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theatre

# SOTOBA KOMACHI

BY YUKIO MISHIMA

DIRECTED BY MICHELLE HUYNH

A TRIO PRODUCTION

UC San Diego  
ARTS AND HUMANITIES  
Theatre and Dance

[theatre.ucsd.edu](http://theatre.ucsd.edu)

# ***Sotoba Komachi***

by Yukio Mishima  
translated by Donald Keene  
directed by Michelle Huynh

## **CAST**

The Old Woman	Lisette Velandia
The Poet	Naomi Louie
The Lovers	Sophia Casas, Lauren Dong, Stephen Loftesnes (The Poet US), Joseff Paz, Ashley Shilts, Danniel Ureña

## **CREATIVE TEAM**

Scenic Designer	Nicholas Ponting
Costume/Makeup Designer	Eui-Hyun Song
Lighting/Video & Projections Designer	Harrison Foster
Sound/Video & Projections Designer/Composer	Stewart Blackwood
Assistant Director	Erica Kahn, Xiaoyu (Mary) Liu
Assistant Costume Designer	Emma Brady
Assistant Lighting Designer	Elba Emicente, Hongyu Xue “Holin”
Assistant Sound Designer	Ethan Eldred
Production Stage Manager	Ruby Hays
Assistant Stage Manager	EmmaJo Spencer, Xinyi (Iris) Wang
Production Assistant	Yulin (Lisa) Fang
Scenic Crew	Ahmed (River) Baig, Cecilia Bryant, Miguel Trevino Gurrola, Judy Martinez
Costume Crew	Molly Heald, Jillian Stern, Frida Villeda, Shiuan Yi Wang
Sound Board Op	Thomas Goss
Light Board Op	Kali Mitchell-Silbaugh

## **THE TRIO SERIES**

*The Trio Series* is a new performance opportunity of three productions with smaller cast sizes, a greater diversity of content, and specifically for the Undergraduate Area.

## A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

*Mukashi wa ima no kagami.* | “The past is the mirror of today.”

Japan—a country deeply rooted in its traditional customs, culture, and history—offers us a unique perspective on the concept of time. We ordinarily think of time as something linear and rather rigid, but time, in the Japanese context, is circulatory. Traditions, rituals, and filial status from the country’s feudal days still permeate the modern Japanese sociocultural landscape. When walking down the streets of Tokyo, one would be able to see the famous Sensō-ji temple right next to a neon-lit pachinko arcade parlor blasting the latest J-pop songs; you may even see a monk in his Buddhist garbs on the train sitting next to a Lolita fashion girl. One is always reminded of the urge to push for a brighter, more advanced future while also the importance of remembering one’s past is invariably omnipresent.

Time is also incredibly weighted. The past seems to always be dragging us down and burdening our bodies with unprecedented traumas and emotional sufferings. With time, our bodies grow to bear great heaviness and we eventually return to the earth, physically and spiritually. As time moves in a circular fashion fighting the gravitational force of life in its loop, the Japanese do not view this as an end, but rather a crescendo to a new beginning. As Japanese noh theatre master Motokiyo Zeami reminds us, “Every phenomenon in the universe develops itself through a certain progression... even the cry of the birds and insect follow this progression... *jo, ha, kyu.*”

Our production runs in its own time loop—one similar to what Zeami poses. Like Japan today, we keep true to the Japanese theatre traditions in which we ground ourselves upon while weaving in the contemporary theatrical aesthetics that are embedded in our modernizing global society. We highlight the concept of *ma* by exploring the intricate and complex happenings of stillness within space, sound, and spirit. Throughout our constant meddling with realities, we entreat you to release your tensions and become enraptured by the story that Mishima poetically dramatizes about the unity of time, beauty, and death. Perhaps it is through the theatre that we can best explain the extreme toll that time has to all of its victims, both visible and invisible.

## SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you to my colleague, Yi-Jen Yu, for proposing this imperative intercultural project to our theatre and dance community. Your initial drive to urge us to reconsider the canonical classics and decenter our theatre-making processes was felt, heard, seen, and embodied throughout the process. Thank you to Dr. Julie Burrelle, Robert Castro, Dr. Jade Power-Sotomayor, and Vanessa Stalling for your continued support and guidance. Thank you to Nicholas Bradbury, Jesse Marchese, Maddie Williams, and Samantha Wong for always inspiring and encouraging me.

