

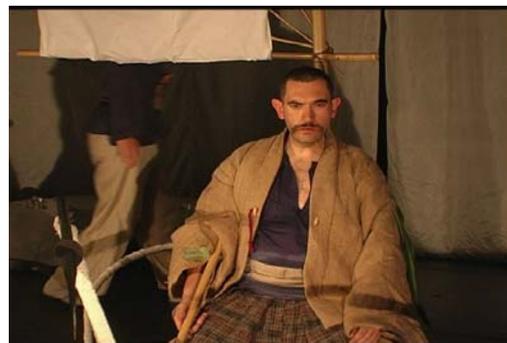
EDUCATOR GUIDE

Story Theme: Looking East

Subject: Theatre of Yugen

Discipline: Theatre

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Performance still from *The Old Man and The Sea* at Theatre of Yugen. Still image from SPARK story, 2005.

SECTION I - OVERVIEW

EPISODE THEME

Looking East

SUBJECT

Theatre of Yugen

GRADE RANGES

K-12 & Post-secondary

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Visual Arts & Language Arts

OBJECTIVE

To introduce students to the Theatre of Yugen's adaptation of the classic American novel *The Old Man and The Sea* by Ernest Hemingway, a unique production based on the aesthetic of traditional Japanese Noh theatre.

STORY SYNOPSIS

Theatre of Yugen was founded in 1978 by Yuriko Doi to bring classical Japanese theater to American audiences. Based on Japanese Noh drama and Kyogen comedy, the Yugen ensemble crafts highly stylized productions from dramatic and literary classics. SPARK goes backstage for their adaptation of Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and The Sea*.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Group oral discussion, review and analysis, including peer review and aesthetic valuing
Teacher-guided instruction, including demonstration and guidance
Hands-on individual projects in which students work independently
Hands-on group projects in which students assist and support one another
Critical reflection on personal expressions and how they are seen and received by others

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

To help students to:

Understand the classical Japanese theatrical performance style of Noh theatre and the art of fusion theatre

Consider different philosophical and aesthetic approaches to theatrical performance and how performing arts can articulate different cultural perspectives

Engage with the process of translating narrative into theatrical performance

Develop in performance skills to develop self esteem, confidence, and creativity

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

SPARK story on Theatre of Yugen on DVD or VHS and related equipment

Computer with Internet access, navigation software, speakers and a sounds card, printer

MATERIALS NEEDED

Access to libraries with up-to-date collections of periodicals, books, and research papers

Pencils, pens, and paper

INTELLIGENCES ADDRESSED

Bodily-Kinesthetic - control of one's own body, control in handling objects

Interpersonal - awareness of others' feelings, emotions, goals, motivations

Intrapersonal - awareness of one's own feelings, emotions, goals, motivations

Spatial - ability to manipulate and create mental images in order to solve problems

Logical-Mathematical - ability to detect patterns, reason deductively, think logically

SECTION II – CONTENT/CONTEXT

CONTENT OVERVIEW

Theatre of Yugen was founded in 1978 by Yuriko Doi to bring classical Japanese theater to American audiences. Based on Japanese Noh drama and Kyogen comedy, the Yugen ensemble crafts highly stylized productions from dramatic and literary classics. SPARK goes backstage for their adaptation of Ernest Hemingway’s *The Old Man and The Sea*.

Yuriko Doi was born into a family that was steeped in traditional performance arts. After training in Japan, she came to San Francisco and became interested in fusion, in crafting original material by combining popular Western stories and plays with classical Japanese theatrical forms. In 2001 Jubilith Moore, Libby Zilber and Lluís Valls took over from Doi as co-artistic directors and continued her mission. Using the theatrical elements and techniques of Noh theatre, Jubilith Moore stylizes *The Old Man and the Sea*, adapting this Western classic to the richly symbolic and controlled pace of Noh. Her production invites the audience to enter into the meditative, refined space of classical Japanese theatre – to suspend disbelief and “be” in the moment.

