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Walking in The City: Koji Nakano’s Reimagining and Re-Sounding of The Tale Of Genji

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WALKING IN THE CITY:
KOJI NAKANO’S REIMAGINING AND RE-SOUNDING
OF THE TALE OF GENJI

by

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SUBMITTED TO SCRIPPS COLLEGE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
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PROFESSOR COATS
PROFESSOR HARLEY

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“Creativity has its own gravity. Everything will fall into place.”
—Koji Nakano
From a Personal Interview by Isabella Ramos. Claremont, November 4, 2016

I never expected that I would co-commission, co-produce, and premiere a work of music in my early 20s. And then proceed to write a thesis on the work’s contents and production in the same school year. I declared as an art history major in the spring of 2015 with the expectation that I will write about dead artists and living artists, with whom I will never meet in my lifetime. This senior thesis project quickly proved me wrong. I am indebted to Dr. Koji Nakano of Burapha University, Thailand for entrusting me with so many of his composition’s components, both administrative and artistic. Dr. Nakano and his philosophical approach to music and art continue to inspire me today.

Many thanks to Professor Bruce Coats for his guidance and patience throughout the many tumultuous, but necessary processes that made this thesis and the Claremont Colleges Festival of Noh possible. Professor Coats’ encyclopedic knowledge of Japanese history and art were also instrumental to both endeavors. I owe Professor Anne Harley my gratitude for pushing me to do things I never thought were possible for me. My professional, musical, and artistic growth would not have been possible without her mentorship and collaboration. Thank you to Professor Ruti Talmor of Pitzer College for her intense artistic vetting of my conclusion’s visual components.

The Claremont Colleges Festival of Noh and the Imagined Sceneries project truly took a village. I will take time to name a few members of that village. Thank you to the Pomona College Theatre Department, the Kongo Noh School, and the festival’s sponsors, guest artists, and participants. Thank you to the Scripps College Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery, the
Scripps College Clark Humanities Museum, Chaffey College, California State University San Bernardino, and the Imagined Sceneries cast and crew.

I have so much love in my heart for my parents, who encourage me to follow my aspirations and who work tirelessly to make the pathways towards my dreams available. Their commitment to our family and the Pilipinx community inspires me as well. Thank you.
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Introduction

The lights dim as a parade of performers in black enter through the museum’s center aisle. Ambient noise of Kyoto’s famed Kiyomizu Temple gradually surrounds the audience in a long crescendo while an actor tells the story of a prince who keeps women captive like baubles. The ring of finger cymbals answers the temple’s gong and cues the entrances of three voices. Three sopranos string syllables together, singing a waka poem as if with one voice. This spiritual tuning into the world of Koji Nakano’s *Imagined Sceneries* (2016)¹ conjures the projection of an image, a girl who has lost her sparrow and the prince of the story, who lurks in the shadows of a brushwood fence. This is a description of the premiere performance (fig. 1) of the first movement of *Imagined Sceneries* at Scripps College Clark Humanities Museum in Claremont, CA as part of the Festival of Noh Theater at the Claremont Colleges in October 2016 (fig. 2).²

The elements described and other elements of the work collectively create movements that function as abstractions of places in present-day and Heian Period (784-1185) Kyoto. My thesis is a journey through Nakano’s imagined spaces in his musical work.

Nakano’s *Imagined Sceneries* is a work for two soprano soloists, koto, light percussion, narrations, electronically manipulated soundscapes, and digital projection.³ It incorporates both

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¹ This multimedia chamber work was written by Koji Nakano, Head of International Affairs in the Faculty of Music and Performing Arts at Burapha University. Scripps College Assistant Professor of Music Anne Harley and I co-commissioned and co-produced *Imagined Sceneries*. This musical work, which premiered on October 29, 2016 at Scripps College’s Clark Humanities Museum, was composed for Anne Harley, Professor of Music and Director of Opera Theatre at California State University, San Bernardino Stacey Fraser, koto player Yukiko Matsuyama, and students of the Claremont Colleges in Claremont, CA. *Imagined Sceneries* was also performed at Chaffey College’s Wignall Gallery in Rancho Cucamonga, CA on October 30, 2016 and at Cal State San Bernardino’s Performing Arts Recital Hall on November 1, 2016.

² The Festival of Noh Theater at the Claremont Colleges occurred during the week of October 24 - 29, 2016. Two Claremont Colleges faculty members laid this festival's groundwork and began planning in 2014. Pomona College Professor of Theatre Thomas Leabhart invited Noh actors from the acclaimed Kongo Noh School in Kyoto, Japan to give performances at the Claremont Colleges. Professor Coats organized an exhibition of Japanese theater prints and costumes in the Scripps Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery. *Imagined Sceneries* was introduced into the festival schedule later into the year of 2014 as a musical celebration of Noh theater.
visual and theatrical elements of *The Tale of Genji*, an early eleventh-century novel written by court woman Murasaki Shikibu. It chronicles the life and times of the playboy character Genji, who is born to the emperor and a lowly concubine. The novel is set in the imperial court of Kyoto during Japan’s Heian period (794 – 1185). Considered a seminal work in Japanese and world literature, *The Tale* maintains a cultural and artistic legacy across media of over a thousand years. *The Tale of Genji* has provided scholars with valuable information on the Heian era, namely on Heian era architecture, rituals, clothing, aesthetics, among other topics. It inspired films (fig. 3), anime (fig. 4) and *manga* series (fig. 5), games (fig. 6), and works of art (fig. 7) and music (fig. 1 and fig. 7).

In many ways, *The Tale* is an archive. In his article “Tacit Narratives: The Meanings of Archives,” archivist, legal historian, and lawyer Eric Ketelaar offers an understanding of archives that contradicts their perceived neutrality. The idea of a membranous, almost living, archive as a social institution, governed by a variety of social and cultural contexts has direct application to the eleventh-century *Tale of Genji* text. If one considers *The Tale*, the core primary source, and its thousand-year cultural legacy an archive, contexts and perspectives that dictate the contents of this archive become visible. Over time, some of *The Tale’s* components have disappeared and have been altered, which greatly impacted recreations of *The Tale*.

*Envisioning the Tale of Genji: Media, Gender, and Cultural Production*, a survey of recreations of *The Tale of Genji* that spans its one thousand years of existence, traces *The Tale’s* life as an archive. In his chapter “*The Tale of Genji* and the Dynamics of Cultural Production,” Japanese literature specialist Haruo Shirane provides a very detailed account of *The Tale’s* reception and recreations. He makes a distinction between *The Tale’s* popularity and canonicity.

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throughout its cultural life. Popularity denotes *The Tale*’s expanded accessibility and readership through alteration of the text, especially through new media. Canonicity, which has associations with authority and aristocracy, denotes transmission and interpretation through transmission of the text.\(^5\) He pairs these two concepts with the models of pietistic translation and cannibalistic translation. Pietistic translation, associated with canonicity deems the core text as sacred and the translation as secondary. Cannibalistic translation, associated with popularity, frames the reader as a consumer who transforms the core text dramatically.

Many *Genji* scholars follow a pietistic ethos in their studies of *The Tale* and look down on cannibalistic translations in popular culture. But Shirane is keen to state that these cannibalistic translations sustain interest in pietistic academic studies of *The Tale* and should be studied at length.\(^6\) *Envisioning the Tale of Genji*’s range of discussions on *Genji* subject matter reflect Shirane’s sentiment, but Shirane does not explicitly state that *The Tale*’s canonization had transformed *The Tale*’s contents in ways that are similar to popularization. Canonicity implies permanence and legitimacy of the dominant canon *Genji* text. However, the processes of transmission that produced the canon text were imperfect and resulted in alterations to the text. A century after *The Tale* was written, Heian Japanese became illegible to the majority of the Japanese populace. *The Tale* was never fully translated into modern Japanese until the twentieth-century. Prior to Akiko Yosano’s full modern Japanese translation in ca. 1938-1939, readers only had commentaries, illustrations, and partial translations of *The Tale* at their disposal.\(^7\) Censorship of the canonized text changed *The Tale* considerably. As will be discussed in chapter 1, Japan

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\(^6\) Ibid., 40-41.

turned to *The Tale* to boost morale and to forge a national identity on the international stage
during the twentieth-century. At the time, the Japanese state’s self-image as a family state ruled
by a pure line of emperors informed censorship laws. As a work that has been treated as a form
of history of the emperor’s lineage, *The Tale* endured censorship. Pressured by a 1933
government ban of Eiichi Banshoya’s *Tale of Genji* play, Tanizaki Jun’ichirō removed a sexually
transgressive scene of an extramarital affair between Genji and the empress Fujitsubo from his
own modern translation of *The Tale* ca. 1939-1941. This affair produces the future emperor
Reizei and appears to delegitimize the emperor’s lineage. While these scenes were reinserted into
*The Tale* after World War II, this example demonstrates the canon text’s malleability in
processes of pietistic translation enacted by authorities such as the emperor.  

Such alterations to the story have motivated artists, such as Nakano, to create art that
draw from existing versions of *The Tale* or art that illuminates lost components of *The Tale*.
While growing up in Japan, Nakano was introduced to Genji in school. Genji’s presence in
Japanese schools is comparable to Shakespeare’s works in syllabi of Western academic
institutions. Nakano also watched *The Tale* on television in the forms of live-action and anime
film. Informed by these encounters with Genji, Nakano wrote *Imagined Sceneries* in response
to cannibalistic recreations of *The Tale* from the mid-twentieth century to the twenty-first
century, many of which expand upon *The Tale*’s many love affairs and nostalgically romanticize
the story (fig. 3, fig. 4, and fig. 5). *Imagined Sceneries* is not an attack on these cannibalistic

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12 For in-depth analyses of these film, anime, and manga adaptations of Genji, see Kazuhiro Tateishi, *The Tale of Genji* in Postwar Film: Emperor, Aestheticism and the Erotic* and Yuika Kitamura, *Sexuality, Gender, and The Tale of Genji* in Modern Japanese Translations and Manga in *Envisioning the Tale of Genji: Media, Gender, and Cultural Production*. 
recreations based on their “inauthenticity.” Nakano is aware of how impossible it is to categorize reactions of The Tale into “authentic” and “inauthentic” with its nuanced and complex history of literary and creative transmission. He seeks to challenge and diversify the ways in which The Tale can be recreated in the present day.

*Imagined Sceneries* is not the first musical recreation of *The Tale of Genji*, but it is conceptually unique from other musical recreations. *The Tale of Genji, Symphonic Fantasy* (fig. 5.) by composer and electronic music pioneer Isao Tomita, which premiered in 1999 and toured Tokyo, London, and Pasadena, CA makes for a useful comparison. Like Nakano’s *Imagined Sceneries, The Tale of Genji, Symphonic Fantasy* employs the projection of images alongside music. At the time of its performance, this symphony was considered a technological feat. Sponsored by Pioneer Electronics, the symphony was performed alongside a wall of 48 Pioneer high-definition video screens that played a video produced by Mitsuru Shimuzu in time.13 A seasoned director of Japanese period dramas, Shimuzu attempted to evoke the world of *The Tale* with imagery of nature, Noh masks, and sound effects. In his article “It’s a Nice Film Soundtrack, but Is It a Symphony?” Mark Swed critiques *The Tale of Genji, Symphonic Fantasy* for its lack of connection to *The Tale*. On its Pasadena premiere, Swed observed, “It is a symphony that sets the stage for "Genji" rather than bringing it to life.”14 From his description, these projected images theatrically evoke a superficial feeling of Japan rather than immerse audience members into the world into *The Tale* as it had intended.

Unlike Tomita’s symphony, Nakano’s project is immersion into *The Tale*, its history of recreation, and the Japanese histories, environments, and sensibilities that shape it. In *Imagined

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Sceneries, Nakano examines The Tale’s urban setting, Kyoto, which has changed considerably from its founding in 794. These changes will be discussed in chapter 2. During his research for this piece in December 2015, Nakano discovered that many of the sites that appear in The Tale have been burnt out, relocated, and rebuilt throughout Japan’s history. Like The Tale itself, Kyoto’s Heian landscape in the present day can only be reimagined, or ‘re-sounded’ from its remains. Imagined Sceneries’ reimagining relies on a balance between what is imagined and what is experienced in performance. Imagined Sceneries is an excavation of Japanese seventh-century transmission of Buddhism and performing arts from China, the realization of The Tale of Genji in the Heian Period, the incarnation of The Tale in Noh theater of the fourteenth-century, and artist Ebina Masao’s post-war 1953 woodblock print series Tale of Genji. The work’s libretto contains texts from The Tale of Genji in its original Japanese language. In its libretto, Imagined Sceneries also explores deep time with the inclusion of fifth-century BCE texts attributed to the female Buddhist esoteric Sumaṅgala-mātā from Therīgāthā (Verses of the Elder Nuns), the oldest known collection of women’s literature, in its original Pāli language.

Nakano’s work also explores the present moment: Nakano’s pre-recorded tracks of Kyoto in December 2015, English-language waka reflections on Genji written by students of the Scripps Core III Interdisciplinary Course “Creating and Recreating Genji,” and the work’s live performance. In addition, Nakano recognizes universal themes of love, family, politics, society, and superstition in The Tale. Through these themes, Nakano seeks to understand the ways in which people lived in the Heian era. These themes are vehicles through which Imagined

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16 To clarify, this is not to say that Japan has disregarded The Tale completely. The city has made a substantial effort to restore components of the Heian Palace and to label sites related to The Tale in the city with placards. The city also has a Tale of Genji Museum.
Sceneries’ international audiences in the present-day can relate to The Tale’s characters. The transnational history and production of Imagined Sceneries will be explored in chapter 3. These elements are organized in the spirit of wabi-sabi, a Japanese aesthetic that sees beauty in imperfection and transience. This aesthetic originated in traditional Japanese culture, specifically in the tenets of Zen Buddhism. In his Imagined Sceneries, Nakano combines fragments of different things and conveys beauty in their collective imperfection.

