

The Boston University Arts Initiative -
Office of the Provost,
the Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies
Program, the Center for the Study of Asia, and
the CAS Department of English present

Theatre Nohgaku



March 30 & 31, 2016

Tsai Performance Center

685 Commonwealth Avenue

About the BU Arts Initiative:

Our mission at the BU Arts Initiative is to ensure the integral role of the arts in the educational experience of every BU student. We support faculty, student, and staff projects, making sure the arts are deeply embedded within the cultural and intellectual fabric of the University.

We work to:

- Raise the visibility of and bring recognition to the breadth and excellence of the arts at BU
- Increase student access to the arts at BU and in the Boston area, so that BU students develop an active & participatory role in the arts as a meaningful element of their BU experience
- Support student, faculty, and staff initiatives that engage our community in the practice of and intellectual dialogue around the arts and art making
- Encourage meaningful opportunities for the BU community and the Boston area community to connect via the arts

Visit us at bu.edu/arts, and share your experience on social media using #TheatreNohgakuBU:



BU Arts Initiative



BUArtsInitiativ



BUArtsInitiative

The BU Arts Initiative would like to thank our residency partners:

Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Program

Pardee School of Global Studies - Center for the Study of Asia

CAS Department of English

Other Partners include:

Boston Playwrights' Theater

College of Fine Arts - School of Theater

BU Japanese House

Department of Musicology and Ethnomusicology, School of Music

Boston University Army ROTC

Theatre Nohgaku's Mission is to share noh's beauty and power with English speaking audiences and performers. We have found this traditional form retains its dramatic effectiveness in languages other than Japanese. We believe noh techniques hold a powerful means of expression in the context of contemporary English language theatre.

To carry out this mission, we:

- Create and perform English language noh, both new works and traditional noh in translation, and occasionally perform traditional noh in Japanese or a combination of Japanese and English.
- Promote understanding of the art of noh and provide training in its techniques through lectures, demonstrations, workshops, and residencies.
- Provide opportunities for Japanese noh masters to perform and teach with Theatre Nohgaku.
- Exploring possibilities for performance across cultural and language boundaries, we seek to create a theatre for the twenty-first century, opening vital new channels for contemporary expression.



Theatre Nohgaku would like to thank their donors for their generous support.

Individual Donors

Anonymous, Madeline Aranda, Monica Bethe, Andrea Blacklow, James Cook, Carol Crandall, Michael Crandall, Paul and Jo Crandall, Steve and Chris Crandall, Judith and Ken DeWoskin, Elizabeth Dowd, Gulshirin Dubash, Dorothy Durac, Sunny Dzik, Bruce Eimon, John Farrell, Rachel Garcia, Michael Gardiner, David Gluck, Judy Halebsky, Joan Hamann, Hisae Homma, Paula Joyce, Kenneth Kraft, Debi Lamm, Cynthia K. Levine, Ian Levine, Indra Levy, Joyce Lim, William P. Malm, Laurie McCants, Harlan Michael, Edith Newton, Gary Nied, Ilona Oliver, James Pelican, Geoffrey Proehl, Charles and Shelley Quinn, Kevin Riordan, Ruri, Kevin Salfen, Fran Schnall, Alice Shaw, Richard Tuschman, Dean and Shirley Tyndall, James Wagner, Erika White.

Please consider supporting Theatre Nohgaku's work by making a tax-free donation. You can sign up for our electronic newsletter and donate online at www.theatrenohgaku.org

Thank you!

568 Grand Street
New York, NY 10002-4378
www.theatrenohgaku.org

Biographies – Design and Production Team

Kanako Abe (Costume Design - *Zahdi Dates and Poppies*) is a Japanese paper artist and costume/prop designer based in San Francisco, California. Abe works predominantly in the medium of paper, drawing inspiration from traditional Japanese paper folding (origami) and paper cutting (isekatagami and kirie). She has worked on a number of productions with Theatre of Yugen and participated in several group art shows across San Francisco. She graduated from San Francisco State University with a BA in Theatre Arts.