Noh is the oldest form of theatre in Japan dating back to the 14th century. It is highly stylized, non-realistic and ritualized as a theatrical form, emphasizing stillness rather than action, symbolism and allusion rather than realism and representation. With minimal dialogue, a slow meditative pace and mannered movement, there is a stillness and grace to this dramatic form that can challenge American audiences, who bring different cultural expectations to the art of performance. As a work of fusion theatre, *The Old Man and The Sea* production presents unhurried musical rhythms, chanting, controlled choreography, masks, shadows and puppetry. Hemingway’s simple tale is rich in symbolism and allegorical meaning, and it is recounted sparingly in distilled prose in the Yugen production.

The traditional Noh aesthetic is minimalist; the set is sparse and props such as puppetry, costumes and masks play an important part. In Moore’s set the glass art of artist Kana Tanaka serves as the sparkling silver sea upon which the story largely takes place, and the marlin, both of which create dramatic images of reflected light.

Hemingway’s novella is about an old fisherman who in his small skiff embarks on what may be his final fishing trip. He has had bad luck and is determined to triumph this time and bring in a great swordfish, the drama revolving around his fruitless battle with the fish, and immense will to endure in spite of great loss. It is a symbolic tale imbued with layers of meaning and depth. Fused with the Japanese art of Noh, the production invites us to enter a different space and look through the glass at what lies beneath the surface. It offers us “moments of yugen” (in the words of Lluís Valls the actor who plays Santiago, the old man). *Yu* defined as “deep, quiet, otherworldly;” *gen* meaning the subtle, profound, dark.”



Performance still from “*The Old Man and the Sea*” at Theatre of Yugen. Still image from SPARK story, 2005.

The Theatre of Yugen’s Noh, Kyogen and fusion pieces have played to great acclaim in San Francisco and on national and international tours for more than twenty years. Two West Coast tours have been sponsored by the Consul General of Japan and particularly acclaimed projects include: a Kyogen

version of *Waiting for Godot*; Noh versions of *Antigone*, *Medea* and Yeat's *Purgatory*; *Kokoro/True Heart* by Velina Hasu Houston (which one a Bay Area Critic's Circle Award for Best Direction); *Blood Wine*, *Blood Wedding*, Carol Sorgenfriei's fusion of Kabuki and Flamenco and Erik Ehn's Noh/Native American *Crazy Horse*.

Under the new leadership in 2001 highlights have included *At the Hawks Well National Tour* in collaboration with Theatre Nohgaku, *The Clay Play* and a collection of Kyogen comedies entitled *Sorya!* In 2003 Erik Ehn's Noh-distilled *Frankenstein* was premiered. The Theatre of Yugen has also presented visiting master Noh performers in the Bay Area many times working in collaboration with Cal Performances, the Asian Art Museum, the Consul General of Japan and Japan Society of Northern CA.

The Theatre of Yugen also offers training and education programs for K-12, university students, and adults.



Rehearsal for "The Old Man and The Sea" at Theatre of Yugen. Still image from SPARK story, 2005.

THE BIG PICTURE

FUSION IN THEATRE

'Fusion' has become popular in recent years as a descriptor for new theatre, dance and musical works that unite different cultural traditions. David Brandon in *No and Kyogen in the Contemporary World* discusses the difficulty of successful intercultural productions. He contends that the cultural forms that fuse most effectively share a fundamental quality among their internal elements. He cites a Kabuki actor directing and acting in *The Dragon King* performed by actors and musicians of the Beijing Opera. He argues that the success of this fusion derived from the similar aesthetic that they share, both coming from Asia and using similar make-up and costumes and use of stage space. However he

concedes "In the end of course the vision of the fusing artists determines what works." (David Brandon)



Rehearsal for "The Old Man and The Sea" at Theatre of Yugen. Still image from SPARK story, 2005.

