SCHOOL MATINEE SERIES

2013 | 2014

SHADOWLIGHT PRODUCTIONS

PORO OYNA: THE MYTH OF THE AYNU

FRI | JAN 10 | 10 AM

Sponsored by
WELCOME TO THE HOP
A performance needs an audience, so be prepared to play your part!

THEATER ETIQUETTE
When entering the Hopkins Center, show consideration for all those sharing the building by remaining quiet and respectful in common areas.

Be aware and use quiet voices. Remember that live theater differs greatly from watching television or movies or attending a sporting event. Live performers can hear and see you and are easily distracted by any talking or moving around in the audience. Even the smallest sounds can be heard throughout the theater, so it’s best to be quiet so that everyone can enjoy the performance.

Applause is the best way to show your enthusiasm and appreciation!

Important things to remember: Backpacks, food, drink, and gum are not allowed in the theater. Please turn off all cell phones and note that recording the performance or taking any photos is strictly prohibited. Hats off! It is respectful to remove hats during your time in the theater.

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Be prepared and arrive early. You should arrive at the theater 30 to 45 minutes before the show. Allow for travel time, parking, and trips to the restroom. You should be in your seat at least 15 minutes before the performance begins.

Have a head count. On the day of the performance be sure to have an accurate head count of students, chaperones, and teachers.

Staying for lunch? Please call 603.646.2010 no later than one week in advance of the show to make a reservation for lunch. The day of the show, bring lunches in marked boxes and give them to a Hop staff member. Lunches will be ready for you after the show in Alumni Hall.

Photo Policy. The Hopkins Center may take photographs during the performance for use on our website or on promotional materials. If you or your students do not wish to be photographed, please see a Hop staff member.

The Show Must Go On! We do not cancel events due to inclement weather. Performances will only be canceled if the artist is unable to reach the theater. Schools will be notified by phone if the performance has been cancelled. We do not issue refunds for weather-related cancellations; please feel free to fill empty seats with other school or community members.

This study guide was created for you by the Outreach & Arts Education team. To download copies of this study guide, see additional resources for this event, or view past study guides, please visit: www.hop.dartmouth.edu/outreach.

ENJOY THE SHOW!

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The Hopkins Center Outreach & Arts Education department embodies the Hop’s mission to “ignite and sustain a passion for the arts.” It provides Dartmouth, the community and beyond rare personal contact with artists and a broad context for the performing arts. Unveiling the creative process of extraordinarily diverse artists, six Outreach programs touch more than 22,000 lives each year.

DID YOU KNOW?

• The Hopkins Center opened in 1962.
• The Hopkins Center was designed by Wallace Harrison, architect of Lincoln Center and the United Nations Building in New York City.
• The first three rows of The Moore Theater are on an elevator that goes eleven feet below ground to create an orchestra pit and can also be raised to the height of the stage to make it larger.
• In The Moore Theater, the area over the stage, called the “fly loft,” is 63 feet tall.
ABOUT THE COMPANY

*Poro Oyna: The Myth of the Aynu* is a new shadow theater work that brings the mythology of the Aynu (pronounced “IN-yoo” and also spelled “Ainu”) culture of Northern Japan to the stage. Illuminating this rich but little known culture, the show was created by American shadow master Larry Reed and his company ShadowLight Productions, in collaboration with Japanese-Aynu musician OKI, a leading torchbearer of the Aynu culture. Other performers include Marewrew, a four-woman chorus specializing in traditional Aynu songs; and Urotsutenoyako Bayangans, a shadow theater company based in Tokyo featuring shadow artist Tetsuro Koyano. The performance at the Hop is the U.S. East Coast premiere of the show. It will be performed in Japanese and Aynu languages with projected English supertitles.

