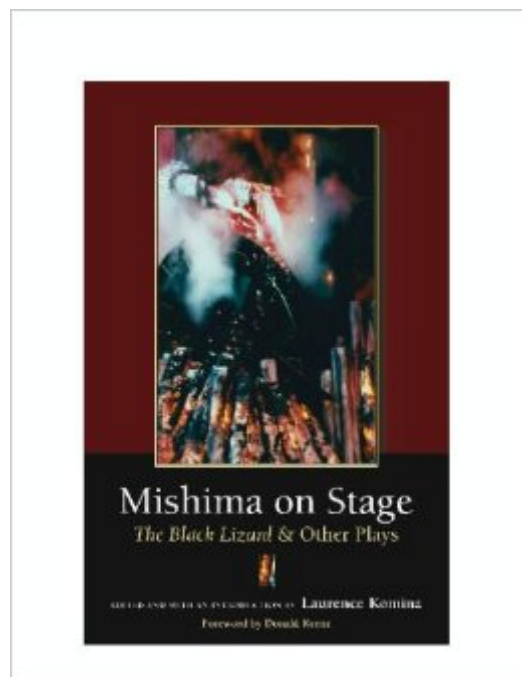


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Mishima On Stage: The Black Lizard And Other Plays (Michigan Monograph Series In Japanese Studies)



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Customer Reviews

I have to admit to not being less than excited to see "Iwashi-uri" (translated here as The Sardine Seller's Net of Love) on the Kabuki-za program back in 1995. First, it was a post-war play, which like many post Meiji Period plays, had proved to be dull and spiritless works. They also were better described not as kabuki plays but "plays starring kabuki actors" since they (usually by design) lacked the rhythm and poetry that make the classical plays so enjoyable, even when dealing with great tragedy. Second, it was written by Mishima Yukio. Though I had majored in Japanese at college, Mishima's writings were conspicuously absent from the curricula of my classes. While this was no doubt due to his strident right-wing politics and famous ritual suicide, it was enough to prejudice myself against his works. When I actually saw the play, though, I couldn't have been more delighted. Mishima had written the play keeping true to the rhythms, importance of music, and playfulness of the plays of the past, and if I had not known the name of the playwright, I might have mistaken it for a much older work. "Mishima on Stage" brings this play and other kabuki plays by Mishima, as well as a number of his insightful psychological portraits written for the Shingeki stage, in script form, allowing readers not only to experience Mishima's talents as a playwright (as mentioned in the introduction, he is considered the greatest Japanese playwright of the post-war period by many critics) and compare the difference in structure between plays written in classical kabuki style, those specifically written for modern theater, and even updated versions of Noh plays.

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