Nakano’s focus on the city of Kyoto and the lives of its inhabitants in his historical and cultural excavation inspired me to analyze his work through concepts of navigating the city. Jesuit and scholar Michel de Certeau’s 1984 book The Practice of Everyday Life, my core text, combines the disciplines of economics, sociology, literature, philosophy, and anthropology. He argues that everyday life in cities operate through the control of space according to a culture’s rules and products. When paired together, de Certeau’s and Nakano’s work share a wide interdisciplinary scope. Prior to this thesis, de Certeau’s writings and The Tale of Genji have never been paired in academic scholarship. In her essay “Walking the City: Spatial and Temporal Configurations of the Urban Spectator in Writings on Tokyo” from the book Urban Spaces in Japan: Cultural and Social Perspectives, Evelyn Schultz engages in a project similar to mine in her exploration of Tokyo. While she does not draw from de Certeau, she relies on Baudelaire’s and Benjamin’s concepts of the vagrant flâneur (city walker) and the written experiences of Japanese writers to understand the experience of walking through Tokyo. Unlike Baudelaire and Benjamin, de Certeau delves into the bodily and semantic products of walking. On its own,

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the flâneur model ignores the hegemonic powers that shape the urban landscape through which the flâneur traverses. These hegemonic powers also determine who can walk through space as a flâneur. De Certeau’s division of the city inhabitant into walker and voyeur permits a framework that allows for the critical study of spatial navigation through the distinctions of class and gender. These identity-based phenomenologies are important in both The Tale of Genji and Nakano’s Imagined Sceneries.
Fig. 1. DeLorenzo, Evelyn. *Still from Film of Imagined Sceneries World Premiere at the Clark Humanities Museum*, 2016.
October 17 - November 19
Scripps Clark Humanities Museum
“The Tale of Genji” Reimagined
Curated by Isabella Ramos (SCR ’17)

Monday, October 24 - Friday, October 28
4:15-5:30 P.M. in Large Studio,
Pomona Seaver Theatre
Noh Class
Members of the Kongo Noh School, Kyoto

Tuesday, October 25
12-1 P.M. in Pomona Oldenborg Language Center
“Finding the Form of Feeling: The Noh mask carver’s quest and solutions along the way”
Rebecca Ogamo-Teele

12-1 P.M. in Scripps Hampton Room
“Introduction to Living Composition”
Dr. Koji Nakano, Burapha University, Thailand

Wednesday, October 26
8:00 P.M. in Pomona Seaver Theatre
“Invitation to Noh: Traditional Masked Drama of Japan”
A lecture-performance by Tatsuhige Udaka & Members of the Kongo Noh Theatre, Kyoto

Friday, October 28
8:00 P.M. in Scripps Steele Hall 101
Professor Katherine Saltzman-Li,
University of California Santa Barbara

Saturday, October 29
1-2 P.M. in Scripps Clark Humanities Museum
Pre-Concert Panel
on Intercultural Arts Collaboration
With composer Dr. Koji Nakano, Imagined Sceneries co-commissioners Isabella Ramos (SCR ’17) and Prof. Anne Harley (SCR) and co-director Prof. Giovanni Ortega (PO).

3-4:30 P.M. in Scripps Balch Auditorium
“Faces of Passion and Regret: Women in Noh”
Rebecca Ogamo-Teele & Members of Kongo Noh Theatre, Kyoto

4:45-5:15 P.M. in Scripps Clark Humanities Museum
A world premiere: Imagined Sceneries (2016) by Koji Nakano
Chamber Music co-commissioned by Isabella Ramos (SCR ’17) & Prof. Anne Harley (SCR)
Featuring Yukiko Matsuyama, koto
Prof. David Rentz (Chaffey College), conductor
Prof. Giovanni Ortega (PO), co-director
Prof. Stacey Fraser (Cal State San Bernardino), Anne Harley & Isabella Ramos, sopranos
5C Student Chamber Ensemble

Opening Reception, On Stage: Japanese Theater Prints and Costumes (Oct 29 – Dec 17)
Curated by Prof. Bruce Coats (SCR Art History)

#KnowYourNoh These events comprise The Claremont Colleges’ week-long festival of Noh theater. For all festival information, scan this QR code with your smartphone. All events are free and open to the public.

Fig. 2. Ramos, Isabella, Festival of Noh Theater at the Claremont Colleges, 2016.
Fig. 3. Yoshimura, Kōzaburō, *Still from The Tale of Genji*, 1952.

Fig. 4. Dezaki, Osamu, *Still from Episode 1 of Genji Monogatari Sennenki: Genji*, 2009.
Fig. 7. Photo of Monitor from London Premiere of The Tale of Genji, Symphonic Fantasy, 1999, http://www.isaotomita.net/images/photo/john01bi.jpg.
Works Cited


The Tale’s Voyeurs and Walkers in Ebina Masao’s Tale of Genji Prints

This chapter of my thesis will focus on the role of Ebina Masao’s prints in Nakano’s Imagined Sceneries in their portrayal of Heian Kyoto sites. In doing so, it will apply Michel de Certeau’s oppositional concepts of voyeur and walker, two types of inhabitants that populate the city from his chapter “Walking Through the City.” Voyeurs are individuals in power who watch the city from a distance, while walkers are ordinary individuals who use and navigate through spaces of the city that voyeurs cannot see.¹ I will use de Certeau’s concepts to understand the social workings of Heian Kyoto in The Tale of Genji and in Koji Nakano’s Imagined Sceneries. As the son of an emperor and a low-ranking concubine, Genji is both a voyeur and walker in Heian Kyoto. Nakano’s selected prints from Ebina’s print series collectively communicate Genji’s two roles.

Ebina’s Tale of Genji Print Series

The Ebina prints engage in intimate relationships with other visual and auditory elements of Imagined Sceneries. Each print, which depicts a chapter from The Tale (fig. 1-10) inspired a movement of Nakano’s chamber work and is digitally projected during the movement that it inspired. As indicated in the chamber work’s libretto, each movement employs Japanese text from The Tale of Genji chapter depicted in its respective Ebina print. The imagery of each print informs its movement’s sonic textures—Nakano’s present day soundscapes, and the orchestration of voices, koto, and light percussion. In each movement, Nakano imagines a Heian soundscape that accompanies the scene of the movement’s Ebina print.

Ebina’s prints also dictate the layout of Imagined Sceneries’ inaugural performance venue, the Scripps Clark Humanities Museum. This space was designed as an exhibition titled

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The Tale of Genji: Reimagined (fig. 11), another component of the Festival of Noh Theater at the Claremont Colleges. The exhibition’s title is based on the observation that many artists, including Nakano, have drawn from The Tale of Genji as a source of inspiration. The nine Ebina prints featured in Imagined Sceneries function as pillars of the exhibition’s content and structure (fig. 10). Each Ebina print and its respective chapter governs a cluster of woodblock prints, which contains print depictions of the same chapter rendered by multiple artists. A museum visitor who circumnavigates the museum space clockwise beginning from the half-wall will encounter these chapter-centered clusters in chronological chapter order: Chapter 5, Wakamurasaki (Young Murasaki); Chapter 7, Momiji no Ga (Beneath the Autumn Leaves); Chapter 12, Suma; Chapter 13, Akashi; Chapter 18, Matsukaze (Wind in the Pines); Chapter 28, Nowaki (The Typhoon); Chapter 41, Maboroshi (The Seer); Chapter 45, Hashihime (The Bridge Maiden); and Chapter 48, Sawarabi (Bracken Shoots). Imagined Sceneries’ digital projection of the Ebina prints and their associated movements follow the same chronological order.\(^2\)

Nakano’s selection of nine prints out of Ebina’s series of fifty-four prints was based on his own aesthetic preferences. Together, the prints weave a comprehensible synopsis of The Tale. In The Tale, many members of the imperial court consider Genji to be a paragon of beauty and perfection, especially in his youth. Ebina’s Ch. 5, Wakamurasaki (fig. 1) and Ch. 7 Momiji no Ga (fig. 2), used in movements I and II respectively, portray two of Genji’s many accomplishments in his prime. Movement III’s Ch. 12, Suma (fig. 3) depicts Genji in his self-imposed exile away from the capital, while movement IV’s Ch. 13, Akashi (fig. 4) and Ch. 18 Matsukaze (fig. 5)

\(^2\) This exhibition showcases art objects related to The Tale of Genji from the Scripps College Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery collection, the Jacqueline Avant Collection, and the Paulette and Jack Lantz Collection. For more details, see the exhibition event page (https://www.facebook.com/events/275226372834103/).

\(^3\) It should be noted that the experience of walking through this exhibition space differs greatly from the exhibition’s online iteration in my Scalar book (http://claremontdh.net/scalar/imagined-sceneries).
depicts Genji in the role of father. Movement V’s Ch. 28, Nowaki (fig. 6) and movement VT’s Ch. 41, Maboroshi (fig. 7) entail Genji’s decline in his older age. Movement VII’s Ch. 45, Hashihime (fig. 8) and Ch. 48, Sawarabi (fig. 9) focuses on Genji’s descendants in The Tale’s Uji Chapters, which are set several years after Genji’s death.

The resulting narrative trajectory of Imagined Sceneries’ nine Ebina prints embodies Carl Jung’s concept of synchronicity, “a meaningful coincidence of two or more events.” Nakano frequently looks towards the concept of synchronicity in his musical compositions. A psychiatrist and psychotherapist, Jung forged his own concepts from Freud’s school of psychoanalysis. It should be noted that psychoanalysis had also influenced the writings of de Certeau. Jung traces his idea of synchronicity to the ideas of his close friend Albert Einstein. While he was developing his first theory of relativity during his professorship at the University of Zürich in 1909-10 and in 1912-13, Einstein was a frequent dinner guest in Jung’s home. Einstein’s theory inspired Jung’s concept of synchronicity, “a relativity of time as well as space, and their psychic conditionality.” Jung sought to use his concept to paint superstition and magic as illusion in the instances of extraordinary events that seem connected. 4

Before he chose Ebina Masao’s print series for integration into Imagined Sceneries, Nakano perused the Scripps College Ruth Chandler Williamson website’s collection of digital reproductions related to The Tale of Genji. After examining over 300 prints online, Nakano felt drawn towards works of Ebina Masao. He noted that Ebina’s ancient and modern sensibilities paired well with his project, which seeks to bridge the Heian era with the present day. Imagined Sceneries’ promotional image (fig. 12), which I designed, represents Imagined Sceneries’

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bridging of the past and present. The left image is a photo taken by Nakano at Kyoto Station (fig. 13) during his research in Kyoto in December 2015. Kyoto Station is also the site of Nakano’s soundscape for movement II. The station’s plasma screen television, buildings, and patrons dressed in present-day clothing situates the image in the present day. Nakano’s photograph casts a shadow on Ebina’s interpretation of Heian Kyoto from 1953. The 2015 photograph’s shadow represents *Imagined Sceneries*’ function as a present-day mediation and interpretation of the past.

Within the context of this promotional image, the image projected in movement VII, Ebina’s *Ch. 45, Hashihime*, represents the past. Set in the Heian era, the scene of this print is from *The Tale of Genji* chapter after which it was titled. It depicts the characters Naka no Kimi and Ōigimi dressed in Heian era garb. The flat patterns and strong outlines of their robes and the print’s fukinuki yatai (blown off roof) perspective are reminiscent of *The Tale of Genji* Scroll from the late Heian period. The print is rendered in the style of yamato-e, a painting style of the Tosa school, a school of painting that originated from the Heian imperial palace’s painting ateliers (fig. 14). Its fantastic colors, which contrast the photo’s lowered opacity and off-white background layer, acknowledge that the past deserves examination and celebration in the present-day. An analysis of Ebina’s *Ch. 45, Hashihime* in isolation from Nakano’s photo and in conjunction with Ebina’s historical context reveals the modern attributes that Nakano recognizes in Ebina’s series.

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6 Bilingual coversheet attached to the print; text sources unidentified.

A limited amount of scholarship on Ebina currently exists. We know that Ebina had a background in printmaking as well as in *Nihonga* (Japanese-style painting), but not much else.8 Scholarship on Japanese history of the 1950s and on Ebina’s contemporaries, especially *Nihonga* artists, can enrich one’s understanding of Ebina and his work. In his essays, “A Changing Suma” and “The Changing Face of ‘The Twilight Beauty’ (Yūgao) in *Genji* Prints,” the art historian Bruce Coats observes visual similarities between *Nihonga* painting of the 1950s and Ebina Masao’s print series. He also interprets Ebina’s colorful and nostalgic 1953 *Tale of Genji* print series as an antidote to the anxieties and hardships of post-war Japan.9 I will now expand on Coats’ commentary of Ebina’s work with an overview of post-World War II conditions in Japan and within its artistic community.

During the post-war period, Japan felt the war’s heavy casualties, faced occupation by Allied Forces, and still coped with its totalitarian past.10 Its artist communities were also impacted. In wartime, artists’ works were subject to government censorship and the United States imposed economic sanctions that limited artists’ access to supplies. From 1941 onward, *Nihonga* artists faced mineral pigment, gold, and silk shortages, while *yōga* (Western-style painting) artists worked with low-quality oil paint and canvases. To survive in this unfavorable environment, many artists were forced to contribute to the war effort by donating works to the military and by staging patriotic exhibitions.

Following the war, Japan and its artists sought a position on the world stage.11 Japanese artists felt that it was necessary to catch up with a globalizing and rapidly changing art world.12

Nihonga painting of the 1950s, in particular, reveals two different ways of entering the world stage. A schism in Nihonga painting formed between the traditional establishment, which looked towards Japan’s past and sought to share the nation’s history and traditions with the world, and artists who experimented with new techniques. One Nihonga painting of the post-war period, Yasuda Yukihiko’s Nukada no Okimi of Asuka in Spring (fig. 15), appears to bridge Nihonga’s rift. Yukihiko’s renewal of the yamato-e style and his use of historical figures as subjects have been described as shin-koten-shugi (neo-classicism). In his bijinga (beautiful woman picture) Nukata no Ōkimi of Asuka in Spring, Yukihiko depicts Nukata no Ōkimi (c. 638 – 690), a contributor to the Asuka period (538 – 710) poem anthology Man’yōshū (The Collection of a Thousand Leaves). Reminiscent of Tosa school painting and similar to Ebina’s work, his background employs a bird’s-eye view of Nara, the Asuka capital. Nukata no Ōkimi is rendered in smooth, wire-like lines, and flat patterns of color with very minimal shading, but is dressed in a modified Asuka-period costume. While her striped skirt is reminiscent of detached long skirts of the Asuka period, her robe’s short length, V-neck, elaborate textile patterns, and lack of a neck ribbon and sash diverge from tradition (fig. 16). Yukihiko also departs from the subdued colors of traditional painting in favor of bolder and richer colors, especially in Nukata no Ōkimi’s red attire.

These characteristics, which merge the old with the new, are visible in Ebina’s Ch. 45, Hashihime, another work that draws from Japan’s past. Ch. 45, Hashihime and other prints from Ebina Masao’s Tale of Genji series took part in Japan’s “Genji boom” of the 1950s, in which a

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variety of media looked towards the Heian era novel to represent “the essence of Japanese culture” on the world stage. Historically, *The Tale* has symbolized imperial court culture and Japan as a nation-state. During the late nineteenth-century before the war, it was declared a work of national literature. In this period of industrialization and state-building, it played an important role as a symbol of Japanese “civilization” and of Japan as a nation. It should be noted that *The Tale* also received international attention by the early twentieth-century. In 1925, the English orientalist Arthur Waley published the first volume of his English translation of *The Tale*.  

Coats also explores Japanese reception of *The Tale of Genji* in post-war Japan. He links Ebina’s series with *The Tale*’s first film adaptation by Kōzaburō Yoshimura released in 1951, two years before Ebina’s series. Yoshimura’s success is due largely to *The Tale*’s promise of romantic fantasy. Its distribution income exceeded ¥100 million for its “escapism” and its offering of nostalgia amidst the hardships of the post-war period. Coats thus interprets Ebina’s *yamato-e* revival of *The Tale* as an antidote to the post-war period similar to Yoshimura’s film.  

