



“Art is something that lies in the slender margin between the real & the unreal.”

— Chikamatsu Monzaemon,
kabuki & bunraku playwright

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The magical world of KABUKI

Friday, September 18th's lecture marked the beginning of Colorado College's immersion into the extraordinary world of Japanese kabuki theatre. Facilitating this 3-event exploration was guest speaker Professor Laurence Kominz of Portland State University.

A traditional theater style originating around 1600 CE, kabuki seems, according to Kominz, “overtly theatrical, all about sounding and looking impressive.” Typical themes of kabuki include humor/buffoonery; disguise; word play; parody; and social inversions, particularly with reversals of fortune and class. The outlandish and overbearing nature of these plots exemplify the aesthetic of *ukiyo*, literally meaning “the floating world,” in which a transitory existence gives rise to and acceptance of hedonism as the way of life. Traditional Japanese aesthetics form the basis of kabuki theatre with many of its stylistic elements adopted from earlier Noh theatre and bunraku puppetry.

Another characteristic of kabuki lies in its practice of solely male actors. While female roles exist in plays, they are undoubtedly played by *onnagata*, or male actors who adopt feminine mannerisms and represent the ideal woman. Complementing the *onnagata* is the *aragoto*, or bravura role,



Taichi Saotome,
a famous *onnagata* & film star

pioneered by Danjuro I (1660-1704). Rather humorously, these characters are often average men transformed into superheroes by some god or deity. To become a great hero, an *aragoto* tears tigers to shreds, tramples bears, drinks huge bowls of sake, and rips out trees. In addition, Sakato Tōjuro I (1647-1709) fashioned the lover boy. Later, Ichikawa Danjuro II (1688-1758) combined the two and created the romantic and martial hero of Suckeroku, a figure akin to James Bond. These are but a few examples of the many stock figures that make up kabuki storylines. Each gender role and character typecast has its own distinctive costume, make-up, walk, and dramatic poses called *mie*.



Professor Laurence Kominz

Continuing with the roles of kabuki actors, Kominz directed attention to their functions off stage as well. In particular, he focused on their blatant commercialism. In fact, Kominz points out that by 1716, product placement was routine in kabuki theatres. Famous *onnagata*, like Segawa Kikunō (1693-1749), set the fashions for women. Even today, kabuki actor Ichikawa Ebizo, the future Danjuro the 13th, currently promotes watches and clothing.

More of kabuki theatre's sensationalism manifested

Continued on page 6...



COLORADO COLLEGE

The Lotus

Important Dates

Friday, October 30th, 2009

Fall Gaylord Prize Submissions due Friday, October 30th by 3:00 to Sandy Papuga Palmer Room # 208C

Wednesday, November 18th, 2009

Gaylord Faculty Research Grant due by the end of block 3, Wednesday, November 18th

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On the afternoon of Friday, September 25th, Colorado College students got to try their hand at Japanese taiko drumming. The Crestone Kaminari Taiko's leader Kenichi Nishiyama and helper Masakazu Naka-



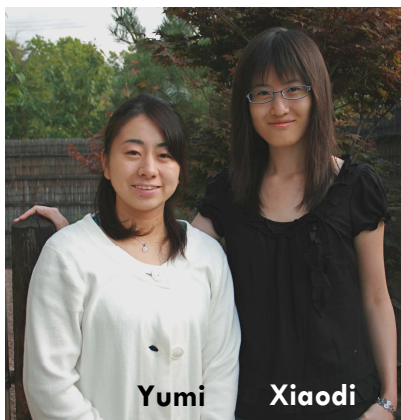
provided drums and instructions. Also present was the taiko master and former leader of the Shumei Taiko Ensemble, Koji Nakamura. He taught the students attending the workshop a musical piece and spoke a bit about his own experience learning taiko. Instead of enacting his old grueling daily regimen of running 14+ miles a day in addition to a demanding set of push-ups, the students merely completed 10 push-ups and 100 hand exercises to "strengthen themselves".

The following night, traditional Japanese music filled Armstrong as the Crestone Kaminari Taiko, Nakamura, koto

Making Some Noise: Taiko Drumming

player Bea Brecht, and shinobue flutist Yuki Isami played in concert. Hosted by CC's Asian Studies program, the LA Japan Foundation, and the Japan-America Society of Southern Colorado with our own Professor Maruyama, the program focused on traditional forms of Japanese music.

Resulting from the Kaminari Taiko's adherence to Shumei principles, which emphasize the pure aural beauty and spirituality of drumming, the prevailing theme of the night was art and beauty. One of Nishiyama's goals for his group is to "fill our hearts and the hearts of those listening with joy and beauty." Judging by the synchronized energy exchange between the performers and audience, music and emotion, the concert was an enormous success.



