The Kyoto Consortium for Japanese Studies (KCJS)

KCJS is an in-country program for the intensive study of Japanese language, humanities, and social sciences. Established in 1989, the thirteen institutions that govern KCJS include Boston University, Brown University, University of Chicago, Columbia University/Barnard College, Cornell University, Emory University, Harvard University, University of Pennsylvania, Princeton University, Stanford University, Washington University in St. Louis, Yale University, and University of Virginia. For more information, see www.kcjs.jp

Japanese Performing Arts
Profsessors Diego Pellecchia and Galia Todorova Petkova
Spring 2020

Meeting Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 16:40-18:10
Instructor Contact: k5617@cc.kyoto-su.ac.jp (Pellecchia) 128255@alumni.soas.ac.uk (Petkova)

This class looks at different forms of Japanese performing arts. The first half of the term will focus on the study of nōgaku, Japan’s performing art combining dance, drama, poetry, mask and costumes through literary and performance analysis. After spring break, the course will shift its focus to kabuki and bunraku. The course is led by Diego Pellecchia (nō scholar and practitioner) and Galia Todorova Petkova (specialist in Japanese performing arts and gender).

Students will learn about the history and aesthetic conventions of traditional performing arts, presented as living traditions in the context of contemporary Japanese society, using a combination of textual and audiovisual materials. The course will provide ample opportunities to attend performances, visit artisans’ laboratories, and participate in workshops with renown Japanese artists, to complement a solid academic background about the arts with a more direct, hands-on approach to the topics covered.
Performances often take place during the weekend: students are encouraged to check the syllabus at the beginning of the semester and keep those dates open. Outings are regarded as compulsory activities: presence will be counted toward the final grade. Students are expected to prepare readings in advance. Preparation will be tested with quizzes and short tests. As part of the final assignments, students will choose a topic for further individual research and present the results at the end of the semester. Presentation formats may include academic papers, translations, or creative works based on research. After the final presentation, students will write a 2500-3000-words essays and further elaborate on the same topic. Readings and other handouts will be provided by the lecturers in advance.
COURSE SCHEDULE and READINGS

Jan 14 Tue  Introduction to Japanese performing arts
Read after class
- Visit the website https://jparc.online/nogaku/

Jan 17 Fri  History of nōgaku
Overview of the history of nōgaku from its origins until today.
Read before class

Further reading

Jan 21 Tue  Nō play focus: Oimatsu
We will discuss the background of the play, its text, and its staging conventions.
Read before class

Further reading
- Borgen, Robert. “From Minister to Exile“. Sugawara no Michizane and the Early Heian Court. (Hawaii U.P., 1994).

Jan 23 Thu  Nō play focus: Kochō
We will discuss the background of the play, its text, and its staging conventions.
Read before class

Further reading
Jan 26 Sun  Nō performance observation: Oimatsu and Kochō
We will attend the performance of two nō plays (analyzed in class) and of one kyogen play (analyzed at home) at a Nō theatre in Kyoto.
Read before the outing

Jan 28 Tue  Post-performance discussion
During this kind of meeting we will go through the notes we took during the performance, exchange opinions, ask questions, and investigate further the plays we attended. In this session we may also create content to populate a digital database on nōgaku.

Jan 30 Thu  NO CLASS

Feb 4 Tue  Nō and kyōgen masks
This class examines nō and kyogen masks within the history of Japanese performing arts. The class will also cover aspects of mask making in preparation to the 2/6 field trip.
Read before class
Further reading

Feb 6 Thu  Visit to a nō mask carver’s laboratory
To do before the field trip
• Based on readings and class activities, prepare questions to ask the mask carver.

Feb 11 Tue  NATIONAL FOUNDATION DAY NO CLASS

Feb 13 Thu NO CLASS

Feb 18 Tue  Nō play focus: Yorobōshi
We will discuss the background of the play, its text, and its staging conventions.
Read before class:

**Feb 20 Thu**  Nō play focus: Kazuraki
We will discuss the background of the play and relevance in its historical setting.