Yuriko Doi produced works that melded Kabuki with Flamenco, Filipino traditions with Noh, Noh with Native-American performance and history – moving beyond religious, racial and political boundaries. "Her repertory falls into six categories: Noh, fusion, contemporary Japanese and just plain contemporary. Masks, evocative costumes and dance-like movement are part of the mix."¹ Doi discusses the delicate balance involved in presenting these works to American audiences, acknowledging that if the conventions are adjusted too much, it is no longer Noh or Kyogen.

Today major cities in North and South America, Europe and Asia regularly host professional touring troupes of Noh and Kyogen as well as Indonesian shadow theatre, Indian Kathakali, Chinese opera and Cambodian dance which make audiences more receptive to multicultural productions. Examples of such productions are Peter Brook's *Mahabharata*, performed by an international cast, Robert Wilson's European-American-Japanese "Theatre of Images" productions, David Henry Hwang's *M Butterfly*, which mixed Chinese opera with *Madame Butterfly*, and *Into the Woods* which used a runway as a central theatrical element in the manner of American Kabuki.

¹ "The Theatre of Yugen," Jean Shiffman, *Callboard*, Theatre- Bay Area, December 2004 - <http://www.theatrebayarea.org/callboard/article.jsp?id=203>

SECTION III – RESOURCES

TEXTS & ARTICLES

Brandon, James. No and Kyogen in the Contemporary World. University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu, 1997.

Ehn, Erik ed. Theatre of Yugen 25 Years. A Retrospective. San Francisco, 2004.

Hemingway, Ernest. The Old Man and The Sea, 1952.

Komparu, Kunio. The Noh Theater: Principles and Perspectives. New York/Tokyo: Weatherhill/Tankosha, 1983.

Lombard, Frank Alanson. An Outline History of The Japanese Drama. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1928.

Nichi Bei Times - <http://www.nichibeitimes.com>
Japanese American bilingual daily newspaper for Northern California published in San Francisco

Nikkei West - <http://www.nikkeiwest.com>
Japanese-American bi-weekly newspaper published in San Jose.

Pound, Ezra and Fenollosa, Ernest. The Classic Noh Theatre of Japan. New Directions Paperbook, 1959.

Schiffmann, Jean. "The Theatre of Yugen Fusion." Callboard, Theatre Bay Area, December, 2004.
<http://www.theatrebayarea.org/callboard/article.jsp?id=203>

Tyler, Royall ed. Japanese NO Dramas. Penguin Classics, London, 1992.

Waley, Arthur. The NO Plays of Japan. Charles Tuttle Company, 1976.

WEB SITES

Theatre of Yugen
www.theatreofyugen.org

Study Guide on The Old Man and The Sea including plot, context and analysis -
<http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/oldman>

Center for Japanese Studies @ UC Berkeley
<http://ieas.berkeley.edu/cjs/>

Japan Society of Northern California
<http://www.usajapan.org/>

The Japanese American History Archives
<http://amacord.com/fillmore/museum/jt/jaha/jaha.html>

Center for Japanese Studies, UC Berkeley
<http://ieas.berkeley.edu/cjs>

Kabuki for Everyone
<http://www.fix.co.jp/kabuki/kabuki.html>

Japan Performing Arts Net
Information on Japanese performing arts, links to a wide range of theatre and dance companies and details of Japan Foundation Performing Arts exchange programs. -
<http://www.performingarts.jp/index.html>

Japan Information Network – Follow: "Web Japan" - "Culture" - "performing arts" - "music." -
<http://jin.jcic.or.jp>

National Theatre of Japan Excellent informational site for Noh, Kyogen and Bunraku -
<http://www2.ntj.jac.go.jp/unesco/noh/en>

Kana Tanaka – Glass artist whose work is featured in The Old Man and The Sea - <http://www.kanatanaka.com>