Jaclyn Fulton (Stage Manager / Technical Director) is a stage manager of theatre, opera, and dance. Local credits include work with the Huntington Theatre Company, Boston Ballet, Boston Early Music Festival, Boston Midsummer Opera, Stoneham Theatre, Centastage, and Fiddlehead Theatre Company. Fulton is a Boston-area native and proud graduate of Boston University's CFA School of Theatre.

Sabrina Hamilton (Lighting Design) is the Artistic Director of the Ko Festival of Performance, (www.kofest.com), where Theatre Nohgaku rehearsed last summer. 2016 will be KoFest's 25th season at Amherst College. Hamilton's credits include many years with Mabou Mines, plus lighting work at the Public, the Goodman, the Mark Taper and 6 years as Route Lighting Designer for NYC's Village Halloween Parade. International credits include work in 15 countries. Her directing, primarily original pieces, has been seen in NYC, Berlin and throughout the U.S. She has served on numerous state and national grant panels, and on the Board of Network of Ensemble Theaters. Teaching: Hampshire, Williams and the M.F.A. Program at Towson University.

Hideta Kitazawa (Mask Design and Carving - *Zahdi Dates and Poppies*) is a second-generation woodcarving artist who received the Outstanding Youth Artesian Award for Tokyo and the Yokohama Noh Drama Hall Director's Prize. In addition to carving traditional noh and kyogen masks, he also creates new masks. Most notable among these are his masks for the original works in English *Pine Barrens*, *Crazy Jane*, *Pagoda*, *Cordelia and Mystical Abyss*. He has exhibited his works both nationally and internationally and his carvings of Shinto floats and o-mikoshi are in current use throughout Japan's Kanto area. His masks are used extensively by noh and kyogen professionals.

Joshua McDermott (Set Design - *Zahdi Dates and Poppies*) graduated from the University of Hawai'i with an M.A. in Asian Theatre and from Brown University with an M.S. in Physics. He has been working in the Oakland Bay Area since 2005 in the areas of technical direction, lighting design, and scenic design. He is currently employed as the Technical Director for the Performing Arts department at the University of San Francisco, where he is the coordinator for the Tech and Design program.

THEATRE NOHGAKU

Sumida River

By Kanze Motomasa

English performance version by

Richard Emmert

Directed by

Richard Emmert

Zahdi Dates and Poppies

A world premiere

By Carrie Preston

Directed by

Jubilith Moore

Composition and Music Direction by

David Crandall

Production

Costume Designer
Kanako Abe

Set Designer
Josh McDermott

Lighting Designer
Sabrina Hamilton

Stage Manager / Technical Director
Jaclyn Fulton

Sumida River

A play in one act
(65 minutes)

Cast (in order of appearance)

Waki / Ferryman.....David Crandall
Tsure / Traveler.....Matthew Dubroff
Shite / Madwoman...Richard Emmert
Kokata / Spirit of the Boy.....Mai O'Connor

Chorus

chorus leader..... Jubilith Moore
chorus members..... Colleen Lanki
John Oglevee
Laura Sampson

Hayashi / Instrumentalists

Nohkan / noh flute.....Kevin Salfen
Kotsuzumi / shoulder drum..... Joyce Lim
Otsuzumi / hip drumJames Ferner

Koken / stage attendant.....Tom O'Connor

Production

Lighting DesignerSabrina Hamilton
Stage Manager/Technician.....Jaclyn Fulton

15-minute intermission

Zahdi Dates and Poppies

World Premiere
A play in one act
(45 minutes)

Cast (in order of appearance)

Wife.....Colleen Lanki
Husband.....Tom O'Connor
Marksman.....Kevin Salfen
Insurgent.....John Oglevee
Insurgent's Wife.....Colleen Lanki

Chorus

chorus leader..... David Crandall
chorus members.....Matthew Dubroff
Richard Emmert
Jubilith Moore

Hayashi / Instrumentalists

Nohkan / noh flute.....Laura Sampson
Kotsuzumi / shoulder drum..... Joyce Lim
Otsuzumi / hip drumJames Ferner

Koken / Stage attendant.....Jubilith Moore

Production

Set Designer..... Josh McDermott
Lighting Designer Sabrina Hamilton
Costume Designer..... Kanako Abe
Stage Manager/Technician..... Jaclyn Fulton

Special Thanks

Casey Preston, Nick Kroes

This production is dedicated to the Memory of
"I kicka your ahsss," Miyoshi Kato (1930 -
2015), fellow international student of noh and
mentor to so many of us.