And, lastly, thank you to all the master artists from Japan and elsewhere who have bestowed on me the invaluable experience of studying noh-gaku, kabuki, butoh, and other Japanese art forms. I am forever grateful to my former and current sensei of Japanese theatre and culture. *Sensei, osewani narimashita.*

## THE DIRECTOR

**Michelle Huynh** is a third-year PhD student previously based in Honolulu, Hawaii and the Southeast/East Asian region. Michelle is a graduate of the University of Hawaii at Manoa where she received her MFA in Asian Theatre Performance. Her artistic projects consist of producing, directing, and acting in traditional Asian theatre works. A firm believer in promoting cultural diversity through all possible venues, she learns, utilizes, and translates traditional Asian theatre acting styles to the Western stage that is often dominated by realism, musical theatre, and Shakespeare. She has been trained under master artists from all over in various Asian performance genres, such as Thai and Balinese dance, Japanese kyogen, and Chinese jingju. She has attended conferences and theatre festivals in the US, Asia, and Europe to showcase both her artistic and academic work. For her research, Michelle is interested in Asian theatre (Southeast, East, and South Asia), intercultural theatre, performances of identity, and affect theory. UC San Diego credits: *IYA: The Ex'celen Remembers* (Co-Artistic Facilitator), *Backwaters* (Dramaturgy, WNPF '21). Select directing credits: *Luar Biasa* (SIFA), *Vietgone* (EPOCH Theatre, Tong), *Madame Mao's Memories* (UH-Manoa).

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## THE CAST

**Sophia Casas (Lover)** is a fourth-year theatre and public law major with a dance minor. UC San Diego credits: *Trojan Women*, *Much Ado About Nothing*. Other select credits: *Dryland*, *Hairspray*, *Trish's Guide to Surviving High School* (Company 157). Sophia would like to thank her friends and family for supporting her throughout the rehearsal process. She hopes everyone enjoys the show!

**Lauren Dong (Lover)** is a second-year theatre major from Orange County, CA. This is her first time performing in a production with the theatre department. She is incredibly grateful for this opportunity and hopes you enjoy the show! UC San Diego credit: *Farside* (AD, WNPF '21). Company 157 credit: *Nothing as it Dreams* (AD).

**Naomi Louie (The Poet)** is a third-year theatre major. UC San Diego credits: *Epicene: A Queer Extravaganza*, *Exotic Deadly: Or The MSG Play*, *Mr. Burns: A Post-Electric Play*. Other select credits: [title of show], *The Individuality of Streetlamps*, *A Long Christmas Dinner*, *The Philadelphia*, *Rules of the Game*.

**Stephen Loftesnes (Lover/Poet US)** is a fourth-year transfer theatre major. UC San Diego credits: *As You Like It* (Silvius, Oliver) and *Epicene: A Queer Extravaganza* (Epicene). Stephen is incredibly excited to be onstage at UCSD for the first time, and hopes you enjoy watching the show as much as we've had making it.

**Joseff Paz (Lover)** is a fourth-year undergraduate theatre and education sciences double major. UC San Diego credits: *Prepared* (ASM, WNPF '21) *Mojada: A Medea in Los Angeles*, *Balm in Gilead*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (ASM), *Much Ado About Nothing* (PA), *The Jefferson Middle School Monthly* and *The Gradient* (Crew, WNPF' 19), *Everybody Black* (Costumer).

**Ashley Shilts (Lover)** is a third-year theatre major with a double minor in dance and entrepreneurship. UC San Diego credit: *Man in Love* (Ensemble). Ashley is thrilled to perform in person again and is very grateful for her parents' love and support.

**Lisette Velandia (The Old Woman)** is a second-year theatre and psychology double major. UC San Diego credit: *As You Like It*.

**Danniel Ureña (Lover)** is a third-year theater and dance double major. This is Danniel's first production with the department. Select credits: *RENT* (Mr. Jefferson/Drug Dealer), *Little Shop of Horros* (Orin Scrivello), *Songs For A New World* (Ensemble), *Pippin* (Ensemble). Danniel is very excited to finally be back in person and would love to thank his family, RAZA friends, and closest friends.

## THE CREATIVE TEAM

**Stewart Blackwood (Sound/Video & Projections Designer & Composer)** is a third-year MFA candidate. Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, he is an interdisciplinary sound and music artist. His focus is creating impactful audio experiences by exploring immersive sound techniques, (un)conventional composition, and live effect processing. UC San Diego credits: *Heap, Man in Love* (ASD). Other select credits: *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Winter's Tale*, (Island Shakespeare Festival); *Godspell JR., Feed, Wildfire and the Birdscouts* (Cleveland Playhouse); *A Brief History of America, The Transition of Doodle Pequeno, Death Comes to Us All, Mary Agnes* (Hangar Theatre); *Emilie, Macbeth, Little Women, Hedda Gabler* (Kent State University).

**Emma Brady (Assistant Costume Designer)** is in her final year of the undergraduate theatre program. Prior to transferring this past year, she danced with ballet companies across the country, including Nashville Ballet and State State Street Ballet. While performing in mainstage productions including, *Sleeping Beauty, The Nutcracker*, and *La Bayadere*, she interned in their respective costume shops. As she navigates her plans after college, she continues to perform stand-up comedy around San Diego and Los Angeles. She is very excited to have worked with such a talented group and experience her first costume design project in theater come to life!

