

## The Kyoto Consortium for Japanese Studies (KCJS)

### Japanese Performing Arts

Professors Diego Pellecchia and Galia Todorova Petkova

Spring 2022

Meeting Time: Monday and Wednesday 16:40-18:10

Instructor Contact: [k5617@cc.kyoto-su.ac.jp](mailto:k5617@cc.kyoto-su.ac.jp) (Pellecchia)

[128255@alumni.soas.ac.uk](mailto: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.



Nō: *Ikkaku sennin*

Kabuki: *Narukami*

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 17 Mon Introduction to Japanese performing arts

#### Read after class

- Brazell, Karen. "Japanese Theater, a Living Tradition" in *Traditional Japanese Theater*. (Columbia U.P., 1999). 3-46.
- Visit the website <https://jparc.online/nogaku/>

### Jan 19 Wed History of nōgaku

Overview of the history of nōgaku from its origins until today.

#### Read before class

- Kagaya, Shinko and Miura Hiroko. "Noh and Muromachi culture" in Salz, Jonah (ed.) *A History of Japanese Theatre*. (Cambridge U.P., 2016). 24-59 ('spotlights' and 'focuses' are optional).

#### Further reading

- Pinnington, Noel. "Contexts: Japan in the Muromachi Age". *A New History of Medieval Japanese Theatre*. (Palgrave 2019).

### Jan 24 Mon Nō play focus

We will discuss the background of the play, its text, and its staging conventions.

Read before class: readings will be based on the play we will watch.

### Jan 26 Wed Nō play focus

We will discuss the background of the play, its text, and its staging conventions.

Read before class: readings will be based on the play we will watch.

### TBA Nō performance observation

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

- Bethe, Monica and Karen Brazell. "The Practice of Noh Theatre" in *By Means of Performance: Intercultural Studies of Theatre and Ritual*. (Cambridge UP, 1990). 167-193

### Jan 31 Mon 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.

### Feb 2 Wed 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 2/7 field trip.

Read before class

- Pellecchia, Diego. "Masks in Traditional Asian Theatre - Japan" in *The Routledge Handbook of Asian Theatre*. (2015). 161-164
- Tanabe, Saburōsuke. "The Birth and Evolution of Noh Masks" in *Miracles and Mischief: Noh and Kyogen Theatre of Japan*. (LACMA, 2002). 43-69.

Further reading

- Nomura, Manzō. "Mask Making" in Teele, R. (ed.) *Mime Journal: Nō/Kyōgen Masks and Performance*, 1984. 171-176.

**Feb 7 Mon 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 9 Wed Nō play focus**

We will discuss the background of the play, its text, and its staging conventions.

Read before class: readings will be based on the play we will watch.

**Feb 14 Mon Nō play focus**

We will discuss the background of the play and relevance in its historical setting.

Read before class: readings will be based on the play we will watch.

**TBA Nō performance observation**

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 16 Wed 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 21 Mon 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 final assignment.

## Feb 23 Wed NO CLASS – NATIONAL HOLIDAY

### Feb 28 Mon Edo-period performing arts

We will look at the various genres performed during the Edo period and their social context.

Read before class:

- Shively, Donald. H. "The Social Environment of Tokugawa Kabuki." In James Brandon, William Malm and Donald Shively. *Studies in Kabuki: Its Acting, Music, and Historical Context*. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1978: 1-61.

### Mar 2 Wed 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:

- Tsubaki, Andrew. "The Performing Arts of Sixteenth-Century Japan: A Prelude to Kabuki." In Samuel Leiter (ed.). *A Kabuki Reader: History and Performance*, New York: M.E.Sharpe, 2002. Pp. 3-15.
- Kominz, Laurence. "Origins of Kabuki Acting in Medieval Japanese Drama." In Samuel Leiter (ed.). *A Kabuki Reader: History and Performance*, 2002. Pp. 16-32.
- Shively, Donald. "Bakufu versus Kabuki." In Samuel Leiter (ed.). *A Kabuki Reader: History and Performance*, 2002. Pp. 33-59.

### Mar 7 Mon 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:

- Thornbury, Barbara E. "Actor, Role, and Character: Their Multiple Interrelationships in Kabuki." In Samuel Leiter (ed.). *A Kabuki Reader: History and Performance*, 2002. Pp. 230-237.

Further reading:

- Raz, Jacob. "Kabuki in the Edo period and its Audiences." In Jacob Raz, *Audience and Actors: A Study of Their Interaction in the Japanese Traditional Theatre*, Leiden: Brill Archive, 1983. Pp. 137-213.

### Mar 9 Wed Nenbutsu kyogen

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 Tues 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 kyogen 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>

**TBA Performance observation: kabuki**

We will attend the March kabuki performance at Minami-za kabuki theatre in Kyoto. English earphone guide is available for the performance, and a summary of the story will be provided.

