



ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN PERFORMANCE FALL, 2023 NEWSLETTER

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear AAP Members,

Happy Fall to you all! I hope that this message finds you embracing life, research, teaching, and learning with curiosity, creativity, and humor. In this issue of the newsletter, please find reports on the AAP Conference and AAP-sponsored panels at the ATHE Conference in August 2023, AAP's important initiatives on anti-racism, our transitions to digital newsletters and an online membership directory, and updates on AAP's leadership transition.

One of my 2023 highlights was attending our AAP Conference on August 2 and the ATHE Conference during August 3–6 in Austin, Texas. Seventeen colleagues presented at the AAP Conference and, with nine AAP-sponsored panels, we also had a strong appearance at the ATHE Conference. Professor Siyuan Liu delivered the 2023 *Asian Theatre Journal* Lecture, "Writing for the Historically Marginalized Voices." As the 2023 ATHE Conference Committee was experimenting with conference theme, proposal procedure, and conference format, organizing this year's AAP Conference and AAP-sponsored panels presented unique challenges. I am immensely

grateful to Amanda Culp (VP/AAP Conference Planning) and Tara Rodman (VP/ATHE Conference Planning) for their diligence, patience, and leadership.

As I prepare for this letter, ATHE's 2024 conference committee is revising conference theme, and is in the process of meeting with focus group representatives and focus group planners. We anticipate a different timeline for 2024 conference application process, and we will act accordingly for AAP's 2024 conference planning after we receive this timeline.

I am pleased to report AAP's anti-racism initiatives. The AAP Anti-Racism Committee organized the virtual workshop, "Decolonizing Asian Performance Research: Embodiment, Ethnography, Archive," and offered it twice—on February 24 and 25, 2023—to accommodate global participants' schedules in different time zones. I thank Tarryn Chun, Ellen Gerdes, and Katherine Mezur for facilitating the workshops. At the AAP Conference in Austin, the Committee hosted the workshop, "Call to Action," in which participants developed action items aiming at changes to make AAP and our annual conference more inclusive and accessible to all scholars who work in Asian Theater and more welcoming to those who have been historically under-represented in our field. I was honored to join Amanda Culp and Alex Rogals in facilitating the workshop, and I thank Amanda and Alex for their leadership. The Committee is hosting a series of two virtual workshops on decolonizing research for October 2023. I thank colleagues on the AAP Anti-Racism Committee for taking on this significant task.

It gives me pleasure to announce that the 2022 Carol Fisher Sorgenfrei Prize was awarded to Colleen Lanki and Tsuneda Keiko for their article, “A *Journal of the Plague Year* by Terayama Shūji in Collaboration with Kishida Rio: ‘Contagious Magic’ for a Time of Epidemic,” published in *Asian Theatre Journal* Spring 2022. It was posthumous for our dear colleague Colleen Lanki who passed away earlier this year. The Sorgenfrei Prize Committee was impressed with the level of scholarship, translation work, and the timeliness of this work in the era of COVID. The Carol Fisher Sorgenfrei Prize for Japanese Theatre is designed to promote and encourage the study of Japanese theatre and performance, given to an early career scholar for an outstanding article, chapter, or essay on Japanese theatre or performance published in English during the current calendrical year in a journal, online journal, or book. Please find the 2023 call for submissions in this newsletter.

As we wrap up a productive 2022–23 for AAP, I would like to send my heartfelt gratitude to Kevin J. Wetmore, Jr. (Secretary/Treasurer, 2006–2023) for his eighteen years of service and contributions to our community. I also thank Minu Park for serving as a Graduate Student Representative during 2021–23. Please join me in welcoming two new members elected to the AAP Executive Board: Alex Rogals as Secretary/Treasurer and An-Ru Chu as a Graduate Student Representative. I congratulate Jashodhara Sen on her successful re-election as the Membership & Outreach Coordinator; she will serve her second term during 2023–25.

This year we will be holding elections for five positions on the Governing Board: Vice President for AAP Conference Planning; Vice President for ATHE Conference Planning; Vice President for Access, Equity, and Inclusion; IT Coordinator/AAP Online Editor; and one of the Graduate Membership Representatives. These are important positions that offer the opportunity to shape the future of AAP. Please watch your email for announcements about the elections. I thank Tarryn Chun, our current IT Coordinator/AAP Online Editor, for running the online interface for voting, and Alex Rogals, our new Secretary/Treasurer, for serving as the election monitor. Please feel free to email me, Xing Fan <stars.fan@utoronto.ca>, should you have questions.

Based on AAP Board’s recommendation and the approval of our

membership, during 2023–24, we will pursue a smooth transition to a digital AAP Newsletter and launch a gradual migration of our membership directory to an online format. I thank our Newsletter Editor Carol Fisher Sorgenfrei, IT Coordinator/AAP Online Editor Tarryn Chun, and Secretary/Treasurer Alex Rogals for their diligence and hard work.

I cannot thank other AAP board members enough for their work, support, and leadership. Jashodhara Sen, our Membership & Outreach Coordinator, organized an excellent Emerging Scholars Panel—one of the most important events in the AAP calendar—at this year’s AAP Conference. Hayana Kim, as a Graduate Student Representative, is offering valuable input to our ongoing discussion on supporting graduate students. Siyuan Liu as Editor and David Jortner as Book Review Editor continue to foster best scholarship in our field with *Asian Theatre Journal*. Also, I thank Carol Fisher Sorgenfrei for editing this newsletter. Published twice a year and accessible in the archives, it is a useful source of information.

I would like to thank everyone who attended this year’s AAP and ATHE conferences, community members who participated in our membership meeting, and those who attend our virtual workshops. Despite all the difficulties that we encounter in life, research, teaching, and learning as we gradually move to a post-pandemic world, your creativity at work, diligence in research, and commitment to our community continue to nurture AAP’s blossoming. Friends and colleagues, take good care.

With Best Wishes,

Xing Fan

President, Association for Asian Performance

A SPECIAL INVITATION: AAP RECRUITING GRAD STUDENTS



Calling all Graduate Students!

AAP warmly invites you to participate in the organization, in whatever way you wish -- If you are interested in learning more, or running for the open position, please

contact one of our Graduate Student Representatives: An-Ru Chu (anruc@uci.edu) and Hayana Kim (hayanakim@gmail.com). Also, please join the AAP Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1450088988610782>) to stay in touch with the other members. This group is a great place for calls for papers, syllabi exchanges, and other helpful resources for graduate students in our field.

A AP ANTI-RACISM INITIATIVE

The AAP Anti-Racism Committee has been busy! Over the summer, we facilitated a workshop at the AAP conference that resulted in a number of excellent ideas for new and continued initiatives that focus on improving accessibility and inclusivity. We will be working on related programming, including virtual events and panels for next summer's in-person conference, throughout the year, so please look out for email and Facebook announcements from the committee.

This fall, we hosted the first virtual conversation in a new series on "Decolonizing Research: Scholars in Practice" on October 13, 2023. ARC chair Tarryn Chun facilitated a dialogue with guests Dr. Hentyle Yapp (UCSD) and Dr. Ivanna Sang Een Yi (Cornell University) on their recent research and how they engage with theory and methodologies from Black Studies, Disability Studies, Indigenous Studies, and Queer Studies. A recording of the conversation will be made available to AAP members at a later date. Stay tuned for future events in this series!



RECAP:

TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL AAP CONFERENCE AUGUST 2, 2023 – Austin, Texas

PANEL 1

MODERATOR: ALEX ROGALS

Finally, a warm welcome to our two new committee members, Akhila Vimal and Satkirti Sinha, and a thank you to Freda Fiala, Ellen Gerdes, and Jashodhara Sen, who have rotated off the committee. We are always happy for more help, so if you are interested in getting involved by joining the committee or running for the new VP/AEI position, please feel free to email Tarryn (tchun@nd.edu) for more information!

---ARC Chair: Tarryn Chun

Committee Members: Jyana Browne,
Amanda Culp, Katherine Mezur, Alex
Rogals, Satkirti Sinha, Akhila Vimal

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Please send news and announcements for the Spring 2024 *Newsletter* (including up-coming events that will take place between June and November, 2024, or those occurred between November 2023 and May, 2024) to: [<csorgenfrei2@aol.com>](mailto:csorgenfrei2@aol.com). The deadline is April 15, 2024.

