This class introduces several traditional Japanese performing arts with a focus on noh and kyōgen. Field trips include performances, festivals, and artisan studios.

Classes will introduce various aspects of each performing art—text, music, dance, stage and staging, costumes, masks—through readings and visuals, and also hands-on experience. Focus will be on noh and kyōgen, but sections will also cover kagura, bugaku, mibyu kyōgen, bunraku, and kabuki.

Students will be expected to prepare the readings before time and to choose a topic for further study to be presented at the end of the semester. These can be academic research papers, translations or new plays composed in the style of one of the arts, work with costumes/masks/sets, or other field work.

In addition to the semester-end presentation, students will need to write a 7-10-page paper developing their presentation ideas. There will also be quizzes and worksheets.

The basic text is Karen Brazell: Traditional Japanese Theater. Columbia University Press, 1998, but readings will be taken from various sources. All field trips not marked “optional” have required attendance.

Jan 12  Overview of Japanese traditional performing arts

Reading:
This is your text book and the first chapter gives an overview of the course.

Background reading:
“Pleasures of Noh” “Nō and Kyōgen as Literature” in Keene, Nō and Bunraku. P. 13-27

Jan 14  Noh and Kyōgen: From ritual to stage entertainment (Okina, Tsurukame and Kazuraki)
Read before class

*Okina* (Handout)


Jan 17  **Performance at Kanze Kaikan: Okina, Tsurukame, Kazuragi**

Jan 19  **Text and stage art: discussion of the performance**

**Reading:**


Jan 20  Optional: festival with *yudate kagura* at Jōnangū 城南宮 near Takeda station.

Jan 21  **Noh music: vocal and instrumental (*Hagoromo*)**

**Related reading**


Read before Jan 24: **Naniwa** (Handout)

Jan 24  **Noh Performance at the Kongo Noh Theater: Hagoromo and Naniwa**

Jan 26  **Noh movement**

**Related Reading**


Jan 28  **Kyōgen: history, text, technique (*Setsubun*). Mibu kyōgen**

Read before class


Further reading:

**Explore:**

http://kyogen-in-english.com/ Don Kenny’s site
http://www.mibudera.com/kyougen.htm Mibudera site with plot summaries and examples of plays and some music.

Feb 2 **Fieldtrip to Mibudera to see Mibu kyōgen**
Feb 3 Optional: setsubun related rites in Kyoto and Nara
Feb 4 Pre-noh performing arts. PROJECT PROPOSALS DUE

Read before class:


Feb 9 **The formation of classic noh**

Read before class:


For reference in class: read as many as you can beforehand


*Kamo* by Zenchiku in Brazell. TJA pp.44-60

Feb 11 **Spring trip: NO CLASS**

Feb 16 **Noh and kyōgen costumes and props.**

Read before class


Further reading


Feb 18 Fieldtrip to Costume Workshop
Feb 23 Noh and kyōgen masks

Read before class:

Tanabe, “The Birth and Evolution of Noh Masks” in Miracles and Mischief.  p. 43-69


Nomura Manzo, Nearman “Behind the Mask of Nō” and “Mask Making” Pp. 20-64, 171-176

Feb 25 Fieldtrip to Mask maker
Feb 27~ March 6 Spring Break
March 8 Composing noh

Read before class:


March 10 Zeami’s theories (Kadensho, Nikyoku Santai Ningyōzu)

Read before class

Hare, Zeami’s Performance Notes, “Fushi Kaden” p. 25-75 and “Figure Drawing of the Two Arts and the Three Modes.” Pp 139-149

Quinn, Developing Zeami: The Noh Actor’s Attunement in Practice. P. 1-21

March 12 Tentative Performance of Noh at Kawamura Stage
March 15 Shōki

Read before class:
**Shōki** (Handout)


**Related reading**


**March 17** Ceremonial noh and noh culture. QUIZ, PROJECT PROPOSAL UPDATE DUE

Reading to be decided.

**March 20** Performance of Noh *Shōki* at Kongo Theater

**March 22** *Tamura and Hyakuman*

Read before class:

*Tamura in 10 Noh Plays*, NGSK, 1955, pp, 19-36


**March 24** *Kasuga Ryūjin*

Read before class:

*Kasuga Ryūjin* in Tyler, Japanese Nō Dramas, pp. 142-155

Further Reading


**March 27** Performance of noh *Tamura, Hyakuman, Kasuga Ryujin* at Kanze Kaikan

**March 29** Amateur performers through the ages

Reading to be decided.

