

The Visions of a Creative Artist

Zenchiku's *Rokurin Ichiro* Treatises

Part 4

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六輪一露の秘注

Secret Notes on the Six Spheres and the Single Dewdrop

[Bunshō Version]

The profession of sarugaku kagura is an impersonal path that dates from the Age of the Deities, and despite the variety of its [original] sixty-six pieces, found its consummation in [the longevity ritual] *Okina Shikisamban* [‘The Ancient One in Triune Form’], which accompanies Shinto ceremonies and Buddhist services. Even so, this profession has been made a mediator for ‘flowers and birds, the winds and the moon’, and an amusement for ‘the firmament and the four seas’.²⁶⁵

Even though our family of Shinto priests is one in name only, through our practice of preserving the [ancient] way by holding to a style derived from kagura, our art is endowed with unseen divine protection. Anyone in our family who ignores our professional ways and engages in irresponsible behavior courts disaster.²⁶⁶ But there will be no impediments [to creative success] when each and every person respects the profession and settles the various details in advance of performance. Thus, the ways of my grandfather as well as of Zeami transmit one tradition of art.²⁶⁷

Strictly speaking, the heart of the Six Spheres and the Single Dewdrop is the upper three spheres. These are divinely inspired actions that arise from [the

The first three installments of this article appeared in the Summer, Autumn, and Winter issues, 1995, pp. 235–61, 281–304, & 485–521.

²⁶⁵ That is, in addition to its religious roots, sarugaku as a professional theatre has become a fine art and a universal form of entertainment.

²⁶⁶ This statement is probably not intended as a moral threat, but as a recognition that an actor who thinks that he can ignore mastery of craft and a responsible attitude toward his art will ultimately block or destroy the ways through which the stream of creativity flows.

²⁶⁷ That is, there is no conflict between the older legacy of sarugaku performing and tradition handed down through the Komparu family and the newer legacy of sarugaku that Zeami and his father created, which today is called *noh*.

threefold] Miwa purity, and are analogous to the Three Embodiments of Ultimate Reality, Bliss, and Transformation, and to the Three Truths of the Void, Provisional Reality, and the Middle Way. It says in a certain text on the deities that ‘the beginning of whatever exists is created through movement, etc.’²⁶⁸ And it also says that ‘[creative energy] is what brings about by means of such a beginning the set path [by which things come into physical manifestation].’ Eventually, this approach to professional acting will become the source of the ineffably subtle in recitation and dance by transforming the natural activities of body, voice, and mind into superior effects. Then, by allowing these activities to arise from the purity of the upper three spheres, you make your six roots of perception into the animating spirit of the Six Spheres and the Single Dewdrop. A calm mind is the place for your path of study.

Your entryway onto this path of study will be the varieties of [artistic expression produced through] the Sphere of Likening. These varieties derive from the basic styles of the three role types [of Woman, Warrior, and Aged Person]. Through your training in these styles from your novice days until full bloom, your level of performing will advance to the upper three spheres.

First of all, what is called ‘study for the novice’ makes the two media of recitation and movement the base for an actor’s training from the time he is a child. From there, by a gradual yet regular route of the levels [that Zeami has outlined in his treatises], he will attain success and achieve a name, and may even attain the two spheres of Breaking Free and Being Empty.

Of necessity, with the levels that rise to the heights,²⁶⁹ the three upper spheres [of my six spheres] correspond to activities of mind, whereas the remaining spheres are activities of physical behavior. Since the real state of both discriminate form and intent is the synonymy of the Absolute and the physical world,²⁷⁰ they together are what constitute the all-encompassing, miraculous path that is impartial because all phenomena are alike [in the nature of their constitution]. Above all, even though I speak of this sequence of the Six Spheres and the Single Dewdrop as a matter deriving from my own experience, it becomes an impersonal matter when you endeavor to work out your interpretations by means of the performing methods set forth by my teacher’s [Zeami’s] family.²⁷¹

First, the Sphere of Perpetual Flow. When this level is reached, the possibilities of form and expression are inexhaustible and the varieties of phrasing and sounds are infinite. Consequently, both form and intent will be excellent

²⁶⁸ The completion and source of this quotation and the following one is given in the Kanshō version, in MN 50:4 (Winter 1995), p. 489.

²⁶⁹ That is, the upper three levels of acting that Zeami discusses in *Kyūi* (Nearman, pp. 318–25).

²⁷⁰ That is, the Absolute, which is associated with mind and its intents, is synonymous with the ‘world’ of discriminated forms, which humans are wont to label the physical world.

²⁷¹ That is, the actor should not take Zenchiku’s metaphor either as dogma or as merely a personal, subjective statement, since the universality and practical applicability of the metaphor will become apparent to the actor as he masters his art through his training in Zeami’s approach.

from their origin to their completion, and [metaphorically] take on a circular shape.²⁷² This will be the life in your art.

Generally speaking, you make what is held in your mind the main point in the myriad modes by which you may perform your various roles. Such an approach is in keeping with the custom of all [artistic] professions. Nevertheless, in this profession of ours the physical expression in particular is vitally important. When there is a thought within, the form will manifest it without. What is held in mind is manifest through the voice and harmonized with the physical expression, and you establish the habit of making your whole body pleasing in its unpretentious gracefulness. When an outer expression is endowed with the five basic elements of Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, and Space, [it is because] the mind also contains these five basic elements. When what you create is filled with those five basic elements of mind, nowhere will the form lack substance. Further, as you become single-minded, your acting becomes subtle, with its form and intent inseparable.²⁷³ Thus, your acting will be before all else a physicalized expression arising from the mind. The mind contains the regulating principle. The physicalized expression contains the mind's intent. When the mind is put into the physicalized expression, the whole body is majestic and faultless. Even to the look of the fluttering hem of a sleeve, every movement is accompanied by a faint [moon-like] glow and is replete with moods. The fine aesthetic effect is incomparable. This effect is also called 'perfectly fashioned and majestic'. The old phrase goes, 'First, thoroughly assume a given character; then, perform its actions thoroughly.'²⁷⁴ Truly, you should first completely assume [the form of] the particular human body to be imitated, and then do its actions. This, accordingly, is the *yūgen* of form and mind inseparable, since the mind has completely strengthened that particular body type so that there is no place that is lacking or diminished.

Now, just when you are about to perform the *issei*,²⁷⁵ you find the point where 'the opportune moment corresponds to the feeling [of the audience]'²⁷⁶ and produce your [initial vocal] sound. Here you present what everyone will see and hear. At this moment, accordingly, you dwell at ease in the spirit of the three upper spheres and control yourself. The old phrase puts it, 'Work the mind ten-tenths, but work the body seven-tenths.'²⁷⁷

²⁷² That is, all aspects of the master actor's work is excellent at all stages and on all levels of activity, and altogether have what is called in the West 'organic unity' or what Zenchiku calls 'a circular shape'.

²⁷³ That is, the actor learns through experience how to integrate all the aspects of his performing through developing a unified and unifying level of consciousness called 'single-mindedness' or 'One-mindedness'. It is related to the Buddhist 'One Mind', which refers to the mind when functioning beyond the duality-based use of intellect.

²⁷⁴ A phrase based on Zeami's Fifth Principle of acting (Nearman, *Kakyō*, pp. 356-59).

²⁷⁵ While the *issei* 一声 specifically refers to the opening poem that the principal actor recites, both Zenchiku and Zeami apply it more narrowly to the first line spoken by an actor.

²⁷⁶ Zeami's catchphrase for the actor's development of his sensitivity to the mood of the audience to aid him in timing his entrance and opening speech (Nearman, *Kakyō*, p. 461).

²⁷⁷ Zeami's Second Principle of acting (Nearman, *Kakyō*, p. 350).

The indissolubility of form and intent is the enlightened realization of *yūgen* and the life span of your recitation and movement. Although the recitation and movement—including that for the Mixed roles—may set aside specific practices and principles previously employed even to the acts of moving the body and stamping the foot, still they will never exhaust the possible ways of performing as you wheel about the stage. I therefore call it ‘life’.²⁷⁸ A certain text says that the character 舞 [*mai*, ‘dance movement’] can be read as *meguru* [‘to move about, to go round’].²⁷⁹

The First of the Ten Styles of Poetry: the Ineffably Subtle, which includes the Moving Clouds and the Swirling Snow [subsidiary styles].

wabinureba
ima hata onaji
naniwa naru
mi wo tsukushitemo
awan to zo omou

Out of my desolation
as intense now as before
I have striven
to plumb the depths of my love
only to feel how much we must meet again.

shitamoe ni
omoikienan
keburi dani
ato naki sora no
hate zo kanashiki

Burning secretly within,
I feel that I shall perish
like smoke from a pyre,
that into the empty sky
dissolves, alas, without a trace.

kaze fukeba
yoso ni narumi no
kataomoi
omowanu nami ni
naku chidori ka na

When the wind blows
over Narumi Bay,
it drives apart
the plover and his mate
to cry their separation over the waves.²⁸⁰

[Text above and below the diagram:]

This is the marvelous style where form and intent are indissoluble and the actor is single-minded in his recitation and movement. The holding of the modal key in the *ch'i* is *ritsu*, the production of voicing is *ryo*.²⁸¹ Hence, it is the entering phrase from the entering phrase [pattern].²⁸² The outer expression of a continually flowing voice creates a characteristic of roundedness [that is,

²⁷⁸ That is, when the actor has attained the stage where form and intent in his work are indissoluble, the effect created on stage has a vitality and reality that is its life. He is no longer concerned with showing how well and accurately he performs the acts that he has learned nor with any innovations that he may make, since neither is the goal of acting. Further, like human life, the possibilities of expression are inexhaustible.

²⁷⁹ The source of this statement has not been located.

²⁸⁰ The same three poems that Zenchiku assigns to the first sphere in the Kanshō version.

²⁸¹ That is, the actor inwardly establishes the base pitch (associated with the musical term *ritsu* 律) of the modal key that he will employ in his recitation, but when he speaks, his reciting will be on his central pitch (associated with the musical term *ryo* 呂, which will be at an interval higher but modally related to his base pitch.

²⁸² Discussed in *Go'on Sangyoku Shū* (KKS, pp. 177–78), where he likens this type of phrasing to ‘a circling figure, having neither end nor beginning’.

completeness]. It is also like a chaplet of beads, for instance. The phrasing would be the cord, and the beads the syllables. The particular outer expression of recitation in performance is produced as ‘first, lower; then, upper; finally, lower’ in all aspects of acting. The particular aesthetic effect is, moreover, like that with a recitation of poems in public. With the basic styles of movement, it extends to the five- and six-part dances and the three sections of *jo-ha-kyū*. All are the heart of the sphere, whereas the vocal reciting is also equivalent to the performance qualities of the five levels.²⁸³

[Main text:]

From this sphere through the Emptied Sphere and the Single Dewdrop, the Dance of Okina is made the genesis,²⁸⁴ and the dances and recitation derived from the five tones and the five sections²⁸⁵ are all [products of] the vital spirit that seems to function like a wheel. [Under these conditions,] the style that emerges and the aesthetic impact of its physical expression are pleasing. Nowhere is this vital spirit lacking, but is like the [all-enclosing] circle of the full moon. That is because the physical expression is sustained by your innermost thoughts and feelings that arise from the vital spirit that creates specific manifestations. In turn, the physical expression depends on your intent, because it contains some performance quality [that is, a particular feeling tone]. Since form and intent are indissoluble [on this level of acting], a harmonious effect is outwardly manifest.

Second, the Sphere of Arising. Since it constitutes the quality of being superior, acting on this level towers in its grandeur and becomes ever more cool.²⁸⁶ As an expression of the Distant White style, it will be like a fragrance in the mist of cherry trees on a mountain peak, or like the rising of the moon through a break in the clouds on an autumn night. The feelings arising from such specifics are equivalent to this level. Is not the very lowness of the earth what is meant by ‘a level’? Since this is so, then we can surely say that [the second sphere that is associated with Earth] constitutes a [fundamental] level having no superior.

