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FRANCE

The Light! The Colors!

Noh Masks
Forging the Spirit

Kyoto
A Market to Savor

游兴偶得—曼谷
尘世喧嚣探幽居

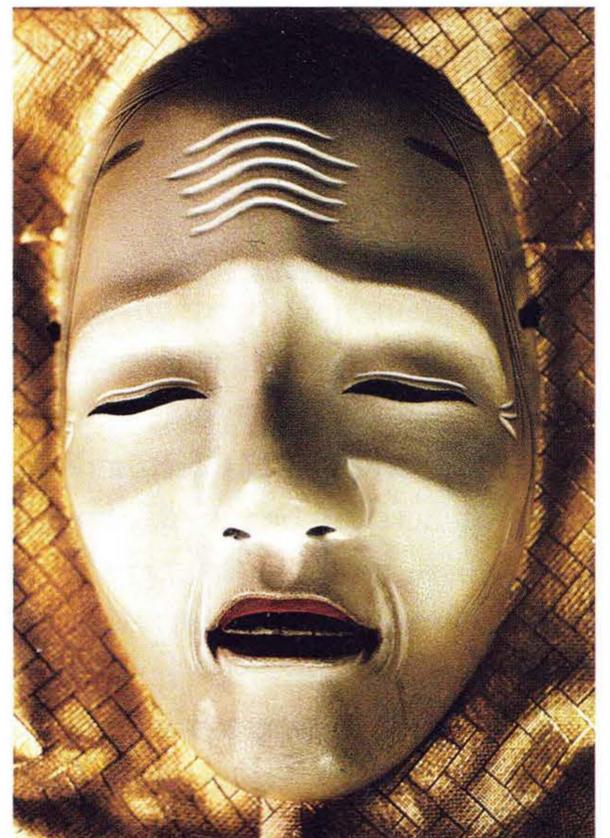
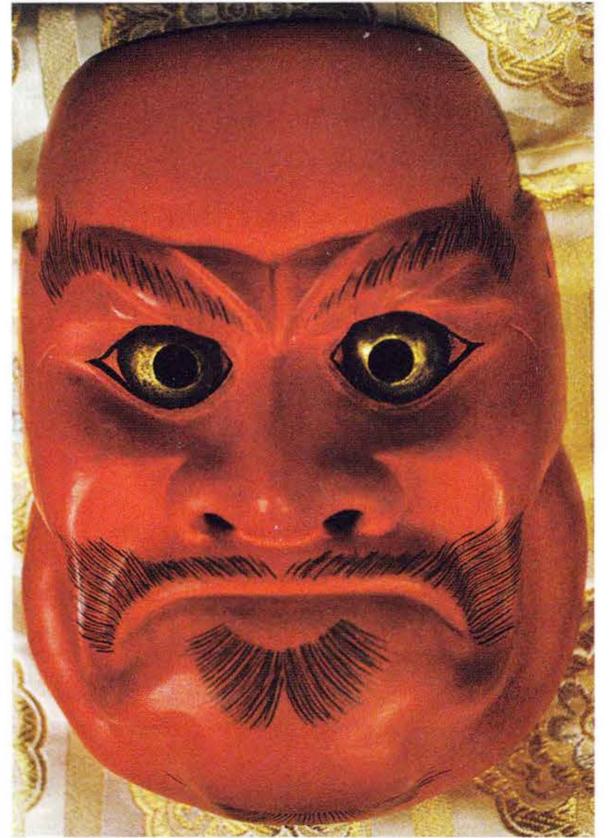
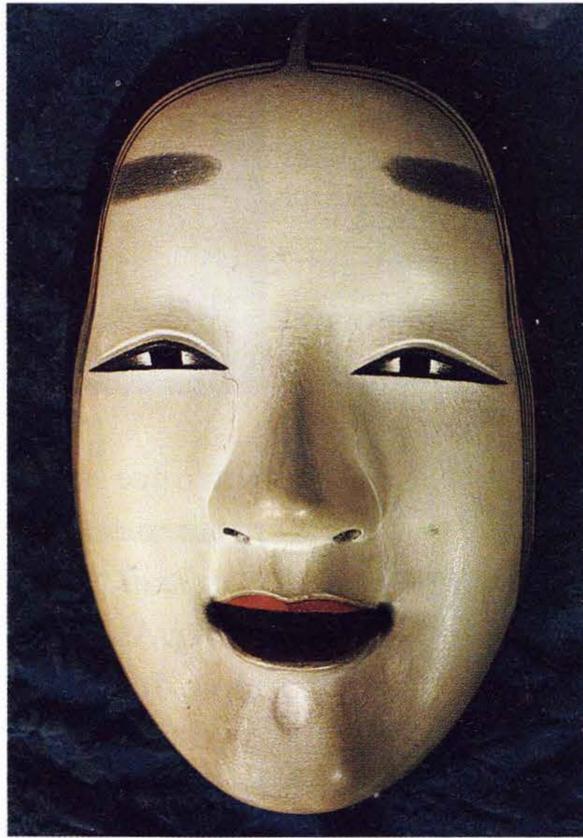
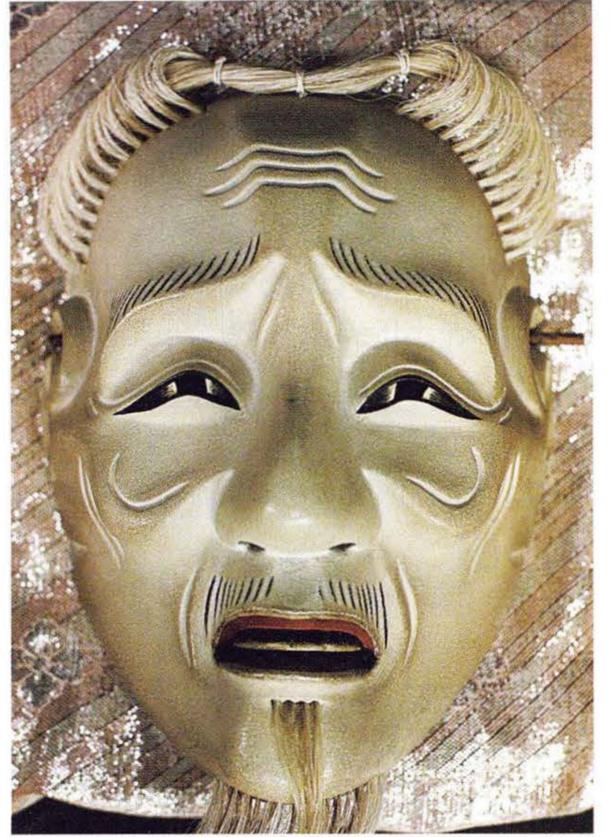
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FORGING THE SPIRIT