The matsubame (painted pine backdrop used
for Sumida River), painted by Kana Niikura, is
generously on loan from Hosho Noh Shite Kata
Masayuki Fujii.

Jubilith Moore (Chorus Leader – *Sumida River* / Director, Chorus Member and Koken – *Zahdi Dates and Poppies*) is a performer, director, writer, teaching artist and producer for the theatre and has devoted her professional life to exploring the ongoing life of traditional Japanese and contemporary American theatre. She has studied noh with Richard Emmert, Akira Matsui, Shiro Nomura, Masayuki Fujii and Kinue Oshima and kyogen with Yukio Ishida and Yuriko Doi. She is a founding member of Theatre Nohgaku and was Artistic Director of Theatre of Yugen from 2001 to 2014. She is the recipient of a Japan Foundation Fellowship, TBA's CA\$H award as well as TCG's Future Collaborations and Leadership U[niversity] grants.

Mai Lisbeth O'Connor a.k.a. 加賀谷舞 (Kokata - *Sumida River*) lives in Western Massachusetts, where she is a third-grader. She enjoys drawing and cooking, all kinds of outdoor activities, such as soccer and skiing, and doing just about anything with her big brother, Naka. O'Connor attended preschool and first grade in Japan. She is bilingual in English and Japanese, and currently attends a Japanese Saturday school, to keep up with her other language and culture. SUMIDA RIVER is her debut performance with Theatre Nohgaku.

Tom O'Connor (Koken - *Sumida River*; Husband – *Zahdi Dates and Poppies*) has created original roles for choreographers and dance-theatre artists, including Maureen Fleming and John Giffin, performing in New York, London, Edinburgh, Milan, and regional venues in the U.S. As a member of Theatre Nohgaku (since 2006) he performed in several projects, including David Crandall's *Crazy Jane*, the European and Asian tours of Jeannette Cheong's *Pagoda* and workshop performances of Richard Emmert's reworking of Debra Brevoort's *Blue Moon Over Memphis*. O'Connor currently serves as TN's managing director. He is also on the faculty of UCLA, where he teaches Acting and Movement in the School of Theater, Film and Television.

John Oglevee (Chorus Member - *Sumida River* / Insurgent - *Zahdi Dates and Poppies*) is a theatre artist who investigates noh in terms of both its classical and contemporary applications. As a founding member of Theatre Nohgaku, he has worked extensively both onstage and off. As a noh consultant, he has worked with The Wooster Group, director David Neumann, composer Brendan Connelly, and Yoji Sakate's Rinkogun among others.

Carrie J. Preston (Playwright *Zahdi Dates and Poppies*) is an Associate Professor of English and Director of the Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies at Boston University. Her book, *Modernism's Mythic Pose: Gender, Genre, Solo Performance*, won the De la Torre Bueno Prize in dance studies. *Learning to Kneel*, a book about the noh theater, will be published this spring. Her theatrical writing has been performed at New York's Dixon Place and The Raw Space and 6th at Penn Theater in San Diego. She has published a chapbook, *Lake Effect*, and poems have appeared in magazines such as *LOCUSPOINT*, *Red Cedar Review*, and *Ellipsis*.