The Second of the Ten Styles of Poetry: The Style of Grandeur, which includes the [subsidiary] Lofty Mountain, Distant White, and Clear Sea Styles.

²⁸³ The reference to ‘the five levels’ (*goi* 五位) is uncertain. It may refer to Zeami’s five primary feeling tones, to Zeami’s treatise *Goi* (ZZ, pp. 170–72), which describes five artistic styles associated with acting (the Miraculous, the Emotional, the Intentional, the Visual, and the Auditory), or to the various characteristics associated with the five primary pitch levels used in *noh* recitation, which Zeami analyzes in *Kakyō* (Nearman, pp. 362–64).

²⁸⁴ In the present context, not only does the Dance of Okina refer to the ritual piece that only the head of a *noh* company performs, but it also signifies the eternal ‘Dance of Life’ associated with the character Okina, whom Zenchiku discusses at length throughout *Myōshuku Shū*.

²⁸⁵ Here, the ‘five tones’ probably refers to the feeling tones that vitalize the physical expressions characterized in the text as the ‘five sections’ of dance.

²⁸⁶ For the significance of *hienoboru*, ‘to cool down’, see *Rokurin Ichiro no Ki Chū*, in MN 50:2 (Summer 1995), p. 258.

*omou koto
nado tou hito no
nakaruran
aogeba sora ni
tsuki zo sayakeki*

‘What is troubling you?’
might a solicitous person ask,
but none such is here.
Lifting my eyes to the sky,
the moon! Oh, how bright it glows.

*fukiharau
arashi no nochi no
takane yori
konoha kumorade
tsuki wo miru ka na*

Down it sweeps,
the storm’s debris
from the mountain top,
but undimmed by these clouds of leaves
the dawn moon I see arising!

*fukenikeru
waga yo no kage wo
omou ma ni
haruka ni tsuki no
katabukinikeri*

While I think upon
this evening-shadowed figure of myself
grown autumn old,
in the distance the moon
has slipped from sight.²⁸⁷

The sentiments of the apparent emotions [of the characters portrayed which arise] from the various performing modes are located here.

[Text above the diagram:]

All wheel-like things have a front and a back. The Sphere of Arising is a single body with a front and a back.²⁸⁸ It is a level that arises within the One Mind.²⁸⁹ It creates [in the audience] an opening of the eye and an opening of the ear to the various pieces as they are performed.²⁹⁰ In sound, this level is equivalent to *ritsu*; in movement, to the *ha* section.²⁹¹

Third, the Sphere of Settling In is the place where the whole repertory is stabilized. Each gesture and sound likewise achieves its fulfillment through a harmonious settling [that is associated with this sphere]. Each particular element in the performance both originates and is decided here. Hence, the

²⁸⁷ Three of the five poems that Zenchiku associates with the second sphere in the Kanshō version. The last line of the second poem differs from that in the earlier version in MN 50:4 (Winter 1995), p. 493.

²⁸⁸ That is, when an actor operates consciously within the Sphere of Arising, there will be an effect that is sensible to an observer. What the actor does will be the back for what the viewer sees as the front. Yet back and front are not separate things, but one and the same thing, just as a wheel is a single body with front and back inseparable.

²⁸⁹ That is, it represents distinction and contrast within organic unity. Zenchiku’s description differs from Stanislavski’s idea of all aspects of a performance producing an organic whole by means of a through line of action that links the specifics. In Stanislavski, organic unity is an effect; in Zenchiku, it is the source and underlying cause of created actions.

²⁹⁰ The eye-opening and ear-opening aspects of a performance are what draw the audience into rapport with a performance and lead viewers into deeper levels of experience with what is performed.

²⁹¹ Context suggests that *ritsu* here refers to a contrastive use of tonality, just as a *ha* section associated with dance refers to a segment that contrasts with the introductory or *jo* section. The notion of contrast is inherent in the Sphere of Arising, which may be taken as a metaphor for distinction within an organic whole.

arising and passing away of particulars is a mode of performing that resembles the flow of thoughts.²⁹²

The Third of the Ten Styles: The Style of Sensibility, which includes [its various subsidiary styles, namely,] the Style of Pathos, the Ambiguous Style, the Ultimate Style, the World-ruling Style, and the Crowd-pleasing Style:

*tsu no kuni no
naniwa no haru wa
yume nare ya
ashi no kareha ni
kaze wataru nari*

In the province of Tsu
Naniwa's spring
is but an empty dream!
Across the desiccated leaves of waving reeds
the winter wind blows chill.

*ozasahara
kaze matsu tsuyu no
kie yarade
kono hitofushi wo
omoi oku ka na*

In a bamboo field
awaiting the winds
this dewdrop lingers:
for one thing alone I pray,
take care of my child.

*nagamureba
waga yama no ha ni
yuki shiroshi
miyako no hito yo
awaretomo miyo*

When I gaze out from my reverie,
the edge of the hill while I live
is white with snow.
Oh, that those in the capital
might see it and be so moved!

*hi kurureba
au hito mo nashi
masaki chiru
mine no arashi no
oto bakari shite*

Once the sun sets,
no visitors come
except the rustling leaves
scattered from the mountain peak
and the storm thundering down.

*saga no yama
chiyo no furumichi
ato tomete
mata tsuyu wakuru
mochizuki no koma*

On Mt Saga
beside the imperial roadway old by a thousand years
I stop at the ruins,
and once again they part the dew-laden autumn grasses,
those moon-bright horses of Mochizuki village.

*yamadera no
iriai no kane no
koe goto ni
kyō mo kurenu to
kiku zo kanashiki*

From the mountain temple
the evening bell rings out;
with each toll
the day too draws to its close.
Just hearing it, oh, how sad!

²⁹² That is, with a master actor's performing, what may appear to the viewer as spontaneous reactions of a character are actually gestures and sounds quite under the conscious control of the actor, who has settled on them prior to performing. In Zenchiku, genuine creative spontaneity is of an entirely different nature related to a sudden welling up of creative energy during a performance, a phenomenon associated with the first sphere.

monoomou
sode yori tsuyu ya
naraiken
akikaze fukeba
taenu mono to wa

Springing forth from my reverie,
 must these drops upon my sleeve
 imitate the dew?
 As the autumn wind blows,
 ceaseless are they in their falling.²⁹³

[Text above the diagram:]

This place of the short black vertical line is equivalent both to the level of vocalization where the oral interpretation is settled on and to the *ritsu* phase of the ‘entering phrase’. Similarly, it is the presetting of movements and the moment of ease and composure [before executing an action]. The connection of intent with the physically expressed scene of ‘flowers and birds, the wind and the moon’ is born from this place.²⁹⁴ Even the mood of desolation associated with ‘the scattering flower and the falling leaf’ is also simply a product of this place where particulars are stabilized.²⁹⁵

[Text below the diagram:]

For the supremacy of the upper three spheres, every gesture and sound must possess the three mental attitudes²⁹⁶ associated with the three spheres of Perpetual Flow, Arising, and Settling In even to a single flick of a sleeve or a single stamp of a foot. That is, it is analogous to the Buddha Nature that is comprised of the Three Causes of enlightenment and the Three Embodiments.²⁹⁷ Whenever this sphere is in operation, it will be the arena where phenomena are identical with Eternal Truth itself.²⁹⁸

Fourth, the Sphere of Likening consists of the imitative representations of various things. These are, first of all, the basic performance styles plus the unique stage appearances created for the mixed roles, which derive from the three principal role types of Old Person, Woman, and Warrior. Also within these various roles, a presentation is softened even with the necessarily violent and fierce representations of warrior types and demons, and thereby enters the realm of *yūgen*.²⁹⁹ At the same time, an ever-present awareness of the levels of

²⁹³ These seven poems are the same as those that Zenchiku assigns to his third sphere in the Kanshō version.

²⁹⁴ That is, what is to be expressed physically as the ‘world’ is associated with the fourth sphere, but the inner image of the artist’s intent upon which the outer expression is based derives from the third sphere.

²⁹⁵ That is, evocative moods that are even higher are a product of an actor’s planning prior to performance.

²⁹⁶ Namely, devoted sincerity, profound trust, and devotion to ridding oneself of egocentricities, as discussed in *Rokurin Ichiro Daii*, nn. 52, 59 & 62, in MN 50:3 (Autumn 1959), pp. 286 & 288.

²⁹⁷ The Three Causes of enlightenment (*san’in* 三因) are the innate Nature of Reality, discriminative spiritual wisdom, and good deeds. These correlate with Zenchiku’s upper three spheres. The Three Embodiments (*sanshin*) are discussed in the introduction to this treatise, in MN 50:4 (Winter 1995), p. 486.

²⁹⁸ The esoteric Buddhist term *sokuji nishin* 即事而真 is more literally rendered as ‘the matter at hand is, at the same time, the Truth.’

²⁹⁹ That is, literal replication is not the actor’s goal. The representational is to be shaped by aesthetic and artistic concerns so that the performance may offer to its audience more subtle aspects.

the upper three spheres is made a natural foundation vital to this tradition of ours. This is a precept in our tradition. The Forceful Movement Style includes just such vigorous actions as ‘quick action’, ‘beating time on the knee’, ‘returning on the knees [from a leap]’, and the lion dance. With the ‘fan lion’, however, there will be an extremely subtle dimension to the performing when the effected appearance of the dancing is a type of demon of the Pulverizing Style.³⁰⁰

With these various kinds of acting, the level of the [character’s] mind and feelings must be understood. Even the humble activities of brine ladling, wood-cutting, and charcoal making should resound in the ear and touch each heart deeply as much as do the sections of the tale of the Shining Prince Genji. These activities should be accompanied by thoughts and feelings that do not hinge upon some literal locale, be it the seaside village of Suma and Akashi Strait where Suma is located, or be it in the interior of the country at Uji or Ono, and they should avoid being coarse in the everyday worldliness of such associations.³⁰¹ The old styles of dancers and musicians—those vestiges of how the Shining Prince Genji must have begun to dance ‘The Waves of the Blue Sea’ under the shade of the red maples—are, alas, but a recollection of that ancient way of performing. Even with what lies beyond one’s powers to accomplish, the mind knows that whatever is indeed done ‘above the clouds’ will be [manifest on Earth].³⁰² But in what manner?

The Fourth of the Ten Styles: The Graceful Style, which includes the Honest, the Gracefully Flowering, the Pine Tree, and the Bamboo [subsidiary styles]:

<i>honobono to</i>	Dimly seen
<i>akashi no ura no</i>	from Akashi beach
<i>asagiri ni</i>	through the bright morning mist
<i>shimagakure yuku</i>	as it vanishes behind an island,
<i>fune wo shi zo omou</i>	the boat that stirs my yearnings.
<i>yū sareba</i>	As evening falls,
<i>kadoda no inaba</i>	beside the gate to the field
<i>otozurete</i>	the rice plants have a visitor,
<i>ashi no maroya ni</i>	and into my reed hut
<i>akikaze zo fuku</i>	this autumn wind comes blowing!

³⁰⁰ The fan lion is described in n. 248, above, and the Pulverizing Style in n. 246, in MN 50:4 (Winter 1995), pp. 519 & 518.

³⁰¹ That is, literal reproduction of the superficial details of realism is to be avoided.

Zenchiku’s geographic and occupational references allude to various plays, all by Zeami. Suma is the setting for two warrior plays, *Tadanori* 忠度 and *Tomoakira* 知章, as well as for *Matsukaze* 松風, whose central characters are two sisters who earn their living by gathering brine for salt-making. It is also the location for *Suma Genji* 須磨源氏, in which the principal role is that of an old woodcutter who in the second part of the play reveals that he is the spirit of Genji. The location also figures indirectly in *Sumiyoshi Mōde* 住吉詣, in which Genji, while visiting Sumiyoshi Shrine to give thanks for his restoration to office, meets Lady Akashi, his mistress during his exile at Suma.

