

Utica College Performing and Fine Arts Department Presents:

GHOST STORIES AT YOTSUKYA

By Tsuruya Nanboku IV

In A New Translation by Mark Oshima

Directed by Rachel M. E. Wolfe



February 27th-29th at 7:30pm
March 1st at 2:00pm

In Strebel Auditorium at Utica College

This play contains horror & gore, and is not suitable for children.
Venue is wheelchair accessible. Poster Artwork by Utagawa Kunisada I.

Utica College Performing & Fine Arts Department

At the Strebel Auditorium at Utica College

Presents:

Ghost Stories At Yotsuya

By *Tsuruya Nanboku IV*

In a New Translation by *Mark Oshima*

Director:

Rachel M.E. Wolfe

Stage Manager:

Michelle Williams

Assistant Stage Manager:

Megan Pugliese, Kat Haight

Set Designer:

Laura Salvaggio

Master Carpenter:

Alcecia Pease

Lighting Designer:

Michael Diederich

Sound Designer:

Michael Diederich

Fight Choreographer:

Jim Drake

Costumer:

Kristin Palazolli

Props Master:

Rachael Pinard

Graphic Design/Programs:

Hannah DeStefano

Special Effects:

Fall 2019 Special Effects Class

Special Thanks:

Kat Haight, Connor Supensky, Taylor Wood, Tyler Mosher, Justin Jones, Ethan Kipp, MaryGrace Kehrl, Christa Fransman, Students from Tech Production Class, Students from Intro to Theatre Class, Students from Scenic Painting Class, and to all helpers/crew/volunteers not listed here!

We Appreciate You!



Director's Notes



Horror is a hugely popular genre in the United States today. Even if you are not a big fan of horror movies, you probably know all the tropes—the slasher coming to get you, the eerie soundtrack, the disturbing mutations of body horror, the acrobatic contortions of ghosts and monsters, and even the problematic idea that the characters somehow set themselves up to deserve what they get.

What you probably don't know is that the conventions we are so familiar with in American horror film today were pioneered on the Japanese kabuki stage over two hundred years ago, well before the invention of film. Kabuki theatre was justly famous for its special effects, which, in a completely live context, were virtually indistinguishable from magic. The kabuki ghost plays of the nineteenth century (employing acrobats to play the ghosts with twisted and seemingly impossible movements) literally and figuratively set the stage for the conventions that would later move from the theatre to film in Japan—and from Japanese to American film—to create the genre of horror as we know it today. And the most famous and influential of the kabuki ghost plays was Tsuruya Nanboku IV's *Ghost Stories at Yotsuya*, whose echoes can be found in transnationally famous movies like *The Ring* and *The Grudge*.

Despite the important place that this play holds in the history of horror and its development as a genre—and despite its continued popularity and fame in Japan—*Ghost Stories at Yotsuya* remains surprisingly obscure in the English-speaking world. No full English translation of the play has ever been published. For our production, we have collaborated across the Pacific with the famous kabuki translator Mark Oshima to work out the version we present to you today. It is my hope that our production, with its blend of elements from the nineteenth-century and the twenty-first, America and Japan, stage convention and film, will bring home to the horror fans among you (and the historians, and the film buffs!) the great debt that American horror owes to Japan, and the debt that film owes to the stage.

- Dr. Rachel M.E. Wolfe, Director



Dramaturg's Notes



First performed as a kabuki play in 1825, Ghost Stories at Yotsuya, or Yotsuya Kaidan, as it was originally called, was well received by audiences. By the early 1900's the play had been adapted for more than 30 movies and still has an influence on horror stories today. Because of how famous the play was and has continued to be, Oiwa, the main female character in the show, has become the most well-known ghost in Japan.

From the 12th to 19th century, Samurai were important in Japanese culture and they were more of a social class than an occupation. Their code of conduct, the Bushido Code, covered topics like Japanese values and traditions has been the building blocks of ethics taught in Japan today. The eight principles covered in the Bushido Code are justice, courage, compassion, respect, integrity, honor, loyalty, and self-control. Of all the principles, loyalty is heavily focused on in Ghost Stories at Yotsuya. Samurai would serve a lord in return for payment and would remain loyal until they died or were banished. To them, loyalty was very important, to the point that they would commit ritual suicide to prove it.

