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# Japanese No Dramas

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On the Art of the No Drama

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## RHYS HOUSTON

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### **Chinese and Japanese Music-Dramas**

National Geographic Books

The Noh Plays of Japan is the most respected collection of Noh plays in English. The classic Japanese plays can be read for their great literary merit and also provide the reader with an understanding of a unique theatre art and important insights into the cultural, spiritual and artistic traditions of Japan. The Noh Plays of Japan, first published in 1921 and justly famous for more than three-quarters of a century, established the Noh play for the Western reader as beautiful literature. It contains Arthur Waley's exquisite translations of nineteen plays and summaries of sixteen more, together with a revealing introductory essay that furnishes the background for a clear understanding and a genuine appreciation of the Noh as a highly significant dramatic form. Noh plays live on as a magnificent artistic heritage handed down from the high culture of medieval Japan. Among the major types of Japanese drama, the Noh, which is often called the classical theatre of Japan, has had perhaps the greatest attraction for the West. Introduced to Europe and America through the translations of Arthur Waley and Ezra Pound, it found an ardent admirer in William Butler Yeats, who described it as a form of drama "distinguished, indirect, and symbolic" and created plays in its image.

**Japanese Tales** University of Illinois Press

This annotated translation is the first systematic rendering into any Western language of the nine major treatises on the art of the Japanese No theater by Zeami Motokivo (1363-1443). Zeami, who transformed the No from a country

entertainment into a vehicle for profound theatrical and philosophical experience, was a brilliant actor himself, and his treatises touch on every aspect of the theater of his time. His theories, mixing philosophical and practical insights, often seem strikingly contemporary. Since their discovery early in this century, these secret treatises have been considered among the most valuable and representative documents in the history of Japanese aesthetics. They discuss subjects from the art of the playwright to the reciprocal nature of the relationship between performer and audience. Atsumori Columbia University Press The Noh plays of Japan have been compared to the greatest of Greek tragedies for their evocative, powerful poetry and splendor of emotional intensity.

*The Nō Plays of Japan* Tuttle Publishing  
The Japanese Noh drama by the Master Zeami Motokiyo about the Buddhist priest Rensei and the warrior of the Taira Clan Atsumori. The story of redemption of the warrior Kumagai Jiro Naozane that killed the young Atsumori. One of the most popular and touching Zeami's Noh drama inspired by "The Tales of Heike". Contents: Preface by Massimo Cimarelli Atsumori by Zeami Motokiyo Pearson Part I Interlude Part II Glossary Notes **Zeami's Style** University of Michigan Press

The appeal of Asian Theater in America today confirms that the theatre of the Far East is a remarkable and catalytic experience for a Western audience. Staging Japanese Theatre presents two complete plays in the theatrical forms of Noh and Kabuki. Each play appears in Japanese with English translations on facing pages and is pre-ceded by a brief history of the theatre form and the

evolution of the production. The text contains an abundance of photographs, diagrams, and the stage directions from the IASTA performance.

**Warrior Ghost Plays from the Japanese Noh Theater** Courier Corporation

Japanese nō theatre or the drama of 'perfected art' flourished in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries largely through the genius of the dramatist Zeami. An intricate fusion of music, dance, mask, costume and language, the dramas address many subjects, but the idea of 'form' is more central than 'meaning' and their structure is always ritualized. Selected for their literary merit, the twenty-four plays in this volume dramatize such ideas as the relationship between men and the gods, brother and sister, parent and child, lover and beloved, and the power of greed and desire. Revered in Japan as a cultural treasure, the spiritual and sensuous beauty of these works has been a profound influence for English-speaking artists including W. B. Yeats, Ezra Pound and Benjamin Britten.

**'Noh,' Or, Accomplishment** Tuttle Classics

Donald Keene combines informative works on two forms of classical Japanese theater into a single volume. The No text looks at all aspects of this traditional theater form including its history, its stage and props, the use of music and dance in its performances, the plays as literature, and the aesthetics of No. Also discussed are Kyogen, the comic farces that are typically interspersed with the solemn No dramas.

