

**EIKO
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**THE DUET
PROJECT:
DISTANCE IS
MALLEABLE**

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PROJECT:
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**NYC
PREMIERE**

**APRIL 15 —
APRIL 17, 2022**

NYU SKIRBALL SPRING SEASON 2022

CREDITS

Conceived and Directed by **Eiko Otake**

Performed by **Ishmael Houston-Jones, DonChristian Jones, Iris McCloughan, Eiko Otake, and Margaret Leng Tan**

Lighting Design by **David Ferri**
Dramaturgy by **Iris McCloughan**
Stage Manager **Jessica Ho**

Margaret Leng Tan plays

The Banshee (1925) by Henry Cowell
In The Name of The Holocaust (1942) by John Cage

Videos on stage

California Landscapes
filmed by **lex moon** in Sequoia National Park, CA

A Night with Moths
filmed by **Rebekkah Palov** in Alfred, NY

Videos in the lobby

With Beverly
Paintings by **Beverly McIver**
Video edited by **Eiko Otake**

The creation of this project and the presentation of this program were made possible in parts by The Japan Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, Dance/NYC, and the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

MEMBER ARE FRIENDS ... WITH BENEFITS

As a NYU Skirball member, you gain access to innovative artists and academics, game-changers and thought-leaders, and more importantly, support programs that promote a broad range of cutting-edge performing arts and discourse. Membership starts at \$75 and offers discounted or free tickets to events, pre-sale opportunities, and special invitations.

FRIEND • \$75

Benefits include:

- Up to 50% off one ticket per show
- Advance notice of upcoming events
- Exclusive pre-sale tickets
- Subscription to NYU Skirball's e-newsletter
- Personalized NYU Skirball Member card
- Member offers at local Greenwich Village restaurants (Fully tax-deductible)

SIDEKICK • \$125

All of the benefits Friend Members receive plus:

- Up to 50% off two tickets per show
- Complimentary NYU Skirball tote bag
- Complimentary ticket exchanges (savings of \$5 per ticket)
- VIP reserved seating for select NYU Skirball humanities events (\$118 tax-deductible)

COMRADE • \$250

All of the benefits Sidekick Members receive, plus:

- Up to 50% off of four tickets per show
- Waived ticketing fees (savings of up to \$6 per ticket)
- Exclusive access and invitations to meet artists
- Invitations to private dress rehearsals (\$243 tax-deductible)

BESTIE • \$500

All of the benefits Comrade Members receive, plus:

- One free ticket per Skirball Presents production
- Invitations to opening night parties
- Private backstage tour (\$236 tax-deductible)

BOSOM BUDDY • \$1000

All of the Bestie Members benefits, plus:

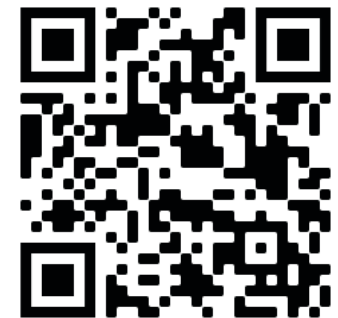
- Two free tickets per Skirball Presents production
- Two complimentary drinks at the Lobby Café per Skirball Presents production
- Enhanced pre-sale, prior to Member pre-sale
- Dedicated patron line for personalized customer service
- Invitations to patron night receptions (\$335 tax-deductible)

SOUL MATE • \$2500

All of the Bosom Buddy Members benefits, plus:

- Four free tickets per Skirball Presents production
- Four passes to all NYU Skirball humanities event receptions
- Ability to secure premium house seats (\$1345 tax-deductible)

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OR MAKE A DONATION. THANK YOU.**



WHAT'S ON @ NYU SKIRBALL



David Dorfman Dance (USA)
(A)Way Out of My Body
World Premiere
April 22 & 23

Employing “out of body” experiences as a metaphor for our body politic, David Dorfman propels his dancers through space and time in a search of personal truths. With breath-taking lighting and visual design by theater-maker Andrew Schneider (*YOUARENOWHERE*) and the company’s four-person house band, led by singer/songwriter Elizabeth DeLise, Dorfman’s newest work, *(A)Way Out of My Body*, beckons us into the otherworldly-ness of dreams, desires, and routines, as well as potential new worlds awaiting us.



