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Edited by James R. Brandon
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A highly decorated leather-puppet figure of the god Kresna of Javanese *wayang kulit* shadow theatre



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ADVISORY EDITOR
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TONI SHAPIRO has provided additional material
 on the current situation in Cambodia.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

When *The Cambridge Guide to World Theatre* was published in 1988, it was immediately recognized as an indispensable reference work in theatre. One of its great values was its ecumenical placing of European, North and South American, African, Arab, Oceanic and Asian theatres side-by-side and page-by-page throughout that substantial volume. It made a forceful statement that Euro-American theatres could no longer be the standard by which other theatres of the world were to be judged. Each culture produces its own forms of performance, which must be understood within its own cultural and historical contexts, not as a shadow of, or in comparison (usually invidious) to, a Western 'norm' which is assumed to be superior. I was happy to have been invited by Martin Banham, editor of *The Cambridge Guide to World Theatre*, to be editorial consultant for Asia and Oceania and to suggest writings for that work.

I was even more pleased when Cambridge University Press proposed that the Asian materials from *The Cambridge Guide to World Theatre* be presented in this separate volume. A smaller volume dedicated to theatre in Asia and Oceania would be convenient for students and scholars specializing in Asian or Pacific theatre. What is more, it opened the opportunity to revise and improve what were already excellent articles.

The book is designed to provide, within the space constraints of a single volume, an overall description of the theatre that evolved in Asia and the Pacific over the course of 2000 years, and of the performances that exist in this region today. The articles are written by specialists in one or more areas and cover the theatre of Asia and the Pacific from China in the north to Indonesia in the south, and from Pakistan in the west to Polynesia in the east. Regional similarities and common themes are discussed in the Oceania entry, which covers Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia, and in the general Introduction. The

bulk of the book consists of 19 national, that is country, chapters (i.e. Cambodia, India, China). Each consists of a major country article covering the historical development and current status of theatre. If information is abundant and the theatre complex, this is followed by cross-indexed, genre entries that describe repertory and performance characteristics of important theatre forms in greater detail. A group of artist entries is included for most countries, giving information about important playwrights, actors, and directors of the past and present. Finally, a select bibliography of major writings in English concludes the country chapter.

Countries are arranged alphabetically, as are genre names and artist names within each entry; this, we believe, will help the interested reader find specific information. In general we follow current national configurations, so that Tibet, for example, is included as a part of China, while Hong Kong and Taiwan are country entries. There are two exceptions: the separate nations of North and South Korea are covered in one entry, and the numerous island nations of the South Pacific are grouped together in the Oceania article.

Nine leading scholars of the theatre in Asia and the Pacific have contributed either whole or partial country entries in this book. Regrettably A. C. Scott died during the time he was writing the major article on Chinese theatre for *The Cambridge Guide to World Theatre*; the China entries were completed by Colin Mackerras. For the present volume, authors have revised their entries, often extensively. Each has added recent information about current performances and has expanded coverage of areas previously underrepresented. Toni Shapiro, conducting research in theatre in Phnom Penh, has contributed current data for Cambodia. Cambridge University Press has expanded the size of this volume in order to accommodate some 100 newly-written genre and artist entries. Finally, the bibliographies have

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Editor's Preface

been updated and new photographs have been selected to illustrate the theatre forms.

All the entries are cross-referenced, so that a word in small capitals (or italic small capitals for words that would normally be in italic) indicates that a separate entry exists under that word.

My warmest thanks go to Sarah Stanton, editor at Cambridge University Press, for providing generous and steadfast support throughout the complex editing process, and to Caroline Bundy for

seeing the manuscript through to publication. I also want to thank Elizabeth Casper for her efficient editorial assistance, in particular for the South Asian entries. Finally, I send a grateful Hawai'ian *mahalo* to Martin Banham, the far-sighted visionary who conceived of this series of encyclopedias of world theatre.

JAMES R. BRANDON
Honolulu 1993