灵魂铸造技术

Story & Photographs by Skye Hohmann

文·图 斯凯·霍曼



In my hands, the mask is surprisingly light. It is smooth, somehow luminous, as if lit from within, giving it an eerie beauty. The carved face is that of a woman, unwrinkled though perhaps no longer young. As I look, her smile seems to change from gentle to gently mocking, before becoming, momentarily, an expression of nearly inexpressible sadness. Her eyes appear to be fixed on mine. Her mouth is open slightly—as if she is just about to speak, as if she has secrets to tell. A shiver runs along my spine. I can't escape the feeling that the mask is somehow more than a simple piece of carved wood. And although its maker, Oun Kojima, is kneeling beside me, it is almost impossible to think of it as something made—carved—by human hands.

"It's amazing," I stammer, finally, putting the mask carefully down beside the mask of an old man's face. With its impish smile, laugh lines, and goatee, this Okina mask looks disconcertingly like its maker. Kojima laughs, gesturing dismissively at the modest collection of masks. "These ones are just for teaching."

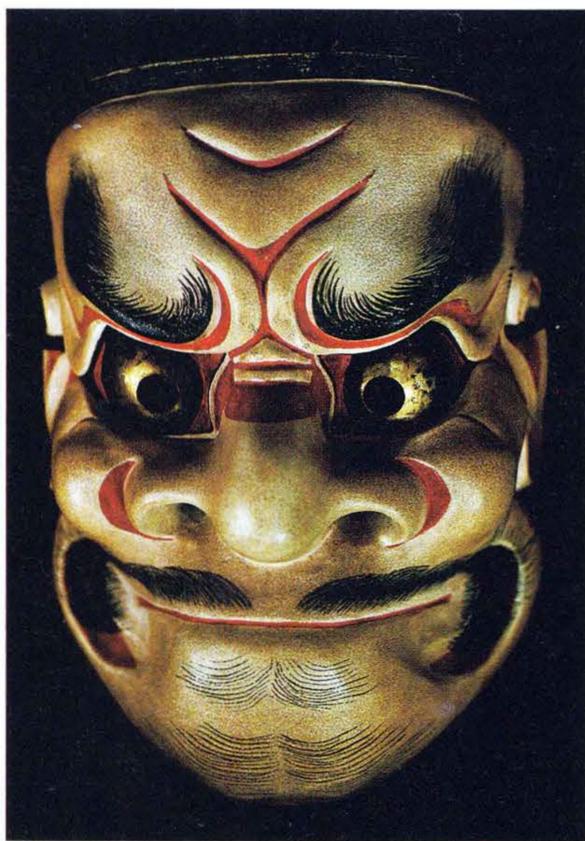
Kojima's teaching set is indeed only a small sample of noh theater's many masks. There are over 200 different masks within the tradition's repertoire, allowing actors to transcend gender, age, and even the boundary between this world and the world of spirits.

