Theatre of Yugen tour of *Moon of the Scarlet Plums*.



KINUE OSHIMA, *Pagoda shite*, is a shite actor of the Kita school and daughter of Oshima Noh Theatre head, Masanobu Oshima. She studied both with her grandfather, Oshima Hisami as well as her father. She graduated from Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music where she studied the instruments of noh. In 1998, she became the first Kita school female member of the Noh Performers' Association. She has taught at the National Art Academy of Taiwan and has joined Kita school performing tours to the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Bulgaria, and the Baltic Countries. In 2005, she was awarded the Hiroshima Prefectural Culture Award. She also teaches noh in several universities and high schools in Hiroshima.



MASANOBU OSHIMA, *Kiyotsune shite*, an actor of the Kita school, is head of the Oshima Noh Theatre and the Oshima-kai based in Fukuyama, Hiroshima prefecture. He studied with his father Oshima Hisami and in Tokyo with the 15th headmaster of the Kita school, Kita Minoru. In addition to performing the major works of the noh repertory, he has performed abroad in Kita performances in Belgium and the Netherlands, Poland, Bulgaria, the Baltic countries, and Australia, as well as Oshima Noh Theatre-led performances in Taiwan, Vietnam and Finland/Sweden. He also directed and performed in a contemporary noh performance of Hoashi Masanori's *Tomo-no-Muro-no-ki*, at the National Noh Theatre in Tokyo in 2002.



TERUHISA OSHIMA, *Kiyotsune* chorus and *Pagoda* nochitsure, is a shite main role actor of the Kita school and son of Oshima Noh Theatre head, Masanobu Oshima. He studied with his grandfather, Oshima Hisami, as well as his father. At the age of 14, he performed the full noh Ebira in Oshima Noh Theatre program in which three generations of Oshimas performed including his grandfather and father. At the age of 18, he moved to Tokyo to become a disciple of the Kita school and has since been taught by Kita noh master Shiozu Tetsuo. He has joined in Kita school performance tours to Poland and Lithuania, Taiwan, and the Netherlands/Belgium.



YASUKO OSHIMA, Oshima Noh Theatre producer, graduated from Keio University and later worked for four years in the youth educational book department of Gakushu Kenkyu-sha Publishing House. She married Masanobu Oshima and became the mother of four children who all have studied noh and now perform and teach with the Oshima Noh Theatre. Her managing and producing for the theatre include in addition to traditional noh performances, special historical events and exhibitions using noh and noh costumes and masks, a Japanese music drama, a CD on a Japanese historical figure, and the editing of the Noh Oshima Bulletin and calendar. She received the Fukuyama Citizens Award in 2000 for her various activities to promote Japanese culture.



HITOSHI SAKURAI, taiko stick drummer, was in the first class at the National Noh Theatre Noh Performers' Training Course which began in 1983, studying with Komparu Taiko School headmaster, Komparu Soemon, as well as Mishima Gentaro, Oe Teruo and Komparu Kunikazu. He has played professionally since 1987. A member of Japan's Noh Performers' Association, he performs regularly in the Tokyo area and also has participated in numerous overseas tours including the 2006 Vancouver performance of *The Gull* and Theatre Nohgaku's *Crazy Jane* tour.



DAVID SURTASKY, *Pagoda* chorus and tour stage manager, is a photographer and theatre artist working in the Greater Pittsburgh Metropolitan Area. He is the technical director for the College of Fine Arts of Indiana University of Pennsylvania and has worked on numerous university productions and national tours as a sound and lighting designer. He appeared in the 1989 Academy Award winning documentary *The Johnstown Flood*. His photographic work has been seen in several arts magazines and journals. He began studying noh in the Noh Training Project in Bloomsburg in 2006, and served as its producing director in 2007. He became a Theatre Nohgaku member in 2008.



NARUMI TAKIZAWA, nohkan flutist, majored in ethnomusicology at Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music where she studied Issō School nohkan flute with renowned noh performer Issō Yukimasa. After graduation, she re-entered the university to specialize in nohkan performance. She now performs regularly throughout the Tokyo area. Among other activities, she composes and performs annually a nohkan piece for a Japanese traditional music festival held in Fukuyama and is a former host of a seven-year long Satellite PCM Radio program called Japanese Music Variety. She toured with Theatre Nohgaku in *Pine Barrens* and *Crazy Jane*, as well as joined the 2006 Vancouver performance of *The Gull*.



RYOJI TERADA, *Kiyotsune* and *Pagoda* chorus member, is a member of the Oshima-Kai, a group of performers associated with the Oshima Noh Theatre. He began studying noh chant and dance in 1991 with Oshima Hisami, the former master performer teacher of the Oshima Noh Theatre, and then with Oshima Masanobu. He has also performed abroad with the Oshima Noh Theatre in Taiwan and Finland and Sweden.



LLUIS VALLS, *Pagoda* ai actor, is the co-artistic director of San Francisco-based Theatre of Yugen where he has worked since 1993 with theatre director Yuriko Doi in their repertoire of English-language kyogen and in their many main stage productions. He has studied noh with Richard Emmert and Akira Matsui, as well as studied kyogen with Ishida Yukio and noh hand drums with Mitsuo Kama. A founding member of Theatre Nohgaku, he has toured in Theatre Nohgaku's *At the Hawk's Well*, *Pine Barrens* and *Crazy Jane*.



ALLAN WEST, backdrop designer and painter, studied traditional Japanese painting at Tokyo University of Fine Arts under Kayama Matazo. He has exhibited and demonstrated for the Japanese Foreign Ministry in Europe and Asia and has received commissions for concerts of the NHK Philharmonic and for national living treasures at the National Theater in Tokyo. His paintings have been featured on Japan's major television networks, newspapers and magazines. He has exhibited in over 20 museums, and 50 galleries throughout the world including the Smithsonian's National Museum of American Art and Japan's Reihokan, the foremost museum of Japanese national treasures.

JACQUES MONTREDON, *Kiyotsune* translator, is a linguist from the University of Franche-Comté, Besançon, researching the relationship between gesture and speech. He recently published his own French noh entitled *Racine, Nô* (Éditions Cêtre, 2008, Besançon). In hopes of having it performed, he invited Richard Emmert to conduct a noh workshop in Besançon and is planning further workshops.