Woodcutters also appear in *Shiga* 志賀 and *Yōrō* 養老, but apparently no play has survived that has a charcoal-maker as a character. Ono is the setting for *Ochiba* 落葉, and Uji for the warrior play *Yorimasa* 頼政.

[Text above the diagram:]

<i>uzura naku</i>	The quail cries out
<i>mano no irie no</i>	in the beach wind
<i>hamakaze ni</i>	at the cove
<i>obana namiyori</i>	where clusters of pampas grass gather together in waves
<i>aki no yūgure</i>	as the autumn evening approaches.

[Text below the diagram:]

<i>miyoshino no</i>	At Yoshino,
<i>yama mo kasumite</i>	even the hills are hazy with mist,
<i>shirayuki no</i>	and in the village
<i>furinishi sato ni</i>	where just yesterday fresh snow had fallen,
<i>haru wa kinikeri</i>	spring has arrived.
<i>yūzuku yo</i>	Oh, how the evening is bathed by the moon's light
<i>shio michi kurashi</i>	as the tide comes full
<i>naniwae no</i>	into Naniwa Bay,
<i>ashi no wakaba wo</i>	its young reed blades
<i>koyuru shiranami</i>	washed by the white-capped waves! ³⁰³

[Text to the left of the diagram:]

The study of the behavior of persons high and low, the physical expression of their various particulars, such as an old voice with a young sound, all will be within this one sphere complete in its manifestation of *yūgen*.

The mental attitude for the places where the Old Person role type appears: 'A distant gaze and a tranquil spirit.'

The attitude for the Warrior role type: 'A strong body with a calm spirit.'

The attitude for the Feminine role type: 'Both mind and body discard strength.'

Fifth, with the Sphere of Breaking Free, after an actor has passed the years in polishing his art, has achieved success and attained a name, and has raised the level of his acting, then even though he has turned away [from the everyday view of acting], he returns [to a level of popular appeal]. From time to time he creates acts like those when he was a novice,³⁰⁴ and in addition produces a [unique but] unorthodox style. Yet there is nothing that seems bad in the way that he performs, even though his acting is adjudged to be still improving. This is like the fineness of gold not being tarnished by dirt or sand.

Some actors may not realize that the tried and true practice of making a

³⁰² This idea parallels the Western saying, 'As above, so below', to indicate the relationship between intent and manifestation.

³⁰³ The same five poems as those that Zenchiku attributes to the fourth sphere in the Kanshō version.

³⁰⁴ That is, his performances have an excitement, verve, and sense of wonder associated with an actor who has just begun to explore the potentialities of his art. The term 'novice' (*shoshin* 初心), however, refers to one who has already mastered sufficient technical skills to begin performing in public, rather than to one just starting to train.

fault a strength is a performance level for highly advanced experts and, while still novices, may accidentally turn a good place in their acting into something bad by superficially copying the highly advanced and unorthodox actions of the expert, believing that such actions are interesting. As a result, the quality of their acting automatically declines, since they are unaware of their error, which turns a strength into a weakness. For that reason, you should be prudent and all the more keep in mind the original physical expression [that you are to use as your model]. When the levels and varieties of your acting are systematically attained step by step, it is what I would call ‘well-advanced actions’. [As Mencius] said [to a king who applied the wrong methods for attaining what he desired], ‘Doing what you do to seek for what you desire is like climbing a tree to seek for fish’.³⁰⁵ Also, it says [in the *Analects*] something like, ‘At seventy, I follow what my heart desires without transgressing the natural law.’³⁰⁶

The Sixth of the Ten Styles: The Interesting style, which includes the [subsidiary] Being Amused and Scenic Description Styles:

yamazato ni
ukiyo itowan
hito mo ga na
kuyashiku sugishi
mukashi kataramu

In this mountain retreat
would there were another
who had turned his back on the floating world!
We would talk of our pasts
so embarrassingly useless.

hito sumanu
fuwa no sekiya no
itabisashi
arenishi nochi wa
tada aki no kaze

Untenanted now
the barrier house at Fuwa,
its wooden eaves
have fallen in,
and only the autumn wind passes through.

[Text above the diagram:]

yayo shigure
monoomou sode no
nakariseba
konoha no nochi ni
nani wo somemashi

O you winter rains!
had I no sleeve
to wipe my reddened cheek,
now that you’ve crimsoned the maple leaves,
what next would you stain?

[Text below the diagram:]

hito wa kode
kaze no keshiki mo
fukenuru ni
aware ni kari no
otozurete yuku

The one awaited comes not,
and the wind’s moaning
tells of deepening night
as plaintive geese,
crying out, fly past.³⁰⁷

[Text to the left of the diagram:]

³⁰⁵ James Legge, tr., *The Works of Mencius*, Dover Publications, New York, 1970, p. 145.

³⁰⁶ Quoted in a somewhat different form in *Rokurin Ichiro no Ki Chū*, in MN 50:2 (Summer 1995), p. 254.

³⁰⁷ In the present version, Zenchiku omits the fifth poetic style with its poems and substitutes the sixth poetic style and the four poems quoted above. In the Kanshō version, these were assigned to the sixth sphere.

This level is the strength to manage the whole repertory [with creative freedom]. It is a strength to manage freely, which emerges from a tranquil mind that bestows quieting effects. Momentary violence in an otherwise tranquil nature is like golden waves arising on the sea of one's Nature. The occasional tranquillity of a coarse nature is but a trifling calm, like a tiger crouching.

Sixth, the Emptied Sphere is ultimately a returning to the initial Sphere of Perpetual Flow. It is a level that fulfills the beginning. Still, it is even less limited by the first sphere [than is the fifth]. It is totally void of any absolute or fixed nature and is quiescent. It is a situation where you do not carry out [your actions with unyielding intent] yet carry out [actions], where you do not strive [to attain fixed goals] yet strive [on], and where you prepare [what you will do] without preparing [an inflexible plan]. Thus, your acting will have a marvelous feeling beyond [any identifiable] style or characteristic mark. When you have reached such a level, you must be wary of places where your acting becomes 'forceful'—an observation that undoubtedly can also be found in the secret writings on poetry. Thus, your physical expressions should be like those that you first produced [when still a novice].

To reiterate, the expert actor naturally becomes strong in his acting, but once he becomes 'forceful', his performing will have neither emotional warmth nor efficacious effects. Further, in guarding against becoming forceful, he must not become afflicted with de-energization. The intrinsic nature of the character portrayed is made the 'skin' [or surface appearance] and his bodily expressions are softened. This is what is truly a strong condition.

Those who talk of acting as being strong or weak lead an actor greatly astray. Moving about violently is dubbed 'strong acting', whereas achieving one's effects by calming down is called 'weak acting'. These are judgments of people ignorant of the way [effects are actually achieved professionally]. According to their view, demons are invariably violent and women are always afflicted with feebleness. What a ridiculous match-up of characteristics with character! [They overlook that] the branches of a dead tree break, whereas the thread-like branches of a willow flutter, yielding to the wind. In short, being 'genuinely strong' must be understood as the ultimate of *yūgen*.³⁰⁸

It has already been stated that when the level of this sphere has ultimately been reached, a performance arises in a playful manner as images of an inner intent and as intentions within these images. Yet, it is also like the moon floating in myriad drops of water or the odor of a flower sending forth its fragrance into the open air. Once a master actor has thoroughly explored the possibilities of a situation, his performance level is calmness itself, the vitality of gracefully tranquil feelings. But this level must depend on evidence perceptible to both the discerning and the non-discerning.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁸ That is, an actor must not only distinguish genuine performance strength from a crude show of force, but also distinguish a sensitive use of that strength from a weak or effete mode of performing.

³⁰⁹ That is, the proof that an actor's performing has indeed reached this level will depend on the response of the viewers and not upon an actor's own proclamation.

[Text above and below the diagram:]

As said, these two spheres of Breaking Free and Being Empty should not be studied during the period from novice to full prime.

When this level is reached, various styles and modes of performing also well up from within the totally void realm beyond characteristic. Furthermore, the level of the acting does not exhaust all possible particulars, yet the actions are full and complete. Accidental forms and expressions occur, and the acting out of a piece creates ever more progressive levels. Yet no matter what plan is devised, a single lifetime will not exhaust all possibilities in a performed piece. This is what happens when the level that arises here is maintained, so an old saying goes.³¹⁰

The Seventh of the Ten Styles: The Finely Wrought Style.

The Eighth: The Sensuous Style.

The Ninth: The Singular Tone Style.

*chirasu na yo
shino no hagusa no
karinitemo
tsuyu kakarubeki
sode no ue ka wa*

Let them not fall!
The bamboo leaves,
when cut, must shed their dewy tears,
but no such drops
shall wet my sleeve.

*murasame no
tsuyu mo mada hinu
maki no ha ni
kiritachi noboru
aki no yūgure*

On the evergreen leaves of the maki tree
still wet with drops
from a sudden shower,
the mist rises
with the coming of the autumn evening.

*tachikaeri
mata mo kite min
matsushima ya
ojima no tomaya
nami ni arasu na*

As I return,
may I again see
this Isle of Pine,
and Male Island's reed hut
left unravaged by the waves!³¹¹

[The Single Dewdrop]

The sharp sword of the Single Dewdrop sweeps away all hindrances and is the natural substance of mind analogous to a wish-granting jewel. It will sever the demon's ropes [that binds us] to a perpetual cycle of rebirths in the Six Realms of Existence and will be made the link for emancipating oneself along with all other sentient beings. 'What is firm and immovable in these miraculous principles is the Unmoving Lord Fudō's Sword of Spiritual Benefit. This all-embracing single-mindedness is quite familiar as Monju's personal Sword of Wisdom,' as that honorable Temple Director of Kaidan Cloister, Shigyoku, has noted. And, 'It is on the level of the single sword of the Illimitable,' as

³¹⁰ Similar ideas are expressed by Zeami (Nearman, *Kakyō*, pp. 66-71).

³¹¹ Styles seven through nine and their poems appear in the Kanshō version in connection with the Single Dewdrop.

[Chuang-tzu's saying] appeared in that [commentary written in Kanera's] own hand. It will be the supernal spirit of vitality.

The Tenth of the Ten Styles: The Demon-crushing Style:

<i>nurete hosu</i>	Glistening upon the dry leaves
<i>tamagushi no ha no</i>	of the bejeweled sakaki branch
<i>tsuyujimo ni</i>	is the frozen dew
<i>ama teru hikari</i>	that reflects Heaven's sacred light:
<i>ikuyo henuran</i>	how many eons this must have gone on!
<i>nagaregi to</i>	Driftwood,
<i>tatsu shiranami to</i>	the whitecaps rising,
<i>yaku shio to</i>	the salt boiling up,
<i>izure ka karaki</i>	which is bitterest?
<i>wadatsu umi no soko</i>	The very bottom of this sea. ³¹²

QUESTION. This profession treats recitation and movement as its essentials. The tenor of the Six Spheres and the Single Dewdrop will certainly resound throughout these two media. In connection with that, of what types are the five feeling tones of recitation and the five sections of dance?

ANSWER. The modes of recitation are the Celebratory, the Subtle, the Passional, the Sorrowing, and the Transcendent. They are the tonal feelings that arise when, after you have savored the performance flavor of each particular mood in those [five types], you bear the appropriate mood in mind as you recite.

Dance is comprised of one *jo* section, three *ha* sections, and one *kyū* section. You break into the *jo* with the *ha* and push the situation to its limits in a variety of ways. The *kyū* is a single section where your performing comes to a halt. To illustrate, when a flower opens, it reaches its peak in seven days. The opening up is the *jo*, the peak is the *ha*. After the situation has been pushed to its limit by means of the *ha*, the sudden scattering of the petals is the look of a *kyū* section. They are like the spheres of Perpetual Flow, Arising, and Settling In.³¹³

Although what is [commonly] called 'dance' is the manipulation of gestures, the supreme level beyond style has an intent that is not concerned with gestures as such. Even so, are the substantive foundation [of an art expression] and that which is called 'dance' distinct matters? If this is so, then as it likewise says in the text [of the *Book of Odes*],

What is in the heart is called intent, what is expressed in words is called a poem.
When either is insufficient in the reciting, [it is because the actor] does not understand what constitutes a 'dancing of the hands' and a 'rhythmic stomping of the feet'.