Du Yun & International Contemporary Ensemble (China/USA)
Zolle & A Cockroach's Tarantella
April 29 & 30
New York Premieres

Pulitzer Prize-winner Du Yun joins with International Contemporary Ensemble to present a diptych from her seductive musical world. In *Zolle*, a staged performance, a dead woman wanders through the shadowy space on the border between memory and reality, tracing the lines of her identity through the land she once walked — an immigrant in death as in life. *A Cockroach's Tarantella* explores religion and belonging as the essential quest and the existential dread that all sentient beings experience, cockroach or not. Scored for ensemble, electronics, and spoken word, with Du Yun as the narrator and featuring Satomi Matsuzaki (Deerhoof), the two works together explore humankind’s ubiquitous fascination with movement and alienation, amidst the hope of belonging.



Pan Pan Theatre (Ireland)
Cascando
North American Premiere
June 21-July 3

Accompany Samuel Beckett’s curious figures into an uncertain future. Attired in dark cloaks and given headphones, audiences are guided through Greenwich Village on this rhythmic, immersive, group walk. Featuring the melodic voices of Irish actors Andrew Bennett and Daniel Reardon, Beckett’s 1963 radio play *Cascando* is transformed into an absorbing immersive experience in which the audience is part of the spectacle. Pan Pan Theatre brings visceral energy to Beckett’s 1963 radio play, which poetically pits words against music. With Direction by Gavin Quinn and Sound Design and music by Jimmy Eadie, *Cascando* is a deeply riveting yet broken tale of a man hopelessly trying to finish a story.



Elevator Repair Service (USA)
Seagull
World Premiere
July 12-31

They triumphantly tackled Faulkner, Fitzgerald, and Shakespeare with their celebrated productions of *The Sound and the Fury*, *Gatz*, and *Measure for Measure*. Now in their newest project, Elevator Repair Service takes on *The Seagull*, Anton Chekhov’s classic drama of artists in life and love. Blurring the line between the play itself and an informal chat with the audience, ERS’s venturesome approach to the text twists truth into lies and fact into fiction as actors become characters who become actors who become characters. All the while, the play remains a permanently modern exploration of the conflicting pursuits of art, love, and happiness.

A NOTE FROM EIKO

My collaborators, both living and dead, come from different places, times, disciplines, and concerns. Being together is memory making. When one person inevitably dies, the other will dance or sit with those memories. With each unique relationship, we learn how distance is indeed malleable. By being in the same place, looking at each other, and taking time to do so, the working process has revealed both urges and hesitations.

The Duet Project is not a set work. Each performance is a part of the larger project. Every version is conceived specifically for the place we gather. As a whole, I have come to realize, this project is like making a quilt that sews together our memories, wishes, doubts, and regrets—all reflecting yesterday’s, today’s, and tomorrow’s world.

Please visit eikootake.org/the-duet-project. The web page shows some pieces that my duet partners and I have generated.

WHO'S WHO

Eiko Otake is a movement-based, interdisciplinary artist. She was born and raised in Japan and a resident of New York since 1976. She worked for more than 40 years as Eiko & Koma, and since 2014, has been working on her own projects. Eiko & Koma created numerous performance works, exhibitions, durational “living” installations, and media works commissioned by the American Dance Festival, BAM Next Wave Festival, the Whitney Museum, the Walker Art Center, and the Museum of Modern Art, among others. Sam Miller produced *Eiko & Koma's Retrospective Project* (2009-2012), which included new commissions, exhibitions, and the publication of a comprehensive monograph of Eiko & Koma’s work. Eiko & Koma were honored with Guggenheim Fellowships (1984), two New York Dance and Performance Award (Bessies, 1984 and 1990), a MacArthur Fellowship (1996), the Samuel H. Scripps American Dance Festival Award (2004), the United States Artists Fellowship (2006), the *Dance Magazine* Award (2006), and the inaugural Doris Duke Performing Artist Award (2012). The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Andy Warhol Foundation, and The Japan Foundation supported *Eiko & Koma's Retrospective Project*. Eiko has performed her solo project, *A Body in Places*, at over 70 sites, including a 12-hour performance at 30th Street Station in Philadelphia, and a month-long Danspace Project PLATFORM (2016). In 2017, Eiko performed three, full-day performances at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. During the pandemic, Eiko performed in Greenwood Cemetery and, most recently, on the occasion of the 20-year anniversary of 9/11, she presented her monologue, *Slow Turn*, which was co-commissioned by NYU Skirball and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and co-presented by

