

An Evening of Noh and Kyogen 2022



Free
online
video
streaming

2022
December 24 Sat.
from **2:00 p.m.**

The Japan Foundation
Official YouTube Channel

<https://youtu.be/u4tNmSJLaxQ>



Noh

DAIE

(The Great Sermon)

KATAYAMA Kurouemon
Kanze School Noh actor



Kyogen

FUTARI DAIMYO

(The Two Feudal Lords)

SHIGEYAMA Sengoro
Okura School Kyogen actor

Free for one year

Both productions will be presented with English subtitles giving a synopsis of the plot.

Presented by : The Japan Foundation Kyoto Office

In cooperation with : Katayama Noh and Kyomai Preservation Foundation · Shigeyama Kyogen Troupe
Kyoto Kanze Association · Art Research Center, Ritsumeikan University

“Daie” (The Great Sermon)

Noh

“Daie” means a great sermon in Buddhism. In this piece, it refers specifically to Sakyamuni’s great sermon.

One day, a tengu in the guise of a yamabushi mountain priest appears before a Buddhist monk in training. The tengu says that the monk has once saved his life, so as a token of gratitude, he offers to grant the monk any wish he desires. The tengu had once been dropped from a tree when he was disguised as a bird. Just as he was about to be killed, the monk had come and saved him. The monk replies that he has always cherished the thought of seeing Sakyamuni deliver his sermon on the Vulture Peak. The tengu agrees to gratify his wish and show him the sermon, but warns the monk not to worship what he sees for it is not real, and then leaves.

The tengu’s servant appears and recounts the story of how the tengu’s life was saved.

The tengu reappears, in the guise of Sakyamuni and replicates the sermon. The monk, on seeing this, cannot help but worship the false image of the Buddha. No sooner has he done that than Indra, the guardian deity of Buddhism, descends from the heavens, rebuking the tengu for deluding the monk. Startled, the tengu sheds his disguise and reveals his true form. He apologizes, and then vanishes.

Tengus’ existence destroys people’s faith in Buddhism. Their evolution has taken some twists and turns, and in Japan, as we get closer to modern times, these creatures are often depicted as having long noses. However, tengu in Noh plays do not have this prominent feature.

Among the various types of Noh plays, there are Noh plays characterized by a faster tempo and which tell a fairytale-like story, like this piece, “Daie”.

An Evening of Synopsis Noh and Kyogen 2022

“The Two Feudal Lords”

Kyogen

Two feudal lords are headed to the capital city of Kyoto. Unaccompanied by his servant, the protagonist feudal lord has to carry his tachi or long sword himself. They see a passerby and force him into service to carry the sword. Feeling indignant at the arrogance of the two feudal lords, the passerby swings the sword as if to slash the two, catching them off guard. The passerby turns the tables on the two. The two feudal lords have their clothes taken away and are made to act like roosters and dogs, laying themselves open to teasing.

In this “low overcoming the high” parable, the feudal lords, forgetting that they are being teased, gradually start to feel amused and end up having fun together with the man. The performance brings the laid-back atmosphere of medieval times to life.

Every year in autumn, The Japan Foundation Kyoto Office organizes an event called “An Evening of Noh and Kyogen” to give people an opportunity to experience traditional Japanese culture. This year, performances will be recorded once again to increase public visibility. Following that, these recordings will be available for free one-year online video viewing.