

## Introduction

*Performance is of a kind with life itself in its immediacy, impermanence, and grounding in experience and might be indistinguishable from life but for the interposition of a special bent of awareness. Subjects in performance, being subject to a concern for how they are perceived by other subjects, their audience, enjoy or suffer a more extensive, and yet more circumscribed, field of consciousness than most of the subjects of life.*

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Zeami (Hada no Motokiyo, 1363–1443) was an actor, a troupe leader, and a poet of unique capabilities and ambitions at the height of Japan's "middle ages." He is widely credited with the transformation of *sarugaku no nō*, "the performance of *sarugaku*," into *nō* drama proper, the "classic" theater of Japan. The idea that such a transformation took place within a single generation is an exaggeration and distortion; rather, *nō* took centuries to become the performing art so designated today. But if we load too much of the transformation of *sarugaku* onto Zeami's shoulders and overestimate his role in doing so, we also may be inclined to underestimate his intellectual and cultural importance by limiting his agency to the creation of a dramatic genre. His role in Japanese culture is far greater than that, and the reasons are apparent not only in the thirty or forty masterpieces he wrote for the stage but also in a remarkable body of texts in which he focuses explicitly on performance.

These *Performance Notes*, as I call them, were written down over more than thirty years. Throughout, Zeami drew frequent attention to their written-ness. In important ways this written-ness overtook his project, even though what he intended to convey was perpetually at odds with writing. Emblematic of this paradox is the title of the final book in the first text translated here, the "Separate Pages of Oral Instructions," from *Transmitting the Flower Through Effects and Attitudes*. The obtrusively self-deconstructive title points to a double supplementarity: these "separate pages" comprise an elaboration on remarks made earlier in this body of notes, even as they are also a stand-in for something that is held to be unwritten, or even unwritable, because it entails a physical excess that cannot be contained in writing and should not be submitted to the promiscuity of texts.

In this self-conscious and self-referential way, the *Performance Notes* differ from the many plays that Zeami created and from the rest of the large repertory that eventually became *nō* drama. Even though the plays were written down at some point, they had far less stake in being written than the *Notes* did because their essence was performance. The play texts are more matter-of-fact and instrumental than the *Notes*. Although they are more than simply lines to be spoken on stage—since they also include such technical specifications as constraints on pronunciation, vocal notations, stage directions, and formal discriminations—they are, nonetheless, an afterthought to the performance itself. Even those play texts of Zeami's extant in autograph manuscripts appear to have been written as licenses for performance, or certifications of transmission in the tradition, rather than as scripts for the members of Zeami's own troupe (many of whom may have been illiterate).<sup>1</sup>

In addition, the *Notes* reveal various kinds of anxiety vis-à-vis their very existence as texts. It is true that some of this anxiety stems from the familiar pathologies of writing: its "différance" (as Derrida has it), its inexactitude, and the incommensurability of text with performance, but a different sort of anxiety is evident as well, at times explicitly so, in the texts. That anxiety stems from the fear that the *Notes* might be too precise, too revealing, and too close to performance and thus might prove to be a commercial liability, releasing performance from the immediate control of Zeami and his artistic descendants. This latter aspect of the *Notes'* written-ness delineates the socio-economic context in which *nō* came into existence, a context of rivalry and suspense over patronage, whose popularity crossing class boundaries had the potential for either success or humiliation.

This second variety of anxiety had a domineering influence on the life of Zeami's *Performance Notes*. With only a few exceptions, they were unavailable to a general readership until the twentieth century. Parts of the most famous *Notes*, misnamed *Kadensho*,<sup>2</sup> were redacted and reshaped for inclusion with other information about *nō* performance in a late-sixteenth-century printed book entitled *Hachijō Kadensho*, and one of the texts (*Learning the Profession*) in the *Notes* was, from the beginning, intended for broader circulation than all the rest. A latter-day troupe leader, Kanze Motoakira (1722–1774), even had it printed in a 1772 woodblock edition.

In 1909 the first substantial body of the *Performance Notes* was made accessible to general readers in Yoshida Tōgō's edition of sixteen of the most prominent texts. Further substantial additions came later in the twentieth century, as late as 1955, and since these texts have come to light, Zeami's status as a representative intellectual of the so-called middle ages has soared in Japan.<sup>3</sup>

The *Performance Notes* were written in hard, confused, violent, and garish times. A long simmering succession dispute in the royal line was definitively

settled only in 1392. In 1399 a powerful clan in western Honshū, the Ōuchi, rebelled against the central authority of the shogun. Insurrections broke out in eastern Japan in 1415 and continued for two years. Shortly thereafter, a Korean fleet attacked Tsushima Island off the western Japanese coast. In 1420, central Japan suffered a drought, followed from 1422 to 1423 by famine and wars in the north. In 1427, the young shogun died, and his father, the real power in the country, reassumed the formal role of military dictator. But he himself died the next year, leaving the succession to a lottery, which pulled his brother out of a high clerical position and into shogunal supremacy for a vicious and bloody twelve-year reign, ending in his assassination (at a dramatic performance!). Meanwhile, new uprisings had spilled into Kyoto, followed by famine and, in 1435, further military campaigns. Moreover, during this time, pirates plagued Japan's commerce with Ming China. Even so, when regarded from later in the century, these times would come to seem like a respite of peace, prosperity, and cultural brilliance as civil war, disorder, and misery clamped down on the country for decades.

The last years of the fourteenth century and the first half of the fifteenth century were a time of extraordinarily rich cultural interaction. Poetry was reconceived, and the subtle and sophisticated critical tradition of several hundred years was invigorated with more social diversity and more ambitious formalism in *renga* (linked verse). Zen institutions reached unprecedented size and influence; written and oral traditions pushed back and forth in martial narrative; and painting and poetic composition in Chinese furnished the capital with salons of wondrous imagination and grand cosmopolitanism.

Zeami's place in this mix is unique. He was the son of an entertainer whom we know today as Kannami (1333–1384), a man with family and tradition in the countryside southeast of the ancient capital of Nara. Even though its political centrality was remote in history and hardly remembered, Nara was an important ecclesiastical site. It was no Vatican but a plain dotted with sacred places of a tattered antiquity as well as venerable Buddhist and Shinto-Buddhist institutions of continuing intellectual and socioeconomic importance. Kannami and his troupe were based in Nara but traveled elsewhere in central Japan, and in fact Kannami eventually died in Suruga Province some 150 miles to the east.

Zeami was rooted in Nara, as are many of the stories told in his plays, but he turned north to the city of Kyoto for patronage, a city itself animated by vast Buddhist institutions, by the impuissant but prestigious royal court newly brought to heel by Ashikaga strongmen. The strongman most instrumental to Zeami's success, the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358–1408), was only a few years older but socially remote. In bestowing his favor on Zeami, Yoshimitsu promised generous patronage but also exacted sexual and, to some extent, artistic submission.

Yoshimitsu proved to be a good patron, but his successor, Yoshimochi, a painter and connoisseur as well as the shogun, favored another actor. By this time, however, Zeami was probably a prosperous and celebrated figure and had other venues and supporters. The change, though, seems to have precipitated various reconsiderations in Zeami's aesthetics. It certainly made him aware of his rival's accomplishments, as he openly acknowledged in his memoir, *Conversations on Sarugaku*.<sup>4</sup>

Life in the city under Ashikaga patronage put Zeami in contact with the Ivy League of Buddhist education and offered encounters with the intelligentsia, magnates, and statesmen of fifteenth-century Japan, and he took advantage of the opportunities. Literate—but perhaps uncharacteristically so, given his background—Zeami acquired a practical facility with “knowledge” as his society constructed it: *waka* poetics and arcana, Buddhist philosophical speculation, aesthetics, Pure Land devotionalism, myths and legends, Chinese anecdotes, a modicum of Confucian philosophy, views of the material world formed by Chinese rationalism, and so forth. This was a bounteous culture for the growth of his dramatic genius.

When he began to write the *Notes*, Zeami's father already had been dead for fourteen or fifteen years. Nonetheless, Zeami had maintained the troupe, produced heirs, and made a material living for himself and the troupe. When he composed his first play is unknown, though he often attached dates to the *Notes*. They are “notes” in many senses and not insignificantly in a recursive and accretive sense: with revision, collation, conflation and reuse; at the end, touchingly, as sharp and enigmatic, grieving yet persistently inquisitive memorials.

In modern Japanese, the *Notes* are called *nōgakuron*, which, badly translated, means “*nō* drama theory.” This term is not right because it is both too specific and too general. The *Notes* are undoubtedly important to understanding *nō* drama in its historical development and the way it is performed and regarded today. At the same time, the *Notes* are important in a far more capacious way than “*nō* drama theory” would purport to be. And to be prickly, if it's “theory of *nō*” you are after, then actually, the *Notes* are not precisely that but “*sarugaku* theory,” *sarugaku* being the antecedent of *nō* and the term that Zeami uses to refer to his performing art.<sup>5</sup> (Zeami uses the word *nō* as well, but usually to refer to either “performance” in a general sense or to a specific play text.)

The *Notes* are diverse. The most famous and the first to be written, as I mentioned earlier, is *Fūshi kwaden* (*Transmitting the Flower Through Effects and Attitudes*). This shows most clearly the evolution in Zeami's thinking from the days of his early successes through the more tempered, albeit more ambitious, views of his later years. Dramatic imitation is a conspicuous concern in the text's earliest books, as this was Zeami's home ground, the familiar style of the four related troupes among which he was raised. He calls that

ground *Yamato sarugaku*, after the region around Nara. “In Yamato, it's dramatic imitation we emphasize, maintaining as broad a repertory as possible,” and accordingly, Zeami tells us how the actor should imitate such and such a character on stage. These notes on dramatic imitation are preceded in *Transmitting the Flower* by notes on training, whose emphasis on dramatic imitation is at odds with the priority given to singing and dance. “You should not instruct the child to do things apart from singing or Sparring or Dance,” says Zeami. “Even if he is capable of dramatic imitation, you should not teach him [that] in any detail.” One reason for this is that children possess, simply by virtue of being children, a quality called *yūgen*, which should serve as the basis for any serious career in performance. In itself, this quality is sufficient to create interest in children's performances. *Yūgen* is not, however, recognized as characteristic of Yamato *sarugaku* but of rival troupes of the sister art of *dengaku* and Ōmi *sarugaku* (named for its place of origin, closer to Kyoto).

Here I must digress: in this introduction I use a number of terms, which I will describe briefly. Some of these terms are Japanese words that cannot be translated satisfactorily and so are best romanized and treated as if they were English. Others can be, I think, adequately translated by English words but still have a particular prominence in the *Notes* and thus merit an introductory discussion. In the category of no satisfactory translation is the word *yūgen*, in the translatable category, “flower.”

*Yūgen* is a word with an imposing reputation. It has a past in both poetics and, more remotely, Buddhism. In the latter context, it seems to have entailed mystery, darkness, and depth, but in an inviting way. An important poet of the turn of the thirteenth century claimed he got confused just hearing the word,<sup>6</sup> but it nonetheless shaped the aesthetic canon of *waka* poetry in the remarkable renaissance associated with the eighth imperially commissioned anthology of *waka*, the *Shin kokin wakashū*, in 1205. From that time to the present, poems expressing *yūgen* came to occupy a central place in the canon. Generally these poems treat natural scenes with no conspicuous or predictably beautiful focus of attention but with the promise of emotional depth and far-reaching associations and allusions.

In Zeami's usage of *yūgen*, such a foundation remains, but he adds a surface romance or even eroticism. In *nō*, *yūgen* is sometimes said to evoke the flawless elegance of a beautiful and high-ranking woman in the days of Hikaru Genji, the “Shining Prince” of Japan's most celebrated romance of the eleventh century. Curiously, though, Zeami does not write many plays on thematic material from *The Tale of Genji*, and his references to *yūgen* embrace a broader range of attractions than can be accounted for thematically. Indeed, the virtues of *yūgen* in *sarugaku* are less concerned with theme than with the abstract and formal beauty of singing and dance, neither of which is particularly mimetic in *sarugaku* and *nō*.<sup>7</sup>

In the later books of *Transmitting the Flower*, a compromise between imitation and *yūgen* is apprehended in the figure of the flower. The term “flower” (*hana* or, in Sinicized compounds, *kwa*, modern Japanese *ka*) is ubiquitous in the *Notes*. It always pertains to something attractive that catches the audience’s attention.<sup>8</sup> In early occurrences, “flower” seems to imply visual interest, as one might expect, given the metaphor, but increasingly in the middle and later books of the *Notes*, it implies other kinds of attractions, aural, intellectual, emotional, or spiritual.

The botanic element of the metaphor is often germane. Zeami’s flower comes into bloom as the high point of a performance, and it wilts afterward. It bears fruit in professional experience and technical mastery but does not leave a tangible residue. In later texts from the *Notes*, it can be construed in an abstract way that sublates the experience of the senses into a mental or intellectual excitement. Beyond that, the flower fades, or sublimates, into Buddhist emptiness, which, though still plausibly manifest empirically, is typically characterized in the negative by means of the prefix *mu-*, which means “not to exist.”<sup>9</sup>

Much of what we come to see later in the *Notes* already is present in nascent form in the diversity of *Transmitting the Flower Through Effects and Attitudes*. It usually is possible to see a thread there, later to be woven into more extensive characterizations of performance, but the later texts tend to be more concentrated and have a somewhat different orientation. By the time Zeami wrote, say, *Three Courses* (1423) or *A Mirror to the Flower* (1424), he had absorbed the influence of his rivals and had streamlined his earlier orientation toward dramatic imitation into three general modes of performance that he then applied individually to create a wide variety of roles. By the time Zeami conceived the later texts, he also had acquired more Chinese learning and thus wrote more self-consciously Sinicized discourses, sometimes merely pedantically but other times adding to the contextual enrichment of his theories. Buddhism is present throughout the *Notes*, but it is better integrated and more philosophically oriented in later texts in the *Notes* than in *Transmitting the Flower*.

Zeami’s respect for Chinese learning and Buddhist philosophy, so apparent in his later *Notes*, is matched by a penetrating engagement with Japan’s own literary and intellectual traditions. *Waka* poetics and criticism of *The Tale of Genji*, *The Tales of Ise*, and the *Kokin wakashū* find a place in Zeami’s later plays, as do strains of Buddhist devotionism and East Asian syncretism, combining Confucian, Buddhist, and Shinto elements. If Zeami acquired a taste for esoteric Buddhism (perhaps from a connection with the Shingon temple Daigoji, southeast of the capital) in his early life,<sup>10</sup> he became even more familiar with and interested in Zen in his mid- and later life.

Both Zeami’s plays and his *Notes* are motivated by a kind of neoclassicism inspired by aesthetic and religious milestones in the past. In discussing sing-

ing, for instance, he harks back to the Chinese theory underpinning *gagaku*. It is difficult, however, to see the practical relevance of much of this theory to modern *nō* performance. It may be that the singing in *sarugaku* proper (as distinct from *nō*) had closer performative links to the pitch systems of *gagaku*, but in any case, the evocation of this ancient musicology does not serve exclusively practical ends. Instead, the systems are part of a broader, all-embracing system of elements or phases that strained toward intellectual reciprocity in fields as diverse as sound, color, the physical substance of the world, seasonal change, smell, political organization, and the like.<sup>11</sup> When he was young, Zeami seems to have taken for granted such consistency and reciprocity in the world. In his middle years, he took a more conscious interest in these systems and based some of the principles of *sarugaku* on them. For example, *jo-ha-kyū*, his principle of temporal organization (from *Pick Up a Jewel and Take the Flower in Hand*), is taken to condition all things that exist in time:

Upon careful consideration, it becomes apparent that all phenomena in the universe, positive and negative, great and small, sentient and insentient, are each equipped for *jo-ha-kyū*. Even the chirping of birds and the crying of insects—the way each cries with its own particular sense—is *jo-ha-kyū*.

Although *jo-ha-kyū* has great explanatory power for understanding the structure of plays and their modular components, and even for understanding the unfolding of a day-long or several day-long events,<sup>12</sup> it can seem arbitrary and unpersuasive when taken out of performance and applied to quotidian events. For all that, Zeami maintains his commitment to the principle throughout the *Notes*, although this is not, apparently, the case for some of the other comprehensive systems that inform his earlier thought.

Zeami’s theories about music or, more specifically, singing come from Chinese philosophy and poetics. From time to time, Zeami refers to this scheme, citing the Mao preface to the *Classic of Songs*. According to the theory, a sovereign should be able to diagnose the nation’s health by careful attention to its songs. If the songs express pleasure, the government is in accord with the people; if the music is irate, it is because the government has alienated the people; and if the singing shows despondency, the government is about to fall.<sup>13</sup>

Zeami coordinates the long Japanese tradition of celebratory song with the sociopolitical implications of this view of music to create a category of performance called *shiugen* (modern Japanese *shūgen*). *Shiugen* is, as he says, straightforward and auspicious. It should not exhibit much melodic embellishment; it should not be difficult to understand; and it should celebrate the world, the realm, the reign, conventional social relationships, and so forth.

For a time, *shiugen* was thought to be the foundation of all singing and to underlie any artistic success in performance. It is strange, though, that so many of the plays in Zeami's repertory are about pain, sadness, loneliness, longing, and grief. We find, moreover, that *shiugen* in itself is not particularly interesting and that the best of the *shiugen* plays, *Takasago*, is notable partly because it departs from its own conventions.<sup>14</sup>

By 1419, Zeami had found a complementary aesthetic in singing which he identified as *bauwoku*. The term is still not clearly understood apart from the fact that it entails a more nuanced and melancholy emotional texture.<sup>15</sup> As the number of texts in the *Notes* proliferated, the range of aesthetic categories for singing also increased, eventually encompassing five purportedly distinct classes or sorts of singing. A detailed discussion of them is not necessary here because they are mentioned frequently in the *Notes* (indeed, two of the texts in the *Notes* are devoted precisely to these five classes),<sup>16</sup> but I shall briefly describe them for our immediate purposes. *Shiugen* remained the first category. *Bauwoku*, however, apparently was replaced by four other categories.<sup>17</sup> *Yūkyoku*, "elegant expressiveness," is more intricately detailed and sensitive than *shiugen*. In the plays categorized as *yūkyoku*, it has varying degrees of depth, as Zeami says, but apparently these plays' elegance and beauty are more prominent than any other classifying feature. *Renbo*, "love and longing," features romantic love, infatuation, and tenderness, and *aishyau* (modern Japanese *aishō*), "grief and suffering," seems to deepen the emotional tenor of *renbo* to include dejection or even tragedy. The fifth category is not defined by where it lies on an emotional register, at some remove from the auspiciousness of *shiugen*, but by the virtuosity with which it is performed. This category is called *rangyoku*, and its conceptual underpinning has a longer genealogy in the *Notes* than does either *renbo* or *aishyau*. Although the word *rangyoku* itself does not appear until the *Article on the Five Sorts of Singing*, just before 1430, the first graph in the compound, *ran*, is evident in Zeami's earlier technical vocabulary, whether in the compound *ran'i*<sup>18</sup> or in the native Japanese pronunciation, *take(taru)*, "virtuosity."

The change from a thematic register, based on the emotional intensity of the play (apparent in *yūkyoku*, *renbo*, and *aishyau*), to the rank of the performers' artistic attainment in *rangyoku* is symptomatic of Zeami's altered understanding of the values of performance and the subjective position of the actor. On the one hand, the category *rangyoku* is at once comprehensive of all the other categories, but on the other hand, it also transgresses some of their most salient features. By the time Zeami created this category, he had largely revised his ethical poetics of sound, shifting from generic and thematic difference to a scale based on the individual performers' skill and attainment.

This shift is closely related to a concern for the actors' personal artistic attainments which, though already strong in the first of the *Notes*, becomes more dominant and more carefully articulated throughout Zeami's career.

Readers may find the frequent mention of rank in the *Notes* somewhat alienating and obscure, but it links Zeami's thought to the strictly hierarchical social theory of traditional Japan. The term in Japanese is *kurawi* (modern Japanese *kurai*), with a long-standing application to the system of court ranks established very early in the development of the Japanese state. But Zeami's usage is not bureaucratic in that respect, and it changed as his thought developed. Already in *Transmitting the Flower*, he discusses *kurawi* in comparison with the synonyms *take* (my "stature") and *kasa* (my "grandeur"):

Q: How is one to understand the distinctions of rank in performance?

A: This is readily apparent to the eyes of connoisseurs. Although rises in rank are generally a matter of layer upon layer of experience in performance, surprisingly there are actors about ten years old who already show a naturally high rank in their manner of expression. But without training, such natural rank is wasted. Typically, the acquisition of rank comes as a result of experience and training. Innate rank is, in contrast, a matter of "stature."<sup>19</sup> What we refer to as "grandeur" is yet something else. Most people assume that "stature" and "grandeur" are the same. What I mean by "grandeur" is the appearance of both gravity and vitality. One might alternatively say that "grandeur" has a broad and general meaning. "Rank" and "stature" are somewhat different. There is, for example, a thing such as innate *yūgen*. This entails "rank." But some actors with "stature" do not have the slightest *yūgen*. This is "stature" without *yūgen*.

All three terms—"rank," "stature," and "grandeur"—relate to the performer's artistic identity. They all express positive values in performance and relate to one another within a semiotic network of prominence, visibility, eminence, and taste. Unlike "stature" and "grandeur," however, "rank" exists on a scale. Zeami's references to it are typically positive, but a "low rank" in performance is possible,<sup>20</sup> whereas a "low stature" or "low grandeur" is a contradiction in terms. Rank can, apparently, be acquired through training, but not by everyone. The "naturally high rank" inherent in the performance of some child actors would seem to be related to what we might call talent, and like talent, it needs experience and development in order to mature into the rank of an adult actor. All the same, rank is not the conscious object of one's training, and it cannot be effectively imitated:

It is not effective to strive for rank in your training. Not only will you fail to secure a higher rank, but what you have already secured in training may decline. In the end, rank and stature are matters of innate capacity, and if you do not have them, there is probably nothing you can do about that.

The importance of rank in Zeami's conception of artistic integrity is fascinating to trace (it has an important afterlife in modern *nō* performance, in which individual plays are ranked),<sup>21</sup> but its significance for us here lies not in its genealogy but in the fracture it reveals in Zeami's ethics of performance.

Although the biographical circumstances in which Zeami acted and wrote are known only sketchily, it is not difficult to imagine that he felt extraordinary pressures in achieving fame and patronage in the capital. His position was perennially contingent on success in performance, and as the *Notes* abundantly testify, some elements in performance are beyond the control of any performer, no matter how gifted. In 1384, when Zeami was just over twenty, his father Kannami died, and the material support of the troupe became primarily his responsibility. He was torn between the aesthetic standards of his native tradition in rural Yamato and the expectations of elegance and sophistication held by patrons and viewers in the city. In addition, he was well aware that rival *sarugaku* troupes had long been situated closer to the capital and were more familiar with the tastes of the elite. Kannami had cautioned him that the art of *sarugaku* was "dependent on the affection and respect of the masses," but of the two most important virtues of his father's Yamato acting tradition, the portrayal of demons and mad women, Zeami counted the former to be of dubious aesthetic value in the decorous and sophisticated world of the capital.