Asian Theatre Timeline produced by Northeastern University - <http://www.atsweb.neu.edu/theatre.history/thhist2/timeline-asia-1.htm>

VIDEO RESOURCES

Japan: The Living Tradition: The Performing Arts, Parts 1 & 2 [VHS] (Color; 1976) Lincoln, NB: University of Mid-America. Nebraska ETV Network; GNP Distributors; Directed by Ken Rockefeller, Produced by Robert J. Allen (Program #11 and #12 of a television series)

Aspects of the Kabuki Theatre of Japan [VHS] (Color; 13 minutes) (1987) Produced by the Northwood Institute and the Institute of Advanced Studies in the Theatre Arts (I.A.S.T.A.), New York: IASTA

Japanese Theatre in the World [VHS] (Japanese title: Sekai no naka no nitron Engeki) (Color; 1997) Tokyo: Process Sihizai Co. Images for an Exhibition "Japanese Theatre in the World" held in New York and Munich, October 1997 – May 1998. Overview of Noh, Kyogen, Kabuki, Bunraku and Butoh.

Throne of Blood, Kurosawa Akira [VHS & DVD] (Black & White; 1961) Noh theatre styled film based on Shakespeare's Macbeth set in medieval Japan. In Japanese with English subtitles.

The Well-Curb [VHS] (Color; 1999) National Noh Theatre, produced by Nippon Eiga Shinsha Co., Ltd.

Kabuki (The Art of Kabuki) (56 min, 1988) Discusses the origin and forms of Kabuki; contains excerpts from a variety of Kabuki performances.

Noh Theatre (The Style of the Classic Japanese Noh) (171 min) Discusses the origins and forms of Noh. Narration written by Richard Abel. Performance excerpts enacted by Sadayo Kita assisted by Akiyo Tomoeda and members of the Kita School of the Noh.

Noh, Theatre of Japan (29 min, 1980) Excerpts from the Noh plays "Funu Benkei" (Benkei in the Boat) by Kojiro and "Hanjo" (The Lady Han) by Zeami. Directed by Larry D. McMullen. Performed by Akira Matsui.

The Tradition of Performing Arts in Japan: The Heart of Kabuki, Noh and Bunraku [VHS] (38 min., 1989) Produced by Shin-El, inc.; Written and directed by Hajime Funatsu, B and CI Distributors, 1989. Nippon Steel Human Resources Development Co. Documentary examining the artistry and technique of the Kabuki, Noh, and Bunraku theatres in Japan. Sample Noh Theatre clip (Color; 18 minutes) http://www.city.kanazawa.ishikawa.jp/hayabunka/beauty/noh/noh_ps.mov

BAY AREA FIELD TRIPS

Theatre of Yugen
2840 Mariposa Street, San Francisco, CA 94110
415/621.0507
Web: www.theatreofyugen.org

Asian Art Museum
200 Larkin Street, San Francisco, CA 94102
415/581.3500
<http://www.asianart.org/pastexhibitions.htm>
Programs for Educators -
<http://www.asianart.org/foreducators.htm>

Japanese Tea Garden in Golden Gate Park
http://www.frp.org/japanese_tea_garden.asp

Japanese American Museum of San Jose
535 North Fifth Street, San Jose, CA 95112
(408) 294-3138
<http://www.jamsj.org>

SECTION IV – CLASSICAL JAPANESE PERFORMING ARTS

Reprinted from Theatre of Yugen Co-Artistic Director Jubilith Moore's Classroom Study Guide

Noh

Noh is the oldest professional theater that still exists today, and has been a part of Japanese culture since the 14th century. It is a highly artistic and stylized form of musical theater. The story is told through dialogue, *utai* (singing), *hayashi* (musical accompaniment) and dance. The characters are dressed in heavy, elaborate costumes that remain from the days when Noh was economically supported by wealthy patrons, who gave gifts of rich robes and masks to show their favor. The leading actor usually wears a lacquered wooden mask, which depicts such characters as an old man, a young or old woman, a divine figure, a ghost and a young boy.

