

Organized by:



SUBMISSION:

FINALIST 02 (TOKUSATSU)

TOPIC:

How has traditional Japanese art evolved in the modern era, and what impact has it had on global cultural exchange?

Organized by:



FINAL ESSAY

Format: Times New Roman, 12 pt. 1.15 Spacing, Justified. APA 7th Edition Style Citation.
Word Count: 3,000-4,000 Words

Chosen question: How has traditional Japanese art evolved in the modern era, and what impact has it had on global cultural exchange?

1.0 Introduction

First being mentioned in Japanese magazines dedicated to special effects materials, *Tokusatsu* 「特撮」 as a term derives from the term *tokushu satsuei* 「特殊撮影」, which directly translates into 'special effects' (Longo, 2022). Indeed, *Tokusatsu* can be a direct translation of the 'special effects' or SFX concept in filmmaking, which refers to the visual tricks and techniques used in filmmaking and live performing arts to create illusions of actions that may be too impractical, dangerous or outright impossible to indeed be carried out in reality. For example, due to many legal, financial and safety concerns, depicting city-wide destruction would be impossible without special effects. (MasterClass, 2021). SFX, defined by MasterClass (2021), thus encompasses various types of tricks and techniques, from mechanical effects such as pyrotechnics and miniatures and optical effects such as motion-capture technology, stop-motion animation, even encompassing digital effects, which can be extensively observed in modern filmmaking via the usage of Computer-Generated Images (CGI). According to Longo (2024), despite everything, the Japanese term of *Tokusatsu* has differed from the Western and global understanding of special effects, in that *Tokusatsu* carries cultural implications unique to Japan and Japanese society. *Tokusatsu* encompasses the special visual techniques used to achieve the 'impossible' in filmmaking and refers to a genre of works that extensively embrace and rely upon those visual techniques (Longo, 2023). *Tokusatsu* has undergone such a unique evolution from simply being special effects into becoming a new art form that celebrates and worships special effects, pushing special effects into the spotlight more so than storytelling and characters, a reversal of the more subdued importance of special effects globally.

Player (2014) denotes the prime characteristics of *Tokusatsu* to be miniature sets, ridiculous colourful and bulky costumes, explosions and flashy movements. Such characteristics, which in turn result in *Tokusatsu* often being dismissed by the global community for being too campy and silly, and attributed to low-quality productions that appeal to few other than children (Player, 2014). Yet, such characteristics hold deep cultural significance and relevance to Japanese society, as the *Tokusatsu* art form has played an instrumental role in the development of Japanese society. As a war-ravaged nation put under the control of foreigners following the end of the Second World War in 1945, Japanese society faced significant hurdles from the humiliation of defeat in the war, a destroyed economy, famine and political purging.

Organized by:



Entertainment for the average Japanese citizen post-war was scarce, and maximum effort went into rebuilding their lives and the nation they belonged to. Then, in 1954, the first actual *Tokusatsu* film was screened by Toho Studios; *Gojira* 「ゴジラ」. *Gojira* was a horrific film depicting the ravaging of Japan by a giant monster leaving destruction in its wake, undoubtedly created as a form of unobvious protest towards the occupation of Japan by the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) after the war. According to Yang (2017), the film was specifically inspired by the *Luck Dragon Five Incident* where fishermen were severely contaminated by radioactive dust from America's testing of nuclear weapons. Despite the bleak depictions of reality in Japan in *Gojira*, the film was incredibly well-received by the Japanese public as a form of entertainment, which spurred the creation and consumption of plenty more *Tokusatsu*-styled productions in the decades to come, serving as a form of mental and cultural therapy for the Japanese and indirectly strengthening the spirit of the Japanese as they continued to rebuild Japan from the ground up to the powerhouse they have become in the present day (Yang, 2017). With that being said, the *Tokusatsu* phenomenon being accepted so willingly by the Japanese despite its bleak initial connotations, is not entirely unpredictable or out of the blue. In actuality, it may be that *Tokusatsu's* acceptance as an art form can derive from the fact that it is actually a modern evolution of two notable traditional Japanese arts; *Bunraku* 「文楽」 and *Kabuki* 「歌舞伎」. And as surprising as it may seem, this niche art form has left considerable marks on global cultural exchange.