Much like Yukihiko, however, Ebina does not simply retreat into a fantastical past. He is aware of the implications of a modern and globalized Japan. In *Ch. 45, Hashihime*, Ebina simplifies the elaborate *jūnihitoe* (twelve-layer robe) worn by court women in the Heian era. He also uses rich and bold colors in his *yamato-e* revival that were popular in 1950s Japan, such as rose and turquoise. As Coats notes in “A Changing Suma,” Ebina’s bilingual coversheets in English and Japanese, which accompany his prints, as well as his choice of *Genji* subject matter,

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19 Kazuhiro Tateishi, “The Tale of Genji in Postwar Film,” 308.
appears to market *The Tale* to a new audience in the new art world of the 1950s. Ebina appears aware of his occupation-period audience, which consisted of English-speaking tourists and the US military.

Re-contextualized in *Imagined Sceneries*, the Ebina prints’ primary function is to visually imagine Heian Kyoto landscapes from *The Tale of Genji* that have disappeared over the course of Japan’s history. Together, the sites depicted in the series mirror the geographic diversity of Nakano’s soundscape locations, which encircle the city of Kyoto (fig. 17) and showcase the geographic diversity of *The Tale*’s setting, Kyoto. Print settings include the outside of a temple, the imperial palace’s walls, a view of a bay, among others. These settings are the sites of Genji’s adventures. Because father denies him a claim to the throne, Genji has access to palace resources and space, and also unconfined to the walls of the palace.

De Certeau’s concepts of strategy and tactics can be used to understand Genji’s dual roles of walker and voyeur in *The Tale* and in Ebina’s series. In his introduction to *The Practice of Everyday Life*, de Certeau breaks down his concepts of strategy and tactics, two types of movement used to navigate through space. Strategies are enacted by power structures and are based on rationality. Tactics, on the other hand, are employed by the subjugated.\(^{22}\) These tactics are creative adaptations of existing strategies, which have never been fully realized by power structures. Within the context of the city, strategies develop the concept of the city, as “the language of power is in itself ‘urbanizing,’”\(^ {23}\) but the city inevitably changes through the unpredictable tactics of its walkers. The following sections will focus on two movements of *Imagined Sceneries* and their associated Ebina prints using de Certeau’s writings about the city.

*III. Suma: Genji, the Recluse*


\(^{23}\) de Certeau, “Walking in the City,” 95, 98.
Imagined Sceneries’ movement III draws from Chapter 12 and Ebina’s Ch. 12, Suma (fig. 3). In the chapter, Genji forces himself into exile to Suma, a remote and rural area in Japan’s Kansai region, because he breaks a strategic rule of the imperial court. Genji has an affair with Oborozukiyo, his brother the Suzaku emperor’s betrothed.\(^{24}\) Genji’s defilement of the Suzaku emperor’s property is forbidden. Tyler’s translation of The Tale’s Chapter 8, which builds to a meeting between Genji and Oborozukiyo, poetically foreshadows Genji’s disruption of imperial order. He describes Genji’s entrance at Oborozukiyo’s father the Minister of the Right’s wisteria banquet. Genji’s extravagant dress and performative entrance to the party metaphorically rattle and embarrass the banquet’s flowers.\(^{25}\)

Nakano’s third movement depicts Genji as a walker, rather than a voyeur. de Certeau defines the walker as a nomad: “To walk is to lack a place. It is the indefinite process of being absent and in search of a proper.”\(^{26}\) This movement opens with Genji’s waka poem, which he writes in a letter to his lover, Rokujō no Miyasudokoro, during his exile in Suma. He expresses discomfort with life outside of Kyoto:

身をかへてひとりかへれる山里に聞きしに似たる松風ぞ吹く
How long, languishing here at Suma on the shore, must I dream and mourn while the briny drops rain down on the seafolk’s fuel of care?\(^{27}\)

In the movement’s accompanying Ebina print, Genji longs for his cosmopolitan life at the capital, which contrasts with Suma’s seclusion. Suma’s environment appears different from the Kyoto capital, notably in its proximity to the sea and in its abundance of sandy soil. Here, Ebina modifies the stylized clouds of the Tosa school. Framing the full autumn moon, they are almost

\(^{26}\) de Certeau, “Walking in the City,” 103.
invisible in his depiction of Suma. Genji, on the brink of tears, pensively gazes at the moon over Suma Bay. As he grasps letters from his friends, he wonders if his companions in the Kyoto capital are staring at the same moon.

To counter his feelings of isolation and loneliness, Genji imposes his cosmopolitan tastes upon rural Suma to find his own place away from the capital on several occasions during his exile. One notable moment in the Suma chapter is when Genji rebuilds his farmhouse in Suma. His contentment with his elegant Chinese-style home and his extraordinary garden in Suma exemplifies de Certeau’s description of walking’s impact on the structure of the city:

“The moving about that the city multiplies and concentrates makes the city itself an immense social experience of lacking a place—an experience that is, to be sure, broken up into countless tiny deportations (displacements and walks), compensated for by the relationships and intersections of these exoduses that intertwine and create an urban fabric, and placed under the sign of what ought to be, ultimately, the place but is only a name, the City.”

For Genji, his Suma home is an extension of his home in Kyoto, and thus of the city as a whole. As a walker in new territory, he employs a tactic to create his own space, in which he feels comfort in his unfortunate predicament.

During his exile, Genji employs several other tactics to sustain himself physically and emotionally in an environment foreign to him. There, tactics range from immersions into nature to escape from physical dangers, such as a fire that consumes his home at Suma. Coats notes that Genji’s experiences away from the capital result in his psychological and spiritual development. His house’s porch on the left of the movement’s print creates a liminal space that

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29 Bilingual coversheet attached to the print; text sources unidentified.
30 Ibid., 244.
31 de Certeau, “Walking in the City,” 103.
communicates Genji’s ambivalent feelings towards Suma and his assortment of tactics. Here, his immersion into Suma’s scenery is incomplete.

For Nakano, this print evoked strong childhood memories of **suzumushi** (bell cricket) chirps, which soothed his experience of the summer heat. These memories inspired him to approximate the sounds of the print’s outdoor environment with special light percussion instruments: an Audubon bird call, frog guiros of three sizes, and hand cymbals imitate the sounds of Suma Bay’s wildlife and rolling waves. Henjō Temple (fig. 19), the site of this movement’s soundscape, has a reputation as a peaceful haven away from the city of Kyoto. However, sounds of cars and temple visitors disrupt the tranquility of Henjō Temple in Nakano’s recording for this movement. Nakano came to the conclusion that his idealized version of nature is unattainable in the present day.

Henjō Temple does not appear in *The Tale of Genji*. It is the location of an affair between Prince Tomohira and Oogao, which inspired the fictional affair between Genji and the character Yūgao in Chapter 4 of *The Tale*. Here, Genji conducted his affair with Yūgao in locations of the capital that share Suma’s obscure attributes. These locations include Yūgao’s shoddy neighborhood home and a deserted mansion on the outskirts of the capital. This affair offers another example of Genji’s role as a walker. Unlike Genji’s other lovers, who reside in estates in disclosed locations in *The Tale*’s text, the location of Yūgao’s residence is never explicitly disclosed. A mysterious woman, her rank is also left undisclosed until after her death, which

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34 These tracks are available in my Scalar book, which documents Nakano’s *Imagined Sceneries* (http://claremontdh.net/scalar/imagined-sceneries).
36 In some cases, Shikibu uses the names of these streets as names for these women (i.e. Rokujō no Miyasudokoro “Lady Sixth Street”). Characteristic of Heian court culture, in which individuals were never mentioned by name out of civility, Shikibu refers to her novel’s characters by attributes such as the color of their robes, their rank, and the location of their residence.
37 Shikibu, “The Twilight Beauty,” 76.
is rare considering the court culture’s fixation with status. Through de Certeau’s lens, such “proper” signifiers such as street names and rank work to order the city for its walkers. The meanings behind these signifiers usually outlive the objects that they name and “create a nowhere in places; they change them into passages.” Genji’s affair with Yūgao, which traversed Kyoto, conveys a lack of concern for Yūgao’s rank and residence, and can be understood as a lack of “proper” signifiers. As a commoner, Genji is permitted to embark on such escapades marked by place rather than by passage.

V. Nowaki: Superstition and Religion in the World of Voyeurs

Imagined Sceneries’ movement $V$ offers a lens into the Heian era’s tapestry of religion. In the Heian era, many believed that the natural world and imperial court were intimately connected. Typhoons, along with tornadoes, lighting, and solar eclipses, were considered tenpen (celestial disasters), signs of corrupt imperial rule. Chapter 28’s typhoon foreshadows Genji’s political and social downfall. In movement $V$, Nakano depicts the turbulence and aftermath of the typhoon with Ebina’s Ch. 28, Nowaki (fig. 5) and stringed percussion instruments that create an ominous soundscape. The sounds of these instruments remind Nakano of the rare meteorological phenomenon of frogs falling from the sky. In this movement’s soundscape, the audience hears the disruptive noise of humanity’s present-day attempts to control nature: sounds of construction at the Heian Palace’s remains (fig. 20). The Heian Palace is the setting of Ebina’s print and of The Tale’s Chapter 28.

When catastrophe strikes, cultures often turn towards systems of spiritual belief in the hope of restoring order. In this movement, Nakano explores two strategic systems of belief in

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38 de Certeau, “Walking in the City,” 104.
Japan: early Japanese Buddhism and onmyōdō (the way of the yin and yang), a religion based on Chinese philosophy that became codified by the Japanese imperial government. While the concepts of yin and yang are derived from Chinese philosophy, onmyōdō is a distinctly Japanese tradition that played an important role in the socio-political dynamics of the Heian era. Because the Heian era was an unstable and tumultuous time in Japanese history, the court established its own Bureau of Divination, comprised of onmyōdō specialists.41

In recognition of onmyōdō’s role in Heian Japan, Nakano reimagines the onmyōdō practice of chanted incantation in movement V of Imagined Sceneries. He represents the Heian period’s dogmatic confluence of Buddhism and onmyōdō42 with two texts chanted in different languages, Pāli (a close relative of Sanskrit), and Japanese. His selection of Japanese text alludes to onmyōdō, while his inclusion of Pāli text points to the seventh-century arrival of Buddhism in Japan. Similar to onmyōdō texts, Buddhist texts that arrived in Japan were also chanted as prayers. Movement V opens with a chanted description of Chapter 28's typhoon from The Tale of Genji in its original Japanese:

野分、例の年よりもおどろおどろしく、空の色変はりて吹き出づ
The wind set in to blow, and changed skies threatened a worse tempest than any normally known.43

The movement’s Pāli verse, chanted by members of the chamber ensemble, comes from the Therīgāthā (Verses of the Elder Women), a collection of 522 verses compiled into 73 poems that represent women's experiences of Buddhist renunciation.44 This verse is attributed to Sumaṅgala-mātā, a female esoteric of early Buddhism:

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42 Ibid., 5.
I’m free
Free from kitchen drudgery
No longer a slave among my dirty cooking pots
(My pot smelled like an old water snake)
And I’m through with my brutal husband
And his tiresome sunshades45

Sumaṅgala-mātā was born into a poor family in Sāvatthi, a city in ancient India. After marrying a basket maker and bearing a son, who later became a monk, she became a nun devoted to the Buddha and practiced vipassanā (insight) meditation. Sumaṅgala-mātā’s consideration of her suffering in lay life resulted in her advancement along the path of Enlightenment. It also inspired her verse above.46 In her “The Struggle for Liberation in the Therigatha,” Rennie argues that the religious and social settings of both the Therīgāthā and the Theragāthā (Verses of the Elder Men) provide evidence of greater restrictions placed on women than on men. Ultimately, Kathryn interprets women’s Enlightenment in the Therīgāthā as struggle rather than as liberation.47

The gender dynamics evident in the Therīgāthā and the Theragāthā mirror the gender dynamics within the Heian court. The scene depicted in Ebina’s print offers a view of the Heian Palace’s gendered world of voyeurs. Unlike Genji’s house in Ch. 12, Suma’s liminal space, the palace structure in Ch. 28, Nowaki dominates the print compositionally. In the image, Genji comforts Murasaki no Ue, his favorite concubine, who peers outside at the typhoon’s damage to her garden. Genji’s paternal embrace of Murasaki represents the nature of their complex

46 (Bryan Levman, pers. comm.)
relationship. Genji first meets Murasaki when she is about ten years old in Chapter 5. Out of his strong desire to make Murasaki his own, Genji soon after abducts and raises her to become his ideal wife. Genji is both a husband and father to Murasaki.48

In the Heian court, women, such as Murasaki, were hidden from the public sphere for their strategic protection. Married off for political gain, women often played the roles of chess pieces in court politics. Court women were the property of their husbands or in the case of unmarried women, their fathers. Thus, women were expected to spend most of their time indoors and to conceal themselves behind *sudare* (blinds) during interactions with men outside of their immediate family. A drawn-up *sudare* is visible on the right of the print. Given her lack of access to the world outside of her domestic space in the palace, Murasaki’s dismay at the destruction of her garden is understandable. Her garden is her only form of contact with the outside world.

In the image, strewn leaves and branches demonstrate the presence and force of the chapter’s typhoon, which instigates a moment that undermines Genji’s social and political power. Yūgiri, Genji’s son with his late wife Aoi no Ue, discovers Murasaki for the first time through a panel blown open by the typhoon. He is immediately struck by her beauty. In the movement’s print, his gesture of placing his fan over his gaping mouth emphasizes his awe and surprise. He later daydreams about having a wife as beautiful as Murasaki.49

Yūgiri’s intrusion into Murasaki’s space violates court strategy, as she is Genji’s property. However, male intrusion, such as Yūgiri’s, into female space by means of voyeurism or *kaimami* was a common practice in the Heian Palace. In de Certeau’s terms, men of the court,

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such as Yūgiri and his father Genji, were bestowed with “an all-seeing power”\textsuperscript{50} that exceeded panoramic views of the city. Women were permitted some degree of vision from their homes through the *sudare* that masked them, but the scope of their vision was limited to the palace’s inner gardens. Thus, confined court women could be neither walkers nor voyeurs, despite their residence within a structure of political authority.

*Sudare*, which comprised the inner walls of the palace, as seen in the Ebina print, were not enough to keep men from intruding on female space. As the typhoon depicted in the Ebina print reveals, these structures were quite flimsy and prone to flying open, especially in times of natural disaster. Their existence on the outside of women’s quarters also tantalized the imaginations of men. Men of the court tactically and frequently violated the court’s strategy of restricting women’s visibility and movement to gratify their fantasies of these women’s physical appearances. On many occasions, men had their way with these women after intruding on their space, either through rape or kidnapping. While it was acceptable for men to have polygamous marriages and extramarital affairs as a result of these violences, women were discouraged from pursuing such relations. Competition within polygamous marriages and within the court for positions inevitably set women against each other. Similar to the women authors of the *Therīgāthā*, the women in the Heian court seldom found liberation and happiness in the court’s volatile environment.