**Elba Emicente (Assistant Lighting Designer)** is a first-year MFA student. She was born in Mexico and holds a BA (Dance) from Universidad de las Américas Puebla (UDLAP). In 2010, she founded her own lighting company “iluminicente” in the City of Puebla, Mexico. Since then, she has participated in several national and international festivals such as Performatica (Mexico), Festival Internacional de Teatro México in Montreal (Canada), Festival Internacional Cervantino (Mexico), The Bates Dance Festival (USA), among other participations. Throughout her career, she had the opportunity to impart some lectures in Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) and Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Spain). In recent years, she worked as a Head of Logistics and Lighting Designer in Cultural Activities at UDLAP, in the same way as a Technical Director of the dance company “Ballet Incluyente”.

**Ethan Eldred (Assistant Sound Designer)** is a first-year MFA student.

**Harrison Foster (Lighting/Video & Projections Designer)** is a third-year MFA candidate. He holds a BFA from Point Park University in Pittsburgh. UC San Diego credits: *Town Hall, Letters from Cuba, Orestes 2.0* (ALD), *Man in Love* (ALD). Other select credits: *Red Hot Patriot and Abandoned Way Out West* (Creede Rep); *Cornell Vet Dance Collective 2019, Empire Burlesque Festival 2019* (Hangar Theatre); *Winter Dance Concert* (Pittsburgh Playhouse). Assistant credits: *The Who's Tommy* (Pittsburgh Playhouse).



## THE CREATIVE TEAM *cont.*

**Yulin (Lisa) Fang (Production Assistant)** is a second-year undergraduate mathematics and economics major with a minor in theatre. She is happy to have had the opportunity to work on this production with the amazing cast and crew!

**Ruby Hays (Production Stage Manager)** is a fourth-year undergraduate theatre major and literature/writing minor. UC San Diego credits: *Trojan Women* (ASM), *The Nether* (PA), *Mr. Burns: A Post-Electric Play* (SM). Muir Musical credits: *Big Fish* (PSM), *Pippin* (ASM), *Hairspray* (PA). Thanks to Jason, Lora, Krystle, Kevin, and family.

**Erica Kahn (Assistant Director)** is a fourth-year transfer student double majoring in theatre and dance with an emphasis in directing and choreography. UC San Diego credits: New Directions 2021 (Choreographer), New Directions 2020 (Choreographer), Winterworks 2020 (Dancer), *Man in Love* (Ensemble). Other select credits *Big Fish* (Choreographer, Muir Musical); *Weirdo (Or Make Nice)* (AD, Company 157). She is excited to have had the opportunity to participate in such a wonderful and collaborative process.

**Xiaoyu (Mary) Liu (Assistant Director)** is a second-year theater major and potential art history minor. Select credits: *BlueBeard* (Chinese Drama Club, in progress); *Voyager* (Scripps on Stage).

**Nicholas Ponting (Scenic Designer)** is a scenic designer and performer based in San Diego. A recent graduate of the MFA program at UC San Diego, his design credits include: *Uncle Vanya* (Virtual), *Exotic Deadly: Or the MSG Play* (Virtual), *Elektra*, *The Jefferson Middle School Monthly* (WNPF '19), and *An Iliad*. Nick is a collaborator with David Reynoso's theatre company Optika Moderna, which opened a studio together this fall at Liberty Station. Most recently, he was the associate designer on *Teatro Piñata*, an installation at The New Children's Museum. Find out more about Nick at [www.nicholasponting.com](http://www.nicholasponting.com) @nicholasponting.

**EmmaJo Spencer (Assistant Stage Manager)** is a fourth-year undergraduate theatre and communication double major. UC San Diego credits: *New Directions: Monumental* (ASM), *Antikoni* (PSM). EmmaJo is so excited to be back in person and wants to thank Michelle, the SM team, and her family for being the biggest support.

**Eui-Hyun Song (Costume/Makeup Designer)** is a second-year MFA student. She was born and raised in Seoul, South Korea and holds a BA in Clothing & Textile from Kyung Hee University (2018). While in college, she attended exhibitions of apparel, accessories, and fashion illustration and worked at the costume studio of figure skating and dance sports. UC San Diego credits: *As You Like It*, *Man in Love* (ACD), *Orestes 2.0* (ACD).

## THE CREATIVE TEAM *cont.*

**Xinyi (Iris) Wang (Assistant Stage Manager)** is a fifth-year undergraduate theatre major with a minor in linguistics. UC San Diego credits: *Exotic Deadly, or the MSG Play* (ASM), *Mr. Burns, Act II* (ASM), *The Gradient* (ASD, WNPF '19). Company 157 credits: *Move, Jump, Fly* (PSM), *How I Learned to Drive* (PSM), *Go* (PSM).

## ALSO ON STAGE

### *MEN ON BOATS*

WRITTEN BY  
JACLYN BACKHAUS

DIRECTED BY  
EMILY MOLER

### *PEERLESS*

WRITTEN BY  
JIEHAE PARK

DIRECTED BY  
TYLER NII

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