Meet the new Asian CPCs

With the start of a new school year at Colorado College, we welcomed two new Asian Cultural Program Coordinators (CPCs) to our campus.



Xiaodi Shen, Xiaodi.Shen@ColoradoCollege.edu – Chinese CPC
Xiaodi, a native of Beijing, was supposed to be a senior at Shanghai's Fudan University this year, but came to CC instead as an exchange student. This is not only her first time coming to the United States, but also her first time out of China.

She is available for Chinese tutoring and learning about Chinese culture. Xiaodi hosts the Chinese Language Table every block, where participants speak Chinese and discuss certain topics.

Goal at CC: Xiaodi wants to experience something different from her home country. CC provides a stepping stone to understanding the rest of the world.

Favorite food: moon cakes – and they're better when watching the moon

Hobbies: reading, taking photographs, Japanese anime

Favorite anime: Axis Powers Hetalia

Yumi Sato, Yumi.Sato@ColoradoCollege.edu – Japanese CPC

Yumi comes to us as a part-time English teacher from Kawagoya city in Saitama prefecture. She graduated from Sophia University three years ago and is now on the Fulbright Scholarship. While here, Yumi hopes to improve her teaching skills; second language acquisition; and knowledge of American culture and history.

Spending some time in the US during her childhood years and experiencing American culture, she'd like to now give back by teaching Japanese culture.

Yumi is available for Japanese tutoring and welcomes those studying Japanese language/culture to attend the Asian house events. She also hosts a blockly Japanese table.

Goal here at CC: "I want to experience the American melting pot and its multi-dimensional culture. In Japan, there are regional differences, but it is still all the same – Japanese."

Favorite food: oyakodon, a great comfort food

Hobbies: listening to music, and playing tennis for fun

Favorite motto: 日進月歩 [nisshin geppo] steady progress, improving a little everyday

Asian American Student Union

AASU 

NOT Asian? • NOT American? • NOT a problem!!!

Asian American Student Union
presents

give a hand to rebuild hope

August 8th, 2009 marked the start of the worst typhoon market southern Taiwan has seen in over 50 years. July 22nd, Taiwan was hit yet again by Typhoon Morakot.

The Chinese American Council of Colorado is setting up a goodwill mission to help with disaster relief. Please help us contribute to their cause.


buy an eggroll (\$2.00) to raise money for typhoon victims


thursday, october 15th - worner - 11:45 am to 1:30 pm



MOSAIC

MOVIE NIGHT
Friday, October 16th
WES Room
5:30 pm





TASTE
OF THE WORLD
Sunday, Nov. 8th
More details to come

AASU, KASA, SASA, and MOSAIC Meeting Times:

Always welcoming new members...

<p>Asian American Student Union (AASU)</p> <p>Korean American Student Association (KASA)</p> <p>Students for the Awareness of South Asia (SASA)</p> <p>Multi-Cultural Organization of Students & International Community (MOSAIC)</p>	<p>Co-Chairs: Ádám Kóbori & Dominic Alvarado 1st/3rd Wednesdays - 6PM - Upstairs Worner</p> <p>Co-Chairs: Ana Carriedo & Alex Song 1st/3rd Thursdays - 6PM - Upstairs Worner</p> <p>Co-Chairs: Anjali Desai & Jennie Crittenden Tuesdays - 6:30PM - Glass House</p> <p>Co-Chairs: Mihi Joshi & Stephanie Coba Chavez Thursday - 7PM - Upstairs Worner</p>
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Students for the Awareness for South Asia

Diwali Festival of Lights

Saturday, October 17th, 2009

Bemis Great Hall

5:00 pm

Sponsored by SASA & Chaplain's office



CC Graduate Andy Smith Shares Experiences After Six Years in Japan



Andy Smith graduated in 2001 from Colorado College with a major in Asian Studies. As a native of Colorado Springs, Andy became aware that Colorado

Spring had a sister city named Fujiyoshida in Japan. After spending two years as a carpenter in Colorado Springs and Seattle, Andy applied for the Assistant Language Teacher (ALT) position through the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (JET) in Fujiyoshida. Andy spent three years as an ALT before taking a position as a Coordinator for International Relations (CIR).

He describes the programs as beyond just teaching English or translating, but as becoming part of

the community. For example, taiko became one of his connections with the community. Andy played with the local taiko group for several years and even traveled with the group to perform in Colorado Springs.

He recommends that those considering to apply for JET show the ability to adapt, organize, and have a genuine interest in Japan. Applicants do not need to have previous teaching experience or certification, but they certainly are bonuses.

JET is considered the premier English teaching program in Japan and one of the best in the world. Due to the current economic downturn the program has become very competitive with more applicants vying for fewer openings in Japan. However, if you are privileged enough to be selected for this program, you will have an unforgettable experience as part of a Japanese community.