**Conclusion**

When considering its original context in post-war Japan and its re-contextualization in *Imagined Sceneries*, Ebina’s 1953 *Tale of Genji* series lends a useful visual component to Nakano’s multimedia reimagining of Heian Kyoto. Unlike Yoshimura’s 1951 film, Ebina’s prints offer more than a nostalgic and escapist view of Heian Kyoto. Their modification of Heian

\begin{footnotesize}\	extsuperscript{50} de Certeau, “Walking in the City,” 92.\end{footnotesize}
fashion and attention to colors in vogue during the 50s parallels the innovations in post-war Nihonga painting. With these characteristics, Ebina’s prints pair well with Nakano’s project, which seeks to bridge the old and the new in its reimagining of The Tale of Genji. The prints work in tandem with narrations written in the present day, soundscapes of Kyoto recorded in 2015, and live performance. Through the lens of de Certeau, the strategies and tactics of Heian Kyoto’s inhabitants are revealed in Ebina’s prints. Genji’s ambivalent social status, as communicated in multiple prints, offers him nearly unlimited freedom within and outside of the court. Court strategies often work in his favor. When they work against him, Genji most often enacts effective tactics. The same can be said of other men in similar social positions, such as his son Yūgiri. In contrast, women of the court have little to no freedom due to their limited scope of vision within the imperial palace and their lack of access to the world beyond the palace walls. With digital projections of Ebina’s prints, Nakano presents a visual idea of how Kyoto’s inhabitants had lived in the Heian era to his audience. Boundaries of movement and vision clearly play important roles in defining expected behaviors of each gender in the world of these images.
Appendix

Fig. 1. Ebina, Masao, Ch. 5, Wakamursaki in Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery: The Permanent Collection, 1953, http://webkiosk.scrippscolllege.edu/Obj21124?sid=184447&x=1112946.
Fig. 2. Ebina, Masao, *Ch. 7, Momiji no Ga* in *Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery: The Permanent Collection*, 1953, http://web-kiosk.scrippscollege.edu/OBJ?sid=184447&rec=10&port=0&art=0&page=10
Fig. 3. Ebina, Masao, Ch. 5, *Suma* in *Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery: The Permanent Collection*, 1953, http://web-kiosk.scrippscollege.edu/Obj21124?sid=184447&x=1112946
Fig. 4. Ebina, Masao, Ch. 13, Akashi in Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery: The Permanent Collection, 1953, http://web-kiosk.scrippscollege.edu/OBJ?sid=184447&rec=7&port=0&art=0&page=7
Fig. 5. Ebina, Masao, Ch. 18, Matsukaze in Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery: The Permanent Collection, 1953, http://web-kiosk.scrippscollege.edu/OBJ?sid=184447&rec=33&port=0&art=0&page=33
Fig. 6. Ebina, Masao, Ch. 28, Nowaki in *Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery: The Permanent Collection*, 1953, http://web-kiosk.scrippscollege.edu/OBJ?sid=184447&rec=22&port=0&art=0&page=22
Fig. 7. Ebina, Masao, *Ch. 41, Maboroshi* in *Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery: The Permanent Collection*, 1953, http://web-kiosk.scrippscollege.edu/OBJ?sid=184447&rec=28&port=0&art=0&page=28
Fig. 9. Ebina, Masao, *Ch. 48, Sawarabi* in *Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery: The Permanent Collection*, 1953, http://web-kiosk.scrippscollege.edu/OBJ?sid=184447&rec=2&port=0&art=0&page=2
Fig. 10. Ramos, Isabella, *The Tale of Genji: Reimagined Exhibition Layout*, 2015.
Fig. 11. Ramos, Isabella, *The Tale of Genji: Reimagined Flyer*, 2015.
Fig. 12. Ramos, Isabella, *Imagined Sceneries Splash Page Promotion Image*, 2016.
Fig. 15. Yukihiro, Yasuda, *Nukata no Ōkimi of Asuka in Spring* in *The John C. and Susan L. Huntington Archive of Buddhist and Related Art*, 1958.
Fig. 16. *The Clothes of Minor Court Lady in the Period of Tenmu and Jitoh Dynasty in The Rebirth of the Tale of Genji Costume Museum.*

Fig. 17. *Nakano’s Route in Kyoto for Soundscapes in December 2015, 2016.*
Fig. 19. Ramos, Isabella, *Route from Kyoto to Henjō Temple*, 2016.
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A Musical Mapping: Genji and Kyoto

De Certeau’s ability to make the ordinary extraordinary through the interaction of the walker with the city invites a conversation about the city of Kyoto. This is the city in which The Tale of Genji’s characters inhabit as well as the city into which Imagined Sceneries’ audience is transported. Kyoto’s urban history deeply informed Nakano’s choices of site for his recorded tracks and with it, the auditory textures of Imagined Sceneries. His recordings together with his other auditory elements function as auditory extensions of the Ebina prints as well as Kyoto’s geography over time.

Imagined Sceneries’ dichotomy of past and present discussed in the previous chapter is inherently located in the work’s supplementary dichotomy of imagined and real. Due to Heian Kyoto’s inaccessibility in the present day, practically speaking, much of the past that Nakano presents is imaginary. In their hybridization of the past and present, the Ebina prints themselves are imagined mediations of the past. Even their digital projection onto the wall of the performance space suggests the immateriality of that past. In contrast, Imagined Sceneries’ presentation of the present Kyoto is more accessible due to its spatial and chronological proximity to the work’s audience. This present includes the human bodies of the work’s performers, the live music produced by these performers, and Nakano’s pre-recorded tracks recorded in December 2015. Since its founding, the city of Kyoto has grappled with a similar dichotomy of ideal and real at the core of the Imagined Sceneries project.

Heian-kyō: An Ideal and Real Capital City

The organization of historian Matthew Stavros’ Kyoto: An Urban History of Japan’s Premodern Capital communicates the existence of the dichotomy of ideal and real in Kyoto’s early urban history. Stavros’ outline of premodern Kyoto’s urban landscape with visual, textual,
and archeological sources will aid my discussion of Kyoto urban history in application to Nakano’s composition process. In “Heian-kyō: the Ideal,” Stavros begins with a discussion of Kyoto’s classical urban plan, which was never fully realized. Known as Heian-kyō (capital of peace and tranquility) during the Heian period, Kyoto was founded by Emperor Kanmu (737-806) in 794. The advantageous topography of the Uta basin, the site of Heian-kyō, may explain the significance of the capital’s name. The mountains surrounding the basin functioned as a natural barrier against enemies. Along with the Katsura and Kamo Rivers, the mountains also provided the city with fresh water. Heian-kyō’s proximity to number of pathways—the Tōkaidō and San’in highways, the Yodo River, and Ōtsu Port—was useful towards Kanmu’s strategy of exercising more control over other provinces.

At the time, the voyeur elite considered the Chinese capital model to be a paragon of the urban plan and of diplomacy. Kanmu strove towards that model and sought to urbanize the entirety of the basin. Heian-kyō’s location and plan followed the tenets of Chinese geomancy and geometry. The three mountains that encircled the city represented the protection of four gods from the four cardinal directions. It was believed that the city would engage in a harmonious relationship with nature and the cosmos. Built on these auspicious circumstances of site, Heian-kyō was designed to perform a multitude of functions—as the home of the emperor, a model of aristocratic aesthetics, and the center of imperial pageantry and of government. As a center of government, the capital was built around the Ritsuryō system, codes based on those that governed Tang-dynasty China. The Ritsuryō system recognized the emperor at the top of a

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3 Ibid., 4-7.
hierarchy of ranked officials. This hierarchy was expressed in Heian-kyō’s rigid and grid-like urban plan, which is in alignment with the four cardinal directions. The city’s land was partitioned into blocks (machi), which comprised the plan’s grid. The top center position of the Heian Imperial Palace in Heian-kyō’s plan represented the emperor’s place at the pinnacle of the socio-political hierarchy (fig. 1 and fig. 2). Suzaku Road, the long and wide entryway that led to the palace’s main entrance, bestowed the palace and imperial authority with monumentality and gravitas. The road also divided the city into a “Left Capital” and “Right Capital,” which were each overseen by a minister for the purpose of governance.

As evidenced by the expected behaviors of The Tale of Genji’s walkers and voyeurs (and voyeur/walkers) based on gender and class presented in the previous chapter, the Ritsuryō codes determined where one lived in the city, how much of the city’s space one occupied, and how one interacted with the city. Streets perpendicular to Suzaku were numbered from first street (Ichijō-ōji) to ninth street (Shichijō-ōji), from the city’s north to its south. As “proper” signifiers, these streets indicated the government rankings of their inhabitants. Those who inhabited first street were the highest ranked officials while those who inhabited ninth streets were the lowest ranked officials. The Ritsuryō system also enforced many rituals and customs, and prescribed the necessarily materials needed to perform them. These actions were scripted and heavily dictated the behavior of Heian-kyō’s inhabitants.

As history tells us, Kanmu’s urban plan could not be fully executed. This is a reality that de Certeau understands well when he discusses the transformation of the concept of the city into urban fact:

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4 Ibid., 2.
5 Ibid., 11.
6 Ibid., 7-8.
7 Ibid., 14-15.
Linking the city to the concept never makes them identical, but it plays on their progressive symbiosis: to plan a city is both to think the very plurality of the real and to make that way of thinking the plural effective; it is to know how to articulate it and be able to do it.8

To de Certeau, the best city plans explore the boundaries of what is possible in reality, but do so pragmatically. Heian-kyō’s planners learned from the failures of five other Chinese-style cities built before Heian-kyō. But of course, no execution of a plan can perfectly mirror the plan itself.9 The goals of these planners were much too lofty.

Unlike Kanmu’s vision of a fully urbanized Kyoto, many blocks of Heian-kyō’s land were unoccupied. The city’s planners were also unable to foresee natural disasters that would strike the capital. The western half of the city (the right) was flood-prone and many of its inhabitants deserted this part of the city. In violation of the original Ritsuryō codes, these empty blocks were converted into agricultural land as a result.10 Yoshishige Yasutane’s compelling account in his kanbun text Chiteiki indicates the severity of the situation:

Over the past twenty years, I have observed the situation throughout the eastern and western sections of the capital. In Ukyō, the houses have become fewer and fewer until it is almost a deserted wasteland. People move out but no one moves in. Houses fall to ruin but no new ones are built. Those who do not have any other place to move to, or who are not ashamed to be poor and lowly, live there… From all this, it is clear that it is Heaven that is destroying Ukyō and no fault of men.11

Similar to Shikibu’s description of the typhoon in Chapter 28 of The Tale,12 as well as the Ebina print (fig. 3) and Imagined Sceneries movement that it had inspired, Yoshishige’s description of

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9 Plans outside of urban planning function very similarly. For ideas on the fallacy of the plan from the perspectives of cognitive science and human-computer interaction, see Lucy Suchman, “Situated Actions” in Human-Machine Reconfigurations: Plans and Situated Actions (Cambridge University Press, 2007).
10 Ibid., 29-31.
disorder in the right recognizes nature and the cosmos’ ability to disrupt material and immaterial human structures. Yoshishige’s account blames Heaven rather than human activity for the right’s decay and thus lacks Chapter 28’s karmic quality. It also should be noted that Murasaki’s garden, which Chapter 28’s typhoon leaves in ruin, is located in the Left Capital and not in the Right Capital. Nonetheless, Yoshishige’s description of a desolate right wing is cognizant of nature and Heaven’s destructive power.

Commoners, which Heian-kyō’s plan never accounted for, emigrated to Heian-kyō in search of better lives and tactically disrupted the city’s gridded plan. Much like de Certeau’s walker, these individuals walked to Kyoto “in search of a proper.”13 For these newcomers, the city’s roads hosted a thriving network of commerce. This led to the repartitioning of the city grid’s blocks, which gave all residential lots access to the roads around them. Consequentially, homes faced all directions, rather than merely east and west. Residential lots narrowed and lengthened, and interior courtyards became common within blocks. Roads became important sites for the formation of commoners’ political, social, and economic bonds. As roads became conducive to community rather than division, commoners formed important relationships across the bounds of administrative blocks. The commoners also felt empowered enough to develop their own street address system that named Heian-kyō’s minor roads, which were left unnamed during the city’s planning. Many of these “unofficial” names were related to commercial activities performed on these streets. These alterations to the city plan undermined the “proper” signifiers that dictated Heian-kyō’s grid plan and with it, the hierarchal structure of Ritsuryō codes.14 As de Certeau’s walkers, these commoners accessed new spaces and relationships in Heian-kyō that the city’s voyeur planners could not see.

13 de Certeau, “Walking in the City,” 103.
Fast forward to the present. Past the political and cultural domination of aristocrats in Heian-kyō, the disappearance of the Suzaku Road, the rise of temple and warrior influence, Murasaki Shikibu’s generation of *The Tale of Genji*, the Hōgen and Heiji upheavals, the destructive Ōnin War, the relocation of the emperor from Kyoto to Tokyo, the World Wars. During these cycles of disorganization and reorganization, Heian-kyō’s Kyoto’s grid plan has been eroded, rebuilt, and altered. The same can be said of Kyoto’s social order due to a cityscape’s fundamental relationship with its inhabitants. However, there are two Kyotos: one ideal and one real, much like its classical predecessor. This is the environment in which Nakano had recorded his soundscapes for *Imagined Sceneries*.

Kyoto: the ideal is most evident in the city’s tourist paraphernalia as well as foreign travel literature. In the introduction to the book *Kyoto*, compiled by the Kyoto’s municipal government, the beloved writer Jiro Osaragi observes, “One still sees moreover in Kyoto—and in no other city—mountains of cultivated loveliness and rivers of limpid clarity.” The Japan Travel Bureau’s Kyoto travel guide from 1984 similarly remarks, “Nestled among gently rising hills, it still exudes an old-world charm in atmosphere.” In his foreword to *Kyoto: A Cultural History*, the film historian Donald Richie sings praises of Kyoto’s efforts at preserving its cultural heritage:

> Few cities can compare with the wealth of Kyoto’s treasures. The city’s tourist office lists 17 World Heritage Sites, 90 gardens, 140 museums and galleries, 177 festivals, 471 notable temples and shrines, as well as 263 other tourist sights—and let us not forget the 82 special trees and rolling schedule of seasonal flowers, for nature-appreciation is also part of Kyoto’s rich heritage.

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Kyoto clearly takes pride in its past, especially in its time as Heian-kyō. The city appropriates ideas and imagery of imperial prestige, and promotes the aristocratic rituals and arts of the past.