PIERRE ROLLE, translator of *Pagoda*, lives in Paris, an academic, social writer, political analyst, occasional journalist and poet (the latter when he is moved to do so). He has devoted articles and books dedicated to exploring various aspects of our world.

KIYOTSUNE (THE NOBLEMAN KIYOTSUNE)

A CLASSICAL NOH PLAY IN ONE ACT



This play is built around a brief mention in *The Tales of the Heike* of the Heike Lieutenant-General Kiyotsune who having given up all hope of victory, took his own life by jumping into the sea rather than lose his life at the hands of an unknown enemy.

Here, Kiyotsune's retainer, Awazu no Saburô, takes as a keepsake a lock of Kiyotsune's hair back to Kiyotsune's wife in the capital. As she grieves, Kiyotsune's ghost appears to her in a dream and tells of the battles in which the Heike were defeated and then of the torments he suffers in warrior hell.

This performance begins from Scene 3

AUTHOR: **Zeami** (1363–1443)

SCENE: Autumn, 1183–84, Kiyotsune's home in the capital, in the present Kyoto.

CATEGORY: Second category warrior (young nobleman) play, phantasm (mugen) noh in one act, without taiko stick drum.

PERFORMANCE PRACTICE: Performed by all five schools

CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

Waki (secondary actor): **Awazu no Saburô**, Kiyotsune's retainer

Tsure (accompanying shite actor): **Kiyotsune's wife**. Wears a young woman (ko-omote/tsure) mask

Shite (main actor): **Ghost of Kiyotsune**. Wears a lieutenant (chûjô) mask



Kiyotsune Chant Book

SYNOPSIS: Scene-by-Scene

For this production the performance begins from Scene 3

Tsure enters in silence and sits.

1. WAKI ENTRANCE: Awazu no Saburô enters and sings of returning by boat to the capital. He announces himself as the retainer of the late Kiyotsune who, having been defeated in battle, had taken his own life by jumping into the sea. He tells how he is taking a lock of Kiyotsune's hair as a keepsake to Kiyotsune's wife in the capital. He sings a travel song expressing his sadness at having to return, not during the glorious spring, but in the mournful autumn, and of the wintry rain and his tears which drench his sleeves. He tells of arriving back in the capital.

2. WAKI/TSURE DIALOGUE: Saburô announces himself at Kiyotsune's home and Kiyotsune's wife answers and invites him in. Saburô weeps and then informs the wife that Kiyotsune has taken his own life rather than lose it at the hand of some nameless warrior. The wife sings that she could forgive him if he died in battle or of illness, but he had promised to return and this proves he was lying. The chorus sings for her of their joys of marriage despite the years of war when she had to hide herself in the capital. Now she can grieve openly.

3. TSURE'S WAIT: Saburô gives the wife a lock of Kiyotsune's hair as a keepsake and she sings of her yearning and deep grief as she takes it in her hand. She then puts it down as the chorus sings of her in tears trying to go to sleep so that he may appear to her in dream.

4. SHITE ENTRANCE: Kiyotsune's ghost enters during the last song and sings questioning life as reality, how the world of the mind is vast, how past grief is illusion and present sadness a dream, and of seeing his lover in a dream.

5. SHITE/TSURE DIALOGUE: Kiyotsune announces himself to his wife who sings of seeing Kiyotsune in a dream, being thankful to see him, but resenting him for taking his own life. He reproaches her for putting down the keepsake and thinks she did not truly love him, but she insists he mistakes her reasons. They continue to reproach each other. The chorus sings of a couple lying side by side yet their anger making them seem to sleep alone.

6. SHITE NARRATION: Kiyotsune with the chorus tells how the Heike, escaping the enemy, received an oracle at the Usa Hachiman Shrine declaring their future hopeless. The chorus sings of them setting out in spring but with autumn they scattered like leaves. Kiyotsune sees the distant herons in the sky as the flags of the Genji enemy. Thus he decided to end his life. One night, he stood on the deck, played his flute, sang songs to calm himself, and under the autumn moon leapt overboard sinking down to the bottom of the sea.

7. SHITE ACTION DANCE: The wife sobs at hearing his story. Then Kiyotsune tells of his life in warrior hell where whenever he turns swords litter the ground and enemies thrust their blades. Anger, lust, greed, and ignorance all strive against the holy path of Buddha as foes endlessly battle. But the torments cease as the pure-hearted Kiyotsune utters the ten invocations, and enters paradise.

Richard Emmert

Photographs (pp 27-30) from the Pagoda rehearsal
October 2009 at the National Noh Theatre, Tokyo



PAGODA

AN ENGLISH NOH PLAY IN TWO ACTS

This is a new English-language noh play rooted in the story of the author's grandmother who sent her youngest son away to sea when he was a young boy to avoid the famine that ravaged China's rural areas in the 1920s. He never returned. After his death in London in the 1970s, the author made the journey to China to find her father's birthplace. Her experiences, at once both tragic and uplifting, are combined with an ancient Chinese legend to form the basis of the play.

A young traveller in search of her father's roots journeys to his birthplace in Southeast China. Carrying her father's treasured keepsake, she meets a distraught woman and her daughter in front of an ancient pagoda, lamenting the departure of a young son many years ago. The woman and daughter 'vanish in the mist'. The traveller then meets a fisherman who tells her the legend of the Pagoda and of the spirit of Meilin who visits it. The traveller realises her father was the son of Meilin and it was her spirit which she had earlier encountered. As night falls Meilin and daughter appear once more and the traveller presents her father's keepsake to confirm her identity to them. Lamenting the son's death they realise that he survived into adulthood and was spared the starvation so many suffered at that time, including Meilin. The presence of the family keepsake enables his spirit to appear and they are united in the spirit world, mother and son, brother and sister. The young traveller is left alone to reflect on the ancient pagoda legend and the migrants' journey.

AUTHOR: Jannette Cheong (1951-)

SCENE: Autumn 1970s, on the edge of a hamlet in Southern China, the birthplace of the traveller's father.

CATEGORY: Fourth category miscellaneous play, phantasm (mugen) noh in two acts, with taiko stick drum.