The Noh Theater Hong Kong University Press

An abridged edition of the world's first novel, in a translation that is "likely to be the definitive edition . . . for many years

to come" (The Wall Street Journal) A Penguin Classic Written in the eleventh century, this exquisite portrait of courtly life in medieval Japan is widely celebrated as the world's first novel—and is certainly one of its finest. Genji, the Shining Prince, is the son of an emperor. He is a passionate character whose tempestuous nature, family circumstances, love affairs, alliances, and shifting political fortunes form the core of this magnificent epic. Royall Tyler's superior translation is detailed, poetic, and superbly true to the Japanese original while allowing the modern reader to appreciate it as a contemporary treasure. In this deftly abridged edition, Tyler focuses on the early chapters, which vividly evoke Genji as a young man and leave him at his first moment of triumph. This edition also includes detailed notes, glossaries, character lists, and chronologies.

**Japanese Nō Dramas /edited and Translated by Royall Tyler** Tuttle Publishing

Japanese Theatre presents a full historical account for Westerners of the theater arts that have flourished for centuries in Japan. Kabuki, arising in the late seventeenth century, is the theater of the commoner. The successive syllables of Kabuki mean "song - dance - skill." The precursors of Kabuki were the puppet theater and the comic interludes in the stately, aristocratic Noh drama - all fully described by the author. In the modern era the Japanese have broken away from Kabuki, and their stage has shown a realistic trend. Left-wing theater groups arose in the 1920's, were suppressed by the militarists, and then revived during the occupation.

Appended to the historical chapters are Mr. Bowers's translations of three Kabuki plays: The Monstrous Spider, Gappo and

His Daughter Tsuji, and the bombastic Sukeroku. This book, with its many excellent photographs, is a permanent addition to the West's knowledge of the exotic, exciting theater of Japan and its tradition of great acting.

*The Tale of Genji* Courier Corporation  
Noh Fans are an essential element of Japanese theater and this collection of fans is a rare example of this fine Japanese art. The chief purpose of *Painted Fans of Japan* is to present for Westerners some of the gorgeous paintings found on fans used in the traditional Japanese Noh drama. Painting as limited to conform to the fan shape has been practiced for hundreds of years in Japan, even by such immortal artists as Sotatsu and Korin. Until now, however, there has been no popularly available volume of reproductions to reveal the almost limitless possibilities in color, design, and perspective within this restricted form of painting. The artists whose works are reproduced in this book are unknown, and the time when the works were painted can only be estimated as early (1601-1741), middle (1742-1791), or late (1792-1867) Tokugawa, the period of Japanese history that extended from the beginning of the seventeenth century to well past the middle of the nineteenth.

*Japanese No Dramas* Columbia University Press

The authors offer a detailed examination and explanation of Noh, the first great Japanese theatrical form. The spirit is at the essence of Noh, as Kannami Kiyotsugu created the form in the late-fourteenth century by combining elements from Japanese theater with Zen Buddhism. The authors present the history, explain the nuances, and even provide samples of these Noh plays.

*Feeling Asian Modernities* Volume

Edizioni srl

*Chinese and Japanese Music-Dramas* is the result of a conference on the relations between Chinese and Japanese music-drama held at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, on October 1-4, 1971. In addition to the Association for Asian Studies, four U-M departments participated in the conference: the Center for Japanese Studies, the Center for Chinese Studies, the School of Music, and the Speech Department. One important inspiration for the creation of such an interdisciplinary conference was the fact that each participant had found, after years of individual research on music-drama in East Asia, consistent frustration caused by attempts to deal on their own with multiple cultural and technical problems. Another motivating force was an awareness among many members of the four disciplines involved that the topic is in fact one of the largest untouched fields of scholarly endeavor in both Asian and theatrical studies. The collection opens with J. I. Crump's exploration of the Ming commentators who began to subject Yüan musical drama to the same critiques as other literature from the past. In the second chapter, Rulan Chao Pian looks to the structure of arias in Peking Opera for clues about what distinguishes this art form. William P. Malm turns to three key sources for the performance conventions of Japanese Noh drama to glean any Sino-Japanese music relationships that exist in technical terms and practices. In the fourth essay, Carl Sesar analyzes a Noh play that stages the tension between Chinese influence and Japanese originality. Roy E Teele concludes the volume with a formal study of Noh play structure to assess lineages of influence from Chinese dramatic forms. After each contribution, the editors print a

transcript of the conference participants' discussion of that paper, providing the reader with a detailed and nuanced view of how the contributors understood and responded to each other's work.