THE STORY

A long, long time ago the demigod Aynu Rakkur lived in the northern land of Aynu on the summit of Poroshiri Mountain beside a sacred lake. One day, Aynu Rakkur could see clouds forming over a faraway island. Soon the storm expanded and a kamuy shintur—vehicle of the gods—appeared and descended to his castle. A big voice called out to Aynu Rakkur, telling him how the Great Evil Monster had stalked the Sun Goddess, trying to swallow her in his gaping mouth. He would open his mouth to swallow her, but the fox gods and crow gods would jump in and prevent him from taking the Sun Goddess, sacrificing themselves for her. But, the great voice continued, the Great Evil Monster finally succeeded—the Sun Goddess had been captured and taken to the monster’s castle and enclosed in a box. Other gods tried to rescue her but the Monster would easily capture them and turn them into babies, which he would keep in cradles in his castle. Without the sun and her light, many humans and gods were dying from excessive sleeping. The great voice, which turned out to be a god named Kemshir Kamuy, continues, telling Aynu Rakkur is he is the only god who can rescue the sun goddess and bring balance back to the world. Aynu Rakkur takes his time getting ready to go, putting on his golden armor and a jacket whose sleeves are on fire. Aynu Rakkur, along with Kemshir Kamuy, finally ascends to the Evil Monster’s castle in the kamuy shintur. Aynu Rakkur finds the cradles and releases the gods to be reincarnated. He snatches the box but is chased out of the castle by the Evil Monster. Aynu Rakkur makes a small boat out of mist, then hoists a white sail in the middle with the Sun Goddess attached. He throws the boat into the sky, returning the sun to its rightful place. Then Aynu Rakkur and Kamuy Kemshir take the Evil Monster down below the earth and destroy him. Aynu Rakkur returns to his mountain top where the humans and gods bring him treasures and jewels to thank him for returning the sun to them.

DID YOU KNOW?

Poro Oyna means “The Great Story” in Aynu.
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

ShadowLight Productions

Founded in 1972 by Larry Reed, ShadowLight Productions is one of the few professional shadow theater companies in the world honoring ancient shadow theater traditions while innovating through the use of contemporary technologies and interdisciplinary approaches. The company’s activities range from traditional shadow theater performances to documentary films and arts-in-education programs.

OKI

Born to a Japanese mother and an Aynu father, OKI graduated from Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music and moved to New York City. After working as a special effects artist on films, he returned to Japan and was presented with his first tonkori, a traditional stringed instrument. This inspired him to relocate to Hokkaido, where he taught himself to play and craft the tonkori. He is now the most prominent performer of this instrument in the world. Though devoted to playing and promoting traditional Aynu music, OKI also blends a wide variety of musical styles in his OKI Dub Ainu Band and other musical collaborations.

Marewrew

This all-female group promotes the Aynu language and art by preserving and performing the traditional Aynu musical form of upopo. The current members of Marewrew are Rekpo, Hisae, Mayunkiki and Rim Rim. They have toured extensively around the world, encouraging audiences to sing along with them in Aynu. They hope to raise awareness of Aynu culture and language by getting one million people to sing with them.

Urotsutenoyako Bayangans

This Japanese shadow theater performance group was founded by Testuro Koyano. Though he is from Japan, Testuro Koyano, trained under master artists in Bali and is dedicated to preserving and sharing the arts of Indonesia.

DID YOU KNOW?

“Marewrew” is the Aynu word for “butterfly”
CONTEXual BACKGROUND

SHADOW THEATER
Shadow theater is a performance technique in which shadows of puppets or performers are cast on a screen. A Chinese legend traces shadow theater back to 121 BCE when a court magician comforted a gloomy emperor by “conjuring up” his departed wife with the aid of a small flame, cloth screen and a shadow. From there the popularity of shadow puppet theater spread across cultures and continents. By the 18th century, shadow shows could be seen in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, India, Egypt, Iran, Turkey and Western Europe—each with a distinct style, look and function. The style of puppetry in Poro Oyna is influenced by the Indonesian/Javanese shadow theater known as wayang kulit. Wayang kulit stories are traditionally pulled from religious epics, and can last from sundown to sunrise. Javanese puppeteers, known as a dalangs, are seen not just as highly skilled artists, but also as priests, comedians and teachers.

WHO ARE THE AYNU?
The Aynu are an indigenous people of Northern Japan whose culture dates back to 1200 BCE. “Aynu” means “human” or “us” in the Aynu language. Aynu tribes once inhabited northern Honshu, Hokkaido, southern Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands. Most Aynu now live in Hokkaido, Tokyo, other parts of Japan and abroad. Historically, the Aynu were hunter-gatherers who held a deep respect for and connection to the natural world, which heavily informed their belief system. After centuries of cultural oppression and assimilation, the Aynu language, history and cultural heritage are largely unknown to Japan and the rest of the world. The Aynu language, which has no written form and fewer than fifteen native speakers alive, has been designated as a critically endangered language by UNESCO. Despite these struggles, many descendants of the Aynu are dedicated to illuminating the history and customs of their ancestors.