Enduring Heritage

Traditionally, the art of making these exquisite masks was a jealously guarded skill, passed down from generation to generation within families of master craftsmen. During the Edo period (1603–1868) these mask-making families thrived under the patronage of wealthy samurai. But in the upheaval of the Meiji Restoration (1868), with the abolition of the samurai class, artistic patronage suffered. Noh theater itself

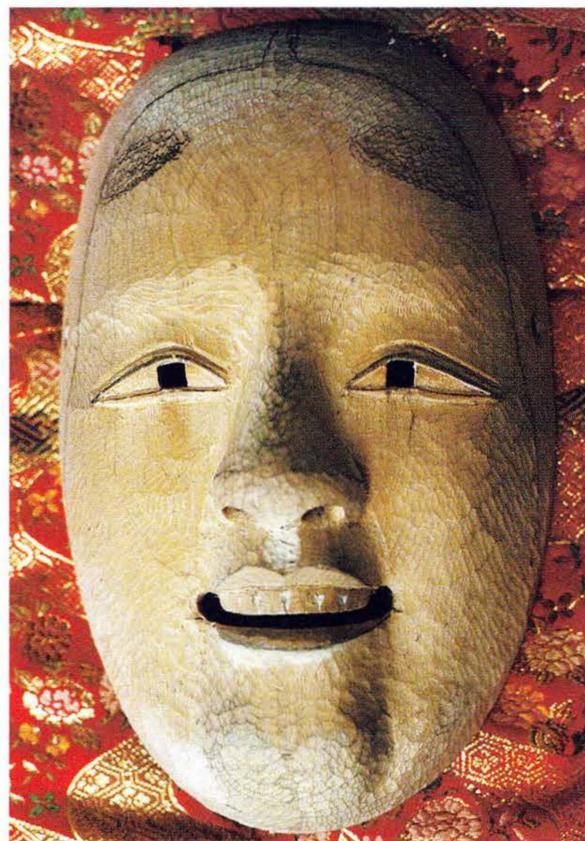
捧在我手中的能面异常轻巧，光滑且略带光泽。仿佛有光来自内部，让面具散发一种玄幻之美。富于曲线美的手雕女性面具毫无皱纹，却隐约地刻着岁月的沧桑。在我的凝视下，她的笑容仿佛从优雅中幻化出一丝戏谑，瞬间又显露出无可名状的忧伤。她的目光似乎透入了我的双眼，微张的双唇好像欲言又止，似欲将心中的秘密深锁。我的脊背不禁传来一阵凉意，这种超越木头面具的神秘感觉让我无法自拔。虽然制作这副面具的小岛旺云就坐在我的身边，我终究不能想像它是经由人类之手雕琢而成。

“真是太奇妙了”，我终于语无伦次地说出一句赞扬的话，接着把手中的面具轻轻放下，搁在一张老翁的面具旁边。“老翁”



The enormous variety of noh masks covers the full range of expressions in human faces from young maiden and old man to demon. To create these images in wood is a task requiring ultimate concentration in matters of craft and great investment of the spirit.

庞大的能面家族无所不包，涵盖从年轻女性到耄耋老翁，甚至是妖魔鬼怪的面部表情。用木材创造这千变万化的形象，不论是手工作业还是为面具注入灵魂，都是需要精神极端集中的劳作。



脸上带着诡异的笑，那深深的皱纹和长长的山羊胡，正酷似它的制作者。小岛笑了，然后漫不经心地指着几个面具说：“这些都只是教学用的样本”。

小岛的教学面具只是“能”剧场拥有的众多面具中的一小部分。这里有超过200个依照传统式样制作的面具，且形态各异，演员戴上它们即可完成性别、年龄甚至是人神两界的转换。

承袭传统

传统上制作这些瑰丽面具的技艺是不传之秘，只在工匠世家代代相传。在江户时代（1603–1868），工匠们在富裕武士的庇护下得以传承技艺。然而当明治维新（1868）的时代洪流将武士阶级卷入历史

struggled to survive. Mask makers, left without a livelihood, turned to other pursuits. The succession was broken, and the oral knowledge of mask making was lost.

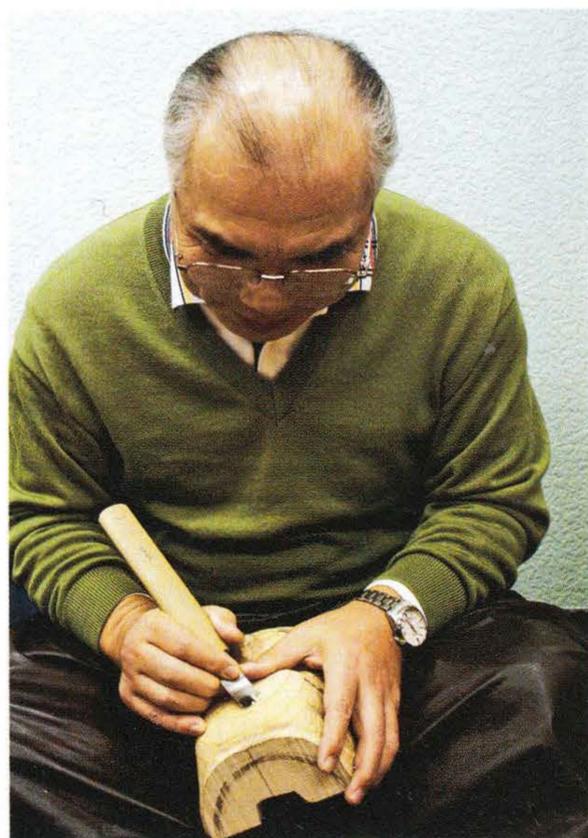
The appeal of the masks themselves, however, proved enduring. As a handful of actors worked to save noh itself, independent carvers turned their tools to mask making in an attempt to protect the tradition.