**Mar 21 Mon NATIONAL HOLIDAY – NO CLASS**

**Mar 23 Wed 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 Minute!) and *Kuruwa Bunshō* (Tales of the Licensed Quarter).

Read before class:

- Brandon, Japan. "Form in Kabuki Acting." In James Brandon, William Malm and Donald Shively. *Studies in Kabuki: Its Acting, Music, and Historical Context*. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1978. Pp. 63-132.
- Blummer, Holly. "Nakamura Shichisaburō I and the Creation of Edo-Style Wagoto." In Samuel Leiter (ed.). *A Kabuki Reader: History and Performance*. Pp. 60-75.

**Mar 28 Mon 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:

- Leiter, Samuel. "From Gay to Gei: The *Onnagata* and the Creation of *Kabuki's* Female Characters." In Samuel Leiter (ed.). *A Kabuki Reader: History and Performance*. Pp. 211-229.
- Isaka Maki. "Images of *Onnagata*: Complicating the Binarisms, Unravelling the Labyrinth." In Ayelet Zohar (ed.). *PostGender: Gender, Sexuality and*

*Performativity in Japanese Culture*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009: 22-38.

Further reading:

- Isaka, Maki. *Onnagata: A Labyrinth of Gendering in Kabuki Theater*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2016.

**Mar 30 Wed 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:

- Brazell, Karen. "The Puppet and Kabuki Theatres." In *Traditional Japanese Theater*. Columbia University Press, 1999. Pp.303-313.
- Goto, Shizuo. "Bunraku: Puppet Theatre." In Jonah Salz (ed.) *A History of Japanese Theatre*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016. Pp. 155-183.

**Apr 4 Mon Bunraku puppet theatre: the texts**

Battles and love suicides.

Read before class:

- Gerstle, C. Andrew. *Circles of Fantasy: Convention in the Plays of Chikamatsu*. Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1986. Pp.1-37.

Further reading:

- Gerstle, C. Andrew (translation and annotation). *Chikamatsu: 5 Late Plays*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001. Pp.1-35.

**TBA Performance observation: bunraku**

We will attend the April bunraku performance at the National Bunraku Theatre in Osaka, the matinee show. Doors open at 10.00, performance starts at 11.00. There is an English earphone guide.

Read before class:

- Summary and translation of the play.

**Apr 11 Mon 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 13 Wed 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.



### Textbooks and other main resources (copies of selected sections will be provided)

- Karen Brazell. *Traditional Japanese Theater: An Anthology of Plays*. (Columbia UP, 1998)
- Pinnington, Noel. *A New History of Medieval Japanese Theatre*. (Columbia UP, 2019)
- Salz, Jonah (ed.) *A History of Japanese Theatre*. (Cambridge UP, 2016)
- Samuel Leiter (ed.). *A Kabuki Reader: History and Performance*. (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2002)
- JPARC website.

### Play translations

Bethe, Monica and Richard Emmert. *Noh Performance Guides: Matsukaze, Fujito, Tenko, Atsumori, Aoinoue, Miidera, Ema*. (National Noh Theater)

Brazell, Karen, ed. *Twelve Plays of the Noh and Kyôgen Theaters*. (Cornell East Asia Series, Ithaca, N.Y. 1988)

Brandon, James and Samuel Leiter (eds.). *Kabuki Plays on Stage: Brilliance and Bravado, 1697-1766, Vol. 1*. (Hawaii University Press, 2002).

- *Kabuki Plays on Stage: Villainy and Vengeance, 1773-1799, Vol. 2*. Honolulu: (Hawaii University Press, 2002).
- *Kabuki Plays on Stage: Darkness and Desire, 1804-1864, Vol. 3*. (Hawaii University Press, 2002).
- *Kabuki Plays on Stage: Restoration and Reform, 1872-1905*, (Hawaii University Press, 2002).

Keene, Donald. Tr. *Twenty Noh Plays*. (New York. 1955)

- *Four Major Plays of Chikamatsu*. (Columbia paperback, 1961)

Kenny, Don. *The Kyôgen Book: An Anthology of Japanese Classical Comedies*. The Japan Times. (Tokyo, 1989)

Shimazaki Chifumi. *The Noh. God Noh, Warrior Noh, Woman Noh I,II,III*. Hinoki Shoten, (Tokyo, Japan. 1973, 76, 77, 80,87).

