The Spirituality of Noh

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(Note: This is an outline of the talk. The names of the dance steps demonstrated are given in parentheses)

I. The Concept of Noh
   A. Noh is a performing art with a history of over 600 years
   B. Noh combines a wide range of arts: architecture, painting, costumes, song, music, drama, crafts, language, recitation, dance and masks
   C. The reason for its longevity is the nature of human spirituality, which longs for true goodness and spiritual beauty and has a strong aversion to impurity and licentiousness
   D. Noh is a unique drama that aims for an abstractness which is quite the opposite of realism
   E. The expression of Noh appeals to the human desire for creativity
   F. Noh expresses the source and essence of Japanese culture: the Japanese language, song and dance, bunraku (puppet plays), instrumental trios, jiuta (ballads), and new Japanese drama

II. Noh and Truth/Goodness: Religious Concepts and Precepts
   A. The concepts of reward and punishment in Noh is based on deeds (ingaouhou) and on the idea of the transmigration of souls (rinne tenshou)
      (Dance step demonstrated: Shoujou, orangutang)
   B. Noh expresses the basic precept against taking life and describes the agony of hell waiting for those who enjoy killing
      (Dance step demonstrated: Ukai, finishing with cormorants)
   C. Noh expresses the prohibitions against lewdness, the use of abusive language and imbibing alcohol
      (Dance step demonstrated: Momiji-gari, gathering maple leaves)
   D. The concept of courtesy (reisetsu) in Noh
      (Dance step demonstrated: Chouryou, stretching goodness)
   E. The concepts of generosity (kanyou) and mutual respect (sougou keiai)
      (Dance step demonstrated: Miwa Hakurakuten. Miwa [Bai-jui] was an ancient Chinese poet)

III. Noh: Beauty, Spirituality and Artistry
   A. Musical instruments: drum, small drum, Noh flute with one tone, dance rhythm (maibayashi)
   B. Song: melody, words, strong and weak recitation, pauses (danrakushi), swaying (yuri), tone (iro), excitement (nori), single recitation, (dokkin), joint recitation (renkin, sakuyo, banbayashi)
   C. Dance movements: sashi-iri-biraki, left and rights turns, kakutori, shimai, mai-bayashi
   D. Costumes
E. Noh masks (*kokaji*)

IV. Noh Performance
   A. Viewing of Noh and Kogen: a video, *Boshibari*
   B. Dance performance by Professor Tsunoi: Chanting (rengin)
      (Dance steps demonstrated: *Hagoromo*, The Cloak of Feathers)