Brilliantly—and, some might say, opportunistically—Zeami incorporated his rivals' virtues into Yamato acting under the rubric of *yūgen*. In imitation of the poetic and critical theory to which elite patronage gave him access, he articulated a theory of rank and musical genre and bought into the hierarchical and decorum-centered aesthetic structures of the Kyoto elites. These ranked structures were highly influential in the early articulation of a canon of *nō* performance, by which I am referring to the minutely prescriptive performance practices of the art. In *sarugaku* under Zeami's hand, these canons were still in their infancy, but they are readily discernible in his categorizations of character types, his identification of modes of singing and enunciation, and his detailed instructions on how to write plays. (*Sarugaku* was so malleable that it adjusted quickly and with little resistance, but for *nō*, especially in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the process of canonization continued to grow more prescriptive and detailed.)

Within Zeami's own experience of performance, however, there were powerful contradictions in this institutionalization and standardization. His father was a clear instantiation of these contradictions in that, for instance, he could overcome material reality to great success on stage. Even though he was a large man, he could make himself small and fragile in the role of a woman or turn himself into a twelve-year-old boy in the role of Lay Priest Jinen.<sup>22</sup> More tellingly, Kannami was able to transgress the boundaries of orthodox

performance: he could use hitherto unacceptable performance techniques without ill effect. As Zeami put it, he had arrived in the realm of *kauko kyakurai*, "facing about and doubling back."<sup>23</sup>

Despite his recognition of hierarchies of rank and performance conventions, Zeami was deeply committed to subjectivity. Whether in his most celebrated plays, works such as *Izutsu*, *Atsumori*, and *Kinuta*, or more unusual, even quirky, ones like *Nue*, *Koi no omoni*, and *Aritohoshi*, Zeami maintains a penetrating interest in his subjects' inner worlds. But these inner worlds do not submit entirely to conventionalization and hierarchy. Rather, they are unique and subtly articulated engagements with conflicted motivation, fraught with paradox and ambivalence. Moreover, the exclusive purpose of rank, canon, and convention in his ethics of performance is the most eloquent and convincing portrayal of these subjects.

The subjectivity of a character on stage is inextricable from the subjectivity of the individual actor, so the intricacy and depth of a character's mind must have analogies in the actor's mind. In the end, the actor, like the character, cannot be fully subject to either convention or canon. This recognition is certainly relevant to the creation of the category of singing called *rangyoku*, and it also may account for the uncertainty or conjecture that runs through the *Notes*. "I wonder," says Zeami in *Transmitting the Flower*, "perhaps," "might it not be . . .," "or is it rather . . .," "I remain puzzled by this." Of *yūgen*, he admits, "Having pondered this problem for some time, I have come to wonder whether *yūgen* is not a matter of innate ability. Is a rank of great virtuosity a matter of long experience? This is worth thinking over time and time again."

Despite the extensive conventions and standards to which the art is subject, Zeami never becomes simply doctrinaire in his approach, and in his acceptance of ambiguity and paradox, he expresses perhaps better than anyone else in his tradition the fascination with and suspicion of mind that are characteristic of medieval Japanese thought.

Consider, for example, the following: In the catalog of character types comprising the second book of *Transmitting the Flower*, Zeami mentions "Chinese Roles":

Now these roles are unusual, and there are really no models to train from. The characters' attire, though, is of crucial importance. And also the mask you wear, even though it is of a human being like anyone else, should convey something out of the ordinary and have something peculiar about it. The role is a good one for a seasoned actor. There is no particular plan for it apart from getting yourself up in the Chinese style. Above all, in both song and movement on stage, the Chinese style is not likely to be very interesting if it actually resembles Chinese practice, so you should only go as far as to give it a certain Chinese flavor.

Despite its being a small matter in its own right, what I just said about “something peculiar” is related to more far-reaching problems. How, you might ask, is it acceptable to portray something as peculiar when there is nothing at hand to imitate in order to create a Chinese style? One way or another, therefore, you must make something look Chinese to other eyes by using a manner of expression that is different from commonplace behavior.

This passage deals with a broader problem of difference in dramatic imitation. The suggestion that the peculiar is what imparts a sense of appropriateness to this role entangles Zeami in the problem of fiction taken for fact. In *Transmitting the Flower*, he is perfectly aware that although the main point of dramatic imitation is to resemble the object imitated in every regard, sometimes what does not actually resemble reality still gives the illusion of reality. It is this dimensionality of Zeami’s awareness that makes his articulations of subjectivity so enticing. But there is a dilemma here relating to the actor’s autonomy. The difference between a stage performance and simply being must have become a preoccupation for Zeami (as indeed it might be for any philosophically inclined actor). Perhaps any such philosophical inclination would be intensified by the political subjugation of anyone of Zeami’s class in the fifteenth century.

The problem may be most apparent with regard to imitation. When Zeami points to the importance and difficulty of imitating an old man, he tries to reduce “imitation” to a minimum and effect an identification of the actor with the object of his art:

In dramatic imitation, surely there is a rank of no imitation. Once you have brought dramatic imitation to its limits and have truly entered into the object of imitation, you have no intention to imitate. . . . If, for example, it is a matter of imitating an old man, an accomplished actor will approach the role with the same intent as that of an ordinary old man who has gotten himself up in fancy dress to dance. . . . Being an old man to begin with, the actor has no need to imitate an old man. No, instead he concentrates all his efforts on the role he performs in dramatic imitation suiting the occasion.<sup>24</sup>

Imitation as imitation preserves the artificiality or duplicity that it aims most ambitiously to eliminate, so it somehow must be refined into nonexistence. This task is extraordinarily difficult. It may be partly for this reason that imitation proper gradually gives way to an interest in singing and dancing in performance in the *Notes*. *Yūgen* also provides one kind of escape from the dualism of imitation. In its expressive foundation, it may reduce imita-

tion to a minimum while maintaining enough interest to hold the audience’s attention.

Other strategies of engagement with the audience’s perception also try to remove the artificiality of imitation. Zeami’s so-called vision apart (*J. riken*), for instance, purports to endow the actor with a pervasive awareness of his appearance in order to eliminate any awkwardness in posture or demeanor. But on a more sophisticated level, this transcends subjective barriers of all sorts, over extended periods of time as well as space, to effect a spontaneous excitement or wonder in the audience (and perhaps in the performer as well).

If a proficiency in “facing about and doubling back” provides such a technique, then when the actor needs to transcend the bounds of decorum and hierarchy to descend to a level of performance that would normally be uninteresting or even vulgar, he will have a concomitant proficiency, or level of attainment in performance, that both engenders and resides in his perfect freedom. This proficiency is *yūgaku* (遊樂), and like many of Zeami’s favorite technical terms, it changes its meaning over the course of his thought. This term, *yūgaku*, has given me a lot of trouble as a translator, and I will address it from that particular perspective in appendix 3. In any case, with some reluctance, I have settled on the translation “fine play in performance” for *yūgaku*.

At first, *yūgaku* seems to be merely a synonym for *sarugaku*. In the 1420 text *A Course to Attain the Flower*, Zeami starts by noting, “As you gain long experience in [this art characterized by *yūgaku*],” various things will happen that attest to your proficiency in producing a beautiful display. The content of this passage indicates a new understanding of “this art characterized by *yūgaku*” that entails spontaneity, freedom, and the transcendence of normal experience in performance:

As you gain long experience in the fine play in performance, if you find that Instance has produced Substance anew, then there surely will be a wonderful visual display. Once you have created visual display in which the expressive attraction attains the greatest achievement, then there will be no distinction between Substance and Instance. When this happens, and the performance rank of long experience is such that instantiated expression of all manner becomes none other than the Substance of performance, that, I believe, must be the wondrous style.

Substance and Instance are two aspects of performance, perhaps reflections of each other or cause and effect, but under normal circumstances, they are distinct and the substitution of one for the other in, for example, a student’s inappropriate imitation of certain aspects of his master’s performance, is a fault in performance. In the preceding quotation, though, the normal

generation of Instance from Substance is achieved with such fidelity that the Instance on stage is a complete instantiation of the Substance in the actor's mind, with exquisite visual consequences. If we follow Zeami's characterization of Substance as what is perceived by the mind and Instance as what is perceived by our vision, then the chain he describes here amounts to the actor's creation on stage of a scene from within the mind, which is then reinternalized as Substance in order to allow subsequent Instances on stage. Lacking experience with the type of virtuoso performance in which this occurs, we are left with puzzling abstractions disconnected from real experience. But even in that disadvantaged position, we can recognize the enormous ambition of Zeami's conception. In transgressing or erasing the normal boundaries between Substance and Instance, the actor has created something wondrous, something of great excitement that precedes the intellectual or rational contextualization for that excitement.

The issue is elucidated further in the 1428 *Pick Up a Jewel and Take the Flower in Hand*. Here Zeami alludes to the locus classicus of "interest" in Japanese mythology, the occasion when the Sun Goddess, who had secluded herself in a cave in a fit of pique, is enticed back into the world of perception (thus supposedly ending a solar eclipse):

This designation "interesting" derives from the happy occasion when the Great Goddess, captivated by the fine play in performance of *kagura* at Ama-no-kaguyama, deigned to push aside the boulder before her cave. She then could see the radiance of each and every one of the other gods' faces, and she was given to name this as white-in-the-face [i.e., "interesting"]. It cannot have been at that very instant that someone said, "Interesting." Rather, "interesting" was the name given to mark the experience as distinct. Before such a distinction had been made, what might one have possibly said?

In this connection, if we examine the issue with regard to performance strategies in our vocation, the spontaneous perception in which something is regarded as interesting by means of the fine play in performance is excitement without intent. . . .

Now, once the Great Goddess had closed off the heavenly cave with a boulder, earth and sea reverted to a state of timeless obscurity and were utterly dark; when, in absence of any intent, it then became light, in that instant of awareness, was there not simply the perception of joy? This would be felicity in vision.<sup>25</sup> This would be the occasion of a spontaneous smile. When she deigned to close off the cave with a boulder and it was utterly dark and language was cut off, that was "the wondrous"; when it had become light, that was "the flower"; and when a distinction was made through conscious awareness, that was "the interesting." Is it there-

fore the case that excitement without intent, that is, spontaneous perception, is simply felicity in vision? On the occasion of a spontaneous smile, language is cut off and there is truly nothing. Such a situation as this is called "wondrous." The mind's apprehension of this as wondrous is "the wondrous flower." That, then, is why we have made the wondrous flower the foremost of the Nine Ranks and defined it as the flower of golden essence. There is a realm in which an excitation from the scene within the intent, startling the mind's ear through the attractions of dancing and singing, spontaneously arouses excitement in the audience—that is the wondrous flower. That is interest. That is excitement without intent.

The psychological insight here—that the spontaneous perception of joy, preceding any conceptualization of its cause, creates "wonder"—lies at the heart of Zeami's idea of *yūgaku* and exemplifies the ideal of an actor's freedom in his ethics of performance. The actor's meticulously trained and cultivated mind can be given free rein to create a preconscious and spontaneous expression of beauty or bliss on stage, an insight with broad philosophical connections in East Asian thought.

The Chinese graph *yū* (orth. *iu*, 遊) of *yūgaku* has settled into a rather restrictive context of "play" in modern Japanese. Read as *asobu*, it is the word for child's play or adult relaxation or erotic dalliance. In early Chinese, however, it had, among others, a sense of untrammelled wandering,<sup>26</sup> of travel for the purpose of learning, of release from official entanglements. These senses of the word were active, too, in early Japanese readings of *asobu*, as well as an apparently exclusively Japanese use meaning "play music."

If the word implies release from conscious labor, in Zeami's writing it nonetheless implies a consummate degree of skill before such a release is effected. It expresses a kind of ecstasis in performative freedom that draws on the legacy of the Daoist sages and Zen practitioners of "no-mind," as well as more proximate masters and teachers of *sarugaku* performance itself.

*Asobu* also suggests a lack of artifice, as we see in the following explication of a famous *waka* poem from *Effective Vision of Learning the Vocation of Fine Play in Performance* (undated but probably written around 1430):

Koma tomete sode uchiharahu kage mo nashi  
Sano no watari no yuki no yuhugure<sup>27</sup>

No hint of shelter  
to rest my pony  
or brush off my sleeves:  
The Sano Ford,  
where dusk descends over snow-filled skies.



I'm not sure what is so interesting about this poem, famous though it is—and it certainly is interesting to listen to. It sounds simply like the experience of someone at the roadside on a journey, with snow falling and no place to seek shelter. But since I am not an initiate in the Way of Poetry, I thought that perhaps there was some other reason for excitement that I was missing, so I asked a poet by vocation. All he told me, though, was that the poem should be taken at face value.

So what I got out of that was that there was no particular frame of mind in which the snow became the focus of appreciation. It was simply an expression of what it is like to be on the road at the riverside with no good place to take shelter from the storm and no perspective by which one might get one's bearings, so the poet just gave voice to what was staring him in the face. Perhaps then the task of a real master is this: to create an excitement that is not to be explained in such and such a manner. *The Tendai Interpretation of "Wondrous"* states, "There where the path of language is of no avail, where one cannot fathom the principle, and the operations of the mind founder; that is wondrous." This must be the sort of attitude we have before us. In this art of ours, when one has attained the rank of a real master and such, then just as with this poem, "No hint of shelter," there isn't the slightest bit of artificiality and grasping in the mind for a particular manner of expression. Instead, an excitement that transcends excitement<sup>28</sup> becomes apparent in the vantage from vision apart, and the fame of one's house spreads far and wide; this is what is meant by a truly accomplished master of the wondrous expressive capacity of the fine play of performance.

It would be redundant and obtuse for me to go on about what Zeami says when his own explanation is itself so much more detailed and persuasive. But before I conclude this introduction, there are a few items that I should mention, about the typical configurations of *nō* plays and the conventions I have used in this translation.

Today *nō* is roughly divided into "plays about ghosts and supernatural beings" (*mugen nō*) and "plays in which the characters on stage are alive in the dramatic present" (*genzai nō*). Neither term is Zeami's, but the underlying division is apparent in his plays and in *nō* plays ever since. *Genzai nō* have many different configurations and cannot be usefully described here, but the majority of the repertory, as it exists both today and historically, is composed of *mugen* plays. Although Zeami did not use the term *mugen* to describe them, he was central to the creation of this staple of the *nō* stage.<sup>29</sup>

Zeami's *mugen* plays most characteristically treat the interior life of a ghost. Why a ghost? Perhaps because there is much to be gained dramatically in the perspective afforded on a life that is over but not complete. The main characters of these plays, called *shite*, literally "doer" or "agent," remain in

the world because of some deep attachment to a past love, anger, pride, or some other strong emotional tie or obsession. As ghosts they return to the world not to terrorize or haunt the living but to reenact important and unfinished episodes in their lives. Their presence is usually mediated by a secondary actor, in modern terms, the *waki* (the one at the side).<sup>30</sup> Sometimes various sorts of subsidiary characters join them. Usually they are the companions (*waki-tsure*) of the *waki* and mirror his role in the play. The *shite* may have a companion (*tsure*) as well, but if he does, it is usually because of a somewhat more complicated dramatic structure. (*Tsure* are more typical of *genzai nō* than of *mugen nō*.) Another actor, called the *ai-kyōgen* (from the sister art, *kyōgen*) takes part in most plays, most prominently during an interlude called the *ai*. In performance today, a chorus of eight voices and a musical ensemble, including one flute player and two or three drummers, fills out the cast. The typical play, as Zeami explains in detail in *Three Courses*, consists of five sections. In the first section the *waki* appears and introduces himself. In the second section the *shite* appears, usually disguised as a villager or commoner of some sort, and delivers a soliloquy. The *waki* overhears this, the *shite* being unaware of his presence. In the third section, the *waki* may ask the *shite* about the soliloquy or about other circumstances underlying the *shite's* presence in the setting of the drama. During the fourth section, the *shite* delivers a narrative explaining (and usually raising further questions about) those circumstances. Often the *shite* reveals or gives important clues to his or her identity in this narrative, only to then disappear into thin air.

Once the *shite* has "disappeared"—that is, stomped on the stage in a prescribed way and walked off stage—the *ai-kyōgen* comes on stage to deliver a simplified account of the narrative that the *shite* delivered in the fourth section. Once the *ai-kyōgen* has finished, he leaves the stage to make way for the final section of the play. In this section, the *shite* again appears, this time in his or her "true" form. The *shite* performs a dance or series of dances (one of which is usually accompanied by purely instrumental music) and brings the play to a close.

There are as many variations on this overall pattern as there are plays in the repertory, some only tiny and some very substantial, but overall the pattern holds, and the play's formal instantiation of the pattern is an important part of why it is a *nō* play rather than some other kind of performance. This is one reason that the *nō* is considered a "classic" dramatic form.

As will be apparent in the *Performance Notes*, many conventions of performance were being introduced even as Zeami was writing the *Notes*. Over two hundred or three hundred years, these conventions were fixed into canons of performance, giving *nō* its unique gravity and abstract formalism. When these canons of performance are apparent in the *Performance Notes*, I have pointed that out. I have also noted various features of fifteenth-century performance described in the *Notes* that did not become part of the canon.

## CONVENTIONS

The *Performance Notes* are full of information about performance, training, history, and subjectivity, and one of the primary purposes of this translation is to convey this in English. In bringing Zeami into English, my goal has also been to pay attention to his idiosyncrasies, his idiolect, his introduction of new topics, his pretensions to Chinese, his turns of phrase, his penchant for metaphor, his occasional run-on sentences, and his repetitiveness. I have not made it my business to try to improve his style but instead have tried to reflect the uniqueness of not only what he says but also how he says it. When I have noticed idiosyncrasies and expressive habits in the text, I have tried to preserve them in English whenever possible.

Much of what the *Performance Notes* contains was written and rewritten over many years, presumably to reflect greater experience, to recognize exceptions to the rule, and to supplement earlier practice with later refinements and alterations. This seems to be reflected in both the content and the format of the *Notes*. For example, Zeami frequently uses the term *mata* at the beginning of a new section of text, and in some texts, he signals the insertion of a new paragraph with the Chinese graph for the number one (printed as • here). We usually cannot tell from material features of the manuscripts themselves when these additions were made, but their content often reflects some change or addition to advice given previously, sometimes even quoting the earlier text to set the new comment in context. There occasionally are verbal clues not only to the supplementary nature of some of these comments but also to the degree of Zeami's hesitation, informality, or spontaneity when he makes them. He is rarely dogmatic or sententious and frequently makes us aware of the contingent nature of his comments, saying, in effect, "Also, it occurs to me, . . ." or "Now that I think of it. . ."

In many cases, I have not found it possible to establish a one-to-one match between Zeami's technical terminology and my English renderings. Wherever possible I have tried to translate consistently the most technical words (when I could not, I simply romanized them out of despair that any translation could suffice). In some cases, though, a word clearly has a technical meaning to Zeami and also has popular connotations that depart somewhat from that technical meaning. One example is *iyauzu* (modern Japanese *jōzu*). At times Zeami uses this term to refer to technical accomplishment, in which case one might translate it as "expert(ise)," "skillful(ness)," "proficiency," or the like.<sup>31</sup> At other times, though, it seems to suggest another kind of success in performance, which relates only partly to acquired technical skill and at least as much to inherent ability, talent.<sup>32</sup>

A notorious example is the word *kokoro*, a common word used to designate the locus of human cognitive, perceptual, and emotional capacity, usually

translated as "heart" or "mind." This word is also, however, the most frequently used term for "meaning" or for a particularly important meaning, say, "essence." Although other, more precise words denote "intentionality" or the discursive content of the mind, *kokoro* is the one often found in Zeami's text. Because this word deserves extended treatment in its own right, I discuss it further in appendix 3, where it is found in the company of other important and slippery terms of art.

In this volume, Zeami's texts are arranged in roughly chronological order. (I follow Omote Akira in this as in so many other matters in this enterprise.)<sup>33</sup> In some cases, we do not know the date of composition for a given text, so I placed it where it seems to best reflect its place vis-à-vis other, dated texts in the collection. In other cases, even when a particular text is dated, we cannot be sure that the entire text was written close to the date recorded. That is, the date may be merely an adjunct to Zeami's signature on the manuscript. In one case, that of *A Mirror to the Flower*, the given date seems to reflect a final collation of relatively disparate materials, so Omote situates the text not by this date but by its overall stature and the place it seems to hold conceptually relative to other texts, some of which bear earlier dates than *A Mirror to the Flower*. I have followed Omote in this.

Following the translated texts are three appendixes, a glossary, a bibliography, and an index. The appendixes describe the music and dance of *sarugaku* in Zeami's time, the physical and editorial details regarding each of the translated texts, and Zeami's languages (and my translations of them).

Appendix 1 examines the occasionally daunting level of detail in Zeami's discussions of music. He was familiar with the terminology of other types of music and dance of his time and borrowed freely from this terminology as well as from the music theory of the time, whether or not it really matched what he was talking about in *sarugaku*. It would have been overly repetitive to account for all these technical terms each time one of them occurred, so I describe their most important aspects here. This is also the place where I discuss general issues of historical performance.

Appendix 2 examines the problems in the textual tradition, details of provenance, and, in some cases, salient material features of the text relevant to this translation. Finally, appendix 3 looks at Zeami's rhetoric and voice in detail and explains more fully some of my choices in translating problematic terms or groups of terms. It is followed by a glossary of frequently used technical terms.

In general, I have romanized technical terms relating to costuming, masks, and musical performance, for example, *kanmuri* and *nōshi*, *eboshi* and *kariginu*, *kuse*, *shōdan*. Such terms are included in the glossary when they occur frequently or throughout Zeami's career; otherwise, they are discussed in the footnotes. The names of individuals are treated similarly.

The gender of pronouns in the translation is usually male because of the exclusive nature of the guilds responsible for *sarugaku* performance in the fifteenth century. That is, when a third-person singular pronoun is needed in the translation, I use the male pronoun unless it is clear that a female is intended.

Zeami's text is written using medieval orthography, and my policy is to reflect such spelling in romanization when quoting his text or the texts to which he refers or alludes. I use romanizations from modern Japanese for modern words, place-names, and personal names. Although sometimes this introduces inconsistencies,<sup>34</sup> I think it generally is better philological practice, even in romanizations, to reflect as much as possible the way in which the original texts were written. In some cases, moreover, modern romanizations obscure the meanings that are apparent in historical romanizations. For instance, the name of the *nō* play *Aritohoshi* plays on the words *ari* (be) and *hoshi* (star), but the second word is obscured in the modern romanization, *Aridōshi*. Even given this general policy, some readers may find inconsistencies. Sometimes, for instance, Zeami's spellings do not conform to orthodox historical orthography (*rekishiteki kanazukai*). For example, he writes *Aritohoshi* as *Aritowoshi*, and that too obscures the pun, but perhaps less so than the modern version. Moreover, the important term *yūgen* appears in these texts in *kana* as both *yu-u-ge-n* and *yu-fu-ge-n*, whereas technically it should be spelled *i-u-ge-n*.