Keven Salfen (Nohkan - *Sumida River* / Marksman - *Zahdi Dates and Poppies*) is Associate Professor of Music at the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio, Texas. He has degrees in composition and musicology from the University of North Texas. His work on Benjamin Britten has appeared in *Music & Letters* and *19th-Century Music*, and his compositions have been performed in England, China, and throughout the U.S. Salfen became a member of Theatre Nohgaku in 2011 and has performed several full noh with the troupe, including *Atsumori* and the English-language noh *Blue Moon Over Memphis*.

Laura Sampson (Chorus Member - *Sumida River* / Nohkan - *Zahdi Dates and Poppies*) is a performer, promoter, agent and reviewer from London, UK. A graduate of Medieval Studies (University of London), Sampson discovered noh in 2011 through joint passions for literature, music and theatre performance. She joined Theatre Nohgaku in 2013 and since then has performed as singer and flute player in several noh and noh-inspired works.

Biographies - Cast

David Crandall (Waki - *Sumida River* / Composer, Music Director and Chorus Leader - *Zahdi Dates and Poppies*) began his study of noh in 1979 when he attended the Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music and met his life-long noh teacher Sano Hajime. Since then, he's enjoyed many opportunities to initiate or participate in noh-related performance projects as a writer, composer, performer and director, both independently and as a founding member of Theatre Nohgaku. He's proud to once again be part of a fine team of artists dedicated to putting new and exciting work onstage.

Matthew Dubroff (Waki-tsune - *Sumida River* / Chorus *Zahdi Dates and Poppies*) is a founding member of Theatre Nohgaku. He has performed in a number of the company's tours, including the *At The Hawk's Well* national tour, *Pine Barrens* southeast tour; *Crazy Jane* Pacific Northwest tour and *Takasago* and *Pagoda* European and Asian tours. Most recently he performed the central role of the Angel in the noh classic *Hagoromo*. A theater educator at Hampden-Sydney College some of his recent directing credits include: *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, *The Homecoming* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Dubroff is also a teacher of the Alexander technique and the Wu Style of Tai Ji.

Richard Emmert (Translator, Adaptor & Director *Sumida River* / Chorus Member - *Zahdi Dates and Poppies*) is Theatre Nohgaku's artistic director. He is also a professor of Asian performance at Musashino University in Tokyo and a certified Kita school noh instructor. Emmert directs the Noh Training Project Tokyo and the summer intensive Noh Training Project UK at Royal Holloway, University of London. He has authored many books on noh for Tokyo's National Noh Theatre. Emmert has directed noh projects throughout the world, has composed, directed, and performed in numerous English language noh plays, and has led performance tours of Theatre Nohgaku in the United States, Europe and Asia.

James Ferner (Otsuzumi) has studied Noh in Tokyo with Kita actor Omura Sadamu since 1996. At first, a kotsuzumi and otsuzumi student of Mitsuo Kama, he presently studies kotsuzumi under Sumikoma Mitsuhiko, otsuzumi under Kamei Yosuke and taiko under Sakurai Hitoshi. He is a founding member of Theatre Nohgaku with whom he has performed in tours of *CRAZY JANE*, *PINE BARRENS*, *PAGODA*, *SUMIDA RIVER* and in the Tokyo salon performance of *BLUE MOON OVER MEMPHIS*.

Colleen Lanki (Chorus Member – *Sumida River* / Wife, Insurgent's Wife - *Zahdi Dates and Poppies*) is a theatre performer, director, choreographer and educator. She was based in Tokyo for many years studying nihon buyoh (Japanese classical dance) and noh, and working in contemporary theatre. She is the Artistic Director of TomoeArts, a company that creates interdisciplinary dance-theatre, and is currently working on her PhD at the University of British Columbia. Recent projects: directing *Kayoi Komachi*, a new chamber opera combining noh and classical music, and creating/performing the interdisciplinary dance-theatre piece *Weaver Woman*. <www.colleenlanki.com> <www.tomoearts.org>

Joyce S. Lim (Kotsuzumi) is from Malaysia and was introduced to noh in 2004 while on an Asian Public Intellectuals Fellowship to Japan. She studied kotsuzumi and otsuzumi with the late Kama Mitsuo; taiko with Sakurai Hitoshi; and shimai and utai with Richard Emmert and Oshima Kinue. Since 2009, she has played the kotsuzumi for the full noh *Funabenkei*, *Atsumori*, *Hagoromo* and David Crandall's *Crazy Jane*. In 2014, she performed the shite role in *Hagoromo* as part of Noh Training Project's 20th Anniversary.