In visual culture, Kyoto’s projection of this self-image can be traced back to woodblock print personifications of Kyoto from the Edo-period. At the time, many print artists enjoyed personifying the major cities of Japan—Osaka, Kyoto, and Edo (present-day Tokyo)—as courtesans together in one triptych (Fig. 4). Conventionally, Osaka is positioned on the left, Kyoto is in the center, and Edo is on the right. Each courtesan embodies stereotypes associated with the city that she personifies. In Torii Kiyomasu II’s rendition of the three courtesans, Kyoto channels her inner Heian empress. Her body maintains a graceful curvature and strikes a tasteful asymmetrical pose. Her right hand hikes up the train of her kimono while the sleeve of her right arm seems to dangle in a breeze. Osaka, widely regarded as a location for trade and business dealings, seems plain in contrast with Kyoto. As if ready for business, she stands upright and looks forward towards the other two cities. Edo, usually perceived as an upstart city looking to out-do Kyoto, exaggerates Kyoto’s asymmetry and curved form. This is especially evident in the overly dramatic movement of her left sleeve and her haughty glare at Kyoto.

When one jumps ahead to visual culture of the present day, these cities’ Convention & Visitors Bureau websites almost fit the descriptions of the three personified cities in woodblock printing. Osaka, who is ready for business, advertises its free city Wi-Fi in a large banner at the top of the homepage (fig. 5). The menu at the top of homepage reads “DISCOVER,” “ENJOY,” and “PLAY.” Like the Osaka courtesan, this layout is simple, pragmatic, and straightforward. Tokyo’s imagery focuses on the city’s modern cityscape (fig. 6). In contrast to Osaka, the homepage has a rather complicated menu. The varying image sizes below the main banner somewhat crowd the webpage as well. Like its courtesan equivalent, Tokyo seeks to stay current
and ahead, and does so somewhat superfluously. As one would expect, Kyoto heavily relies on its traditions to market itself on its homepage (fig. 7). A gold lacquer at the top of the page reads “Purchase original Kyoto traditional craft goods on eBay!” The homepage’s menu has a “Shrines & Temples” category. An image of elegant gold leaf painted fans occupies the majority of the homepage. When one experiences the website live, this component of the homepage scrolls to reveal idyllic images of spring cherry blossoms overlooking the Togetsukyō bridge, a gold lacquer screen, two prostrate women in traditional Japanese attire and make-up, and of the iconic Kiyomizu Temple alongside clusters of autumn leaves.

The real Kyoto lies beyond its avatars in digital space. All travel literature mentioned above observe Kyoto’s modern attributes alongside its meticulously conserved traditional architecture and institutions. Social anthropologist and Asian studies specialist Christoph Brumann’s study on urbanization in central Kyoto “Re-uniting a Divided City: High-rises, Conflict and Urban Space in Central Kyoto” in the book *Urban Spaces in Japan: Cultural and Social Perspectives* presents a view of contemporary Kyoto that compliments Stavros’ view of the real Heian-kyō. Brumann discusses the rise of modern, high-rise structures such as *manchons* (large condominiums) in the central Kyoto in the 1960s. At the time, many families and single individuals were attracted to Kyoto’s city center because of its proximity to train lines to Osaka and Kobe and its selection of shopping, medical, educational, and cultural facilities. He observes that these structures in central Kyoto detract from Kyoto’s self-projected image as the bastion of Japanese tradition and give Kyoto an indistinguishable appearance from those of other Japanese cities. Locals railed against these large and imposing
structures because of their appearance, the disruptive nature of their construction, as well as their tendency to obstruct views of Kyoto’s scenic mountains (fig. 8). These structures became so intensely contested that public complaints against them became known as keikan ronsō and the public organized against their construction. In 2007, public concerns were answered with the landmark keikan jōrei (townscape ordinance), which amended six municipal ordinances. Through a coalition of national ministries, the municipal administration, local business leaders, and citizen groups, these amendments protect historically significant sites in Kyoto and require new buildings to feature traditional architectural features.

The manshon controversy and its resolution in 2007 made possible by a coalition of citizens and state actors presents an example of a walker’s agency in conflicts over space as well as the potential for an alliance between walkers and voyeurs. The manshon controversy also tells a story about the reality of Kyoto’s cityscape: it is the new masquerading as the old in search of the ideal.

*What is a Soundscape?: Nakano’s Kyoto Soundscapes*

In their geographical diversity and digital quality, Nakano’s soundscapes actively engage with Kyoto, both real and ideal, across time and space. Nakano’s methodology for recording *Imagined Sceneries’* accompanying tracks was inspired by ethnomusicologist Shin Nakagawa’s book on Kyoto soundscapes titled *The Sounding Cosmos of the Heian-kyō Capital.* With illustrations and descriptions from historical documents and novels, Nakagawa revives and

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19 Ibid., 63-65.
20 These tracks are available in my Scalar book, which documents Nakano’s *Imagined Sceneries* (http://claremontdh.net/scalar/imagined-sceneries).
analyzes Kyoto’s Heian era soundscape. According to Nakagawa, the temples of Heian-kyō were informed by the city’s gridded plan and its orientation with the cardinal directions. These temples encircle the city and tune their bells in relation to each other and in relation to their respective site. Nakano recorded his tracks near Kyoto’s temples, some of which still exist in the present day. The circular form of his pathway is indicative of the temples’ geographical orientation (fig. 9).

As we examine Nakano’s soundscapes more closely, it is helpful to define a soundscape and to understand the concept of the soundscape within a Japanese context. Interdisciplinary in nature, soundscape studies rely on the work of musicians, musicologists, ethnomusicologists, scientists, architects, and literary theorists. Kozo Hiramatsu, a specialist on sonic environment and acoustic ecology, offers a review of Japanese soundscape studies in his article “Some Aspects of Soundscape Studies in Japan” that allows us to contextualize Nakano’s soundscapes. Ethnomusicologist Keiko Torigoe, who had observed the activity of the World Soundscape Project, an international research project, introduced Japanese scholars to the concept of soundscape. Canadian composer and musicologist R. Murry Schafer, who founded the project, coined the word “soundscape.” Encouraging others to carefully listen to sonic environments that surround them in the hope of reducing noise pollution, he defines a soundscape as a “world as a macrocosmic musical composition.”

Building on Schafer, Hiramatsu breaks the distinction between (musical) sounds and (non-musical) “noise” in music and soundscape studies. Reiko Fujiwara understands this

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distinction as a sonic binary of musical/non-musical created by Western traditions of music. She recognizes that this approach privileged Western music as inherently musical and deemed non-Western music as primitive and non-musical.24 This distinction in music influenced early soundscape studies. Ethnomusicologist Miho Yamagishi developed the concept of soundscape as a reflection of everyday life in her examination of descriptions of Tokyo sounds in Japanese essays. Torigoe, who established the Institute of Kanda Soundscape Studies in 1984 upon returning to Japan, understands the soundscape as a large body of information that evokes the atmosphere of a site more successfully than a photograph of the same site.25

Hiramatsu, Torigoe, and Yamagishi present conclusions on the soundscape that express many intensions behind Nakano’s soundscapes in Imagined Sceneries. Reflective of Hiramatsu’s disillusionment with the distinction between musical sound and non-musical noise, Nakano combines the sounds of live musicians and pre-recorded tracks of Kyoto. In movements III and V, which were discussed in chapter 1, Nakano selected several instruments that defy and hybridize the musical/non-musical binary. The frog guiros, Audobon bird call, and hand cymbals of movement III present imagined sounds of Suma Bay’s environment. Movement V’s stringed percussion replicates the phenomenon of frogs falling from the sky (fig. 10). Torigoe’s idea of soundscape as a body of information that conveys a site’s atmosphere lies at the heart of Nakano’s compositional project. In most movements, traditional, natural, and modern sounds mesh together to convey Kyoto’s reality as an urbanized and modern city that showcases its traditions and scenic natural environment. As discussed in chapter 1, recordings of cars and Heian Palace construction mesh with the light percussion’s mimetic natural environment in

movements III and V respectively. Trains, the clinks of restaurant tableware, and a voice on a PA system at Kyoto Station (fig. 11) play alongside the chamber ensemble’s reimagining of a dance performed in the Heian court in II. *Momiji no Ga.*

Similar to Yamagishi’s concept of soundscape, Nakano sought to communicate what life had been like for Kyoto’s inhabitants across time with his own soundscapes. This intention is best expressed in movement *I. Introduction*, which plays a recording of Kiyomizu Temple (fig. 12), one of the few existing temples in Nakano’s musical mapping. Kiyomizu Temple is also the setting of this movement’s Ebina print *Ch. 5, Wakamurasaki* (fig. 13). The beginning of the movement’s pre-recorded track plays a strike of Kiyomizu Temple’s gong. Similar to the role of the church bell in pre-dominantly Christian nations before the secular age, the temple gongs of Japan formed what historian and heritage studies specialist Toby Butler calls “auditory communities,” which developed individuals’ identities and relationships. Symbolic of the temple gong’s ability to build community in Heian Kyoto’s soundscape, three solo vocalists cue each other’s entrances with finger cymbals, which function as proxy gongs.

**Conclusion**

Throughout its life as a major city, Kyoto’s ideal presentation of self contrasts its reality. Over time, its meticulous plan drafted by its voyeur elites deteriorated as a result of nature’s unexpected interference. The plan also failed to foresee the socio-economic needs of its commoner walkers. These walkers discovered tactics that dismantled the city grid’s block system, exploited the city’s roads, and formed commoner communities. Kyoto’s *manshon* controversy in more recent years presents the potential for allyship between walkers and voyeurs.

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26 See chapter 3 of this thesis for more information on movement II’s soundscape.
from de Certeau’s model. But the controversy’s conclusion highlights the pervasiveness of Kyoto’s self-image as an elegant city of the Heian past. Through the lens of Japanese soundscape studies, Nakano’s soundscapes are extensions of Kyoto’s geography over the course of its existence.
Fig. 1. Stca74, Schematic map of historical Heian-kyō (present-day Kyoto) showing the location of the Greater Imperial Palace (Daidairi) and the Tsuchimikado mansion, 2007, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Heiankyo_palace_location.png.
Fig. 5. Osaka Convention & Visitors Bureau, OSAKAINFO, http://www.osaka-info.jp/en/.

Fig. 6. Tokyo Convention & Visitors Bureau, GO TOKYO, https://www.gotokyo.org/en/
Fig. 8. Ramos, Isabella, *Kyoto Tower*, 2013.
Fig. 9. Nakano’s Route in Kyoto for Soundscapes in December 2015, 2016.

Fig. 11. Nakano, Koji, *Kyoto Station* in *Imagined Sceneries* Scalar Book, 2015. [http://claremontdh.net/scalar/imagined-sceneries/media/image6_2.png](http://claremontdh.net/scalar/imagined-sceneries/media/image6_2.png).
Works Cited


Imagined Sceneries, Movement II: A Transnational Consciousness in Bugaku and Gagaku

As the red leaves fall,
Forty instruments mingle
With the autumn wind.
Ah, his “Blue Sea Waves” shimmers.
The sight pierces to the bone.
—Isabella Ramos
“Narration for Movement II: Momiji no Ga”
From Koji Nakano’s Imagined Sceneries

The epigraph poetically describes a projected image of a man who elegantly dances the “Seigaiha” (“Blue Sea Waves”) under red momiji (maple) leaves (fig. 1). A theatrical reading of this poem accompanies the projected scene and its imagined soundtrack. In performance, six, not forty, musicians accompany his dance with instruments from around Asia. One can hear a cowbell-like rattle, a resonant clatter, jingle, crash, and clang back the melodic line of a sliding whistle. I have described the bugaku (court dance and music) performance depicted in Ebina’s Ch. 7, Momiji no Ga and imagined in movement II of Koji Nakano’s Imagined Sceneries. This chapter will extend beyond the structure of the city and into the world. I will examine of the history of bugaku and its musical accompaniment, gagaku, in context with Nakano’s Imagined Sceneries and Ebina’s Ch. 7, Momiji no Ga. Historically, the repertoires of bugaku and gagaku have been known as international styles of performing arts. With its imagined bugaku performance, Imagined Sceneries links the transnational consciousness of the past to that of the present.

Travel and the Formation of a Performing Arts Tradition

Elaborate costumes, and slow, elegant, and repetitive gestures characterize bugaku, such as the performance depicted in Ch. 7: Momiji no Ga. This form of dance is somewhat similar to the more recognizable Noh theater, but it predates Noh by several centuries. Noh began in the fourteenth century, while bugaku dances developed alongside gagaku’s codification in 701. In
that year, Emperor Monmu established a music department called the Gagaku-ryo in his
Chinese-style government.¹ Gagaku’s first set of repertoire drew from Japanese folklore set in
time as early as the reign of the legendary first emperor of Japan, Emperor Jimmu, in sixth
century BCE.² Gagaku repertoire is broken into three categories—Japanese vocal music
traditionally incorporated into the festivals of the imperial palace, instrumental music imported
from other parts of Asia, and ancient Japanese vocal music from the Heian period.³ This essay
will focus on the second category, to which “Seigaiha” depicted in Ebina’s Ch. 7, Momiji no Ga
belongs.

Bugaku and gagaku’s diverse pool of foreign influences prompts an application of Michel
de Certeau’s concepts into my discussion. Much of his chapter “Walking in the City” comments
on the everyday practice of walking, specifically its ability to restructure cities. He does,
however, briefly discuss travel as an extension of walking and observes its impact on cultural
practices:

“Travel (like walking) is a substitute for the legends that used to open up space to
something different… this walking exile produces is precisely the body of legends
that is currently lacking in one's own vicinity…”⁴

Bugaku and gagaku’s “body of legends,” its history, repertoire, and legacy, is defined by
its foreign influences and is made possible by travel. In Japan, Japanese and foreign
diplomats, dancers, and musicians sought to recreate new performance techniques and
repertoire they had witnessed or performed in foreign countries. Nakano’s attraction to
bugaku and gagaku’s confluence of cultures in his work can be better understood when

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¹ Masataro Togi, “A Brief History of Bugaku” in Gagaku: Court Music and Dance, 1st Ed., Performing Arts of
² Ibid., 121.
³ Togi, “What is Gagaku?” in Gagaku: Court Music and Dance, 34.
⁴ Michel de Certeau, “Walking in the City” in The Practice of Everyday Life, trans. Steven Randall (Berkeley:
one considers Nakano’s background as a composer. Nakano has stated his deep familiarity with and fondness for gagaku and considers it an international style.5 His embrace of gagaku parallels his identity as a transnational artist and scholar.6 Methodologically, Nakano strongly believes in travel as an essential component of composition and of learning.

Masataro Togi’s book Gagaku: Court Music and Dance will be pertinent to my discussion of gagaku and bugaku as international performing arts. In his book, Togi writes about gagaku’s history from his perspective as a performer of gagaku music. In the introduction to Togi’s book, Malm understands Japan as a “cultural cul-de-sac” for the thriving Silk Road in its ancient history. As the country located furthest east on the Silk Road (fig. 2), Japan encountered a heavy flow of materials and ideas from many places along the trade route.7 Foreign influences on bugaku’s costume, dance, and music distinguishes bugaku from later Japanese theater arts such as Noh, bunraku, and Kabuki. Nakano included his own imagined performance of gagaku in movement II of Imagined Sceneries out of his observation that many Japanese feel disconnected to gagaku and bugaku in the present day.8 I will now outline the influences that traveled along the Silk Road and entered Japan’s cultural sphere during gagaku and bugaku’s formative period.