I made certain compromises in this context. In general, when I thought that a given word might be known to some readers in a romanization from modern Japanese, I generally used it (e.g., *jo-ha-kyū* for the more correct *jo-ha-kiu*). When I thought that the word was less familiar than that, I used historical romanization (*bauwoku* rather than *bōoku*). Often, particularly from the mid-1420s onward, Zeami used Chinese graphs for a word or an expression, without any phonetic gloss. When I found it necessary to refer to such texts in romanization, I used orthodox historical orthography (as reflected in, for example, Kindaichi Haruhiko's *Shinmeikai kogo jiten*). When the traditional orthography is substantially different from the modern (Hepburn) romanization, I include the modern version in parentheses, identified as "mod. J." (modern Japanese). Likewise, when it seemed to me advisable to include a historical romanization for words that, according to my general rule, appear in modern versions, I supplied the historical version in parentheses preceded by the abbreviation "orth." (orthographically). In the few cases in which a Chinese word is romanized, it is preceded by the abbreviation "Ch.," the word "Mandarin," or the like.

When Zeami quotes song texts or *nō* plays, they are both transliterated and translated. In such cases, certain other technical details may intrude on my general romanization practice. When those texts are clearly written in *kana*, I tried to reflect that in the romanization. When there is ambiguity, I

follow the general principles used in Yokomichi Mario and Omote Akira's *Yōkyokushū*.<sup>35</sup> Song texts are sometimes quoted with technical specifications regarding the specific type of song being quoted.<sup>36</sup> When such specifications are included in the translation, they are written in superscript small caps. In the case of *Five Sorts of Singing*, I did not use romanizations for the many quotations from *sarugaku* songs found there but presented them in Japanese, on facing pages, for reasons explained in the introduction to that text.

## NOTES

1. Omote Akira and Getsuyōkai, eds., *Zeami jihitsu nōhon shū* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1997), vol. 2 (*kōtei hen*), p. 1.
2. The title of *Transmitting the Flower* is discussed further in appendix 2.
3. More information about the textual history of the *Notes* can be found in appendix 2 and in the introductions to each of the texts translated here.
4. This has been translated by Erika de Poorter, *Zeami's Talks on Sarugaku: An Annotated Translation of the Sarugaku Dangi, with an Introduction on Zeami Motokiyo* (Amsterdam: Gieben, 1986).
5. *Sarugaku* is generally written with the Chinese graphs meaning "monkey music," but Zeami insisted that instead the word is related to the religious music of Japan's indigenous pantheism (so-called Shinto), pointing to the graphic form of the words in question.
6. Kamo no Chōmei, *Mumyōshō*, in *Kamo no Chōmei zenshū*, ed. Yanase Kazuo (Tokyo: Kazama shobō, 1980), p. 88 (separately paginated).
7. Certain terms of widespread usage in the *Notes* are discussed in the introduction or in the appendixes.
8. In addition to *Fūshikwaden (Transmitting the Flower Through Effects and Attitudes)*, we could list the titles *Kwashiu* (An Extract from *Learning the Flower*, 1418), *Shikwadau* (A Course to Attain the Flower, 1420), *Kwakyau* (A Mirror to the Flower, 1424), *Shiugyoku tokkwa* (Pick Up a Jewel and Take the Flower in Hand, 1428), and *Kyauraikwa* (The Flower in . . . Yet Doubling Back, 1433).
9. The term is found in such compounds as *mukyoku*, *mushin*, and *mumon*.
10. For details, see ZS, pp. 16, 23.
11. A helpful account of the phases can be found in "The Five Phases," in Wm. Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom, eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 2d ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), vol. 1, p. 348.
12. See the discussion in *A Mirror to the Flower*.
13. Zeami quotes the Mao preface most extensively in *Articles on the Five Sorts of Singing*, but he also refers to it at several points in the *Notes*.
14. *Takasago* celebrates the longevity of the pine, the benevolence of the ruler, the felicity of conjugal fidelity, and so on, and has always been one of the most popular plays in the repertory. But Zeami himself admits that it is in some ways eccentric in *Conversations on Sarugaku*, in ZS, p. 286. I have treated this in detail, in a long discussion and a translation of the play, in ZS, pp. 69–70, 77–78.
15. *Bauwoku* is generally written in *kana* in the manuscripts of the *Performance Notes*, but in one text, the graphs 亡臆 (a devastated heart) appear. Scholars have used 望憶 (longing thoughts) and 亡憶 (devastated thoughts) as well, and some versions of the original text write 茅屋 alongside the original *kana*. This means a sedge-thatched hut and is to be taken as a metaphor for the life of lonely poverty that gives birth to the emotion in question. None of these graphs really makes very good sense, and it has been suggested that Zeami actually meant 亡国之音 (*baukoku no on*, the music of a land about to fall) but did not say what he meant because the phrase was bad luck. See ZS, pp. 265–66n.30.

An article by Ueki Tomoko in *Zeami* makes a cautious but interesting case for 茅屋 but still leaves the question open to some doubt (“Bauwoku shōkō, Zeami no ongyokuron wo megutte,” *Zeami, Chūsei no geijutsu to bunka*, January 2002, pp. 112–27).

16. *Articles on the Five Sorts of Singing* and *The Five Sorts of Singing*. Further comments can be followed through the *Notes*.

17. Zeami seems ambivalent about the categorizations. In *Five Sorts of Singing*, he complains that “no one understands the basic difference between *kusemahi* and *tadautai* singing voice, much less the distinction between *shuigen* and *bauwoku* vocal styles” and claims that he has provisionally divided the art of singing into five different classes: *shuigen*, *yūkyoku*, *renbo*, *aishyau*, and *rangyoku*. There is no precise date for the composition of *Five Sorts of Singing*. The only other mention of *bauwoku* (in this case, actually spelled *bauoku*) from late in Zeami’s life is in *Learning the Profession* (1430), where it appears with *shuigen*, *renbo*, *aishyau*, and the heterogeneous categories of *urami* and *ikari* (here, hatred and anger) as well as Dance and Sparring.

18. “On the Rank of Great Virtuosity,” in *A Course to Attain the Flower*.

19. *Take* (i.e., 長) is translated as stature, and *kasa* (i.e., 嵩) as grandeur, in contradistinction to *kurai* (位). Zeami seems to be inconsistent in his explanation.

20. Thus in the most immediately relevant of the texts in the *Notes*, the one entitled *Nine Ranks*, in which the bottom three “ranks” have no aesthetic utility apart from one exceptional case (discussed later).

21. For example, the Kanze school divides the entire repertory into eight levels: at the top are twenty-two plays or songs termed “profound instructions” (*omonarai*, internally differentiated into four groups), below these are nine plays called “instructions in the nine” (*kyūban narai*) and then nine more described as “instructions in the quasi nine” (*jun-kyūban narai*). The rest of the repertory is placed into five classes (*kyū*) below these. See the table at the beginning of the Taiseiban edition of *Kanze yōkyoku hyakubanshū*.

22. *Conversations on Sarugaku*, in *ZZ*, p. 268. In *Transmitting the Flower*, he says a sixteen- or seventeen-year-old boy rather than a twelve- or thirteen-year-old boy, but in either case, it is worth remembering that according to traditional Japanese ways of reckoning age, a child is a year or two younger than what we mean when we say a sixteen- or seventeen-year-old, and so on.

23. The term is ultimately traceable to Chinese Chan (Zen) texts and seems most likely to refer to a bodhisattva’s ability to attain the full enlightenment of a buddha but to remain in the sensible world to assist others. It instantiates a perhaps more trenchant epistemological paradox in more recent Zen contexts and, of course, in the *Notes*. A shortened form of the term appears in the title of the late text *Kyakuraikwa* (*The Flower in . . . Yet Doubling Back*), and an intriguing reference to this state of experience appears in the text of the song “Rokudai no utai” quoted at the end of *Five Sorts of Singing*.

24. Compare Teika on Narihira: “When composing a love poem, abandon your ordinary self and, imagining how Narihira would have behaved, compose your poem as if you were Narihira” (“Kyōgoku chūnagon sōgobun,” in Hisamatsu Sen’ichi and Nishio Minoru, eds., *Karonshū nōgakuronshū*, vol. 1, *Chūsei no bungaku*, NKBT, vol. 65 [Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1965], p. 333, trans. David Bialock, “Voice, Text, and Poetic Borrowing,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 54, no. 1 [1994]: 212–13).

25. The annotation glosses the native Japanese うれしき心, with the Chinese compound 觀喜, but Omote (*ZZ*, p. 188), Konishi Jin’ichi (*Zeami shū*, *Nihon no shisō*, vol. 8 [Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1970], p. 312), and Yamazaki Masakazu (*Zeami*, *Nihon no meicho*, vol. 10 [Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1969]) all regard this as a miswriting of the homonym 歡喜, a word redolent with Buddhist associations (as in the name of the divinity 歡喜天, Chinese for Ganeśa). Might it not be overhasty, though, to assume that Zeami (or whoever made the annotation) misnotated his intent? The compound makes good sense in the context of this discussion as the joy of seeing or, by extension, the joy of perception, and Zeami has a distinct penchant for neologisms.

26. For example, 逍遙遊, the name of one of the books of the classic *Zhuangzi*.

27. Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241), *SKKS* 671.

28. *Mukan no kan*. Earlier, Zeami spoke of *mushin no kan* (a kind of excitement that transcends the mind), and his assertions about an “excitement that transcends excitement” seem to be related. The various concepts prefixed with negatives such as *mushin* and *mukan* (*mu* being 無) are impossible to translate, as they entail the Zen dialectic that insists on their ineffability. Whatever translations are used for them should be understood as heuristic and “sous rature.” See “On Depth,” in *A Mirror to the Flower*.

29. One hesitates to say that Zeami invented the form by himself because he ambiguously credits the authorship of one of the most celebrated of all *mugen* plays, *Matsukaze*, to both his father, Kannami, and himself. For a detailed discussion of *mugen* plays, see *ZS*.

30. Both the *shite* and the *waki* have somewhat different meanings in Zeami’s usage, which are noted in the appropriate places in the translation.

31. For example, in “On an Expert’s Grasp of Excitement,” in *A Mirror to the Flower*: “When his Singing, Dance, and Sparring are complete, we call an actor expert.”

32. For example, *Transmitting the Flower*, “A pretty little boy with a good voice who is talented besides can hardly go wrong.”

33. Omote’s epoch-making work (which continues even as I write) has created a new standard for understanding the *Notes*. It is contained in numerous volumes, several of which are listed in the bibliography. Most important of all these is his critical edition *Zeami Zenchiku* (*ZZ*) in the series *Nihon shisō taikai*.

34. Even when using historical orthography, I have romanized *o-u* as *ō* and *u-u* as *ū*, and analogously, *ko-u* as *kō*, and so on. I romanize the *h-* column of the syllabary as *ha-hi-fu-he-ho*.

35. These discrepancies occur because there are some characteristic differences between orthodox historical orthography and the way these texts have been delivered on stage. The most common example is the formal verbal ending known in modern Japanese as *-sōrō*. On stage, this appears in sentence final form as *-sōro*. Orthodox historical orthography romanizes this as *-safurafu*, but in modern *nō* performance, it is typically pronounced *-sōro*. When the word is written exclusively with a Chinese graph, I have adopted the expedient *-safuro*.

36. These technical specifications stem from Zeami’s own usages, but in later centuries, they were supplemented and revised, for consistency, by Yokomichi Mario. (He calls these units *shōdan*.)

## Transmitting the Flower Through Effects and Attitudes

風姿花伝, 1400–1418

*Transmitting the Flower* as we have it today consists of seven different books or chapters. The first three seem to comprise a unit in themselves and are the earliest statements we have regarding *sarugaku* performance. They discuss training throughout the actor's life, the roles the actor should have at his command, and questions about how to prevail in competitive performance. In the third section Zeami begins to talk in more detail about the aesthetic ideals of *sarugaku*, setting the tone for extensive comments throughout the *Performance Notes*, but he remains closely attuned to the practical deployment of aesthetic strategies for advantage in performance. A note at the end of the third book dates these three texts as a single manuscript to 1400.

Book 4, "Divine Purport," seems to have been compiled separately because of its divergent thematic material. Whereas the first three books are closely concerned with training and performing, this fourth book collects various types of lore about the origins of *sarugaku* in the remote past, relating it to Japan's indigenous mythology and religion as well as to Buddhist legend. At the end of the book is an account of contemporary *sarugaku* troupes and some of their primary responsibilities.

The fifth book, "Ultimate Achievement," returns to performance but at the same time discusses the different aesthetic aims of rival *sarugaku* troupes as well as some other closely related performing arts such as *dengaku*. Book 6, "Written Preparations for the Flower," is Zeami's first discussion of writing plays, and book 7, "Separate Pages of Oral Instructions," contains the most extensive account of the "flower" and its relation to the actor's training and innate ability.

Because of its variety and the relatively long period over which it was compiled, *Transmitting the Flower* gives an instructive picture of the history of Yamato *sarugaku* in the early fifteenth century. If, as Zeami claims, the first three books represent not his own thinking on the subject so much as his father's (in Zeami's words, "what I have done here is to record the general meaning of the things that my late father told me"), we can better understand his adulation of Kannami throughout the *Performance Notes*. All the same, we should be somewhat skeptical about accepting this assertion uncritically. It was not unusual for medieval Japanese thinkers to attribute the points they made to the tradition to which they belonged rather than to their own innovation. In

any case, the material in books 5 through 7 is, as Zeami himself admits, more an account of what he learned over the middle decades of his career regarding performance and training than of his inheritance. These books also trace some of the changes that took place in *sarugaku* performance at the time.

As Omote suggests, the emphasis in book 5 on respect for the tastes of the masses and the mastery of diverse performance styles may reveal the keen competition Zeami faced in the early fifteenth century from rivals in *dengaku* and Ōmi *sarugaku*. Book 6, on composing for the *sarugaku* stage, reveals certain textual and rhetorical changes from the earlier books, particularly the use of honorific language at certain points. This suggests that this part of the text was intended for transmission to a different person than were the earlier parts of *Transmitting the Flower*.

If there is some sense of discontinuity in the transmission, there is also a strong sense of continuity in the development of the theory of the "flower" between books 3 and 7, as Omote points out.<sup>1</sup> In addition, there are suggestions that the seventh book may have existed in some sort of draft form even while the third was being written, despite the gap of more than eighteen years between the dates recorded at the ends of the two books. This means that the composition of at least the last book, but probably the last three books, of *Transmitting the Flower* took place over a number of years and thus is a cumulative gathering of notes on performance rather than a discrete treatise about performance written in a period of reflection and production.

*Transmitting the Flower* is the best known of the *Performance Notes* and is sometimes referred to as *Kadensho*, but for reasons discussed in appendix 2, this title is misleading.



Now if you inquire into the practices and origins of *sarugaku*, with its promotion of long life,<sup>1</sup> some will tell you it arose in the time of Buddha, and others will say it was passed down from the age of the gods; but that time has gone, and in either case, the age is so remote that it is beyond our power to imitate the effects they created. Ever since Prince Shōtoku, during the reign of Empress Suiko, commanded Hada no Kōkatsu<sup>2</sup> to make sixty-six entertainments

1. See Omote's introduction to the excerpts from *Transmitting the Flower*, in *Rengaronshū, nōgakuronshū, haironshū* (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1973), p. 214.

2. Shōtoku Taishi (574–622), second son of the sovereign Yōmei, was a central figure in the development of the early Japanese state, responsible for the promotion of Buddhism and the erection of several important architectural monuments. He served as regent for his aunt, the sovereign Suiko (r. 593–628), until his death.

Hada no Kōkatsu (orth. Kaukatsu, fl. early seventh century; the surname is generally read Hata today) was an influential supporter of Prince Shōtoku and his aunt. His importance to Zeami and the legendary accounts of his relation to the origins of *sarugaku* are part of a broader medieval interest in the legendary Shōtoku, connected to the development of a religious cult

and to call them “*sarugaku*” (for both the peace of the realm and the enjoyment of the people), it has persisted generation after generation, taking the beauties of the landscape as an impetus to performance. This is what has caught so many people’s attention in recent years. Since that distant time, descendants of that Kōkatsu have transmitted the art in their position as priests at the Kasuga and Hie shrines. And so it is that the performance of groups from Yamato and Ōmi flourishes even today, in service of the gods at these two shrines.<sup>3</sup>

Study the old, then, and make certain that you do not neglect tradition even while appreciating the new. Within his heritage, the accomplished master is, after all, someone who shows no vulgarity in speech and exhibits *yūgen*<sup>4</sup> in his attitude.

Whoever aspires to this vocation should, I think, avoid other arts. He should engage in the vocation of poetry, though, because it is an ornament to graceful performance and an inducement to long life.

It is here, then, that I have set down various notes of general bearing on what I have seen and heard since my youth under the discipline of this art.

- Promiscuity, gambling, and excessive drinking: three major prohibitions against these have been set down by our predecessors.

- Be resolute in training, don’t be contentious.

## NOTES ON TRAINING THROUGH THE YEARS

### AT SEVEN

- A beginning in this art comes at about the age of seven.<sup>5</sup> In training at this age, there is always something a child does on his own that shows where his talents lie. He should be allowed to follow such natural inclinations, whether

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focusing on him. Zeami’s origins in the Yamato basin also gave him a geographical connection to Shōtoku, whose power base in Ikaruga had been close by.

Zeami mentions Shōtoku several times in the *Notes* and quotes extensively from a song about him in “Five Sounds.”

3. Kasuga is the tutelary shrine of the Fujiwara, now in central Nara and thus in the old province of Yamato. The four troupes of Yamato *sarugaku* all had hereditary commissions for performance there. The Hie Shrine is a complex of important shrines on the western shore of Lake Biwa in the old province of Ōmi. It was, similarly, an important venue for performance by the rival Ōmi troupes.

4. For a discussion of *yūgen*, which is romanized and left untranslated, see the introduction. The appearance of this fundamental value of *nō* performance so early in the *Notes* is a signal of its importance. The social context of *yūgen* is clear here and seems to have significance both on and off stage.

5. According to the traditional way of counting age in East Asia (*kazuedoshi*), this refers to the number of calendar years in which a person has lived and is thus one to two years younger than the corresponding Western count.

they be toward Dancing, Sparring, singing, or just the raw display of energy.<sup>6</sup> You should not be too quick to say what is good and what is bad because if you demand too much, the child will lose interest in performance and weary of it, making no progress.

You should not, though, instruct the child to do things apart from singing or Sparring or Dance. Even if he is capable of dramatic imitation, you should not teach him such techniques in any detail, nor should he be allowed to perform in the first piece of a formal production. You should let him display his talents in the third or fourth piece, as seems appropriate.

### AT TWELVE OR THIRTEEN

About this time, the child will begin to be able to carry a tune, and he will start to understand something about performance, so he should be taught various sorts of roles.

First of all, since he is a child, anything he does will entail *yūgen*. Furthermore, his childhood voice will be at its peak during this period. With these two advantages, his bad points will fade and his good ones blossom. Now, for the most part, you should not have children do too much dramatic imitation.<sup>2</sup> It neither looks good nor increases the child’s ability. But as he comes to show real mastery, a child may be permitted to perform almost anything. A pretty little boy with a good voice who is talented besides can hardly go wrong. All the same, such a flower<sup>7</sup> is not the true flower. It is merely the flower of the moment. Training at this time, therefore, should always be gentle. To that extent, it is unlikely to be definitive with regard to the child’s lifetime potential.

At this stage, those things the child can do easily should be made the flower of his performance, and the main emphasis should be on his technique. His movements should be exact and his singing understandable

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6. *Hataraki*, *mai*, and *ongyoku*—the terms translated as “Sparring,” “Dance,” and “singing”—are fundamental tools for the actor and are translated into these English words, which will be understood in a more technical sense than would the same words in lowercase. “Sparring” and “Dance” are capitalized as proper nouns for specific kinds of stage activity. I usually, however, leave “singing” in lowercase because by *ongyoku*, Zeami intends at least two (perhaps more) distinctive types of vocalization.

“Singing” refers to the full range of vocal delivery in *sarugaku*, from the heightened speech (*kotoba*) used in dialogues and self-introductions to the various species of singing proper, whether rhythmically “congruent” or “noncongruent.” “Sparring” refers usually to the often relatively mimetic movements characteristic of young gods and demons, or warriors in battle. “Dance” refers to the abstract and formal, usually instrumental, dances most typical of women and goddesses. For further discussion, see appendix 1.

7. *Hana* is the common Japanese word for “flower” or “blossom,” but Zeami uses it throughout his *Notes* as a symbol for what is most basically attractive in a performance. For more extensive discussion, see the introduction.

syllable by syllable; his basic gestures in the dance should be instilled precisely; and great care should be given to his training.

#### AT SEVENTEEN TO EIGHTEEN

This period is of such great importance that you had better not practice too much. First, since your voice will be changing, you will lose one of your dramatic charms. As your legs grow disproportionately long, you will lose your physical charm; the time will have passed when, given your pretty voice, you could perform with effortless flair, and with such alterations, you will outgrow your performance strategy and be left at a loss. This will, moreover, put you in positions that the audience finds comical, and you may be embarrassed; with one thing and another, all this can be disheartening.

In training at this time, even if people point and laugh, pay them no heed. Practice instead in private, at a pitch your voice will allow, and train hard, using your voice as appropriate to evening or morning;<sup>8</sup> be resolute in your awareness that this is the turning point; commit yourself to performance for life with complete devotion; no other means of training exists. If you give up at this point, your performance is sure to cease then and there.

Although it's true that a pitch is relative to the particular voice in question, you should probably sing at *ōshiki* or *banshiki*.<sup>9</sup> If you are too particular about pitch, it is likely to hurt your posture, or it may lead to problems in the voice once you are older.

#### AT TWENTY-FOUR TO TWENTY-FIVE

A man's artistic potential for his entire life begins to be fixed about this time. Consequently, this is a critical threshold in training. Your voice will already have changed, and your body will have reached maturity. This provides two advantages, a voice and a posture; both reach maturity at this time. Performances worthy of a man in his prime are born of these.

About this time, people will begin to take notice and say, "Look how good he's become!" On occasion you may even win in competitions against famous actors because of the freshness of your dramatic achievement at this particular time. People may be excessive with praise, and you might mistake yourself for a fully accomplished actor. This is very dangerous. Your achieve-

8. Further details on the type of voice appropriate to a time of day is found in *Oral Instructions on Singing*.

9. *Ōshiki* and *banshiki* are pitches in the traditional tonal system imported from China. *Ōshiki* corresponds generally to A and *banshiki* to B, but given the lack of standards of absolute pitch in modern *nō* performance, the significance of these pitch terms provokes some uncertainty. For further discussion, see appendix 1.

ment at this time is not the true flower. It is a flower born of youth and the freshness that spectators see in you. Someone with a discriminating eye will recognize this fact.

The flower at this time is a beginner's achievement, and it will be a great shame if you mistake it for real expertise and then, thinking yourself a great actor, give free rein to your personal eccentricities on stage to make a virtuoso display. Even though you are highly praised and win in competitions with famous actors, you should realize that this is merely a temporary flower born of novelty. You should work at mastering the traditional forms of dramatic imitation and train all the more diligently, inquiring very carefully of truly accomplished actors concerning the fine points. Should you mistake this temporary flower for the true flower, you will fall even further from that real flower. Nearly everyone becomes enthralled with this transitory flower and fails to realize that it will soon fade. We recognize this as a period of "initial intent."<sup>10</sup>

• Ponder this problem<sup>3</sup> long and hard. If you really have a grasp of your level of achievement at this stage, that flower will not disappear throughout your life. If you overestimate your level of achievement, even the flower once attained will wilt away. Take care to understand this well.

