

Sophia University – Summer Session 2025

July 1 – July 22, 2025 *July 1: Orientation *July 4: No-class day

Date: [March 11, 2025 \(updated\)](#)

Course Title	Japanese Performing Arts, from past to present
Course Code	ARZ301
Instructor	BRINDEAU Véronique
Class Period	2nd Period (10:55–12:35)
Course Format	In-Person
Language of Instruction	English
Maximum class size	20
Course Description	History of main traditional Japanese performing arts: noh, kabuki, bunraku and analysis of major plays based on video excerpts. Their development through changing society, from religious ritual to popular entertainment, and influence on modern film makers, directors, stage design.
Course Objectives	Introduction to the aesthetics of traditional performing arts as a way of grasping social and aesthetic values in Japanese society, from 14th century to modern times, and an access to personal appreciation.
Expected work outside of class	Regular consulting of PowerPoint files and internet links to videos on Moodle. This could take 45 minutes – 1 hour per class depending on the individual.
Course Materials	All class material – mandatory and optional readings – will be uploaded on Moodle. Purchase of textbook: not necessary e-book: not applicable
Moodle	All class materials – mandatory and optional readings – will be uploaded on Moodle. Assignments will also be submitted through Moodle.
Contact Instructor	•via Moodle message •via Email veronique.brindeau@wanadoo.fr
Evaluation (Attendance, Class participation, in-class assignments, final exam, quizzes, etc.)	Attendance 10% Report 50% Quizz 40%
Other comments	-
Class schedule	*July 1: Orientation *July 4: No-class

[DAY 1] July 2 (W)……Mythical origins of theatre. Amaterasu and Kojiki (an. Analysis of *Okina*.

Okina revisited: *Divine dance* (2018), a modern vision performed by kyōgen actor Nomura Mansai, set design by Sugimoto Hiroshi

[DAY 2] July 3 (R)……Genesis of noh theatre: *sarugaku, dengaku, ennen*. 1374, a turning point in history of Japanese theatre. Kan ami (14) and Zeami, their life and works.

Reference to noh performance (*Kakitsubata*, “The spirit of iris”) in Ozu Yasujirō’s film *Banshun* (“Late Spring”, 1949)

[DAY 3] July 7 (M)……The art of *shimai* (Noh dance): composing with *kaka*. Teaching Noh dance in Naruse Mikio’s film *Uta Anton* (1943)

[DAY 4] July 8 (T)……Noh stage, from temples and shrines to modern stage design. Relation between stage setting, performing gestures and musical structure

Glass and stone noh stages in Odawara Foundation (stage design Sugimoto Hiroshi, 2018)

[DAY 5] July 9 (W)……A history of mask in Japanese performing arts: from gigaku to bugaku and noh. Costumes and props on noh stage
Basic concept of *yūgen*: “mysterious profundity” and female role masks development

[DAY 6] July 10 (R)……The mirror of the flower: aesthetic principles of Zeami:

“Move the mind to 10/10ths, move the body to 7/10ths”.

“Eyes ahead, mind behind”

[DAY 7] July 11 (F)……Kyōgen: a comic counterpoint to the drama expressed through words and gestures. Analysis of *Busu* (“Delicious Poison”)

Merging Noh and kyōgen in manga universe: from *Kimetsu no yaiba* to *Demon Slayer* (2024)

[DAY 8] July 14 (M)……Development of kabuki theatre. The world of Edo. Onnagata, the art of Female role performed by male actors.

The interpretation styles: aragoto, wagoto. Costumes, makeup (*kumadori*). Mie, the art of striking poses.

A painter in kabuki world in Shinoda Masahiko’s film *Sharaku* (1995)

[DAY 9] July 15 (T)……Booklets: a collaborative writing.

Dynamics of kabuki drama structure: *sekai* (world, frame) and *shūkō* (new plot)

Kanjinchō (“the subscription list”, 1860), a kabuki play inspired by noh *Ataka*.

Kurosawa Akira’s version: *Tora no o wo fumu otokatachi* (“The Men

	Who Tread on the Tiger's Tail", 1945)
	[DAY 10] July 16 (W)..... <i>shosagoto</i> : the kabuki dances. Notion of «furi» (gesture) Analysis of <i>Fuji musume (Wisteria maiden)</i> . Importance of amateur practice apart from the theatrical stage.
	[DAY 11] July 17 (R)..... <i>Jiutamai</i> : the art of minimalism in dance as an extension of Zeami's aesthetic principles Analysis of <i>Kane ga misaki</i> (performed by Bandō Tamasaburō)
	[DAY 12] July 18 (F).....history of Bunraku: the art of puppeteers, reciters and shamisen players. <i>Tsubosaka-kannon Reigen-ki</i> ("The Miracle at the Tsubosaka Kannon Temple",1879) A modern bunraku style romance in Kitano Takeshi's film <i>Dolls</i> (2002)
	[DAY 13] July 21 (M).....Life and works of Chikamatsu (1653-1724) <i>Sonezaki shinjū</i> , directed by Sugimoto Hiroshi (Paris, 2013)
	[DAY 14] July 22 (T)..... <i>Dōjōji</i> : an ancient legend through noh, kabuki, bunraku and jiutamai versions. <i>Analysis of Hidakawa</i> .

*Course format, evaluation methods and class schedule may be subject to change.

[Important Note Regarding Class Capacity]

Course enrollment in each course is on a first-come, first-served basis. Please be aware that once the maximum capacity is reached, you will no longer be able to select that course.

If you plan to transfer the credits to your home university, please consider alternative courses as well when making your study plan, in case the courses you want to take are full.

In case you are unable to take your desired courses and the number of courses you are enrolled in changes, a refund will be issued based on the number of courses reduced.