2.0 What is Bunraku?

Bunraku 「文楽」, also referred to as *Ningyou Joururi* 「人形浄瑠璃」, is Japan's form of traditional puppet theatre. It is first and foremost a vocal narrative art, featuring a chanter known as the '*tayuu*' who provides narration and voices the characters, the shamisen players who provide the accompanying music, and puppets of various unique styles crafted intricately with fine details and functions, each puppet controlled by three men who move the puppet in perfect rhythm and timing to the musical narrative (Barthes, 1971) and (Odanaka and Iwai, 2021). The '*Bunraku*' term derives from the name of a *Ningyou Joururi* puppetry theater; *Bunraku-za* which became the only commercial puppetry theatre surviving into the modern period ("Japan Fact Sheet – *Bunraku*", n.d.). Puppetry in Japan started as early as the Heian period (794-1185), but it was only when puppeteers were invited to Kyoto to perform for the elites in the 16th century that simple puppetry was combined with *Joururi* (musical storytelling), creating the *Ningyou Joururi* art ("Japan Fact Sheet", n.d.). Turner (2018) observed that this elite puppet theatre was refined further at the start of the 17th century by creating new plays depicting realistic and relatable depictions of the life of commoners. These new performances of *Ningyou Joururi* resonated deeply with commoners and created a massive demand for the puppet theatre among them, resulting in *Ningyou Joururi* shedding its initial elite origin and becoming an entertaining art for the masses (Turner, 2018). From there, *Bunraku* flourished as a performing art, delivering various unique stories, yet still greatly emphasizing story and character elements related to the common folk (Odanaka and Iwai, 2021). Unfortunately, in the

Organized by:



second half of the 18th century, with many of the finest minds passing away and various unique innovations in *Kabuki*, *Bunraku* gradually lost its luster (Turner, 2018). The art lived on among amateur performers and craftsmen, soon reverting to the more elite performing art status with which it was initially founded (Turner, 2018). Well into the 20th century, *Bunraku* faced difficulty after difficulty: financial deficiencies, restrictive legislation, wartime, and low-quality original works (Turner, 2018). However, with Japan steadily rebuilding itself into economic prosperity after defeat in the Second World War and the rekindling of nationalist sentiment spearheaded by author Yukio Mishima, Japanese society began to embrace the traditional spirit of Japan once again, creating optimal conditions for *Bunraku*'s resurgence, according to Odanaka and Iwai (2021). Since, the *Bunraku* theater has grown to be more visible than ever in the present day (Turner, 2018). This relative prosperity for the art form is also reflected in its increased presence on the global stage starting in the 21st century. *Bunraku* is often showcased outside of Japan via performance tours by Japanese troupes and demonstration classes which introduce the art to the global public through programs such as the Asian Puppet Theatre Exchange and special lectures on Bunraku in universities (Japan Foundation, n.d.). Additionally, the America-based *Bunraku Bay Puppet Troupe*, established in 2004, has emerged as the first non-Japanese *Bunraku* troupe, and the troupe has since played a significant role in promoting *Bunraku* to citizens of the United States (The National Theatre, 2024). However, the global spread of *Bunraku* is primarily limited to the neighbouring Asian countries, the United States, and select European countries such as the United Kingdom and Russia. Additionally, due to its status as a somewhat elite performing art, the spread of *Bunraku* globally has mainly been limited to those in academia and the upper-middle classes of the countries mentioned above.

