

Tuesday 18 June | 7.30pm | Snape Maltings Concert Hall

Sumidagawa

Shizuka Mikata *shite*, mother
Seigo Mikuriya *waki*, ferryman

Monet Hirai *kokata*, child

Akiko Yanagisawa creative producer/
co-ordinator

Gasho Yamanaka *jiutai* chorus
Kohei Kawaguchi *jiutai* chorus
Yasuki Kobayakawa *jiutai* chorus
Yasumitsu Kobayakawa *jiutai* chorus

Yasuhiro Sakoh *nohkan* (flute)
Tatsushi Narita *kotsuzumi* (shoulder drum)
Tetsuya Yamamoto *otsuzumi* (hip drum)

Pre-performance talk 6.30pm Peter Pears Recital Room

Kohei Kawaguchi (*shite* actor, Kanze school) and Jason James (director general of the Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation) discuss *Sumidagawa*

30'

A Tale of the Sumida River
adapted from the Noh play 'Sumidagawa'

25'

Xanthe Gresham-Knight storyteller and writer
Gareth Matthey co-writer and dramaturg
Carlos Davey sound design

INTERVAL

Sumidagawa
by Kanze Motomasa (c.1400–1432)

90'

Hayley Cox maker of burial mound (structure)

Sumidagawa is presented in partnership with
Noh Reimagined, produced by
Akiko Yanagisawa (Mu Arts Japan)

Total duration: approx 135'
including a 20-minute interval

With thanks to Professor Sir Barry Lfe for his kind support

A note on the actors in Noh plays

Shite – the principal actor. All Noh plays involve a protagonist who undergoes some kind of transformative emotional experience.

Waki – the supporting actor, a foil to the protagonist. While *shite* roles transcend reality and sometimes appear as an apparition or spirit, *waki* is a male character living in the real world. It is the encounter between the *shite* and the *waki* that leads in some way to the emotional experience.

Jitai – the chorus group. This sits in the designated *jitai-za* (chorus seat) on the right of the stage. The chorus chants to describe the scene or express the mind of the characters.

Kokata – a role played by a child actor. In Noh plays the *kokata* do not wear masks.

A Tale of the Sumida River

Come with me on a journey.
I have a story to tell. One story, every story.
A mother – once noble.
A child – now lost.
And a ferryman to ferry us where we must go.
Climb on board.
We must journey on, journey on –
Looking for what has gone.
Eastwards is the way.
But first – we must cross the Sumida River.

Today the Sumida River snakes its way through the beating heart of Tokyo, flowing past temples and stadiums and into Tokyo Bay. But long ago the Sumida River flowed free, between marshes and fens, uncontrolled by human hands. This was a wild landscape – Tokyo didn't exist, and civilisation itself lay far away to the west. To see a city-woman from the far-away capital Kyoto, all alone, far from home, bamboo branch in hand, was a clear sign to traveller and ferryman alike – the woman must be mad. For if not mad, what else could drive her desperate need to cross the Sumida River?

A Tale of Sumida River is commissioned by Noh Reimagined

Noh Reimagined 2024 is supported by:
Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan, Japan Arts Council
Arts Council Tokyo (Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture)
Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation
Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation
Japan World Exposition Commemorative Fund