³¹² This poetic style and its two poems are also assigned to the Single Dewdrop in the Kanshō version.

³¹³ That is, the *jo* resembles a perpetual and uninterrupted flow of events, the *ha* a sudden contrastive event arising within the flow that breaks into, but does not stop, that flow, and the *kyū* a specific event that brings that arising to its natural conclusion.

A hand seems to be a hand, and dance seems to be dance.³¹⁴ The intent of the poetry, the performance flavor of the recitation, the wonder that ceaselessly manifests in form and substance, these will be what constitute true dance! Indeed, true dance is on a level where the performer does not know where he will stamp his foot!³¹⁵ He must certainly understand the intent of this statement. In short, with dance he is aware that if he just had feet he would indeed be dancing even though he had no hands.³¹⁶

The five ways of understanding ‘dance’ are these: the style in which gesture is the causal agent and dance is the effect, the style in which dance is the causal agent and gesture is the effect, the style where simply gesture is the causal agent, the style where simply dance is the causal agent, and the style of the interaction of dance and gesture.³¹⁷

With dance, it is what goes ‘beyond characteristics and beyond style’ that must be understood; with recitation, it is phrasing that must be understood. When words and syllables are being produced by the voice, the syllables are produced either according to the pronunciation of the written character or according to phrasing. If they occur as a result of phrasing, feelings will be generated. There must be an oral transmission for all these effects.

Foot rhythms in dance are a type of drumming. What are [popularly] called ‘foot rhythms’, however, refer to the widely employed ‘*kusemai* rhythms’ when performed with the feet. That understanding is inappropriate. The stamping of the foot must be the paramount foundation of dance. [After all,] are there public details on the means for achieving the relaxed and smooth step for a *naiben*?³¹⁸ Even with a *hataraki*, for instance, is there ever a situation where the footwork in and of itself is done unintentionally?³¹⁹ Hence, as your

³¹⁴ That is, when the actor does not understand intent and its relation to mastery of technique, he sees dance simply as a series of gestures to be performed mechanically.

³¹⁵ That is, when a performer is insufficient in the areas of intent and technique, he is said not to know what he is doing. But, ironically, when a performer has finally attained an understanding of ‘true dance’, he has an attitude that frees him from slavish copying so that he is spoken of here as one who does not know where a foot stomp will come.

³¹⁶ In medieval Japan, dancing was primarily associated with hand and arm gestures rather than with foot and leg movements. Zenchiku’s point is that rhythm, which is associated with feet, underlies movement, and that rhythm, rather than particular gestures, is what constitutes dance. This emphasis on upper torso movements is due in part to clothing styles, particularly in court-influenced forms. Above the waist the performer has considerable freedom of movement, but below the waist the fullness of the costume tends to conceal or constrain foot or leg movements.

³¹⁷ Despite some differences in terminology, Zenchiku’s five styles correlate with Zeami’s five ways for understanding the nature of dance. Zenchiku’s first two correspond to Zeami’s fourth and fifth ways, whereas the remaining three equate with Zeami’s first three ways. Since Zenchiku does not elaborate on these complex terms, and Zeami’s discussion is too lengthy to quote here, readers are referred to Nearman, *Kakyō*, pp. 366–72.

³¹⁸ That is, popular understanding of an actor’s footwork is different from the methods by which it is actually achieved, and such methods are not made public. The same degree of secrecy can also be found concerning the technique for achieving a smooth walk used by those court functionaries called *naiben* 内弁 who officiated at certain major festivals.

³¹⁹ Although no specific discussion of foot rhythms occurs in Zeami’s treatises, Zenchiku may be extending Zeami’s idea of ‘the beginner’s spirit’. In his treatise *Kakyō*, Zeami observes that if an actor does not consciously maintain the attitude of the beginner’s spirit, his acting will

acting develops, the foot rhythms that you used when a young child tend to decline. A similar statement was set down in former times.

QUESTION. What are interval and rhythmic beats?

ANSWER. ‘Heaven and Earth not yet differentiated’ corresponds to the interval; their creation and what follows correspond to the beats. Also, Heaven has its intervals and beats, and Earth its intervals and beats. But an interval is not the only thing that has limits. Beats have limits as well as their edge. You must grasp the idea that supremely superior effects are created from interval. Those who are unskilled commonsensically take rhythmic beats entirely as the real thing or cause and are ignorant of what is called ‘interval’. Within the interval is a rhythmic beat. Within a beat is an interval. In presenting a poem between movement sequences, it is important to explore both these items thoroughly. There will be an oral transmission for this.³²⁰

QUESTION. What about the Mixed roles?

ANSWER. It is impossible to exhaust all the possibilities of the spirit of these. Yet even among these, there must be fine aesthetic effects where male and female types of departed spirits are enacted without recourse to either dance or mimetic gestures.³²¹ And there must be deeply touching effects³²² as well, residing in the marvelous moments of genuine [creative] performing. In brief, you must indeed study concrete particulars and hold your mind intently on the various principles that underlie them.

If you practice these various items over the years, continually work them through until you reach a confident attitude, then at the immediate moment of creating you will make full and complete the marvelous air with which you perform anything. This is possible because you perform with an intent where there is practically nothing save for what you are carrying out, and your innermost thoughts will be pure and clear. Your Buddha Nature, limpid as Miwa’s river, will be like a clear mirror, and your spirit will shine forth like the moon.

In particular, what the acts of the deities produce will, in addition, be given to you as favors in trust according to the nature of your performing art, but without these gifts being a personal matter. Since [as a human] you are between Heaven and Earth, the deities [both of Heaven and of Earth] will deign to accept your sincerity and grace of character. Your way of practicing

revert to a level like that which the beginner first exhibited (Nearman, *Kakyō*, pp. 68–71).

In the present passage, Zenchiku shows an application of this principle when he observes that patterns of behavior associated with childhood tend to disappear as the actor becomes more sophisticated about his acting.

³²⁰ See the commentary in MN 50:4 (Winter 1995), pp. 516–17, for an analytic paraphrase of this paragraph.

³²¹ That is, moments when the actor does not rely on physical gestures to communicate the character’s thoughts and feelings to his audience.

³²² *Zuifū* 隨風 is apparently Zenchiku’s neologism for effects that touch the very marrow. It may also be an *ateji* for Zeami’s term 瑞風, ‘the felicitous or auspicious effects’ achieved by an actor who has developed his sense of aptness in performing (Nearman, *Kakyō*, p. 473, n. 176).

your profession will be the very 'Way of the Deities'. If you think that the professional way of earning a livelihood is by dazzling people through your skill with words and the charm of your appearance, you will suffer spiritual repercussions.

Simply, you must know that, being born into this Heavenly profession, you pursue a way that frankly puts aside all self-aggrandizing thoughts. By following this way, you make what is not [creatively] dishonest a manifestation of your purity [of mind and intent], and make your carrying out of the practice itself an expression of [artistic] integrity. As is said [in *Toyuke Kōtai Jingū Go-chinza Hongi*], 'Even though his vitality is like Heaven and Earth as he lets his thoughts ride on wind and cloud, he makes the following of the way his foundation and makes fidelity to the deities his aim.'

29th day of Spring, Bunshō 1 [14 February 1466]
Komparu Takeda Hada Shikibu, Chief Actor
ZENCHIKU NO Ō (monogram)
In his 62nd year.³²³

³²³ By Japanese reckoning. By Western computation, he would have been 60 or 61.

[*Yūgen Sanrin* 幽玄三輪

Ineffable Subtlety and the Upper Three Spheres]

In this treatise Zenchiku explores the similarities between acting on its highest levels and various religious practices, and integrates his Six Spheres with Zeami's system of Nine Levels of acting. Zenchiku equates acting on its highest levels with the actor's 'entering the realm of *yūgen* (ineffable subtlety)', a phrase used by Zeami. This realm is not simply an aesthetic world of elegance and grace, as has been suggested by some present-day scholars, but is for Zenchiku an artistic and spiritual realm that the professional actor must enter and explore if his art is to prove spiritually efficacious for his audience.

The only manuscript copy of this untitled, undated treatise appears as part of the Hachizaemon collection of Zenchiku's writings. It is included in Yoshida, *Zenchiku Shū*, under the title *Sanrin Kuhon* 三輪九品, 'The Three Circles and the Nine Grades', as Section 4 of *Shidō Yōshō* 至道要抄, Zenchiku's last treatise on his Six Spheres.

Among professional actors in *kagura sarugaku*, there has never been anyone since ancient times who gained a reputation for his acting while deviating from a level that reaches supremely high results or [as Zeami called it] 'the realm of *yūgen*'. Any actor who did not attain the grade of *yūgen* never came to the attention of the cultivated and the cultured.³²⁴ Naturally, persons who entered this level enjoyed a high reputation and gained honor. Even so, in recent years the professional way has been ignored and become debased. Alas, in the turbidity of a world where even the discriminating eye of the cultivated and cultured is beguiled, it has been fashionable to take pleasure only in crude and violent styles. More and more a taste for the jewels that our professional way polishes or for the flowers that it holds aloft has lost vogue.³²⁵ What shall we blame for these deplorable conditions?

Accordingly, in my pondering on the professional way of practicing, [it has struck me that] there is nothing that is not endowed with Buddha Nature, be it Heaven and Earth or Yin and Yang, the sun and the moon or the constellations, the deities of Heaven and Earth, or the Buddha's teachings, even to the art of governing people and to the deeds of all humans. Hence, this Buddha Nature is also equivalent to 'the realm of *yūgen*'. But when a person does not understand what his Buddha Nature is, his acting becomes commonplace;

³²⁴ *Kijin kōi* 貴人高位 ordinarily means 'gentlemen and those of higher rank', but later passages in this treatise indicate that Zenchiku is speaking of 'developed and developable levels of sensibility' in viewers rather than of social ranks.

³²⁵ A reference to the shogunate's increasing lack of support for Zeami's and Zenchiku's tradition. In later generations, this trend reversed and the Zeami-Zenchiku tradition enjoyed the preeminent position.

when he does not discern ‘the realm of *yūgen*’, his acting becomes crude in its appeal to popular taste and never rises to a higher level.

[If we correlate the entering of ‘the realm of *yūgen*’ with various religious concepts, then] in Tendai Buddhism, form and intent are developed into the *Lotus Sutra of the Wonderful Teaching*, where form and intent correspond to the efficacious merits of ‘all phenomena being contained in a single thought’, and to the infinitude of ‘personal and universal karmic effects on the ten realms’.³²⁶ Hence it is said, ‘The environment as well as the body and mind of someone in an Avici Hell functions exactly like those of the saintly; nor does the physical body of Vairocana Buddha or the environment [in which He manifests] exceed for a single instant those of an ordinary person.’³²⁷ In Shingon Buddhism, the spirit of the accord among the Three Mysteries [of body, speech, and mind] acts on the basis that ‘this very mind of yours is what becomes Buddha.’³²⁸ Also, in Jōdo Buddhism, it is ‘the sure rebirth [in the Pure Land] by relying on the power of this vow [of Amida Buddha]’.³²⁹ Rebirth can be instantaneously attained, and the mind made peaceful and confident. Similarly, [an actor who is enlightened about his art] returns to a foundation that treats the visible as a necessity and makes it the place for manifesting his realization.³³⁰ In our practice of the Way, we fashion ten role types by starting from the three basic role types. Also, even with those who attained mastery in our art, all such in ancient times truly attained the level of *yūgen*.