Jubilith Moore



Kinue Oshima as Meilin

CHARACTERS: (in order of appearance)

Waki (secondary actor): **a young traveller from the West, the daughter of a Chinese seaman**

Maetsure (accompanying shite actor in first act): **a Chinese peasant woman's daughter**

Maeshite (main actor in first act): **a Chinese peasant woman**

Ai (interlude actor): **oyster fisherman and lighthouse/pagoda keeper**

Nochitsure (second act tsure): **the spirit of Meilin's daughter**

Nochishite (second act shite): **the spirit of Meilin – the traveller's grandmother**

Nochitsure (second act tsure): **the spirit of Bai Li, Meilin's son and the traveller's father**

SYNOPSIS: Scene-by-Scene

ACT ONE

Stage attendants bring on stage a framework structure representing a pagoda.

1. WAKI ENTRANCE: A traveller enters to shidai music and tells how, after her father's death, she has decided to travel to his birthplace in China carrying her father's treasured keepsake. She sings a travel song describing her uncertain quest, the long journey to China, down through the heart of this mysterious and isolated 'middle kingdom', and her arrival in the provincial capital and then to her father's hamlet. She sees a pagoda and decides to ask two approaching women if she can take shelter inside.

2. MAETSURE/MAESHITE ENTRANCE: A peasant mother and daughter enter to issei music and sing of lost souls searching hopelessly, the lament of untold misery saying 'every grain of rice a tear', and wondering whether those departed will ever return.

Opposite (top): Kinue Oshima

Middle (left to right): John Oglevee, Rick Emmert, Ryoji Terada

Bottom: Lluís Valls



3. WAKI/TSURE/SHITE DIALOGUE: The traveller asks the women if she may seek shelter in the pagoda. In turn, the mother asks her to count the boats she sees on the horizon and when the traveller reports that there are nine, the women are disappointed. The daughter explains how her mother is full of sorrow, but invites the traveller to join them to look at the moon from the top of the pagoda. The daughter tells how a noblewoman built the pagoda many years ago then narrates the story of how her mother sent her son on a boat to avoid famine but has now waited forty years for his return. The mother once again asks the traveller to count the boats, but there are still only nine.



4. MAESHITE/MAETSURE NARRATIVE: The chorus with the daughter and mother sing of the sun setting and waiting for the full moon to rise, then evoke the pain and sorrow one feels and the tears one sheds when separated from loved ones not knowing when, or if, they will return.

5. MAESHITE/MAETSURE EXIT: Again the traveller is asked to count the boats on the distant horizon, and this time, as the moon shines brightly, she counts ten. She turns to tell the mother and daughter, but they have vanished.



6. AI INTERLUDE: An oyster fisherman enters singing of the full moon and cold night. He introduces himself as being in charge of the pagoda which acts as a lighthouse. He meets the traveller and relates the story of the noblewoman who built the pagoda centuries ago after her husband was lost at sea, and how it is said that her spirit still waits for his return. In turn, the traveller tells how her father recently died and that this is his birthplace. When the fisherman in sympathy mentions the local saying "every grain of rice a tear," the traveller tells how the two women she just met had used the same expression. The fisherman suggests that the two women might have been the spirits of Meilin and her daughter who are also said to visit here. They come to realise that Meilin must be



Above: Kinue Oshima as the Spirit of Meilin

Below: Teruhisa Oshima rehearsing the Spirit of Bai Li

the mother of the traveller's father, Bai Li, and thus Meilin must be the traveller's own grandmother.

ACT TWO

7. WAKI WAIT: The traveller reflects on the woman in the ancient story of the Pagoda and that of her grandmother separated from her father, both women waiting for a loved one to return.

8. NOCHITSURE/NOCHISHITE ENTRANCE: The spirits of Meilin and her daughter enter to deha music singing of the full moon and how the night is longest when there is fear of an empty dawn. They ask the traveller what she seeks, and she shows them an amulet, the treasured keepsake of her father. Meilin and her daughter realise it is the one Meilin gave her son when he left home and that he was indeed the traveller's father.

9. NOCHISHITE NARRATIVE: Meilin reflects on her long wait that has ended with finding out her son is dead without having returned home. As she laments, the traveller reminds her that he in fact survived to adulthood and with this knowledge, Meilin realises that her long vigil has ended.

10. FINAL DANCE AND EXIT: The presence of the family keepsake enables the spirit of Bai Li to appear. The spirits dance and are united in the spirit world – mother and son, brother and sister. Then as they exit, the traveller reflects on the many other lost souls in search of one another and wonders what will be revealed as the morning mist clears.

Jannette Cheong/Richard Emmert

WHY WRITE A NOH PLAY?

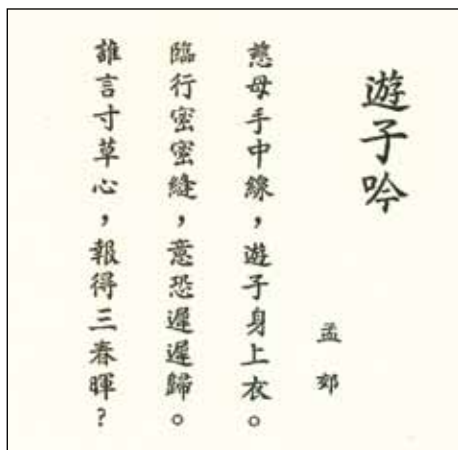


The character for 'noh' in Chinese means 'can' – the verb used to indicate that it is possible for something to be done.¹

I was fortunate to meet the Oshima family at their theatre in Fukuyama in November 2007 at a time when I was working on a piece for Western musical theatre. It was the Oshimas' interest in this work, their kindness in thinking that my story might make a noh play, and their dedication to their art, that inspired me to consider taking this fascinating journey into the world of noh. 'Serendipity' is the 'discovery of something fortunate', and the 'gift for discovery'. Both underpin the making of *Pagoda*.

The Oshima family and friends introduced me to Richard Emmert, one of the few Westerners with the skills, experience, passion and generosity of spirit to collaborate on such a project. Rick first encouraged me to attend a noh Writer's Workshop that he was running in the USA, and then, with the help of twenty-first century technology (the Internet), acted as my mentor in this classical art form – Rick, working from his base in Tokyo and myself working from the French Pyrenees. For nearly four months I shut myself away to let the beauty of the mountains combine with my thoughts of the life-changing experiences that happened to me more than 30 years ago. Rick helped me understand how I could use the structure and discipline of noh to interpret these into a noh play.