3.0 What is Kabuki?

Where *Bunraku* is traditional puppet theatre, *Kabuki* is Japan's traditional actor-centric theatre. It is characterized by an all-male cast of performers portraying male and female characters, all of whom dress up in extravagant costumes, adorned with bold makeup portraying exaggerated caricatures of the characters in the story, and who make each movement dramatic (Gerstle, 2005) and (Japan Arts Council, 2019). *Kabuki* 「歌舞伎」 as a term itself derives from the *Kabukimono* 「歌舞伎者」, former samurai wearing unusual and flamboyant clothing such as women's and foreign clothing while behaving vulgarly to the public in acts of self-expression (Japan Arts Council, 2019). The origin of *Kabuki* as an art can be traced back to the *Kabuki-odori* dance in the early 17th century, which featured female performers dancing and singing while mimicking the flamboyant dressing and actions of the *Kabukimono*; for example, by dressing up as the strange men and frolicking with other women in teahouses (Bach, 1989) and (Japan Arts Council, 2019). These performances were incredibly well-received by commoners and elite alike. However, their popularity resulted in fights breaking out among the audience; thus, out of a desire to avoid such conflicts and to deter immoral influences, the Shogunate leaders would prohibit women from engaging in eccentric performances (Bach,

Organized by:



1989; Japan Arts Council, 2019). Young men then picked up the performances, though this was also banned for similar reasons (Gerstle, 2005). It was only after that the performances were adopted by grown adult men and underwent evolution into complex multi-layered stories with even greater production (Liao, 2023). Specific roles that each actor portrayed in a performance began to develop and diversify, such as male, female, and comic relief actor roles. The performances began embracing exaggeration via dramatic movement sequences and eye-catching makeup (Japan Arts Council, 2019). The plots for each performance also became more elaborate due to the adoption of the already excellent storylines originating from *Bunraku* performances, which would inspire original *Kabuki* playwrights as the art developed. Like *Bunraku*, *Kabuki* resonated with commoners by portraying storylines which were relatable to the common folk in addition to the fact that *Kabuki's* actors often belonged to the lower castes of society and thus understood the struggle of the commoner (Bach, 1989; Japan Arts Council, 2019). White (2023) noted that *Kabuki* would bask in positive growth for centuries until the Meiji era in the 19th century when the Meiji Government reformed *Kabuki* into a more 'refined' elite art similar to the Western theatre, which in turn resulted in uninspired plays for the general audience. In his observation, the decline of *Kabuki* would continue until after the Second World War when, in 1951, the *Kabuki-za* Theatre was rebuilt, and the performances of *Genji Monogatari* became a colossal hit, kickstarting the revival of *Kabuki* itself even in the middle of rebuilding Japan. Japan's continued economic prosperity and nationalist sentiment would only further propel *Kabuki* to greater heights, where it is now arguably the most recognizable traditional Japanese art (Japan Arts Council, 2019) and (White, 2023). *Kabuki's* impact on the global stage can be traced to the middle 19th century, when modified *Kabuki* performances were put on in the United States and, later, Europe (White, 2023). Though not entirely faithful, these first overseas performances introduced the global stage to the basics of the art. Foreigners were attracted to the unique aesthetics of the art, resulting in elements of *Kabuki* being tied to the image of Japan on the global stage until this day (Liao, 2023). Since its revival, true *Kabuki* troupes have gone on tours across the United States and Europe, bringing authentic *Kabuki* performances to the global stage, in addition to many troupes hosting workshops and demonstrations of the art in academia and among the global performing arts community (White, 2023). Unfortunately, *Kabuki's* penetration in modern global cultural exchange seems limited to North America, Oceania and Europe, and its presence elsewhere remains muted.

4.0 Tokusatsu as an evolution of Bunraku and Kabuki

At first glance, little may suggest that *Tokusatsu* is an evolution of the more traditional stage arts of *Bunraku* and *Kabuki*, other than all three involving some form of acting. While it is true that *Tokusatsu* is likely not the direct evolution of *Bunraku* and *Kabuki*, it may be that *Tokusatsu* is an evolution of several individual aspects of the traditional arts that have converged after being ingrained in Japanese society since the Edo period. Firstly, *Tokusatsu*, much like *Bunraku* and *Kabuki*, is a medium of expressing the 'impossible' for the commoner; they often, if not always, portray stories of unusual feats that are way beyond society's reach.

