

The reason I participated in the APAF is because of the uncomfortable feeling that could not be wiped out every time I saw a performance in Japan.

I am attracted to the theater itself, but I was often left unconvinced by the work on stage, especially by the physical expression (the physical presence on stage) of the actors in modern theater. As I explored the roots of this feeling, I came to realize that it might be partly due to the fact that the Japanese modern theater has its roots in *Shingeki* (“New Play”), which is based on a style imported from the Western theater (this notion also relates to the question that Mr. Miyagi raised).

Who are the Japanese? What is a creation that is the most natural according to the place where I was born and raised?---I found out about the APAF when I was asking these questions to myself, and was drawn to the keyword “Asia.”

Personally, I have just started my own theater creation unit as a writer and a director. I have a general objective of pursuing powerful, attractive physical expressions, but I am still in the midst of exploring them.

It will certainly be different from the currently popular “loose” physical expression in Japan, nor will it be a physical expression gained through the western training methods. I find the traditional physical expressions of the *noh* and the *kabuki* actors powerful, but they are not exactly what I am searching for, either.

I was especially impressed by the Round Table Discussion. I was so drawn to it that I wanted to keep on listening, and I wished that the Round Table Discussion lasted for the entire day.

Upon hearing the opinions of the artists from different countries, I realized again that, because many Asian countries are multi-cultural, we are in an environment where we have no choice but to become conscious of our own traditional culture. Historically, Japan has also been greatly influenced by the continental culture, but my knowledge is limited to a textbook-level, and I have not felt it for real. I felt ashamed about my ignorance towards Japan; at the same time, it gave me an opportunity to re-recognize and to reflect on my origin and my roots.

Since I have always been drawn to the Japanese folk art and dance from different regions, naturally, I became interested in observing the different Asian physical expressions in the international collaboration works that have been nurtured over the centuries.

I could see the physical expressions here and there in the collaboration works, which were different from the western methodology and training. However, I think that it is premature to generalize the “difference” that I felt as a cultural difference. For example, the actors of the Taipei Sun Son Theatre were impressive in the way they have been trained, but that is the characteristic of the theater company, and we lack enough materials to conclude that it is a Taiwanese (Asian) culture which is distinct from the Japanese culture. In the future, I would like to see many Asian theater performances in order to reflect on the Japanese-ness defined by the small differences between the neighboring countries.

Through the APAF, I came to have a strong desire to pursue the unpretentious question of finding the physical expression that I would like to see myself, and would like to show to the others, putting aside what the Japanese theater has accumulated over the years.

This summer, I plan to visit the summer festivals across the country, and to study various styles of the regional traditional dance. For example, the *kokiriko* dance of Toyama Prefecture is known for its repetition of simple movements, but it is these simple movements that make it quite attractive. It no doubt gives me the real sense of “Japan,” and at the same time, conveys something very powerful that transcends time.

What is the physical expression that is uniquely Japanese? “Asia” can also become a mirror that reflects the Japanese-ness, and its cultural and historical roots. I hope that the APAF will be open to many more participants in the future.