- *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

Atkins, Paul. *Revealed Identity: The Noh Plays of Komparu Zenchiku*. (Center for Japanese Studies, U. of Michigan, 2006)

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

Bethe and Brazell. *Nō as Performance: An Analysis of the Kuse Scene of Yamamba*. (Ithaca, N.Y. 1978)

Bethe and Brazell. *Dance in the Nō Theater*. (Ithaca, N.Y. 1982)

Brandon, James R, ed. *Nō and Kyōgen in the Contemporary World* (University of Hawaii, 1997)

Keene, Donald. *Nō: The Classical Theater of Japan*. (Tokyo, 1966, 1973)

Komparu, Kunio. *The Noh Theater: Principles and Perspectives*. (Tokyo, 1983)

Hoff, Frank and Willi Flindt. *Life Structure of Nō. An English Version of Yokomichi Mario's Analysis of the Structure of Nō*. Reprint from *Concerned Theatre Japan*, Vol. 2, no. 3,4. (1973)

Pinnington, Noel. *A New History of Medieval Japanese Theatre*. (Palgrave, 2019)

#### 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)

Nearman, Mark. translations of Zeami's *Kyu'i*, *Kyakuraika*, and *Kakyo* in *Monumenta Nipponica* (Autumn 1978, Summer 1980, Autumn, Winter 1982, Spring 1983)

Michiko Yusa, "Riken no Ken: Seami's Theory of Acting an Theatrical Appreciation" *MN* Vol. 42, no. 3, (Autumn 1987)

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)

Thornhill, Arthur H. *Six Circles, One Dewdrop: The Religio-Aesthetic World of Komparu Zenchiku* (Princeton UP, 1993)

#### Kyōgen

Haynes, Carolyn. "Parody in Kyogen: Makura monogurui and Tako" *Monumenta Nipponica* 39 (1984)

Haynes, Carolyn. "Comic Inversion in Kyōgen: Ghosts and the Nether World," *Journal of Association of Teachers of Japanese*. (1988)

Kenny, Don. *The Kyōgen Book. An Anthology of Japanese Classical Comedies*. The Japan Times, Tokyo, 1989

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)

Brandon, James. *Kabuki: Five Classic Plays* (Harvard University Press, 1975, University of Hawaii Press, 1992)

Keene, Donald. *Nōand Bunraku: Two Forms of Japanese Theatre*. (Columbia University Press, 1990)

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 Kyôgen Theater in Japan*. (Los Angeles County Museum, 2002).

Teele, Rebecca, ed. Nō Kyôgen Masks and Performance. *Mime Journal* 1984. (Claremont, Ca. 1986.)

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

Trinh Khanh, ed. *Theater of Dreams, Theater of Play: Nō and Kyôgen in Japan*. (Art Gallery New South Wales, 2014).

### 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)

Sato Hiroaki and Burton Watson. *An Anthology of Japanese Poetry From the Country of Eight Islands*. (Anchor, 1981).

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

Tyler, Royall. (tr.) *The Tale of Genji*. (Penguin, 2001).

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

### Background (historical and cultural)

Araki, James. *The Ballad-drama of Medieval Japan*. (Berkley, 1964).

Blacker, Carmen. *The Catalpa Bow. A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan*. (The Devonshire Press, 1975)

Goff, Janet. *Noh Drama and The Tale of Genji. The Art of Allusion in Fifteen Classical Plays*. (Princeton Library of Asian Translations. 1991).

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

Hisamatsu, Sen'ichi. *The Vocabulary of Japanese Literary Aesthetics*. (Tokyo. 1963/1978)

Izutsu, T&T. *The Theory of Beauty in the Classical Aesthetics of Japan*. (The Hague. 1981.)

Lafleur, William. *The Karma of Words*. (University of California Press, 1983)

Matisoff, Susan. *The Legend of Semimaru, Blind Musician of Japan*. (N.Y. 1978)

Bunraku and Kabuki

Brandon, James, *Kabuki: Five Classic Plays*, (Harvard University Press, 1975, pb 1992).

Brandon, James, *Chūshingura: Studies in Kabuki and the Puppet Theater*. (University of Hawaii Press, 1982)

Brandon, James, William Malm, Donald Shively. *Studies in Kabuki: Its Acting, Music and Historical Context*. A Cultural Learning Institute Monograph. (U. of Hawaii East-West Center and U. of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies).

Brandon, James, tr. With Miwa Tamako. *Kabuki Plays: Kanjinchô and the Zen Substitute*. (New York. Samuel French, 1966).

Gerstle, Andrew, Kiyoshi Inobe, William Malm, *Theater as Music: The Bunraku Play "Mt. Imo and Mt. Se; An Exemplary Tale of Womanly Virtue*, Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Michigan, 1990.

Gerstle, Andrew, *Circles of Fantasy; Convention in the Plays of Chikamatsu*, (Harvard Council on East Asian Studies, 1986).

Keene, Donald, tr. *Four Major Plays of Chikamatsu*. (Columbia Paperback, 1961).

Parker, Helen, *Progressive Traditions; An Illustrated Study of Plot Repetition in Traditional Japanese Theatre*. (Brill, 2006).