Organized by:



For example, the *Godzilla* franchise features giant hulking monsters, aliens from space and even magic, which are not too dissimilar to the stories of mythology portrayed in *Bunraku* and *Kabuki* performances with their depictions of *Youkai* and inhuman feats. While it may be proposed that this expression of the ‘impossible’ is not exclusive to *Tokusatsu* and can instead be found in fiction in general, few other art forms are genuinely able to express the ‘impossible’ in ‘realistic’ manners as *Tokusatsu* productions. The emphasis and celebration of physical craftsmanship in *Tokusatsu* also lends to its evolution into the two traditional arts. The *Tokusatsu* community prides itself on analogue technology, even when digital technologies have become more prevalent. Thus, analogue techniques and creations such as the suits for actors to wear, miniature sets, props and even the pyrotechnics are highly respected not just by producers but also by the audience, paralleling the immense respect audiences place on *Bunraku*’s intricately detailed puppets and the extravagant costumes and makeup prepared for *Kabuki* actors. Thirdly, the exaggerated performances of actors in *Tokusatsu* may be a carry-over from the performances of *Bunraku* and *Kabuki*. Due to the costumes in *Tokusatsu* often having limited capabilities in terms of expressions, *Tokusatsu* actors often resort to overdramatic and stylised movements and gestures to express their roles, as seen with the transformation sequences of *Super Sentai* series shows; this being entirely similar to the acting philosophies of *Bunraku*’s puppet masters who move the limbs of each puppet with vigour and dramatism, and also in *Kabuki* where the actors move in such drastic gestures to the point where they appear inhuman. With those subtle connections, perhaps it would not be too farfetched to view *Tokusatsu* as the evolution of *Bunraku* and *Kabuki* in the modern era.

5.0 Tokusatsu’s Impact on Global Cultural Exchange

Since the inception of *Tokusatsu* as an art form unique to Japan, with 1954’s *Gojira*, art has received much praise from Japanese society. To this day, many franchises that began as *Tokusatsu* productions still embrace the unique art of *Tokusatsu* and have been consistently producing *Tokusatsu* productions. To illustrate, the *Ultra Series* franchise, *Super Sentai* franchise, and *Kamen Rider* franchise have all produced yearly morning television shows, each being creatively distinct. However, *Tokusatsu* as an art has only received little respect and esteem on the global stage. Art is considered pure entertainment without consideration of its nuances, in turn, lending to the art rarely being discussed academically or institutionally (Higuchi et al., 2013, as quoted by Longo, 2024). This way of thinking leads many to discard the possibility that *Tokusatsu* as art has left resounding impacts on the world, but the truth is quite the opposite. Over the past 70 years, *Tokusatsu* has managed to leave its footprints and impacted global cultural exchange significantly.

Organized by:



5.1 Tokusatsu as the introduction to Japanese cinema and television

Japanese cinema had closely followed the development of Western cinema since the last decade of the 19th century, but it would only be until esteemed director Akira Kurosawa's *Rashomon* [1950] that Japanese cinema was finally acknowledged on the global stage, with the film receiving various international awards such as the 1952 Academy Award (Player, 2014). However, *Rashomon*'s success on the global stage would only pale in comparison to the global reception received by Ishiro Honda's *Gojira* [1954]. Player (2014) notes that *Gojira* wound up so well-received by those in the film industry, that the film began to be distributed outside of Japan beginning in 1955 onwards, where global moviegoers were captivated by the film's horrific-yet-entertaining visuals and effects. The movie was also reedited for American audiences by distributors and released as 'Godzilla' in 1956, laying the foundations for the internationalization of the 'Gojira' franchise to be the 'Godzilla' franchise (Yang, 2017). The *Tokusatsu* film was so beloved by international audiences, to the point that Longo (2022) surmised that it was more likely for those outside of Japan to have encountered 'Godzilla' than any other piece of Japanese cinema at the time, including Kurosawa's esteemed works. *Gojira*'s success sparked intrigue among overseas film distributors who would start intensively importing Japanese films, especially *Tokusatsu* films, to meet the audience's demands for films that gave similar impressions (Player, 2014) and (Yang, 2017).