Battery Park City. Since 2014, Eiko and photographer historian William Johnston have visited irradiated Fukushima several times to create tens of thousands of photographs of her dancing in Fukushima. They presented exhibitions in many cities and published the photo/essay book, *A Body in Fukushima*, in 2021. A film of the same name, which Eiko edited with her texts and sound design, premiered at MoMA’s Doc Fortnight 2022. She has created many dance-for-camera works and presented video installations and screenings. Eiko has received a special Bessie Award citation, an Art Matters grant, the Anonymous Was a Woman Award, and an honorary doctorate from Colorado College. She teaches at Wesleyan University, New York University, and Colorado College. eikootake.org

Ishmael Houston-Jones is a choreographer, performer, author, educator, and curator. His improvised dance and text works have been performed world-wide. He has received four New York Dance and Performance “Bessie” Awards for his work. In addition to his choreographic and performance projects, Ishmael has curated two multi-week platforms at Danspace Project in New York: *Platform 2012: Parallels* examined Black dance makers and Postmodernism; *Platform 2016: Lost and Found*, co-curated with Will Rawls. The latter investigated the effect the loss of a generation of artists from HIV/AIDS in the 1980s and ‘90s has had on work made by young queer artists today. He serves as curator of Draftwork at Danspace, an afternoon series of works-in-progress. He is also a Board Member Emeritus at Danspace Project and is Chairman of the Board of Movement Research in New York. Ishmael’s work has been supported by awards, grants and fellowships from: Foundation for Contemporary Arts (2013), the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (2013), Doris Duke Performing Artist Award (2015), Herb Alpert Awards in the Arts (2016), The Robert Rauschenberg Foundation (2018), and the United States Artists (2021). Ishmael Houston-Jones is a Master Lecturer at the University of the Arts School of Dance in Philadelphia and an adjunct professor at the Experimental Theater Wing of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University. ishmaelhouston-jones.com

DonChristian Jones is a New York based interdisciplinary artist, singer/songwriter, muralist and producer. His work spans musical and time-based performance, rap albums, video and public murals, blending genres of painting and performance installation. He graduated from Wesleyan University in 2012, where he majored in painting. He also studied in Rome, Italy. DonChristian has shown his works and performed at institutions such as The Whitney Museum, MoMA PS1, New Museum, Brooklyn Museum, and Carnegie Center. In 2017, he was a collaborating artist-in-residence at the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation in Captiva, Florida with Eiko Otake where she started her *Duet Project*. Forbes listed DonChristian’s debut album *Where There's Smoke* as one of the ten best Hip Hop albums of 2018. DonChristian is a co-founder of Public Assistants, a mutual aid network, design lab, and resistance hub that was created as an organizing base in response to the confluence of the Covid-19 pandemic and global socio-political uprising. donchristian.world/publicassistants

Iris McCloughan (they/them/theirs) is a trans poet, artist, and performance maker in New York City. They were the winner of the 2018 Stanley Kunitz Memorial Prize from American Poetry Review and were named a finalist in nonfiction for Best of the Net 2020. They are the author of three poetry chapbooks, including *Triptych* (greying ghost, 2022) and *Bones to Peaches* (Seven Kitchens Press, 2021). Their writing has appeared in *American Poetry Review*, *juked*, *jubilat*, *Gertrude*, *Denver Quarterly*, and *Queen Mob's Teahouse*, among many others. Iris' performances have been presented in NYC (The Poetry Project, AUNTS, JACK, Ars Nova, Movement Research at Judson Church), Philadelphia (Institute of Contemporary Art, The Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia Contemporary, FringeArts, Vox Populi), Chicago (Links Hall), Detroit (Public Pool), and elsewhere. They have collaborated with many other artists and writers, including Eiko Otake, Joan Jonas, Mike Lala, Toby Altman, and Julie Mayo. Since 2014 Iris has worked as a dramaturg in Eiko's projects. irismccloughan.com