Read before class:

**Feb 23 Sun**  Nō performance observation: Yorobōshi and Kazuraki
We will attend the performance of two nō plays (analyzed in class) and of one kyōgen play (analyzed at home) at a nō theatre in Kyoto.

**Feb 25 Tue**  Post-performance discussion
During this kind of meeting we will go through the notes we took during the performance, exchange opinions, ask questions, and investigate further the plays we attended. In this session we may also create content to populate a digital database on nō theatre.

**Feb 27 Thu**  Review
During this session we will review all the content and readings covered in the first half of the semester. This will serve to consolidate knowledge, and to prepare for the mid-term assignment.

**Mar 3 Tue**  SPRING BREAK NO CLASS

**Mar 5 Thu**  SPRING BREAK NO CLASS

**Mar 9 Mon**  Mid-term paper due (1500~2000 words)

**Mar 10 Tue**  Edo-period performing arts
We will look at the various genres performed during the Edo period and their social context.

Read before class:
Mar 12 Thu  Nenbutsu kyōgen
In this class we will look at various forms of nenbutsu kyōgen, a type of masked pantomime performed on the occasion of Buddhist rituals.
Read before class
• TBA depending on plays to be staged on March 15.

Mar 15 Sun. Field trip to Seiryō-ji temple: 17.00 – 20.00/21.00
On March 15th temples commemorate the Buddha’s death, or passing into Nirvana (nehan 涅槃). We will visit Seiryō-ji in Saga (Arashiyama) to observe the ceremony and a Saga nenbutsu kyōgen performance (17.00-19.30). The students can also stay for the main event – the fire festival Taimatsu 松明 (20.00-21.00). Read before the field trip: the story of the plays.
http://www.sagakyogen.info/program.html

Mar 17 Tue  Introduction to kabuki: origins and history
Overview of the thriving performance culture in the late sixteenth century, which brought to the birth of kabuki, and of kabuki’s development afterwards.
Read before class:

Mar 19 Thu  The kabuki actor
We will examine kabuki as an actor’s theatre, the close relationship between actors and spectators, and its influence on the stage construction and conventions.
Video: TBA
Read before class:
  Further reading:
Mar 22 Sun  Performance observation: kabuki
We will attend the March kabuki performance at Minami-za kabuki theatre in Kyoto – Super Kabuki II: Oguri (A New Version). No English earphone guide is available for this performance, but a summary of the story will be provided.

Mar 24 Thu  Performance of gender in kabuki: masculinities
We will look at the ways in which gender and the body have been presented on the stage: role types and acting patterns, focusing on the aragoto and wagoto styles of masculinity.

Video: excerpts from the plays Shibaraku (Wait a Minutel) and Kuruwa Bunshō (Tales of the Licensed Quarter).

Read before class:

Mar 26 Tue  Kabuki: the making of onnagata
We will explore the female impersonation in kabuki: history, acting techniques, body construction, role types, prominent onnagata.

Video: TBA

Read before class:

Further reading:

Mar 31 Tue  Bunraku puppet theatre: history and performance
Overview of the development of bunraku and the elements of performance: puppets, puppeteers, music accompaniment and chanted narration, stage conventions and effects.

Read before class:

**Apr 2 Tue  Bunraku puppet theatre: the texts**
Battles and love suicides.

*Read before class:*

*Further reading:*

**Apr 7 Tue  Student presentations 1**
Students will present their final projects. Students will receive feedback from peers and from the instructors, which they will be expected to include in their final paper.

**Apr 9 Thu  Student presentations 2**
Students will present their final projects. Students will receive feedback from peers and from the instructor, which they will be expected to include in their final paper.

**Apr 11 Sat  Performance observation: bunraku**
We will attend the April bunraku performance at the National Bunraku Theatre in Osaka, the matinee show – *Yoshitsune sembon zakura* (“Yoshitsune and One Thousand Cherry Trees”) (Act1 〜 2). Doors open at 10.00, performance starts at 10.30, scheduled to end at 3:10pm. There is an English earphone guide.