As the *Tokusatsu* art expanded to the television format starting with *Ultra Q* in 1966, Japanese television programs also began to be distributed to surrounding East Asian and Southeast Asian countries, who sought to capture the demand for *Tokusatsu* works among children (Iwabuchi, 2015) and (Chua, 2021). The exportation of *Tokusatsu* works to Asia resulted in the release of dubbed and subtitled works such as *Kesatria Baja Hitam* or *Kamen Rider Black* in Indonesia, and even the production of new original works for foreign audiences such as 1974's *Hanuman vs. 7 Ultraman* (Chua, 2021). Conversely, in the West, it would only be until the early 90s that *Tokusatsu* television programs were introduced, with Saban Entertainment's *Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers*, an adaptation of the 1992 *Kyouryuu Sentai Zyuranger* series which was reshot and reedited to feature an all-American cast to appeal to the Western audience (Kangas, 2023). The *Power Rangers* franchise almost instantly captivated the youth of the West, soon growing into one of the most prominent entertainment properties in the world before fizzling out in the late 2000s (Kangas, 2023). At a time when cultural barriers were very much standing strong, it was difficult for members of the global community to truly get to know one another and understand the other's culture. Nevertheless, *Tokusatsu* films and television programs, with their awe-striking visual effects that provide engaging and entertaining media for consumption, managed to break through the cultural barrier separating Japan from the global stage. This breakthrough introduced the rest of the world to Japan's culturally rich cinema and television. It also paved the way for Japan to propagate and share its culture with the global community for decades.

Organized by:



5.2 Tokusatsu on shaping the livelihoods of fans

Over the past seven decades, Tokusatsu's emergence as an art form has naturally gained a significant (if relatively small) following among global community members. From Thee's (2020) observations, many within the following have been captivated by the uniqueness of the *Tokusatsu* format ever since they were exposed to the art as children; from its extensive practical visual effects, the stories told within the art form, the plentiful memorable uplifting characters featured in the stories, and even the sheer over-exaggeration of the performances. Additionally, *Tokusatsu* is not merely a generational fad that can only appeal and captivate older generations. To this day, many continue to be captivated by the art of *Tokusatsu*, to the point that the present-day makeup of Tokusatsu fans comprises those across multiple generations, mostly among Millennials and Generation Z (Carter, 2016) and (Thee, 2020). Consequently, this reverence towards *Tokusatsu* among dedicated fans has led many fans within the global community to undertake various decisions, all propelled and influenced by their love for eccentric art. Notably, following closely in the footsteps of the Japanese *Tokusatsu* works that are dear to their hearts, many fans outside Japan have sought to create their *Tokusatsu*-styled works (Patrick, 2024). While the success of these fan-driven works has varied (such as in Malaysia, where the projects have faced difficulty in convincing investors in the long run), several works have succeeded in their respective countries. Namely, the *Armor Hero* series in China by Alpha Group, which has spanned multiple series since 2008, and in Indonesia; the *BIMA* franchise by MNC Media which spans various multimedia projects such as animated shows and even live-action shows (Thee, 2020) and (Alpha Group, 2024). Interestingly, these fan-driven works are not shy to admit their heavy inspirations from Japanese *Tokusatsu*, as many producing companies have even sought technical and production collaboration with Japanese *Tokusatsu* production companies such as Ishimori Productions and Tsuburaya Productions (Thee, 2020) and (Patrick, 2024).