But, in the middle decades of the following century, history once again interfered. In the turbulence surrounding WWII, the thread of instruction was again broken.

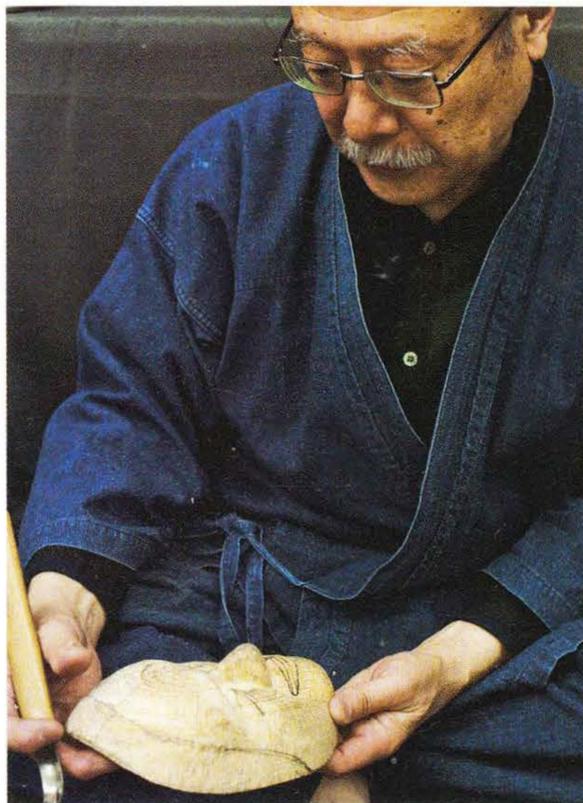
In the warm, tatami-matted room of Kojima's Nagano City workshop, Joun Iijima, the most senior student present, breaks off my history lesson to take a sip of tea. "And so," he continues, "now it is only self-taught mask makers, like our *sensei*, who are passing on the tradition."

How Craft Goes On

Kojima, now with graying hair and a silver beard, became interested in noh masks in his twenties, and studied the objects intensively for several years before picking up a chisel. Deeply committed to reviving and passing on the craft of mask making, he began teaching soon afterwards,



and founded the Noh Mask Craft Association (Nohmen Kogeikai) in 1982. He has exhibited worldwide and teaches pupils across central Japan. Often, classes that start as introductions for hobbyists at local cultural centers develop into extended, long-term relationships. This is the case with Kojima's Nagano studio, where most students have now been learning the craft for over a decade. "People want to continue learning," he maintains. "It takes eighty hours to make a single mask, but those eighty hours are sometimes spread out over ten years." Consequently, Kojima makes the journey twice



monthly from his base in Nagoya to his students in Nagano City, a distance of about 200 kilometers.

Advanced students, like Joun Iijima, have been given carving names ending with the same "un" (cloud) character as their teacher's. Among these students are many who also teach, making Kojima the head of one of many small schools eager to carry on the relatively newly reestablished tradition of mask making.

"It takes time to be able to teach this skill." Kojima once again gestures to the set of teaching masks. "You need to be able to make all of the masks—this full set—to be able to teach."

I wonder whether the rule was something Kojima gleaned during his long study of this ancient, esoteric craft. My question is answered immediately. "No, this is simply my own teaching method."

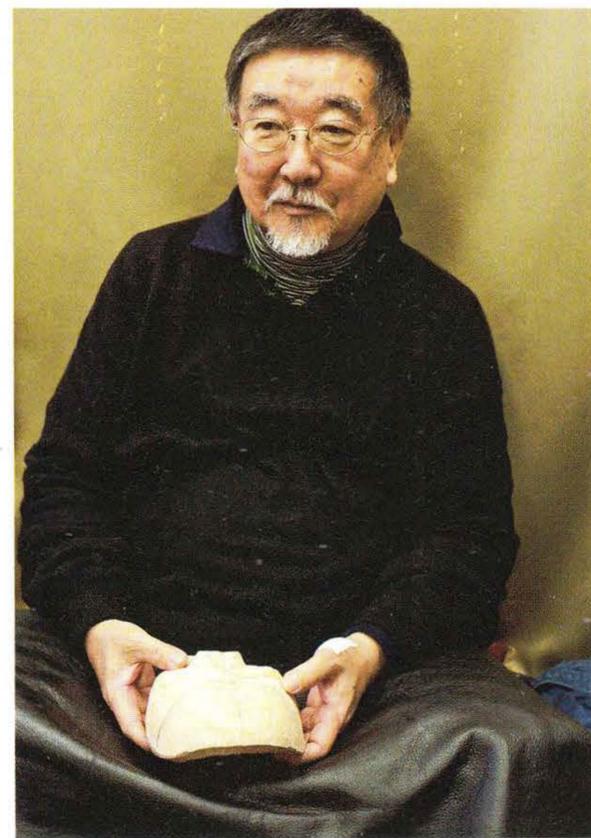
Just Like Makeup

I watch as students and teacher set to work for the morning. Traditional handmade tools peel away tiny shavings of prized and carefully selected fine-grained Kiso Valley *hinoki* (Japanese cypress), in a process that almost seems to be revealing, rather than creating, something below the surface of the wood.