Likewise, among the Ten Worlds of possible existence, the Demons of Hell, the Hungry Ghosts, and the Beasts act with particular violence and force. Hence they are spoken of as paths worthy of fear and are called the three paths of wickedness, as they are crude and frightful. Yet since the Ten Worlds, all together, comprise substantive nature, they are what fills the world of a Buddha.³³¹

³²⁶ That is, when a person cultivates his creative intents and the forms by which they are manifest to the point where these forms function on an efficacious level, any moment then contains within itself the potential of all phenomenal expressions. Thus, the impact of any thought or deed will have countless repercussions not only upon oneself but upon the whole universe in all its multilayered manifestations.

³²⁷ This quotation also appears in Shigyoku’s commentary. Within the sphere of Zenchiku’s perspective, it implies that the true source of acting effectively on a professional level is not limited simply to a matter of some personal talent. Just as all humans possess the innate potential for realizing enlightenment, so every actor has the innate creative potential for entering ‘the realm of *yūgen*’.

³²⁸ Zenchiku’s quotation is constructed from two sources: the Zen assertion to someone in training, ‘Your very mind is indeed Buddha’ (*sokushin ze butsu* 即心是仏) and the Shingon statement, ‘One’s very body becomes Buddha’ (*sokushin jō butsu* 即身成仏). Zenchiku’s version in context implies that the actor’s ability to integrate his use of body, speech, and mind derives from his realization through practice that the functioning of these three faculties depends on his innate creative potential, which is inseparable from the spiritual Source.

³²⁹ The quotation appears in *Kyōgyōshinshō*. The vow is to bring all sentient beings to a realization of their inherent enlightenment through rebirth in the Western or Pure Land Paradise. Zenchiku’s following two sentences also have a Jōdo Buddhist coloration.

³³⁰ That is, whatever an actor has come to understand about his art is useless unless he can somehow express that understanding in or through his art.

In contrast with the natures of Hellish Demons and Hungry Ghosts, the actor also creates the forms of lions and foxes among the Beasts even to creating those of departed spirits and demons of the Movement-crushing Style.³³² Nevertheless, there should not be even a suggestion of a threat of crudity, violence, or frightfulness in the form and spirit of his acting, whose root cause is bred from *yūgen*. People will make up for this. It will be a manifestation of the Buddha Nature.³³³

Similarly, all vocalizations are of some particular type. Since they are the common effects of the five visceral organs in response to the nature of a particular style, they are equivalent to the performing level of the actor's voice.³³⁴

In the present treatise, the way of studying the Six Spheres and the One Dredrop has regarded the upper three spheres as the root cause of *yūgen*. Acting ranges over the ten styles, and when it possesses the *yūgen* of the upper three spheres, it will also possess 'the tripartite causal Buddha nature'³³⁵ and emit the light of complete benevolence even when creating a unique [human] character or a demonic role. Hence his performing will shine upon our nation and be a bright path for leading all sentient beings to enlightenment.

Apropos, Zeami has left us his nine types of essential acting levels for keeping the ranking of levels in mind. When my thoughts are incorporated into

³³¹ The Buddhist view expressed in this paragraph may be expounded as follows. The Ten Worlds (or Realms of Existence) constitute ten categories of possible human existence based on the subjective experience of one's own behavior. The 'world' in which an individual 'is born and lives' is, therefore, determined by his behavior. For instance, if he is overwhelmed with feelings of hatred, he is living in a hellish world, or if he is obsessed by greed, he is operating as a hungry ghost in a world of insatiability. How long such a person continues to 'live' in one of these worlds depends on the persistence of his feelings of hatred or greed. If he succeeds in breaking his obsession with these negative feelings, he will 'die' to that world and 'be reborn' in one of the other worlds.

These ten worlds range from the three most negative ones of hellish beings, hungry ghosts, and animals, up to the highest level of a fully enlightened Buddha. But the 'world' of such an enlightened being is not 'outside' and separated from the other nine 'worlds', since he still contains the potential of all the worlds of existence, as do all humans 'living' in any of the other worlds. This potential also functions as the basis for an actor playing any of the various roles in *noh*, which are artistic representations of these Ten Worlds.

³³² Demon characters of this style are said to have a demonic appearance but a human heart, in contrast with more purely demonic figures.

³³³ That is, the actor himself does not have to be crude or violent to express the crudity or violence of the character that he portrays. Spectators will supply a feeling of horror if the actor simply manifests the element of the demonic in a subtle manner, since it is of the nature of the living experience to respond to the demonic with awe and horror.

³³⁴ This sentence refers to the medieval Japanese theory of vibratory qualities of sound utilized by the *noh* actor, which are analogically related to the five visceral organs. Zeami expounds this theory in his treatise *Kakyō* (Nearman, pp. 362-64).

³³⁵ *San'in busshō* 三因仏性, the Tendai term for this tripartite nature, refers to the three elements as (a) the true innate nature of all phenomena, the awareness of which protects one from destructive or karmically negative effects, (b) wise discernment as the means for perceiving that innate nature, and (c) good and compassionate deeds, which enable one to develop his potential for realizing Buddhahood.

that system, the three performing styles of Zeami's upper types correspond to the three upper spheres of the Six Spheres. His middle types are mixed and correspond to the Sphere of Likening. His lower levels correspond to the Sphere of Breaking Free. The Emptied Sphere and the Single Dredrop are the levels of highest artistic effects, and are the levels [respectively] inherent in spiritual emancipation and in enlightenment, which operates unhindered.³³⁶

When the producing of acting on the uppermost of [Zeami's three] upper types is the level. The Appearance of a Miraculous Flowering³³⁷ will be its inherent nature.³³⁸ That is, the 'inherent nature' is one's fundamental Nature, which does not depend on contributory causes [to 'bring it into existence', as do phenomena]. The way that this essential embodiment manifests through effects would be called its 'level'.³³⁹ This uppermost level of inherent nature will be a fusion of all levels.

³³⁶ That is, acting is to be discriminated according to a series of qualitative levels (*i* or *kurai* 位), whose quality is determined by its essential or inherent nature (*shō* or *mochimae* 性).

³³⁷ Zeami's epithet for his highest level of acting (Nearman, *Kyūi*, p. 323), used to indicate the manner in which the essential nature of that level manifests through acting.

³³⁸ In the manuscript, the characters for 'level' and 'nature' appear in regular size, while the phrases preceding these words are in a heavy, large hand. The remaining sentences are written to the left of these two topic sentences as an explanation of them.

³³⁹ That is, whatever practical understanding an actor has of performing, the qualities of that understanding—its essential embodiment—automatically manifests within a given performance, the particulars of which comprise the contributory causes of his acting. It is this manifestation in performance of the nature of the actor's understanding that comprises the level of his acting.

Shidō Yōshō

至道要抄

Essentials for Attaining the Professional Way

This treatise, the final in his series, synthesizes and in many places reformulates fundamental concerns that have occupied Zenchiku in his earlier treatises. It is written primarily for the practitioner rather than for the teacher.

The treatise begins with a general theory of voice, with emphasis on the way an actor uses and develops this instrument of his art. It is an expansion and, to some degree, a revision of the earlier theory of five basic feeling tones, as expounded in his *Go'on no Shidai* 五音の次第, 'The Sequence of the Five Feeling Tones'. There, the emphasis was placed on the actor's sensitizing himself to the particular feeling tone in a given play. The present, general theory starts with the fundamental property of a trained actor's voice and the appropriate way to develop it throughout his career as he learns to master the various types of feeling tones. This process of development centers on the role that mind plays in effecting one's art.

Zenchiku then proceeds to introduce a tripartite system for effective study of the art of noh acting, concerned with what is the appropriate deportment of body, speech, and mind. Next, he discusses how the deportment of these three fundamental media of acting become integrated in performance as three aspects responsible for creating effective acting. He then examines how these media, operating through these aspects, come to exhibit what he calls 'ineffable subtlety' (*yūgen*), a term that he now explicates in his own way.

Finally, using two chart-like diagrams, Zenchiku integrates his tripartite system for effective study, the three media of expression, the three aspects of effective performing, and his Six Spheres and Single Dewdrop.

This treatise, probably his last work on the art of creative acting, summarizes the core of his understanding gained through his lifetime as a creative artist and master. Only one copy of the manuscript, in Zenchiku's own hand, is known to exist. In several instances he has made interpolations that clarify or expand his key terms. These interpolations appear in the translation enclosed within parentheses.

The manuscript lacks a formal colophon. Inside the manuscript cover, however, is a note in Zenchiku's own hand:

The 18th day of the Sixth Month. My seventeen-day retreat in Monju Hall at Inari has caused all the various solicitations in my heart to be satisfied. The solicitation associated with my visit to the three [deities at their shrines] when on the mountain top for the first time has been completely fulfilled.

Some scholars have taken this addendum as evidence that the treatise was written later than Zenchiku's sojourn at Inari, which he describes in his *Inarisan Sanrō Ki* 稻荷山參籠記, 'An Account of My Pilgrimage to Mt Inari'. But had this been

the case, this comment would probably have appeared either as part of a formal introduction or in a colophon, rather than on the inside cover. More likely, this comment was added by Zenchiku later, and may refer to a deeper understanding of his own treatise that came about through his visit to Inari Shrine.

Omote speculates that since the Monju Hall was destroyed by fire on Ōnin 2.3.21 (13 April 1468), ‘the 18th day of the Sixth Month’ refers to the year Ōnin 1, making the date 19 July 1467. This he takes as the day Zenchiku completed his manuscript.³⁴⁰ But this is improbable since Zenchiku did not begin his trip to Inari until 28 July 1467. More probably, the month and day refer to the date when he appended the note whose content indicates was after his Inari visit. This would place the date in Ōnin 2 (16 July 1468). A later year is unlikely since he is believed to have died at some time during 1468.

His is the wondrous voice, voice of the World-Regarder,
Brahma-voice, voice of the rolling tide,
Voice all world-surpassing,
Therefore, ever to be held in mind.³⁴¹

Although it is said that the feeling tones used in performing sarugaku acting are various and sundry, basically eight feeling tones can be discerned: first, the Celebratory Tone; second, the Celebratory Mode; third, the Entertaining Mode; fourth, the Ineffably Subtle Tone; fifth, Passional Attachment; sixth, Grief; seventh, the Transcendent Mode; eighth, the Tranquil Mode.

First, the Celebratory Tone is a level of performing where your voice as it is naturally endowed is kept as it is. For instance, even among musical instruments made of reed, cord, string, and bamboo, there is the natural ‘voice’ of bamboo when it is blown through, and the ‘voice’ of a string when it is plucked. Various and sundry voicings of feeling will take place as a performer gradually shifts his manner of performing on the basis of the tonal modes inherent in his particular instrument. [As the *Book of Odes* says,] ‘Rising and falling over the tones and intervals [of a modal scale], the sounds create patterns. These are called voicings.’ Hence, the voice associated with the tonic tone *kyū* is the voice that emerges first from the mode of the moment, and is a straightforward level of performing.³⁴² We can regard this as the Celebratory Tone. When interpreted in our professional practice, it is difficult to set down what tone produces this particular sound. But if I had to set this down, then the Celebratory would be [the sound made with] an open mouth.³⁴³

³⁴⁰ KKS, p. 266, n. 2.

³⁴¹ From the *Lotus Sutra*, Chapter 25, on the Universal Gateway of Kanzeon, the Bodhi-sattva Who Regards the Cries of the World.

³⁴² ‘The mode of the moment’ (*toki no chōshi* 時の調子) refers to the very first mode used in a day’s program. This mode is influenced by the mood of the audience and the performance conditions on the particular day.

³⁴³ That is, the sound ‘ah’ when produced on the actor’s natural base pitch.