Noh is a highly refined, richly symbolic and beautifully stylized dance drama written in lyric poetry. It is tragic theatre, deeply philosophical and concerned with man's spiritual beliefs and moral codes. Theatrical elements include a simple elegant setting, elaborate costumes, two-three main characters, a chorus and a musical ensemble of three drummers and flutist.

Following a philosophy of simplicity, the Noh stage is almost entirely bare, adding to the stylized, ethereal feel of the performance. Connected to the dressing room by a long bridge is the rear stage, and in front of that, the main stage. The musicians sit between these two stages during the performance. The form of Noh is so structured that the performers even have specific places to stand. The main character (the *shite*) stands by the pillar on stage right, while the supporting character (usually a monk or religious figure called the *waki*) stands at the pillar on stage left.

Kyogen

Kyogen literally means "crazy words" and is a type of classical comic theatre that is performed with highly stylized action and lines. It is staged between Noh performances, although it is sometimes performed in its own right. It addresses such worldly concerns as greed, vanity and the pleasure of outwitting someone. These short comedies are cast with stock characters of servants and masters, wives and husbands and feuding Buddhist priests.

Kyogen characters fall into humorous situations as a result of human weaknesses. Developed at about the same time as Noh, Kyogen are characterized by realism and down-to-earth humor, in sharp contrast to the lofty and minimalist tone of Noh. The strong acting of Kyogen is usually carried out with powerful and precisely articulated dialogue and the occasional use of musical instruments.

Kabuki

Kabuki is a form of classical theatre that evolved in the early 17th century. It is characterized by the rhythm of the lines spoken by the actors, extravagant costumes, flamboyant make-up (*kumadori*) and the use of mechanical devices to achieve special effects on stage. The make-up accentuates the personalities and moods of the characters. Most plays draw on medieval or Edo period themes, and due to a government ban on women and young boy performers, kabuki developed as a theatrical art performed by adult males alone, giving rise to the institution of *onnagata* – male actors who specialize in female roles.

Nearly all Kabuki actors belong to an acting family, and in many cases stage name and role are

hereditary. There are about 30 acting families in existence today, paying respect to and continuing their own lineage and style.

Bunraku

Bunraku is known as a highly sophisticated form of puppet theatre featuring large puppets (manipulated by up to three men), narrators (*tayu*) and *shamisen* (a three stringed instrument) musicians. It developed at the same time as Kabuki and deals with the same themes. In fact many of the most famous Kabuki plays were originally written for the puppet theatre. Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1724) who wrote many Bunraku plays is still revered as one of Japan's greatest playwrights.

SECTION V – VOCABULARY

VOCABULARY AND CONCEPTS IN THE SPARK STORY

Aesthetic

Concerned with beauty

Allegory

Narrative with a symbolic meaning

Endure

Bear, undergo

Essence

Indispensable quality, fundamental element

Fusion

Blending In artistic terms an approach to style rather than a style

Innovation

New ideas, change in the established ways of doing things

Meditate

Quiet, reflective thought, contemplate

Minimalist

A reductive style or approach that is spare and reduced to bare essentials

Nuance

Infect with meaning, shade of expression color or tone

Realism

Term used in art and literature suggesting the representation of life as it really is and as accurately as possible

Ritualized

Ceremonial, observing systems and rites

Sparse

Bare or thin

Stylized

Make or design according to a particular style or convention

Symbolism

Use of symbols - objects, characters, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts.

SECTION VI – ENGAGING WITH SPARK

STANDARDS-BASED ACTIVITIES & DISCUSSION POINTS

Being Still - Simple Meditation Exercises

The Theatre of Yugen’s mission statement describes its dedication to “the pursuit of the intangible essence of *yugen*” *Yu* is defined as “deep, quiet, otherworldly,” *gen* is “subtle, profound, dark.”