I wanted to draw on two stories that had stayed with me all this time. The first was how I found my father's birthplace in China in the 1970s at a time when China was virtually closed to the West, and what I learnt about his childhood and family. The second was the legend of a Pagoda local to his native province. The stories had a common subject – courageous women – one rich, in the case of the Pagoda legend, and one poor, my Chinese grandmother, who both lost loved ones in tragic circumstances, and never gave up hope. But, the story of *Pagoda*



Above: Mask from the Oshima family collection

Below: Tang dynasty poem: *The Roving Son* by Meng Chiao (751-814) a reference used in the *Pagoda* text

noh also has a subtext – identity and migration. People of mixed race often wonder about their identity. The writing of *Pagoda* has enabled me to explore who I am and where I have come from. It has also helped me to understand that migration is as old as mankind itself.

When I first saw noh performed I was not aware that it was a 'cultural treasure', nor was I particularly concerned that I did not understand it, or its stories. I just considered it a beautiful art form. In the noh world, artistic practice generally precedes meaning – though the search for harmony between form and function is as important to noh as it is any art form. However, noh has many structures and conventions. Writing for noh involves respecting these, but at the same time, within these conventions, the writer has a great deal of freedom of expression. Once familiar with the conventions of noh the art form reveals itself and no longer seems impenetrable and esoteric, but rather liberating and unrestrictive.

I have learnt much about noh and the structural elements of noh by 'doing' ie writing a noh play. Interestingly, writing for noh has also enabled me to explore aspects of Chinese as well as Japanese culture². But those with whom I have been fortunate enough to work over the last two years have devoted their entire lives to 'perfecting their art'. They have enabled me to get close enough to the art of noh to allow it to captivate me and tease out the images in my mind to tell this story in the way noh allows.

I will continue to worry about whether the *jo-ha-kyu*³ is right, and whether I have been sufficiently faithful to the traditional noh conventions for *Pagoda* to be 'accepted' as a noh play. Perhaps this personal story will be as inspirational to the performers of *Pagoda* as the complete adherence to the rules of noh. It is for others to judge whether we have managed to respond well to both

challenges. I hope, like me, our audiences will grow to understand a little of what noh has to offer – to art and to our understanding of life.

Jannette Cheong

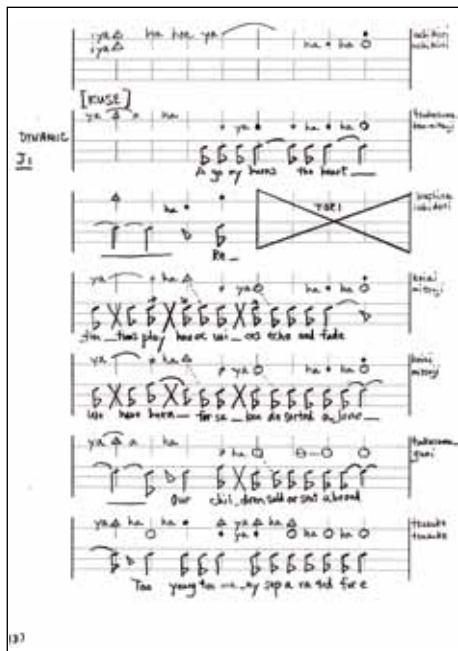


¹ Royall Tyler, in his introduction to Japanese Nô Dramas states 'noh which means 'accomplishment' or 'perfected art, is no doubt an expression of practical as well as aesthetic ambition'.

² Many classical noh plays draw on Chinese poetry, especially from Wakan-roei-shu (a Collection of Japanese and Chinese poems for chanting - 1013). Chinese poetry had the same standing as Latin poetry in Europe at the time noh flourished in Japan.

³ *Jo-ha-kyu* Important underlying structural concept: "Jo, literally 'preface,' means the opening of the process, and it is generally characterized as smooth and even. *Ha* means 'break' and indicates a change in tone from the *jo* as well as the main body of development of the play's theme. *Kyu* means 'fast' and is taken as 'fast finale', the climax of the play. Zeami came to see *jo-ha-kyu* as a universal organizational principle for all things existing in time, and he applied the term not only to the play as a whole, but to *shodan* and even individual syllables of a text." Hare, Thomas Blenman. Zeami's Style: The Noh Plays of Zeami Motokiyo. Stanford University Press, 1986, pp. 291-300.

COMPOSING FOR AND DIRECTING PAGODA



Pagoda notation

Composing music for new noh plays demands, in particular, an understanding of noh chant styles and their melodic structure, an understanding of the rhythmic structure and patterns of the drums of the noh ensemble, and an understanding of how sung text fits together with those rhythms. Actually, in the new noh plays being created in Japan, I have never heard of one being composed by a 'music composer' - someone trained in composing for a variety of Western or Japanese musical instruments or voice. Rather, those who compose for noh are noh performers themselves, those intimately connected to performing classical noh plays and who understand how music works in those plays.

Composing for noh in English has the added demand that one has to have a sense of how English text can be sung in general, and the imagination to bridge the gap between how a Japanese text can be sung with noh rhythms and how an English text can be sung with noh rhythms. The language characteristics of Japanese and English are different. How can English come to life with noh rhythms without just imitating Japanese?

It is a constant struggle. Certainly I have heard enough criticisms that English does not sound 'natural' when sung in noh style. I usually counter that I don't know of any Japanese speaker going to noh for the first time who thinks that Japanese is necessarily 'natural' when sung in noh style. The singing style of noh is a 'made', not natural, singing style developed over many centuries. Similarly, with a Western operatic vocal style, there are no doubt those who believe that opera is only natural to Italian and not to any other language. For better or for worse, I have always attempted to find ways for an English text to come to life with a noh score and take on some of the depth of feeling and emotion in the same way I sense happens when I hear Japanese text with the rather 'unnatural' musical style of noh.



For *Pagoda* then, the composing really began as I helped Jannette Cheong structure her piece. Some parts of noh which she adopted have rather straightforward textual and in turn musical structures. Others do not, and in the same way that individual classical noh plays have certain musical characteristics unique to that play and that play alone, *Pagoda* has certain parts which, though of the noh style, are unique to it.



