

The 1991 World Organization for Human Potential *Demonstrations*

RABU KONISHI

This May those attending the World Organization for Human Potential were treated to lectures and physical demonstrations by three extraordinary young children from around the world—Xavier Marquer and Marie-Liesse Richard from France, and Rabu Konishi from Japan. All three of these young people have been on the Intensive Treatment Program for many years. Each one has achieved a high level of intellectual, social, and physical excellence, in many areas achieving skills beyond the level of their peers. Each one is an ambassador of hope for the future of brain-injured children everywhere.

Their delightful demonstrations consisted of two slide lecture presentations in the Valentine Auditorium and a gymnastic duet and ballet solo in the Veras Building.

The first child to perform was thirteen-year-old Rabu Konishi from Kyoto, Japan, who has been on the Institutes' Intensive Treatment Program for four years. When she began treatment Rabu could not walk more than a few steps without falling. She was a bright little girl who was severely injured in the midbrain.

The old-fashioned word used to describe Rabu many years ago was "athetoid"; she had very jerky, uncontrolled movements in her arms and legs. This problem affects her language, which is soft, halting, and labored in delivery, although perfect in organization and content. Rabu has huge respiratory problems, and uses tremendous energy just to execute the simple feat of standing still.

Prior to the Institutes' program, Rabu's language was so soft and labored because of her breathing problem that only her family could understand her.

On Wednesday, the first day of the World Organization Meetings, Rabu presented a lecture on one of her great loves, Kabuki Theater. The audience of foreign dignitaries, members of the International Academy of Child Brain Development, Institutes' staff members, and invited guests were fascinated with her subject and extremely impressed that Rabu delivered it in English, her second language.

In addition to her lecture, Rabu presented an equally moving demonstration of her growing physical excellence. In spite of her mobility problems, Rabu has chosen to study ballet, the ultimate challenge in grace and poise. The very idea of a severely midbrain-injured child performing a ballet solo may seem unimaginable, but not at the Institutes. Young Rabu Konishi, dressed in her white tutu, tiara, and ballet slippers, danced elegantly. She stood erect, performing all the basic ballet positions, extending her arms gracefully and taking tiny calculated steps. Her performance was beautiful and dignified, and she appeared to enjoy every second of it. Her audience adored it.



Right: Rabu Konishi is congratulated by Glenn Doman following her lecture on Kabuki Theater. She then presented an elegant ballet performance.