Before science was used to explain how things happened, demons and ghosts were often blamed in early Japanese mythological stories. There were so many of these stories told that eventually subcategories were developed. Ghost Stories at Yotsuya falls under yurei, or vengeful spirits. Many of the stories of yurei are demonized women who seek revenge and torment the man who wronged them. These stories are evidence of the historically long repressed fear of the opposite sex in Japan.

Ghost Stories at Yotsuya follows the dramatized version of the real-life story of Oiwa who died in 1636. Of those who know of the story, it is a common superstition that her ghost haunts her grave as well as the performance of the play itself. Oiwa's first memorial was a temple and shrine located where her family's home used to be. Eventually, the memorial was burnt down in a fire, so it was rebuilt in Tokyo where it stayed for almost 100 years until firebombs destroyed it during WWII. Her final memorial was built in Tokyo where she is supposedly buried. Many accidents and deaths have been linked to the production of this show, so it has been increasingly common for cast and crew members who perform her play to try and visit her grave and ask permission to perform the show.



-Katherine Burritt, Dramaturg

Cast



Kelley Citrin



Ryan Wallace



Emily Braun



Roquise Bryant



Katherine Burritt



Bailey Dunn



Ryan Furmanski



Alexandria Leounis



Tyler Mosher



Logan Newman



Aleccia Pease

Cast List

<i>Oiwa</i>	<i>Kelley Citrin</i>
<i>Iemon</i>	<i>Ryan Wallace</i>
<i>Outcast/Puppets</i>	<i>Emily Braun</i>
<i>Naosuke</i>	<i>Roquise Bryant</i>
<i>Maki</i>	<i>Katherine Burritt</i>
<i>Ume</i>	<i>Bailey Dunn</i>
<i>Takuetsu/Outcast</i>	<i>Ryan Furmanski</i>
<i>Ito/Kuma</i>	<i>Alexandria Leounis</i>
<i>Genshiro</i>	<i>Tyler Mosher</i>
<i>Chobei/Samon</i>	<i>Logan Newman</i>
<i>Kobei/Yumi/Outcast</i>	<i>Aleecia Pease</i>

Biographies

Kelley Citrin (Oiwa)

Kelley Citrin is delighted to be making her debut with the Utica College Theatre Program. Kelley's past performances include Westmoreland High School's production *The Wedding Singer* and *Curtains*, as well as several student directed variety shows in which she played characters from *RENT* and *Les Miserables*, among others. She is a recent graduate of Utica College's Education program and is currently the receptionist for Utica College's Center for Student Success.

Ryan Wallace (Iemon)

An actor for Utica College Theatre, this is his first lead role for a college play. He is a prominent member of the Utica music and theater scene.

Emily Braun (Outcast/Puppeteer)

This is her first play here at Utica College acting as an Outcast and the Master Puppeteer. She is very excited to be in this show and hope everyone enjoys it! She has Rachel Wolfe to thank for helping



her step out of their comfort zone.

Katherine Burritt (Maki)

Katherine, a junior at Utica College studying Communications and Media with a concentration in theater, is glad to be a part of another Utica College Theater production. In total Katherine has been in 39 productions with *Ghost Stories at Yotsuya* being her 40th! Her previous credits include *Urinetown* (Little Becky), *Arcadia*, *Cabaret*, and *All in the Timing* here at Utica College. Outside credits include *You're A Good Man Charlie Brown* (Lucy), *Young Frankenstein*, *Catch Me If You Can*, *Mamma Mia!*, and many more.

Ryan Furmanski (Takuetsu/Outcast)

Ryan Furmanski (Takuetsu and an Outcast) is a Junior at Utica college studying Biology and this will be his second production at Utica College. He has previously played minor roles in two productions: *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, and *Peter Pan* at Whitesboro High School, as well as Gus Coverly in Utica College's *Arcadia*.