#### AT THIRTY-FOUR TO THIRTY-FIVE

Your ability to perform is at its highest peak at about this time. At this point, if you come to a full realization of the various points in these notes and master them in performance, you will most certainly gain the recognition of the powerful and secure your fame. By this time, if you should fail to gain the recognition of the powerful and remain unsatisfied with your portion of fame, then no matter how expert you may be, you should realize that you have not yet reached the fullest flowering of your art. If you do not do this, your performance will decline after the age of forty. The proof of this will be apparent later. You would, then, rise until about age thirty-four or thirty-five, and decline from forty on. Unless you have attained the recognition of the powerful, do not imagine that you have brought your performance to its fullest.

I will alert you to one more thing here. This is the time for you to take account of what you have learned in the past and to set some guidelines for your direction in the future. Unless you attain expertise by this time, it likely will be very difficult for you to attain the recognition of the powerful hereafter.

10. The word *shoshin* (初心) is important to Zeami, but it unfortunately cannot be rendered by a single and consistent English word or phrase. In many cases it means "beginner," or, as at the beginning of this paragraph, "beginner's achievement," but it also stands for an important type of awareness in the performer, to be drawn on throughout his career. In that case, it is translated as "initial intent."

## AT FORTY-FOUR TO FORTY-FIVE

From this time on, your performance strategy should change fundamentally. Even if you have achieved the recognition of the powerful and become enlightened<sup>11</sup> to a serious understanding of the art, all the same you had better find yourself a good *waki*.<sup>12</sup> Your skill may not deteriorate, but you will unavoidably grow older and lose both the flower of physical strength and the flower of appearance. I don't know about the exceptionally handsome, but for the basically attractive person, it becomes quite unacceptable to perform without a mask when you're old. You'll have to do without advantages of this sort, then.

From about this time, you probably should not attempt any sort of intricate dramatic imitation. Make the most of what is attractive in your performance, but with a light touch—don't break your neck—and let the *waki* show off the flower of his performance, holding back your own so as to support and harmonize with his. Even when you don't have a *waki*, you should probably avoid intricate and physically demanding performances. No matter how you do them, they won't appeal to a spectator's eye.

Whatever flower you haven't lost by this point must be the authentic flower of your talent. Any actor who hasn't lost this flower by the time he is about fifty must surely have gained fame throughout the realm before he was forty. No matter what degree of recognition from the powerful an actor may have acquired, he must be the sort of person who thoroughly understands his own capabilities; he will, consequently, take great care to find a good *waki*, and he won't exhaust himself performing in a play where his faults are sure to be exposed. The mind of someone who understands his own capabilities is the mind of a master.

## AT FIFTY AND BEYOND

There's probably no better principle at this age than to do nothing. From time to time, somebody says how once old age has taken its toll, a splendid steed is no better than a nag. All the same, an actor of genuine attainment will still have his flower at command even when his repertory has dwindled away and, for better or for worse, he has nothing to show off.

My late father passed away on the nineteenth day of the fifth month when he was fifty-two years old, but on the fourth of that month he offered a perfor-

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11. The term used here, *tokuhō* ("get the Dharma" or "achieve enlightenment"), has a specifically Buddhist flavor and is repeated in texts from late in Zeami's career. See *The Flower in . . . Yet Doubling Back*.

12. The *waki* in modern *nō* performance is a secondary role, usually that of a traveling priest, which introduces most plays and sometimes can be regarded as a kind of surrogate for the audience as a whole. The counterpart to the *waki* in modern *nō* is the *shite*, the primary role in a play. In Zeami's usage, *shite* is usually more generally conceived to mean merely "actor," but he gener-

mance to the god of Sengen in the province of Suruga.<sup>13</sup> His performance that day was particularly beautiful and was appreciated by high and low alike. Now by that time, I gather, he had already relinquished most roles to the juniors, and he himself would add just a little something here or there where it was unobtrusive, yet his flower seemed to blossom more and more. Because he had attained the authentic flower, it held fast in his performance without scattering, even until the tree was old and the branches few. To my eyes, this is proof that the flower remains in old bones.

Here above, Notes on Training Through the Years.

## NOTES ON DRAMATIC IMITATION

It is impossible to write about all the types of dramatic imitation. All the same, since it is of utmost importance to this vocation, you should take great care in this regard. Now, the main point is to present a comprehensive likeness of the object portrayed. But be clear on this: the degree to which imitation is appropriate depends on the object of imitation.

A dramatic imitation of the figure of His August Majesty, the king,<sup>4</sup> his ministers and his courtiers, or the comportment of members of the military houses is very difficult because these persons are out of our ken. We should, nevertheless, make every effort to research their language and inquire into their demeanor and to seek their criticisms after they have seen our performances. In addition, we may feel free to imitate precisely various high officials and their accomplishment and refinements. But it's not good to imitate too closely the vulgar habits of bumpkins and louts. Woodcutters, reapers, charcoal makers, and salt makers are probably suitable for detailed imitation, inasmuch as they suggest attractive, eye-catching action on stage. But don't imitate every last detail of even lower occupations. It would be unseemly to bring them before the eyes of high-ranking spectators. Presenting them with such a sight would be too vulgar and would offer nothing to draw their interest. Make sure you give this due consideration.

## THE WOMAN

Now the way a woman looks is well matched to the endeavor of a young actor. All the same, it is of the greatest difficulty.

Right from the start, there won't be anything worth watching if the clothes and accessories don't look right. Empresses and consorts are difficult to

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13. Suruga Province was the area corresponding more or less to modern-day Shizuoka Prefecture. The Sengen Shrine is the most important shrine in the area and was very popular in the mid-



impersonate, since we have no opportunity to observe their movements, so you have to make careful inquiries. The way they wear their robes and broad trousers is not open to your individual interpretation.<sup>5</sup> You must find out how to do it correctly. The way that women of ordinary circumstance look should actually be easy, since you can observe them at any time. A general approximation of the way such a woman wears her robes and short-sleeved gowns should do. As for the look of a dancer or *shirabyōshi*<sup>14</sup> or, again, a "madwoman," she should hold a fan or a branch of leaves or flowers ever so gently. She is to wear her robe and trousers very long, even stepping on them, and her bearing should be gentle. Moreover, her face won't look good if she directs her gaze upward, but if she looks down, that will detract from her appearance from the back. If she holds her head up straight, it is unfeminine. In any case, she should wear something with long sleeves and should not show her hands. Her sash should be loosely tied.

All told, then, you have to be careful about dress so that you can get the look right. It's true that you can't do any sort of dramatic imitation well if the dress is bad, but this is even more true for the look of a woman, so the way she's dressed is essential.

### THE OLD MAN

The imitation of an old man is one of the ultimate achievements in our vocation. Since this is a role in which your level of accomplishment is immediately apparent to the viewer, it is of the utmost importance.

Now, this is an attitude that many relatively expert actors have never mastered. It thus is a mistake in critical judgment to assume that someone is accomplished just because he can mimic the frame of an old man involved in some sort of work like woodcutting or making salt. It is the attitude of an old man in *kanmuri* and *nōshi*, or *eboshi* and *kariginu*,<sup>15</sup> that can be represented

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 14. *Shirabyōshi* (orth. *Shirabyaushi*) was an independent performing art of the late Heian and Kamakura periods. It was performed by women (also called *shirabyōshi*) who often doubled as prostitutes and danced wearing male clothing and sometimes carrying swords. A couple of *shirabyōshi* performers gained the patronage of the Heike strongman Kiyomori, according to the *Heike monogatari*, and more broadly, they played a conspicuous role as performers in the early middle ages. By Zeami's time, however, most of them seem to have disappeared, their legend remaining in *nō* plays and related performing arts. The term *shirabyōshi* appears to have come from the simple rhythmic accompaniment characteristic of their performances, borrowing the technical term *shakubyōshi* from *gagaku*, where it meant abbreviated performance accompanied only by the beating of fans or *shaku* clappers instead of proper drums.

15. *Kanmuri* and *eboshi* are lacquered court hats, the former a formal one, the latter more informal. *Nōshi* (orth. *nahoshi*) and *kariginu* are, similarly, formal and informal robes originally worn by aristocrats and adopted for use as stage dress. *Nōshi* and *kariginu* are tailored in a similar fashion and have overlapping uses in modern *nō* costuming. For detailed discussions of the robes, see Sharon Takeda, in collaboration with Monica Bethe, *Miracles and Mischief: Noh and Kyōgen*

appropriately only by an accomplished actor. Without years of practice and high rank, one cannot perform the role suitably.

Furthermore, without the flower, there will hardly be anything interesting to watch. In general, the presentation of an old man bent over at the waist and lame in the knees loses the flower and looks decrepit. And there's little of interest in that. Above all, don't fidget and fuss; comport yourself with grace.

Most important of all is the dance of an old man. Your problem is how to look old and yet retain the flower—it's just as if blossoms were to come into bloom on an ancient tree.

### THE ROLE WITHOUT A MASK

This, too, is very important. Such a character is, by definition, of ordinary station and ought to be easy to portray, but surprisingly, unless the actor has attained high rank, the role without a mask is not worth watching.

It goes without saying that you should perform such roles in accordance with the play's specific requirements. There's hardly reason to expect that you should physically resemble every such character, but nonetheless some people try to do a facial impression of the character, altering their own features to that end. This is not at all worth watching. You should imitate the general movements and carriage of the character in question. You should make no attempt to imitate the facial expression of that character but to maintain your own expression.

### THE DERANGED

These characters afford the most consistently interesting performances in our vocation. Since there are many types of derangement, anyone who aims to master the vocation should exhibit versatility. This problem demands long and hard consideration.

On the one hand is that derangement caused by possession resulting from offense to a god, a buddha, or a demon, living or dead; if you look at the physical disposition of the possessing spirit, you should find indications of how to proceed. Of greatest difficulty are those whose derangement has been caused by separation from a parent or because of the search for a lost child, by being abandoned by a husband or left behind as a widower. If a good actor fails to distinguish the mental state of one from another but simply reacts with a uniform derangement, he will not create excitement among the spectators. If it's a question of derangement on account of anxiety, then that anxiety should

be the primary aim of your portrayal, and you should think of the derangement as the flower; when you then throw yourself into the derangement, it will be sure to create excitement in the audience and much interest in the performance. With such a technique, if you can provoke tears in your audience at certain points, you should recognize this as unsurpassed skill. You should make careful distinctions regarding this in the depths of your heart.

There is, of course, no question that you should dress appropriately for the performance of a deranged role. But since the role is, after all, of someone with deranged sensibilities, you may demonstrate this conspicuously in your dress, in accordance with the time.<sup>16</sup> You should carry a branch of whatever might be in bloom in the season.

There is something else you should be aware of, even when performing the role of a deranged person. When the derangement is caused by demonic possession, you of course should make the agent of that possession the primary focus of your portrayal, but there's nothing worse than a deranged woman possessed by a warring spirit from the realm of *asuras* or by demonic gods.<sup>17</sup> If you exhibit a demonic rage when portraying a woman because you've made the possessing agent the focus of your performance, it is visually incongruous. But if, on the other hand, you make the portrayal of a woman the aim of your performance, then the logic for the possession won't hold. Something similar will happen if you portray a deranged male possessed by a woman. In short, the secret is not to take such roles in your performances. They show a lack of competence by the writer of the play. An accomplished writer in this vocation is unlikely to use such unpromising material as the focus of his play.<sup>18</sup> The secret here is to keep this in mind in such circumstances.

Also,<sup>19</sup> you are unlikely to be successful in deranged roles in which a mask is not used unless you have attained complete expertise in performance. Unless you reflect the derangement in your facial expression, it won't be persuasive. But if you contort your face without the skill of a master performer, certain parts of the performance will be unsightly. Indeed, you could say that this is one of the ultimate achievements of dramatic imitation. Beginners

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16. Zeami doesn't make clear whether he is referring to the dramatic present or the occasion of performance.

17. In Sanskrit, *asura* refers to supernatural beings of a warlike character such as Indra, but for Zeami, the term indicates primarily the ghosts of dead warriors who appear in plays of a particular configuration in the *sarugaku* (and *nō*) repertory.

18. There is, all the same, a play in the repertory that seems to fulfill these conditions, *Kanawa* (*The Iron Ring*), of unknown authorship.

19. Zeami frequently begins "paragraphs" in his *Notes* with the word *mata* (also). This may suggest that the paragraphs in question are later additions (by Zeami) to a note composed earlier. In any event, the *Notes* were not the result of a single long dissertation on *sarugaku* performance but a compilation of articles over a long period of time. (*Transmitting the Flower*, for instance, was composed over almost two decades, between around 1400 and 1418.)

should refrain from this in an important performance. Roles without masks are very difficult, and deranged roles are very difficult; how difficult then is the attempt to comprehend both within a single intent and to produce a flower in the interesting spots! This requires great discipline in training.

### THE PRIEST

Although this role does have a place in our vocation, it does not call for extensive training because it is not common. In the case of a splendidly attired bishop or a high cleric, you should probably take his dignity as foundation and make his solemnity the aim of your portrayal. When it comes to lower-ranking clerics, recluses, and ascetics, their self-abnegation is the foundation, so the depth of their devotion must be palpable. Depending on the thematic material,<sup>20</sup> you may find it necessary to use unexpected techniques.

### THE SHURA

This,<sup>21</sup> too, is one of the objects of dramatic imitation. You may perform the role well, yet there is little of interest in it. It should not be performed often. But if you take a famous character from among the *Genji* or the *Heike*<sup>22</sup> and bring out the connection between him and poetry and music, then—as long as the play itself is well written—it will be more interesting than anything else. It's best if there are some particularly flashy places.

Among the energetic movements of *shura* like this are some that verge on the movements of demons. Others contain elements of dance. If the piece reflects the style of the *kusemai*,<sup>23</sup> then some dance-like movement is appropriate. The character should hold a bow, wear a quiver, and carry a blade to give the role some weight. Inquire carefully into the way to hold and brandish the blade, and do it correctly. Be very careful to distinguish which places are appropriate for Sparring and which for the figures of Dance.

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20. The term *fushimono* (thematic material) is used only rarely in the *Notes* but is common in the poetics of *renga*.

21. *Shura* is an abbreviated Japanese version of the Sanskrit *asura* discussed earlier.

22. The *Genji* (or Minamoto) and the *Heike* (or Taira) were two factions based on partially fictional links of kinship who came into conflict in the latter half of the twelfth century. The conflict between them is popularly understood to have been the central cause of the fall of the Heian governmental structure. The conflict also was the source of a long narrative tradition of texts and oral performances known collectively as the *Heike monogatari* (*The Tales of the Heike*), which served as a rich source of stories for treatment in *nō* and other performing arts.

23. *Kusemai* (orth. *kusemahi*) originated as an offshoot of the performing art of *shirabyōshi* but put more emphasis on rhythm, especially syncopation. It became particularly popular in the mid-fourteenth century and was adopted for *sarugaku* by Zeami's father, Kannami. Examples of *kusemai* are quoted by Zeami in *Five Sounds*. See also appendix 1.

### THE GOD

✓ Now this role has the look of the demonic. And if an element of wrath is in some way apparent in the portrayal, then depending on the god in question, there should be nothing wrong with that sense of the demonic. There is, however, something very different at the heart of this role. Gods are well suited to the graces of Dance. But demons have no impetus at all to Dance.

Without fail, gods must be dressed appropriately to the style of gods and be dignified, and since there's probably no such thing as a god outside a dramatic role, you should pay close attention to costume and to dress the character with great care.

### THE DEMON

This role is a specialty of Yamato *sarugaku*. It is very difficult.

Now then, because there are interesting ways to portray demons such as angry ghosts and people possessed by spirits, they are easy. If you keep your eye on your dramatic opponent and move your feet and hands precisely, moving in accord with the *monogashira*,<sup>24</sup> you will find ways to create interest.

As for a true demon from hell, the better you portray it, the more terrifying it will appear, so there's no opportunity to create interest. Or is it instead that the portrayal is so difficult that it's rarely accomplished with interest?

First of all, the role should be, fundamentally, strong and fearsome. But what creates interest in the mind is different from what creates fear or the impression of strength. So then, the dramatic imitation of a demon really is a matter of very great difficulty. If you truly perform it well, it only stands to reason that it shouldn't be interesting. Its essence is, after all, fear. Fear and interest are as different as black and white. So, shouldn't we say that an actor who can create interest in portraying a demon is a truly expert master? But the actor who does only demons well can hardly be one who understands the flower. That being the case, the demon portrayed by a young actor may appear to be well done, but it isn't interesting at all. Isn't it logical, then, that the demons of one who does only demons well are uninteresting? You should study this in detail. The consideration needed to create an interesting demon is like a flower blooming out of a boulder.

.....  
24. It is not entirely certain what Zeami means by *monogashira*. It could refer to the emblem of a demon or a lower-ranking god, which often tops the headgear in such roles, or it could refer to the *kashira* pattern in the drums, which often marks cadences in the music.

### CHINESE ROLES

Now these roles are unusual, and there are really no models to train from. The character's attire, though, is of crucial importance. And also the mask you wear, even though it is of a human being like anyone else, should convey something out of the ordinary and have something peculiar about it. The role is a good one for a seasoned actor. There is no particular plan for it apart from getting yourself up in the Chinese style. Above all, in both song and movement on stage, the Chinese style is not likely to be very interesting if it actually resembles Chinese practice, so you should only go as far as to give it a certain Chinese flavor.

Despite its being a small matter in its own right, what I just said about "something peculiar" is related to more far-reaching problems. How, you might ask, is it acceptable to portray something as peculiar when there is nothing at hand to imitate in order to create a Chinese style? One way or another, therefore, you must make something look Chinese to other eyes by using a manner of expression that is different from commonplace behavior; and there you are: it turns into that very thing.

My notes on dramatic imitation are, by and large, as I have presented them above. It is not possible to write at a greater level of detail. All the same, someone who has a good mastery of the notes here will probably be able to figure out the specifics on his own.

### NOTES IN QUESTION-AND-ANSWER FORM

- Q: Now then, what is involved in looking out on the house before the *sarugaku* begins on the day of a given performance to predict the outcome of a performance, favorable or not?  
A: This is a matter of considerable difficulty. One is unlikely to understand unless he is expert in the business of prediction.

When you look at the venue of a day's performance, there should probably be some indication as to whether or not your performance is likely to succeed. Just what that might be is hard to tell. I would venture to say, though, having given it some thought, that for a shrine or temple performance<sup>25</sup> or a performance for the elite, the audience assembles but the house doesn't settle down for a while. Then everything gets very quiet as the audience waits for the performance to begin, and

.....  
25. Performances were sometimes held in connection with shrine or temple rituals, often as an offering to the deity in question, either on commission by a patron of the troupe or by the troupe itself.

everyone, with the same intent, looks toward the green room,<sup>26</sup> thinking you're late; just then, having captured the moment, you make an entrance and sing your *issei*,<sup>27</sup> whereupon the house will be pulled right into the mode appropriate to the moment,<sup>28</sup> and the minds of all present will harmonize with and settle into the actor's movements, and no matter what, that day's *sarugaku* is already off on the right foot.

*Sarugaku*, though, depends on the attendance of the elite, so if they arrive early, you must begin right away. On such an occasion, the house will not yet have settled down; latecomers will be jostling their way in and people will still be in a commotion; and not everyone's mind will be ready for the performance. It thus will be no small matter to capture their attention. On such an occasion, even though you are all made up for the first play of the day, you should exaggerate your movements, sing in a louder voice than normal, stomp your feet a bit higher than usual, and perform with such vitality that you seize the audience's attention. You should do this in order to get the audience settled down. Furthermore, you should perform in such a way as to appeal particularly to the minds of the elite. When this is the case, a *waki* play<sup>29</sup> is unlikely to be entirely successful. All the same, it is crucially important because, above all, you have to appeal to the expectations of the most important members of the audience.

Nonetheless, if your audience has already settled down and has by itself created an expectant silence, you can hardly go wrong. Even so, it's no small matter to diagnose the audience's readiness for the performance unless you are well experienced in the business of prediction.<sup>6</sup>

Also, things can be quite different in an evening performance. In the evening, you begin later, so of course, the audience will be more settled. That being the case, a play that would work well in second place on a daytime program should be put first on the evening program. But if the first piece of the evening gets bogged down, the performance won't get back on track, and you will need a finely honed performance of a high-quality play. In the evening, if your audience

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26. A room immediately adjacent to the *hashigakari*. Actors wait there for their cues to go on-stage and, today, may do some last-minute costuming there.

27. The *issei* is a particular song form in a noncongruent rhythm with the metrical pattern 5-7-5/7-5 (sometimes with an additional 5-7/5-7). See the glossary.

28. In Zeami's view, a particular occasion calls for a particular musical mode or set of notes and pitch conventions. These vary according to the time of day and season of the year and other considerations. See a further consideration of this in *A Mirror to the Flower*.

29. When Zeami speaks of a "*waki* play," he means a play that is appropriate to perform directly after (lit., "alongside") the ritual opening of a performance, which would normally occur with *Shikisanban* or, as it is called today, *Okina*. In modern parlance, the term *waki nō* is somewhat stricter than this, but there is a significant overlap between Zeami's usage and modern usage.

seems unsettled, they will quiet down right away with the *issei*. For this reason, it's the latter part of a performance that is most advantageous during the day, but the beginning of the performance that is best during the evening. If it's too quiet at the beginning of such a performance, you'll have trouble finding the right time to recover.

A secret principle<sup>7</sup> states that in all things you should know that consummation comes where yin and yang meet in balance. The essence of daytime is yang. Therefore, your strategy is yin, in that you aim to perform with restraint. To give birth to yin in a time of yang is what it means to balance yin and yang. This is how to begin a performance that will eventually lead to a successful consummation. This is the frame of mind that enables the audience to see the interest in a performance. But since evening is yin, when you translate your vitality directly into a good performance and bring the flower into blossom in people's minds, that is yang. This creates a consummation in which yang is matched to the yin of evening. Using the same rationale, if you try to put yang with yang, or yin with yin, you won't achieve a balance, and you are unlikely to bring the performance to consummation. What is interesting without this consummation? Sometimes from time to time even during the day, the audience may, for whatever reason, grow too settled and somber; then you should realize that yin has come into its time, and you should put your mind to work to keep the performance from bogging down. Although the day may sometimes be overtaken by yin, it is quite unlikely that the night will be overtaken by yang. This, I suppose, must be what it means to predict the outcome of a performance.

Q: How is one to judge *jo-ha-kyū*<sup>30</sup> in performance?

A: This is easy to judge. There is *jo-ha-kyū* in all things; so, too, in *sarugaku*. You should judge it according to the expressive nature of the play in question.

