Performing Arts in Japan
from classical theater to contemporary experiences

Instructor/Title	Christine Greiner/Dr.

【Course Outline / Description】

The Japanese contribution to theatrical language is one of the richest and most original in the world. This course is an outline of the Japanese Performing Arts, through the analysis of a variety of experiences, which represent different perspectives of Japanese aesthetics and thought. We will introduce the key forms of classical theaters (noh, kabuki, bunraku, and nihonbuyo), a cartography of the modern schools (shimpa, shingeki and the Japanese versions of Modern Western Dance), the popular musical Takarazuka Revue Company, examples of the experimental arts in postwar Japan, known as *angura* (butoh, subversive theater groups and directors) and anti-art collectives (like Gutai, Zero Jigen and Mono ha), and finally, some important examples of Contemporary Dance and Theater that have been exploring subjects such as alternative spaces, body-technology, J-pop and cuteness, and micropop activism after 2011). Each week will include the viewing of several performance documentaries, including explanations about body training, uses of time and space, styles of expression, costumes, make up and dramaturgy.

【Course Objectives/Goals/Learning Outcomes】

1. To introduce the main aspects of Japanese Performing Arts from different historical periods and perspectives.
2. To clarify the importance of Performing Arts in Japanese culture.
3. To analyze how different artistic experiences can inform us about political and philosophical contexts, such as gender, identity, and social matters.

【Class Schedule/Class Environment, Literature and Materials】

Lecture 1- A brief introduction and the ritual performances

Lecture 2- The classical theaters

Lecture 3- The noh theater: readings and films

Lecture 4- The kabuki theater: readings and films

Lecture 5- The onnagata actors: body training

Lecture 6- The puppet theater: bunraku and Hachioji Kuruma Ningyo

Lecture 7- The nihonbuyo technique

Lecture 8- Seminar on Traditional Theaters

Lecture 9- Modern Times and the Takarazuka Revue

Lecture 10- The Schools of Modern Theater and Dance

Lecture 11- Intercultural exchanges with the West

Lecture 12- The context of postwar and the *angura* movement

Lecture 13- The first period of Butoh dance

Lecture 14- The scrapbook of Tatsumi Hijikata and the butoh-fu

Lecture 15- Kazuo Ohno and the genealogy of butoh

Lecture 16- Anti-art: the dialogues between visual and performing arts

Lecture 17- Gutai and Mono-ha

Lecture 18- Seminar on Postwar Performing Arts

Lecture 19- The impact of Bubble Economy on Stage: The Ku Na' Uka Theater Company
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Lecture 20- Gekidan Kaitaisha: Theater of Deconstruction

Lecture 21- Dumb Type: theater and technology

Lecture 22- The photo performances and installations of Morimura

Lecture 23- Girly Generation: Yubiwa Hotel and Nibroll

Lecture 24- The post- media performance of Mika Ninagawa and Mariko Mori

Lecture 25- Fusion Theater: rethinking tradition through the work of Heidi Durning

Lecture 26- Seminar on Contemporary Performing Arts

Lecture 27- Seminar on Body and Politics

Lecture 28- Seminar on Cultural Exchanges and the Con-fusion Era

Lecture 29- Final Exam Preparation: review of traditional and modern theater

Lecture 30- Final Exam Preparation: review of contemporary theater and dance

【Textbooks/Reading Materials】

Havens, Thomas R.H. Radicals and Realists in the Japanese Nonverbal Arts. University of Hawaii Press, 2006.
Ortolani, Benito The Japanese Theater, from shamanistic ritual to contemporary pluralism. Princeton University Press, 1990.

Articles and e.books are available for further readings. These readings are not mandatory but they can help the writing assignments and seminars.

Section 4

【Learning Assessments/Grading Rubric】
- ← Percentage breakdown of assessments
- ← Grading procedure in details

Final Exam	30%
Seminar	25%
Writing Assignments	25%
Participation and Attendance	20%