To become a member of AAP, fill out and mail the form that is included with the newsletter, or email: Alex Rogals AAP Secretary/Treasurer (alexrogals@yahoo.com)



All the best

Carol Fisher Sorgenfrei

Newsletter Editor

**PRESENTERS: FANCHEN KONG,
EASON LU, MENGHANG WU**

Fanchen Kong, “Thick Description for Scripts and Ideographic Body Movement in Kunqu Performance”

This paper examined the relationship between the choreographic method and scripts of Kunqu (昆曲). The symbolic body movement interpreted by the performers from the scripts to the audiences in oral society in ancient Chinese stage, because Kunqu begins from the scripts. The performers studied the deep meanings in the text, and then translated them into symbolic body language. The setting of body movement in Kunqu performance is comparable to the ethnographic method of thick description (after Geertz) in the theory of anthropology. With the development of Kunqu from ancient time to nowadays, interpretation became a method of choreography. The body movement within this function is called ideographic body movement. The paper explained how body movement is used to interpret the ancient scripts, how the performers understand the source scripts, and how they interpret by ideographic symbolic body movement. Their choreography focuses on three methods: (i) interpreting the emotion of roles which are expressed by the setting in scripts, with the literature rhetoric *bi*(比) and *xing*(興); (ii) constructing the landscape and setting of the play through the body language; (iii) connecting the meaning of the scripts through the combination of singing and dancing. This study explains how thick description works in Chinese traditional opera and supports the choreography method of ideographic body movement in Kunqu performance.

Eason Lu, “Performing the Women’s Script: The Archive and Repertoire of Nüshu”

Nüshu is a unique script system discovered in China in 1982 that was exclusively created, used, and circulated among women of ethnic minority in Jiangyong, Hunan. Unlike traditional writing systems, chanting and performing were the primary methods used to create, read, and learn nüshu. Combining fieldwork and archival research, this study analyzed the performativity embedded in this distinctive culture and its interaction with the official, male-centered mandarin Chinese language. Nüshu documents the private sentiments of women in Jiangyong and facilitated unique sworn sisterhoods that challenged the constraints of traditional marriage.

Inspired by the emotional expressions recorded in nüshu, contemporary artists reinterpret the script and emphasize the suppressed identities of women and the sympathetic affection between homosocial relationships. This paper examined two artworks: Macau-based artist Yuen-yi Lo’s painting, *Mapping*, and Hong Kong City Contemporary Dance Company’s choreography, *Herstory*. Both pieces creatively highlight the secretiveness and femininity embedded in nüshu through emphasizing the ideographs signifying women. They also exemplify how nüshu is often observed through a feminist lens today. By incorporating grotesque physical gestures into their adaptations of nüshu ballads and performances, the patriarchal restraint that dissolved sisterhoods in Jiangyong now has tangible, corporeal effects. The paper also highlighted how scholarly and artistic approaches to recover and reinterpret nüshu had mutual influences.

Menghang Wu, “Performing Nuclear Waste in Eiko Otake’s *A Body in Fukushima*”

The paper discussed how Eiko Otake explores the role of performing waste and abandoned objects in the aftermath of a catastrophe, using Eiko Otake’s dance performance-photo collection *A Body in Fukushima* (2021). In *A Body in Fukushima*, Otake and photographer Williams Johnston visited multiple locations in Fukushima to capture the experience of the post-nuclear disaster. They created a collaborative photograph collection together that embodied the experience of the disaster. The paper examined the performance created by Otake and draws on the theories of Heidegger, Latour, Morton, Harman, and de Certeau to understand the relationships between waste, politics, economy, and identity in a post-disaster context.

Drawing on a variety of theoretical perspectives aids in providing a deeper understanding of the complex relationships between waste, politics, economy, and identity in a post-disaster context. The paper also situated the performance in the context of Atomic Bomb Literature and today’s global nuclear discourse.

The presentation considered how we can understand catastrophe through the perspective of performance, how bodies with post-war trauma co-exist with nuclear-radiated land, and how the objects and objecthood in the work speak to Eiko’s Japanese cultural

background and Asian American diasporic identity. In addition, it highlighted the potential for the study of performing waste to bring a de-anthropocentric perspective to performance studies.

PANEL 2

MODERATOR: DAVID JORTNER

**PRESENTERS: ZHEN CHENG,
MAN HE, HANSEL TAN**

Zhen Cheng, “Not the Other Avant-Garde: Zhang Guangtian’s Avantgarde Theaters”

This paper explored the highly politicized and contentious artistic works of Zhang Guangtian, a renowned playwright, director, and independent musician born in Shanghai in 1966. Known as the Avantgarde Player (Xianfengxizi) due to his active engagement in social criticism through his art, Zhang has been controversially labeled as a radical Maoist, a New Lifter, and a nationalist. Through his art, Zhang portrays the dynamic interplay between the social, cultural, and political changes in China and expresses his belief that revolution is still necessary to address the social injustices brought about by neoliberalism.

The paper delved into Zhang's most well-known theatrical works, the *Idealism Trilogy*, which consists of *Che Guevara* (Qie-Gewala, 2000), *Sage Confucius* (Shengren Kongzi, 2002), and *Left Bank* (Zuo'an, 2006). The paper focused on *Che Guevara*, which depicts the Cuban revolution and the life of the legendary revolutionary icon, and *Sage Confucius*, which draws a connection between the death of Lin Biao and the 9/11 terrorist attack.

The paper argued that avant-garde theater in post-revolutionary China revitalizes the imagination of revolution through trans-pacific displaced nostalgia, shedding light on the complex interplay between politics, culture, and art in contemporary China. It also attempted to complicate the existing research on Chinese avant-garde theaters.

Man He, “The Voice of ‘Communist Bandits’: Theatre Professionals’ Migration across the Taiwan Strait in Early Cold War

The professionalization of Chinese spoken theatre (huaju), in both epistemological and empirical scales, intriguingly thrived in various makeshift conditions during the interruption of the Second Sino-Japanese War. This chaotic period saw the emergence of theatre professionals who graduated from war-time institutions where trainings from Chinese indigenous operas, left-wing cinema, and Soviet and American modernist theories were effectively synthesized while huaju itself was highly politicized to mobilize patriotic fervor. How did these theatre talents continue or remake their profession after 1945 when the alliance between the Nationalists and Communists ended? How was theatre professionalization re-oriented for those who migrated within the Sinosphere in the early stages of the Cold War?

This presentation addressed these questions via a case study on Cui Xiaoping (1922-2017), a female actor and director who relocated to Taiwan in 1947 and, after a successful career in radio drama, was imprisoned as a spy for “communist bandits” between 1968 and 1977. Reading Cui’s writings in tandem with her interrogation records, this presentation examined how Cui applied her previous wartime training in voice acting to institutionalizing radio broadcasting in Taiwan in the 1950s.

This case study further aspired to start a broader project that maps out the dynamic relationship between theatre and migration in the Sinosphere during the Cold War. In this new narrative, it is the female theatre professionals produced during WWII, not the established (male) dramatists from the May Fourth era, who claim their voice of theatre against the political background of Cold War tensions.

Hansel Tan, “Staging Singlish: How Singapore’s English Language Theatre found its Voice”

In the early 1980s, Singapore witnessed a nationwide battle over the use of “Singlish” – a colloquial form of pidgin English that evolved out the country’s unique multicultural history, developing against linguistic policies of the ‘60s which outlawed the use of dialects in pedagogical spaces and standardized English as a national language of instruction.

This paper unpacked a sonic moment in the history of English Language Theatre (ELT) in Singapore through the lens of the Singaporean English accent (colloquially referred to as Singlish), as refracted by the complex interplay of postcolonialism, linguistic policy, nation-building, cultural ideology, and the immanent musical politics of speech acts. As a uniquely syncretic form of English that evolved out of Singapore’s multiethnic, multireligious, and multilinguistic demographic, leaders made concerted attempts to renounce Singlish in narratives of deca, and employed various methods to police its proliferation.

Against a backdrop of national debates concerning “Standardized English” mandates, the paper specifically reconsidered the impact, legacy, and radical-daring of two groundbreaking productions, *Nurse Angamuthu’s Romance* (1981) and *Samseng and the Chettiar’s Daughter* (1982), in shattering the ideological acoustic ceiling by trafficking Singlish onto the Singaporean ELT stage, as well as the ambivalent strategies of adaptation-as-camouflage that enabled them to do so, much to the chagrin of policymakers. By eavesdropping on the aural politics of the Singapore stage, we were invited to track how deeply-seated colonial biases continue to haunt contemporary historical surveys of Singapore’s ELT that privilege authorial and textual landmarks over sounded ones.

PANEL 3

MODERATOR: RADHICA GANAPATHY

PRESENTERS: AMANDA CULP, SATKIRTI SINHA, AKHILA VIMAL

Amanda Culp, “Scripting History *For the Record*”

In the fall of 2019, Black Box Okhla (BBO) Theater in New Delhi premiered a devised play called *For the Record*. Led by artistic director Nikhil Mehta, the play’s premise evokes a trend in recent found-text collaboration: “1971: A tribunal is tasked with selecting three artifacts that represent India to the world. 2018: Transcripts of the tribunal meetings are released to the public. 2019: *For the Record* recreates the deliberations, the disputes and the drama!”

The formula for the play is structurally familiar, oscillating between scenes of the actors playing versions of themselves in process and scenes from the tribunal transcripts brought to life by the actors as part of a heightened performance. What makes BBO’s production unique, however, is that the historical basis of this tribunal—a United Nations enterprise designed to collect and exhibit three “national treasures”—is a fabrication, the contours of which have been strategically engineered by the company. Audiences, however, are never told that the veracity of the supposed “found text” is suspect and are left at the end of the performance having learned a piece of Indian history that is fictional, yet at the same time thoroughly believable.

