



PRESS RELEASE

## **Noh Reimagined Tokyo 2021: Sound of Life / As part of Tokyo Tokyo Festival**

**18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021 | National Noh Theatre**

### **Noh x Contemporary British Arts and Culture**

The most innovative British artists from diverse genre will encounter 650-year-old tradition of Noh to collaborate with the top level Noh performers at National Noh Theatre, Tokyo. It will premier three ambitious works along with classical Noh pieces under the most relevant universal theme -Nature and Man.

The first edition of Noh Reimagined Tokyo linking with the hugely successful bi-annual festival Noh Reimagined at London's Kings Place will be held in May 2021. Noh Reimagined Tokyo 2021: Spirits of Flowers explores how nature is celebrated and interpreted in the Noh tradition and what it means to our lives today. It will bring top class Noh performers including Yoshimasa Kanze, Noboru Sano and Senzaburo Shigeyama, and Yukihiro Isso joined by internationally acclaimed British artists - Cerith Wyn Evans, Aidan O'Rourke and Thick & Tight to Japan Premier their works in collaboration with Noh Performers.

### **Programme**

**18<sup>th</sup> May Doors open 6pm / Starts 6:30pm**

Opening talk : "Noh and nature" by Reiji Ando, arts anthropologist

#### **1 「Fianuis : From Rona」 ” Aidan O'Rourke encounter Noh”**

This programme unwraps the poem and essay on Rona island, an abandoned remote island off the coast of Scotland, written by a Scottish poet KATHLEEN JAMIE. Her Poem will be transcribed by Noh chant by Kanze Yoshimasa Joined by music by Aidan O'Rourke and Yukihiro Isso in collaboration.

#### **2 Cerith Wyn Evans and Sano Noboru :[ Nomori's Mirror - Between conceptual art and Noh.**

The artist who has been explored the mirrical effect in his artworks will collaborate with Noboru Sano to draw on the secret of Mirror in Noh masterpiece Nomori

佐野登 (Sano Noboru)、一噌幸弘( Isso Yukihiro)、囃子方 (Noh musicians) Cerith Wyn Evans art works

**19<sup>th</sup> May 6pm Doors open/6:30pm Starts**

Pre-performance talk about 「Unclouded Moon」 by Thick &Tight:

#### **1. Classical Noh piece Traditional Kyogen performance**

#### **2. Thick & Tight 「Unclouded Moon」**

British dance duo Thick & Tight are delighted and honoured to be invited to respond to Noh and Kyogen. Unclouded Moon seeks to unveil our abstract and emotional relationship to the moon. Its wistful melancholy light is a witness to the loss of nature perpetrated by human beings. We explore the idea of undoing harm, of reversal as



a kind of progression. We must unravel the falsehood of humans being somehow separate from nature. Informed by our queer perspective, and through study into queer culture in both the UK and Japan, we examine how the term ‘unnatural’ is often applied to behaviours within the LGBTQ+ community to create divisions around who belongs in our interconnected world. Under the light of the unclouded moon, all divisions cease to matter and perhaps we can understand anew how the beautiful balance of life depends on its diversity. Until we can celebrate the diversity within our own species, how can we hope to heal the wounds in our wider world?

Through extensive research and insightful training with Senzaburo Shigeyama and others, we have tried to comprehend the performative, thematic and contextual elements of Noh and Kyogen, finding connections with our own practice in dance and queer performance. Unclouded Moon is inspired by the rhythms, structure, choreographic languages and metaphysical philosophy found in Noh and Kyogen, finding a way through precise discipline towards expressive freedom and through complexity towards simplicity.

### 3 「変幻化 Hengenka 2021」

All performers come together for the Yukihiro Isso’s work Hengenka, which celebrates the awe-inspiring power of nature, with the title invoking the constant energy, transformation and interconnectedness of the natural world. The piece features the kami (spirits) of music and creation, as well as the comical monster Tengu. The Tengu role, originally played by a Kyogen actor when the piece was premiered in 2017, is here choreographed and performed by Thick & Tight in a new interpretation. <https://vimeopro.com/jonhallfilms/noh-reimagined>  
password: Akiko

Curated and Produced by Mu:Arts, Kings Place, International Noh project Committee

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**Noh Reimagined on the Mu:Arts website:**

<https://noh.muarts.org.uk/>