To engage with Noh theatre requires a stillness of mind; it requires that the mind be receptive to the graceful, meditative pace of the plays. To help students understand this sense of stillness, begin with the following simple exercises.

Deep centering

Close your eyes, breathe deeply and regularly, and imagine that you are going deep, deep into a well within your center. Visualize that this beautiful, deep well goes infinitely down and down. Breathe in as you descend, and absorb the cool, soothing, healing energy that is buried deep in this bountiful well. Breathe out as you descend, and expel all the negative thoughts and energy that you have accumulated during your day.

Your deep inner world has its own essence, its own reality, its own light. Feel silence, peace, and calm; no noise can reach you here, no words, no sound. Breathe deeply and slowly, experiencing your deepest, most serene essence in the silence of your deep well

Breathing

Breath is a deep rhythm of the body that connects us intimately with the world around us. Close your eyes, breathe deeply and regularly, and observe your breath as it flows in and out of your body. Give your full attention to the breath as it comes in, and full attention to the breath as it goes out. Whenever you find your attention wandering away from your breath, gently pull it back to the rising and falling of the breath.

Inhale through your nose slowly and deeply, feeling the lower chest and abdomen inflate like a balloon. Hold for five seconds. Exhale deeply, deflating the lower chest and abdomen like a balloon. Hold for five seconds. Do this three or four times, then allow your breathing to return

to a normal rhythm. You will begin to feel a change come over your entire body. Gradually you will become less aware of your breathing, but not captured in your stream of thoughts. You will become more centered inward. You will just “be there.”

Elements of Fusion Theatre Watch the SPARK story on The Theatre of Yugen. Watch the story a second time without the sound and invite students to work in pairs and think about the following elements of the theatrical craft of fusion theatre.

- stylization
- dance
- gesture
- mime
- choreography
- costume
- puppetry
- set properties
- masks

How would students describe each of these elements? How do they contribute to the performance? What other elements do students notice, for example the use of the fan, the representation of the boat etc?

Play the segment a final time and ask students to close their eyes and listen carefully. Working with the same partner, they should discuss the following elements.

- language/poetry
- tone
- pace
- rhythm or meter
- music
- song
- instruments
- sound effects
- chorus

Bring the class together to discuss all these elements and the way they impact the performance. How did they respond to the piece? In what way is it different from traditional Western drama?

***SPARKLERS:**

Actors in the Noh theatre wear masks. The masks are either expressionless or wear an exaggerated expression and they force the actors to create a sense of character with their bodies and movement, rather than directing energy towards creating facial expression as in Western theatre. Ask students to discuss how the masks impact upon on performance? Does it make it harder or more difficult? *Noh Masks On-line*

<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~amorentz/index.htm>

In The Manner of Noh

Developed with Jubilith Moore – Artistic Director, Theatre of Yugen

Chanting - In the SPARK story on Theatre of Yugen's "The Old Man and The Sea" audiences see and hear a form of chanting that is distinctive to Noh theatre. The sound is produced from a very deep place in the body and, as with martial arts the sound is pushed out from below the stomach. Invite students to sit on the floor in the manner of Noh performers with their legs folded and feet tucked under their buttocks. Ask students to choose a song or melody they all know, for example the official song of the State of Louisiana *You Are My Sunshine* by Jimmie Davis & Charles. Encourage them to hum the tune together, noticing how they produce the sound, melody or harmony.

Then ask students to chant the song in the manner of a Noh performer, producing the sound from deep below their stomach. In Noh, when teaching a child to sing value is placed on making a big sound, singing as loudly as possible. They are then taught constraint. This may be helpful in guiding students to simulate the Noh chant. Explain that in the Noh chant there is no harmony; all the singers sing the same note at the same time.