Based on interviews with Mehta, this paper investigated the dynamic interplay of text, performance, and history in *For the Record*. In repeating an event that never, in fact, occurred, *For the Record* troubles the expectation that history is sanctioned by textual record and theatricalizes the precarious slippage between truth, fact, and fiction that defines the present political moment in India, as well as the US.

Sakriti Sinha, “The Indigenous Binaries of resistance in postcolonial India”

In his pivotal article ‘What do secularist means by ‘secularism’?’ (2019) for the London School of Economics, Jeremy Rodel identified three tenets of secularism: institutional separation, no discrimination on the grounds of religion and freedom of belief. However, his Eurocentric principles on secularism sound good in theory but remain challenging to implement in a realistic world, especially in postcolonial

countries like India, which remain politically, socially and culturally in a hybrid state. Subsequently, India post-independence has transformed into a more conservative state due to formulating an ambivalent space. In his significant postcolonial theory(1993), Homi Bhabha elaborated on this ambivalent space as a cultural pot with various binaries. Apparently, cramping the separation of religion from state, more so, with the coming of a populist leader like Narendra Modi under the banner of hostile Hindutva ideology, the discourse of institutional detachment becomes unthinkable.

The paper analyzed the role of the indigenous folk performance *Bidesiya* (Foreigner) from the hinterlands of Bihar in postcolonial India and the varying degrees of resistance- consciously and unconsciously- that is produced. Such resistance challenged the idea of majoritarian secularism held by the BJP (Bhartiya Janta Party) regime and its parental body RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh - a Hindu nationalist paramilitary organization).

Additionally, the paper explored paradigms of the *Bidesiya* style and its produced resistance, as well as how it confronts the secularism biases that empowered populist leaders like Modi and Trump to portray themselves as secular despite abhorring and viewing it as tokenism.

Akhila Vimal, “Forbidden Culture: Understanding Ritual Space and Challenge to Normativity in Kodungallur Bharani”

Kōṭṭṇāllūr Temple and its month-long Bharani festival, with its diverse ritual traditions and vast community participation, is a significant identity in the socio-cultural and religious sphere of Kerala. The Bharani Festival is a site of intense sacrificial paradigms that involve lower caste bleeding bodies. Thousands of Komarams (oracles), believed to be the representatives and devotees of goddess Bhadrakālī, mutilate their foreheads and spill blood as an offering to the deity. From the next day is the Bharani festival following which the temple is closed for seven days - a period designated specifically to cleanse the temple of impurities.

The paper focused on the self-mutilated bodies and their dance, which transcend their identity by analyzing popular songs with obscene references that form an essential part of the ritual. The songs sung at the festival interrupt the conventional binaries of sacred/profane, and challenge the moral codes of erotica and abuse.

The paper discussed the complexities emerging from the celebration of lower caste bodies and their performance in a space which no longer belongs to them but has been historically appropriated by upper caste groups. The festival and its location exhibit the so-called ‘primitive’ cultural practices that challenge the colonial/post-colonial imagination of the nation and its ‘refined’ majoritarian Hindu religious identity, and as a result are currently being challenged on legal and moral grounds.

Nevertheless, a symbolic set of performances continues to manifest and transmit the context of decolonialization through asserting space and establishing identity through songs and dance.

PANEL 4

MODERATOR: TARA RODMAN

PRESENTERS: YUIE CHEN, ALISSA ELEGANT, YAO XU

Yujie Chen, “Applying a Gaudy filter for Chinese Contemporary Dance: ErGao’s Dance Film *Gongxi Facai N+*”

This paper examined Chinese choreographer and filmmaker ErGao (He Qiwo)’s work to argue for an embodied cultural self-awareness in contemporary dance practices that speak back both to the universality of the Western model and the national allegory. ErGao’s dance film *Gongxi Facai N+* (Wish You Get Rich N+) (2010), delineates his place-based dance practice, one that combines bricolage and parody, to form a body politic that is simultaneously culturally specific and undermining of cultural essentialism.

In the dance film *Gongxi Facai N+*, ErGao’s place-based politics works on two levels. First, ErGao borrows the existing subversive bricolage of the Chinese youth subculture *tuku* (peasant cool) to address China’s spatial and social stratification and its resulting discourse of rurality. Second, the dancer’s body becomes a place where he uses parody to both confirm and contest discursive cultural inscriptions.

ErGao’s place-based politics effectively point out the artifices of cultural symbols and their allegories of power and, at the same time, confirm their importance in generating locally bounded embodied knowledge. Using gaudy and absurd filters, ErGao successfully disputes the West’s claim of universal application of Euro-American-originated dance forms and aesthetics

in China. ErGao's practices have further implications because they shift where the world dance field understands as the center.

Alissa Elegant, "Nurturing Spaces of Workers Art: The Role of Labor Unions in Developing Julebu (Workers Clubs 工人俱乐部) and Wenhua Gong (Cultural Palaces 文化宫) in the Early People's Republic of China"

The paper set the metaphorical stage for amateur dance and other performance practices in the People's Republic of China by analyzing the role of labor unions (gonghui 工会) in developing and managing julebu (workers clubs 俱乐部) and wenhuagong (cultural palaces 文化宫) in the 1950s, a period of the dissemination of patterns of socialist practice and infrastructure.

Workers' julebu, and wenhuagong were important infrastructures making it easier and more likely for urban workers to engage in and interact with artistic practice and performance. The intimate and continued connection between labor unions and these spaces can make this relationship appear natural and inevitable. The paper asks how this connection came into being by looking to newspaper and magazine reports on the 1950 All China Worker Julebu (Wenhua Gong) Work Meeting as well as published handbooks of the time to understand the hopes and challenges labor unions had for these spaces that nurture artistic practice and performance.

This shifts the focus of inquiry from the better archived creative process of elite creation to spaces where dance and other artistic practices occurred as part of everyday life. The nature of performance practices in these spaces is likely that of repetition and re-performances/re-interpretations (as opposed to premieres) of well-known pieces documented in Chinese performance studies literature.

Additionally, focusing on the artistic benefits unions provided workers de-centers Western assumptions that the sole function of labor unions is extracting better labor conditions from employers. It centers workers as multifaceted humans that benefit from art as well as better wages and working conditions.

Yao Xu, "As If Zhao Faiyan was Reincarnated in Zhang Qi"--Mediating Femininity through the Plum Blossom Girls' Song and Dance Troupe's Dance on Hands"

In contemporary Chinese dance historiography, Chinese popular song and dance troupes' artistic endeavors during the 1920s and 1930s were largely dismissed as merely mimicking the carnal entertainment of Western cabaret and vaudeville performances, devoid of serious artistic or social values. These critiques partially evoke Homi Bhabha's (2004) conceptualization of "colonial mimicry" through which the colonial subject is caught in an "ambivalent" place where they are compelled to mimic the colonizer, while at the same time, continually producing differences to the " 'normalized' knowledge and disciplinary powers" (122-123), which could subvert the act of mimicking into a mockery.

The paper contended with these critiques by analyzing a series of photographs of the Plum Blossom Girls' Song and Dance Troupe's *Dance on Hands* created in 1930. In relation to writings and discussions on the physical culture during the 1930s, the paper resituated *Dance on Hands* in the context of China's colonial modernity and demonstrated that *Dance on Hands* does not outrightly copy nor resist the colonial pedagogy, but performs a "double-mediation" that curates and appropriates the representation of femininity in colonial pedagogy and in Chinese literati imaginations.

**PANEL 5
MODERATOR: AMANDA CULP
PRESENTERS: RADHICA
GANAPATHY, DAVID JORTNER**

Radhica Ganapathy, "Decolonize this: Examining the immaterial and the material in Performance."

Corresponding with the celebration of Queen Victoria's jubilee, the Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886 opened on May 4th in London and ran for a period of six months. This was a historical event with an elaborate staging of imperial culture. The Prince of Wales, in his opening address, described this as "stimulate commerce and strengthen the bonds of union now existing in every portion of her Majesty's Empire." This presentation focused specifically on an ethnological display which was integral to this exhibition.

The display included small clay figures in their native settings, alongside a living display of human beings from India. The living exhibit

was staged similarly to the presentation of the clay figures. Upholding a problematic colonial ideology based in hierarchies, this display of objects (both literal and human) is exemplary of Victorian anthropology that was intermingling science and entertainment. This type of historical display was fundamental to imperialist practices that led to a scripting of how the colonized were seen and understood. There is clearly a presence of material performance in these performing objects that speaks directly to postcolonial discourse and race politics.

This paper deconstructed a politics of performance regarding the objects as living – and the living as objects.

David Jortner, “Bewildering ‘Cabuques’: A Historiography of Early Anglophone Scholarship on Japanese Theatre”

From the “opening” of Japan in 1854 (acknowledging, as we write this, that Japan was never truly “closed” and that this “opening” was only somewhat voluntary) diplomats, scholars, intellectuals and artists flocked to the nation to explore its culture. These Western individuals found a nation and culture which challenged their preconceptions in many ways, from food to social structures to the performing arts. Their reports, letters, books, and scholarship helped to set/create perceptions about Japan and the Japanese theatre which have lasted even to the current day.