When, in 1647, the shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu, grandson of the legendary Tokugawa Ieyasu, issued regulations prohibiting variations in noh performances, strict rules were created for both costumes and masks. "Even now, noh masks have to be carefully copied," Kojima continues, "the size of the eyes, the height of the nose, even the number of painted hairs—variation is not allowed."

The students work slowly, stopping

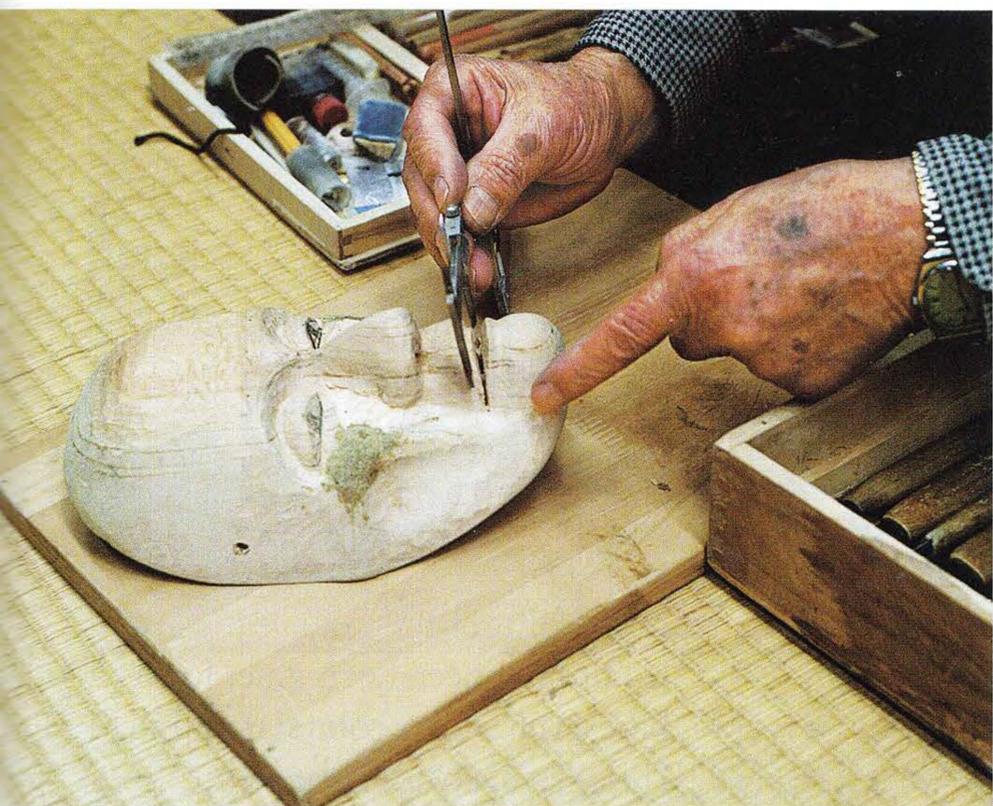
Working from a teaching model (far right) or with calipers, like Koun Hizawa (right), mask carving is a demanding craft, as exemplified by Seiun Kitagawara (left) and Joun Iijima (below, left), often requiring 80 hours for a single mask, according to teacher Oun Kojima (below).



的陈迹，让一直以来仰仗庇护生存的艺术也遭遇了一次巨大的冲击。能剧场自身面临生存危机，制作能面的工匠为维持生计，不得不去从事别的职业。传统被扯开了一道裂缝，口耳相传的知识也随之消失。

值得庆幸的是能面本身的魅力并未因此减弱。一些演员开始投身拯救能剧的运动，那些原本就从事个体经营的雕刻师为了维系传统，开始用他们手中的工具刻起了面具。时代迈入 20 世纪中期，当一切刚有转机，第二次世界大战的铁骑，又一次踏断了那根脆弱的传承之线。