5 Koji Nakano, “Introduction to Living Composition: Creating a Sustainable Environment for Asian Traditional Music.” Burapha University, Papers Read at the Burapha University International Conference held in Pattaya, July 28-29 (2016): 491.
6 Born in Tokyo, Japan, Nakano studied composition at the New England Conservatory of Music and the Royal Conservatory of The Hague. He is currently Head of International Affairs on the Faculty of Music and Performing Arts at Burapha University in Thailand and frequently travels around the globe a guest professor and lecturer. As co-founder of the Asian Young Musicians’ Connection, Nakano promotes new music by commissioning composers to create music for professional musicians around the world in annual concerts, lectures, and workshops. He also visited Claremont, CA as a Scripps College Erma O’Brien Distinguished Professor in October 2016 in time for the world premiere of his work, Imagined Sceneries. See “About,” Composer Koji Nakano, accessed January 2, 2016, http://kojinakano.weebly.com/about.html.
Korean music entered Japan by means of cultural and diplomatic exchange between Japanese and Korean kingdoms. The first documented performance of foreign music in Japan took place at the funeral of Emperor Ingyo in 453. Musicians from Shiragi, a southeastern Korean kingdom, performed at the occasion. The participation of these musicians in such an illustrious event arises from a history of good rapport between Japan and Korea. Prior to 453, ambassadors, scholars, and craftsmen from Korean kingdoms had visited and settled in Japan. By 554, musicians from the southwestern kingdom, Kudara, were sent to Japan to replace court musicians of Emperor Kimmei. Prince Shotoku, a proponent of Buddhism when it first entered Japan during Emperor Kimmei’s rule, also sought to increase interest in Korean performing arts and performing arts from other foreign countries. In 593, he established a music department dedicated to the study of foreign music in Osaka’s Shitenno-ji temple. He offered benefits to prospective department members such as position succession based on patrilineal inheritance and tax-exemptions. Korean music that entered Japan through these means were later classified as Komagaku in gagaku repertoire.9

Bokkaigaku, music from Bokkai, present-day Manchuria, entered Japan’s cultural sphere when over a thousand individuals from Bokkai immigrated to Japan in 746. Bokkaigaku was later officially categorized as Komagaku. Similar to the importation of Korean music into Japan, Bokkaigaku would not have had a place in Japanese gagaku without Japan’s favorable diplomatic relations with Bokkai. The two nations had been trading partners and had arranged visits of official delegations since 727. Two priests, Fattriet from Rinyu, present-day Vietnam, and Bodhisena from present-day India also contributed repertoire from their respective homelands to gagaku.10

10 Ibid., 125-7.
At its peak, Tang-dynasty China thrived as a burgeoning cultural center. As a result, Japan sought to adopt Chinese ideas and policies and implemented the Taika Reform. Following the implementation of Taika Reform of 645, Chinese music, known as Tōgaku (Tang music), became popular in Japan. This reform integrated components of Chinese culture and styles of governance including its taxing systems, calendar, architecture, writing, and astronomy into Japanese institutions. Through the Silk Road, Tōgaku’s transmission to Japan continued into the ninth century by means of written transmission.

Ebina’s Ch. 7, Momiji no Ga and “Seigaiha”: Reimagined

Genji’s “Seigaiha” in Ebina’s Ch. 12, Momiji no Ga originated in Tang-dynasty China and falls under the Tōgaku classification. The dance is set in the imaginary Dragon Palace, as described in Chinese folklore. It tells the story of a magical moment during a dancer’s performance. The article “The Waves of Kokonor: A Dance-Tune of the T’ang Dynasty” argues that “Seigaiha” had originated as a folk-dance song from China’s Sinkiang Province. Sinkiang had been a Turkic-speaking area that became a Chinese protectorate under the Tang Dynasty. The article’s authors unearth several associations between “Seigaiha” and Sinkiang in

11 For more information on the dissemination of Chinese music throughout Asia and a larger scope of the networks of cultural exchange in Asia, see Liang, Tsai-Ping. “Chinese Music in Asia.” National Music Council of the Philippines, Music of Asia: Papers Read at an International Music Symposium held in Manila, April 12-16, 1966, 1971, 191–95. Liang writes about the influence of Chinese music on Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Thai music as a performer-scholar in his article. His research on the interconnectedness of Asian musical traditions Liang discusses the importance of the Silk Road and its impact on the foundations of performing arts across Asia at length.

12 Ibid., 124-125.


examinations of several different translations of the song’s title. Sinkiang was home to the family of the poet Li Po, who refers to the song as “Ch’ing-hai” (blue waves), the Chinese translation of the song’s title in his poetry. In 609, his grandfather was deported to Sinkiang Province and his family consequently settled in Sinkiang. It is possible that the song had been woven into the traditions of Li Po’s family during their residence in Sinkiang. The word ch’ing-hai paraphrases the Turkic word kokonor (sky blue) the name of a lake near Sinkiang that comprises the song’s alternate English translation “The Waves of Kokonor.” To further support their argument, the article’s authors discuss the etymology of “Rindai,” the jo (first movement in free rhythm) of “Seigaiha.” Rindai is derived from Bügür, the name of a Sinkiang town. Due to “Seigaiha” and Sinkiang’s many historical and etymological associations, Sinkiang may have been the song’s birthplace.

“Seigaiha,” as interpreted by Ebina Masao in his Ch. 12, *Momiji no Ga*, depicts Genji performing a bugaku dance to “Seigaiha” at a festival in celebration of his father, the Kiritsubo Emperor, at the imperial palace. *Momiji* leaves clustered above Genji and scattered below him indicate that it is autumn. He is accompanied by his friend and rival, Tō no Chūjō, whose trailing garb is on the right of the print. While most costumes for Tōgaku were primarily red, the standard costume for “Seigaiha” was an exception, as evidenced by Genji’s attire. Genji’s outer garment’s green color and scattered chidori-mon (plover seals) follow the convention of costumes worn in “Seigaiha” performances. His outer garment is decorated with partial

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23 Ng, “The Symmetrical, Parallel and Balanced Characteristics of Bugaku,” 147.
concentric circles that stylistically represent waves and embody the imagery of this dance. The word *seigaiha* is also the name of this pattern.

During the Heian era, the time to which this scene belongs, Japan saw a decline in contact with the Asian mainland and with it, a decline in the influx of Tōgaku into Japan. However, many foreign dances and songs, such as “Seigaiha,” began to stabilize and Japanese institutions continued to integrate Chinese culture and modes of governance. The urban plan of the new imperial capital and *The Tale of Genji*’s setting, Heian-kyō. As discussed in chapter 2, the city’s gridded plan was divided into two halves, the left (east) and the right (west) (fig. 3). Tōgaku and Kogaku became official categories of music and were each ascribed to a half of the city. Kogaku became affiliated with the right, while Tōgaku became affiliated with the left. These affiliations of the performing arts explain why both Genji, a son-in-law of the Minister of the Left, and Tō no Chūjō, the son of the Minister of the Left, perform the Tōgaku “Seigaiha.” In addition, Genji and Tō no Chūjō’s performance of *bugaku* represents the aristocracy’s attraction to *bugaku* and *gagaku* during the Heian era. Prior to the Heian period, only professional dancers and musicians performed *bugaku* and *gagaku* in temples and shrines. By the Heian era, members of the new court, such as Genji and Tō no Chūjō, began to study and perform *bugaku* and *gagaku* in their residences.

In his interpretation of “Seigaiha” in movement II of *Imagined Sceneries*, Nakano draws from *bugaku* and *gagaku*’s identity as a cultural product of different foreign performing arts traditions and practices. His reimagining of Genji’s performance in live performance relies on

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26 While the court had created these distinctions between Chinese and Korean styles of music, it should be noted that much of Korean music was derived from Chinese music traditions.
the juxtaposition of the digital projection of Ebina’s *Ch. 12, Momiji no Ga* with the live performance of light percussion instruments. Nakano’s orchestration of light percussion instruments (fig. 4) in this movement is quite different from traditional *gagaku*. In *gagaku*, there are several instruments indigenous to Japan, such as the large wooden framed *da-daiko* drum pictured in the left of the print. However, similar to *bugaku* and *gagaku* repertoire, the instruments used in *gagaku* are derived from instruments in foreign countries. For instance, the *kakko* drum, common in Tōgaku orchestrations, is a relative of the Chinese *jiegu*. It should be noted that many instruments used in *gagaku* come from China and Korea, but not from other contributors to *gagaku* and *bugaku* such as Manchuria, Vietnam, and India. In movement II as well as in other movements, Nakano includes instruments that issue from South and Southeast Asia, most of which do not yet have relative Japanese variants. He recognizes Fettriet’s contributions to *bugaku* and *gagaku* with a small gong and a hardwood slit block from Vietnam. His inclusion of finger cymbals from India recognizes Bodhisena’s contributions.

In movement II, Nakano also includes instruments from places without historical contributions to *bugaku* and *gagaku* to make a statement about international musical collaboration in the present-day. These include several instruments from Thailand, bamboo knocker clocker and hand cymbals, and several Western instruments, a small hand tambourine, Audubon bird call, and a slide whistle. The Thai instruments seem to represent his contribution to the work, as Thailand is his current country of residence. The Western instruments appear to represent *Imagined Sceneries*’ performers and collaborators at the Claremont Colleges in the

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United States. Collectively, all instruments of movement II embody Nakano’s approach to composition.

Out of his own longing for a living thing in his compositions, Nakano developed his own approach to composition called living composition, a musical composition that begins with an idea and an open framework. The resulting performance of living composition is informed by the individual musical personalities and musical cultures of the performers. For many of his compositions, Nakano travels internationally to better understand his collaborators and their musical cultures. Mindful of the wide range of his collaborative artists’ musical practices, he understands that music cannot be composed in only one way, so he combines Western and Asian styles of music in his compositions. As a result, his works transcend the myujiku/ongaku (Japanese music/Western music) dichotomy that is traditionally found in Japanese sound aesthetics. The collaborative nature of Imagined Sceneries’ composition exemplifies Nakano’s practice of living composition. During his visit to Scripps College, Nakano spent time with the work’s performers to learn about their own approaches to performance within and outside of a rehearsal context. Nakano also requested for the implementation of Noh movement in several movements of Imagined Sceneries. The work’s performers learned the Noh theatre tradition’s slow hakobi walk from members of the Kongo Noh School from Kyoto, Japan, who were featured guests at the Claremont Colleges Festival of Noh Theater.

Nakano joins the transnational consciousness of the past and present day closer together with the juxtaposition of the ancient ritual of the bugaku dance and a soundscape of the bustling

29 Nakano, “Introduction to Living Composition: Creating a Sustainable Environment for Asian Traditional Music,” 4.
Kyoto Station. Similar to the Heian Palace during Japan’s Heian era, this station is an entryway for international visitors and a site of contemporary ritual. Within this discussion, ritual is employed within a secular context—which is much closer to the concept of ritual as defined by psychoanalysts Sigmund Freud and Lévi-Strauss. Freud believed that ritual can be removed from its religious connotation and be understood as an elaboration of everyday tasks. Lévi-Strauss similarly strips ritual of its religious connotation. He observes ritual in everyday tasks and notes how ritual makes distinctions through certain gestures, objects, and repetition. A parallelism between Genji’s *bugaku* performance and the experience of moving through Kyoto Station can be made through this definition of ritual. *Bugaku*’s repetitive gestures are timed with live music. Guided by the architecture of the palace and learned behavior, the audience knows to gather around the performance and to watch it. This is ritual. As de Certeau observes, behaviors associated with these rituals are “marked out by the ‘citation’ of the places that result from them or authorize them.” Thus, participants and site create ritual together. In present-day Japan, travelers routinely traverse through train stations to board trains according to strict schedules. This is also ritual.

Conclusion

*Bugaku* and *gagaku* and their legacy of transnationality have structured and inspired Koji Nakano’s *Imagined Sceneries* in its instrumentation and in its many collaborative forces. Influences from China, Korea, Vietnam, and Manchuria have indeed imbued *bugaku* and *gagaku* with a rich cultural tradition. Conjectures on the origin of “Seigaiha,” as well as its appearance in *The Tale of Genji* and its artistic incarnations exemplifies this special quality of *bugaku* and

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gagaku. Through his practice of living composition, Nakano has transformed bugaku and gagaku to include the traditions of other countries in the present-day. The inclusion of both performing arts traditions comprise a fascinating and inspiring layer in Imagined Sceneries.
Fig. 2. Map of Overland Silk Road in *Freer Gallery of Art*, 2016, https://www.asia.si.edu/explore/asia/silkroad/images/map_large.jpg.
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Erased Sceneries: A (Literary) Walk Through Los Angeles:

Transnationality across the Pacific frames the conclusion of this thesis. In the previous chapter, transnationality shaped the Heian period performing arts of gagaku and bugaku, both of which inspired movement II of Nakano’s work. As a result of the collaborative process that produced Imagined Sceneries, transnationality also defined the realization of Nakano’s work. To conclude my journey through time and space, I would like to discuss transnationality on a smaller scale and return home. I will shift from Kyoto to the location of Imagined Sceneries’ performances—my home, Los Angeles County. In its sheer economic, cultural, and ethnic diversity, Los Angeles is a microcosm of the world. Due to its reputation as a city of diversity, it is easy to cast Los Angeles as a bastion of hope in the current wake of rising nativism in the United States and across the world. As Kyoto had done in chapter 2, Los Angeles presents this image as an ideal self. However, in reality, Los Angeles, namely its hegemonic institutions, has a history of forgetting and erasing the histories of the city’s disempowered. The dream of transnationality and a cosmopolitan ethos of respect for difference\(^1\) has not yet been realized. My multimedia project titled Erased Sceneries: A (Literary) Walk Through Los Angeles: is a personal examination of erased Los Angeles groups and spaces that extends ideas of movement and space from previous thesis chapters.

Erasure of place and identity can be traced to colonial projects across the Pacific. Erasure is an integral component of such exploits. In its inherent violence, colonization results in physical destruction upon a colonized space. Colonial projects destroy the identities of their colonized subjects as well. In chapter 2, I presented the sonic binary of musical/non-musical,

which was used by Western musicologists to understand non-Western music. This approach privileged Western music as inherently musical over the more “primitive” non-Western music as non-musical. Similar categorizations are visible in Western photographic projects of colonization. Within these contexts, cameras function as weapons that can be “loaded,” “aimed,” and “shot.” As writer and activist Susan Sontag addresses in her essay “In Plato’s Cave,” “To collect photographs is to collect the world.” These images profoundly impacted the practice of categorization of bodies within formerly occupied nations. As art critic John Berger tells us in his first chapter of *Ways of Seeing*, we are trained how to see and our training is informed by such categories. “The way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe.” In his essay “Rhetoric of the Image” philosopher, linguist, and literary theorist Roland Barthes gives our personal knowledge and beliefs a name—lexicon.