Thus, having previously composed music for English noh, many of the difficulties for *Pagoda* in particular remain some of the same difficulties encountered in my earlier compositions. But perhaps most important for me in composing for *Pagoda* was the fact that Jannette came to understand those musical challenges and was willing to accommodate text changes to fit some musical demands. Places which she found difficult to change despite my nudging also were good as they forced us both to strive to find yet another way. As these were sung in Theatre Nohgaku's summer rehearsals in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, Jannette made excellent comments and sometimes text changes to make both singing and text develop a tighter and more compact and meaningful fit.



In terms of directing the performance, as I write this from the perspective of two and a half months before the opening, the difficulties are already obvious. Most of Theatre Nohgaku's members are based in the United States with only four of us in Japan. The Oshima Noh Theatre members and the musicians are all based in Japan. It is clearly a matter of directing long distance as full rehearsals with members from both will not happen until we gather in London in the days just before the December opening.

Allowing such a state might sound a bit optimistic for bringing a new work to the stage. In Japan however, it is standard in traditional performances for performers to prepare a play individually learning from teachers who have



already performed it, and then gather for only one rehearsal in advance. For new plays, main performers might gather several times in advance but the practice of having one final rehearsal with all participants is much the same.

For *Pagoda*, I rehearsed Theatre Nohgaku members in August in the US. Those members are now learning their own parts as I rehearse the Japanese participants in Japan. For TN members used to studying both Japanese and English texts, the English text is certainly easier, but they have less experience in learning a new context of performance. For the Japanese on the other hand, learning a new performance is generally not that difficult except that this one is in English and that changes the equation considerably. Fortunately, all the musicians have worked with Theatre Nohgaku on other plays and they have some idea as to how to match noh rhythms with English. Still they have to memorize a lot of English and I will be working with them to do that.



And finally, for Kinue Oshima, who will sing in English, as an experienced noh performer, her movements will be crisp, clear and centered in the quiet intensity of noh. Learning the English and pronouncing it correctly while singing in the noh style will, however, be new for her. I have every belief that her professionalism in noh will carry her over and the meeting of these two groups on a far away European stage will be an exciting event in the long history of noh.

Richard Emmert



Photographs (pp 35-36) from the August rehearsal of *Pagoda* in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, USA

ENGLISH NOH - A BRIEF (AND BIASED) HISTORY

Theatre Nohgaku got its start in 2000 when I invited English-speaking advanced noh students, including those from my Noh Training Project workshops in Tokyo and Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, to gather for a week in Bloomsburg to work on W.B. Yeats' *At the Hawk's Well*, music for which I had composed in noh style in 1981 and which had several subsequent productions. The rehearsals were an initial attempt to see whether noh in English could be both interesting and viable enough to create a company of English noh performers.

YEATS AND NOH

The history of plays in English being called 'noh' seems to have originated with Yeats when he wrote his *At the Hawks' Well* in 1916. Its production, however, did not use a noh musical style, but original music composed by Edmund Dulac.

Here, immediately, a misunderstanding was created of what noh is. Noh plays are not the same as Shakespeare plays which can be performed in a variety of ways and still be considered Shakespeare. Noh instead is like opera. Taking the text of a Verdi or Mozart or Britten opera, discarding the music and performing it in a style other than opera, would create a performance based on opera lyrics. But is it still a Verdi opera when the lyrics are just spoken? Is it still a Mozart opera if the text is done in Beijing opera style without Mozart's music? Is it still an opera if it is done in the style of noh?

I don't think so. An opera is done in a style that we recognize as opera. Likewise, a noh play (and 'play' is a misnomer — it is more a musical or dance-drama) is done in a style that can be recognized as noh. A Mozart opera performed without Mozart's music in the style of noh, is noh. A performance using the libretto of the classical noh *Kiyotsune* sung in opera style is not noh, but is opera.



Though Yeats called his play a 'noh' play, it was, in my opinion, a Western musical performance whose text was influenced by noh. But it was not noh. That had to wait until the Japanese noh scholar, Yokomichi Mario, made an arrangement for *Hawk's Well* in Japanese in 1949 which had a production by noh professionals, and then yet another version and production of it in 1965. Both of these have been often performed since. In the noh world, these are considered noh, but a version using the original music by Edmond Dulac is not.

The version I composed in 1981, followed both the Yeats English and the musical style of noh. It was, to my knowledge, the first time that anyone had written strict noh music to go with the original English of Yeats' play. It was an English noh.

OTHER ENGLISH NOH

After Yeats, there no doubt have been others who have written texts influenced by noh, and likely even called them 'noh plays'. Of course, in my view, they are not noh until they are performed at the very least in the musical style of noh.

One that came very close to being noh was the play *St. Francis*, written by Arthur Little with music by Leonard Holvik. This was performed in 1970 at my alma mater, Earlham College in Indiana. It was my second year, and these two professors conducted a noh seminar which I took. The seminar featured readings of noh texts in translation, listening to recordings of noh music and seeing the one available film about noh. We then began to rehearse the work which the two professors had created. The structure followed closely some of the typical structures of classical noh. The music suggested noh, but was written so American students not trained in noh techniques could still perform it. I was chosen to be the main actor for the production, hardly imagining that this would be a first step in what would become a lifetime relationship with noh.



Left: Akira Matsui Right: Richard Emmert

Later when I went to Japan, I met a young noh actor — Akira Matsui who is on this tour — and began to take lessons with him in traditional noh chant and dance. Then, I studied the four instruments as well and began to develop an understanding of the music of noh, in particular the relationship between the drums and the text and how text and rhythm are so important in creating the style of noh.

While studying noh in Japan, I was told by several people that the music of noh developed from the Japanese language and could not be done in other languages. Despite this, as I began to feel the rhythms of noh in my body, it seemed natural for this native English speaker to begin to think of English text and how it could fit with these rhythms. When Jonah Salz, a young American director based in Kyoto, asked me to write music for a production of *At the Hawk's Well*, it was easy to throw caution to the wind and to dive in and write music for the Yeats text in traditional noh style. Performances followed in Kyoto, Osaka and Tokyo. Yokomichi Mario, the director of the earlier *Hawk's Well* versions in Japanese and my professor of noh studies at Tokyo University of Fine Arts, told me at the Tokyo performances, that my version was 'too noh-like'. On reflection, his criticism suggested that I could have explored the noh style in a way which departed more from typical noh, but it clearly recognized, if there was still any doubt, that yes, noh can be performed in English.