This paper examined some of the earliest writings about the Japanese theatre by English speakers such as Richard Cocks, Lord Rutherford Alcock, Edward Morse and Basil Hall Chamberlain. These early observers and scholars saw the Japanese theatre at a time of cultural change; while some found the theatre to be a center of depravity others saw a rapidly disappearing beauty in the art forms of kabuki and noh.

As scholars, a historiographical study of these early reports allows one to see how these early views of Japanese theatre created fundamental assumptions and scholarly methodologies based on racially and nationalistic ideologies that still exist in the 21st century.

**SESSION 5: ANTI-RACISM
WORKSHOP: CALL TO ACTION
Moderators: Jyana Browne, Amanda Culp, Xing Fan, Alex Rogals (on behalf of the AAP Anti-Racism Committee)**

Last year, the Anti-Racism Committee’s conference workshop ended with a full session brainstorm on what changes we want to make to AAP so our organization and our annual conference are more inclusive and accessible to all scholars who work in Asian Theater and more welcoming those who have been historically under-represented into our field. This year, we invited everyone to join us in taking up ATHE’s Call to Action by spending this session responding to that brainstorm, developing action items, and formulating concrete plans to implement them for the coming academic year.

**SESSION 6: EMERGING
SCHOLARS PANEL
EMERGING SCHOLARS PANEL
Moderator: Siyuan Liu
Presenters: Hanyang Jiang, Yihui Sheng, Menghang Wu**

Hanyang Jiang, “A Babel of Nature: The English-Language Sources of Zheng Junli’s *Tan biaoyan* (On Acting, 1936)”

Zheng Junli (1911-1969) was a left-wing stage director, actor, and moviemaker in modern China. Known as one of the first translators of Stanislavsky’s writings into Chinese, he worked in tandem with his colleagues to produce a translation of *An Actor Prepares* (1936), the English-language recension of Stanislavsky’s acting manual, resulting in *Yanyuan ziwo xiuyang* (An Actor’s Self-Cultivation, 1943).

This paper examined how Zheng conceived of Stanislavsky’s ideas on acting before setting out to translate *An Actor Prepares*. It focuses on a 1936 manuscript *Tan biaoyan* (On Acting) by Zheng that chronicles the emergence of “natural acting” on the British and French stages from the mid-sixteenth to the late nineteenth centuries. A large portion of *On Acting* is in fact a patchwork of translated excerpts from different English-language texts, among which are *The Theatre* by the American cultural critic Sheldon Cheney (1886-1980), *The Drama* by the English actor-manager Henry Irving (1838-1905), and the English version of *The Art of Actor* by the French performer Constant Coquelin (1841-1909).

The three primary source texts had proposed different conceptions of naturalness that were juxtaposed against each other in Zheng’s manuscript, hence giving rise to a “Babel of Nature.” The paper argues that the

layered message. that *On Acting* conveys is analogous to Stanislavsky's principles enunciated in *An Actor Prepares*: the ultimate aim of acting is to create artistic truth rooted in (human) nature, and to this end, an actor must study and live the part. For Zheng and his fellows in the mid-1930s, natural acting was a shorthand for the expressive revelation of character's interiority.

Yihui Sheng, "The Performers' Brush: A Case Study of Scene Twelve "Composing the Score" ("Zhipu") in a Mid-Qing Stage Script of *Palace of Everlasting Life* (Changsheng dian)."

In 1750, a person named Shen Wencai hand-copied a comprehensive stage script of the renowned chuanqi song-drama *The Palace of Everlasting Life* (Changsheng dian) composed by the playwright Hong Sheng (1645–1704) in 1688. Shen's stage script is the earliest known document that records how the full-length *Palace* was once staged in Kunqu, a Chinese theatrical tradition predominant in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. While there are very few primary sources detailing theatrical performances before the mid-eighteenth century in China, Shen's stage script provides valuable first-hand information for scholars to investigate the ways in which premodern performers transformed a play from the playwright's text into a performable piece.

This paper takes one scene from this understudied script as an example to examine how performers edited Hong's text to challenge the playwright's assumed authority over the play and claim credit for their own creativity in the production of *Palace*.

Menghang Wu, "Beyond Orientalism: Tracing the Nonhuman Aesthetics in Shen Wei's *Folding* and *Near the Terrace*"

The paper challenged most of the scholarship about Shen Wei's works in dance studies as they largely examine and criticize his abstraction, self-orientalism, Chinese identity, and cultural representation. However, scholars ignore the nonhuman, objecthood, queerness, and cross-media, potentiality of challenging human centrism in Shen Wei's works, which block more possibilities and potentialities in both criticizing his works and expanding the boundaries of dance studies and cross-cultural studies. The paper analyzes his two works *Folding* and *Near the Terrace*.

The paper argues that Shen Wei's works are not limited to seeking abstraction but employ objecthood aesthetics for seeking common solidarity and radical gender-political implications through queer ecology. Thus, the previous scholarship on his self-orientalism is a misreading. Moreover, the paper argues that nonhumanness constitutes a being that breaks the linear narrative. The nonhuman being here provides the potentiality to rupture the dualism between East and West.



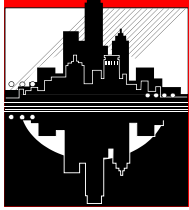
-- submitted by *Amanda Culp*,
VP for AAP Conference



SCHOOMZE! EAT! IMBIBE! ENJOY!

A great way to relax, unwind, and spend time with friends –old and new! To celebrate our 36th wonderful year, the annual **Schmoozefest** took place at Mai Thai Restaurant, just three blocks from the conference

hotel. Later, from 9:00-10:30pm, AAP's Grad Student Representatives hosted **Happy Hour** at the Marriott's Edge Rooftop Bar.



RECAP: **AAP at ATHE --- Aug. 3-6, 2023 -- Austin, Texas**

We had a fantastic range of panels this year, and it was exciting to hear so many perspectives on the issues centered at this year's conference. Here is a summary of the AAP-sponsored sessions that took place at the 2023 ATHE conference in Austin, TX.

Internationalizing ATHE

This virtual session, held prior to the in-person conference, allowed ATHE members hailing from many different focus groups and geographic regions to come together to discuss the challenges of being part of ATHE, and of Theatre Studies, as an international scholar. Through shared anecdotes and exchanges of frustration and wisdom, the session allowed this crucial element of ATHE's organizing to be reflected upon...and hopefully improved in the future.

The Problem of Pronunciation

Alex Rogals, with Masae Suzuki, offered a presentation on Okinawa's local version of *noh*—essentially a two-for-one, in which we learned both Japanese and Okinawan versions of the terms, and with that, an implicit narrative of Japan's history of colonizing the Ryukyu Kingdom.

Amanda Culp then presented on *rasa* (with an “uh” not an “ah”!) and *bhāvha*, and the theories of performance (and long histories of practice) that these terms encode. This pressed home the necessity of learning these words in context (rather than decontextualized, as in Schechner's “Rasaboxes”) -- not to wall them off in a sphere of untouchable authenticity, but to use these terms from their own starting points.

Xing Fan next led a pronunciation

lesson for *xiqu*, which highlighted the political stakes of avoiding common translations, such as “traditional Chinese theatre,” which suggests that *xiqu* is a form that belongs in the past. Xing also offered valuable teaching techniques, such as playing terminology bingo with students at the beginning of a term; introducing a common syllabus in different word formations (e.g. *kunqu*, which uses the same *qu* sound as *xiqu*.)

Across the presentations, what emerged was a strong sense that it is worth taking the slightly slower, more awkward route of being consistent in using actual performance terms, because these words do things and express concepts that the English language doesn't have the capacity for. When we use these terms, we gain a more vibrant and more precise palette to convey the extraordinary range of performance practices in the world.

AAP Meet and Greet

This was an opportunity to see new and old faces and to discuss what AAP is, where it is headed, and how we can meet the needs of current and future members.

We discussed the value of AAP as an academic community, especially for those of us who are the only (or one of only a few) theatre/arts/humanities faculty members at our institution. We also discussed AAP's identity as dedicated to the purview of “Asian performance” and where that leaves people whose scholarship

moves between Asian and Asian American performance, or other diasporic formations. This conversation was underlined by the question of where people studying Asian American / Diasporic Asian performance might feel they belonged at ATHE...and whether that is AAP or not.

Collaborating Against Colonialism

This session featured participants from a number of different focus groups, who came together to tackle issues of pedagogy, scholarship, and artistic practice in conjunction with the desire to decolonize theatre studies.

What Are You? Amplifying Mixed-Asian Voices in Acting Pedagogy

Through personal anecdotes, socio-political structural analyses, statistics, and group casting exercises, the four presenters offered a moving and rigorous discussion of the challenges of working as a “mixed-Asian” actor and/or acting teacher. They highlighted the tensions of the particular moment of casting history we are now in: while “color-blind” casting has been successfully overturned in many situations, given the dearth of roles specifically written for multi-racial actors, what are actors and acting teachers to do?