First of all, at the beginning of a day of *sarugaku*, you should choose for the *waki* play something dignified and strictly faithful to its source that is not too detailed, in which the song and movement are in a familiar mode of expression; and you should perform it confidently. It should, first of all, exemplify *shiuigen*<sup>31</sup> and thus be auspicious. No matter how fine the *waki* play is, if it does not show *shiuigen*, it is not likely to succeed. Even if the play is not quite first rate, as long as it entails

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30. *Jo-ha-kyū* provides the overall structure for *nō* and is later discussed extensively by Zeami. See also ZS, esp. pp. 50-51, 83-84, 273, 274.

31. This is first instance of Zeami's use of the word *shiuigen* (mod. J. *shūgen*), an important class of *sarugaku* performance that has formal as well as thematic and philosophical consequences. See the introduction.

*shiugen*, there should be no problem. This is because it is for the *jo*. For the second or third piece of the day, you should do a good play in a mode of expression you have mastered. In particular, since the finale<sup>8</sup> must be fast, you should pack it with a variety of stage business.

Also, for the first play on a subsequent day, you should do something whose mode of expression is different from that of the first play on the previous day. You should think about the best place for a tragic play somewhere in the middle of the performance on a subsequent day and perform it then.<sup>32</sup>

Q: What about a winning strategy in competitive *sarugaku*?

A: This is of great importance. First, in order to create a contrast, you must have a diverse repertory and perform plays whose mode of expression is different from your rivals'. When I said in the preface that you should gain some familiarity with poetry, this is what I meant. A play won't turn out just as you intend when someone else performs it, no matter how expert he may be. When the play is one you composed yourself, then the language and the stage business are all part of the plan. Accordingly, if one of the performers has a facility with language, it should be easy for him to compose a play. This is the very life of our vocation.

No matter how expert an actor may be, if he doesn't have any plays of his own, he's like a soldier who has gone to war without his weapons, even if in his own right he could match the force of a thousand. The test of an actor's skill, then, is readily apparent in competitive performance. When your rival performs a colorful play, you should perform a different sort of piece, quietly, with clear points of concentrated interest. In this way, if you do something different from your rival, then no matter how good his performance is, you won't lose to him by much. And if your performance turns out well, then you are certain to win.

Nonetheless, with regard to the actual performance, you should distinguish among first-rate, second-rate, and third-rate plays. We can call those plays good that are faithful to their source, have something fresh about them, and, on top of that, display *yūgen* and have points of particular interest. When a good play is well performed and, moreover, succeeds, that should be accounted the best outcome. When a not particularly special play, faithful to its source and without any obvious faults, is well performed and succeeds, that is second best. When a hack piece is none-

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32. Zeami is referring here to a festival performance lasting several days. His term, *naki sarugaku* (tragic play), doesn't necessarily mean tragic in the classical sense. Literally it might be translated as "a crying play"—that is, one intended to draw the tears of the spectators. Such a play might well have a "happy ending," although it should have provoked sadness earlier.

theless well performed with great effort so that its weaknesses vis-à-vis its source are turned to your advantage, that is third best.

- Q: There is something I don't understand in this regard. Sometimes an inexperienced young actor wins in competitive performance against an actor with long experience, even a famous actor. I don't understand this.
- A: This is none other than the transitory flower of those under thirty that I talked about earlier. Once the flower of an old actor is gone and he has become old-fashioned, then sometimes the younger actor may prevail through the flower of novelty. A real connoisseur will discern that this is so. I suppose what it comes down to in a case like this is a competition in judgment between a connoisseur and an amateur.

There is, though, something worth noting here. It's unlikely that the flower of a young actor, no matter who he may be, will prevail over an actor who has not lost his flower, even after the age of fifty. But sometimes a fairly good actor will be defeated because he has lost his flower. Take a look at a tree, no matter how celebrated a tree, out of its flowering season. Then look at a mongrel cherry with a single layer of petals when it's just begun to blossom here and there. When you think of this example, you can see why the flower of a single morning might win in competition.

What is important is that the flower is the very life of performance in our vocation, and it is a serious mistake for an old actor simply to depend on his past celebrity, completely unaware that his flower is gone. Someone who doesn't understand how the flower works, even though he can play lots of different roles, is like someone who gathers all sorts of plants to put on display out of season. In form and color, each flower among a vast number of trees and plants is unique; what's the same for all is that it's their flowers that our minds regard as interesting. The actor who has brought a particular kind of flower to its fullest will be famous a long time for that particular flower, even though he is unable to play a variety of roles. So unless he has found a solution to the problem of how he appears to his audience, someone who thinks he has a great many flowers in his own sensibility will be like a tree in bloom out in the hinterlands or a wild plum hidden in a thicket.

Also, even "the experts" offer many different levels of skill. No matter how expert and celebrated an actor may be, if he hasn't grasped the problem of the flower, then even though he may get by as "an expert," he is unlikely to hold on to his flower later. But an actor who has a good grasp of the problem of the flower will keep that flower even when his facility in performance declines. As long as the flower is still there, he will be able to do something interesting throughout his life. And so it is that no matter who the young actor might be, he is unlikely to beat an actor for whom this true flower persists.

Q: In performance, surprisingly mediocre actors are nonetheless recognized as really very good at one thing or another. When expert actors don't do this particular thing, is it because they can't do it or because they shouldn't do it?

A: In all matters, some people have a certain kind of proficiency and are recognized for it. Sometimes others, even though they have attained a superior artistic rank, are unable to manage this particular thing. But this applies only to relatively expert actors. But how could a truly great actor, one who is both expert in the techniques of performance and has made the fullest use of his creativity, fail in any of his aims? Of course, not one actor in ten thousand is both expert in the techniques of performance and has also made the fullest use of his creativity, that is because of complacency and a failure to use that creativity.

Now even the expert have their faults, and even the mediocre have their strengths. Nobody really sees this. Even the person in question doesn't know it. The talented actor depends on his name and conceals himself in his accomplishment; he doesn't know his weak points. Since the mediocre actor doesn't have creativity in the first place and doesn't recognize his weaknesses, he also will fail to discern whatever strengths he may command. So both expert and mediocre actors should seek out the opinions of others, each for his own part. But of course, someone who has already mastered performance and made the fullest use of his creativity already knows this.

No matter how laughable an actor may be, if an expert sees some good point in his performance, he should learn it. This is a strategy of the first order. If, on the other hand, the expert actor recognizes a good point in the poor actor's performance but out of a sense of arrogance refuses to imitate someone less skilled than himself, he will be hampered in his own mind and will probably be unable to discern the faults in his own performance. This must be because he has faltered in his perseverance. Also, if the poor actor can discern the weak points in a talented actor's performance, he may say to himself, "If even an expert performer like that has such weak points, then my own performance must have all the more, novice that I am"; if then, with a healthy respect for this, he talks to others and puts his creativity to work, committing himself seriously to training, he is likely to make rapid progress. But if this actor just thinks to himself complacently, "I wouldn't do something awkward like that," he isn't likely to have a clear grasp of his own strengths. Not knowing his strengths, he may think that his weak points are good, too. In this way, he will grow older, but his performance will not improve. This is how a poor actor thinks.

Therefore, if a talented actor grows complacent, his performance will decline. Isn't this even more the case for the complacency of a not

particularly effective actor? Think about this problem carefully. Put your creativity to work on this: the talented actor is the model for the mediocre actor; the mediocre is the model for the talented. That the talented actor should incorporate the strong points of the mediocre actor in his repertory makes eminently good sense. By recognizing even the weak points of someone else, you make him your model, how much more so by recognizing his strong points! That's what I mean when I say, be resolute in training, don't be contentious.

Q: How is one to understand the distinctions of rank in performance?

A: This is readily apparent to the eyes of connoisseurs. Although rises in rank are generally a matter of layer upon layer of experience in performance, surprisingly there are actors about ten years old who already show a naturally high rank in their manner of expression. But without training, such natural rank is wasted. Typically, the acquisition of rank comes as a result of experience and training. Innate rank is, in contrast, a matter of "stature."<sup>9</sup> What we refer to as "grandeur" is yet something else. Most people assume that "stature" and "grandeur" are the same. What I mean by "grandeur" is the appearance of both gravity and vitality. One might alternatively say that "grandeur" has a broad and general meaning. "Rank" and "stature" are somewhat different. There is, for example, a thing such as innate *yūgen*. This entails "rank." But some actors with "stature" do not have the slightest *yūgen*. This is "stature" without *yūgen*.

There is something else a novice should think about. It is not effective to strive for rank in your training. Not only will you fail to secure a higher rank, but what you have already secured in training may decline. In the end, rank and stature are matters of innate capacity, and if you do not have them, there is probably nothing you can do about that. Again, sometimes once you have put in adequate time and cleaned off the grime, rank will come by itself. What I mean by training are the models on which skills such as singing, Dance, Sparring, and dramatic imitation are developed to their greatest capacity.

Having pondered this problem for some time, I have come to wonder whether *yūgen* is not a matter of innate ability. Is a rank of great virtuosity a matter of long experience? This is worth thinking about over and over again.

Q: What does it mean to speak of the stage business matching up with the text?

A: This is a detail in training. It's a matter of the stage actions used in performance. It's also a matter of posture and the movement of the body.

You should, for example, direct your mind to accord with the chanted text. When the text says look, you should look; when it says reach out or draw back your arm, you should reach out or draw your arm back accordingly; and when it says “listen” or “a sound is heard,” you should lend your ear; if you use your body thus in accordance with each action as specified, you will perform the stage actions as a matter of course. First, move your body; second, move your arms; and third, move your legs. You should plan your movements in accordance with the melody and their visual appeal. It is difficult to make this clear in writing. You should learn in accord with what you see when the time comes.

Once you have made the most of your training in this matter of matching the movements and the text, the singing and the actions of performance will reflect a single understanding. In short, when I say that the singing and the actions of the performance reflect a single understanding, I mean that you understand the idea. If it’s a question of mastery, then this must be it. This is a secret. Although the text and the movements occupy separate concerns in the actor’s mind, an actor who can make them reflect a single understanding should be considered an unsurpassed master. This makes for a truly strong performance.

Many people also confuse strength and weakness. It’s odd that people should understand a performance lacking elegance to be a strong performance or judge that a weak performance exhibits *yūgen*. There must be actors who don’t lose their attractiveness, no matter how often one sees them. This is strength. The actor who appears to be in flower no matter how often one sees him has *yūgen*. The actor, then, who has made the most of matching the text with the action reflects the singing and actions in a single understanding; he is an actor who has naturally made the most of both strength and *yūgen*.

Q: It is common in criticism to hear one refer to *shiore*.<sup>10</sup> What does this refer to?

A: It is not possible to express this in words. The sense of it just doesn’t come across. All the same, there certainly is a mode of expression called *shiore*. The sense of it, too, is entirely dependent on the flower. Think about it carefully and you’ll see that it is not something you can attain through training or with stage business. Is it, then, something you come to know once you have brought the flower to its fullest expression? If it is, then someone who has brought the flower to its fullest expression in one regard should have the experience of know-

ing *shiore* even if he hasn’t done so with every sort of dramatic imitation.

Therefore, what we have referred to as *shiore* should be ranked even higher than the flower. Without the flower, there would be no point to *shiore*. It would simply be sogginess. What is interesting is for the flower to be *shiore*. What interest would there be in a plant or tree subject to *shiore* when it has never been in bloom? Now, since giving expression to the flower is itself very difficult and since this matter of “*shiore*” is considered above that, then it must be something even more demanding. That being the case, it is hard to explain, even with a metaphor.

There is an old poem that reads,

Usugiri no magaki no hana no asajimeri  
Aki ha yufube to tare ka ihiken<sup>33</sup>

Bedewed by morning,  
a flower in a faint autumnal mist  
upon a plaited fence:  
who said  
the best of autumn’s in the dusk?

Another reads,

Iro miede utsurofu mono ha yo no naka no  
Hito no kokoro no hana ni zo arikeru<sup>34</sup>

What alters in this world,  
without betraying itself to sight  
is—now I understand—  
the flower  
of a person’s mind.

I suppose the tone of *shiore* must be something like this. This is a problem to ponder in your mind.

Q: It is clear from reading these notes that the first and foremost concern in performance is to know the flower. It is of crucial importance. It also is open to question. How is one to comprehend this?

33. Fujiwara no Kiyosuke (1104–1177), SKKS 340.

34. Ono no Komachi (fl. ca. 850), KKS 797, also quoted in the *Kana* preface.

A: This is the most significant of the ultimate accomplishments in our vocation. Every matter of great difficulty, every secret, has its rationale in this.

I believe most of this matter is treated in detail in the previous notes on training and dramatic imitation. The temporary flower, the flower of the voice, the flower of *yūgen*—these are apparent to people's view, but since they are flowers specific to particular techniques of performance, in time they will scatter, just as real blossoms do. Since they are short-lived, as blossoms are, cases of renown throughout the realm are few indeed. But by both coming into bloom and scattering, the authentic flower should be in the control of the mind. In such a case it is long lasting. What should one do to understand this? I believe this is treated in the separate account of oral instructions.

You should not fret too much over this. If, from the age of seven, you have carefully thought about and understood with discrimination the notes on training through the years and the varieties of dramatic imitation, have given your all to performance, and made the fullest use of your creativity, then you will know the kind of flower that doesn't fade. The mind's mastery of the roles of performance is none other than the seed for the flower. So if you are to know the flower, you must first know the seed. The flower must be the mind, and the seed, the techniques of performance.

Someone of old<sup>35</sup> said,

The ground of mind holds many seeds;  
each of them sprouts in rains far and wide.  
In suddenly awakening to the sense of the flower,  
the fruit of *bodhi* will ripen and abide.

Now what I have done here is to record the general meaning of the things that my late father told me, things I subsequently held in my mind for perpetuating our house and revering the art; it is not in order to rival the erudition of others that I have done this but out of

.....  
35. The sixth patriarch of Zen (or Chan) Buddhism, Huineng (638–713). The poem that follows is a *ge* (hymn) by him from the Platform Sutra 49, where it appears after the quotation of five hymns by past worthies. (It also is quoted in *Wujia zhengzong zan* [五家正宗宗] and *Jingde zhuandeng lu* [景德伝燈録].) The *Konparu-bon* and *Sōsetsu-bon* texts of *Transmitting the Flower* provide Japanese glosses in *kana*, but they are not thought to be contemporary with Zeami's quotation of the poem. There are variations in the third verse, and its meaning is not entirely clear. One version reads 自吾[*sic*, for 悟] 花情種, translated by Philip Yampolsky, from a Dunhuang manuscript as "When yourself you have awakened to the living seed of the flower" (*The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1967], p. 178).

concern for the decline of our vocation, in its forgetfulness of the censure of the world at large. It is only to leave behind precepts for my descendants.<sup>11</sup>

Here above, the various notes of *Transmitting the Flower Through Effects and Attitudes*.  
Ōei 7 [1400]:4:13 signed, Junior Fifth Rank, Subordinate,  
Saemon Dayū, Hada no Motokiyo<sup>36</sup>

## DIVINE PURPORT

• *Sarugaku* had its beginning in the age of the gods, when the Great Goddess Amateru secluded herself behind the boulder door in the heavens;<sup>37</sup> she cast the whole world into darkness, so the eight hundred myriad gods, gathering together on Mount Ama-no-kaguyama, performed *kagura* music and for the first time ever used a comic performance<sup>12</sup> in order to catch her august attention. Ama no Uzume no Mikoto came forth from among the group and sang and danced with a consecrated branch from the *sakaki* tree in her hand, her voice raised high, prancing and stomping in the light of bonfires, in order to provoke a divine possession. Secretly listening to her voice, the Great Goddess opened the boulder door a little. The land grew light once again. The faces of the many gods shone white.<sup>13</sup> The festivities on this occasion were, so they say, the beginning of *sarugaku*. A detailed account is to be transmitted orally.

• In the land where Buddha lived, on the occasion of the consecration of the Jetavāna Monastery built by the rich man Sudatta, the Buddha Śākyamuni was preaching a sermon. Devadatta,<sup>38</sup> in the company of ten thousand heathens,

.....  
36. In addition to a date (including its zodiacal identification), the signature lists a court rank, Junior Fifth Rank, Subordinate, and post, Saemon Dayū (orth. Dayufu). These were not actually awarded by the royal court but by the priests of Kōfukuji or Tōnomine Temple, as was the practice for celebrated *sarugaku* performers. The name Hada no Motokiyo is mentioned here only in the *Notes*, although there is one mention of the given name Motokiyo by itself in *Conversations on Sarugaku*, Zeami's artistic memoir, as well. On Zeami's names, see the note at the end of appendix 3.

The formality of this list signals that these three books of *Transmitting the Flower* were collected as a single unit at this point in Zeami's career, only later augmented by "Divine Purport," "Ultimate Achievement," "Written Preparations for the Flower," and "Separate Pages of Oral Instructions." For more detail on the formation of *Transmitting the Flower*, see appendix 2.

37. The story is famously recounted in *Kojiki* 1:17, but Zeami would not have been familiar with it there, drawing instead on the *Nihon shoki* or texts derived from it.

38. This paragraph mentions a couple of the Buddha's foremost disciples and a supporter as well as a contemporary troublemaker: Sudatta was Buddha's benefactor and patron. He purchased a prince's garden for him and built a monastery there. Devadatta was Śākyamuni's jealous cousin and caused him various troubles, eventually inciting the assassination of his father. Ananda was a beloved and devoted disciple who is credited with collecting Buddha's sermons to



made such a great commotion dancing with festooned branches and sheaves of bamboo grass that it became difficult to continue the consecration. Buddha cast his gaze toward Śāriputra who, thus fortified by the Buddha's strength, prepared a performance with drums and songs at the back entrance to the temple, and there, through the ingenuity of Ānanda, the wisdom of Śāriputra, and the eloquence of Pūrṇa, they performed sixty-six acts of dramatic imitation so that the heathens, hearing the sound of the drums and flute, gathered at the back door and settled down to watch. Given this respite, the Buddha continued with the consecration. Our vocation found its Indian origins in this.

• In the land of Japan during the reign of Emperor Kinmei,<sup>39</sup> there was a great flood along the Hatsuse River in Yamato, and a large jar came floating down the river. A courtier caught hold of the jar near the cedar *torii* at Miwa Shrine. There was a baby inside. He was gentle and quiet and a perfect jewel. Since this child had fallen from heaven, the event was announced at court. That night, in His Majesty's dream, the baby spoke, saying, "I am the reincarnation of Qin Shihuang of the Great Realm of China.<sup>40</sup> I have a certain affinity with the realm of the sun and am manifest here now." His Majesty took this for a miracle and summoned him to court. As the baby grew older, his intelligence surpassed that of other people, so at age fifteen, he was made a minister and the surname Shin was bestowed upon him. The graph for Shin is also pronounced Hada;<sup>41</sup> indeed, Hada no Kōkatsu was this very child.<sup>42</sup>

When there were troubles abroad in the land, Prince Shōtoku, in accordance with precedent from the Age of the Gods and from the Land of Buddha, called upon this Kōkatsu to perform sixty-six acts of dramatic imitation and

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 create the Buddhist canon. Śāriputra was reputed to be among the most intelligent of Buddha's great disciples. Pūrṇa was renowned for his eloquence.

Neither Zeami's immediate source for this account nor his basis for tying it to the origins of *sarugaku* is clear, but the story is told in "Sudatsu shōja wo okosu" (How Sudatta Erected the Monastery), in *Gengū in'en gyō* (*The Sutra of Stories About the Wise and Foolish*), and mentioned in *Taiheiki* 24.

It is likely that Zeami was familiar with the exquisite wooden statues of Ānanda, Śāriputra, and Pūrṇa at Kōfukuji in Nara.

39. Emperor Kinmei is the legendary twenty-ninth Heavenly Sovereign of Japan, reputed to have lived from 510 to 570. Reference to his high regard for Hada no Ōtsuchi is made in the *Nihon shoki*, "Kinmei tennō sokui zenki." Presumably Ōtsuchi's qualities have been transferred here to Kōkatsu.

40. Qin Shihuang was the (in)famous first emperor of the short-lived Qin dynasty (221–206 B.C.E.), associated with unifying China but also considered a cruel ruler and a burner of books.

41. The graph 秦 is pronounced *shin* in Sino-Japanese. The native Japanese reading for the graph is *hada* or *hata*.

42. Hada no Kōkatsu (orth. *Kaukatsu* or *Kawakatsu*) was a legendary figure reputed to have served the sovereign Suiko and to have founded Hōryūji temple around a statue entrusted to him by Prince Regent Shōtoku.

likewise had sixty-six masks made, which he gave to Kōkatsu. These acts were performed in the Great Shishinden Hall of the Tachibana Palace. The realm came to order and the country became peaceful. These were *kagura*<sup>43</sup> performances, so with a view toward posterity, Prince Shōtoku took the graph *shin* from the word *kagura* and removed the radical, leaving only the phonetic element.<sup>44</sup> Read in the context of the calendar, this element is pronounced "sarū," so Shōtoku named the performance *sarugaku* because it "gives voice to" (申) "enjoyment" (樂). This is also because it derives from *kagura*.

This Kōkatsu served the sovereigns Kinmei, Bidatsu, Yōmei, Shushun, and Suiko as well as Prince Shōtoku.<sup>45</sup> He transmitted his artistry to his descendants, and because changelings like Kōkatsu do not leave behind physical remains, he set off in a dugout canoe from the Naniwa coast in the province of Settsu and drifted onto the Western Sea wherever the wind might take him. He arrived at the coast of Shakushi in the province of Harima. When the people on the coast pulled his boat from the water and looked inside, what they found was different in shape from a human being. He possessed various people and made wonders manifest. The people therefore held him in reverence as a god, and the province was prosperous. They called him Great Luminous Deity Taikō, writing 大荒 (greatly vigorous) for Taikō. The potency of his divine power is apparent even in the present age. He is an avatar of the deva Bishamon.<sup>46</sup> When it became necessary for Prince Shōtoku to subdue the traitorous minister Mononobe no Moriya, it was through the miraculous skill in means<sup>47</sup> of this Kōkatsu that Moriya was brought to defeat, so they say.<sup>48</sup>

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 43. *Kagura* is a diverse body of ancient performance in Japan aimed at placating or summoning the *kami* (gods). By the "middle ages," it had reached into the remote countryside with various kinds of religious performances and was closely linked to early *sarugaku*. Several varieties of *kagura* persist in modern Japan, and of the music performed in one of these (at least), is a sort that is closely related to the *kagura mai* performed in contemporary nō.

44. This lore regarding the name *sarugaku* is dependent on the visual structure of the graphs used to write *kagura*, 神樂. The first graph should be split, and the right half, 申, read in accord with its zodiacal significance as *sarū*. This is then combined with the other graph from the word *kagura*, and the result is 申樂, pronounced *sarugaku*. Zeami reinterprets the word *sarugaku*, which had normally been written 猿樂—that is, "monkey music"—for the more favorable reading of "music that gives humble voice." Although 申 is popularly understood to mean "monkey" in the context of the East Asian zodiac, it also is used for the humilific or formal verb "to speak" (*mōsu*, orth. *mausu*).