**March 31** “Atsumori” from *The Tales of the Heike*→*noh*→*kowakamai*→*kabuki*bunraku

Read before class, in this order:

“The Death of Atsumori” in Royall Tyler, tr. *The Tale of the
Atsumori in Brazell, TJT, pp 126-142
Ko Atsumori , Keller Kimbrough tr. In Oyler and Watson, ed. Like Clouds or Mists, Cornell East Asia Series, 2013, pp. 247-260
Suma Bay, tr. James Brandon, in Brazell, ed. TJT, pp. 442-455

April 5  Kabuki
Read before class

April 7  Bunraku
Read before class:
Keene: Nō and Bunraku, p. 123-146, 159-165
plays (to be announced)

April 9  Performance of Bunraku at the National Bunraku Theater, Osaka (date flexible)

April 12  Student Presentations
April 14  Student Presentations
April 19  Papers due

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


Tyler, Royall. *Japanese Nó Dramas.* (Penguin classics, 1992)
   *A Cycle of Noh Plays, Pining Wind.* (Ithaca, N.Y. 1978.)
   *A Cycle of Noh plays, Granny Mountains.* (Ithaca, N.Y. 1978.)
   *To Hallow Genji: A tribute to Noh,* Self published, 2013


*Noh Performance commentary*


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


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


**Theory and secret writings**


Hare, Tomas. *Zeami Performance Notes.* (Columbia University Press, 2008)


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


Rath, Eric C. *The Ethos of Noh: Actors and Their Art.* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2004)


Pinnington, Noel. *Traces in the Way: Michi and the Writings of Komparu Zenchiku.* (Cornell East Asia Series, 2006)

**Kyôgen**


General Japanese Theater and other Japanese Theatrical Arts
Adachi, Barbara. *Backstage at Bunraku* (Weatherhill, 1985)


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

*Japanese Theater in the World* (Japan Society, 1997)

Parker, Helen S. E. *Progressive Traditions: An Illustrated Study of Plot Repetition in Traditional Japanese Theater* (Brill, 2006)

Costumes and Masks
*Iikei no nō shōzoku no haykusugata.* Heibonsha. (Tokyo 1984)

*Iikei no nō men no hyakusugata.* Heibonsha. (Tokyo 1983)

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

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


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


Background (classics)
Anthology of Japanese Literature to the 19th C. Penguin Classics.


McCullough, Helen (tr.). The Tales of the Heike.

Philippi, Donald (tr.). Kojiki. (Tokyo. 1968.)


Background (historical and cultural)


O’Neil, G.P. *Early Noh Drama.* (London and Bradford, 1958)


Bunraku and Kabuki

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


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.


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).
There are four families of traditional Japanese theatre: Noh, Kyogen, Kabuki, and Bunraku (puppet theatre). Know what they’re all about! The famous Tokyo-based Gekidan Shinkansen theatrical troupe follows pure tradition by performing roles and events in a noisy, modern, and outlandish way, to shock the crowd as was originally intended. Bunraku (文楽). Bunraku is traditional Japanese puppet theatre, founded in Osaka in 1684. Three types of performers take part in a bunraku performance—the ningyotsukai (puppeteers), tayu (chanters), and shamisen players. (A shamisen is a three-stringed musical instrument.) Now, Noh is usually composed of one kyōgen play between two Noh plays. Noh masks. Noh performances are codified using the iemoto system, which is a Japanese term that refers to the founder of a Japanese school of traditional art. Noh evolved from folk art forms such as Dengaku and Shirabyoshi. Noh was initially performed only for the Japanese aristocracy. During the Muromachi Period (1336-1573), Zeami Motokiyo and his father Kan’ami, both actors and playwrights, established the Noh theater of today. It became a popular form of entertainment for all social classes during the Edo Period. Traditional Japanese theatre includes kabuki, noh (and its comic accompaniment, kyōgen) and the puppet theatre, bunraku. Noh and kyogen theatre traditions are among the oldest continuous theatre traditions in the world. The earliest existing Kyogen scripts date from the 15th century. Noh was a spiritual drama, combining symbolism from Buddhism and Shintoism and focusing on tales with mythic significance. Kyogen, its comic partner, served as a link between the theological themes of the noh play with...