Following this, the presenters raised the issue of being made to choose between different parts of their identity, and how painful that is.

The session culminated in a discussion of how to work with students who may identify as multi-racial (or be in the process of working out their identity), with awareness of the nuances of one’s own position as an educator.

Publication Pipeline: The Contextualization Problem

The session opened with a group discussion about common problems that writers face when trying to write about Asian theatre for a non-specialist audience, such as how to deal with toggling between the source language and English, and especially how jargon will be experienced by the non-specialist reader.

The group then broke into small groups where early-career scholars were given feedback on a pre-circulated piece of writing. These targeted discussions were concrete in their applicability to a specific piece of writing, but nevertheless, are generally pertinent. Some examples include: How to frame the argument and its stakes right away; how to use an opening

anecdote to direct the reader to some of the larger themes; how to focus on just one thing and allow it to expand through fuller analyses; which terms need explication; and, given our reliance as performance historians on reviews as sources of evidence, how to differentiate between what the reviewer saw, and the reviewer’s assessment — and which might be needed for a given argument.

After Theory

This session, involving AAP and the Theory and Criticism focus group, paired presenters who shared their partner’s research, in a format that was refreshing and productive. Together, the papers tackled a wide range of examples concerning which theories get used to analyze performance, and how.

Examples include a paper that turned to Korea’s Jeoson era to think about different ways of carrying out critical thinking, in the face of communicative gaps between Korea-based and internationally-based scholars of Korea. Another paper addressed yellowface in commedia dell’arte and problems of pedagogy. Another considered the precarity of Eiko Otake’s body dancing in the nuclear waste of Fukushima.

Across the papers and group conversation, participants discussed the distinction between feeling compelled to use “Western” theory, and thinking about building a bridge to readers who may not be familiar with a given topic.

ATJ Lecture: Siyuan Liu, “Writing for the Historically Marginalized Voices”

Tracing the processes by which he wrote his major books, Liu offered an overview not only of his own scholarship, but of some of the major paradigms that have become mainstays of English-language Chinese Theatre historiography. In doing so, the theme of Liu’s lecture was the way in which his scholarship has brought out a range of marginalized voices in Chinese theatre, to offer counter-narratives and wider understandings of Chinese theatre history.

Moving through Liu’s scholarship, it became evident that he has been at the forefront of pairing old and new historical methods; traditional archival research, paired with data analysis, has allowed Liu to challenge accepted versions of history, as well as our own blindspots, for example, concerning the

outcomes of censorship of *xiqu* plays from 1949-66.

The immense detective work of piecing together theatre history becomes, under Liu's treatment, an opportunity to rethink not just theatre history, but the many categories of erasure and oppression (class prejudice, gender discrimination) that often occlude our understanding.

Performing Social Protest

This roundtable involved presenters from AAP, BTA, TASC, and the Theatre History focus group to offer a range of examples and critical interpretations of performative protest and racial solidarity. The presenters all emphasized the gains of historical research, and the many lessons that can be drawn from

historical examples of collective resistance and action through performance.

And as for Next Year's Conference...

Please stay tuned! ATHE is working to consider a range of options for format and CFP. For now, please mark your calendars: the 2024 conference is booked for **July 25-28, in Atlanta, GA.**



--submitted by

Tara Rodman, VP/ ATHE Conference Planner



CONFERENCES, PRIZES AND CALLS

A AP EMERGING SCHOLARS ADJUDICATED PANEL 2024

The Association for Asian Performance (AAP) invites submissions for its 29th Annual Adjudicated Emerging Scholars Panel to be held during the Association for Asian Performance annual in-person conference in 2024, which precedes the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) conference in Atlanta, Georgia. As soon as we get further information, we will announce the dates.

Selected papers will be strongly considered for publication in the *Asian Theatre Journal* – an official publication of AAP. Eligibility is open to all (current and recent graduate students, scholars, teachers, artists) provided they are: 1) early in their scholarly career OR new to the study of Asian performance; 2) have not published in *Asian Theatre Journal*, and 3) have not previously received an AAP Emerging Scholars Award.

We welcome submissions from past applicants.

Papers (8-10 double-spaced pages) may deal with any aspect of Asian performance or drama. Preparation of the manuscript in *Asian Theatre Journal* style, which can be gleaned from a recent issue, is desirable.

Up to three winning authors will be selected and invited to present their papers at the upcoming AAP conference. Paper presentations should be no longer than twenty minutes. A \$100 cash prize will be awarded for each paper selected to help offset conference fees. AAP Conference registration fees are waived for the winners, who also receive one-year free membership to AAP.

The receipt of the award is contingent upon attendance at the AAP conference. All paper submissions will receive written feedback from the selection committee. Please keep in mind that if you are traveling outside of the country and anticipate any visa complications in the summer, we hope to keep the AAP pre-conference in person.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:

Papers should be accompanied by a separate cover sheet detailing the author's contact information: institutional affiliation and current title (if relevant), address, phone number, and

email address (for both academic year and summer holiday). The author's name should not appear in the paper. Please send submissions electronically to Dr. Jashodhara Sen, Assistant Professor of Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Florida, jsen@ufl.edu.

Deadline for Submissions: February 30, 2023. Winners will be notified by April 30, 2024.

AAP is proud to sponsor this adjudicated panel. Not only is it a chance for students and emerging scholars to get exposure and recognition for their work, but it also provides an opportunity to meet and make contacts with others who are interested in similar fields of research.

Please direct any inquiries regarding the Emerging Scholars Award panel to Jashodhara Sen at jsen@ufl.edu

To find out about the benefits of becoming an AAP member, please check out our website at <http://asian-performance.org> and consider joining us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/aaponline/>

SORGENFREI PRIZE SUBMISSIONS

The Association for Asian Performance is pleased to announce a call for submissions to the 2023 Carol Fisher Sorgenfrei Prize for Japanese Theatre Scholarship. The prize shall consist of a three-thousand-dollar award, a plaque and a complimentary year's membership in AAP.

The Carol Fisher Sorgenfrei Prize for Japanese Theatre is designed to promote and encourage the study of Japanese theatre and performance given to an early career scholar for an outstanding article, chapter, or essay on Japanese theatre or performance published in English during the current calendrical year in a journal, online journal, or book. (Early career scholars may include current graduate students, or those with an MA/MFA/PhD/other terminal degree no more than six years past graduation, including independent scholars.)



PRODUCTIONS, FESTIVALS, EXHIBITIONS, AND OTHER EVENTS

Nominated essays may cover any period, any style and any genre of Japanese theatre or performance (note: performance here is taken to mean theatrical performance, dance and other related forms), published in English between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023 in a peer-reviewed or otherwise vetted publication. The selection committee shall have final determination as to whether or not an essay qualifies for the prize.

Self-nominations will be accepted, as will nomination by editor or other. There is no limit on nominations from a single publication. The winner will be announced by early Summer and the prize awarded at the AAP Annual Conference in August 2024. The winning essay will be an original contribution to the field, exhibit excellence in the analysis of Japanese theatre, and demonstrate the author's potential as a scholar of Japanese theatre.

Submission deadline for the 2023 Prize is **May 1, 2024**. Submissions should be sent through the AAP website or directly to David Jortner, chair of the prize committee, at David_Jortner@Baylor.edu

BOOK REVIEWERS NEEDED!

Asian Theatre Journal is once again looking for book reviewers, especially those interested in reviewing in the areas of South Asian, Chinese, and/or Middle Eastern/West Asian Theatre and Performance. We also have several books about broad issues in theatre in Asia. Please let me know if you are interested by sending an email to David_Jortner@Baylor.edu.

TWO KABUKI ANNIVERSARIES AT UHM

In April 2024, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa celebrates **100 years of Kabuki in English** and **130 years of Kabuki in Hawai'i** with the production of **The Maiden Benten and the Bandits of the White Waves**

(*Benten Musume Meo no Shiranami*), written by Kawatake Mokuami. Commonly known as *Benten Kozō*, the play is presented in a new translation-adaptation by project director Julie A. Iezzi.



Ichikawa Monnosuke VIII serves as Artistic Adviser, accompanied by actors Ichikawa Takishō and Ichikawa Utaki, who are already in residence at UHM. Ichikawa Komazō XI will join the team of visiting artists in the spring, when UHM's Dept. of Theatre and Dance will also host Kashiwa Senjirō (*narimono*), Nagano Isamu (wigs) and Oguri Sachie (costumes). Local artists Kineya Sakio (Bryson Goda, *nagauta* shamisen) and Kenny Endo (percussion) will lead the offstage music ensemble.

Benten Musume opens on April 19, 2024 and runs through April 29. The East-West Center Gallery joins the celebrations with a featured exhibit from January 28 through May 5, 2024, titled "Hawai'i Kabuki—Connecting through Time and Space." It will feature

historical costumes, wigs, and other kabuki-related items from the UHM collection; the

history of local and touring Japanese kabuki troupes to Hawai'i, as well as lecture-demonstrations by our visiting artists.