It is also said, ‘Are not filial piety and fraternal submission the source of all humane actions? The proper way to proceed in anything is to establish an appropriate source.’³⁴⁴ And it is also said, ‘When the source is neglected, what springs from it will not be well ordered.’³⁴⁵ Thus, it has seemed imperative that that source be wholly understood. As a Shinto text says, ‘*Moto* [when written with the character *gen* 元, ‘source, origin’] is the *moto* that enters into the word *gensho* [元初, meaning ‘beginning’, in a temporal sense], whereas the *moto* [written with the character *hon* 本, ‘source, foundation’] is the *moto* entrusted to the word *honshin* [本心, ‘one’s true motives or intentions’ as the source of one’s actions].’³⁴⁶ Thus, the pure, clear, honest foundation [of your performing] must be a spirit that is in accord with ‘divine will’ and in harmony with the Buddha’s Teachings.³⁴⁷ As a result, how will anything from the myriad paths of the world be excluded?

From this Celebratory Feeling Tone you will gradually come to understand the various flavors of performing and how to color them. This Celebratory Tone can be called the inherent nature of recitation. To illustrate, the weave in silk cloth is its inherent nature. It is its foundation. To commence dyeing various patterns on cloth is like shaping the various modes of performing. When the nature of the weave is deficient, the dyeing of the pattern will not be satisfactory.

The gestures of movement develop from the chanting of the poetry. Your way of performing with body and sound should be simply this.

Second, since the Celebratory Mode is a performing level where vocal patterns are already being created and since it involves a performance mode, line interpretations will be shaped by extending the departing phrase: the beginning is low, the middle raised, and the end lowered. This method of interpreting by a circular route will be reflected in your use of body. Accordingly, the Celebratory Feeling Tone corresponds to ‘a world at peace’ and ‘contented repose’.³⁴⁸

From the Celebratory Mode, you must understand ‘the miraculousness of performing’. There is a secret writing where the characters used for writing ‘the miraculousness of performing’ are read as *takumi naru waza* [‘adroit

³⁴⁴ Loosely based on a passage in the *Analects*, 1:2.

³⁴⁵ Taken from the *Great Learning*, 7, this quotation also appears in Zeami’s *Go’ongyoku Jōjō* 五音曲条々 (ZZ, p. 203), where he associates ‘the basic voice’ (*honshō* 本声) with the production of a Celebratory performing mode which he considers the foundation or ‘source’ of all other vocal modes. The idea expressed here corresponds on one level to an actor obtaining proper voice placement before developing other vocal skills.

³⁴⁶ The quotation derives from the medieval Shinto text *Yamato-hime no Mikoto Seiki* 倭姫命世紀, in relation to the notion that the true source of human behavior is not measured by some temporal beginning but by the motives within the heart.

³⁴⁷ ‘To be in accord with divine will’ refers to the actor’s awareness of the source of his creative inspirations and his attempt to function in accord with them. ‘To be in harmony with the Buddha’s Teachings’ refers to his attempt to rid his art of egocentric motives and intentions.

³⁴⁸ These two phrases, borrowed from the *Book of Odes*, were attributed by Zenchiku to the Celebratory quality in his earlier treatise *Go’on Sangyoku Shū*.

performing’].³⁴⁹ This quality of being excellent in performing will truly be the ultimate among the myriad paths.

Third, the Entertaining Mode is a basic style that ‘takes in the sights’, that throws willows and cherry trees into wild abandon with only a whisper. You aim at stirring up a profusion of aesthetic effects for which you have scenes of ‘flowers and birds, breeze and moon’, and have added appropriate intonational lines. Then, by holding that intent in mind, your acting will be on a level where you recite in a buoyant manner.³⁵⁰

Fourth, the Ineffably Subtle Feeling Tone is the supreme and foremost level. This Ineffable Subtlety is greatly misunderstood. Something that is pretentious, overly emotional in language, and effete may be adjudged as ‘ineffably subtle’, but it should not be so considered.

Concerning the Ineffably Subtle in general, it adheres to the Buddha’s Teachings, the royal commands [based on them], and the Way of the Deities. Furthermore, it will not be self-centered. What is essential is simply a strongly formed intent, an intent that not only is profound, distant, and subdued but also permeates all without being surpassed by anything.³⁵¹

The fineness of gold is ‘ineffably subtle’, as is a clear mirror, and the power of a sword, and stones and rocks, as well as demonic beings. If you have not attained the true way for performing a demonic being, then when you portray fox or badger demons, they will be conventional representations of monsters, and their appropriate basic style will be missing because you do not understand the professional way of Ineffable Subtlety. Nevertheless, even though wild things such as these demons are not real, they are subjects suitable for entertainment. To say nothing of real things! If just their surface appearance is pleasing and made to look plausible, they will not be unlike the demons of the previous type. Hence, when you do not understand the genuine inherent characteristics [of the character that you are portraying], your performing cannot be called ‘ineffably subtle’.

As to the numerous varieties of the Ineffably Subtle, inasmuch as ‘Heaven and Earth before their separation’ [that is, the Sphere of Perpetual Flow] is the foundation of Ineffable Subtlety, Heaven and Earth [that is, the spheres of Arising and Settling In] will be ineffably subtle, as will be [their phenomenal expression, which we call] ‘the sun and the moon, the stars in their constellations, the mountains and the sea, the grasses and trees’ [associated with the Sphere of Likening].

³⁴⁹ Omote (KKS, p. 267, n. 15) suggests the Shinto text *Jinnō Keizu* 神皇系図, as a possible source of Zenchiku’s interpretation.

³⁵⁰ That is, in this mode emphasis is to be on the more superficial and outwardly brilliant aspects of performing. The aim is to arouse excitement and delight (‘to throw willows and cherry trees into wild abandon’) rather than to deeply touch the emotions of the audience.

³⁵¹ That is, this clearly formed intent (*gi* 儀, literally, ‘meaning’) permeates all that the actor does, without anything that he performs interfering with its expression. Yet, in its manifestation it has three particular properties: it has profundity without being pretentious, it is ‘distant’ in the sense of not being obvious or trivial, and it is restrained in its emotionality.

What is thick is weak; what is slender is strong.³⁵² What is slender readily calms down, which is the meaning behind the Ineffably Subtle. When something that is thick is made violent, it becomes weaker still. But when you have a spirit that is rich yet fine, you are not bested by anything because the Ineffably Subtle accompanies your performing. When your performing is endowed with the Ineffably Subtle, there will be both the thickly rich and the fine, since they are inherent products of mind. This is precisely why [in fine performing] exceedingly rich places may emerge from ineffably subtle ones. Even so, when thickly rich places are merely violent, the performing reaches the point of being weak.

Fifth, Passional Attachment is a style in which forms manifest on the outside because there are thoughts and feelings within. In this grade, you make your mind the source. Because you hold in mind the form to be expressed, the style of the form will be that of the Ineffably Subtle, while your mind itself is in the mold of Passional Attachment.

What is essential is that your physical expression be aesthetically pleasing [to your audience] and that your thoughts and feelings be strong and deep. What I mean by your thoughts and feelings being strong and deep is that the patterns of your vocal sounds are filled with the thoughts and feelings derived from a wide-ranging and clear understanding [of the character portrayed]. Hence, the aesthetic impact of your physicalized expressions will be at its height and thoroughly satisfying [to your audience]. It is the ultimate of our professional way and its supreme climax. ‘Frank in temperament, whilst flexible in intent,’ as the *Lotus Sutra* [Chapter 16] expresses it. Your physical expression will be honest and straightforward, and your mind will be gentle and pliant so that benevolent thoughts and feelings can be strong and deep.

You must have thorough experiential knowledge of the level of performing where, having entered into and intensified that [inner spirit] from which you recite the linguistic patterns of Passional Attachment, you then recite, faintly [suggesting this inner attitude].³⁵³ [Your mental image and the feelings associated with it], for example, should have a visual affinity with the springtime blossoms, autumnal maples, or [the various natural beauties, such as] flowers and birds, wind and moon.

³⁵² In this paragraph Zenchiku plays with a range of meanings associated with the antonyms *futoshi* 太し and *hososhi* 細し. Because no single English words imply all the various connotations of either of these key terms, context determines the choice of an equivalent.

Futoshi means most neutrally ‘that which is thick’, but since something that is thick is often unsupple and unyielding, it is adjudged weak because it can more easily be thrown off balance and lacks tensile strength. The term also carries connotations of ‘something brutish, brazen, or impudent’. On the other hand, it can refer to ‘something rich, broad, or deep’, especially in association with a word such as *kokoro* 心, ‘spirit, mind’.

Hososhi refers to ‘that which is slender’, and by extension, to ‘what is fine’ in the sense of ‘detailed’ and ‘finely wrought’ as well as ‘what is frugal’. It is associated with the term *yawaragu* 和らぐ, ‘to be softened or calmed down’ or, negatively, ‘to lose its sharp edge’, particularly in relation to spirit or mind.

³⁵³ That is, the actor does not display the passion outwardly, but performs with great restraint on his deliberately intensified inner feeling.

Sixth, with Grief, you foster pity for the lot of human beings and for the paths of their affectional loves. You draw your audience into these transitory experiences of the world, and furnish them with intonational lines rich in moods. Your reciting from a practical understanding [of this approach to creating grief on stage] will be a turning point between the moods of Passional Attachment and Grief, and to that extent must be considered important.

It is also of vital importance to recite by pushing the various performing modes to their limits and by displaying a coloration of grief that even surpasses the nuances shown in the intensity of Passional Attachment. By way of illustration, it is like trees having been completely desolated by winter. When this mode is recited tearfully and with woeful moaning as with the Passional Attachment patterns, you have forms that are commonplace in the sense of being old-fashioned in style.³⁵⁴ Even though the feeling of grief that lies within the pathos of passional attachment is a spirit that will intensify what is already intense, the pathos of affectional attachment will suddenly shift to the pathos of a binding love, whereas the grief shifts to the pathos of passing sorrow.³⁵⁵ To summarize, in keeping with the winter metaphor, you should recite simply through a feeling of 'a withered tree'. There will be an oral transmission on the spirit of this. (Wisdom in the extreme returns to foolishness, emotional coloration in the extreme becomes shallowness. The 'beginner's spirit' will accordingly be an extreme.)³⁵⁶

Seventh, the Transcendent Mode is a matured level of performing. This is like being 'ripe in years'. Hence, the time-worn figures of pine and cryptomeria are not in the least confused with the remaining deciduous trees. By the time [an actor has been stripped of his affectations, weaknesses, and tendencies to overplay so that he is like a deciduous tree that] buffeted by mountain winds and sea breezes, droops and, with the whipping of its dead leaves, becomes a bare tree, that essential [transcendent] level will emerge and be the source of whatever reaches the height of adulation! Thus, it is the level where success is achieved and a name attained.

Even so, an immature person who is unprepared to enter onto this level may make a study of such an advanced level and become proficient through some personalized act. To reiterate, this is a sequence of study by which he will not attain ready entrance to a level where people say that his acting is even

³⁵⁴ That is, the old style of superficial and bombastic rhetorical expression (which was characteristic of sarugaku acting prior to Zeami's father's style came in vogue) is to be supplanted by the decidedly more subtle 'inner realism' of the Zeami-Zenchiku approach.

³⁵⁵ That is, when a character experiences grief as part of a strong emotional attachment, one of these feelings will ultimately dominate his actions. If it is the feeling of attachment, then the character will ultimately give way to an expression of a love that binds it ever more strongly to the object of its passion. When grief predominates, the feeling will ultimately shift to one of passing sorrow.