Over the next years, I composed music for and directed and performed in several English noh. They were: 1) a Tokyo production of American Janine Beichman's play *Drifting Fires*, a story about space travelers in the distant future visiting the place which once was the planet 'earth' and there meeting the spirit of the last human being (1985); 2) an Earlham College production readapting *St. Francis* in a stricter noh style (1988); 3) a University of Sydney production of Allan Marett's *Eliza*, a story of a British woman shipwrecked off the coast of Australia and



Above: Akira Matsui, performing in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, USA

Below: Theatre Nohgaku, Noh Training Project in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, USA

forced to live with aboriginal people, and who in turn came to appreciate their unique sense of dream and time (1989); 4) a San Francisco Theatre of Yugen production of *Crazy Horse* by American Erik Ehn which collaborated with Native American performers to tell the story of the great Native American chieftain (2001); 5) a Vancouver production of Canadian poet Daphne Marlatt's *The Gull*, a play about cultural identity issues of Japanese fishermen along the British Columbia coast and touted in Canada as 'the first Canadian noh' (2006); and 6) a University of Hawaii production of my own English translation of the classical Japanese noh *Sumidagawa* (2009).

During the 1980s, there were two others in Japan who made productions which can be considered English noh, or at least noh-influenced English plays. First, Kuniyoshi Munakata Ueda, a Shakespeare specialist at Nihon University, began using noh with Shakespeare, notably *Hamlet* and *Othello*. Although the plays sometimes lacked a clear sense of the relationship between poetic text and drum rhythms that give noh its vitality and intensity, they did include chant and movement in noh style and used noh musicians. Second, my good friend and now fellow member of Theatre Nohgaku, David Crandall, wrote and directed two plays, *Crazy Jane* and *Linden Tree*, both which had a strong noh structural feel in terms of text and movement but employed his own musical composition for a Western instrumental ensemble.

THEATRE NOHGAKU AND ITS WORK

In the above list of English noh, there is a large gap between the noh plays I wrote music for in the 80s and the next one which followed in 2001. After working on English noh in the 80s, it seemed clear that if it was to become viable, it was necessary to have a group of English speakers trained in noh. In 1991, I started an ongoing semi-intensive Noh Training Project in Tokyo,



Photographs from the Noh Training Project/Theatre
Nohgaku performance of Funa Benkei, August 2009



and then in 1995, a summer intensive Noh Training Project in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania. Both continue today.

Thus, after some years of planting the seeds, Theatre Nohgaku was born. We had our first tour in the United States in 2002 of Yeats' *Hawk's Well*. In 2003, we began an annual Writers' Workshop geared to playwrights and poets interested in writing in the style of noh. In 2004, we collaborated with the Noh Training Project for its 10th anniversary performance in Pennsylvania of the classical noh *Kurozuka* in Japanese. In 2006, we toured Theatre Nohgaku member Greg Giovanni's *Pine Barrens*, a story of the devil said to roam the pine barrens of New Jersey. In 2007, we toured David Crandall's *Crazy Jane* which he readapted to be sung in noh style with a noh ensemble. And finally, this past summer, we again collaborated with the Noh Training Project for its 15th anniversary by performing the classical noh *Funabenkei* in Japanese.

This production of *Pagoda* in collaboration with the Oshima Noh Theatre is another step in our development as a company. But perhaps more importantly, it is a step in making noh an accessible art form for the English-speaking world.

Richard Emmert



Photographs from Greg Giovanni's *Pine Barrens*

‘GETTING TO NOH’



Kinue Oshima studies the mask of Meilin

In undertaking this production the Oshima Noh Theatre and Theatre Nohgaku, working with the Japan Society and Pagoda author, Jannette Cheong, wanted to deepen the understanding of classical and contemporary noh theatre through this publication and a programme of public lectures/ demonstrations, talks and school-based workshops. All these activities come under the umbrella of the ‘Getting to Noh’ programme.

A TRIP TO THE THEATRE

Punning on the name ‘noh’ (Getting to Noh) has a distinguished history. In 1916 W B Yeats arranged publication of a book of noh translations entitled ‘Certain Noble Plays of Japan.’ To Yeats noh was aristocratic and mysterious. It was aristocratic because for three hundred years in Japan noh had been mainly performed privately before very select audiences, and it was mysterious because its patrons favoured the spirituality imparted to noh by its great pioneer Zeami (1363–1443). But in Zeami’s day noh companies competed strenuously against each other for popularity and like any other theatre were judged on their ability to move their audiences. Noh is simply theatre with a particular way of engaging its audience and I hope you will find that Jannette Cheong and Rick Emmert have succeeded in combining classical form with compelling content. The dancing, the music, the chanting, the poetry, the mystery are all there in *Pagoda*, but, as you admire the virtuosity of the performers, you are allowed to shed a tear too for Meilin.

Brian Powell

Emeritus Fellow of Keble College and St Antony’s College, Oxford

WHAT IS NOH?



HISTORY

Noh developed into its present form during the 14th and 15th centuries under the leadership of the distinguished performer-playwrights Kannami and his son Zeami. Zeami, in particular, wrote numerous plays that are still performed in today's classical repertory of some 250 plays. He also wrote a number of once secret works which explain the aesthetic principles governing noh and give details on how the art should be composed, acted, directed, taught, and produced. Noh flourished during Zeami's time under the patronage of the military shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu.

Later during the Edo period (1603-1868), noh became the official performance art of the military government. Feudal military lords throughout the country supported their own troupes and many studied and performed the art themselves. With the societal reforms of the Meiji period (1868-1912), noh lost its governmental patronage and was left to fend for itself. Although it nearly died out, enough performers regrouped, found private sponsors, and began teaching the art to amateurs so that it slowly began to flourish again. Today, like many classical performance forms throughout the world, noh cannot be described as a popular art among the average Japanese. Yet its supporters are enthusiastic and its professional performers are highly trained and extremely busy performing and teaching throughout the country. There are today approximately 1,500 professional performers who make their living largely through performing and teaching noh.