Alexandria Leounis (Ito/Kuma)

Alexandria Leounis is a Senior at Utica College seeking a Bachelor's in Cybersecurity. Alexandria is taking on her first major roles as Master Ito and Kuma. This is her fifth show in her experience in theatre, stemming from sixth grade. Her previous shows include: *Once on This Island*, *Willy Wonka*, *Peter Pan*, and *Jekyll and Hyde*. Alexandria would like to present her gratitude to those close to her for accepting and encouraging her to be her own person.

Tyler Mosher (Genshiro)

Tyler is a Senior attending Utica College, going for a degree in Psychology. He was inspired to participate due to his theater professors, Rachel Wolfe and Laura Salvaggio. He is excited to be on the stage after all his years working behind the scenes.

Logan Newman (Chobei/Samon)

Hello everyone and welcome to the play. My name is Logan Newman and I am a full-time student here at Utica College and I am in my second year. In the play I am the the characters Samon and Chobei. My recent stage works are *The Man, 12 Angry Men*, *Soldiers*, and *The One Who Could Not Run*. Thank you for your attendance and enjoy the play.

Aleecia Pease (Kohei/Yumi/Outcast)

Aleecia Pease is a Sophomore at Utica College. She is pursuing a degree in Construction Management with a minor in Theater. Aleecia is acting as both Kohei and Yumi in this ghost story. She also is the Master Carpenter for this set. She also is the Master Carpenter for this set. This is her fifth show at Utica College. Her previous roles include: a kit kat girl in *Cabaret*, Hamlet and the Director in *I Hate Shakespeare*, Lady Croom in *Arcadia*, and Tiny Tom in *Urinetown*. Aleecia would like to thank her family and friends for supporting her as she pursues her dreams, and the theater at Utica College for accepting her as she is.

Dr. Rachel M.E. Wolfe (Director)

is an Assistant Professor of Theatre

here at UC, where she teaches acting, dramaturgy, play analysis, and theatre history. Her professional work as a director and a dramaturg has been seen on stages in New York, California, and Seattle, WA, where she is a co-founder of the theatre company Handwritten Productions. She made her stage debut here at UC last year with *Arcadia*, and hopes that this Spring's very different offering will surprise, thrill, shock, and (most of all) educate.

Michelle Williams (Stage Manager)

Michelle Williams has been involved in theater for many years. She has been onstage as Piper in *Annie Jr.* (2009), Narrator in *The Hundred Year Snooze* (2010), Bird Girl in *Seussical Jr.* (2011), Capers in *Robin Hood: The Next Generation* (2012), Marlene in *Renfield of the Flies and Spiders* (2013), Quinn in *Bad Auditions by Bad Actors* (2014), Mrs. Corry in *Mary Poppins* (2015), and Dr. James in *Ladies of the Jury* (2015). Michelle also did costumes and stage makeup for *42nd Street* (2013), was a stage crew member for *Forbidden Broadway* (2014), was the assistant stage manager for *Addams Family* (2016), and was the stage manager for *Aristocats Jr.* and *Annie Jr.* (2019). She was an assistant stage manager for *Urinetown* (2019) last semester. Michelle is the stage manager for this production of *Ghost Stories at Yotsuya* (2020).

Megan Pugliese (Asst. Stage Manager)

Megan has been involved in many shows throughout her middle and high school career, both through the crew and cast. She started stage managing

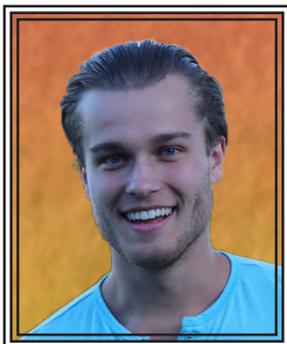
in her freshman year of the Clinton High School Drama Club and continued through to her senior year when she stage managed the musical, *9 to 5*. She also acted in the ensemble for the musicals *Footloose* and *Over Here!*, and helped out in various crew roles for the musicals and drama club productions. She currently works for the production company, Up State Studios, and is completing her second year at Utica College, majoring in psychology with a minor in theater.