Review the chanting activity by asking students to consider how singing a Western song in the form of a Noh chant changes the song. Talk about the differences in relation to the concept of 'fusion' discussed in this Guide. What is the effect of

bringing diverse elements together? What elements need to be present to make fusion successful? What is gained? What is lost?

Jo Ha Kyu

Next ask students to choose a mundane, everyday activity such as cleaning their teeth, talking on the phone, reading, eating, etc. Ask them to describe and act out their activity, giving it a clear path of action, including a beginning, middle and an end. Then introduce the Noh concept of *Jo Ha Kyu*. *Jo Ha Kyu* is an aesthetic structure, including *Jo* – an introduction, usually slow, *Ha* – a break away or development, usually quick-paced, and finally *Kyu* – a climax. Most Noh play usually having one *jo* section, three *ha* sections, and one *kyu* section. The climax is followed by a concluding scene. (For a fuller explanation of the concept in terms of aesthetics and pacing, see <http://web-japan.org/factsheet/noh/program.html>.)

Students can incorporate a dynamic quality in their sequence by changing the pace or incorporating a gesture, a stylized gesture in the manner of Noh theatre. Invite students to form a circle and teach their sequence to the rest of the group.

Choreography

Stance and carriage form the basis of all movement patterns (*kata*). In the basic stance, the arms describe a circle and the trunk is tilted forward somewhat, the knees slightly bent and the center of gravity located in the lower part of the abdomen. The effect is as of a gliding walk.

Use the gestures developed in the previous activity or invite students to develop a new gestural sequence based *Jo Ha Kyu*. Encourage them to be as stylized as possible. When students have worked on their sequence, choose five different sequences to string together into a choreographed piece. It would be helpful to nominate another student as the director to work out the pattern or overall sequence and to devise a floor plan so that the movements are choreographed in the space.

Suggest that students perform the choreography to different genres of music and see how that informs the performance of it as well as the interpretation. Invite students to review these activities. Ask students how they feel about the movement, pace

and stylization of the Noh theatrical method. Do they have a sense of “grace under pressure” through the discipline and control of the movements? Did they experience “moments of Yugen?” a term used by Lluís Valls in the SPARK story to describe moments infused with the spirit of Yugen theatre.

The Old Man and The Sea

As a class, read Hemingway’s classic American novella. Written in 1952, it is an epic story of an old, seasoned fisherman as he struggles to change his bad luck and catch a great swordfish on what may be the final trip of his life. Set in a fishing village in Cuba, the old man is looked up to and cared for by a devoted young boy.

Ask the students to work in small groups and discuss the fundamental and universal themes explored in the book, identifying the following concepts:

- Santiago is characterized as someone struggling against defeat. The novella is about human endurance and survival and the refusal against all the odds to admit defeat.
- Santiago is pitted against the creatures of the sea. The tale is a chronicle of man’s battle against the natural world, or of man’s place within nature.
- Death is inevitable, but the best men (and animals) will nonetheless refuse to give in to its power – and, as such, prove themselves.

Clarify with students their understanding of symbols. *Symbols are objects, characters, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts.* Then talk through specific symbols in the story.

The Marlin - magnificent and glorious, symbolizes the ideal opponent. In a world in which “everything kills everything else in some way,” Santiago feels genuinely lucky to find himself matched against a creature that brings out the best in him: his strength and courage, his love and respect.

The Shovel-Nosed Sharks symbolize the destructive laws of the universe; those laws can be transcended only when equals fight to the death. Because they are base predators, Santiago wins no glory from battling them.

Ask students to take notes on and discuss the symbolism in the novella, including:

- Hemingway likens Santiago to Christ who, according to Christian theology, gave his life for the greater glory of humankind.
- Crucifixion imagery is evident as Santiago’s palms, cut by his fishing line, evokes Christ suffering his stigmata.
- Hemingway portrays the old man as a crucified martyr, saying that he makes a noise similar to that of a man having nails driven through his hands.
- The image of the old man struggling up the hill with his mast across his shoulders recalls Christ’s march toward Calvary.
- The position in which Santiago collapses on his bed—face down with his arms out straight and the palms of his hands up—brings to mind the image of Christ suffering on the cross.