Similar to the role of photographic ethnography in India as discussed in the first chapter of art historian and anthropologist Christopher Pinney’s book *Camera Indica*, photographic ethnographies of the late nineteenth-century conducted by American colonizers photographed, categorized, and consequently, primitivized indigenous Pilipinx tribes. The photography of these ethnographies legitimized the colonization of these supposedly inferior and uncivilized peoples. These ethnographies as well as Spanish visual culture that arrived in the Philippines during Spain’s rule over the Philippines continue to guide Pilipinx ideals of beauty. A socio-economic hierarchy based on skin color is alive and well in the Philippines. I know this firsthand. The light faces of mestiza/os populate much of the country’s visual media. My own light skin and thinness

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5 Christopher Pinney, “‘Stern Fidelity’ and ‘Penetrating Certainty’” in *Camera Indica: The Social Life of Indian Photographs* (Reaktion Books, 2013), 53.
put me in a substantial position of privilege whenever I visit home. Whitening soap for the
erasure of dark skin, any trace of the Native, is easy to find in local supermarkets.

In the present day across the Pacific, I feel the repercussions of these colonial projects.
As I have learned as a second-generation Pilipina-American in the Los Angeles, erasure of
identity and space is alive and well in the present. Nakano’s interpretation of wabi-sabi, as a
confluence of fragments of different things, is similar to the way in which I understand Los
Angeles and my own identity. Los Angeles is large, sprawling, and both physically and socially
fragmented. The construction of Asian-American identity can be a painful and difficult process
as well. I walk through the city and seldom see people who look like me on billboards and in
movies. The same can be said about my experience as a voyeur in the ivory tower. I comprise a
very small minority of Pilipinx-Americans at the Claremont Colleges despite that Pilipinxs are
the largest Asian ethnic group in Southern California.\(^7\) As a hybrid of two cultures, I have
understood my own phenomenology of space as wearing multiple masks depending on what
space I occupy. Assimilation plays an important role in this phenomenology. Not only for the
second generation, but for all Pilipinxs.

My own lexicon as a middle class second generation Pilipina-American and an art history
major at Scripps College guides the way in which I see the city. Erased Sceneries: A (Literary)
Walk Through Los Angeles: communicates my experience of Los Angeles as both a walker and a
voyeur. Aesthetically and conceptually, my photo essay engages in dialogue with Nakano’s
Imagined Sceneries as a site-specific audio-visual exploration of a city.\(^8\) It is my own walk (and
drive) through Los Angeles that loosely follows the route that I had traveled to poster and

\(^7\) “A Community of Contrasts: Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders: A Diverse and Growing Force in Los
\(^8\) See http://claremontdh.net/Scalar/imagined-sceneries/erased-sceneries for the soundscapes of my shooting
locations.
advertise the October 2016 Claremont Festival of Noh Theater. My execution of the festival’s promotion plan required me to exploit my social capital. It also forced me to swallow my introversion and communicate with strangers. I reached out to over 160 businesses and media outlets to advertise this festival. The majority of Noh Festival sponsors are Japanese and Japanese-American organizations. Many of these organizations are subjects of my photography as a result. Some of my photographs critique the ethics of some sponsors and the urban plans of their neighborhoods. Other images also pay tribute to sponsors who have walked long distances for people of color.

*Erased Sceneries* strives to negotiate photography’s long-standing dichotomy of beauty and politics. Like Nakano’s work, the photographs are composed using the aesthetic principles of *wabi-sabi*. My project seeks beauty in the imperfection of constructions of Asian-American identity in Los Angeles across time. In seeking beauty, the project does not desire to romanticize erasure in the same way that Damien Chazelle’s 2016 film *La La Land* does. In their thoughtless, preservationist, and citationless appropriations of non-Western aesthetics and bodies, many modernist projects are also guilty of *La La Land*’s sin. As an aesthetic located in approximately the same position as Greek aesthetics in Western ideas of beauty, in Japanese aesthetics, this project appropriates *wabi-sabi* as an answer to the West’s erasure of identity and spaces. Aesthetically, my project attempts to evoke *wabi-sabi*’s aspects of suffering, impermanence, and emptiness.⁹

To be clear, I intend to approach photographic appropriation mindfully. I am aware of my position and lexicon. I understand that I am neither Japanese or Japanese-American. I can write about Japanese-American history from books and personal histories of Japanese-Americans, but I cannot write from a Japanese-American perspective. My artistic vocabulary is also heavily

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informed by aesthetic principles of East Asia as an art history major with a focus on Asian art, which is predominantly centered on the art of East Asia. Due to the institutional invisibility that Pilipinxs face, I have never been offered a Pilipinx art history course and I have a very weak grasp of Pilipinx art. This Western compartmentalization and hierarchy of non-Western aesthetics are products of colonial ethnographic photography mentioned above.

While I am not Japanese or Japanese-American, I have observed that Japanese-Americans, Pilipinxs-Americans, and other Asian-American minorities of this city share similar experiences. Due to the white gaze’s homogenization of our bodies, we have all been categorized as Asian in the national census. For the same reason, unfortunately, we also encounter similar racial slurs and stereotypes. Despite our residency in this country, we are marked as colored and other. My project conceptually departs from the Summer 2016 issue of Aperture magazine, Vision & Justice, edited by author and curator Sarah Lewis, and Partial Recall, edited by art critic, activist, and curator Lucy Lippard. Both seek to reclaim imagery of historically undervalued and misrepresented groups in American history, Native Americans and African-Americans respectively. I seek to do the same with my own photography and writing for Asian-Americans. My writing on my personal photography is inspired by Roland Barthes’ poignant and critical writing on the “Winter Garden” photograph of his mother that is presented in his book Camera Lucida. Finally, Erased Sceneries synthesizes passages from books and articles about Los Angeles housed at Vroman’s Bookstore, a Noh Festival media sponsor. The inclusion of

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11 Superimposed texts are below my photographs in this document and on my Scalar book.
these passages reflects literary critic and intellectual Maeda Ai’s keen observation that succinctly summarizes my thesis: “the novel is a text/product of the city.”


This screenshot of Google Maps (fig. 1), which I use as the cover photo of the photo essay, succinctly expresses our fascinating, yet disturbing digital age. Here, the map and the voyeur become one entity in digital space to survey the walker. Using my Android devices’ GPS tracking capabilities, Google Maps records my geographic location over the course of my

ownership of an android device.\textsuperscript{13} Unlike the map’s failure to accommodate walkers in Chapter 2’s stories of Kyoto, this map accurately tracks my movement using a device that I instinctively carry with me at all times. This portion of the map presents evidence of Los Angeles as a large, sprawling, disjointed city that cannot be walked, but driven. To further articulate my positionality in this project, it is also impossible to be a resident of all Los Angeles neighborhoods that I have photographed. I am an outsider within the contexts of many of these neighborhoods.

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\textsuperscript{13} This is eerily similar to colonist voyeurs’ surveillance of their colonial subjects’ activity. This surveillance birthed the types of ethnographic photography discussed in the conclusion’s introductory text.
Granite benches that imitate Zen archery targets from artist Hirokazu Kosaka’s\textsuperscript{14} public artwork \textit{Buffer Zone} no longer stand at the Little Tokyo/Arts District Station for unknown reasons (fig. 2).\textsuperscript{15} A still from his performance art \textit{Kotohajime} (fig. 3) is superimposed onto this photograph of the installation’s remnants. Like Kyoto Station in movement \textit{II} of \textit{Imagined Sceneries}, Little Tokyo/Arts District Station is a site of present day ritual that convenes visitors and locals together. Cars are incapable of such a thing. Based on my encounter with Nakano’s work and my own lexicon, I connotationally read Hirokazu Kosaka’s work, with its title as anchor,\textsuperscript{16} as an expression of the train station as a site of crossroads. I also read the piece as a testament to the condition of the multicultural identity, of being situated between several different worlds.

\textsuperscript{14}Kosaka, the Japanese American Cultural & Community Center’s Master Artist in Residence, was a tremendous supporter of Festival of Noh Theater at the Claremont Colleges. He emailed me a list of Japanese media outlet contacts and allowed me to leave my promotional post cards at the Japanese American Cultural & Community Center. Within the scope of Los Angeles’ art history, he is an important figure. See Jeremy Rosenberg, “Hirokazu Kosaka: From a Buddhist Monastery in Japan to an Art Legend in L.A.,” KCET, March 15, 2012, https://www.kcet.org/history-society/hirokazu-kosaka-from-a-buddhist-monastery-in-japan-to-an-art-legend-in-la.

\textsuperscript{15}As a high schooler in Pasadena, an LA suburbia and a home to several Gold Line Stations, the Little Tokyo/Arts District Station was a frequent meeting place for my group of friends.

\textsuperscript{16}I use Barthesian language from his essay “Rhetoric of the Image.” According to Barthes, an anchor secures an image’s meaning within the context of advertisement. Anchor loses its valence within the context of art due to the many possible meanings that may be projected onto the object by both artist and viewer. See Barthes, “Rhetoric of the Image,” 40.
The superimposed text comes from a page of artist Barbara Thomason’s book *100 Not So Famous Views of L.A.* It describes her painting of Little Tokyo’s Yagura Tower, a major feature of architect and former Korean-American Coalition board chair David Hyun’s renovated Japanese Village Plaza (fig. 8). Hyun’s renovation revitalized Little Tokyo, both real and ideal. However, with Little Tokyo’s revitalization came its gentrification. No longer a place of habit, Little Tokyo is now a tourist destination. In her text, Thomason describes Yagura Tower and Little Tokyo’s history in context with Japanese immigration and internment (fig. 4). It is crucial that this history remains a component of the present debate on immigration.

17 Like a walker, her book explores sites in Los Angeles that are invisible to voyeurs. She does so by co-opting the landscape compositions of legendary woodblock print artist Utagawa Hiroshige. I feel that parts of her writing read like a tourist guidebook. See Barbara A. Thomason, *100 Not So Famous Views of L.A.* (Pasadena: Prospect Park Books, 2014).

18 Many Japanese Village Plaza businesses allowed me to leave Noh Festival postcards in their stores.


22 Because Japanese-Americans came from a non-white axis nation, they were the only group of Americans interned during World War II. In contrast, Italian-Americans and German-Americans were spared from internment. This is an important fact to remember in our present moment.
86.

Yagura Tower

The Yagura Tower in Little Tokyo is a replica of a fire lookout tower in rural Japan. Many of the Japanese Americans returning home after being in the World War II internment camps wanted it torn down because it reminded them of the guard towers at the camps. The first Japanese arrived in Los Angeles in the late 1800s; later waves came from Northern California first to lay railroad tracks for Henry Huntington’s Pacific Electric Railway, and then after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, and many of those immigrants gravitated to Little Tokyo. To this day it remains the cultural heart of the Japanese American community, home to several Buddhist temples, two museums, shops, and many good sushi bars, noodle houses, restaurants, and food shops, including Fugetsu-do, a sweet shop that has been selling mochi since 1903.

The tower is in Little Tokyo on 1st Street, marking the entrance to the Japanese Village Plaza, across from the Japanese American National Museum.

Chapter 1 discusses the international art market of the 50s and 60s, but does not discuss international commercial trade of that era. This Hangyodon sticker on the Japanese Village Plaza Sanrio store\textsuperscript{23} window tells the story of commercial trade between Japan and the United States in the post-war. Similar to post-war art styles discussed in Chapter 1, the manga aesthetic, which informs the cuteness and two-dimensionality of this creature, was developed to rebuild Japan after World War II. Out of shame and embarrassment after the war during the 50s and 60s, Japan

\textsuperscript{23} This Sanrio branch graciously allowed me to leave Noh Festival postcards on their register counter.
repackaged the “American look” in its toys, and other commodities for export back to the US. These commodities were so cute, colorful, and beautiful that international markets gobbled them up. From then on, Japan continued this cycle and expanded their reach in the world economy. However, regardless of how introspective a manga series story is, the manga aesthetic inherently obfuscates race. I superimposed a waka poem written by Hiroko Iruka on display in the Japanese Village Plaza (fig. 6) that captures Japanese culture’s marketability to Western audiences.

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24 Sanrio’s cast of cute anthropomorphic animals, which played major role in my childhood and continues to do so today, is a model example of Japan’s success.
25 I refer to manga comics here. Manga can also denote a type of comic illustrated in the manga aesthetic.
26 Emily Yoshida’s article on the manga aesthetic does a very good job of breaking down the complicated exchange between American and Japanese art styles and its resulting problems of representation. I also appreciate that the author had written this article from a very personal place. See Emily Yoshida, “Ghost in the Shell and Anime’s Troubled History with Representation,” The Verge, May 9, 2016, http://www.theverge.com/2016/5/9/11612530/ghost-in-the-shell-anime-asian-representation-hollywood.
Norman Klein’s book *The History of Forgetting: Los Angeles and the Erasure of Memory* and the title of Nakano’s work inspired my photo essay’s title. A passage on the failure of Downtown\textsuperscript{27} housing developments on Spring Street is superimposed onto photographic evidence of Spring Street’s failure (fig. 8). Spring Street presents an example of Los Angeles’ crisis of gentrification, unaffordable housing, and resulting displacement: all of which are tied to the politics of race and class. Both views of Spring Street in the photo communicate the dual role

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\textsuperscript{27} I promoted the Noh Festival in LA’s Downtown neighborhood. I included a Noh Festival feature in Los Angeles Opera’s monthly newsletter during my time on LA Opera’s 2015-2016 College Advisory Committee. I also reached out to the Colburn School, of which I am an alumna. Mark Swed, classical music critic of the *Los Angeles Times*, headquartered in Downtown, attended the *Imagined Sceneries* premiere.
of the voyeur in Los Angeles. The view from a posh and tightly secured Spring Street loft on the right offers a classic voyeur experience as described by de Certeau.\textsuperscript{28} The left image of an almost sculptural tent that belongs to displaced individual was taken from a distance through a car window. My car, which is a necessity to traverse the entirety of Los Angeles, connotes my own privilege.

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\textsuperscript{28} De Certeau uses the image of a man at the top of a skyscraper who surveys the city from a distance to introduce the concept of the voyeur. See Michel de Certeau, “Walking in the City” in \textit{The Practice of Everyday Life}, trans. Steven Randall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 92.
Echo Park is home to this Citibank building, and a large and diverse immigrant population. In the 80s and 90s, Los Angeles neighborhoods like Echo Park experienced a “white flight.” However, unlike the spacious suburbs of San Gabriel Valley, in which many people of color buy and own their own homes, the urban neighborhood of Echo Park is an “inverted mirror” of the suburb. The dense urban city plan is inherently conducive to racial segregation. Also, the recent surge in the region’s gentrification has increased housing prices and

29 I worked at Levitt Pavilions’ national office in this Citibank building in the summer of 2015. Levitt’s Communication & Social Media team graciously promoted the Noh Festival at my request.

displacement.\textsuperscript{31} In his Author’s Note to \textit{The Madonnas of Echo Park: A Novel}, Echo Park native and author Brando Skyhorse (fig. 10) recalls Echo Park’s social workings at play in his sixth-grade classroom.