NEW NOH IN KYOTO

In January, 2024, Jonah Salz directs a 15-person cast in a revival of "Under an Umbrella, in the Rain" at the Oe Noh Stage in Kyoto by the Noho Theatre Group. Featuring a new ai-kyogen interlude, live musicians, and butoh dancers. In addition to kyogen masters Shigeyama Akira and son, it also features noh master Akira Matsui and son. This will be Salz' final Noho production supported by Ryukoku University's Faculty of International Studies, as he retires in March 2024 after 28 years. He is open to opportunities for teaching and directing!

<https://www.facebook.com/NohoTheaterGroupKyoto>

JAPANESE THEATRE SALON

The J-PEST online salon that began in the early days of Covid continues with regular monthly meetings. Mari Boyd, Carol Fisher Sorgenfrei, Mika Eglinton, Peter Eckersall, Beri Juraic, Cody Poulton, and Jonah Salz are regular members, with occasional guest speakers and drop-ins like Claudia Orenstein, Jane Trainer and David Jortner. Their first series of five "pandeminars" was held in 2021, with summaries in the English Journal for Japanese Society for Theatre Research (JSTR).

https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/ejstr/3/1/3_39/pdf/-char/ja

They held their second J-PEST Seminar in March 2023 with three panels devoted to the theme of J-Theatre in Diaspora. These were chaired by Eckersall (NYC-, London-, and Berlin-based Japanese administrators and performing artists), Juraic (discussion with Yudai Kamisato and play reading), and Salz (Noh-kyogen as taught overseas). Archives and further information is available in the archives,



PERFORMANCE TRAINING

TRADITIONAL JAPANESE THEATRE TRAINING, KYOTO

The Kyoto Art Center has decided that the Traditional Theatre Training's 40th annual summer intensive will take place from mid-June to mid-July, 2024. Noh, Kyogen, and Nihonbuyo classical dance and theatre will be taught by mid-career professionals, with a recital at the venerable Oe Noh Theatre. Scholarships are available for researchers and artists. Details will be announced soon.

<https://www.kac.or.jp/eng/program/4227/>

INTERNATIONAL NOH INSTITUTE: JULY 2023

Report by Diego Pellecchia

The INI (International Noh Institute), offering training in noh chant and dance every summer, continued its tradition with the Kyoto Summer Intensive 2023(July 10-23).

This year's program was designed to provide a concentrated and personal learning experience. With a limited number of participants, the aim was to facilitate detailed guidance in an intimate learning environment. The INI was founded in 1986 by Udaka Michishige, who passed in 2020. It is currently managed by Diego Pellecchia (Kyoto Sangyo University) with Michishige's sons Tatsushige and Norishige as main instructors.

Six participants from varied backgrounds were selected for the program, and their unique experiences contributed to a diverse and enriching training environment.



From left to right, Diego Pellecchia, Udaka Tatsushige, the six participants to the training program, Udaka Norishige."

In addition to noh chant and dance training, the program featured a mask-making demonstration and a Gion festival tour, in collaboration with "Discover Noh in Kyoto".

The program concluded with a performance where participants showcased their newly acquired skills in noh chant and dance. They were joined by students of the Udaka family, which added depth and authenticity to the presentation. The concluding performance was well-received, and attendees recognized the growth of the participants over the course of the program. The synergy with the Udaka family students was also a notable highlight.

Given the success of the INI Summer Intensive 2023 and the positive feedback received, plans are underway to conduct the INI Summer Intensive again next year. We appreciate the efforts of all participants, the Udaka family, and "Discover Noh in Kyoto" for their contributions. For those interested in staying updated on our activities and future programs, we encourage visiting our website <https://internationalnohinstitute.com/>

ONLINE NIHON BUYO EDUCATION

Japanese Dance Online (JDO), launched in the fall of 2022, offers English-narrated instructional videos of Nihon Buyo, serving a diverse audience that includes individuals interested in learning Nihon Buyo without access to a local teacher, those seeking to broaden their Nihon Buyo repertoire, aspiring instructors, and students of Japanese performing arts seeking resources on Kabuki dance and Nihon Buyo.

JDO provides pre-recorded courses covering Nihon Buyo fundamentals and Kabuki dance repertoire, and personalized one-on-one online lessons conducted in English through Zoom.

Kazuko Kaya Yamazaki, Ph.D., a Hanayagi natori and anthropologist specializing in the anthropology of dance, is the visionary behind JDO. Kaya's Nihon Buyo background encompasses more than a decade of training under the tutelage of Hanayagi Chiyo, the author of "Fundamentals of Japanese Dance," and her

role as a selected member of the original demonstration team for Chiyo's method.

For further information, please visit:

Website: <https://www.japanesedance.online>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@JapaneseDance>

Udemy: <https://www.udemy.com/course/classical-japanese-dance-traditional-japanese-dance-basics/>

For inquiries, workshop requests, or demonstrations, contact Kaya at kaya@japanesedance.online.



MEDIA

PUBLICATIONS and OTHER

NEW OPEN ACCESS PUBLICATION CONNECTS ASIAN AND WESTERN THEATRE TECHNIQUES

Techniques and Exercises for Movement-based Theatre is a collection of exercises based on Maya T ngeberg- Grischin's extensive career as a performer, director, pedagogue, and researcher. It is both a practical handbook for theatre teachers, directors, actors and dancers and an historical overview and analysis of theatre techniques of the past fifty years. The author was recently awarded a Keralan Ministry of Education prize for her long-term contribution to theatre education in Kerala. The work is published online in the Theatre Academy's publication series Nivel 20, University of the Arts Helsinki. 2023

ISBN 978-952-353-069-0

ISSN 2341-9679

Read more in the blog:

<https://blogit.uniarts.fi/post/techniques-and-exercises-for-movement-based-theatre/>

REALISMS IN EAST ASIAN PERFORMANCE

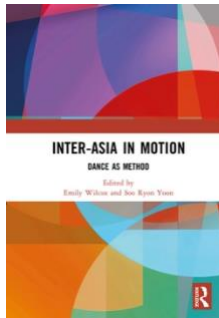
Jessica Nakamura and Katherine Saltzman-Li, Editors

Existing scholarly discussions of theatrical realism have been predominantly limited to 19th-century European and Russian theater, with little attention paid to wider explorations and alternative definitions of the practice. Examining theater forms and artists from China, Japan, and Korea, *Realisms in East Asian Performance* brings together a group of theater historians to r

reconsider realism through the performing arts of East Asia.

The book's contributors emphasize trans-regional conversations and activate inter-Asian dialogues on theatrical production. Tracing historical trajectories, starting from premodern periods through today, the book seeks to understand realisms' multiple origins, forms, and cultural significances, and examines their continuities, disruptions, and divergences. In its diversity of topics, geographic locations, and time periods, *Realisms in East Asian Performance* aims to globalize and decenter the dominant narratives surrounding realism in theater, and revise assumptions about the spectacular and theatrical forms of Asian performance. Understanding realism as a powerful representational style, chapters collectively reevaluate acts of representation on stage not just for East Asia, but for theater and performance studies more broadly.

"A groundbreaking work on directing theory and practice from a cross-cultural and comparative



perspective. Well-articulated and convincing, the book succeeds in offering a more inclusive definition of realism and its varied practice that will be very useful for both Western and non-Western theater scholars."

—Xiaomei Chen,
University of California, Davis

DOI: 10.3998/mpub.12254299

296 pages | 17 illustrations

Hardcover | 2023 | \$95.00 U.S.

ISBN 978-0-472-07642-0

Paper | 2023 | \$39.95 U.S.

ISBN 978-0-472-05642-2

Open Access

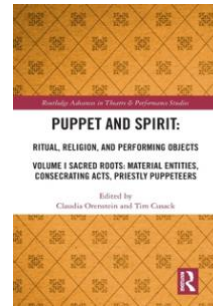
ISBN 978-0-472-90384-9

INTER-ASIA IN MOTION: DANCE AS METHOD

Emily Wilcox and Soo Ryon Yoon published their new co-edited volume *Inter-Asia in Motion: Dance as Method* with Routledge in Fall 2023. This book explores dance and choreography as sites for the articulation of new theoretical and historical paradigms in inter-Asia cultural studies. The chapters in this volume cover a wide range of dance works, artists, genres, and media, from Kathak to K-pop flash mob dance, from Cold War diplomacy to avant-garde dance

collaborations, and from festival dance to dance on screen.

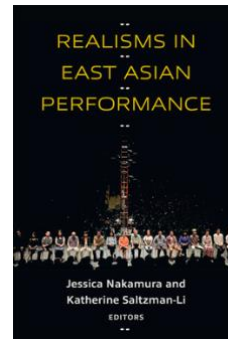
Working against the Western-centric category of "Asian dance" and Western-centric theorizations of intercultural performance that foreground "East-West" relationships, each contribution shows how dances in Asia make one another as their key aesthetic references beyond Eurocentric influences, as well as how inter-Asia relations emerge from cultural,



geographical, and aesthetic diversity within the region. This book is the first of its kind in both cultural studies and dance studies. It will contribute greatly to readers' understanding of how performance shapes and transforms the cultural

and political dynamics of inter-Asia, with a focus on dance circulations in and across East, South, and Southeast Asia. *Inter-Asia in Motion: Dance as Method* will be a key resource for academics,

researchers, and advanced students of Dance Studies, Performance Studies, Cultural Studies, Asian Studies, International Relations and Politics, History, and Sociology. The chapters included in this book were originally published in *Inter-Asia Cultural*



Studies.