Move on to discuss Theatre of Yugen’s adaptation of the novella. In what ways do Hemingway’s themes and symbolic meanings lend themselves to the highly stylized Japanese theatrical form of Noh? For example, how does the spare distilled prose of the book relate to the restraint of the tempo and mood of Noh? The symbolic stage of Noh presents a drama of masks and gestures, the subtle rather than the obvious. Does this work in relation to the Hemingway story?

Return to the theme of fusion. To quote Jubilith Moore, the Artistic Director of the production- “In bringing Hemingway’s *The Old Man and the Sea* to the stage it has felt like we had two kinds of perfectly formed grapes; each grew upon ancient and well maintained vines (Noh theatre and the American novel). We brought them together, stripped them from the vine, gently pressed them and have added what we hope to be the right combination of catalysts (yeast) and time to create a new wine, vintage 2005.”

What is added or changed by this process of bringing together culturally different forms – a Western novel and a classical Japanese theatrical form? Does it work in this production of *The Old Man and the Sea*?

Ask students to write a one-page response to this question Discuss the responses with the whole group.

***SPARKLERS:**

Is *The Old Man and the Sea* a parable, allegory or fable, a novel or novella? Explain each term and ask students to decide how they would categorize the story and why?

Ask students to give other examples of fusion in contemporary culture and describe the cultural forms that have been brought together.

**RELATED STANDARDS
LANGUAGE ARTS**

Grade 7

Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

- 3.2 Identify events that advance the plot and determine how each event explains past or present action(s) or foreshadows future action(s).
- 3.3 Analyze characterization as delineated through a character's thoughts, words, speech patterns, and actions; the narrator's description; and the thoughts, words, and actions of other characters.

Grades 9 & 10

1.0 LISTENING AND SPEAKING STRATEGIES

Comprehension

- 1 Formulate judgments about the ideas under discussion and support those judgments with convincing evidence.

For more information about SPARK and its educational content, including the Visual & Performing Arts Standards, visit the Web site at <http://www.kqed.org/spark/education>.



For more information about the California Visual & Performing Arts Standards, visit the CA Dept. of Education at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/index.asp>

RELATED STANDARDS

THEATRE

Grade 2

1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION

1.1 Use the vocabulary of theatre, such as plot (beginning, middle, and end), scene, sets, conflict, script, and audience, to describe theatrical experiences.

4.0 AESTHETIC VALUING

4.1 Critique an actor's performance as to the use of voice, gesture, facial expression, and movement to create character

4.3 Students critique and derive meaning from works of theatre, film/video, electronic media, and theatrical artists on the basis of aesthetic qualities.

4.4 Identify the message or moral of a work of theatre

Grade 7

4.0 AESTHETIC VALUING

4.2 Explain how cultural influences affect the content or meaning of works of theatre.

Grades 9-12 (Proficient)

1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION

Development of the Vocabulary of Theatre

1.1 Use the vocabulary of theatre, such as genre, style, acting values, theme, and design, to describe theatrical experiences.

1.2 Research, analyze, or serve as the dramaturg for a play in collaboration with the director, designer, or playwright.

1.3 Identify the use of metaphor, subtext, and symbolic elements in scripts and theatrical productions.

3.0 HISTORICAL & CULTURAL CONTEXTS

3.2 Describe the ways in which playwrights reflect and influence their culture in such works.

4.0 AESTHETIC VALUING

Critical Assessment of Theatre

4.1 Use complex evaluation criteria and terminology to compare and contrast a variety of genres of dramatic literature.

4.2 Draw conclusions about the effectiveness of informal and formal productions, films/videos, or electronic media on the basis of intent, structure, and quality of the work.