45. Sovereigns Kinmei (510–570), Bidatsu (538–585), Yōmei (d. 587), and Shushun (usually read Shushun, d. 592).

46. The deva Bishamon (Tamonten; Skt. *Vaiśravaṇa*) is one of the guardians of the four directions, specifically responsible for the northern sphere.

47. Zeami uses the explicitly Buddhist word *hōben* (Skt. *upāya* [skill in means]) here.

48. Mononobe no Moriya (d. 587) was a powerful member of the entourage of the sovereign Yōmei and opposed the introduction of Buddhism to Japan. He was defeated by the pro-Buddhist camp of Soga no Umako and died in battle.

• During the reign of Emperor Murakami in Heian, the Capital of Peace and Tranquillity, *The Records of Sarugaku and Ennen*, written by Prince Shōtoku, came to His Majesty's august attention;<sup>49</sup> they arose, first, in the Age of the Gods and the Land of Buddha and, using the crazy phrases and ornamented diction, were transmitted from Yuezhi<sup>50</sup> and Shindan<sup>51</sup> to Japan, the Realm of the Sun, all the while preserving a karmic affinity with the praise of Buddha and the turning of the Dharma Wheel, quelling demonic connections and attracting happiness and divine succor. When the dances of *sarugaku* were performed, the nation was at peace, the people tranquil, and lives long; since this was revealed truth in Prince Shōtoku's very hand, Emperor Murakami determined that *sarugaku* be used as prayer throughout the realm. The descendant to whom this Kōkatsu had transmitted the arts of *sarugaku* was Hada no Ujijasu. It was he who performed the sixty-six *sarugaku* pieces in the Shishinden Hall. At that time, the acting governor of Ki was a man of high intelligence. He was the husband of Ujijasu's younger sister, and he performed *sarugaku* with him.

Thereafter, it proved impossible to perform all sixty-six pieces in a single day, so they selected from among them and settled on these three: the Inatsumi no Okina (Okina mask), the Yonatsumi no Okina (Sanbasō), and Chichi no Jō.<sup>52</sup> The *Shikisanban* that we perform today are these. They are patterned after the Three Bodies of Buddha, namely, the Dharmakāya, the Sambhogakāya, and the Nirmāṇakāya.<sup>53</sup> An oral transmission regarding the *Shikisanban* can be found in separate written instructions.

Counting from Hada no Ujijasu, the line extends twenty-nine generations to its distant descendants, Mitsutarō<sup>54</sup> and Konparu.<sup>55</sup> This is the Emai

49. Probably an imaginary source, although Emperor Murakami (926–967, r. 946–967) was an actual sovereign.

50. That is, the Kushan empire in what is the extreme western extent of modern China.

51. An old word for China, from the Sanskrit *cīnasthāna*.

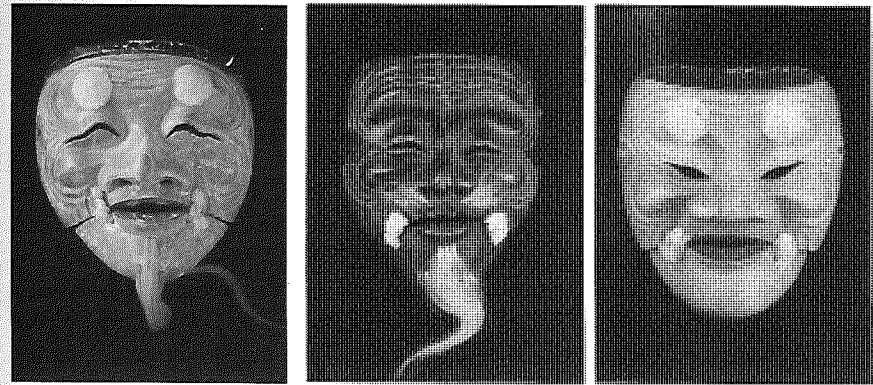
52. Inatsumi no Okina (more simply, Okina), Yonatsumi no Okina (Sanbasō), and Chichi no Jō (mod. J. Chichi no Jō) were the three old men who originally appeared in the ritual play *Shikisanban*. The earliest masks used for these characters predate the development of *sarugaku* and are the earliest direct examples of nō masks.

In modern performance, the character Chichi no Jō no longer appears but has been replaced by another role, that of a young man known as Senzai.

53. Dharmakāya, Sambhogakāya, and Nirmāṇakāya are the Sanskrit names of three aspects of a buddha's existence according to Mahāyāna scholasticism. Generally, the first (J. *hosshin*, 法身) represents the ultimate or absolute reality of the Buddha, the second (J. *hōjin*, 報身) a manifestation of him in a paradise, and the third (J. *ōjin*, 應見), his earthly and salvific form.

54. Mitsutarō (orth. Mutsutarau) is the twenty-seventh head of the Enman'i, or Emai, guild (orth. Yenman'yi-za) and the son of Bishaō Gonnokami (orth. Bishawau Gonnokami). His performance of demon roles is mentioned in *Conversations on Sarugaku*, ZZ, and, in translation, Erika de Poorter, *Zeami's Talks on Sarugaku: An Annotated Translation of the Sarugaku Dangi, with an Introduction on Zeami Motokiyo* (Amsterdam: Gieben, 1986).

55. Konparu here refers to Konparu Yasaburō (orth. Yasaburau), son of Mitsutarō's younger brother Konparu Gonnokami and father of Zenchiku.



Three masks for the play *Shikisanban*: (left to right) Okina, Sanbasō, and Chichi no Jō. In Zeami's account of the origins of *sarugaku*, he mentions three plays chosen to represent a total of sixty-six plays supposedly performed in the distant past by Hada no Ujijasu. Those three plays are conflated with three roles and three masks: Inatsumi no Okina (or, simply, Okina), Yonatsumi no Okina (or Sanbasō), and Chichi no Jō. The first two mask types continue to be used in *Shikisanban* as performed on the modern nō stage, but the role of Chichi no Jō has been taken over by a character who does not wear a mask. Some old Chichi no Jō masks, nonetheless, still exist. All three masks are listed as Important Cultural Properties by the Japanese government. The Sanbasō was carved by Nikkō, and the other two by Miroku. Although little is known about these mask carvers (reputed to have lived in the tenth century), both are mentioned in *Conversations on Sarugaku* and are counted among the best carvers in the tradition for these masks. (Photographs from the collection of Kanze Bunko Foundation)

guild in Yamato. This house has inherited three items from Ujijasu, a demon mask carved by Prince Shōtoku, the Kasuga portrait of His Divine Visage, and a relic of the Buddha.

• In the current generation, on the occasion of the Vimalakīrti Lectures at Kōbukuji in Nara,<sup>56</sup> *ennen* dances are performed in the refectory, and rituals are performed in the lecture hall. This is to mollify the heathen and pacify demonic activity. At this time, the Vimalakīrti Sutra is expounded in front of the refectory. This is based on auspicious precedent at the Jetavāna Monastery.

56. The Vimalakīrti Lectures were held annually for a week beginning on the sixteenth day of the tenth month at Kōbukuji (called Kōfukuji today) temple in Nara. They consisted of a full reading of the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa Sutra, a Mahāyāna scripture expounding nonduality through the words and deeds of the celebrated lay saint Vimalakīrti.

Kasuga (mentioned immediately after) and Kōfukuji are considered separate institutions today, the former a Shinto shrine and the latter a Buddhist temple. But when they were founded and during Zeami's day, they were a single institution with both Shinto and Buddhist significance as well as political weight, as the tutelary shrine/temple of the Fujiwara clan.

The services to the gods at Kasuga and Kōbukuji in the province of Yamato are performed in the temples there on the second and fifth days of the second month and comprise the beginning of religious observances for the year for the four *sarugaku* troupes.<sup>57</sup> They are prayers for peace in the realm.

- The four *sarugaku* guilds responsible for religious services at Kasuga in the provinces of Yamato: Tobi, Yūzaki, Sakado, Emai.<sup>58</sup>
- The three *sarugaku* guilds responsible for religious services at Hie in the province of Ōmi: Yamashina, Shimosaka, Hie.<sup>59</sup>
- At Ise, two guilds responsible for *shushi*<sup>60</sup> performances.
- The three *sarugaku* guilds participating in the New Year's Rectification Prayers at Hosshōji:<sup>61</sup> Shinza (resident in Kawachi),<sup>62</sup> Honza (Tanba), Hōjōji (Settsu). These three guilds are likewise responsible for religious services at Kamo and Sumiyoshi.

### ULTIMATE ACHIEVEMENT

Now, I have written down the various notes of *Transmitting the Flower Through Effects and Attitudes* in large part for the instruction of our de-

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57. "Troupe" is my translation of the Japanese *za*, a term for the professional organizations of artists and craftspeople characterizing the economy of artistic production in medieval Japan. The *za* bears some resemblance to a guild. Many of the arts of medieval Japan are carried on professionally by *za* and are thus termed *za no geijutsu* (arts of the *za*).

58. The four *za* of *sarugaku* performance that arose in Yamato and are identified as the progenitors of the oldest schools of *shite* acting are Tobi for the Hōshō, Yūzaki for the Kanze, Sakado for the Kongō, and Emai for the Konparu. The fifth modern school is the Kita, an offshoot of the Kongō that became independent in the early seventeenth century.

59. The three Ōmi (orth. Afumi) *za* that were active in Zeami's day. The Yamashina and Shimosaka *za* were resident in the so-named areas of modern-day Nagahama City. The Hie (orth. Hiye) *za* was located near the Hie Shrine on the western shore of Lake Biwa. It counted among its members the celebrated actor Inuō Dōami (orth. Inuwau Dauami), about whom Zeami speaks in *The Flower in . . . Yet Doubling Back* and *Conversations on Sarugaku*, in ZZ, pp. 261–66, passim. After Inuō, all the Ōmi *za* seem to have declined in popularity, and by the late sixteenth century, their more capable performers had been absorbed by the various Yamato *za*. See Omote's detailed note, in ZZ, pp. 434–35n.18.

60. *Shushi sarugaku* originated in performances of an apotropaic or esoteric character by priests at the Tōdaiji and Kōfukuji temples, but by Zeami's time, the magical elements in the performances seem to have diminished in place of a greater emphasis on entertainment.

61. Hosshōji temple was located in eastern Kyoto, in the Okazaki District, but the temple fell into disuse in the mid-fourteenth century. The three *za* mentioned here by Zeami were apparently the most important in Kyoto in days before Zeami. The Shinza (not to be confused with the *dengaku* Shinza) was based in Settsu Province, in modern Osaka. The Honza (also called the Yata *za*) was based in modern-day Kameoka, and Hōjōji (orth. Hohujauji) of Settsu Province was based in modern-day Ibaraki City. Again, see Omote, in ZZ, pp. 434–35n.18.

62. Zeami is mistaken here. The Shinza was actually from Settsu. See ZZ, p. 41n.

scendants, despite my anxiety that they come to outsiders' attention, but my fundamental intention in doing so comes from my observation of the members of our vocation who neglect the disciplines of our art and occupy themselves with unrelated activities, and, when they do chance to turn to our proper art, they forget its source and lose sight of its course, treating it as merely the opportunity for a cheap laugh,<sup>14</sup> tainted as they are by an ephemeral wish for celebrity. I wonder whether the Way isn't already in decay and constantly feel sorrow. In any case, if you devote yourself to the vocation and hold the art in high esteem, without selfish interest, then how could you fail to achieve its benefits? Although this art entails handing on the effects of tradition, there is also, in particular, something about it that stems from individual capacity, which is therefore beyond words. I call it *Transmitting the Flower Through Effects and Attitudes* because it is a matter of the flower's being transmitted from mind to mind through the attainment of its effects.

In general terms, the acting styles of Yamato and Ōmi<sup>63</sup> are different. In Ōmi, they emphasize the realm of *yūgen* and relegate dramatic imitation to second position, making expressive grace fundamental. In Yamato, it's dramatic imitation we emphasize, maintaining as broad a repertory as possible but in such a way that *yūgen* is apparent in our acting style. Nonetheless, a truly talented actor lacks nothing, no matter what his acting style. Concentrating all one's attention on a single style of acting is the approach of an actor who has not really arrived at full mastery.

In Yamato, therefore, the acting style takes dramatic imitation and discursive ingenuity<sup>15</sup> as fundamental, and we specialize in roles of impressive bearing or in the exercise of demonic fury; these are the kinds of roles at which we are considered masters, and the majority of our effort goes toward them; but at the height of his fame, my late father was celebrated for his acting style on the basis of roles like the play with Shizuka's dance<sup>16</sup> or the dramatic imitation of a deranged woman at the great *nenbutsu* recitation at Saga;<sup>17</sup> it was because of this kind of acting that he gained fame and appreciation and was known throughout the land. Nothing is more important than *yūgen* in an acting style like this.

Also, the expressive manner of *dengaku*<sup>64</sup> is a particularly distinctive, and all audiences are accustomed to think that it doesn't measure up to the criti-

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63. Yamato Province is the area around Nara, and Ōmi Province is the area around Lake Biwa.

64. By Zeami's time, *dengaku* was a performing art much like *sarugaku*, although its origins were in music and dance associated with planting and agricultural activities. It was partially professionalized and came to include various feats of strength and acrobatics.

cal standards of expressiveness in *sarugaku*, but Itchū of the Honza,<sup>65</sup> who in recent times was considered a veritable saint in this vocation, offered a broadly diverse repertory and was known for his portrayals of demons and gods and the exercise of demonic fury. Why, I've heard that there wasn't anything missing from his expressive manner. And it's true that time and time again my late father said that Itchū was his real master in regard to expressive manner.

Each person in his own way, whether out of arrogance or inability, learns only a single manner of expression and fails to understand the importance of diversity, and is averse to the expressiveness employed by other troupes. Actually though, these people are not so much averse to the other types of expression as they are arrogant because they haven't mastered them. Since they are unable to master the other styles, even though they may at one time have been recognized for their skill in one particular style, they will not be able to sustain a long-lasting flower and will not gain the recognition of the powerful. Those who have gained the recognition of the powerful because of their skill will have something interesting in whatever manner of expression they may choose. Although forms of expression and models for emulation are diverse and varied, interest is common to all of them. It must be the arousal of this interest that is the flower. This is something that is not missing in Yamato, Ōmi, or *dengaku*. Unless you are an actor who has control of this capacity for not missing something, you are not likely to win the recognition of the powerful.

In contrast, there are expert actors who, even though they haven't mastered every type of role, probably do command control of about seven out of every ten and who have, moreover, polished a particular style among these so well that it becomes a model for their students; these actors, too, may well become famous throughout the realm if they bring their creativity to bear. But if there is some aspect in which they remain insufficient, their reception will be mixed, depending on whether the audience is in the city or the country and whether it is discerning or not.

All told, there are many different ways to gain fame in performance. It may be difficult for the expert to satisfy the perceptions of an insensitive audience. The mediocre will not gain the approval of the connoisseur. Now it should not be a surprise that the mediocre cannot satisfy the expectations of the connoisseur. When it's a case of the expert's being unable to gain the approval of the insensitive, it's because the perceptions of the insensitive aren't up to the task, but all the same, a truly accomplished and creative actor should be able to perform in such a way that even the insensitive will re-

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65. The Honza was a *dengaku* troupe from the Shirakawa area of Kyoto and was, along with the Shinza in Nara, the representative *dengaku* troupe of the mid-fourteenth century. Itchū was its most famous actor and is discussed further in *Conversations in Sarugaku* and in Poorter, *Zeami's Talks on Sarugaku*.

gard the performance as interesting. We should regard an actor of such creativity and skill as a master of the flower. A performer who has truly risen to such a rank, no matter how old, will not prove inferior to the flower of youth. An actor like this who has attained such a rank is praised throughout the realm and regarded as interesting by everyone, even in the most distant and countrified places. An actor of such creativity is skilled in the full diversity of roles whether in Yamato or Ōmi—even, indeed, in the expressive manner of *dengaku*—all in accord with the preferences and expectations of the audience. I have written *Transmitting the Flower Through Effects and Attitudes* in order to make clear this fundamental insight regarding this endeavor.

That said, however, there's certainly no prospect for your performance if you neglect the model on which your own manner of expression is based. That surely makes for a weak actor. It is only in mastering the model for your own manner of expression that you will be able to understand the full range of acting styles. The actor who says that he has in mind the full range of acting styles and does not enter into the expressive manner of his own troupe not only fails to understand his own manner of expression but stands an even smaller chance of coming to a clear understanding of another manner of expression. For this reason, if your performance is weak, you will not have the flower for long. If you do not have the flower for long, that must be the same as not really knowing any manner of expression at all. For that reason, in the section on the flower in *Transmitting the Flower*, I said, "After you have given your all to a diverse repertory and made the fullest use of your creativity, then you will know the kind of flower that doesn't fade."<sup>18</sup>

With regard to secret matters,<sup>19</sup> the performing arts generally exist to mollify people's hearts and create excitement in the high and low; they are the foundation for long-term prosperity and increase, the means of gaining longevity. Indeed, it is said that all the vocations promote prosperity and longevity when fully mastered. When rising to the fullest rank and securing the family name a place in posterity, this art in particular gains the recognition of the powerful. This is long-term prosperity and increase.

There is, however, a fine point to consider here.<sup>20</sup> When an actor appears before people of discernment and intelligence, they respond appropriately to his mastery of artistic stature and rank, with no particular complication. The eyes of the dull, the rural, and the countrified may not have adequate sensitivity to appreciate such stature and rank. What should you do about this? This art is dependent on the affection and respect of the masses for the long-term prosperity of the troupe. For this reason, if you put too much emphasis on forms of expression that are difficult to access, you will fail to draw the appreciation of the people at large. Therefore, from time to time in certain places, your long-term prosperity will depend on your not forgetting your own initial intent as a beginner and performing in such a way as to appeal to the eyes of the dull. Carefully scrutinize the dynamics of interaction between

actor and audience, from the exalted aristocrats and great temples to the countryside and hinterlands (including festival occasions at various shrines): isn't it true that the actor who can perform in all these circumstances without disparagement is the real virtuoso with long-term prosperity? Therefore, no matter how expert you may be, if you lack the affection and respect of the masses in some circumstances, you cannot be called an actor of long-term prosperity and increase. That is why my late father performed the art in such a way that no matter how far away he was in the country, in no matter what remote corner of a mountain village, he retained sympathy for the frame of mind of the people there and made their attitudes his most important concern.

That said, however, the beginning actor should not become discouraged, thinking it too difficult to attain such mastery. You should take these notes to heart and use little by little the principles they contain, and put your personal capacity to work with your understanding of them and use your creativity.

For the most part, these notes are even more applicable to the careful consideration and creativity of the expert actor than to the beginner. I lament the fact that there are many who, even though they are actors of considerable attainment, because they rely on their own power and are bedazzled by their fame, don't have this as reference and fail to acquire long-term prosperity, despite their celebrity. Even though they may have skills, without creativity they won't be successful. To have skills, on the one hand, and to give your utmost creatively, on the other, is like holding onto both the seeds and the flower.

If by some chance, such an actor as has won the recognition of the powerful should, through circumstances over which he has no power, face a time when his success diminishes, then so long as the flower of appreciation from the rural and rustic has not disappeared, there is no danger of the vocation itself coming abruptly to an end. As long as the vocation has not ended, then surely there will come a time when he will again be successful in the realm at large.

• The discipline required for long-term prosperity and increase is completely in accord with the principles of the world at large, and if you cling to selfish advantage, then this above all else will have the effect of destroying your vocation. Long-term prosperity and increase will come to those devoted to the vocation. If instead your efforts go toward prosperity, then that will surely destroy your vocation. If your vocation is destroyed, then that's the end for prosperity as well, isn't it? Focus on the causal relationship in which integrity and clarity<sup>21</sup> lead to the blossoming of the wondrous flower,<sup>66</sup> replete with its myriad virtues.

What I have written in *Transmitting the Flower*, from "Training Through the Years" through its various notes, is not the result of my own personal

66. *Myōka* (orth. *myaukwa*) was an important term in Zeami's later treatises. This is its first appearance and indicates a level of marvel or wonder in performance.

erudition at all. It is what I have learned from my infancy onward into adulthood, through the power of my late father and the more than twenty years since, from what I managed to retain of the things I have seen and heard; I have done this for the sake of our vocation and our house, as a steward of this tradition—how could it be from merely private interest?

*In the ninth calendar year of Ōei [1402]:3:2  
hastening my brush to completion  
Zea (with seal)<sup>67</sup>*

## WRITTEN PREPARATIONS FOR THE FLOWER

• Writing plays is the very life of our vocation. Even if you don't have unusual erudition, use your ingenuity and you will be able to write a good play.

The overall feel of a play is apparent in the section on *jo-ha-kyū*. When writing plays to be performed at the beginning of the day, you should be strictly faithful to the sources and write in such a way that from the first line of the play, those sources are immediately recognizable to the audience. Write in a generally straightforward manner in order to start off the day's performance in a lively and colorful way; you need not take advantage of every last detail for presentation. Then, once you have gone further into the day's sequence of plays, write subtly, taking fullest advantage of every turn of phrase and every opportunity for visible presentation.

Specifically, if the title of the piece relates to a famous place or legendary site, you should probably use Chinese and Japanese poems about the place, familiar poems, in points of concentrated interest in the play. Don't squander key phrases in places irrelevant to the *shite*'s<sup>68</sup> lines or stage business. Try as you may, the audience will pay no attention to high points in a play, whether visual or aural, unless they are well presented. In fact, excitement stirs when interesting words from the troupe's star performer come front and center in the viewer's mind and his actions capture the viewer's gaze; this is the first rule in writing *nō*.

Be sure, though, to choose poetic language that is appealing and readily comprehensible when heard. Strangely enough, when appealing language is matched to the actor's movements, the character portrayed takes on a tone of *yūgen* all of its own accord. Difficult language doesn't match the movements. There are, however, places where difficult and unfamiliar words may be employed. They are suitable when they match the material from

67. One manuscript includes the notation that Zeami attached his signature here, although that manuscript does not attempt to reproduce the signature proper, instead using the notation "with seal."

68. *Shite* is used here, rather unusually, to refer to the principal character, as in modern *nō*. But Zeami more frequently uses the word to mean actor rather than principal character.



The first leaf (right) and the last leaf of Zeami's autograph manuscript of "Written Preparations for the Flower," from *Transmitting the Flower Through Effects and Attitudes*. The latter includes Zeami's admonition that the text not be shown to anyone other than serious professionals, as well as his signature, consisting of the two graphs *Ze-a* and his *kaō*, or cipher. (Photograph from the collection of Kanze Bunko Foundation)

which the character in question is derived. A distinction should be made according to whether the story is based on Chinese or native sources. When you use vulgar or common language, though, the expressive capacity of the play is impoverished.

So the best kind of play is one that is faithful to its source, fresh to the eye, has places of high interest, and a tone of *yūgen*. The second best is one that, though not particularly fresh in its manner of expression, isn't obviously flawed either and proceeds in a straightforward manner, with points of interest. These are general guidelines. But a play that has something to catch the eye should be interesting, something that, in the hands of a talented actor, can be turned to advantage. When one has gone through all sorts of different plays, day after day, then even a poor play may be made to appear interesting because the actor has injected a bit of color by changing the performance here and there. The success of a given play depends on when it's performed and how it falls in the overall program. You should not abandon a play on the grounds that it isn't any good. It has a great deal to do with how the actor handles it.

