

Japan Culture Group

Project Leader

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Digitization of Classical Theater Archives

This project aims to develop, in cooperation with research institutes at home and abroad, a digital database and its effective use of classical theater archives, including showing and casting information. The database's major part comes from enormous collections on traditional performing arts that the Art Research Center has been accumulating. We are hoping that digital archiving technology we have been developing will be a driving force for establishing the world-scale research infrastructures and research in Japanese traditional performing arts.

-Compiling a Comprehensive Chronological Table of Kabuki and Bunraku Theater

In this project we have been compiling the web version of a comprehensive chronological table of the Kabuki and Bunraku theatre up to the break of WWII. The chronological table contains the following databases which correlate with each other.

- 1) Chronological table of showings in places such as Edo, Osaka, Kyoto, and Nagoya.
- 2) Database of actors' names
- 3) Database of casting and places where actors performed
- 4) Database of archival materials with images



--Digital Data Archives

Related to the above-mentioned archival materials, aiming at creating chronological tables with bibliographic references and commentaries which have never been compiled in paper form, we are digitalizing images of the materials and developing a research environment that enables the visitor to trace back to original sources. As of now, the following digital image databases are available:

- 1) Show bills (available at ARC, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Kunitachi College of Music, Nihon University, etc.)
- 2) Kabuki music scripts reference systems (ARC, Kunitachi College of Music, etc.)
- 3) Actor prints (ARC, Tokyo Metropolitan Library, Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum at Waseda University, etc.)
- 4) Ledgers (ARC, Kunitachi College of Music, Nihon University, etc.)



-- Website Management of Information about Classical Theater Showings

We are developing a website to accumulate information about on-going classical stage performances through online postings. By managing this website and its English and Chinese versions which form a participatory community, we hope to organize and channel amassing information so that we could build up expert knowledge on the web sphere and disseminate abroad new knowledge on Japanese classical theater.

Collaborating Institutions:

Kunitachi College of Music, Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum at Waseda University, Shochiku Otani Library, and Cornell University GloPac.