

Display

Musical Instruments

The following musical instruments accompany a typical Noh performance: wooden flute (fu-eh), shoulder drum (ko-tsuzumi), hip drum (o-tsuzumi), and stick drum (taiko).

There are usually three or four musicians in the ensemble, each playing a different instrument.



Noh Flute



Shoulder Drum



Hip Drum



Stick Drum

The Masks of Noh

Noh masks are very important symbolic properties of Noh as a masked drama. There are about 60 types of Noh masks.

The masks are sculpted in a way to ingeniously combine the reality and the imaginary for producing a form of beauty. A great effort is exerted to make each one conform to the actual performance.



Ko-omote



Fukai



Mikazuki



Shikami



Shoujou



Hannya

Fan

All actors who enter the stage carry a fan. There are two types of fans: Shizume-ogi, which are like ordinary fans; and Chuukei, which are made so that the outer tip is partly open, even when the fan is closed. There are various decorations painted upon the fans.



Kami-ougi



Shura-ougi



Kazura-ougi



Kyoujo-ougi



Oni-ougi

Costumes

The costumes of Noh visually express the spirit and substance of a Noh play.

Woven mainly of silk, many costumes are made of a very thick material. They are made with sophisticated intricate detail and often come in various designs.



Karaori



Atsuta



Kariginu



Chouken

Experience Japanese Culture

Japan's Traditional Performing Arts Noh



Date: Wednesday March 15, 2017

Time: 13:50 – 14:50

Place: Jhong Jheng Theatre
in National Taiwan College of Performing Arts



NPO法人 能楽普及集団

鶴亀座

Tokyo NPO TSURUKAMEZA

Demonstration

An introduction to the world of Noh

Noh, Japan's traditional performing arts, was developed in the 14th century.

Noh is a kind of symbolic drama, colored with the graceful aesthetic effect of quiet elegance that is expressed through the word Yugen (elegant, refined, and elusive beauty).

Its subjects are taken from history or classical literature, and it is structured around songs and dances. Its most obvious characteristic is that the main actor performs while wearing a mask of exceptional beauty.

The themes used in Noh are more concerned with very personalized human activities. Noh has developed into a highly stylized and refined performing art that takes place upon a very simple stage.

A Noh composition is based on the following four elements: song, dance, music, and drama.

Each song, dance, and music can be performed individually if necessary.

Chant

About two-hundred Noh-choral books have been published. These books have been popular all over the country. A Noh chant is basically a story telling which is sung by a choir without a defined melody.



Dance

The main actor (**Shite**) dances portions of a song, accompanied only by the choir.

Shite is dressed in the formal crested kimono (**Montsuki**) and a long pleated culotte-like Japanese trouser (**Hakama**).



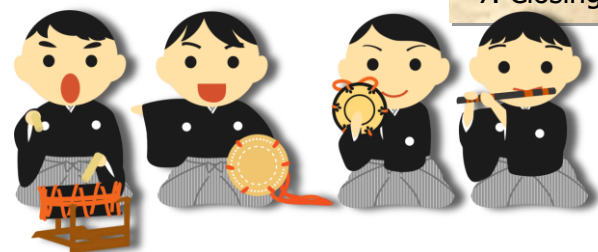
Maibayashi

An actor performs several parts of a song without wearing the full Noh costume and mask, but the actor is still dressed in the Montsuki and Hakama. Musicians and the choir accompany the actor.



Programs

1. Speech at the opening
2. Singing Shikainami
3. Description of Noh(DVD)
4. Live Noh Performance
 - Dancing (solo) [Funabenkei], [Tenko]
 - Chanting Performance (choir) [Tosen]
 - Maibayashi Performance (with ensemble) [Hagoromo]
5. Noh Trial
 - Noh Masks
6. Live Noh Performance again [Tsuchigumo]
7. Closing [Shojo]



Story

Funa-Benkei

(Benkei in the Boat)

First, Benkei starts off explaining why Yoshitsune left the capital and came down to Daimotsu Bay. Yoshitsune's older brother Yoritomo (The Kamakura Shogunate) had recently had some doubts about Yoshitsune's intentions.

Yoshitsune, with his lover Shizuka Gozen, decided to flee from the capital for safety.

Against her wish to stay with Yoshitsune, Benkei insists that Shizuka must return to the capital. After Shizuka performs a dance at the farewell party, she leaves Daimotsu Bay and travels alone to the capital.

Yoshitsune and his men then go out to sea in a boat, but suddenly black clouds form, the sea rises, and the ghost of Taira no Tomomori comes upon them. The ghost tries to seize Yoshitsune and carry him down into the sea to suffer the same fate as Tomomori himself. Benkei, with his priestly power, eventually drives off the ghost.

Tenko

(The Drum from Heaven)

A boy named Tenko had a wonderful drum which had come down from Heaven, but when this was taken from him to be presented to the Emperor he was drowned. An Imperial envoy tells this story and explains that as no one has been able to make any sound come from the drum since it was taken to the Palace. He has been sent to fetch the father of Tenko. Together they go to the Palace and when the father strikes drum it gives out such a miraculous sound that he is promised a rich reward and a musical performance is arranged to placate the soul of his son. When this is done, the ghost of Tenko comes and dances before them.

Tosen

(The Chinese Ship)

One day in a sea battle, the lord of Hakozaki captured a Chinese ship and ever since has kept a prisoner, So-kei, on his estate to look after his horses and cattle. After thirteen years a Chinese ship arrives with two children aboard who have brought money with which to ransom their father. He is therefore released to return with them but is not allowed to take back the two children who have been born to him while he has been in Japan.

He is torn between the two who try to hold him back and the two who are waiting to sail with him back to China. Moved by this, the Lord gives permission for the two Japanese children to go as well, and all five sail happily away.

Hagoromo

(The Robe of Feathers)

Some fishermen are walking through the pinewoods on Mio Bay when one of them finds a beautiful robe hanging from the branch of a pine tree.

He is about to take it home when an angel comes to claim it, explaining that it is a feather robe from Heaven.

This makes the fisherman determined to keep it as a national treasure, but the angel tells him that without it she can never again return to Heaven.

He is so moved by her distress that he agrees to return it if she will dance for him. He at first refuses to give it back before she dances for fear that she will fly away as soon as the robe becomes hers again. In reply, the angel tells him that only humans practice such behaviors. He shamefacedly gives up the robe.

Overjoyed now, the angel puts the robe on and dances. Then, as she gives unlimited blessings on the land, the angel returns to Heaven among the mists and clouds.

Tsuchigumo

(The Ground Spider)

After the serving woman has brought the sick Minamoto no Raiko some medicine, a spider comes to him in the guise of a priest. But when it begins to enmesh Raiko in the thread of a web, he realizes that it is some evil creature and manages to slash it with his sword. At this it vanishes but Hitori-musha, alarmed by his master's cries, hurries to the scene and after hearing what has taken place, determines to hunt out the creature. He and his men track it down by following the trail of blood to a cave and there they destroy the spider that has been the cause of Raiko's illness.