

*An American story
distilled through Japanese noh*

GETTYSBURG

Text: Elizabeth Dowd
Music: David Crandall

A poetic exploration
of the ill-fated friendship between
Confederate General Lewis Armistead
and Union General Winfield Hancock
and the unseen wounds of war.

Featuring violin, harmonica,
mixed chorus and drums,
Gettysburg seamlessly blends
Japanese and Western musical
traditions to create an entirely new
audience experience

Noh, originating in Japan more than 650 years ago, is one of the oldest continuously evolving stage arts in the world. It combines highly stylized dance, chant, music, mask, and costume with intense inner concentration and physical discipline, resulting in a uniquely powerful theatrical event

Theatre Nohgaku's mission is to share noh's beauty and power with English-speaking audiences through the creation of new works that transcend the boundaries of culture and language.





GETTYSBURG

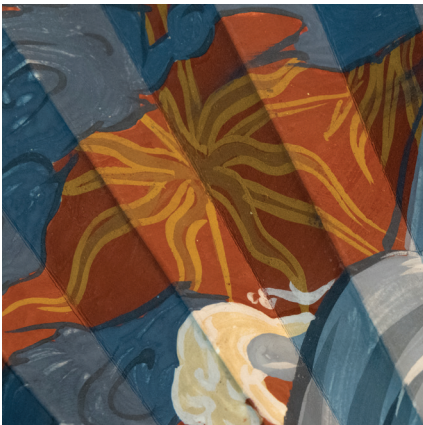
AN AMERICAN NOH

*Friendship across battle lines
in America's devastating Civil War. . .*

Playwright *Elizabeth Dowd* and composer *David Crandall* reimagine the conflict at the center of American history as Japanese noh, creating something unprecedented: an intertwining of voices from our country's painful past with noh's poetic forms, a synthesis of the extraordinary music of noh with choral concert music, accompanied by violin, harmonica, and the drums of noh.

Through this synthesis *Gettysburg* gives audiences an opportunity to consider the larger and lasting significance of America's war against itself.

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- **INTRODUCTORY VIDEO** <<https://youtu.be/5sjcgNxaAzA>>

Gettysburg is ideal for spaces seating 150-350 audience members. Workshops, artist residencies, and/or guest lectures are available in the following areas: performance studies, theater, playwriting, dance, music, Japanese studies, sculpture, woodworking, and American history.

Theatre Nohgaku's mission is to share noh's beauty and power through the creation of new works that cross the boundaries of culture and language.

For more information, contact us at <info@theatrenohgaku.org>



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Synopsis:

A veteran of the war in Afghanistan travels to the battlefields of Gettysburg in search of the place where Confederate General Lewis Armistead fell. The veteran, a descendant of Union General Winfield Hancock, has inherited a watch entrusted to Hancock by the dying Armistead in recognition of their pre Civil-War friendship. The veteran meets a groundskeeper who leads him to Armistead's marker. There they talk about Armistead and the bond between soldiers. The groundskeeper suggests that to fully experience Gettysburg the veteran should, "Wait till twilight. When the sun slants across the fields, you can feel the past. You can hear it." The groundskeeper departs across the open field of Pickett's Charge where his day's work awaits.

As the veteran waits for sunset, a docent locates her straggling tour group (the audience) and shares information about Pickett's Charge and the story of Hancock and Armistead, friends fated to fight against each other. As the veteran watches the evening mist rise from the battlefield he feels the presence of the men who died there. In this half-waking, half-dreaming state, the ghost of Brigadier General Lewis Armistead appears to him. The chorus sings the story of the pre-war friendship between the two generals, Hancock and Armistead. The ghost does a dance of anguish. The two veterans speak across time of their shared experiences of war, loss, and duty above all.

The ghost asks if history has revealed any words from Hancock upon hearing of Armistead's death. Learning there are none, Armistead remains trapped in the afterlife of soldiers' hell, doomed to relive his final battle and his regret at the loss of friendship.

As dawn approaches, the ghost departs. The chorus describes the autumn leaves blown across the field. The veteran pauses before his own departure to return Armistead's watch to the battlefield. With a final salute, he exits.