*Read before class:*
• Summary and translation of the play.

**Apr 16 Thu  Final paper due (2500-3000-words)**

**Grade weights:**
• Attendance/participation: 20%
• Mid-term paper: 20%
• Final presentations: 30%
• Final paper: 30%
Textbooks and other main resources (copies of selected sections will be provided)

- JPARC website.

Play translations


Keene, Donald. Tr. *Twenty Noh Plays*. (New York. 1955)
- *Four Major Plays of Chikamatsu*. (Columbia paperback, 1961)


- *Warrior Ghost Plays from the Japanese Noh Theater*. (Cornell East Asia Series, Cornell East Asia Program 1993)
- *Restless Spirits from Japanese Noh Plays of the Fourth Group* (Cornell East Asia Series, Cornell East Asia Program, 1995)

Studies in nō history and plays


Beng Choo, Lim. *Another Stage: Kanze Nobumitsu and the Late Muromachi Noh Theater*. (Cornell East Asia Series, 2012).


Brandon, James R, ed. Nō and Kyōgen in the Contemporary World (University of Hawaii, 1997)
Komparu, Kunio. The Noh Theater: Principles and Perspectives. (Tokyo, 1983)

On performance treatises and transmission
Hare, Thomas. Zeami’s Style: The Noh Plays of Zeami Motokiyo. (Stanford. 1986)
Hare, Tomas. Zeami Performance Notes. (Columbia University Press, 2008)
Pinnington, Noel. Traces in the Way: Michi and the Writings of Komparu Zenchiku. (Cornell East Asia Series, 2006)
Rath, Eric. The Ethos of Noh (Harvard University Asia Center, 2004)
Quinn, Shelley Fenno. Developing Zeami: The Noh Actor’s Attunement in Practice. (University of Hawaii Press, 2005)
Rimer and Yamazaki (tr.) On the Art of the NōDrama: The Major Treatises of Zeami. (Princeton UP, 1984)

Kyōgen
Morley, Carolyn. Transformation, Miracles, and Mischief; The Mountain Priest Plays of Kyōgen (Cornell East Asia Series, East Asia Program, 1993)

General Japanese Theater and other Japanese Theatrical Arts
Adachi, Barbara. Backstage at Bunraku (Weatherhill, 1985)
Parker, Helen S. E. *Progressive Traditions: An Illustrated Study of Plot Repetition in Traditional Japanese Theater* (Brill, 2006)

**Costumes and Masks**

*The World of Noh Costumes*, Yamaguchi Orimono, Inc. (Kyoto, 1989)

*Patterns and Poetry: NōRobes from the Lucy Truman Aldrich Collection.* (Museum of Art Rhode Island School of Design, 1992)

Takeda, Sharon Sadako & Monica Bethe. *Miracles and Mischief; Noh and Kyōgen Theater in Japan.* (Los Angeles County Museum, 2002).


*The Tokugawa Collection of Noh Costumes and Masks.* (Japan Society. New York, 1976.)


**Background (classics)**

Heldt, Gustav (tr.). *The Kojiki: An Account of Ancient Matters* (Columbia UP, 2014)

McCullough, Helen (tr.). *Tales of Ise.* (Tokyo 1968/1978.)

McCullough, Helen (tr.). *Kokin wakashū: the first imperial anthology of Japanese poetry.* (Stanford UP 1985)


Tyler, Royall (tr.). *The Tales of the Heike.* (Penguin, 2014)


Shirane, Haruo. *Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons.* (Columbia 2012).

**Background (historical and cultural)**


Hall, J.W./Takeshi, T. (ed) *Japan in the Muromachi Age.* (Berkley, 1977.)


Bunraku and Kabuki
 Brandon, James, *Chūshingura: Studies in Kabuki and the Puppet Theater*. (University of Hawaii Press, 1982)
Keene, Donald, tr. *Four Major Plays of Chikamatsu*. (Columbia Paperback, 1961).