Margaret Leng Tan is an avant-garde pianist and toy pianist whose work goes beyond traditional boundaries of discipline or genre. She embraces aspects of theater, choreography, performance, and even uses "props" in her performances. Tan brings daring as well as disciplinary rigor to her work, inherited from her mentor, John Cage. Margaret has been featured in international festivals and recorded with labels Mode, New Albion and ECM. She has also appeared on public television as well as at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall. Margaret is the subject of two feature documentaries: *Sorceress of the New Piano: The Artistry of Margaret Leng Tan* by Evans Chan (2004) and the award-winning *Twinkle Dammit!, The World of Margaret Leng Tan* by Chuang Xu (2020). Tan's theatrical sonic portrait, *Dragon Ladies Don't Weep*, won Work of the Year (Dramatic category) in the 2021 Australian Art Music Awards. Tan collaborated with Eiko & Koma in *Mourning* (2007) in which she played John Cage's *In the Name of Holocaust*, among other music pieces. Their performance tour in 2008 included Russia and Poland. She also performed during Danspace Project's 2019 Platform that centered on Eiko's *A Body in Places*. margaretlengtan.com

David Ferri has worked with prominent choreographers such as Pina Bausch, Shen Wei, Doug Varone, Jane Comfort, Yin Mei, David Rousseve and Ballet Preljocaj. He has been the Production Manager for the prestigious American Dance Festival since 1996 training upcoming designers in America. Recipient of a 1987–1988 Bessie Award for his design of Doug Varone's *Straits*, and 2000–2001 Bessie Award for Sustained Achievement in Lighting Design. Ferri is the resident Lighting Designer/ Technical Director for the Vassar College Dance Department. Ferri was also resident lighting designer and technical director at PS 122 from 1985–1991. He lives in New York between his travels and projects.

JHo (Jessica Ho) was first introduced to the world of dance production through her mentor Roma Flowers, who led her to an internship with the American Dance Festival under the supervision of David Ferri in 2012. Through ADF, JHo has worked with major contemporary

dance companies such as Pilobolus, Paul Taylor Dance Company, Hubbard Street Dance Company, Mark Morris Dance Company. Since then, she has worked for the University of the Arts as the Production team to stage their bi-yearly dance concerts, Vassar College's Bardavon Dance Gala as well as Jody Sperling/Time Lapse Dance.

Beverly McIver has a significant presence in contemporary American art and has charted a new direction as an African American woman artist. She is committed to producing art that consistently examines racial, gender, social and occupational identity. Beverly's work is in the collection of many important museums including the National Portrait Gallery at the Smithsonian and the North Carolina Museum of Art, as well as in significant corporate and private collections. Currently, she is the Ebenshade Professor of the Practice in Studio Arts at Duke University. Beverly received a master of fine arts degree in painting from Pennsylvania State University and an honorary doctorate from North Carolina Central University. Introduced by the American Dance Festival Director Nimerichter, Beverly met Eiko in 2018 and travelled to Japan to meet her mother. Beverly and the paintings were in the ADF premiere of the *Duet Project*. Her retrospective exhibition *BEVERLY MCIVER: Full Circle*, which includes paintings of Eiko and her family, is at the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art (SMoCA) from February–September 2022, before touring the country. beverlymciverart.com

lex moon (they them/theirs) is an artist and filmmaker whose work is driven by the instinct to build resistance and resilience against the white supremacist capitalist destruction of life on our current Earth. They have worked closely with Eiko in creating dance films and video installations since 2015. The resulting works of Alexis and Eiko's collaboration have been shown at Danspace Project, Dance for Camera Film Festival, Anthology Film Archives, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, and River To River Festival. Alexis was awarded the 2017-2018 Mortimer-Hays Brandeis Fellowship. Their first feature film *Spider Moth Butterfly* was completed in 2020. alexismoh.com