Pakistani Cartoonist Nigar Nazar shares Her Humor and Message

Nigar Nazar was featured as part of the Spiritual Journey Series hosted by Shove Chapel the first week of block 2. Along with Corb Hillam, they presented how cartooning continues to influence their outreach to the community.

Nazar's cartooning career started in the newspapers. She had decided to be the only female, comic cartoonist in Pakistan among the many political cartoonists; "Only when I was angry would I draw political cartoons, but they would not get published except on my website, www.gogicomics.com."



Nigar Nazar created some original cartoons for the audience

Nazar has also contributed to UNICEF's brochures and pamphlets educating people about health and hygiene. This had inspired her to expand the topic and publish her own book, "The Garbage Monster," as well as creating a board game about the dos and don'ts of the environment.

While Nazar was away from Pakistan on a Fulbright Scholarship, Pakistan had established a bus system. Nazar noticed immediately the empty canvas on the side of the buses. She took initiatives to start painting the buses to convey positive messages to the community. Some of these topics include: good governance, national unity, respecting elders, and most importantly addressing women's rights and literacy. Nazar sees herself as "the mouth-piece for women in Pakistan – their voices need to be heard."



Nigar Nazar has made cartoons that satirize the current political, legal and cultural situation of the country.





No Shame in Specializing in Asian Studies: Riley Scholar Zelideth Rivas

Zelideth Rivas specializes in Japanese-Brazilian immigration, touching on memory – how immigrants remember their childhood in Japan; victimization – laws that prohibit immigration; and adaptation – linguistic fusions of Portuguese and Japanese language and life-style.

Rivas became interested in Japanese culture in high school. She was sent to Japan for a year through the Rotary Youth Exchange Program. Initially, she had wanted to study in Europe, which only accepted students 17 years old and up. Unfortunately, Rivas was fourteen at the time.

As an undergraduate at Wellesley College, Rivas was pursuing a degree in International Relations. However, another incident directed her life towards Japanese. When declaring her major, she had a conversation with the Dean about her current classes. The Dean commented to Rivas, “Your eyes don’t shine when you talk about IR as much as they do when you talk about Japanese literature.”

While writing her dissertation at the University of California Berkeley, Rivas focused on Japanese-Brazilian immigration. Her father had raised the issue that she knew so much about another culture but not enough about her own Latino heritage. This in turn directed her interests toward child immigration literature.

Rivas pursued her passion despite the difficulties faced accepting Japanese Studies as an “impractical major.” The reason she had chosen IR as her initial major was because IR was “practical,” — a major that was associated with a career in the end. Rivas is very happy with her decision in the end. Her passion is in studying immigration — “telling the stories and making sure [immigrants’] voices are heard.”

Rivas has a lot to share about the unique topic of the Asian experience in North and South America. In her classes she touches on a variety of topics including the international evolution of the California roll and advertisement depictions of Japanese-Brazilians. Please look into enrolling in one (or both) of these classes offered by Rivas: block 3) Race & Exploration of Diasporic Literature, and block 7) Literary (Re)presentations of Asians in the Americas.



Hatsugama celebration in Brazil
Picture credit to Zeli Rivas



Look for her
classes block
3 and 7!

More Crestone visitors

On the afternoon of September 7th, the Asian House had some interesting visitors. Nine college and graduate school students, accompanied by none other than Crestone Kaminari Taiko leader Kenichi Nishiyama, (see Taiko, pg 2) came to hear CC Professor Maruyama speak about Japan-US relations. They were interested in learning from Maruyama due to his Japanese and American background. The students were visiting the Shumei International Center in Crestone on a goodwill trip/religious retreat. This is the second time that Nishiyama has brought international students on such a trip to CC.

The magical world of KABUKI *continued...*

itself in Kominz's lecture, "Kabuki Stars: Edo Period to Today," based on his new book, *The Stars Who Created Kabuki: Their Lives, Loves, and Legacy*. Since "the playwrights of kabuki wrote at the best of the stars, and not innovation," the main actors were in essence the directors. Following this thread, Kominz related the dynamic history of kabuki in brief through prominent stars.



Izumo no Okuni

The first kabuki performers were in fact women, the most famous being Okuni, who dressed androgynously on a Noh stage. In the 1620s the typical kabuki actress was acting by day and a prostitute by night. Though banned from this low-class entertainment, samurai often went in disguise to view plays. However, samurai's eventual fights over the leading ladies led to a ban on female kabuki performers in 1629. Nevertheless, the same drama ensued with the young male entertainers who replaced the women. In the end, kabuki evolved into an all-male institution and continues to be one today in traditional kabuki troupes.

Kominz commented that part of kabuki's allure lies in the effective conveyance of the heterosexual ideal (*aragoto* & *onnagata*) by only one gender (all

men in Kabuki, or all women in Takarazuka theatre).