*Noh Plays of Japan* Columbia University Press

Annotation Zeami (1363-1443), Japan's most celebrated actor and playwright, composed more than 30 of the finest plays of no drama. He also wrote a variety of texts on theater and performance. This text presents the full range of Zeami's critical thought on the subject.

*The Columbia Anthology of Modern Japanese Drama* Columbia University Press

This annotated translation is the first systematic rendering into any Western language of the nine major treatises on the art of the Japanese No theater by Zeami Motokivo (1363-1443). Zeami, who transformed the No from a country entertainment into a vehicle for profound theatrical and philosophical experience, was a brilliant actor himself, and his treatises touch on every aspect of the theater of his time. His theories, mixing philosophical and practical insights, often seem strikingly contemporary. Since their discovery early in this century, these secret treatises have been considered among the most valuable and representative documents in the history of Japanese aesthetics. They discuss subjects from the art of the playwright to the reciprocal nature of the relationship between performer and audience.

**The Noh Theatre of Japan** Floating World Editions

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*Japanese Plays* Penguin UK

This outstanding, scholarly work by an American-born authority on Chinese and Japanese art and literature, edited and translated by one of the most ambitious, influential, and innovative poets of the first half of the 20th century, provides Western readers with a valuable interpretation of an important aspect of Japanese culture. In addition to the complete translations of 15 plays, the text discusses historical background and development of the Noh theater.

*Japanese No Masks* Princeton University Press

The "fourth-group Noh," so designated because they are performed fourth in a formal five-Noh program, includes almost one hundred plays, and is a group of great variety: some plays are supernatural or visionary, others realistic; their leading characters include deities, demons, ghosts, mad people, samurai, and street artists. Dividing them into nine sub-groups, the author fully analyses their dramatic characteristics. Includes translations of four Noh chosen from the first four subgroups. Format is line-by-line translation next to the Romanized Japanese text, with introduction and running commentary.

**Chinese and Japanese Music-Dramas**

## Pantheon

Japan boasts one of the world's oldest, most vibrant and most influential performance traditions. This accessible and complete history provides a comprehensive overview of Japanese theatre and its continuing global influence. Written by eminent international scholars, it spans the full range of dance-theatre genres over the past fifteen hundred years, including noh theatre, bunraku puppet theatre, kabuki theatre, shingeki modern theatre, rakugo storytelling, vanguard butoh

dance and media experimentation. The first part addresses traditional genres, their historical trajectories and performance conventions. Part II covers the spectrum of new genres since Meiji (1868-), and Parts III to VI provide discussions of playwriting, architecture, Shakespeare, and interculturalism, situating Japanese elements within their global theatrical context. Beautifully illustrated with photographs and prints, this history features interviews with key modern directors, an overview of historical scholarship in English and Japanese, and a timeline. A further reading list covers a range of multimedia resources to encourage further explorations.

**Painted Fans of Japan** Shambhala Publications

The Japanese dramatic art of Noh has a rich six-hundred-year history and has had a huge influence on Japanese culture and such Western artists as Ezra Pound and William Butler Yeats. The actor and playwright Zeami (1363-1443) is the most celebrated figure in the history of Noh, with his numerous outstanding plays and his treatises outlining his theories on the art. These treatises were originally secret teachings that were later coveted by the highest ranks of the samurai class and first became available to the general public only in the twentieth century. William Scott Wilson, acclaimed translator of samurai and Asian classics, has translated the *Fushikaden*, the best known of these treatises, which provides practical instruction for actors, gives valuable teachings on the aesthetics and spiritual culture of Japan, and offers a philosophical outlook on life. Along with the *Fushikaden*, Wilson includes a comprehensive introduction describing the historical background and philosophy

of Noh, as well as a new translation of one of Zeami's most moving plays, *Atsumori*.

*Zeami* National Geographic Books

"An important contribution to study of the noh theater, and those interested in the noh or seriously working that stretch of the scholarly street are sure to find it required reading." *Journal of Asian*

*Studies*" Superior. . . . The book offers several things heretofore unavailable in English: as detailed a biography as the scant documentation allows, an analysis of the changes in Zeami's theories over the course of his long life, and excellent analyses and translations of several plays." *Journal of Japanese Studies*