TYPES OF PLAYS

There are five categories of noh plays. In order, these feature gods, warriors, beautiful women, miscellaneous (notably mad-women or present-time) figures, and supernatural beings. During the Edo period, a full day's programme consisted of the ritual piece Okina-Sanbaso followed by one play from each category in the above order. One Kyogen play would be presented between each noh. Of the five categories, the women plays are the slowest in tempo but the most poetic, and of the highest level in expressing yugen, an aesthetic term suggesting quiet elegance and grace, and subtle and fleeting beauty.

CHARACTERS



Above: Hisami Oshima in *Tokusa*

Below: Masanobu Oshima in *Kayoi Komachi*

The main character of a noh play is called the shite (pronounced sh'tay) who sometimes appears with one or more companion characters called tsure. In many plays, the shite appears in the first half as an ordinary person, departs, then appears in the second half in its true form as the ghost of a famous person of long ago. The former is called the maejite and the latter, the nochijite, or nochishite. They are traditionally performed by the same actor. The secondary actor, the waki, is often a travelling priest whose questioning of the main character is important in developing the story line. He also often appears with companion wakitsure. An interlude actor called ai or ai-kyogen also often appears as a local person who gives further background to the waki, and thus to the audience, in order to understand the situation of the shite.



CHORUS

A chorus called jiutai, usually consisting of eight persons, sits at the side of the stage, functioning to narrate the background, and the story and its mood. It also sometimes describes the character's thoughts and emotions or even sings lines for the characters.

INSTRUMENTALISTS

Instrumentalists known as hayashi sit at the back of the stage. They consist of a transverse flute (nohkan), an hourglass-shaped drum held at the shoulder (kotsuzumi), a slightly larger hourglass-shaped drum placed on the lap (okawa or otsuzumi), and a barrel-shaped drum placed on a small floor stand and played with two sticks (taiko). The rhythms and melody of these instruments follow highly prescribed systems.

One particularly unique feature is the use of drum calls (kakegoe), the shouts or cries of the drummers which serve as signals between the drummers as well as between the drummers and singers. These drum calls also add an important element to the sound texture of the performance, creating the mood and with the chant, establishing the tempo.



Kinue Oshima in *Ama*

MOVEMENT

A performance of noh is not a performance of realistic theatre. Rather, its movement is highly stylized and prescribed. While some gestures have specific meaning, others serve as an abstract aesthetic expression to convey the emotions of the main character. All of noh can be described as dance. Sometimes there is very little movement as dramatic tension is built mainly through narration. At other times there is strong, vigorous movement. Movement takes place sometimes to the singing of the chorus or sometimes to purely instrumental music. In general, deliberateness, brevity, suppression and abstraction are important features of noh movement.

MASKS

Makeup is not used in noh. Rather, delicately carved masks are often used by the shite main character and/or the tsure attendant. These masks are considered objects of superb beauty as well as powerful means of expression. In general, any character being portrayed which is not a middle-aged man living in the present will wear a mask. Therefore all characters portraying women and old men wear masks as well as supernatural beings such as ghosts, deities, demons, and divine beasts. In general, masks either have a more or less neutral expression, or portray a very strong emotion. The former, in fact, allows the mask a variety of expressions with the play of light and shadow on it as the actor changes slightly the tilt of the mask. Even in roles in which an actor does not wear a mask, the sense of a masked face is evident. This is called *hitamen*, literally 'direct mask'. For this, the actor does not use his face for realistic expression but rather for mask-like expression. The *waki* secondary character or accompanying *wakisute* never wear masks as they are meant to be middle-aged (generally, men) living in the present-time of the play.

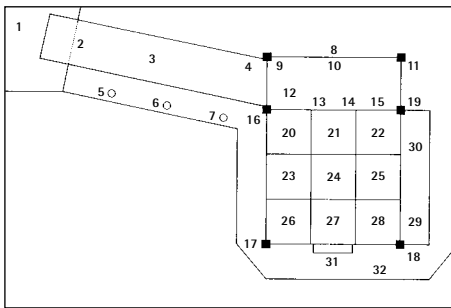


Above: Masanobu Oshima in *Sesshoseki*, and in *Yuya* (right)

COSTUMES

Costumes in noh are elaborately made with gorgeously dyed silk and intricate embroidery. These costumes reveal the type of character being portrayed and follow prescribed conventions as to their use. Still, there is much variety. The detail of design, the color combinations, the richness of texture, and the strength of form give noh its visual impact. All characters, whether rich or poor, young or old, male or female, are beautifully costumed. The costuming process is complex. Rather than the actor putting on his own costume, two or three costumers are needed to sculpt the costume on the actor.





- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1 <i>kagami-no-ma</i> (mirror room) | 17 <i>metsuke-bashira</i> (viewing pillar) |
| 2 <i>age-maku</i> (curtain) | 18 <i>waki-bashira</i> (waki pillar) |
| 3 <i>hashigakari</i> (bridgeway) | 19 <i>fue-bashira</i> (flute pillar) |
| 4 <i>kyôgen</i> seat | 20 <i>jô-za</i> (shite spot) |
| 5 <i>san-no-matsu</i> (third pine) | 21 <i>dai-shô-mae</i> (rear center) |
| 6 <i>ni-no-matsu</i> (second pine) | 22 <i>fue-za-mae</i> (rear corner) |
| 7 <i>ichi-no-matsu</i> (first pine) | 23 <i>waki-shô</i> (right center) |
| 8 <i>kagami-ita</i> ('mirror board' painted with a pine) | 24 <i>shônaka</i> (center) |
| 9 <i>kôken</i> (stage assistants) | 25 <i>ji-utai-mae</i> (left center) |
| 10 <i>ato-za</i> (rear space) | 26 <i>sumi</i> (corner) |
| 11 <i>kiri-do</i> (small entrance door) | 27 <i>shôsaki</i> (front center) |
| 12 <i>taiko</i> (stick drum) | 28 <i>waki-za-mae</i> (waki spot) |
| 13 <i>ôtsuzumi/ôkawa</i> (hip drum) | 29 <i>waki</i> seat |
| 14 <i>kotsuzumi</i> (shoulder drum) | 30 <i>ji-utai/ji</i> (chorus) |
| 15 <i>fue</i> (flute) | 31 <i>shirasu-bashigo</i> |
| 16 <i>shite-bashira</i> (shite pillar) | (stairs to white stones) |
| | 32 <i>shirasu</i> (white stones) |



STAGE

The main part of the stage used in noh is a curtain-less square with a bridgeway leading to it from backstage. At the end of the bridgeway there is a hanging curtain that swings up and back allowing the characters to enter and exit. Stages were traditionally outside and covered with a long sloping roof. From the late 19th century, they have been mainly moved indoors. These inside stages are open on two sides in a kind of semi-theater-in-the-round. There is no attempt at designing a realistic stage set. Rather, only symbolic stage properties are used. The pine tree painted on the back wall of the stage represents the tree through which noh was, by legend, passed down from heaven to mankind. In Japanese culture, the evergreen pine has come to be an important symbol of longevity and unchanging steadfastness.