There is, however, something worth noting here. Certain kinds of plays should not be performed at all. No matter how much it may be a matter of

dramatic imitation, you should not perform in wild derangement or anger when, for example, you are playing an elderly nun or an old woman or an elderly priest. Likewise, there should be no dramatic imitation with *yūgen* in an angry role. This is not real performance but frivolity.<sup>22</sup> I discussed the essence of this in the note on deranged roles in the second section.

Also, as in all things, without balance there will be no consummation. What I mean by balance is a play based on good material performed by a talented actor with a successful outcome. Accordingly, people are used to thinking that with a good play and a good actor, things could hardly turn out badly. Strangely, on some occasions, even in these circumstances, things don't turn out well. The discernment of a connoisseur will detect such a case, and he will understand that even though it is not the actor's fault, the general viewer may still conclude that the play isn't any good and the actor, nothing special. What is the problem when a talented actor performs in a good play and it still doesn't succeed? I wonder whether it doesn't have something to do with a disharmony in yin and yang at the time. Or is it because there's hasn't been adequate thought given to the flower? I remain puzzled by this.

Here is something requiring discernment on the part of the writer: Both an exclusively musical play based on a consistently quiet subject and a play centered mainly on dance and movement are easy to write because they are one-dimensional. What we need are plays in which the movement is matched to the singing of the text. This is a matter of great difficulty. These are the plays that really excite an audience's interest. The language should be easily understood, and individual words should hold interest; the melody should be attractive, and the flow from word to word, graceful; special care should be taken to include points of concentrated interest that can be enacted with strong visual appeal. This is how to write. When all these elements are suitable to one another, the entire audience is excited.

That being the case, some things you must know about in detail. The actor who uses the movements to set a meter for the singing is a beginner. When the movements are created from the foundation of the singing, it is because the actor is well seasoned. The singing is what is heard; the movements are what is seen. It stands to reason that it is only by following the path laid out by the story that everything is transformed into actual movement on stage. The language expresses that story. Therefore, the singing is the Substance and the actions are the Instance.<sup>69</sup> The proper order is that the actions should be born of the singing. Making the singing dependent on the actions is backward. In all vocations, as in things in general, precedence is given to the proper order

69. The conceptual binarism *tai/yū* (orth. *tai/yufu*, Ch. *ti/yong*) is introduced here, to be taken up again later, most extensively in *A Course to Attain the Flower*. See the introduction.

rather than an inversion. It is not the inversion that takes precedence over the proper order. Again and again, you must make the text of the singing the standard by which you bring out the color of the movements.<sup>70</sup> This is the training in which the music and the movements reflect a single frame of mind.

There is still another matter to consider when writing plays. In order to write in such a way that the movements proceed from the singing, you must write with the movements as the basis. If you make the movements the basis for writing, when those words are sung, they will naturally give birth to the movements. Therefore, when writing, make movements your priority, and also figure out how the melody can be made pleasant. Then when you reach the actual performance, you again should give priority to the singing. Once you acquire experience with such considerations in mind, the chanting will become the movements; the dancing will become the singing; and you will master the unity of a myriad forms of expression within a single mind. This leads, moreover, to great fame for the writer.

• On knowing the strong and *yūgen*, and the weak and the coarse, in performance. This is something that usually is visible, so it seems easy, but many actors are weak or coarse because they do not really understand it.

First, you should know that in all dramatic imitation, one becomes coarse or weak through imposture. With adequate consideration, you should be able to tell the difference. This is something you should grasp firmly in your mind.

First, to make something strong that is by rights weak is imposture and therefore coarse. That something strong will be strong is strong. It is not coarse. If you try to imitate an object, intending to invest something strong with *yūgen*, but it only resembles it, then it is not *yūgen* but weakness. Therefore, if you simply devote yourself to dramatic imitation and enter fully into the object without imposture, then there is unlikely to be any coarseness or weakness.

In addition, if something that is strong is performed too strongly, it will turn out to be particularly coarse. If you make something that is *yūgen* gentler still in its manner of expression, it will turn out to be particularly weak.

When you look carefully at the distinction, you will see how one goes astray by concluding that *yūgen* and the strong are separate; they are in the

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70. Here and in two other places in this chapter of the text, Zeami uses the honorific verbal auxiliary *-tamau* (orth. *tamafu*). Omote suggests a particular relationship between Zeami and the person for whom he initially intended *Transmitting the Flower* but doesn't specify what this relationship might be. It remains a mystery, especially if it was intended for transmission to his sons, although it is unlikely he would use honorific forms for them.

substance of the thing. All sorts of things express *yūgen*: in the class of "people," they could be empresses and royal consorts or dancers, beauties and handsome men; in the class of "plants and trees," they could be the blossoms. Shouldn't we similarly label as strong such things as warriors and savages, or demons and gods, or the pine or cedar (if it's a matter of plants and trees)? If you skillfully imitate various things like these from among the myriad things in the world, then the imitation of something possessing *yūgen* will turn out to have *yūgen*, and something strong will, as a matter of course, be strong. If you don't fully recognize this but simply try to make everything express *yūgen*, then you will be giving short shrift to the imitation itself, and it won't resemble its object. To imagine that your performance expresses *yūgen* without realizing that it doesn't resemble the object of imitation is weak. So if you imitate a dancer or handsome man, as a matter of course you should express *yūgen*. You should just think of imitating your object. Also, if you effectively imitate something strong, you will produce, as a matter of course, a strong performance.

There is, however, something you should be aware of. Since this vocation regards the audience as fundamental, you should, in accordance with the times, adjust the imitation of something strong a bit toward the direction of *yūgen* when you are in front of an audience that enjoys *yūgen*.

There is something that the writer, too, should keep in mind about this strategy. When writing, he should focus on choosing characters that can be treated with *yūgen* and, all the more, keep his intent<sup>71</sup> and language elegant. If there is no imposture, he will naturally appear to be an actor who expresses *yūgen*. When you have completely understood the principle of *yūgen*, you will also understand what is strong. And as long as you truly resemble the object of imitation, you will have nothing to worry about in the way you appear to others. When you have nothing to worry about, that is strength.

Likewise, in the very resonances of unobtrusive words such as *nabiki* [sway], *fusu* [lie down], *kaheru* [return home], and *yoru* [approach] are opportunities for a gestural echo, because these words are gentle. *Otsuru* [fall], *kudzururu* [crumble/collapse], *yabururu* [be broken/defeated], *marobu* [topple/fall down], and so on all have strong resonances, so their accompanying movements should be strong, too.<sup>23</sup>

Because of this, you should know that strength and *yūgen* are not discrete phenomena but stem from directness in dramatic imitation and that weakness and coarseness result from divergence from dramatic imitation.

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71. The concern here for intent (*kokoro*) and language (*kotoba*) reflects the age-old concerns of *waka* poetics.

Given this consideration, a writer is wrongheaded to insert coarse words, arcane and outlandish Sanskrit spells, Chinese collocations, and the like in opening lines such as for the *issei* and *waka*, the very places where he is aiming for gestures evocative of, and opportunities for the expression of, *yūgen*. To be sure, in some situations it would be out of character to perform exactly as the words of the text prescribe. A really accomplished person, however, understands these inconsistencies and maneuvers through them deftly, with creativity and ingenuity. Such comes from the genius of the actor. This doesn't mean we should simply overlook wrongheadedness in the writer. Then again, even though the writer may write with understanding, if the actor is oblivious to the potential, then that's another question altogether. That's how it is.

Also, some plays should not depend so much on language and discursive ingenuity and should be performed expansively, depending on the play. In such a play, you should dance and sing in a straightforward way and perform the stage business smoothly and expeditiously. To fuss and fidget over such a play, moreover, is the technique of a poor actor. You should know as well that this is the way such a play is diminished. Consequently, a search for choice language and gestural echoes should be reserved for plays with discursive ingenuity and points of concentrated interest. In a straightforward play, even if a character with *yūgen* is given difficult language to sing, it should work out well as long as the melodic structure is clear-cut. These, then, are matters that you should understand as basic guidelines for plays. Once you have thoroughly understood these notes, you will need to perform with poise and self possession, or all this instruction will be for naught.

• In regard to the success or failure of a play, you should know how suitably it is matched with the rank of the actor. There should be expansive plays of quite high rank, not particularly polished in terms of language or general tone, but strictly faithful to their source. Such plays may not have anything worthy of particularly detailed scrutiny. A generally expert actor may not be quite right for such plays. Even if the actor is an unsurpassed master of a level fully suitable to such plays, unless the play is performed for an audience of connoisseurs in a grand venue, it will not always be such a great success. Unless there is a high degree of suitability among the rank of the play, the rank of the actor, the audience, the venue, and the occasion, all these things, it will not be all that easy to succeed in performance.

There are, as well, unprepossessing little plays without a particularly impressive source, which nonetheless display *yūgen* and have a certain delicacy. These are often very good for beginning actors. For venue, they are likely to be suitable to religious festivals in out-of-the-way places or nighttime performances. Sophisticated members of the audience and good actors

as well, beguiled by their interest in country performances or unobtrusive venues elsewhere may bring them to the stage with similar intent in grand venues, before aristocrats and such or on occasions meant to highlight a particular performer, only to find that they don't turn out well and that as a consequence, the actor's reputation is damaged and the sponsor loses face, too.

So unless an actor is such that he is unlimited in his choice of repertory or performance venue and there is no better or worse among his performances, he cannot be called a fully expert master of the peerless flower. When it comes to an expert who is suitable to any sort of performance context, there is no need to tell him what is right and what is wrong.

Also, some actors do not have a knowledge of performance commensurate with their skill in performing, and some actors know more about performance than their skill would suggest. The former, though successful before aristocratic audiences and in grand venues, may misunderstand performance and be stymied in other cases, because they don't know it. Then again, there are actors whom one might call beginners, who don't have that much real skill and command only a limited repertory but who don't lose the flower in important venues, who gain increasing appreciation from all, and who show hardly any inconsistency in their performances; this must be because they know performance disproportionately better than their actual skill therein.

Opinions are divided regarding these two types of performers. All the same, one's renown is likely to last longer if one's performances are successful each time before aristocratic audiences and in grand venues. And if that is so, isn't it also true that a troupe leader who has a clear knowledge of performance (even if he is lacking in certain respects as a performer himself) is preferable to one who doesn't really know performance as well as his skill would suggest? The performer who truly knows performance also knows where his own skill is wanting, so in an important performance, he refrains from something that is unlikely to succeed and emphasizes that manner of expression at which he is skilled; since the outcome is good, there is unflinching appreciation among his audience. You should thus use performances in unobtrusive and out-of-the-way venues to accustom yourself to aspects of your performance that don't always go as you wish. If you train in such a way, there will eventually come a time when those unsatisfactory aspects will turn out more to your satisfaction. In the end, then, your performance will gain grandeur, the grime will fall away, and your own fame will prosper, as will the troupe's, and then, certainly, the flower will remain with you as long as your years may last. This is because right from the beginning, you know performance. If you employ every bit of your ingenuity through a mind that knows performance, then you will know the seeds that produce the flower. In any case, people have their own opinions about these two



types of performers and will determine which is better, as they are pleased to do so.<sup>72</sup>

“Written Preparations for the Flower,” complete as above.  
These notes should not be shown to anyone other than  
serious professional aspirants.  
Zea (signature)

### SEPARATE PAGES OF ORAL INSTRUCTIONS

On the matter of knowing the flower, read through these oral instructions. First, you might, say, look at a flower in bloom and you will understand the reason why in all things, we have come to use the flower for comparison.

A flower, you see, is particularly appreciated for its rarity when its time comes, since it among all the trees and grasses blooms in response to the change of seasons. In *sarugaku* as well, the mind perceives as interesting what it knows to be rare. The flower, what is interesting, and what is rare, these three all mean the same thing. Is there any blossom, after all, that does not scatter but lasts on and on? Precisely because it scatters, a blossom is rare when in bloom. In performance as well, we should, above all, recognize what does not stay the same as the flower. Rarity comes from not clinging to the same but moving on to other forms of expression.

There is, however, something worth noting here. This does not mean that you should dredge up some form of expression that has no place in the world merely on the pretext that it is rare. What you should do is complete a comprehensive training in accordance with the various notes presented in *Transmitting the Flower*, and then when you are ready to put on *sarugaku*, you should choose from the repertory in accordance with your particular circumstances. Is there any rare flower in the world apart from those that bloom in accordance with their time and season? Also, once you master the many roles that you have undertaken to learn, you should select a manner of expression that suits the season and occasion and reflects people’s preferences; this is like keeping an eye out for seasonal flowers in bloom. That flower I speak of, moreover, comes from the seeds of last year’s flowers. So in performance, even though various sorts of expression have been seen before, it takes a long time to exhaust your repertory once you have mastered a diversity of roles. Thus it is that something is rare when you see it once again after a long time.

72. *Seubu woba sadametamafu beshi*. The use of the honorific *tamafu* here (and two other places in the sixth book) may indicate that this book was intended for transmission to someone other than the person for whom the earlier books were written. See Omote, in *ZZ*, pp. 54n, 552.

What’s more, people’s tastes vary, and whether it’s a matter of song or movement or dramatic imitation, they are different from place to place, so it is necessary to master many different forms of expression. Mastering a truly diverse repertory, then, is like having in your hands the seeds necessary to bring into bloom any flower from the full year’s cycle, from the plums of early spring to autumn’s chrysanthemums.<sup>73</sup> Then no matter what flower it may be, you can bring it out according to the wishes of your audience and the season. If you do not master such a diverse repertory, then at times you will fail to bring a particular season’s flower into bloom. How, for instance, will an actor who knows only how to bring the flowers of spring into bloom manage when spring has passed and it’s time to appreciate the flowers of summer plants? How will he bring into bloom that season’s flowers when all he has to offer are the flowers of spring? There, that should make it clear.

Now as for the “flowers”: the flowers in question are what is seen to be rare in the minds of your audience. These oral instructions, then, are what I referred to earlier in a passage from *Transmitting the Flower* where it says that after you have made the fullest use of the repertory and used every bit of your creativity, you will know the kind of flower that doesn’t fade. When I refer to the flower, then, it’s nothing particularly special. Giving your utmost to the repertory, finding a way to use your creativity, and understanding what creates the excitement of rarity: that’s what the flower is. This is what I meant when I wrote, “The flower is the mind, the seed, the techniques of performance.”

In the section on demons from “Notes on Dramatic Imitation,” I even said, “The actor who only does demons well must not understand what’s interesting about demons.”<sup>74</sup> When an actor who has mastered a diverse repertory chooses to perform the role of a demon once in a great while, then, because of its rarity, it becomes the flower and is likely to be interesting. If you think someone is good only at portraying a demon, without other forms of expression, then even though it may appear that he performs that role well, there is nothing particularly unusual about it, so there is not likely to be a flower in what the audience sees. As when I said the role was “like a flower blooming out of a boulder,” unless you make the demon strong and terrifying and bloodcurdling, then you don’t have the basic manner of expression right. That is the boulder. What I mean by the flower is the sense of rarity experienced by your audience; they are accustomed to the actor in question and know him to be fully versed in all forms of expression, with a supreme

73. “Plum” is a conventional appellation for *Prunus mume*, sometimes also called a Japanese apricot. It is not the same tree as produces a sweet and fleshy fruit in midsummer.

74. This isn’t exactly what Zeami said in the place mentioned; the text there reads, “The actor who does only demons well can hardly be one who understands the flower.”

command of *yūgen*, yet here he is performing a demon!—that is the flower. The actor who performs only the role of the demon is merely a boulder; there won't be any flower there.

• It has been said, in detailed oral instruction, that singing, dance, vigorous exercise, stage business, and bearing all are of a single frame of mind. This means that when you perform the usual movements and sing in the usual way, people think to themselves, that's just what I expected; but you don't permit yourself to cling to that, and instead you set your sight on performing the movements (even though they are the same old movements) ever so lightly, or maybe you tax your ingenuity over precedents in order to sing (even though it is the same old song) with a certain something extra, paying additional attention to the timbre of your voice; then you will perform the action or singing at hand with great concentration, aware in your own mind that you've never devoted so much attention to it before, and your audience will be impressed, saying the performance is even more interesting than usual. Isn't this that very rarity in the frame of mind of your audience that I have been talking about?

So although the singing and overall bearing are the same, what a talented actor aims to do should be interesting in a particular way. A poor actor has no thought of the unusual, since he performs just those notes that he remembers learning. The talented actor performs the same melody, but he is aware of a certain twist.<sup>75</sup> What I mean by a "twist" is a flower in the melody. Among the same talented performers, with the same dramatic flower, the one who has given the most consideration to this problem knows, moreover, the flower of victory. In general terms, singing the melody is a fixed pattern, whereas the "twist" is something particular to the talented performer. In dancing, the movements represent a learned pattern, but a graceful bearing is something particular to the talented performer.

• In dramatic imitation, there is, surely, a rank of no imitation. Once you have brought dramatic imitation to its limits and have truly entered into the object of imitation, you have no intention of imitating. Therefore, if you make the places of interest your central consideration, how could there not be a flower in your performance? If, for example, it is a matter of imitating an old man, an accomplished actor will approach the role with the same intent as that of an ordinary old man who has gotten himself up in fancy dress to dance the *furyū-ennen*.<sup>76</sup> Being an old man to begin with, the actor has no

75. Zeami introduces a subtle distinction here among the prescribed (and sometimes notated) musical notes (*fushihakase*), the melody indicated by them (*fushikakari*), and a certain interesting "twist" (*kyoku*) given to it by a skillful actor.

76. The *furyū-ennen* were colorful dance celebrations performed widely by the people of Kyoto from the late Heian through the Muromachi period. *Furyū* were parades of people in bright costumes connected with the Gion Festival of the Yasaka Shrine or other religious festivals intended

need to imitate an old man. No, instead he concentrates all his efforts on the role he performs in dramatic imitation suiting the occasion.<sup>77</sup>

Also, the oral instructions regarding the way to seem old and still bring your performance to full dramatic flower are as follows: First of all, don't set your mind on the decrepitude of age. Both Dance and Sparring are performed in time to music, and the actor is to stomp his feet, extend and draw back his arms, perform his movements, and reflect in his attitudes the beat of the music. The fact is, though, that when you grow old, you stomp your feet, extend and draw back your arms, perform your movements, and strike your bodily attitudes just a little late, falling slightly behind the rhythm, a bit later than the *taiko* drum, the chant, and the main beats of the *tsuzumi* drum.<sup>78</sup> This more than anything else serves as a point of reference for portraying an old man. Just keep this consideration in your mind, and otherwise act as you would usually but with much more color and vividness. Generally in the mind of an old person is the desire to do everything just as if he were young. Unavoidably, however, his limbs are heavy, his hearing is slow, and although the heart is willing, the movements of his body don't make the grade. If you understand the truth of this, then that is genuine dramatic imitation. The techniques of performance should be carried out as the old man would wish, with a youthful attitude. This, I would say, is because in an old man's mind, the young are to be envied and their attitude is to be imitated, isn't that so? But even though the old man may try his hardest to act as if he were young, the fact is that he unavoidably falls behind in the rhythm. An old man acting as if he were young contains the principle of the rare. It's like a flower in blossom on an ancient tree.

• On mastering the ten styles<sup>79</sup> in performance. The actor who has mastered the ten styles can run through the same things sequentially time and time again, but since it takes a while to complete the cycle, he will always

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to eradicate epidemic disease. *Ennen* were celebrations at which originally priest performers and later professional performers danced and displayed their talents for the increased longevity of the participants. Like *furyū*, *ennen* seem to have begun in the late Heian period. They became prevalent in the Kamakura and Muromachi periods, and were connected with charismatic Buddhist sects.

77. Compare Fujiwara no Teika on the celebrated poet Ariwara no Narihira: "When composing a love poem, abandon your ordinary self, and imagining how Narihira would have behaved, compose your poem as if you were Narihira" ("Kyōgoku chūnagon sōgobun," in Hisamatsu Sen'ichi and Nishio Minoru, eds., *Karonshū nōgakuronshū*, vol. 1, *Chūsei no bungaku*, NKBT, vol. 65 [Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1965], p. 333, trans. David Bialock, "Voice, Text, and Poetic Borrowing," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 54, no. 1 [1994]: 212–13).

78. The *taiko* is a stick drum used in roughly 15 percent of the modern *nō* repertory. The *tsuzumi* is an hourglass-shaped drum used in nearly all *nō* performances. For further detail, see the introduction and appendix 1.

79. *Jittei* (lit., "ten styles") does not mean ten different categories of performance but is a way of encouraging a broad repertory.

seem to have something rare to offer. The person who has mastered the ten styles will, in his ingenuity and creativity in them, be able to spread out into a hundred different varieties of expression. He probably will have the breadth of consideration to vary things for rarity of expression, running through his repertory piece by piece without repetition for three to five years. This gives him a broad and confident position from which to perform. Also, during the course of the year, you should be clearly aware of the four seasons. And when it's a matter of *sarugaku* performed over several days, it goes without saying that you should think carefully about the sequence and variety of the plays you perform. If, in this way, you think over everything, beginning with matters of great importance and extending to little details, you should not lose the flower throughout your career.

Also, it has been said that rather than<sup>24</sup> knowing the ten styles, make sure you don't forget the flower that comes and goes, year in and year out.<sup>25</sup> As for the flower that comes and goes, year in and year out . . . —well, for instance, the ten styles are the varieties of dramatic imitation—what comes and goes, year in and year out, that is a matter of having all the various means of expression in this art under your control at one time, from the visual charm of a child, through the technique acquired by a beginner, to the movement of a mature young actor, to the manner of expression of an actor grown old. At one time in performance you may appear to be a boy or youngster; at another time, a man in his prime; at still another a fully mature and much seasoned performer, performing in such a way that you don't appear to be the same person from occasion to occasion. This is the principle of commanding all the artistic skills of a lifetime at one time, from the time of your childhood until past your old age. That is why we speak of the flower that comes and goes, year in and year out.

I have not, however, either seen or heard of an actor who reached this rank, whether long ago or more recently. I have heard only that in the prime of his youth, my late father was particularly accomplished in a manner of expression suggesting long experience in performance. I have no doubt about this, since I was well accustomed to seeing him in his forties. When he took the role of Lay Priest Jinen,<sup>80</sup> the way he performed on the preacher's dais created such a stir that the people who saw it said he looked like a sixteen- or seventeen-year old.<sup>81</sup> This is something that I actually heard from other people and witnessed with my own eyes, so I am confident that he was such a master fully suited to this rank of performance. I have neither seen nor heard

80. Although Lay Priest Jinen (or Jinen Koji, as mentioned here) refers to a character, a play of that name exists and could plausibly be attributed to Kannami. It is about a young Buddhist aspirant who saves a girl from slave traders by dancing and performing other entertainments.

81. Note Zeami's inconsistency in his later report of the occasion, in *Conversations on Sarugaku*, where he says Kannami looked only twelve or thirteen (ZZ, p. 265).

of another actor who, in this way, mastered in his youth the manner of expression of a long seasoned master actor and also sustained in his body after he had aged the manner of expression that he had been able to command in the past.

