



- ① butai (main stage)
- ② wakiza (side stage)
- ③ atoza (rear stage)
- ④ hashigakari (bridge)
- ⑤ kagami no ma ("mirror" room)
- ⑥ strip of pebbles
- ⑦ first pine
- ⑧ second pine
- ⑨ third pine
- ⑩ two pine trees upstage of bridge
- ⑪ kagamita ("mirror" board, acoustic)
- ⑫ kirido (sliding door)
- ⑬ kizahashi (three steps)
- ⑭ kyōgen-bashira (comedian's pillar)
- ⑮ shite-bashira (principal actor's pillar)
- ⑯ metsuke-bashira ("eye-fixing" pillar)
- ⑰ waki-bashira (subordinate actor's pillar)
- ⑱ fue-bashira ("flute" pillar)
- ⑲ curtain

## SHORT DESCRIPTION OF KYŌGEN THEATER

**Kyōgen**, the comic interludes that are an integral part of Nō performance, poke fun at human frailties long the butt of the professional storyteller, that pillar of the great Asian oral tradition from which the spirit of kyōgen is derived. In its treatment of social pretensions, this entertainment reflects a universal propensity for playing on connubial discord, deflating the self-esteem of authority, mocking at quackery, and highlighting the trials and tribulations of the servant class, which are common themes for jest the world over. Through its use of stylized vocal forms, pantomime, and spatial control, kyōgen preserves some of the formal elegance of Nō with which it is so closely linked. There is a great deal in its artless humor and oral techniques that is reminiscent of the downing on the traditional Chinese stage and the way the latent reactions of the audience are stimulated. The Chinese comic actor is also descended from a long storytelling tradition and the servants, stupid officials, shrews, and bumpkins he portrays come from the same gallery of characters familiar to the kyōgen actor, with whom the Chinese actor is again united in degrading the priest. In each case the nature of the comic action is physical and situational, inciting revelation of what people would be and what they really are. In both kyōgen and Chinese performance, the comic actor becomes a catalyzing agent through arrangement of his appearance within the main action of the plays. In kyōgen the interval between the principal acts of a Nō performance is given over to the comic actor, and in the Chinese theater the script is devised to yield the stage to him, in both cases as a relief from the tensions of the straight performance.