Some of these fans are also involved in Hollywood, such as film director Guillermo Del Toro, whose adoration of Tokusatsu can be seen in the extensiveness of practical visual effects utilized in his films such as *Pacific Rim* and *Hellboy* (Motamayor, 2024). Additionally, with *Tokusatsu* works being heavily linked to the production and sales of toys and collectables, which typically include figurines and roleplaying toys, several fans of Tokusatsu outside Japan even decided to set up shops selling *Tokusatsu*-related merchandise. Examples are Accel Helper Shop in Malaysia and Tokollectibles in North America (Patrick, 2024). Despite there being strong demand for *Tokusatsu* products in various countries, it is an indisputable fact that the distribution of *Tokusatsu*-related merchandise outside of Japan has been very inconsistent, making it difficult for those outside of Japan to purchase such merchandise through official distributors (Chua, 2021). Noticing this, Patrick (2024) notes that some fans take matters into their own hands by becoming dedicated merchants who procure *Tokusatsu*-related merchandise directly from Japan to provide to *Tokusatsu* fans of their own country. Furthermore, several global fans of *Tokusatsu* even decide to express their appreciation for the

Organized by:



format by organizing community events related to *Tokusatsu* (Thee, 2020). Such events not only become a platform for connecting fellow fans of the art, but also connect the fans to those involved in producing such shows by inviting actors, writers and executives (Kevin, 2024; Patrick, 2024). This, in turn, creates cross-cultural exchanges between Japan and the host country of the events, which is an increasingly important aspect being considered by the productions of Japanese *Tokusatsu* as they aim for a more global outlook in the years to come (Kevin, 2024).

6.0 Conclusion

In the globalized world of the modern era, global cultural exchange occurs continuously daily, and cultures that cannot keep up with it risk becoming obscurity in the global community's eyes, no matter how unique the culture is. Thus, an essential aspect of modern global cultural exchange is not just the uniqueness of the culture, but also the capability of the culture to be propagated and accepted by those on the global stage. While *Bunraku* and *Kabuki* remain some of Japan's most prominent arts, perhaps the nature of the modern era, which emphasizes consumption of the freely accessible television and film rather than appreciation of the more 'elite' theatre, has hindered the traditional arts' capacity to leave marks on global cultural exchange. In their place, *Tokusatsu* has emerged, embracing the fundamentals of both traditional arts and thus transforming into an art form that is more accessible and appealing to the modern global society. Despite the campy nature of the art, which had attracted dismissal from many who consider it merely plain entertainment for children, *Tokusatsu* has left considerable impacts on global cultural exchange, especially in introducing Japanese television and film to the world and even in shaping the livelihoods of its fans. The art shows no sign of slowing down, with many creators, prominently being Toho Studios with *Godzilla* and Tsuburaya Productions with the *Ultra Series* franchise, dedicating themselves to global cultural exchange by innovating more works and products that may reach wider global audiences (Kevin, 2024). [3893 words]

REFERENCES

APA 7TH EDITION REFERENCING FORMAT

- Alpha Group. (2024). *铠甲勇士-奥飞娱乐官方网站*. Alpha Group. Retrieved September 9, 2024, from https://www.gdalphabet.com/star/star_details/id/4.html
- Bach, F. (1989). New Directions in Kabuki. *Asian Theatre Journal*, 6(1), 77-89. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1124292>
- Barthes, R. (1971). On Bunraku. *The Drama Review*, 15(2), 76-80. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1144622>
- Carter, C. (2016). *The Complete Guide To Generation Alpha, The Children Of Millennials*. Forbes. Retrieved September 9, 2024, from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/christinecarter/2016/12/21/the-complete-guide-to-generation-alpha-the-children-of-millennials/>
- Gerstle, C. A. (2005). Kabuki and the Production of Texts. *Oral Tradition*, 20(2), 188-216. 10.1353/ort.2006.0006
- Japan Arts Council. (2019). *History of Kabuki*. Japan Arts Council. <https://www2.ntj.jac.go.jp/unesco/kabuki/en/history/index.html>
- Japan Foundation. (n.d.). *The Japan Foundation - Performing Arts*. Japan Foundation. Retrieved September 9, 2024, from <https://www.jpf.go.jp/e/project/culture/perform/>
- Kangas, C. (2023). 'Power Rangers' at 30: How a show with Japanese monsters and teen drama captured a generation. *Los Angeles Times*. <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/tv/story/2023-08-28/power-rangers-30th-anniversary>
- Liao, C. (2023). *Kabuki and Noh are evolving with the times. Here's how to experience them*. National Geographic. Retrieved September 9, 2024, from <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/japanese-theater-noh-kabuki>
- Longo, A. (2022). Reframing Tokusatsu and Robot Anime legacy: Towards new ways of conceiving Japanese Media. *Faculty of the Graduate School of Global Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts for the Doctoral Degree*.
- Longo, A. (2023). The remaking of tokusatsu monsters. *Journal of Adaptation in Film & Performance*, 16(1+2), 81-99. 10.1386/jafp_00090_1
- Longo, A. (2024). Engaging the present, embracing the past: Pop culture museums and cultural continuity in Fukushima. *International Journal of Culture Studies*, 27(7), 1-14. Sage Journals. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367877924124440>