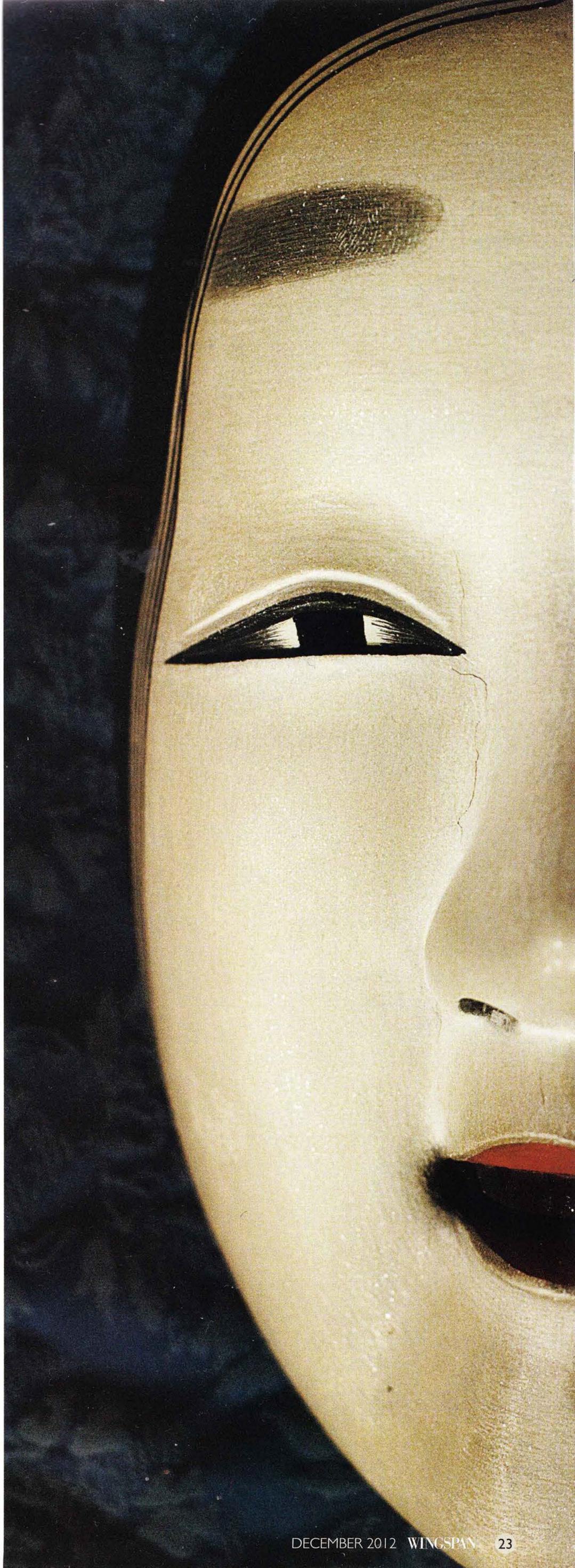
有人参考教学模型（右侧远图），也有人像飞泽皇云一样使用卡尺（下图）测量。能面雕刻要求的高超技艺，在北川原征云（旁页中间）和饭岛丞云（旁页左下）的示范下，小岛旺云师傅（旁页右下）告诉我们刻一个面具就往往需要 80 个小时之久。

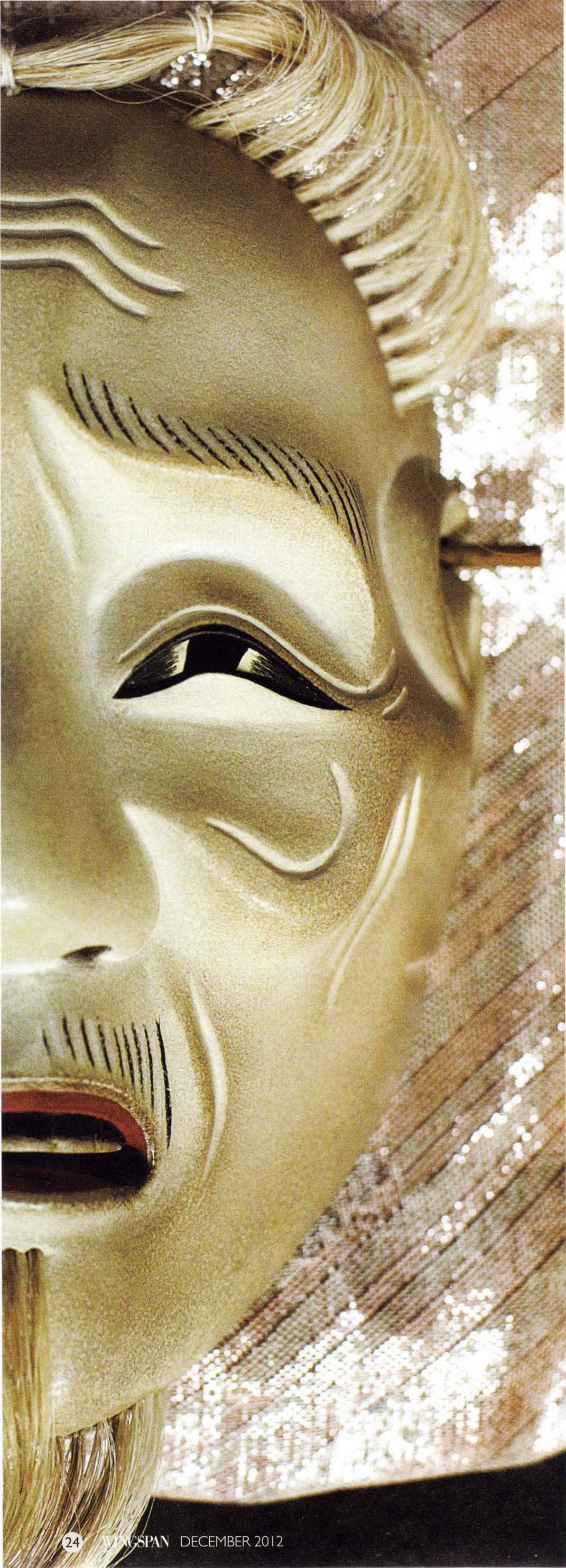


长野市小岛旺云作坊里榻榻米房间的融融暖意，很容易让人对这堂活生生的历史课听得入迷。直到旺云的大弟子饭岛丞云请我喝茶，才打断了我思维的漫游。他说：“所以现在的能面大师、包括我们的老师都是自学成才的，传统的继承全靠他们。”