³⁵⁶ A reference to Zeami's admonition that an actor at all ages and in all circumstances should 'remember the beginner's spirit' (Nearman, *Kakyō*, pp. 68–71). The intent of Zenchiku's statement is unclear as it is uncertain whether he is recommending or attempting to discourage the actor to carry this 'beginner's spirit' to the extreme when performing in the Grief Mode.

comparatively interesting. This immature actor does not understand that he will continue to lose any reputation that he has for his original work since this was done in a [basically] rough and tough manner. If he expects to reach this 'full-blown mode of performing', well then, he must exert himself step by step for years and years.³⁵⁷

[An inexperienced actor may ask] in all sincerity what he is to understand by 'full blown'. That is to be expected. On this essential level where what is usually considered a fault is turned into something 'theatrically right' and where even the incongruous ripens into something interesting, performing will be effective simply to the extent that it is good. You must reflect well on this. Practical experiences pile up over the years, and this is what naturally keeps supplying the level of specifics in performing. The immature actor apes those specifics without having attained the underlying experiences. This counterfeit level is 'rough and tough'. Moreover, it will lack grace. Hence, the act that such an actor personally originated will also be lost. This matter is of utmost importance. As Mencius said [in criticism of the inappropriate manner in which a certain king was attempting to fulfill his desires], 'To pursue what you are doing in order to seek for what you desire is like your climbing a tree to seek for a fish!'³⁵⁸ And he added, 'If you climb a tree to seek for a fish, there will be no great fault beyond acting foolishly. However, for you to pursue what you are doing to seek what you desire will assuredly contain faults.' This, indeed, is of great import.

Eighth, the Tranquil Mode is a level of performing whose essential nature is elegant yet tranquilly matured. This, indeed, would be what is truly graceful. For instance, it would be like seeing the rain drizzling on blossoms blooming here and there on the few remaining moss-covered branches of some famous tree at Yoshino or Ōhara or Oshio.³⁵⁹ This tranquilly graceful yet entrancing level is the ultimately unsurpassable level. The previous 'full-blown' level is violent. The Tranquil Mode is serene.

I have referred to the previous level as violent but, basically, even while something with an insensate and insentient nature is raging, there is still a feeling that a wind storming through the pines or a tempest blowing through the cryptomeria arises from [essentially] tranquil emotions, and that the color and scent of the wind-scattered cherry blossoms are what are storming. Even when there is a period of calm, a naturally violent thing is prone to become violent, since its inclination is to be violent. What is tranquil by inclination is prone to

³⁵⁷ That is, an actor who attempts to perform in a manner too advanced for him may gain immediate success and recognition for his work in a particular role because his performance looks 'different' and therefore is considered 'original'. But since this work is not founded on a solid understanding and mastery of his art, he will ultimately lose his reputation, because an underlying crudity in his work will become more and more apparent through subsequent performances.

³⁵⁸ This and the following quotation are based on *Mencius*, 1:1:7, verse 16.

³⁵⁹ All three locations were famed for their cherry trees. Each has also served as a location in one or more noh plays.

become tranquil even though it is basically tranquil. This distinction must be thoroughly understood. Have you ever seen as the epitome of tranquillity a horse feeding in a field with muzzle stuck into the grass or a monkey napping on a rock? These are but momentary subsidings in otherwise wild creatures.

Thus, a performer of a naturally rough and tough temperament may draw a lesson from good acting and give variety to the spirit of his performing once he has made his body tranquil [in its use]. His performing will still appear deficient, but an astute person will see it as comparatively entertaining. For the unsophisticated person, it will be eye-catching. Hence, a level of performing whose innate nature is a calm gracefulness is something where a purposefully wild and disheveled look finds particular accord with the style of both the reciting and the movement.

Performing that still astounds both ear and eye even in moments of considerable calm is adjudged to be on this level of the Tranquil Mode. Similarly, a secret writing on the way of poetry³⁶⁰ says that a poet should systematically master variety within the bounds of the Ten Poetic Styles by working from Ineffable Subtlety from the very start.³⁶¹ Once he has reached the supreme mysteries of his art, the level on which he comes to study the Demon-Crushing and the Powerful Styles will correspond to this level of a transcendent nature [just described for actors]. These should not at all be treated as separate and unrelated levels. Both will be something that arises from long years of practice and application.

Item, concerning our tradition's threefold study of proper conduct, concentration, and discernment.³⁶²

'Restraining practices'³⁶³ ([which refers to] the body in action: these movements should be excluded) are rapid actions, leap-frogging, energetic demons, lions,³⁶⁴ juggling, the various sorts of grotesques, as well as heavenly and earthly goblins. In present-day Warrior roles, 'returning on the knees from a leap', 'beating time on the knee', and 'fluttering shifts'³⁶⁵ are of this kind

³⁶⁰ Probably a reference to *Sangoki*.

³⁶¹ That is, the actor's training, like that of the poet, should begin with focus on and discipline of thought and feeling. This view superficially seems to contradict Zeami's method, which ostensibly begins with training the body and voice. But Zeami's approach implies that it is the actor's mind that is actually being trained right from the start.

³⁶² In Buddhism, the 'threefold study' or way of learning (*sangaku* 三学) is comprised of 'the precepts' (*kai* 戒) that are restraining practices used to guide one's conduct, 'meditative concentration' (*jō* 定) for focusing the mind, and 'discernment' (*e* 慧) gained through spiritually awakening to what phenomena are and That Which underlies them. Although these three terms, as well as several later ones, derive from Buddhism, Zenchiku accommodates their meaning to acting phenomena.

³⁶³ *Kaigyō* 戒行, as a Buddhist term, refers to doing one's spiritual training by putting the precepts into practice. Since these take the form of 'Refrain from killing, stealing, etc.', they are called 'restraining practices'.

³⁶⁴ What is probably meant is the way lions were enacted as part of Shinto and Buddhist festivities, since his brother-in-law's play *Shakkyō* was already part of the standard repertory.

³⁶⁵ The exact meaning of the technical term *hirahira-gaeri*, 'fluttering shifts', is uncertain. The word suggests the concluding of a movement with 'a flick of the wrist' or any similarly unnecessary and distracting flourish.

of excluded movement. The overly clever³⁶⁶ and the flashy are of this sort.

‘Concentration’ (mind in action) is to meditate and focus on what is held in mind. It is a mode in which [expressed] form and spirit are equally tranquil. In general, the ways of expression are myriad, but careful discrimination and a graceful style will truly be their basic intention.

‘Discernment’ (speech in action) is [the functioning of] compassionate wisdom. Breaking attachment to the notion of excellence, you do not settle rigidly on anything. Lightly, yet with a regard for particulars, you move in a calm manner. You pause, yet without [the flow of your acting] coming to a halt. Although your performing flows on, it does so without haste; although it is tranquil, it does not drag. Because you have given depth to your performing, it will show on the surface. According to the occasion, you give priority to the face, and particularly to the eyes.³⁶⁷ As they say, priority is given to the mind in seeing and to the body in hearing.

Item, in the middle way between absolute wholeness and momentary instantaneousness, there will be a single embodiment for each thought. Everywhere in the universe, phenomena and the discernment [that arises from a direct intuition of phenomena] (that is, form and spirit) are in complete accord. Single-mindedness is essential.³⁶⁸

This, accordingly, is equivalent to the absolute Ineffable Subtlety. Now, when we think of things as being hard and clear, our level of perception is small. When we think of things as being soft and loose, our level of perception is large.³⁶⁹ The Ten Worlds of possible human existence, our bodies and minds, and their foundation are things without any permanent residue. Your phenomenal forms (associated with disciplined appropriateness), emotional moods (associated with meditational concentration), and aesthetic atmospheres (associated with an enlightened realization of compassionate discernment)—all and everything in your acting—will be sufficiently endowed and harmoniously unified even when broken down into fives,³⁷⁰ ([an idea analogous to] the Truth of the Middle Way in the *Lotus Sutra of the Wonderful Teaching*).

Item, you must experientially understand three modes of performing. The three modes are the Ineffable Subtlety of body, the Ineffable Subtlety of speech, and the Ineffable Subtlety of mind.

³⁶⁶ Apart from a negative connotation, the meaning of *kyōmyō* (or *gōmyō*) 楽妙 is uncertain. It may refer to an attempt to be ‘overly entertaining’ or to be ‘a crowd-pleaser’, or it may be an *ateji* for 巧妙 (now read *kōmyō*), ‘markedly adroit’, but in a negative sense of being a show-off.

³⁶⁷ This sentence suggests that masks may not have been used as extensively in the Komparu tradition in Zenchiku’s day as they are in modern-day *noh*.

³⁶⁸ In this and the following paragraph Zenchiku derives his terminology from Tendai Buddhism, but the ideas he expresses with them are apparently his own.

³⁶⁹ That is, we perceive the ‘world’ as comprised of either a conglomeration of particulars or a constantly changing flow.

³⁷⁰ ‘Fives’ stands for any of the five-part aggregates that Zenchiku has mentioned in his analysis of acting, such as the five mental elements from which the stage ‘world’ is created, the five doors of perception, the five visceral organs, the five principal tones of a modal scale, and the five feeling tones.

The Ineffable Subtlety of body is a respect for the ‘body’ of aesthetic effects created by means of the physical body. The Ineffable Subtlety of speech is recitation [as, literally, the mode of performing with sounds]. The Ineffable Subtlety of mind encompasses the ‘flavors’ of the performing modes. Hence, the phases in the practice of this profession are of necessity just these three.

The supreme heights of your art come when the aesthetic effects produced by your body are well concealed in the various particulars while still remaining pleasingly austere and clear, and the recitation with which you begin to speak has a tonal vigor appropriate for that level of performing. Then, the performance flavor of ‘an ineffable subtlety of mind’ will deeply dye the guiding principle [that you have worked out for your performance], and the evocative resonances will be outwardly rich in mood and accompanied with a [subtle] glow.³⁷¹ Hence, [to attain this level] you must have a taste for these three performing modes.

To illustrate, the three modes are like the surface of the Clear Mirror of the Absolute.³⁷² When you are unpretentious and impervious to praise or blame, the forms that you employ in performing will be in no wise lacking or diminished, and will nowhere be unseemly or indistinct. This Single Wheel (it is the circularity [of the Mirror of the Absolute]) goes around and around without even a breath’s break in its turning. This is analogous to the moving of the mind even when the body is still. When it does not move, there is discord [between intent and expression]. Further, even though the mind is calm, the body moves. When it does not move, the mind moves. Mind and body together constitute [the art of] moving to the reciting of poetry. Although this process is called the Six Wheels of Perpetual Flow, Arising, Settling In, Likening, Breaking Free, and Being Emptied, the level of the Single Wheel becomes simply the level of the Clear Mirror’s Sword of Vitality.

The body in action is like the pedestal of the [mind’s] Clear Mirror. Speech in action excludes the various conflicting explanations for everything (that is, it is teaching by the immanent Buddha-mind).³⁷³ Thought in action is the characteristic of the fundamental nature of the eight-petaled lotus, which is comprised of eighty-four thousand miraculous effects majestically impressive, faultlessly pure, and appropriately straightforward.³⁷⁴

³⁷¹ That is, the surface brilliance associated with body techniques is suppressed and the vocal techniques greatly modified so that the subtler effects arising directly from the mind may come through.

³⁷² That is, the ‘Single Wheel’, as presented in his treatise *Nika Ichirin*.

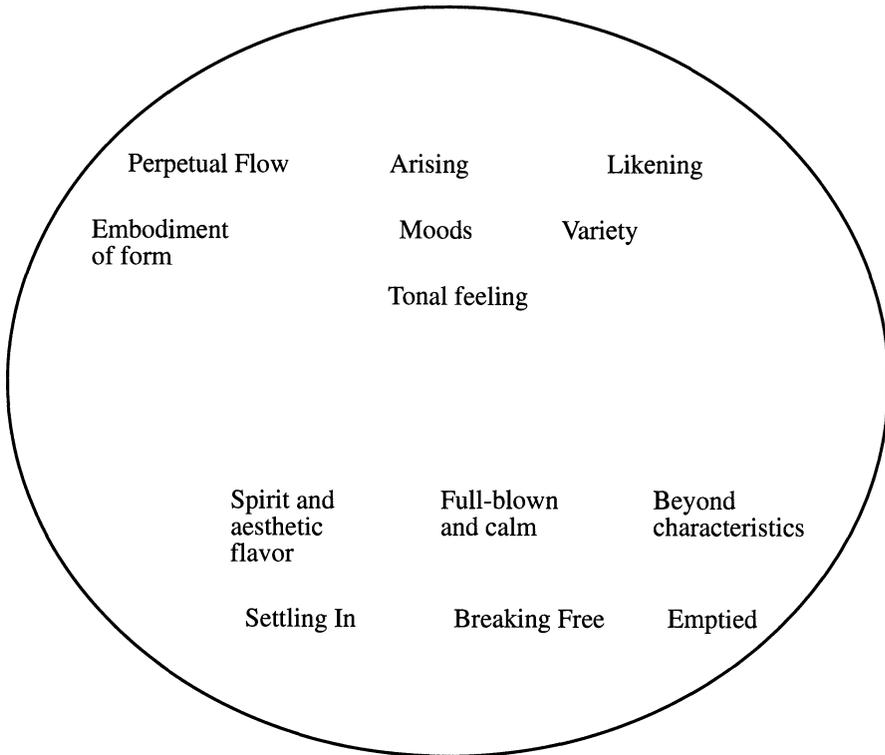
³⁷³ That is, through speech the ambiguities of semantic interpretation are removed, since speech can make intent unambiguously manifest.