Rebekkah Palov is an electronic moving image and sound artist. Her time-based work has been exhibited at experimental international film festivals and sound-art exhibitions including exhibition at Anthology Film Archives NYC, MassArt Boston, Museum of Arts and Design NYC, SAT Montréal, QC, The STONE NYC, Bushwick Starr NYC, Oblo Film Festival Lausanne CH, r22 Tout-monde r22.fr, SoundFjord Gallery London UK, and Digital Art Weeks Zurich CH. Rebekkah is a member of "Carrier Band" (IEA Records) electroacoustic ensemble and her on-screen performance credits include *The Lollipop Generation*, film by G.B. Jones, and *Catalog*, film by Stephanie Barber. Palov is a media arts writer and researcher, in particular, the work of electronic music pioneer Harald Bode (1909-1987). rebekkahpalov.us

SPECIAL THANKS

I am grateful to NYU Skirball Executive Director Jay Wegman, Technical Director Zachary Spitzer, and the whole staff.

A big thank you to my collaborators who are in today's performance. In this project, I have also worked with: David Brick, David Harrington, Ann Carlson, Forrest Gander, Joan Jonas, William Johnston, John Killacky, Beverly McIver, the late Sam Miller, lex moon, the late Chikuha Otake, Ralph Samuelson, Sarah Skaggs, Merián Soto, Chitra Vairavan, Wen Hui, and the late C.D. Wright. You all are so tremendous. Thank you.

I performed other duets before this project started. The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC)'s River To River Festival presented my collaborations with Tomoe Aihara, Emmanuelle Huynh, and Okwui Okpokwasili. Danspace Project's Platform 2016 included evenings of *Talking Duets* that featured David Brick, Ishmael Houston-Jones, Emmanuelle Huynh, John Kelly, Yvonne Meier, Bebe Miller and Elizabeth Streb. Our rule was we could ask any questions to each other, but we did not always have to answer. I continue to work with this rule.

The project is not only about working with collaborators. but also about working in different places. The video *California Landscape* was filmed in Sequoia National park during travel hosted by the UCLA Center for the Art of Performance (CAP). The video *A Night with Moths* was filmed during a creative residency at the Institute of Electronic Art at Alfred University. The following institutions provided creative residencies: the Rauschenberg Foundation, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Macalester College, UCLA CAP, Danspace Project, and Northwestern University. American Dance Festival (ADF) commissioned the first iteration; Wesleyan University, the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA)'s Time-Based Art (TBA) Festival, and the Dance Center at Columbia College, Chicago presented subsequent iterations. Thank you.

I am grateful to my dramaturg Iris McCloughan; lighting designer David Ferri; Bonnie Brooks for coordinating engagements as the project director through 2020; and my assistant Allison Hsu for helping me in everything I do.

This project is produced under the aegis of Inta, Inc. I owe so much to the past and current presidents, Ivan Sygoda and Paula Lawrence; INTA board members; and Karl Gossot and Sean Donovan for their administrative work.

Lastly, I thank my friends and students. With each of you, I have had a delightful duet/conversation.

ABOUT NYU SKIRBALL

NYU Skirball holds close James Baldwin's dictum that "artists are here to disturb the peace." Our mission is to present adventuresome, transdisciplinary work that entertains yet upends, inspires yet frustrates, and confirms yet confounds. We proudly embrace artists who defamiliarize the familiar, productions that blur aesthetic boundaries, and thought-leaders who are courageous, outrageous, and mind-blowing. We are NYU's largest classroom. We want to feed your head.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Kyoko Hayashi, *From Trinity to Trinity*. Barrytown, NY: Station Hill Press, 2010.

Eiko Otake and William Johnston, *A Body in Fukushima*. Middlebury, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2021.

Joan Rothfuss (ed), *Eiko & Koma: Time Is Not Even, Space Is Not Empty*. Minneapolis, Walker Art Center, 2011.

Judy Hussie-Taylor and Lydia Bell (eds), *A Body in Places*. New York, Danspace Project, 2016.

NYU SKIRBALL FUNDING

NYU Skirball's programs are made possible with support from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature, and by Howard Gilman Foundation, Collins Building Services, Consolidated Edison, Harkness Foundation for Dance, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Mertz Gilmore Foundation, and Marta Heflin Foundation, as well as our valued donors through memberships, commissioning fund, and Stage Pass Fund support.



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