延续技艺

小岛如今已是须发斑白，他从二十多岁就爱上了能面，其后又花了数年潜心研究，才拿起斧凿，进入这个奥妙世界。他对这门技艺的复活和传承付出了全部心血，其后又成为老师，培养接班人，并于 1982 年设立了“能面巧艺会”。他奔走世界各国，展示能面艺术，辗转日本中部，传授毕生技艺，与各地原本出于个人兴趣设立的能面学习班慢慢发展出许多广泛而





frequently to check their progress. Some fit paper templates against their masks, looking carefully for discrepancies between the pattern and their work. Koun Hizawa, still spritely in his late eighties, checks the measurements on his mask against a photograph of an exemplary antique mask. He does so using calipers, an innovation of his own devising. “Actually, I made a set for everyone,” he tells me excitedly.

Mask-making starts with a rectangular block of fine-grained Japanese cypress, onto which a plan for the face is sketched in pencil. The next step is to rough out the form with a chisel until the basic features of the mask begin to take shape. Work slows as details are carefully penciled on and then chiseled into being. Finally, the eyes, nose, and sometimes mouth are opened, and the surface is sanded down to a beveled smoothness that still manages to suggest the carver’s tools. “In the old days, we believe they used sharkskin. Nowadays, we have sandpaper, so we use that instead.” Iijima explains how powdered oyster shell, mixed with traditional deer-horn glue, forms a base over which colors are applied “just like makeup.”

Striking Experience

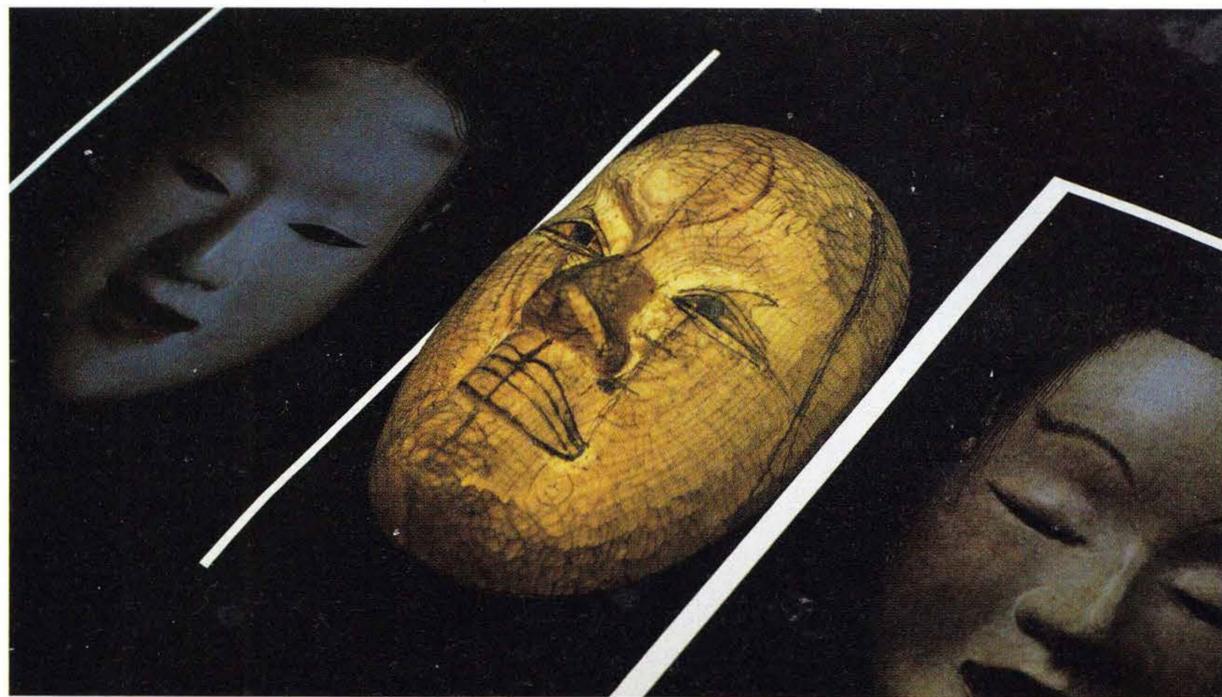
I return to watching Kojima shave careful curls of fragrant cypress from the rough form of his mask, in which the features of a young woman are, eerily, forming in the chisel strokes. “I like these smooth masks best,” he tells me. “The masks of demons and gods are uneven, bumpy. They’re much more forgiving of mistakes. The female masks are much more challenging to make.”

