

# The New York Times

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## Dance: Sachiyo Ito Presents Classics at Japan House

**S**ACHIYO ITO, a New York-based Japanese classical dancer and teacher, presented a program of Kabuki-style and Okinawan court dances Wednesday at Japan House. It was the court dances that stood out, particularly one called "Shudun" ("Memories"). The calm pace of Miss Ito's gliding walk and muted arm gestures created a sense of continuous flow, of a lifetime passing in a single moment in "Shudun," and her stony face caught the loneliness of the bereft lover in the accompanying song.

In "Takadera Manzai," Miss Ito took

the role of a young man in an excerpt from an early 18th-century opera that told the story of two young brothers who disguise themselves as troubadours to avenge their father's death. The movements are said to have been inspired by Okinawan karate, and certainly the more emphatic, pivoting walk, the widespread arms and suddenly flexed feet had the percussive quality of martial-arts forms. But the same effect of gliding continuity was evident here, as it was in Tamagusuku Chokun's "Yanaji" ("Willow Tree"), a flower-drenched sorbet of a closing

number with colorful costume and props.

The program also included two somewhat unfocused-seeming Kabuki-style dances, Koiju Nishikawa's "Danjuro Musume" ("The Lady Danjuro") and "Ninin Wankyo." In the Danjuro, Miss Ito was a young girl infatuated with a Kabuki actor. In the second, she impersonated a merchant who wanders the fields, insane, after having squandered his fortune on a courtesan he is no longer allowed to see. The stubborn teen-ager of the first dance was a

familiar cultural phenomenon, and Miss Ito danced her very amusingly, using her delicate, expressive hands to good advantage. But with her smooth, babyishly pretty face and youthful figure, Miss Ito was an unconvincing madman, despite her dragging walk, the world-weary tilt of her head and a poignant moment when a dream image of the courtesan steals a love letter from him, teasing him as she disappears once more.

Sahomi Tachibana assisted Miss Ito in the two dances, and throughout in-

terludes of unidentified music were provided by Reiko Kamata.

JENNIFER DUNNING