SPACE AND TIME

In general, the use of space and time is not portrayed realistically. Rather, there is a freedom of portrayal that requires the audience to use their imaginations. Characters take only a few steps and through their song or that of the chorus, the audience knows that they have travelled a great distance. Two characters may appear on the stage nearly side-by-side, but again the audience comes to understand that they are not yet in each other's presence. While this may be confusing for the first time viewer, for many people who come to understand these and other conventions, noh creates a much more powerful theatrical expression than realistic theatre.

Richard Emmert

MAKING THE MASKS FOR PAGODA



Noh masks are sculpted from a fragrant, light and strong wood known as Japanese cypress (hinoki), and painted with a whitewash made from oyster shell powder (gofun) and various natural mineral pigments. The masks made using these techniques have been passed down for generations and used by noh performers who employ various devices to create diverse expressions on stage.

As a noh mask-maker, the masks which I usually make follow the traditional mask types which have been passed down for centuries, although my own flavour somehow is added to the mix. Still, it is quite rare for mask-makers today to have the chance to create completely new masks. The four masks to be used for the new noh play *Pagoda* are all new masks and I have created them after discussing the play with the playwright and director as well as the performers. Having previously made new masks for Theatre Nohgaku, I have found that creating such new masks is a very exciting process and I am very happy to have been asked to be a part of this endeavor. I also look forward to seeing how European audiences react to this new English play performed in the very old noh style and I hope that my newly created masks will both reflect the ancient traditions of noh and the feeling of this new play, *Pagoda*.

Hideta Kitazawa



Above: Hideta Kitazawa at work

Below: Other masks carved by Hideta Kitazawa

THE PINE TREE BACKDROP



An old pine is the only subject allowed for the Noh drama stage. It is believed that under an old pine one can have access to spirits in the nether world. It is the pine which sanctifies the stage, and makes it possible to portray acts of life, death, and redemption.

Noh stages are built as shrines. They traditionally have as part of the structure, pine trees painted on cedar panels. Within the Kano school Yamato-e tradition which is favored for Noh stages, I have found the possibilities for *Old Pine* backgrounds almost endless.

I have developed a new type of hanging scroll in order to suit the requirements of contemporary theaters, and easy transportability. This painting is in the more austere colors and style of some of the earliest Noh paintings. I imagined the pine as if it were a sentient being at an important turning point, steeling itself at the edge of a metaphoric abyss, and yet stretching, seeking beyond the confines of its frame.

Allan West
Designer



Above: Allan West at work Below: Noh performance with backdrop by Allan West

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH



A noh workshop for teachers was held at the Victoria & Albert Museum and attended by teachers from across the country.

In addition, six school-based workshops were led by Richard Emmert and Kinue Oshima for seven schools in London and Oxford to engage students in a practical exploration of noh theatre. Four London schools (Blackheath High School, George Green's School, Negus at Plumstead Manor, Westwood Girls' College for Languages and Arts) also worked on a related arts project which aimed to develop young people's creativity and self-expression through writing and performance. Each school produced noh-influenced 'travel' pieces, based on the themes of identity and migration. The schools attended a joint interim workshop to prepare their pieces for performance at the Southbank Centre in front of a public audience and members of the professional theatre companies.



The 'Getting to Noh' programme also included a number of demonstration workshops and lectures to open up the world of noh to the general public – an introduction to the art of noh, its history, stories, masks, costumes and music – at the following venues:

- Victoria & Albert Museum
- School of Oriental and African Studies
- British Library
- The Japan Foundation
- Samuel Beckett Theatre
- Pitt Rivers Museum
- The Nissan Institute
- The Maison de la Culture du Japon




Finally, *'Elegant Accomplishments: the Art of Noh Performance'* is on display at the Victoria & Albert Museum in the Toshiba Gallery of Japanese Art and Design from 7 September 2009 to 7 March 2010.



Above (top): Teachers' workshop at the V&A Museum
 Above (bottom): Rehearsal of students' own work
 Right: School-based noh workshops





Autumn leaves drift west and east, some paths meet, some not
Untold stories lost in mist – lost in time

Pagoda

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people have helped to bring this production to fruition. Without their support, kindness and interest in our work it would not have been possible to bring this unique production to Europe. We are extremely grateful to all of our sponsors and contributors for their support. In particular, we must thank the Agency for Cultural Affairs of the Government of Japan, for its vision in understanding that the project is as much about trying to appreciate what we experience in our own time, as it is about understanding of the traditions of the past.

All of our sponsors, contributors and supporters have given us a warmth and generosity that has added far more value than the financial support needed for a production of this kind.

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Japan Embassy, London (First lecture/demonstration of the tour, followed by reception)

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Southbank Centre (Venue for world premiere, London performances and educational activities)

School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS, University of London)

(London venue for rehearsals and workshops. Special thanks to David Hughes)

Victoria & Albert Museum (London venue for education activities, and exhibition of Noh masks, costumes, prints and scripts)

The British Library (London venue for public lecture)

Keble College, University of Oxford (Oxford performance venue, O'Reilly Theatre)

Pitt Rivers Museum (Oxford venue for Noh Mask Exhibition, public lecture and educational activities)

Nissan Institute (Venue for Open Seminar)
Japan Embassy, Dublin (Dublin lecture/demonstration followed by reception)
Samuel Beckett Theatre, Ireland (Dublin performance and workshop venue)
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