The following day, Sept. 18th, Professor Kominz held a workshop in Cossit, which consisted of:

- merchant, princess, *aragoto*-character play & *mie*
- old retainer, lord, *aragoto* vocal work
- sword fight choreography
- watching a kabuki production by Kominz's students

Later that afternoon, Kominz helped instruct Professor Joan Ericson's class on how to perform "The Sardine Seller's Net of Love," a complex tale of love and irony. The high-pitched voices of the *onnagata* roles, the presence of a true *onnagata* (a male student playing a girl), and the ensemble of students pretending to be a horse resulted in a good deal of laughter. Commenting on kabuki's exaggerated spectacle, Kominz exclaimed, "This is the big, bold, clashing colors side of Japanese culture that I love." We at CC enjoyed the drama he brought onto campus first block and look forward to his return.



Kominz and students

"[Kabuki] is the big, bold, clashing colors side of Japanese culture that I love."

— Professor Kominz



Professors Condry, Williams, Bhattacharjya, and Ericson meet before the speech

Ian Condry Presents Samurai Gangsta: Hip-Hop, Japan, and the New Politics of Change

Ian Condry, an associate Professor of Japanese cultural studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, presented the Gaylord Endowed Lecture in

Asian Studies on October 6. He specializes in contemporary Japan, with emphasis on roles of media, popular culture, and globalization.

Professor Condry's speech discussed material from his first book [Hip-Hop Japan: Rap and the Paths of Cultural Globalization](#). He describes the book as an ethnographic study of "Japanese rap music scene, exploring issues of race, gender, language, popular music history, and cultural politics primarily through the perspectives of Japanese musicians." Professor Condry's preparation included

fieldwork from 1995-97 in Japan at nightclubs and hip-hop performances.

Most college students would love to go to nightclubs and concerts a couple of nights a week in the name of research, but he insisted that the work was exhausting and presented unique challenges to anthropological research, like gathering participant background information in a noisy location from occasional individuals.

Professor Condry raised the question of whether music influences culture or culture influences music. Through songs, rappers addressed topics like 9/11, Hiroshima, capitalism, and education that extend beyond the border of any nation. Works like these demonstrate that Japanese hip-hop is not only making dance music for clubs, but also confronting issues to make us all think about our place in the world.

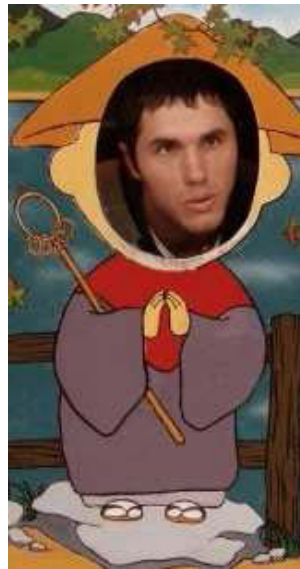
Introducing... the Asian Studies Interns



Jen Myers

Sophomore; Asian Studies

Interests: Art, Skiing, Asian music, Bento boxes and coconut water



Sam Buchanan

Senior; Economics major

Interests: Ecological Economics, Religion, and Gender Studies



Lisa Ly

Senior; IPE & Asian Studies double major

Interests: Cello and Chinatowns

Asian Studies Opening Reception and Study Abroad Opportunities in Asia

On September 29th, 2009 the Asian Studies hosted its annual opening reception. Students who spent a portion of the previous year abroad were invited to share their experiences with students interested in study abroad and with the Asian Studies faculty.

If you were unable to attend the event but are still interested in discovering study abroad options in Asia, then please visit the Asian Studies website or the International Programs. Please be aware that programs have different deadlines. Programs beginning in the spring will have fall deadlines; programs

beginning in the spring will have fall deadlines. Be on the look out for one-block courses abroad as well!

Do you want candid advice from a student that went abroad? Free to contact any of the students below:

China: Lisa Ly, Rosemary Handschy (CET located in Beijing and Harbin)

Thailand: Anna Perks and Anna Johnson (International Sustainable Development Studies Institute in Chiang Mai)

India: Sarah Schulte (ACM India Studies in Pune)

Nepal: Brittin Alfred (Pitzer in Nepal in Kathmandu)

Japan: Sam Buchanan (Kansai Gaidai University in Osaka)

Christina Mitchell, and Victoria Silver (Japan Study at Waseda University in Tokyo)

Happy Travels!



Colorado College

The Lotus is a publication of the
Asian Studies Program

Brought to you by the AS Interns:
Jen Myers
Lisa Ly
Sam Buchanan



Looking for a Block 3 Course?

This course addresses how displaced communities remember and narrate their experiences. We will consider approaches to conceptualizing race, racism, and racialization. Ultimately, we will be asking: what does diasporic literature have to contribute to an understanding of race as a social relation and historically dynamic process?