³⁷⁴ That is, the mental activities of an actor fully enlightened to his art is comparable to the myriad (‘eighty-four thousand’) marvelous effects achievable through the operation of a spiritually awakened mind (‘the eight-petaled lotus’). By implication, the actor who sets Zen-chiku’s Six Wheels in motion around the axis of the Single Dewdrop achieves similar spiritual effects through his acting, but without resorting to ‘preaching doctrine’.

The Three Areas of Study and the Three Performance Modes

PROPER CONDUCT CONCENTRATION DISCERNMENT

<p>Phenomenal Form</p> <p>The body that fashions particulars well, according to the path.</p>	<p>Emotional Moods</p> <p>What is in thought manifests in outer forms.</p>	<p>Aesthetic Flavor</p> <p>All and everything is sufficiently equipped (Void), broken apart and sifted through (Provisional), yet harmoniously unified (Middle).</p> <p>The Middle Way.</p>
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Physical expressions that make all things places of tranquillity.

The effective performing modes for form and spirit manifest in the tonal patterns.

This circle is the level of clear discernment as the Single Dewdrop Sword, etc. (One-mindedness is equivalent to clear discernment).³⁷⁵

The sound of recitation turns the harmonizing of form and spirit into the gestures of movement. This is the Middle Way of acting.³⁷⁶

In harmonizing or concentrating on the three performance modes, we speak of ‘physical expression’, ‘a highly subtle level’, ‘fulfillment [or realization]’, ‘variety [or quality]’, ‘doing as one will [or spontaneity]’, ‘doing as intended [that is, seeing the deeper intent]’, and ‘the spirit of things’.³⁷⁷

First, [the body in action]. In that the embodiment of form is direct and open, yet aesthetically pleasing, it is called the Ineffable Subtlety of the body associated with the Sphere of Perpetual Flow.

Second, speech in action. The level of performing where the tonal feeling of the recitation has finally become pleasingly clear and crystalline in its ineffable subtlety becomes the polished performing mode of the Sphere of Arising.

Third, intent in action. What is called ‘flexibility [in intent]’³⁷⁸ refers to your attitude of mind at any particular moment being [the result of] a profoundly resolute deference to the One Mind. Hence, you operate on this level by keeping your mind fixed to the case at hand while performing with ease. This is called the Sphere of Settling In. When you embody those various and sundry particulars in a performance, it is the Sphere of Likening. After you gradually attain a maturing of that level and are no longer disturbed over what is ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, it is called the Sphere of Breaking Free. Finally, the level that is void and beyond characteristics is called the Emptied Sphere. Now on top of this, you create your movements and reciting. What is vitally important to this professional approach is the Middle Way. This is comprised of the upper three spheres alone.

What is straightforward and open, yet majestically distanced, is called ‘the life flow’ of movement and reciting. What is on a high level is called ‘a vertical [ascendancy]’. What is well governed and fulfilling is called ‘settled in’. To attain the various particulars of performance at will is called ‘[likening according to an] image’. To be at one’s height and at complete ease and free in performing is called ‘breaking [free]’. To do little [outwardly] is called ‘being emptied’. The unifying and integrating non-dualistic Mind that is the motive spirit of these previously named qualities is called ‘the innate sword’. That is all there is.

³⁷⁵ In the manuscript this sentence begins within the crudely sketched circle and extends below and outside it.

³⁷⁶ In this diagram Zenchiku brings together the principle ideas that he has just been discussing and presents them as a mirror, with the text above and below the circle, apparently representing what the mirror reflects, and the text inside the circle being that which causes the reflection to arise. In the original text, the terms read from right to left. In the translation, they have been set to read from left to right to accord with English-language expectations.

³⁷⁷ These seven terms correlate with Zenchiku’s Six Spheres and Single Dewdrop.

³⁷⁸ This term derives from a line in the *Lotus Sutra*, which Zenchiku has already quoted in relation to the Passional Attachment mode, p. 42, above.

PROPER CONDUCT: The three categories of precepts, the five cardinal precepts, the ten good deeds, etc.³⁷⁹

The text on the deities of Heaven and Earth says, ‘Let not your eye look indiscriminately. Let not your ear hear indiscriminately. Let not your nose smell indiscriminately. Let not your mouth speak indiscriminately. Let not your body move about indiscriminately. Let not your thoughts operate indiscriminately.’

CONCENTRATION: Having developed single-mindedness, you perform conscientiously.³⁸⁰

Having entered deeply into meditation,
He sees Buddha everywhere.³⁸¹

DISCERNMENT: Myriad words and diverse explanations are excluded. The motive spirit is equal to Heaven and Earth. Thoughts and feelings ride the wind and clouds. The power of concentration coupled with benevolence is magnificent.³⁸²

Phenomenal forms (body, Perpetual Flow), permeating moods (sound, Arising), and aesthetic atmospheres (the ‘taste’ [that is, direct experience] of the mind’s performing mode, Settling In)—all and everything (Likening)—is sufficiently supplied, broken apart (Breaking Free), and sifted through (Being Emptied), yet harmoniously unified (the Innate Sword, the Middle Way).

[Zenchiku crudely sketches a circle here representing the Single Sphere:]³⁸³

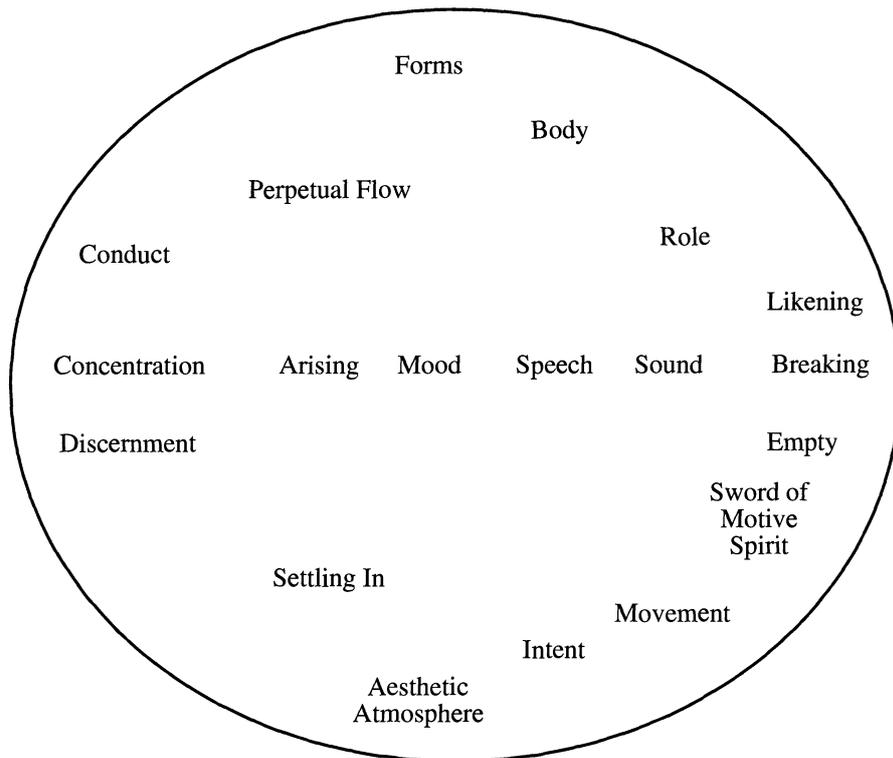
³⁷⁹ These are all identified in *Rokurin Kanjō Hiki*, in MN 50:3 (Autumn 1995), pp. 300–01.

³⁸⁰ Based on a line from *Toyuke Kōtai Jingū Go-chinza Hongi*.

³⁸¹ From the *Lotus Sutra*, Chapter 14.

³⁸² Based on a passage in *Toyuke Kōtai Jingū Go-chinza Hongi*.

³⁸³ The original text reads from right to left, the translation from left to right. The design of the diagram suggests that the elements named are those that lay within the artist’s inner being which must operate to transform his art into a reflection of the Bright Mirror of Wisdom.



The Six Spheres are synonymous with this Single Sphere alone. It incorporates the three modes of performing within its single sphere. The three modes are the upper three spheres of Perpetual Flow, Arising, and Settling In, and these accordingly are analogous to the actor's threefold study of proper conduct, concentration, and discernment. They are analogous [respectively] to phenomenal forms, the permeating mood, and the aesthetic atmosphere that comprise the miraculous law of the equivalence of the absolute and the instantaneous.

Phenomenal forms are [the result of the use of] the physical body straightforward and open in its conduct per se. Permeating moods are [the result of] flexibility of intent. When there is thought within, its form manifests outwardly. This, accordingly, emerges in the tonal feelings with which the vocal patterns are executed. When form and spirit are in harmony, your performing achieves an appearance of 'dancing'. This is what is meant by form, moods, and aesthetic atmosphere.

'Breaking down and sifting out' is equivalent to '[refining by] pulverizing

and humbly offering.’ ‘Harmonic unity’ is the Truth of the Middle Way.³⁸⁴ This is vitally important. It corresponds to ‘the appearance of dancing’ characteristic of our professional approach. It would seem that ‘to pulverize’ is [analogous to the Truth of] the Voice, ‘to humbly offer in full’ is [analogous to the Truth of] Provisional Reality, and ‘harmonic unity’ to [the Truth of] the Middle Way.³⁸⁵

When these things are done wholeheartedly, what alone is important is that you manage your body and its aesthetic effects nicely, do your recitation agreeably, and then thoroughly cultivate your spirit. This sequence must be arranged as ‘spirit, sound, body’. ‘Seeing’, ‘hearing’, and ‘emptiness’ are perceived [by spectators] as ‘body, sound, and spirit’. When you have simply transformed these three into ‘the appearance of dancing’, it is the ultimate in ineffable subtlety of the unsurpassable upper-level effects [which Zeami has spoken of]. Hence, you must by all means understand through direct experience how role type, sound, and movement are equivalent to phenomenal form, permeating moods, and aesthetic atmosphere. The direct intuiting of this spirit is called the Single Dewdrop of the Sword of Motive Spirit.

³⁸⁴ That is, the term ‘unity’ implies the absolute as an indivisible whole, whereas what is ‘harmonic’ implies some ‘particular’ instance in relation to all other instances, or the instantaneous. The term ‘harmonic unity’, therefore, represents the integration of the absolute and the instantaneous, which is equivalent to ‘the Truth of the Middle Way’ between the Absolute Void (which is devoid of any boundaries) and the Provisionally Real (which is comprised of the boundaries of time, space, and form that we place on what we perceive as phenomena).

³⁸⁵ That is, on the highest levels of the practice of an art, the artist must discover the Middle Way of ‘harmonic unity’ that integrates the recognition that whatever he creates is a ‘construct’. This construct is ‘void’ in that it has no ‘true’ existence (a recognition that ‘breaks apart’ the illusion of reality). At the same time he is aware of his obligation to present that construct as accurately and in as full detail as possible without pretentiousness (a genuinely ‘humble offering’ to his audience).