Sumida River

Notes from the Director - Richard Emmert

Sumida River is a direct performance rendering in English of the Japanese noh *Sumida-gawa* written by 15th century playwright Kanze Motomasa--the son of Zeami who is the most renowned figure in the 600+ year history of noh. *Sumidagawa* is one of the saddest plays in the classical noh repertory.

It is difficult to divide noh into the Western theatrical constructs of tragedy and comedy. Comedy can be equated on the noh stage to the lively kyogen plays that are traditionally performed between noh. But equating tragedy to noh does not take into account that most end with a suffering ghost being prayed for, a demon being quelled, or a god's grace and power being felt. These are all uplifting, but not tragedy or comedy.

Sumida River is an exception. It is a tragedy—not with a tragic hero, because a mother who has lost her young son does not seem heroic. But it is universal and it strikes the depths of human emotion and compassion.

Theatre Nohgaku recently had the privilege of performing *Sumida River* in south Texas on the same program as Benjamin's Britten's opera *Curlew River*. Britten composed his opera after having seen *Sumidagawa* in Tokyo in the 1950s. While *Sumidagawa*/ *Sumida River* is strongly Buddhist, Britten's opera is a Christian counterpart, sad but with the Christian perspective of a mother and son who will meet again in heaven.

Theatre Nohgaku's rendering follows the Kita school version of the play. We hope it will have the same impact in Boston that it has had for six centuries in Japan.

Zahdi Dates and Poppies

Notes from the Playwright - Carrie Preston

I first experienced noh while visiting my husband at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan. That fascinating and baffling daylong performance launched a journey I wasn't expecting. I traveled to Tokyo to train in noh performance technique, wrote a book about noh and modernism that required research in Japan, Ireland, and England, and ultimately drafted a series of noh-inspired plays, including *Zahdi Dates and Poppies*.

As I read every noh play I could get in translation, I found myself drawn to a famous group of dramas about defeated warriors. I hoped that this ancient form of warrior plays could help me explore my personal struggles with my husband's deployment to Iraq, particularly the fact that he had killed those I could not consider enemies. He had taken lives that felt the love I feel, appreciated the beauty I appreciate. I wanted to explore a heartbreaking, deadly situation from a variety of perspectives. In this play, there are no heroes, villains, or innocent bystanders.

Noh inspired *Zahdi's* journey to Iraq, but I don't consider it a noh play. I hope the ghosts of defeated warriors, who have visited the noh stage for six centuries, might help us confront the trauma of war that persists long after the battle is over. Please join us on this journey.

Notes from the Director - Jubilith Moore

“It is forbidden to kill. Therefore, all murderers are punished, unless they kill in large numbers, and to the sound of trumpets.” —Voltaire.

It took me a long time to see *Zahdi Dates and Poppies* for the intricately poetic, subliminally forceful, heart touching play I believe it to be. I had been told it was a new noh in English and quickly put it, and numerous assumptions, into that mind box. What it actually is however is as ambiguous as its story line. Without doubt, it is a well-made play that invited my loyalty, is intensely personal, enduringly relevant and strong enough to withstand broad interpretation. It declares the complexity of hope, love, duty and loyalty, while acknowledging that it is possible to do right and wrong simultaneously: one can share a bed with one’s love, and a nightmare; one can drop bombs while two miles high traveling at 600 mph in a million dollars worth of fighter jet and yet be the one in danger; one can be violently stripped of every earthly joy and still possess a depth of compassion capable of forgiveness.

I am grateful for the opportunity to be this play’s student, and to work with this remarkable group of people, both on and off the stage. My only wish is to have more time in the room with them. Thank you for supporting live theatre and may you find a talisman today.