“You know,” he continues, “we never use the word ‘carve’ (*horu*) to describe making noh masks. Rather, we say ‘strike’ (*utsu*), as in the making of swords. Some people say it’s

because, with noh masks, you're forging the spirit."

Even the amateur student masks, when completed, emanate an inner power. There is something almost supernatural in the way the carved expressions change with perspective. "At home, I have a display room for my masks," Hizawa tells me. "My grandkids refused to go in when they were young. It didn't matter which masks were hanging; they said it was too creepy. It wasn't until they reached their twenties that they started to be comfortable with the masks."

"I think you bring a lot of your



own experience into looking at a mask," Iijima adds. "Sometimes, I look at a particular mask and feel that it looks sad, and I'll realize that it's because something bad happened that day. Later, when I'm in a happy mood, I'll look at the same mask and find it smiling back at me." 

It is perhaps unimaginable to picture a process that starts with a block of Japanese cypress and ends with a sophisticated mask of an old man, made by Kojima and used for teaching, unless there is a pattern or patterns to work from.

如果不是有这样的工作模式存在，一般人可能很难想象从一块木曾桧木变成面具，呈现出栩栩如生的老翁面容的过程。而这个过程被小岛用于教学使用。

长期的交流关系。小岛的长野工作坊就是如此，大多数学徒都已经学艺逾10年。“大家都想继续学习”，他说：“制作一个面具就要花上80个钟头，而80个钟头有时候能跨越10年光阴的藩篱。”现在，小岛每月两次往返于他在名古屋的据点和长野之间，但这200公里的距离也阻挡不了大师的脚步。

学生中技术精湛的，比如饭岛丞云，落款都带一个云字，以示师徒之份。很多学生还有自己的徒弟。以小岛为首的流派，就像很多小规模的面具流派一样，着力于将这条不久前才重新连上的传统之线牵向未来。

“想为人师就要花费漫长的时间磨练技术”，小岛再次指着那些教学用的面具

对我说：“你需要学会所有这些面具——这一整套的制作技巧，一点不能遗漏，才能收徒授业。”

我不知道这是不是小岛在长期传授这门古老神秘技艺时的掌握的准则，而我的问题很快就有了了解——“不过，这只是我自己的教学方针。”

宛如化妆

那天早上，我仔细观察了诸位师徒的作业过程。他们使用的是精选的昂贵木料“木曾桧”，用传统工具刨削，仿佛要挖掘出木材表面下的深邃，而不是去创造什么。

早在1647年，日本史的传奇人物德川家康之孙德川家光颁布了一项禁令，禁止能剧表演脱离规范及多样化路线。严格的规定同时适用于扮相和面具。“即使是现在，面具也必须严格复制传统”，小岛继续说道：“人物眼睛大小、鼻子高度，甚至是画上去的头发的数量，都不允许自

由发挥。”

学生们的制作过程非常缓慢，时不时停下来检查他们的成果。有的人拿纸样比对自己的作品，反复审视两者之间有无差池。飞泽皇云已经年近90，仍然精神矍铄，拿着一张古代能面的照片作样本细细比对尺寸。他手持卡尺精确测量，自豪地说这是他自己开发的工具，“其实我给每个人都做了一套”。

制作面具要从一块质地细密的长方形木曾桧木块着手，用铅笔在上面描出面部形状。接下来要用斧凿切削出大致的线条，让面具的基本轮廓浮现出来。制作过程的缓慢是出于对细节的孜孜以求，每一笔精细的描画，要通过同样精细的雕刻技术成为现实。最后，人物的眼睛鼻子，有时连嘴巴都要凿出空穴，面具表面的凹凸要用砂皮磨光，但能看出些许工具的痕迹。“我们相信先人们用鲨鱼皮打磨面具，现在已经用砂皮代替。”饭岛向我解释牡蛎壳磨成的粉末加上传统的鹿角胶是如何威力强大，用它打底后给面具上颜料“就像化妆一样”。

惊人体验

此时我又回头观察小岛聚精会神地雕出面具的玲珑曲线，只见一个年轻女子的面容随着凿子的起落渐渐浮现。“我最喜欢光滑的面具”，他告诉我：“因为鬼神的面具不讲求至臻至善，对精致度要求不那么严格，所以我喜欢做更具有挑战性的女性面具。”

“你知道吗”，他接着讲述：“我们其实从未用‘雕刻’这个词来描述面具的制作，而是用‘打’这个词，就像铸剑一样。有人认为这是因为制造面具就是在铸造灵魂。”

即使是出自业余学徒之手的面具，也会释放一种内在的力量。面具的表情会随视角变化，仿佛背后有一种超自然的神秘。“我家有一间展厅专门陈列面具”，飞泽告诉我：“可是我的孙子小时候不愿意进那个房间，不论挂什么面具，他们都说太诡异。直到他们长到20岁，才开始学会与面具共处。”

“我想每个人都是带着很多个人体验观察一个面具的”，饭岛最后总结道：“有时我看着一个面具，会觉得它面带忧伤，那是因为当天曾有坏事发生。时过境迁，当我化悲为喜，我发现面具又在朝我微笑，用笑容化解了烦恼。”