

Orpha Phelan

Orpha Phelan is an opera director. In 2001 she was asked by the Britten Festival to direct *Sumidagawa*, the noh play on which Benjamin Britten based his opera *Curlew River*. She has been fascinated by Japanese noh theatre ever since.

For the past seven summers, Orpha has trained in noh theatre in the USA, under the guidance of Japan's National Living Treasure, Akira Matsui, and world renowned noh expert, Richard Emmert. She was invited to Japan for seven months in September 2003 by the Japanese government, on a Bunka Cho fellowship, to further her study of traditional Japanese theatre. There she had intensive lessons with Noh master Omura Sadamu in the dance and chant of noh theatre and with Mitsuo Kama in the music of the *ko-tsuzumi*.

Orpha is offering performance-based training in the dance, chant, music and performance history of noh. In the past, she has worked with a range of ages, from primary school children to postgraduates and teachers. The workshops are of particular interest to students studying drama, world theatre, literature, and Japanese, though exposure to Japanese culture through this ancient art form is rewarding for all, wherever their interests lie. No prior experience is necessary.