PUPPET AND SPIRIT: RITUAL, RELIGION, AND PERFORMING OBJECTS

Edited by Claudia Orenstein and Tim Cusack.

This anthology of essays aims to explore the many types of relationships that exist between

puppets, broadly speaking, and the immaterial world.

The allure of the puppet goes beyond its material presence as, historically and throughout the globe, many uses of puppets and related objects have expressed and capitalized on their posited connections to other realms or ability to serve as vessels or conduits for immaterial presence. The flip side of the puppet's troubling

uncanniness is precisely the possibilities it represents for connecting to discarnate realities. Where do we see such connections? How do we describe, analyze, and theorize these relationships? The first of two volumes, this book focuses on these questions in relation to long-established, traditional practices using puppets, devotional objects, and related items with sacred aspects to them or that perform ritual roles. Looking at performance traditions and artifacts from China, Indonesia, Korea, Mali, Brazil, Iran, Germany, and elsewhere, the essays from scholars and practitioners provide a range of useful models and critical vocabularies for addressing the ritual and spiritual aspects of puppet performance, further expanding the growing understanding and appreciation of puppetry generally.

This book, along with its companion volume, offers, for the first time, robust coverage of this subject from a diversity of voices, examples, and perspectives.

Puppet and Spirit: Ritual, Religion, and Performing Objects (Routledge Advances in Theatre & Performance Studies)



ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES

THEATRE PROFESSOR AT PENN STATE

Penn State's School of Theatre invites applications for a full-time, tenure-track assistant professorship in Theatre History and Practice. We are receptive to many approaches that bridge research and creative practice, and we welcome candidates with specializations in Asian, Latinx, and/or Native American/Indigenous cultures and methodologies. The School of Theatre hopes this new addition will contribute to its undergraduate and graduate curricula, and participate as an artistic collaborator in mainstage season and student-driven projects.

Please see the website at the applicant portal for more information about the position. The applicant portal is available at:

1st Edition
Performing Objects Volume I Sacred Roots:
Material Entities, Consecrating Acts, Priestly
Puppeteers
Edited By [Claudia Orenstein](#), [Tim Cusack](#)
Copyright 2023
ISBN 9780367713379
278 Pages 35 B/W Illustrations
Published July 31, 2023 by Routledge

ATJ ONLINE AT JSTOR
JSTOR will be sending all AAP members a second invitation to sign up to access *ATJ*. This will supply back issues of *ATJ* (more than three years old) that people can access online, but it will require that each AAP member create their own login. This service is free and a part of your AAP membership. *ATJ* is published by University of Hawaii Press. Support the Press.

https://psu.wd1.myworkdayjobs.com/PSU_Academic/job/Penn-State-University-Park/Assistant-Professor-of-Theatre-History-and-Practice_REQ_0000049591-1

TESOL INTERNS IN JAPAN

Ibaraki Christian University in Hitachi, Japan seeks interested students of our unpaid TESOL internship. They write, "the program is now in its tenth year, and we have welcomed interns from all over North America, Europe, Australia and Asia. With the experience gained through the internship, many of our former interns who applied to the JET Program have been accepted."

Interns to help undergraduate English majors in Japan improve their English. Interns will work with students in and outside of the classroom to help them academically and

provide opportunities to practice English communication. Interns will also plan and create opportunities for students to use their English in non-academic settings such as special events, sports and other extracurricular activities

Those interested can visit <https://www.icc.ac.jp/academics/literature/eng/internship/info.html>

for more information including testimonials from past participants. If you would rather see testimonials from a third-party site, please visit <https://www.goabroad.com/providers/ibaraki-christian-university/reviews>

We welcome all students at American, Australian, Canadian, Irish, New Zealand and United Kingdom colleges and universities irrespective of religious faith, culture and nationality.

We are especially interested in applicants who would like to intern during our spring semester (April – July), and our fall semester (September-December). However, dates for internships are flexible and we do our best to arrange them to accommodate student schedules.

We now recruiting for the 2024-2025 academic year in Japan. For further information, contact:

M. Patrick Stephens, Intern Coordinator
Department of Contemporary English
Ibaraki Christian University
Omika 6-11-1
Hitachi, Ibaraki, 319-1295 (Japan)

E-mail: stephens@icc.ac.jp

Phone: +81-294-52-3215

THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA (ATHENS)

The University of Georgia Department of Theatre and Film Studies seeks a tenure-track assistant professor whose artistic practice and research focus on acting and directing with an emphasis on vocal production and vocal health, with a strong background in recognized methodology; Linklater, Rodenburg, Fitzmaurice, Alba, Miller, Estill, etc. Additional areas of specialization could include voice-over, heightened text, dialects, musical theatre performance, acting styles, performance methods based in global, non-western, or diasporic performance, intimacy direction and choreography, acting on camera. Anticipated start date of August 1, 2024.

Applications received by December 15th, 2023 will receive full consideration, and the screening process will continue until the position is filled.

Visit <https://www.ugajobsearch.com/postings/342535> to apply.

Inquiries may be directed to Professor George Contini, Search Committee Chair, gcontini@uga.edu.



MEMBER NEWS, KUDOS, AND ACCOLADES

KATHY FOLEY

She just finished guest editing the first issue of *Puppetry Research International*, a new online journal (Claudia Orenstein of Hunter college, chief editor), soon to debut. Many of the papers were part of a May Conference in Bali and concerned contemporary Balinese innovations in puppetry. Foley served as a moderator for the May 2023 UNIMA-International Council meeting special sessions and along with Matthew Cohen (UConn) and

Orestein presented a paper at the UNIMA Council Meeting Seminar in Bali. She is currently the head of the Nancy Staub awards for excellence in publications in puppetry, so as you read exemplary articles, books, or dissertations on puppetry/material performance, contact her. She presented a *wayang golek* workshop for the Puppeteers of America Festival in Maryland (June 2023). She is serving as an adjunct professor for Universitas Pendidikan Sultan Idris in Malaysia for 2023.

KEVIN WETMORE

Kevin Wetmore (Loyola Marymount University) published “A Theatre of Ghosts, A Haunted Cinema: The Japanese Gothic as Theatrical Tradition in *Gurozuka*” in *The Wenshan Review of Literature and Culture* Special Issue on Asian Gothic 16.2 (October 2023). He also published the essays “A Theatre of Ghosts: Spirits on the Traditional Japanese Stage” in *Dramatic Apparitions and Theatrical Ghosts* by Ann C. Hall and Alan Nadel (London: Bloomsbury, 2023). Both pieces form part of a larger project

on ghosts and witches in Japanese theatre and cinema. He will be directing Noda Hideki's *Akai Oni* at Loyola Marymount University this forthcoming spring.

MINWOO (MINU) PARK

They published “Researching Spontaneous Doing: Random Dance as Decolonial Praxis in *Dancing Grandmothers*” in *Performance Matters* 9, no. 1-2 (December 2022): 222-235. The paper can be found at: <https://performancematters-thejournal.com/index.php/pm/article/view/431>. It examines the dramaturgy of imperfection in *Dancing Grandmothers* (2011), a contemporary dance piece by Eun-me Ahn Dance Company, which foregrounds *makchum* (random dance) as an important site of knowledge. The raw aesthetic of *makchum* revives the connection with the physical unconscious by decolonizing cognitive and embodied knowledge. In November, Minu will share their work-in-progress, “Performing the Arts of Suffering: Young Artists in Jeju Island and Transgenerational Healing” as part of ASTR working session, A Return to Visitation: Tourism Practices as a Performance of Hope.

JAN CREUTZENBERG

Jan Creutzenberg (Ewha Womans University, Seoul) published an article on “The Brecht-brand and German Theatre in South Korea” (*Critical Stages* 27, June/July 2021, [open access](#)), a late outcome of the 2010 conference on “Brecht in/and Asia”. As part of his ongoing research project “Performative Exchanges between Korea and Germany”, he also published the chapter “P’ansori in Germany: Korean Singing-Storytelling, from

Representation of Culture to Creative Collaboration”, in: *Cross-border Interactions and Encounters between Germany and Korea*, edited by Yonson Ahn and Jihye Kim ([Lexington 2023](#)), a revised version of the earlier article “The P’ansori Experience in Europe”, *the world of music* (new series) 11.1 (2022): 109–132 (available on [JSTOR](#)).

Since 2022, Jan writes a bi-monthly Korean-language column on theatre in Germany for *The Korean Theatre Review* (월간 <한국연극>), most recently on music theatre, including the German translation of the musical *Hamilton* (which sadly ended its run after just one year). The magazine is available online via [Moazine](#) (subscription needed).