“It’s a dance party,” Ms. O’Neill said. “Yes, there will be dancing.”

Dancing? The boys didn’t like the sound of this. Were we expected to dance with girls? And were Mexican boys to dance with Vietnamese girls? What about Vietnamese boys—would they dance with Mexican girls? Then a more terrifying thought arose: Who would I dance with? By the end of class, I had formed a pact with two Vietnamese boys I had never spoken to before, not to dance with any girl, even if we were asked. There were many other treaties of convenience made that day, as boys and girls who had segregated themselves by race and language throughout the year became unexpected allies in an effort to outsmart our teacher, who was white. Who, we wondered, would \textit{she} dance with?

Fig. 10. Skyhorse, Brando, \textit{Excerpt from The Madonnas of Echo Park: A Novel}, 2011, http://claremontdh.net/scalar/imagined-sceneries/media/BigBandEdit-24Text.png.

Large stylized bonzai trees frame a walker’s perspective of the Silver Lake Reservoir and the Silver Lake neighborhood’s late afternoon traffic. These bonzai trees belong to the Neutra Colony of homes designed by modernist architect Richard Neutra, who immigrated from his native Austria to Los Angeles in 1923.32 The United States perceived Austrians as “enemy aliens” after World War I and Neutra faced harsh immigration restrictions on his journey to the US.33 Neutra defied expectations of immigration officials and eventually became one of the most

33 Ibid., 42.
celebrated American architects in the world. Like other modernists, Neutra owes a substantial amount to Japanese aesthetics, as indicated by the bonzai trees. This photo pays tribute to another important Silver Lake native, the theater company East West Players (fig. 12). This theater company, now in Little Tokyo, tackles themes integral to the Asian-American experience and provides meaningful roles for Asian-American actors. It is a shame that the present still encounters the same problems of media representation that EWP catalyst Makoto Iwamatsu had encountered in the 60s.

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Founded in Silver Lake in 1965 and with its main stage in the area for more than three decades, East West Players (EWP), the nation's first Asian American theater organization, represents a remarkable confluence of talent, history and need. Need relates to the longstanding lack in U.S. culture of Asian American themes and meaningful roles for Asian American actors, which EWP, fired by the ethnic pride and identity politics zeitgeist of the 1960s, sought to redress. Talent and history come together in, and radiate out from, Japanese actor Mako, the prime catalyst for EWP's creation.\textsuperscript{460}

Having begun to find work in film and television but frustrated by the continuing dearth of meaty, non-stereotypical stage and screen roles for Asian Americans, Mako (full name Makoto Iwamatsu) teamed with fellow actors Beulah Quo, Soon-Tek Oh, Pat Li, June Kim and Yet Lock to form EWP. When Mako was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor in \textit{The Sand Pebbles} (1966)—only the third such honor for an Asian actor, after Miyoshi Umeki's Oscar and Sessue Hayakawa's nomination in 1958—he instantly became a magnet for additional talent to join EWP and for audiences to attend its plays.\textsuperscript{461}

For its first seven years, the troupe trained and staged in the Bethany Presbyterian Church (founded in 1931), just off Silver Lake's main drag at the corner of Griffith Park Boulevard and Edgecliffe Drive. Why this particular venue was chosen brings us back to Judge Delbert Wong. Judge Wong was a member of the church and was as interested as EWP's founders in fostering an Asian-oriented theater. He also happened to be

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Before and after my high school graduation, my class assembled here at the Pitcairn House, a Pasadena building designed by the Greene & Greene architectural firm.35 Like Neutra, the Greene brothers also drew from Japanese aesthetics, evident in the Pitcairn House’s extensive...
use of natural materials, projected beams. Even the lanterns carry a sense of “japanicity.” A chapter in a book on the Greene brothers’ famed Gamble House written in 2015, conveys a shockingly essentialist idea of Japanese culture (fig. 14). By observing a “fast-disappearing” Japanese culture in the late nineteenth-century, the author ignores power dynamics between Japan and a Western-centered global economy. This economy forced Japan to “modernize” and Westernize its “traditional” material culture and cultural sensibilities. This moment in Japan’s history is somewhat similar to its post-war history presented in Chapter 1.

36 I use “japanicity” as an allusion to Barthes’ “italianicity.” He used this concept in a breakdown of a Panzani advertisement to describe coded, non-coded, and linguistic messages that function as euphoric signs that convey the “Italianess” of the advertisement to its French audience. See Barthes, “Rhetoric of the Image,” 33, 35, 48.

century, thanks largely to Edward Sylvester Morse, Ernest Fenollosa, William Sturgis Bigelow, and others who traveled extensively within Japan to study and collect important objects from a fast-disappearing culture. While officially studying the marine life of brachiopods, Morse also took time to observe and sketch historic buildings in Japan, noting how they were constructed and ornamented. This provided material for his popular book, *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* (1886), which in 1903 found a place on Charles Greene’s bookshelf.

Eating in the car: this is the reality of a Angelinx voyeur/driver. But the ground on which I parked my car is a site of slavery, genocide, and forced internment. In the San Gabriel Valley (SGV), displacement was a reality from Spain’s establishment of the San Gabriel mission as part of their colonial mission system to the internment of Japanese-Americans at the Santa Anita Race Track. The Tongva people who had previously inhabited this land have become obfuscated from the San Gabriel mission’s history. In addition, the vibrant Japanese-American

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38 I purchased a spicy cod roe onigiri from a San Gabriel Mitsuwa market and devoured it in the parking lot when I took this picture. I was permitted to post a Noh Festival poster at this Mitsuwa branch.
39 This is no different from the education I received as a student in my fourth grade history course. It does not help that I was a student at Roman Catholic school. See “History – About Us – San Gabriel Mission Church,” accessed
community that existed before internment was never fully revived. Very few Japanese-Americans returned home to San Gabriel Valley (fig. 16). Nonetheless, the SGV’s Asian-American and Latinx immigrant populations, both of which live in solidarity with each other, offers a model of cosmopolitanism in the present.

The indignity of attending public school paled in comparison to the injustice that was forced relocation and internment during the Second World War. In the months preceding the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Japanese in the San Gabriel Valley could not have imagined they would soon lose their homes and livelihoods. In fact, with the specter of war looming, many Japanese Americans were active in the local community's preparations for national defense. Less than six months before they would be sent there as internees, local Japanese participated in the Japan Day celebrations at the 1941 Los Angeles County Fair at the Pomona Fairgrounds. Even during Japan Day, reports indicate that the fair's "national defense theme predominated." Just two months later in November of 1941, the L.A. Times chronicled a local "Food for Defense Week Campaign" in El Monte during which the area's farmers were expected to disclose their farms' production to local officials. Given the plethora of first-generation Japanese farmers in the area, "At each [high] school, Japanese interpreters were present to help Japanese-mostly farmers of truck crops-fill out their patriotic reports." In all likelihood, the following year's agricultural production fell far short of the Food for Defense drive's estimates, as the area's Japanese residents would be relocated prior to the 1942 harvest.


This photograph’s punctum,⁴² these dancing shoes, caught my attention from across the ballroom at the Filipino American Symphony (FASO)’s Swing the Night Away dinner dance in Glendale.⁴³ The shoes, the dance hall in subdued colors, and a big band playing the standard “It Had to Be You” resurrect Glendale’s past as a film noir shooting location.⁴⁴ Due to its

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⁴² I am using Barthesian language. A punctum is a detail unique to a viewer that seemingly fills the whole picture. See Barthes, “PUNCTUM: Partial Empire” in Camera Lucida, 45.

⁴³ I am the Business Administrator and a volunteer Social Media Associate of the Orchestra. Robert Shroder, musical director of the Orchestra, graciously accepted my invitation to the Noh Festival. This image was one my live-tweets from the event.

⁴⁴ The following films are major examples of noir shot in Glendale. See Billy Wilder, Double Indemnity, Crime, Drama, Film-Noir, (1944) and Michael Curtiz, Mildred Pierce, Crime, Drama, Film-Noir, (1945).
monumentalization in Los Angeles literature and Hollywood film, noir is a genre of LA’s past.  

Noir’s Hollywood prestige and the film industry’s inability to see a non-white audience as something beyond niche market obfuscated the noir dance hall’s role in the formation of American ethnic communities (Fig. 17). By pricing its dinner dance at $125 per head, FASO has embraced noir and its connotations of glamor. As a result, the Orchestra forgot about its commitment to being a community orchestra for all the Pilipinx regardless of class. Moreover, the Orchestra forgot what the dance hall had meant for the first Pilipino Angelinos. Dance hall admission was far more affordable for these new arrivals to the United States.


As one would expect, non-white Americans were never the stars of noir fiction, but they engaged in noir-like narratives in lounges and dance halls. The first Filipino immigrants frequented dance halls to form community and to defy racial stereotypes. See Linda Espana-Maram, “‘White Trash’ and ‘Brown Hordes’” in *Creating Masculinity in Los Angeles’s Little Manila: Working-Class Filipinos and Popular Culture in the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006),

“I offer my critiques as an act of love. FASO is still a walker. We do not yet have our own rehearsal space or performance space like Los Angeles Philharmonic. We wander from venue to venue. With what it has, FASO does an excellent job of promoting Pilipinx talent and compositions to Los Angeles and beyond. Its consistently high ticket prices limit the economic diversity of its audience, however. The Orchestra challenges the assumption that orchestral music comes with connotations of ethnicity, but it has not yet successfully challenged the art form’s connotations of class.

to entrepreneurs, some of whom catered to an emerging population of consumers, young working people with discretionary incomes. On another level, however, popular culture practices represented sites where workers, marginalized by class, race, age, or gender, took back what they felt was rightfully theirs: their bodies, their time, and the freedom to construct, affirm, or reject identities in their own fashion and among their peers. The historian Robin D. G. Kelley understands the urgency of this need within communities of exploited laborers. Writing about African Americans in the Jim Crow South, Kelley eloquently argues that the “search for the sonic, visceral pleasures of music and fellowship, for the sensual pleasures of food, drink, and dancing was not just about escaping the vicissitudes of southern life. They went with people who had a shared knowledge of cultural forms, people with whom they felt kinship, people with whom they shared stories about the day or the latest joke, people who shared a vernacular whose grammar and vocabulary struggled to articulate the beauty and burden of their lives.”\textsuperscript{105} Like these black workers, Filipinos went to dance halls because they not only liked to dance but also liked to share experiences and formulate a collective memory of more than just the workplace.

This photo is a tribute to my cat Star (fig. 18) for his emotional support during his time as a member of my family, especially during my commission and production of *Imagined Sceneries*, and the undertaking of this thesis.\(^4^9\) Art historically, cats have had an iconographic association with women: from *The Tale of Genji*’s Onna San no Miya and her cat (fig. 19)\(^5^0\) to pussy hats.\(^5^1\) I similarly understand my indoor/outdoor cat as an extension of myself. As a second generation only child of a Pilipinx-American household, I received a strict upbringing

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\(^{5^0}\) I could not find any suitable texts on cats from Los Angeles, so I returned to *Genji* with this memorable passage. Onna San no Miya is “Her Highness” in Tyler’s translation of *Genji*. Her admirer Kashiwagi (the Intendant) obsessively imagines her cat as his beloved. See Murasaki Shikibu, “Spring Shoots II” in *The Tale of Genji*, trans. Royall Tyler (New York: Viking, 2001), 628.

\(^{5^1}\) I theorize that this association came to be due to behaviors ascribed to cats that are also traditionally ascribed to women: docility, introversion, and occasional malice. I grew up working in a no-kill cat sanctuary and with my own cat over the past twelve years. I grew up identifying as a woman. From these experiences, I discovered that these culturally ascribed behaviors according to categories were absolutely untrue. And not every woman is a cat person.
from parents who constantly cared and worried for my well-being unlike most of my peers.\(^{52}\) I grew up with restrictions on my movement and behavior outside of home. In my wanderlust, I lived vicariously through Star and invented epic stories about his escapades beyond home. Due to their ability to walk long distances, and to navigate and discover parts of the city that remain hidden to humans, cats are “superwalkers.”\(^{53}\) In my youth, I also struggled to forge meaningful long-term friendships with others at school, so my parents introduced me to someone who would love me unconditionally for the rest of his life.\(^{54}\) I love this cat in the same way. After growing up together over the past twelve years, I feel that Star and I share a state of intersubjectivity.\(^{55}\) In this photo, the punctum is time: a photo is paradoxical in that it is both alive and dead.\(^{56}\) The photograph is an intimate moment of the everyday life that I share with my cat. However, Star is reaching the end of his life and I am unsure of how many moments like this we have left together.

\(^{52}\) To be clear, my parents were not draconian. My restrictions were not nearly as intense as my mother’s in her childhood in the Philippines. I am aware that my parents raised me in the way that they did out of love.

\(^{53}\) This is a bastardization of de Certeau’s concept of the walker. I have received calls from people, who have dialed the number on cat’s tag, telling me that they have spotted my cat. These people usually live blocks away from my house.

\(^{54}\) This cat purred when he saw me from his enclosure at the Burbank Animal Shelter in August 2003. I knew that this cat would be my best friend when I heard the sound. This is the only “love at first sight” that I will ever believe in.

\(^{55}\) Intersubjectivity is achieved when two individuals share an experience, language, or culture. See Barbara Smuts, “Encounters with Animal Minds,” *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 8, no. 5–7 (2001): 304.

\(^{56}\) Barthes, “Flat Death” in *Camera Lucida*, 92.
had one, too. The sight of it scampering fetchingly about immediately reminded him of that other one. “I have never seen a cat with a prettier face than the one Her Highness has at Rokujō,” the Intendant remarked. “I caught a little glimpse of it, you know.”

His Highness, who was particularly fond of cats, pressed his visitor to tell him more. “It is a Chinese cat,” the Intendant said; “it does not look at all like this one. A cat is a cat, of course, but it is so tame and friendly that it really is remarkably attractive.” He hoped to make him feel like seeing it himself.

His Highness was inspired to get in touch with the Kiritsubo Consort,* and the cat arrived. The gentlewomen liked the dear little kitty very much, and the Intendant noted that His Highness wanted to keep it. A few days later he was back. His Eminence Suzaku had favored him and given him errands already when he was a page, and now that he was off in the mountains, the Intendant had become a familiar visitor at the Heir Apparent’s.

“What a lot of cats!” the Intendant remarked, preparing to give His Highness a koto lesson. “But where is the darling I saw?” He found it and petted it affectionately.

“Yes, it is pretty,” His Highness said. “It is not very friendly yet, but I suppose

Works Cited


