Thank you for the introduction. My name is Kin'ya Kitaoji. I was born in Kyoto in 1943. My real name is Masakatsu Asai. Congratulations on your matriculation. I am honored to be here and take part in this ceremony. Thank you to President Tanaka and the professors. You have my sincere gratitude. I made my screen debut at the age of 13 in the film *Oyako Daka* (*Virtue in Spades*). Later, I transferred to a school in Tokyo, and then was allowed to enter the illustrious Department of Acting in the School of Literature II at Waseda University. Every day I met new friends and was overwhelmed by the intensity of their passion and sense of purpose. On the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth, the theater department decided to put on a commemorative performance, and I wanted to be a part of the staff. But a friend egged me on. "Asai, are you going to play only in samurai movies for the rest of your life? You're in the acting department, try your hand at Shakespeare!" The play was *King Lear*, and Professor Inami, who was directing, recommended that I play the role of Edgar. I steeled myself for the challenge. Rehearsal went on at the Okuma Memorial Auditorium, and finally the day came for the performance at Iino Hall. There, I performed as Masakatsu Asai for the first time in my life. When the curtain fell, I was moved beyond words. I was still excited when I received a call from a producer of the Nissay Theatre, who had seen my performance at Iino Hall, and recommended me for the role of Christian in a production of *Cyrano de Bergerac* starring Shoroku Onoe II the following spring. This opened the door to a new world for Kin'ya Kitaoji. My friend's words gave me strength: "Are you going to play only in cheap samurai movies for the rest of your life?" I am still close with him. You will all make wonderful connections here, and take new steps toward your purpose while experiencing many new things. Remember to be grateful, to love and be loved in turn, with all the strength you have been given. I wish you all the best in your respective fields. Congratulations.