Meanwhile, the student-led German-language ensemble of Ewha Womans University “Auf die Bretter” is in the last stages of producing Schiller’s *Maria Stuart* (premiere: Nov. 4, 2023, with Korean subtitles). Anyone interested to attend the performance in person (on the Ewha campus), please get in touch (jan.creutzenberg@gmail.com).

MATTHEW ISAAC COHEN

He co-directed with Rahul Koonathara (currently a graduate student at the University of Connecticut) an intercultural shadow puppet production titled *Ramayana: A Tale of Trees and Wood* that combined the traditions of *tholpavakoothu* and Javanese *wayang kulit* in order to retell the Ramayana narrative from the perspective of the trees and wood that inhabit the epic. This was part of the Story of the Tree, a semester-long, cross-departmental exploration of the Tree of Life as a shared symbol across different faiths. The production toured Connecticut in April 2023. Matthew is also acting as PI on a grant on shadow puppetry and machine learning which involves Rahul teaching an AI how to move shadow puppets in the *tholpavakoothu* style.

Matthew was in Bali in April-May 2023, where he presented papers at the UNIMA International council meetings in Sanur and at ISI Denpasar, attended a wayang festival, and participated in a workshop on Balinese *wayang kulit* delivered by Professor I Nyoman Sedana and his son Made Georgiana Triwinadi at Sanggar Kamajaya in Denpasar.

He spoke about wayang representations of hell at the symposium To Hell and Back: An Exploration of Artistic Expressions of the

Afterlife across Asia held at the Asia Society in New York City on April 15, 2023; participated in forums organized by the Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry in conjunction with a solo exhibit by Indonesian-Australian artist Jumaadi (April 12, 2023) and the exhibit Tradition and Revolution in Indian Shadow Puppetry (October 13, 2023); presented papers on wayang online for Clarkson University (February 15, 2023) and Diponegoro University in Semarang, Indonesia (August 11, 2023); and was a panelist in the UNIMA-USA Zoom event, Puppets, Holidays and Holydays: Sharing Heritages, speaking on the 2022 production of *Wayang Esther*.

Recent publications include: On the Way to 'Asia': Exoticism, Itinerancy and Self-Fashioning in the Making of Central European Modern Dance, *Re-Writing Dance Modernism: Networks/Prze-pisać taneczny modernizm: Sieci*, ed. Julia Hoczyk and Wojciech Klimczyk (Kraków: Narodowy Instytut Muzyki i Tańca, Warszawa, 2023); *Wayang Ritual Drama of Cirebon: Continuance of a Kratophanic Tradition, Puppet and Spirit: Ritual, Religion, and Performing Objects. Volume 1: Sacred Roots: Material Entities, Consecrating Acts, Priestly Puppeteers*, ed. Claudia Orenstein and Tim Cusack (London: Routledge, 2023); Review of Kathryn Emerson, *Innovation, Style and Spectacles in Wayang: Purbo Asmoro and the Evolution of an Indonesian Performing Art*, *South East Asia Research* 31, no. 2 (2023). He was also a consulting producer, presenter, and featured performer in a video documentary on rare wayang forms in Indonesia and abroad entitled *Wayang Worlds: Esther, Gedhog, Thithi*, which was funded by a grant from the American-Indonesian Cultural & Education Foundation and launched on YouTube on February 23, 2023.

Two of Matthew's journal articles, *Wayang in Jaman Now: Reflexive Traditionalization and Local, National, and Global Networks of Javanese Shadow Puppet Theatre* (*Theatre Research International* 44, no. 1, 2019) and "The Dr. Walter Angst and Sir Henry Angest Collection of Indonesian Puppets: The structure of the conjuncture" (*Asian Theatre Journal* 35, no. 2, 2018), won the Nancy Staub Award for Excellence in Publications on the Art of Puppetry from UNIMA-USA.

In the fall semester of 2023, Matthew is a Visiting Curatorial Scholar at Yale University Art Gallery, in order to complete a book manuscript based on research conducted since

2017 on the Dr. Walter Angst and Sir Henry Angest Collection of Indonesian Puppets. A small exhibition of some of this collection's *wayang kulit* and *wayang potehi* puppets and related objects is scheduled go up at the Yale University Art Gallery in December 2023.

CAROL FISHER SORGENFREI

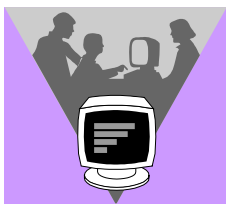
Her original play *How to Read Japanese*, directed by Penny Bergman, was featured (to thunderous applause) as a staged reading at the "Festival of Monsters Conference," Center for Monster Studies, University of California, Santa Cruz (Oct. 15, 2023). The play, a contemporary fusion of *Macbeth* and the kabuki *Yotsuya Ghost Tales*, is a major revision and rethinking of an earlier work by Sorgenfrei titled *Ghost Light*. Featuring a cast of five (four females, one male - with the lead being an Asian-American female), *How to Read Japanese* is available for production and/or for use in your courses. Contact Carol at csorgenfrei2@aol.com.

JONAH SALZ, PETER ECKERSALL AND MIKA EGLINTON

In August, J-PEST continued its overseas outreach with a panel on Covid-19 and J-Theatre at the tri-annual European Association for Japanese Studies in Ghent. Eckersall chaired a panel with Salz discussing Noh strategies during Covid-19 and Eglinton on a pandemic-era Hamlet at the SCOT company in Shizuoka. Sawanishi Yuten, author of the short story "Under an umbrella, in the rain" engaged in a discussion with Eckersall after a portion of the streaming video by the Noho Theatre Group's adaptation to noh style was shown.

LINDA EHRLICH

She will be a Visiting Faculty member in Japanese Cinema at Miami University of Ohio, Fall 2023.



AAP ONLINE

A AP WEB SITE

Want to stay up-to-date on all things AAP? Visit the AAP website for member news, calls for papers, and information on our annual conference! The *Newsletter* will now appear on the website.

www.asian-performance.org



You can also **renew your membership** and **register for the conference** online at www.asian-performance.org.

****Please be sure to update your bookmarks to the new web address! The old site is no longer active.****

Members are also encouraged to join and post to our Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/aaponline/>

Questions? Email IT officer Tarryn Chun (tchun@nd.edu) or submit a query via the website.

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A AP LISTSERVE

The AAP email list is now administered through the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE). The list facilitates discussions and the circulation of news among subscribed members. **You do not have to be an AAP member to join the AAP email list.** If you were previously subscribed, you are on the new list. To subscribe or unsubscribe to AAP list: <https://listserv.hawaii.edu/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=AAP-L&A=1>

A AP TWITTER FEED

The Association for Asian Performance now has a Twitter feed: @aapnotes. The account is currently following a select few of you, but is perfectly happy to follow every AAP person who uses Twitter. If you choose to follow AAP's Twitter feed, Tarryn Chun will be notified and will see that AAP follows you back. If you don't use Twitter, but you know of an event that AAP should promote, contact IT Coordinator Tarryn Chun tchun@nd.edu and she will see that the information twitters.

A AP ON FACEBOOK

Look for the Association for Asian Performance on Facebook. Please visit and like this page and participate with discussions, syllabi and questions. **"Like" us on AAP's Facebook page:**

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Association-for-Asian-Performance/103477229028>

A AP SYLLABUS BANK

As a contribution to Asian performance pedagogy, AAP invites contributions to its online syllabus bank. Syllabi in the online bank are intended to provide models of how various aspects of Asian performance might be taught, especially at an introductory level. AAP members can send syllabi they would like to share to Tarryn Chun tchun@nd.edu



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AAP MEMBERSHIP (Join now or renew by Jan. 31)

AAP is a Focus Group of the (Association for Theatre in Higher Education). AAP retains its own dues, which are separate from and in addition to any dues you may pay to ATHE. We currently hold our annual conference the day before ATHE, and we regularly co-sponsor conference events and panels with other focus groups. Please check off AAP as one of your focus groups with ATHE renewal. **Please renew prior to Jan. 31 to ensure no disruption in your ATJ subscription.**

AAP membership fee includes a subscription to *Asian Theatre Journal*, *AAP Newsletter*, *AAP Membership Directory*, and occasional other goodies as available. To find out about the benefits of becoming a member, please check out our website at www.asian-performance.org or email Alex. Rogals at alexrogals@yahoo.com **Membership is for the calendar year, Jan. 1-Dec. 31.** Currently, new renewals will be able to get the most recent back issue of *ATJ* and the *Newsletter*. However, *ATJ* sets its own policy, so check with Secretary/Treasurer Alex Rogals for the most recent information.

To become a member or renew, you may use the following form, or sign up on the website. You may pay either via PayPal on the website or use the following printed and mailed form to pay by check.

*Please print and return the following membership and renewal form with a check made payable to "Association for Asian Performance" to:
AAP Membership c/o Alex Rogals, 415 E 16th St Apt C7, Brooklyn, NY 11226*

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