Religion and Worship
Much like Native Americans, Aynu culture is grounded in a spiritual connection to the natural world. By tradition, the Aynu believe that gods called kamuys (“spiritual beings”) are found in everyday places, side by side with humanity. There are many “sizes” of gods, some small with not much power and others with more power. Religious Aynu made daily offerings to the fire kamuy, the fox kamuy, the river kamuy and, most importantly, the bear kamuy. It was believed that these spiritual beings helped the Aynu by guarding and protecting them, often disguising themselves as plants or animals to interact with humans and bestow gifts such as food and animal skins. Aynu Rakkur, the hero of Poro Oyna, is a demigod or “the God who smells and looks like a human being.” He is considered to be the greatest god and is often referred to as the “cultural hero” of the Aynu. Because peaceful, harmonious life was ensured by the gods’ protection, the Aynu honored them in many ways, including performing intricate ceremonies to “send back” these spirits so they could replenish their gifts in the spirit world. These celebrations were critical parts of the Aynu spiritual life and included storytelling, singing, dancing and playing music.
CONTINUOUS BACKGROUND (CONT.)

Storytelling
Since the Aynu people do not have a written language, their myths, stories and experiences were transmitted by word of mouth from generation to generation. Many of these stories are about the gods and often include a lesson or moral. In the Iburi and Hidaka districts of Hokkaido in Japan, such stories are called oyna or yukar. Oyna are stories or epic poems that feature Aynu Rakkur (also known as Okikurumui). Yukar stories feature the more common, day-to-day gods as well as humans. In the traditional telling, one person would chant, accompanied by members of the audience beating out a rhythm on the hearth with sticks.

The stories were told in the structure of a simple song, with a repeating phrase much like a chorus separating narrative sections that act like verses, adding to the musicality of the performance. In the early 20th century some yukar were transcribed from Aynu spoken word then translated into Japanese and English, allowing some traditional tales to live on in the printed word.

Song and Dance
Song and dance were a significant part of Aynu day to day life as well as various festivals and ceremonies. A classic song style of Aynu life is upopo. Upopo is sung a cappella by a group of women. The women create a rhythm by clapping their hands or drumming out a rhythm together on the household’s shintoko. There are only a few, repeated words in the song, but the polyphonic harmony sung in the back of the throat and repetitive rhythm create a spellbinding experience. Watch a video of Marewrew performing upopo at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=hby3n2fKspM

In addition to upopo, rimse are traditional dances performed at festivals. These dances reenact both village stories and tales of the gods. Some rimse are believed to help ward off evil spirits. Due to the gradual disappearance of these dances, several of them were designated as important intangible cultural properties by the Japanese government in 1984. This helps ensure that the dances will continue to be performed and shared with future generations.

Music
Aynu music features two unique instruments—the tonkori and the mukkuri.

Tonkori (TAN-koor-i): Developed on the northern island of Sakhalin, the tonkori is a long, flat instrument made of spruce wood with five strings. It can be played vertically or horizontally, like a guitar. To play it a musician uses fingers from both hands to pluck the strings from both sides. Watch a traditional tonkori performance at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ur8-K_Hr8jw. Watch OKI’s more modern, rock style of playing at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=_X9QxFaHJwA.
CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND (CONT.)

Mukkuri (MOOK-u-ri): Similar to a jaw harp, this instrument is a piece of bamboo with a string attached to one end. It is played by placing the thin part of the wood between the lips and pulling the string tightly over and over again to make the wood vibrate. The mouth serves as a natural resonator, allowing the sound to be amplified and manipulated. Watch a mukkuri being played at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7QtCQiS_0aY

Clothing

Traditional Aynu clothing includes appliqued or embroidered robes known as attush which are worn by both men and women. These robes were often made out of the bark from elm trees which was soaked in hot springs and then worked into a yarn-like consistency and woven. Aynu women wore a matanpushi (embroidered headband) and ninkari (earrings) as well as necklaces with metal plaques and glass beads. Men wore a crown called sapanupe for important ceremonies. This crown was made of wood with carved figures of animal gods and other ornaments on its center. Men would also carry an emush (sword) secured to their shoulder by an emush at (strap). Men wore large beards and women had their mouth and hands tattooed at a young age. In Poro Oyna, look for attush and matanpushi on the members of Marewrew, and note the emush carried by Aynu Rakkur.