You should not forget any of the various elements of the art, starting from what you learned as a beginner, but pick and choose what you need on a particular occasion. Is it not wonderfully rare to be able to perform as a long-seasoned actor when you still are young and to sustain the attractions of your prime even when you have aged? For this reason, if once your artistic rank rises, you abandon and forget one by one the means of expression you used to employ, it will be just like throwing away seeds for the flower. What you will have then are just the flowers of those individual occasions; without seeds, they're nothing more than plucked flowers. But if you have seeds, how would you not be able to respond to the needs of each season, year after year? Above all, you must not forget your initial intent. It is for this reason that it is so common to hear statements of praise like "Hasn't he grown up quickly!" or "Look at how experienced he's become!" with reference to young actors, and "My, how youthful he looks!" with reference to old actors. Doesn't this show the rationale for rarity? If you use the ten styles to color your performance, it will give you a hundred colors to choose from. If in addition to this, you retain in your personal performance style the elements of performance that come and go, year in and year out, what a great flower you shall command!

• On being attentive to all things in performance. When, for example, you perform in a manner expressive of anger, you must not forget gentleness of mind. This will give you a method of acting as angry as you wish without becoming coarse. To maintain a gentleness of mind when angry is the principle of rarity. Again, in dramatic imitation requiring *yūgen*, you must not forget the principle of strength. This exemplifies the principle of, in all things, resisting the urge to cling, whether in Dance, in Sparring, in dramatic imitation, in anything.

Also, there must always be intent in making the use of the body. When you move your body strongly, you should hold back in stomping your feet. When you stomp your feet strongly, you should carry your body quietly. It is difficult to convey this in writing. It is something for face-to-face oral instruction. [This is discussed in detail under the titled sections of *Learning the Flower*.]<sup>82</sup>

82. *Learning the Flower* (*Kashū*, 花習, orth. *Kashifu*) is the earlier form of the treatise that later was entitled *Kakyō* (orth. *Kakyau*), translated here as *A Mirror to the Flower*. *Kakyō* consists of six "titled" sections, each beginning with a catchphrase in addition to several subsequent sections, also with titles. These were not catchphrases but individual titles, each ending with the word *koto* and thus termed *kotogaki*. See Omote, in ZZ, p. 89n.

• On knowing the flower of secrecy: “When you keep it secret, it’s the flower. Unless you keep it secret, it cannot be the flower,” that’s it. To understand this distinction is a flower of crucial importance.<sup>26</sup>

That is, in the houses of the various artistic vocations, the assertion by a given house that something is a matter of secrecy has a great effect, specifically because it is kept secret. For that reason, when these secrets are made known, they are not things of particularly great consequence. But the person who admits they are nothing of great consequence does so because he doesn’t really understand the great utility of secrets.

For instance, if everyone knew that the flower is merely what is fresh, as these oral instructions explain, then, before an audience of people who would be expecting to see something fresh, even if you were to perform something fresh, they would not likely perceive it in their minds as particularly fresh and exciting. It becomes the flower for the actor precisely because the viewers do not know that it is the flower. Instead, the viewers just see the actor and think that he is surprisingly interesting, and the fact that they are not conscious of this as the flower in itself becomes the actor’s flower. To just this extent, then, the plan to evoke unexpected excitement in people’s minds—this is the flower.

For example, among the plans of those in the vocation of arms, the stratagem of a great general may, by employing an unexpected plan, result in victory over a powerful rival. What is this, in fact, other than that the defeated party loses because it has been fooled in accord with the principle of freshness? In all matters, this is the principle by which victory is attained in contests in the various artistic vocations. A plan like this would be easy to defend oneself against, after the fact, when one understands with hindsight: Ah, so that’s what it was all about, but at the time, one loses because one doesn’t yet understand it. For that reason, one preserves these things carefully, for the good of the line, as secrets.

In light of the preceding, know this. Not only should you not reveal secrets, but you should not even be identified as someone who knows such secrets. When you end up having your intent known to someone else, then, provided your rival is not negligent but alert, it will warn him to be wary. When your rival is not wary, it still should be easy for you to prevail against him. Is it not, in fact, a great effect of the principle of freshness to be able to win, having lulled your rival into neglectfulness? For that reason, you gain a lifelong mastery of the flower when you keep others from knowing some-

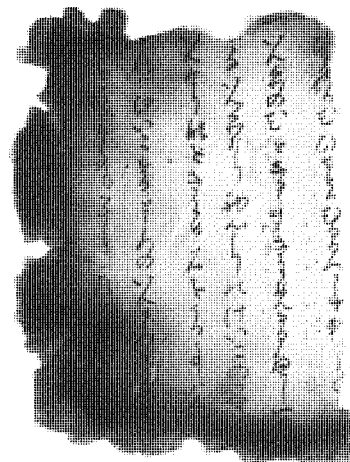
.....  
 Kashifu should be distinguished from section 6 of *Transmitting the Flower*, 花修云, “Kashiu ni iwaku” (translated here as “Written Preparations for the Flower”), even though in modern Japanese, both Kashifu and Kashiu are pronounced similarly: Kashū and Kashu.

thing because it is a family secret. When you keep it secret, it’s the flower. Unless you keep it secret, it cannot be the flower.

The ultimate is knowing the flower of cause and consequence. Everything is dependent on cause and consequence. The many things that one learns in the art as a beginner and thereafter are the cause. Performing with expertise and gaining fame are the consequence. When, therefore, you are indifferent to cause (in your training, that is), it will also become impossible to realize the consequence. You must be fully aware of this.

Also, you must respect the occasion. If last year all was at its peak, this year, you should be aware that there may be no flower. Each brief moment may be either male time or female time.<sup>83</sup> No matter what you may do, if there are good times in performance, then there are certain to be bad times as well. This is a cause and consequence over which you have no power. Be well aware of this, and when you are performing *sarugaku* on an occasion that is not all that important, you may hold back in performance, not knocking yourself out to be victorious in competition, not breaking your neck, and not being particularly worried if you lose; then just as the audience has started to lose interest, thinking, What is this all about, just then, on the day of an important *sarugaku* performance, you change your plan, and perform a hall-mark play expertly, displaying your virtuosity, your audience will be taken by surprise, and you will certainly prevail with a great victory in an important contest. This is the great effect of the fresh. The disappointments of recent days can thereby be causes that lead to good consequences.

A leaf from Zeami’s autograph manuscript of “Separate Pages of Oral Instructions,” from *Transmitting the Flower Through Effects and Attitudes*. The second line from the right begins the section reading, “The ultimate is knowing the flower of cause and consequence. . . .” Although nearly invisible in a black-and-white image, the text includes some interlinear notes in red. It was badly damaged in a fire, but what remains is invaluable both because it is in Zeami’s hand and because it preserves the earliest form of the text, for transmission to Zeami’s younger brother, Shirō. (Photograph from the collection of Kanze Bunko Foundation)



.....  
 83. As becomes clear in a later passage, *odoki* (orth. *wodoki* [male time]) is considered advantageous, whereas *medoki* (female time) is considered disadvantageous to the performer.

Now then, when you have three *sarugaku* performances on three consecutive days,<sup>84</sup> you should hold back on the first day and blend in with the rest of the performance, and then, on the day you feel is the most important of the three, choose a good play, a showcase for your particular talents, and perform it with striking intensity.<sup>27</sup> If on the very first day you are faced with the disadvantage of female time during a match performance, hold back at first, and then, once your opponent's advantage in male time has declined to the disadvantage of female time, perform a good play with vigor and concentration. This is the opportunity to take back the male time for your side. If this play turns out well, it should give you first place for that day.

This business of male time and female time means that in every competition, there is bound to be a time when you may show yourself to advantage. This is considered male time. If the competition extends over several performances, the advantageous time will switch back and forth between the rivals. A certain text<sup>28</sup> has it that "the gods of victory and defeat, the so-called *shōbujin*, preside over performance venues and keep watch. This is considered a particular secret among warriors." If your rival's *sarugaku* comes off well, you should be aware that the god of victory is with him, and be wary. Two gods oversee the moments of cause and consequence, and they alternate back and forth, so when you believe that it has become an advantageous time for your side, you should perform a reliable play. This is none other than the cause and consequence of venue. Take care not to ignore it. If you have confidence, you shall gain the advantage.

• We have it that there are good and bad occasions, which we refer to in terms of cause and consequence, but if we consider this problem comprehensively, it will resolve into a simple matter of two things: what is fresh . . . and what is not. You may watch the same talented actor in the same play yesterday and today, but what appeared so interesting before will not be interesting at all now; what you had been accustomed to think of as interesting yesterday appears uninteresting, and therefore bad, today. Then later on, on some occasion when it seems good, it is because earlier you had in your mind thought of it as not so good, but it changed into something fresh and became interesting. Therefore, once you have attained real expertise in this vocation and learned its ins-and-outs, you will understand that what we call the flower is nothing in particular. Unless you have become expert in the ultimate accomplishments of this vocation and come to see the principle of freshness in all things, there can be no flower.

It says in a certain sutra, "Good and bad are not two, false and true are a single reality."<sup>85</sup> Fundamentally, what are we to use to determine good and

84. Standard for *kanjin sarugaku* subscription performances.

85. 善惡不二、邪正一如。The sentence sums up the doctrine of nonduality as it is expressed in, for example, the ninth chapter of Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa Sutra, "The Dharma-Door of Nonduality"

bad? It is merely a matter of regarding as good what suffices and as bad what is insufficient at a given time. So, too, regarding various forms of expression: those forms that you select in consideration of the prevailing tastes of people at a given time, in a particular place—those are the flowers that aptly serve your need. If one style of expression is enjoyed here, then another style will be appreciated there. This is the flower of various different people and their minds. Which of these is to be counted authentic? You should know as the flower what serves the interests of the given occasion.

• These "Separate Pages of Oral Instruction" are of great importance to the house in this art and are to be transmitted to a single person in each generation. If your sole descendant is someone without talent, then you should not transmit this to him. It is said, "A house is not, in itself, a house. It is made a house through its transmission from generation to generation. A person is not, in himself, a person, but he becomes a person through knowing."<sup>86</sup> This is the means to the wondrous flower for the fulfillment of the myriad virtues in this art.

• The notes in these "Separate Pages" were transmitted to my younger brother Shirō<sup>87</sup> some years ago, but there are adequate grounds for their transmission hereby to Mototsugu,<sup>88</sup> since he has proved himself to be a master of performance. Secret transmission, secret transmission.

Ōei 25 [1418]:6:1, Ze (signature)<sup>89</sup>

## NOTES

1. In one possible reading of this passage, the term translated as "promotion of long life" (*ennen*) is taken to refer to a distinct performing art of the middle ages. Omote rejects this view in favor of the version on which this translation is based, that of *sarugaku* as a "life-stretching art."

(Robert Thurman, trans., *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti* [University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1981]), but the phrase itself is not found there. Tanaka also cites *Shuzen jiketsu* 4, attributed to Saichō, and *Mineaiki*, where it is mentioned as encapsulating the Tendai doctrine of *isshin sankan*.

86. The source of this quotation has not yet been identified. It appears in identical form in Shinkei's *Sasamegato*, possibly through transmission by Zenchiku from here.

87. Zeami's younger brother, the father of Saburō (orth. Saburau) Motoshige—that is, Onnami. Note that the existence of the *Sōsetsu-bon* text, with its colophon for Motoshige, contradicts or at least complicates Zeami's injunction that the text is to be transmitted to only one person per generation.

88. It is unclear to whom this refers. Tanaka suggests an elder brother of Motomasa named Gorō (orth. Gorau), whose religious name was Gensen shami, whereas Omote suggests that Mototsugu was an earlier name of Motomasa himself. See Tanaka Yutaka, ed., *Zeami geijutsuron shū*, vol. 35 of *Shinchōsha koten shūsei* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1976), and ZZ, p. 65.

89. The "signature" in question is a *kaō*, a presumably unique monogram generally composed of graphs from the writer's name and used much as we use a signature.

2. I use “dramatic imitation” to translate Zeami’s *monomane*, a technical term for the representation of specific characters or character types on stage. See also the introduction.

3. Zeami uses the term *kōan* here (my “problem”), taken from the vocabulary of Zen Buddhism. In Zen, especially Rinzai Zen, the term might more appropriately be translated as “case.” *Kōan* often are paradoxical or seemingly nonsensical but are purportedly used to jar the practitioner into a deeper level of understanding. Such a meaning is not completely unlike Zeami’s use of the term, but at the same time he seems to use it in a less technical and less dramatic way, to mean something more like “a matter for serious consideration.”

4. *Kokuō* (orth. *Kokuwau*), which I have translated as “king,” is ambiguous. Although it might be taken to mean the “heavenly sovereign,” conventionally called the “emperor” (*tennō*), it is more likely to mean the reigning shogun. Recall Yoshimitsu’s acceptance of the title *Nippon kokuō* from the Ming court.

5. Zeami’s text mentions two articles of clothing here. The first, *kinu*, is a generic term for robes as well as the word “silk,” indicating the most desirable cloth for such robes. The second term, *hakama*, is a word referring to the broad trousers that both men and women might have worn on certain occasions. In modern *nō*, the most common “robe” worn is a specific type of short-sleeved kimono, the *kosode*, and the specific type of *hakama* is generally the *ōkuchi*, very broad trousers with wide openings on the sides of the body at the hips. For details on *sarugaku* and *nō* costuming, see Sharon Takeda, in collaboration with Monica Bethe, *Miracles and Mischief: Noh and Kyōgen Theater in Japan* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Tokyo: Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan, 2002).

6. Omote reads *sono michi* here and earlier in the same article to refer to professional prognosticators and fortune-tellers, and I have followed his lead. Konishi Jin’ichi (*Zeami shū*, *Nihon no shisō*, vol. 8 [Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1970], p. 53) and Yamazaki Masakazu (*Zeami*, *Nihon no meicho*, vol. 10 [Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1969]) read it as a reference to *nō* acting with, consequently, different results. Omote is persuasive in that in all the treatises, Zeami uses the demonstrative adjectives very selectively. Clearly, when he says *kono michi*, he means this vocation of *sarugaku*, but he uses *sono michi* only twice, both times in this question-and-answer format. Accordingly, I have distinguished the usages by referring to *sono michi* as “business” and *kono michi* as “vocation.” The inconsistency in translation is justified by Zeami’s apparent skepticism about prognostication.

7. Following Omote’s reasoning in reading the first *kanji* in the line as *hi* rather than *shi*. See ZZ, p. 438n.22.

8. *Ageku* (挙句), borrowed from the vocabulary of *renga*, where it signifies the last 7–7 verse of the sequence. Here the term does not refer to so brief a passage but borrows a similar sense of cadence or finality.

9. *Take* (長) is translated as “stature,” and *kasa* (嵩) as “grandeur,” in contradistinction to *ku-rai* (位). Zeami is, it seems, inconsistent in his explanation.

10. In his first reference to the word, Zeami uses a perfective verbal form, *shihoretaru*, but in translating it, I found it preferable to pretend the word is a nominal *shihore* (Zeami’s spelling is *shihore*), since that is the way he later treats the concept. There is no agreement on the interpretation of the word. The word is written consistently in *kana* and may be close to the modern *shihore*, 萎れ (and which should be written in *kana* in more orthodox traditional orthography as *shiwore* rather than *shihore*). This word means something like “wilted” or “withered.” But as Konishi Jin’ichi says, it may be more appropriately interpreted according to a now obsolete meaning, 霪 (drenched), which would correctly be written *shihore* (“Shihori no setsu,” in *Bashō*, *Nihon bungaku kenkyū shiryō sōsho*, vol. 32 [Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1969], pp. 241–49).

11. The syntax of the first sentence here is ambiguous and has been taken to mean that Zeami disregards the censure of the world at large for writing down material that should, by rights, be transmitted only orally. I have tried to retain the ambiguity of the passage in translating it but follow Omote and Katō in their assertion that the censure referred to is what the world at large directs against actors who let their vocation fall into decline. See ZZ, p. 433n.15.

12. *Seinō* (細男, orth. *seinou*) The word used normally refers to a performer of interludes in *kagura*, but I follow Omote’s note here, reading the word as a reference to performance rather than to performer.

13. *On’omote shirokarikeri* (Their august faces shone white) is the folk etymology of the word *omoshiroshi* (mod. J. *omoshiroi* [interesting]) an important term in Zeami’s aesthetic vocabulary.

14. The word *keseu* is uncertain and has been the focus of various conjectures, ranging from 見証 (enlightenment) to 見所 ([critical praise from] the audience). Here I have followed Kōsai Tsutomu’s suggestion, 戯笑 (*Zeami shinkō* [Tokyo: Wan’ya shoten, 1962], pp. 233–36).

15. *Giri* (儀理): Omote suggests that this means a kind of linguistic interest or interest in argumentation exemplified by the dialogue in the first half of *Sotoba Komachi* or the Zen dialogue in *Hōkazō*. See ZZ, pp. 437–38n.21.

16. Probably an early form of the play now entitled *Yoshino Shizuka*.

17. Perhaps an earlier incarnation of the play *Hyakuman*.

18. A slight variation on a passage at the end of the section “Notes in Question-and-Answer Form.”

19. The extant texts give two variants at this point. The *Konparu-bon* and *Sōsetsu-bon* texts read *shigi in iwaku*, 私義云 (regarding private matters), rather than *higi ni iwaku*, 秘義云 (regarding secret matters). But when written in a cursive hand, the two Chinese graphs *shi* and *hi* are fairly similar, and there is a good chance that *shigi* is a mistranscription of *higi*. See ZZ, p. 438n.22.

20. According to Omote’s suggestion, reading *koko ni* for *koto ni*.

21. *Shōjiki enmyō* (orth. *shyaujiki yenmyau*) is unclear. *Shōjiki* is relatively comprehensible as “honest,” “straightforward,” or the like, but *yenmyau* has been parsed with the *kanji* 延命 and 円明. The latter combination seems more likely (see ZZ, p. 46) but still leaves us uncertain. *En*, as “round,” suggests plenitude or well-roundedness, and *myō* suggests “luminosity” or “brilliance.” But as a compound the word seems unattested elsewhere in Zeami’s oeuvre, and we can only speculate that it means something like “clarity.”

22. *Kyausau* is obscure but Omote sees it as meaning “crazy” or “frivolous.” See ZZ, p. 49nn.

23. Not many of the words Zeami lists here appear in his plays, but for reference, the following is a sample of their occurrences in plays closely associated with him:

Kami no megumi ni *nabiku* ka to harumekiwataru (*Oimatsu*), “Spring begins to dawn everywhere, as if under the *sway* of the gods’ blessings.”

Itoma maushite *kaheru* yama no haru no kozue ni saku ka to machishi hana (*Yamanba*), “Taking my leave I *return* to the mountains in spring, for the flowers I’ve awaited seem about to bloom on the twig tops.”

Iki to shi ikeru monogoto ni Shikishima no kage ni *yoru* to ka ya (*Takasago*), “Each and every living thing *draws* under the shelter of Shikishima.”

Yasakebi shite *otsuru* tokoro wo I-no-Hayata tsutto yorite tsudzukesama ni kokono katana zo saitarikeru (*Nue*), “The arrow whistled through the air, and I-no-Hayata raced to the spot where it *fell*, and stabbed the beast nine times.”

Sono yume wo *yaburu* na, *yaburete* nochi ha kono koromo tare ka kite mo tofu beki (*Kinuta*), “Don’t *tear* me away from this dream, for once I’m *torn away*, who will come to see me, who will don these lover’s robes?”

24. There has been some controversy about how to read *yoru ha* here. In some cases, the word can indicate the time *from which* something happens, but in that case we would expect a perfective before *yoru* rather than the *mizenkei+mu (n)* auxiliary found here, so it is unlikely that this was the intended usage (despite the modern Japanese translations by Yamazaki [Zeami], Konishi, and Tanaka). Omote chose the comparative *yoru*, and I have followed him. See ZZ, p. 440n.26.

25. Here, on first appearance, Zeami uses a Sinitized reading of the expression, as *nennen kyorai no hana*, but at the end of the paragraph, he nativizes it as *toshidoshi sarikitaru hana*.

26. *Kan'yō no hana* is syntactically inverted, if we are to believe the glosses by Konishi (*hana no yōketsu de aru*), Yamazaki (*hana ni tsuite no jūdai na kadai na no de aru*), and Omote (*hana no kan'yōji de aru*). But perhaps Tanaka's syntactically stricter rendering is closer to the mark. He says that because of secrecy, understanding the distinction between what is and is not a flower is itself a flower of particular importance (*sore wa hana no naka de mo toku ni jūyō na hana de aru*).

27. The primary manuscript reads *tansei*, but I have followed Omote in his reliance on supplementary manuscripts reading *gansei* and *ganzei*, respectively. The word comes from Zen texts like *Hekiganroku* (Ch. *Biyānlü* [*The Blue Cliff Record*]) in the expression *gansei toshutsu* (Ch. *yanjing tuchu* [the pupils pop out]) and indicates strength of personal commitment in the performance of an action.

28. アルモノニイハク (lit., "in a certain thing it says"). The thing is assumed to be a text by Omote, and I have followed him, but perhaps it means "a certain person says. . ." In either case, it remains unidentified. Where the quotation ends is uncertain as well. Omote and Tanaka include only the first sentence; Konishi and Yamazaki, two sentences.

## An Extract from *Learning the Flower*

花習内拔書, 1418

*Learning the Flower* is presumed to have originally been a larger text, of which only this extract survives. Some of the text, very slightly revised, is repeated in *Mirror to the Flower*. The content focuses on the central structural principle in Zeami's plays and performance, *jo-ha-kyū*, which was described in the introduction. In discussing how play and performance structure work, Zeami takes time to comment on what happens when this structure is disrupted by the arrival of important spectators after the performance already has begun. His advice for such a situation is practical and directed toward what the actor may do to remedy the disruption, but we also see here some indication of Zeami's relationship with his patrons.



### JO-HA-KYŪ IN PERFORMANCE

Although *The Transmission of the Flower* discussed *jo-ha-kyū* in general terms, a few items remain for more detailed examination. First, since all things have their particular *jo*, *ha*, and *kyū*, it follows that you should determine them accordingly in writing plays.

Since it comes at the beginning, what I mean by the *jo* is a sense of foundation. It is, for this reason, correct and frontal in attitude.<sup>1</sup> In *sarugaku* then, the *waki* play<sup>1</sup> is *jo*. Its appeal should come from a thematically straightforward play, auspicious and without particular subtlety, proceeding correctly. Stage business should consist of just song and dance, alone. Song and dance should provide the basic expressive matter in this vocation. Consequently, a play for the *jo* should be constructed with song and dance. The next play should be one that differs in tone from the *waki* play; while faithful to its source and strong, it should create a deliberate, settled impression. Although this second play is different in tone from the *waki* play, it still uses

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1. Zeami usually uses the term "waki play" to refer to the play that comes after (*waki* [lit., "alongside"]) *Shikisanban*, the ritual play with which formal full-day presentations were begun. *Shikisanban* wasn't performed in every performance, however, so the *waki* play came to mean more or less the same thing that it means today, the first play in a performance of several, treating