

# MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release – 16 June 2014



JAPAN FOUNDATION

The Japan Foundation, Sydney presents



—a lecture series at the Art Gallery of NSW—

The Japan Foundation, Sydney is proud to present an upcoming lecture series at the **Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW)**, in conjunction with the current *Theatre of dreams, theatre of play: nō and kyōgen in Japan* exhibition. The lecture series, titled ***Noh to Now: Traditions and Counter-traditions in Japanese Performance***, will be held on selected Wednesday nights in July and August, starting July 23.

The [Noh to Now](#) program features local and international experts introducing different genres of Japanese performance. Spanning the centuries from the emergence of **Noh theatre** in the middle ages to the present day, they explore both canonised and marginal artforms and artists, including *Ankoku Butoh* ('Dance of Darkness'), **Kabuki**, virtual songstress **Hatsune Miku** ([support act for Lady Gaga's recent US tour](#)), and all-female musical theatre troupe **Takarazuka Revue**.

A highlight of the series is the August 6 lecture on Noh by **Naohiko Umewaka**, a **Noh Master** from a long and distinguished lineage of Noh practitioners, and a professor at Shizuoka University of Arts and Culture. Direct from Japan, Umewaka will draw on decades of experience to shed light on this captivating form of theatre.

Says Japan Foundation, Sydney director **Nao Endo**, "As shown by the introduction of a [Japanese Traditional and Contemporary Theatre elective](#) in this year's **HSC curriculum**, there is increasing recognition of the value of Japanese performing arts traditions in the Australian community. We are excited to work with the Art Gallery of New South Wales to offer this timely series, which blends authoritative voices and perspectives from both Australia and Japan."

## Program

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|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Jul 23</b> | <b>Occupied Bodies: Re-thinking the Atomic Gaze in Ankoku Butoh</b>                     |    |
|               | Dr. Adam Broinowski, Australian National University                                     |                                                                                       |
| <b>Aug 6</b>  | <b>Noh, and the Aesthetics of Restraint</b>                                             |    |
|               | Professor Naohiko Umewaka (Noh Master),<br>Shizuoka University of Arts and Culture      |                                                                                       |
| <b>Aug 13</b> | <b>Song, Dance, Skill: Introduction to Kabuki</b>                                       |   |
|               | Dr. Shun Ikeda, Australian National University                                          |                                                                                       |
| <b>Aug 20</b> | <b>Presence &amp; Composition: Bunraku Puppet Theatre and Virtual Diva Hatsune Miku</b> |  |
|               | Dr Yuji Sone, Macquarie University                                                      |                                                                                       |
| <b>Aug 27</b> | <b>The Allure of Gender-Bending Musical Theatre</b>                                     |  |
|               | Dr. Leonie Stickland, Murdoch University                                                |                                                                                       |

<b>Dates:</b>	July 23 and August 6, 13, 20 & 27
<b>Time:</b>	6:00 – 7:00pm (Doors open 5.45pm)
<b>Venue:</b>	Centenary Auditorium <b>Art Gallery of New South Wales</b> Art Gallery Rd, The Domain Sydney
<b>Admission:</b>	Free. No bookings required.
<b>Enquiries:</b>	<a href="mailto:reception@jpf.org.au">reception@jpf.org.au</a> / 02 8239 0055 (The Japan Foundation, Sydney)
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.jpf.org.au">www.jpf.org.au</a>

## Playlists available



Search 'Noh to Now' on [YouTube](#) to sample the genres in this program.

### ABOUT NOH THEATRE:

Noh theatre is Japan's oldest continuing theatre tradition, and is listed by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage. Sometimes described as Japanese opera, it is known for its rich symbolism, slow movement and highly stylised expression. Noh developed in Japan in the Middle Ages and arrived at its present form in the 14<sup>th</sup> century; Noh costume reflects the kind of dress worn by the nobility in Japan around this time. Arguably one of the most recognisable elements of Noh is its many masks, which are changed over the course of a performance to signify changes in a character's emotional or psychological state.

### ABOUT THE AGNSW EXHIBITION:

The Art Gallery of New South Wales' [Theatre of dreams, theatre of play: nō and kyōgen in Japan](#) exhibition was organised in cooperation with the Agency for Cultural Affairs in Japan. It features a total of 165 works related to Noh theatre—many from the prestigious National Noh Theatre in Japan—including exquisitely carved masks, richly embroidered Noh robes, and paintings depicting this ancient performing arts tradition. The exhibition is now open and will run until September 14 (closed for conservation purposes July 28-30).

### ABOUT THE JAPAN FOUNDATION, SYDNEY:

The Japan Foundation, Sydney is the Australian arm of the Japan Foundation, which was established by the Japanese government to promote cultural and intellectual exchange between Japan and other nations. It runs a diverse range of programs and events, including exhibitions, talk events, grant programs and Japanese language courses for all levels from beginner to advanced. The Japan Foundation was established in 1972 with a global network of 22 offices in 21 countries. The Australian office was founded in 1977.



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For more information please see [www.jpf.org.au](http://www.jpf.org.au) or contact:

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