Organized by:



- MasterClass. (2021, December 22). *Special Effects in Film: A Brief History of Special Effects - 2024*. MasterClass. Retrieved July 20, 2024, from <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/special-effects>
- Motamayor, R. (2024). *Why Pacific Rim Terrified Director Guillermo Del Toro Like Never Before*. SlashFilm. Retrieved September 9, 2024, from <https://www.slashfilm.com/1546081/why-pacific-rim-terrified-director-guillermo-del-toro/>
- N, K. (2024). *Shinichiro Shirakura on Brand Strategy and Globalization – The Tokusatsu Network*. The Tokusatsu Network. Retrieved September 9, 2024, from <https://tokusatsunetwork.com/2024/07/shinichiro-shirakura-on-brand-strategy-and-globalization/>
- The National Theatre. (2024). *[Sept.&Oct.] The UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage “BUNRAKU” on the world stage! The National Theatre presents a spectacular fusion of tradition and anime in the United States! | 公益財団法人フォーリン・プレスセンター (FPCJ) . フォーリン・プレスセンター*. Retrieved September 9, 2024, from <https://fpcj.jp/en/prlisting/natl-theatre-tokyo-202407/>
- Odanaka, A., & Iwai, M. (2022). *Japanese Political Theatre in the 18th Century: Bunraku Puppet Plays in Social Context*. Routledge.
- Patrick, I. J. (2024). For the love of tokusatsu — Malaysia's growing fandom of Japanese practical effects productions. *Malay Mail*. <https://www.malaymail.com/news/life/2024/06/20/for-the-love-of-tokusatsu-malaysias-growing-fandom-of-japanese-practical-effects-productions/140608>
- Player, M. (2014, March 21). *Midnight Eye feature: Intergalactic Tokusatsu: Charting The Japanese Space Opera, Part 1*. Midnight Eye. Retrieved September 9, 2024, from <http://www.midnighteye.com/features/intergalactic-tokusatsu-charting-the-japanese-space-opera-part-1/>
- Thee, M. (2020). Why tokusatsu, Power Ranger style shows, became so huge in Indonesia, and the diehard fans who made their own series. *South China Morning Post*. <https://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/travel-leisure/article/3094570/why-tokusatsu-power-ranger-style-shows-became-so-huge>
- Turner, J. W. (2018). History and Sustainability of Bunraku, the Japanese Puppet Theater. *Demographics, Social Policy, and Asia (Part II)*, 23(2). <https://www.asianstudies.org/publications/ea/archives/history-and-sustainability-of-bunraku-the-japanese-puppet-theater/>
- Web Japan. (n.d.). *Bunraku*. Web-Japan.org. Retrieved September 9, 2024, from <https://web-japan.org/factsheet/en/pdf/32Bunraku.pdf>

Organized by:



- White, K. (2023). How Noh and Kabuki Troupes Transformed Theater in the West and Japan. *The Underground Journal of Undergraduate Research*, 13(2), 14-18. <https://theundergroundjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/The-Underground-French-GlobalDrama.pdf>
- Yang, B. C. (2017). Why Godzilla? The Factors for Global Fame of Tokusatsu Giant Monsters. *International Journal of Liberal Arts and Social Science*, 5(5), 7-16.

Organized by:



JABATAN PENGAJIAN ASIA TIMUR
Department of East Asian Studies

-END-