Losing and Reclaiming a Culture

Despite their rich language and culture, the Aynu were forced to abandon their belief systems and formally assimilate into the Japanese culture in the mid-to-late 19th century. The Japanese forbid many Aynu ways of life including use of the Aynu language, traditional tattoos and piercings, fishing and hunting. Aynu had to take on Japanese names in place of their Aynu names, and farm the land—a skill they did not know. Aynu were also given a Japanese education that did not acknowledge Aynu beliefs and traditions. The Japanese government felt it was protecting the Aynu by offering them these opportunities and helping them leave behind their “barbarian” ways. Now that the Aynu language is almost extinct and many traditions and ways of life lost, Japan realizes the error of those policies. In 1997 the Japanese government switched to a mission of promotion and preservation. In 2008 it officially recognized the Aynu as an indigenous people in an effort to ensure that future policies and laws support the sharing and understanding of Aynu culture.
LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

SHADOW SCIENCE DETECTIVES  (GRADES 4-6)

Materials Needed: white paper; small to medium sized miscellaneous objects in a bag or box; pencils; light source, preferably a desk lamp with clamp and moveable/hinged arm; small table or desk

Set table or desk up against a wall in a corner of the classroom away from the students. Secure paper to wall behind table and outline or otherwise indicate where future papers should be taped. Set/secure light source in front of or to table. Working individually, have students select an object from the box and place in the center of the table. Turn light on (turn other lights off if possible) and observe the shadow on the paper, making sure not to move the object. Keeping the base in one place, move arm of lamp around to experiment with changing the shape and placement of the shadow. Use an oven mitt or other heat-proof covering if lamp is hot to touch. After experimenting, set the light source in one place and carefully trace the shadow of the object on the paper. Have student write the name of the object on the back of the paper along with their name. Repeat with each student.

Collect shadows and reassign them to a new student. Have the students look at the new shadow and form a hypothesis about the placement of the light needed to cast the shadow. Have students recreate the set up and determine the position and angle of light used to make the shadow.

Extender: Have students document every placement they tried in their search to find the correct angle of light. If time and resources permit have students experiment with multiple colored lights, determining how to mix colors of light to change the color of the shadow.

ONLINE ACTIVITY: SCIENCE OF SHADOW PUPPETS from The Kennedy Center’s ARTSEDGE

Check out this complete lesson for grades 5-8 that connects science to the art of shadow puppets: http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-6-8/Shadows_and_Light.aspx. While you’re there, don’t miss ARTSEDGE’s interactive tutorial on shadow theater (Flash Player required).

PRE PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION:

• Why would one culture want to change another to be more like them? Discuss the reasons why we want to be similar to or different than other people.

• The Aynu have no written language, which means no books to read. Discuss how you might (or might not) learn without books. Would you want to come to school if there were no books? Why or why not?

• Why do you think the Aynu were so close to nature? Why might they have seen gods and spirits—good and bad—in everyday items and events?

• How do you feel about seeing a performance in a different language?

POST PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION:

• Did all the elements of the show (singing, music, shadow theater) work together to tell the story? Why or why not?

• Was it difficult to follow and understand the story? In what ways? Compare and contrast listening to English with listening to Japanese and Aynu. What other techniques beyond language helped tell the story? Explain.

• Discuss your favorite images from the story. What about these images that make them memorable for you?
LEARNING ACTIVITIES (CONT):

WRITE-IT-YOURSELF YUKAR: NATURE MYTHOLOGY (GRADES 6-9)

Yukar are Ainu chanted stories about the many spiritual beings, or kamuy, that they believed shared the world with them. Read The Young Wolf Spiritual Being Sings About Itself below, one example. Discuss and identify the structure of the story/song: verses, chorus, meter/rhythm, characters, themes, etc. Have each student select an animal or part of nature and write his or her own chant about it using the style and structure of yukar. If there is time, share the stories out loud. Experiment with clapping along to see if the meter works.


The Young Wolf Spiritual Being Sings About Itself

Hotenao

One day I was bored and so I went to the beach and was playing when a little grown-up human came along. Then when he came downstream, I blocked his way downstream, and when he came upstream, I blocked his way upstream.

When that had happened six times upstream and six times downstream, the little grown-up human let his fierce disposition show suddenly in his face and he said, "Pii tun tun, pii tun tun!

You kid, troublemaker kid, if you’re going to do stuff like that, then try telling me the name of this promontory, its name in the past, its name in the present, unravel them both."

When I heard that I responded with a laugh, saying, "Who in the world doesn’t know the past name and the present name of this promontory? The past was a time of great spiritual power and so people called this promontory the Cape of Spiritual Beings. However, the present is a time of decline and so people call it the Cape of Ceremonial Offering Sticks, and that’s a fact."

When I had said that the little grown-up human said, "Pii tun tun, pii tun tun!