Hannah DeStefano (PR & Graphic Design)

Hannah DeStefano, a sophomore Communications and Media Major with a Concentration in Theatre, is an avid lover of theatre & arts. She has played different roles in a multitude of productions over the years. From AS-Ming, to light board operator, to design, to onstage, she loves to do it all. Hannah's recent onstage roles at Utica College include Penelope Pennywise in *Urinetown* and The Emcee in *Cabaret*. Some of Hannah's favorite credits include Daughter in Starkid's *Trail To Oregon*, Fantine in *Les Misérables*, Catherine in *Pippin*, Janet Van De Graaff in *The Drowsy Chaperone*, Lady Macbeth/Hecate/Lady Macduff in *Macbeth*, etc. Other than being on stage or singing, she enjoys graphic design, her work in PR, going to Applebees, and playing boardgames with her friends and boyfriend. Hannah hopes to soon double major in (most likely) PR very soon. Contact her for free-lance programs or design work!

CASTING ANNOUNCEMENT

Due to unforeseen circumstances a few roles in the show may be assumed by outside understudies. These changes are reflected below.



Justin D. Jones (Understudy for Takuetsu)

Justin Jones is a Junior Business Management Major with a Minor in Theatre at Utica College. He has been in over at least 30 theatrical productions in the area throughout the years. His most recent roles include Oliver Rivers in *Puffs* at Wilde Rep Theatre and Bobby Strong in *Urinetown* at Utica College. When Justin is not performing he can be found playing sports (particularly frisbee), playing board games with friends, working, or at Applebees. Justin is grateful to have been asked to step into this show, and thanks Jim Drake for being Jim Drake.



MaryGrace Kehrli (Understudy for Puppeteer)

MaryGrace is a Freshman Health Studies Major with a Minor in Theatre at Utica College. She has been in 10 theatrical productions in the area. Her most recent roles include Sally Perks in *Puffs* at Wilde Rep Theatre and Soupy Sue in *Urinetown* at Utica College. In her spare time, she likes to bake, go to Applebees, and live her best life. MaryGrace is thrilled to be playing a rat for the very first time, and is grateful to have this life long dream fulfilled. She thanks Justin Jones and Hannah DeStefano for inspiring her performance.



Ethan Kipp (Understudy for Naosuke)

Ethan Kipp, Utica College Class of 2019, started his acting career here at the college. He has been in several shows including *Arcadia*, *Cabaret*, *All in the Timing*, *Jekyll and Hyde*, *The Complete works of Shakespeare Abridged*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and several others.

Thank You For Coming!

*Like Utica College Theatre on Facebook to stay updated on all events
& auditions!*

*Utica College is also offering THE 300 Acting for Nursing Simulation starting
on 2/24/2020, and a few additional one credit acting classes towards the end of
the semester as well! Contact lmsalvag@utica.edu for more information!*

*Check out TCUC Pioneer Players
for more theatre opportunities at Utica College!*



Pioneer Players Presents

ALMOST MAINE

By John Cariani

Directed By Paloma Collado & Jason Francey



**April 23rd, 24th, & 25th at 7:30pm
In Strebel Aud. at Utica College**

\$10.00 General FREE Student

Contact jfrance@utica.edu for More Info



Pioneer Players AUDITIONS

Theatre Club's Pioneer Players announces auditions
for our Spring 2020 production of **ALMOST, MAINE**
by John Cariani. The production is to be student directed
by Paloma Collado & mentor directed by Jason Francey.

Audition Dates:

**3/24/2020 at 7:30PM
3/25/2020 at 7:30PM**

Audition Requirements:

Please prepare an up to 2 minute monologue of any
genre. No previous theatrical experience required in
order to audition.

Other Information:

EVERYONE is welcome to audition, both Utica College
students and community members alike. Please arrive at
7:00PM to sign in and warm up. Auditions will begin at
7:30PM and will be held in the Strebel Auditorium.

We hope to see you there!

Please contact hmdestef@utica.edu or jfrance@utica.edu
with any additional questions.