Notes from the Composer / Music Director - David Crandall

Zahdi Dates and Poppies marks an exciting step forward for me in my work as a composer of noh music. To help bring the story alive onstage, I’ve tried to create a continuum of styles ranging from pure noh chanting to modern Western melody (and in one spot even harmony!), all underpinned by the traditional drum and flute ensemble of noh. This approach has given me a free range of expression that I hope enhances the subtle nuances of the words, allowing me to use the strength of tradition without being bound by it.

In my role as music director, I’ve been blessed with a talented cast of English-speaking actors and musicians who are well-grounded in the traditional practice of noh but flexible enough to accommodate innovation. The text requires sudden shifts in mood and intensity that are challenging to achieve, ranging from guttural tsuyogin (dynamic) chant used in battle scenes to a delicate duet scored for tenor and soprano expressing heartbroken marital love. It’s no easy thing to keep such disparate elements balanced within a single dramatic and musical world. I’m grateful that these performers do it with such grace.

Play Synopses

Sumida River

Sumida River explores the deep bond between mother and child and the tragedy of loss. A ferryman on the Sumida River is about to take a traveler across, but they decide to wait for a madwoman following close behind. The woman arrives and tells how she is looking for her son who has been taken by slave traders. As they cross, they notice a crowd on the opposite bank conducting a Buddhist memorial service. The ferryman tells how a boy died a year earlier after having been left behind by slave traders. The woman realizes that the boy was her own son. The ferryman takes her to the grave. When she begins to recite prayers, the boy’s voice is heard from inside the grave. His ghost then appears to her but when she reaches out to touch him, he slips back into the grave and disappears, leaving only “sadness and sorrow.”

Zahdi Dates and Poppies

Zahdi Dates and Poppies tells the story of a US Marine fighter pilot haunted by an insurgent he killed during a bombing raid in Zaidon, Iraq. During the course of the play, he learns that the bomb also saved the life of a fellow Marine marksman. The pilot’s wife, despite her personal antipathy to war, tries to support him as he struggles with the nightmares of combat trauma. In the pilot’s dreams, the ghost of the Iraqi insurgent tells the story of how he, a farmer of Zahdi dates, found himself with a rifle on the rooftop in Zaidon where he died. The ghost mourns the loss of his beloved, who, in this nightmare, wears the face of the pilot’s wife.

About Noh

Noh in its present form dates to the late 14th and early 15th centuries, when an actor/playwright named Kan’ami (1333–1384) and his talented son Zeami (c.1363 — c.1443) began receiving patronage from the ruling Ashikaga shogunate. Rooted in an eclectic mix of medieval entertainments, noh evolved into a refined and subtle performance art that enjoyed government sponsorship through the late 19th century. That sponsorship ended when Japan began to modernize, but noh continues to thrive today with approximately 1,500 professional performers and teachers carrying on the tradition.

Remarkable for its integration, noh weaves together many elements that are themselves highly developed art forms. The beautifully allusive texts are grounded in classical Japanese and Chinese poetry and treat subjects ranging from samurai battles, divine revelation, demonic possession and all-too-human vendettas to the broken hearts of delicate court ladies. The chant has a deep intensity and power in its dynamic mode that can suddenly take lyrical flight in its melodic mode. The instrumental music, performed on two (sometimes three) drums and a flute, is rhythmically complex, with an elasticity governed by drum calls that, though never improvised, create a give-and-take that a jazz musician might well appreciate. The costumes include richly brocaded silk kimonos, often adorned with gold and woven in breathtakingly intricate designs. Movement is stylized and minutely controlled to create an intense stillness that gives astonishing life to the hand-carved masks, which, perhaps more than any other element, exemplify the care and passion that artists have poured into noh over the centuries.

With so many delightful points of entry, it’s no wonder that every viewer sees noh in a different light. We invite you to sit back, unwind your modern sense of time, and participate with the performers in the creation of a world deeply infused by the private mystery of the human heart.