You kid, if you’re really going to say stuff like that, then try telling me the name of this river, its name in the past its name in the present, unravel them both."

When I heard that, I responded, saying, "Who in the world doesn’t know the past name and the present name of this river? In the past, in the age of spiritual power, people called this river Fast-Flowing Freshet. However, the present is a time of decline and so people call it Sluggish Freshet, and that’s a fact."

When I had said that the little grown-up human said, "If you’re really going to say stuff like that, then let’s try saying each other’s origins, you and me both."

When I heard that I responded, saying, "Who in the world doesn’t know your origins? Long ago Okikirmui went into the mountains, and when he built a hunting hut there he made the hearth frame of alder. When that hearth frame was exposed to the fire it dried so that when Okikirmui stepped on one end of it the other end rose up. That made Okikirmui angry and so he carried that hearth frame down to the river and threw it away. After that, that hearth frame drifted downstream with the current and went into the ocean, and all the spiritual beings saw it being struck by the waves of the far ocean and the waves of the near ocean, and all the spiritual beings considered it a pity that a thing made by Okikirmui’s hand that ought to be revered was like this, serving no purpose and drifting around until it rotted into the sea. And so that hearth frame was made by all the spiritual beings into a fish, and was named ‘hearth-frame fish.’ But this hearth-frame fish doesn’t know its own origins and has turned itself into a human being and is hanging around. That hearth-frame fish is none other than you."

I said. The small adult person’s expression had grown darker and darker as he was listening. "Pii tun tun, pii tun tun, And you are none other than the little child of a wolf."

As soon as he had said this he quickly jumped with a splash into the sea. I followed him with my eyes and saw a single red fish, wiggling its tail fin, go off to the open sea. This is the story the young wolf spiritual being told.

From Sarah M. Strong’s Ainu Spirits Singing: The Living World of Chiri Yukie’s Ainu Shin’yoshu.
**VOCABULARY:**

- **a cappella:** singing, often in harmony, without accompaniment by musical instruments
- **Assimilation:** the process in which one group takes on the cultural and other traits of a larger group
- **Demigod:** a god regarded as minor in a hierarchy of other gods; also refers to beings that are part god part human
- **Indigenous:** originating in and naturally living; growing or occurring in a region or country
- **Intangible:** not able to be touched or seen
- **Oppression:** subjection of a person or a people to a harsh form of domination
- **Polyphonic:** music with two or more independent melodies that blend together
- **Premiere:** the first public performance or showing of something such as a play or movie
- **Promontory:** a point of land that juts out into the sea
- **Shintoko:** a box used to keep valuables in an Ainu house
- **Supertitles:** translation of words being spoken or sung in a foreign language during the performance of a play or opera, projected on a screen above the stage
- **Transcribed:** written down
- **UNESCO:** stands for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; it is a multi-national organization that strives to build lasting peace by encouraging cooperation among all societies.
- **Upopo:** various rhythmic patterns sung by 3-4 female singers with different timing, creating an organic, often hypnotic listening experience
- **Wayang kulit:** Indonesian shadow puppet theater; “Wayang” roughly translates to “theater,” and “kulit” translates to “skin” (early shadow puppets were made from leather).

**OTHER RESOURCES**

- **Poro Oyna website**
  http://www.shadowlightaynuproject.org/index.html
- **Ainu Museum in Hokkaido**
  http://www.ainu-museum.or.jp/en/
- **East-West Center Arts Program and the Center for Ainu and Indigenous Studies, Hokkaido University Ainu Treasures exhibit handout**
- **Smithsonian Online Ainu Exhibition**
  http://www.mnh.si.edu/arctic/features/ainu/
- **Philippi, Donald L. Songs of Gods, Songs of Humans: The Epic Tradition of the Ainu.**
- **Marewrew music clip**
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XA1j6FMvVAc
- **OKI music clip**
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MvYiLZ-M3VY

**CREDITS:**

East-West Center Arts Program and the Center for Ainu and Indigenous Studies, Hokkaido University
<http://arts.eastwestcenter.org/2013/01/18/Ainu-treasures-exhibition/>

Heathcott, Amy (adapt.) “Playing with Shadows: An Introduction to Shadow Puppetry” ARTSEDGE


Kodama, Sakuzaemon, M.D. *Ainu: Historical and Anthropological Studies:* Hokkaido University Medical Library Series, Vol. 3 Sapporo, Japan: Hokkaido University School of Medicine, 1970. Print.
