

Fall/Winter Season

# PERFORMING ARTS

2023

24



Japan Society Gallery Exhibition

# Out of Bounds

## Japanese Women Artists in Fluxus

October 13, 2023 — January 21, 2024



Mieko Shiomi, performing Water Music during Flux Week at Gallery Crystal, Tokyo, 1965.

**Out of Bounds: Japanese Women Artists in Fluxus** is the first exhibition to fully explore the contributions of four pioneering artists—**Shigeko Kubota** (1937–2015), **Yoko Ono** (b. 1933), **Takako Saito** (b. 1929) and **Mieko Shiomi** (b. 1938)—to Fluxus, a transnational network of artists, composers and poets that began in the early 1960s. Inspired by earlier avant-garde movements, such as Dadaism, and the experimental work of Marcel Duchamp and

John Cage, Fluxus artists challenged artistic conventions by embracing humor, chance occurrences, and process over product. Near the 60th anniversary of the movement's founding, this exhibition contextualizes the essential role that Kubota, Ono, Saito, and Shiomi played in Fluxus art, events, performances, and publishing.

Photo by Teruo Nishiyama, Courtesy of Mieko Shiomi

Japan Society presents

## Cage Shock: *Homage to His First Japan Visit*

Thurs. Dec. 7 at 7:30 pm

—Pre-concert lecture at 6:30 pm

—Followed by a *Private Gathering for Artists and Members*

### John Cage's Japan Series – Program #4

Support for *John Cage's Japan* is generously provided by Doug and Teresa Peterson and the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional support from Nancy and Joe Walker, and the Nomura Foundation.



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Support for the international travel of Tomomi Adachi for *Cage Shock* is provided by The Japan Foundation.



### 2023—2024 Performing Arts Season Support

The season is made possible by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.



Major support is generously provided by Doug and Teresa Peterson and Hisamitsu America, Inc. Endowment support is provided by the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Endowment Fund, The John and Miyoko Davey Endowment Fund, and the Endowment for the Performing Arts, established with a leadership gift from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

**Hisamitsu.**

Additional support is provided by The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, Nancy and Joe Walker, Dr. and Mrs. Carl F. Taeusch II, Dr. Jeanette C. Takamura, Estate of Alan M. Suhonen, and Friends of the Performing Arts. All Nippon Airways Co., Ltd. is the official airline of the Japan Society Performing Arts Program. Yamaha is the official piano provider of Japan Society.



Japan Society programs are made possible by leadership support from Booth Ferris Foundation and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

## ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Tonight's program is the final installment in our *John Cage's Japan* series. The program contents are truly worthy of concluding this four-month-long celebration exploring the connection between one of the most influential artists of the 20th century and Japan—because these works portray John Cage's first physical encounter with Japan in 1962.

Thanks to Tomomi Adachi, who has served as a curator, director and performer for the three concerts under *John Cage's Japan* and shaped my vague but demanding requests for this last concert into a solid structure. I expressed to him that:

- 1) I wanted to tell our audience what kind of pieces John Cage introduced and performed to the audience in Japan during his 1962 Japan trip;
- 2) I wanted to include a composition of Cage's entitled with a Japanese word;
- 3) I wanted to include a piece by Toshi Ichihyanagi (1933-2022) in order to pay tribute to this celebrated composer who enabled Cage's first trip to Japan, and who passed away just as Tomomi and I were discussing content details for this Cage series.

To respond to the first request, *Aria, Solo for Piano with Fontana Mix*; and *0'00"* were chosen. The inclusion of *0'00"* particularly pleased me not only because Cage premiered it in Japan, but also because it is a spin-off of Cage's arguably most famous work, *4'33"*. The second request was fulfilled by *Haiku*, a perfect choice because all Americans know that "haiku" represents Japan's unique culture. The third request was realized with *Sapporo*, a heartwarming and fitting selection as it premiered in Japan during John Cage's trip, with Cage himself conducting.

At this climax of our *John Cage's Japan* series, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Laura Kuhn, Executive Director of John Cage Trust, who guided me and trusted Japan Society all the way through this project. Also, I would like to thank Mrs. Yasuhiro Yoshioka and the Sogetsu Foundation, who generously allowed us to use many archival photos from Cage's 1962 Japan visit, all taken by the late Mr. Yoshioka. Dear audience members, before leaving the concert, please stop in the lobby to look at the slideshow, which documents many interesting and poignant scenes from Cage's trip.



Yoko Shioya  
Artistic Director

## *John Cage's Japan Series – Program #4*

### *Cage Shock: Homage to His First Japan Visit*

#### PROGRAM

##### *Haiku*

**John Cage (1912-1992)**

Tomomi Adachi (voice and electronics)  
Tania Caroline Chen (piano, sound and found objects)  
Victoria Shen (electro-acoustic devices)

##### *Sapporo*

**Toshi Ichihyanagi (1933-2022)**

Tomomi Adachi (conductor)  
Tania Caroline Chen (piano, sound and found objects)  
Victoria Shen (electro-acoustic devices)  
with the International Contemporary Ensemble

#### **-Intermission-**

##### *4'33" (NO.2) (0'00")*

**John Cage**

Tomomi Adachi (performance)

##### *Aria and Solo for Piano with Fontana Mix*

**John Cage**

Tomomi Adachi (voice)  
Tania Caroline Chen (piano, sound and found objects)  
Victoria Shen (electro-acoustic devices)

#### **International Contemporary Ensemble:**

**Viola:** Kyle Ambrust

**Cello:** Katinka Kleijn

**Cello:** Michael Nicolas

**Trombone:** Michael Lormand

## CURATOR'S NOTE—Cage's visit to Japan in 1962

After losing the war in 1945, Japan came under U.S. occupation. Half in self-reproach and half through enforcement by the U.S., the Japanese postwar culture scene, especially in avant-garde art, began by denying all feudalist-oriented traditional Japanese culture. The fact that Cage, an American considered to be at the forefront of the avant-garde, praised traditional Japanese culture might have been taken by those postwar Japanese artists as permission to adapt traditional elements in their works. In the case of composer Toru Takemitsu especially, his encounter with Cage was a turning point, and he started incorporating traditional Japanese culture into his compositions as a direct result of this encounter.

Having said that, however, composer Toshio Mayuzumi, who introduced the European avant-garde to Japan, had already begun exploring and incorporating “Japan-ness” through his *Symphony Nirvana* in 1958. Furthermore, even before Toshi Ichiyanagi's return to Japan in 1961 after studying under John Cage in New York, artists such as Yasunao Tone, Takehisa Kosugi and Mieko Shiomi, who founded *Group Ongaku*, had already experimented with improvisation-based music events, the type of activities that are commonly (and incorrectly) considered as a phenomenon born out of Cage's influence.

Given those facts, I think it is more accurate to say that all of them had naturally crossed each other in the course of global synchronicity, rather than that the Japanese-culture-inspired Cage had a singular, one-way impact on contemporary Japanese artists.

Although often overlooked, one of Cage's encounters during his first visit to Japan included an introduction to Tatsumi Hijikata, the founder of butoh. Over the following years, elements of Hijikata's works could be seen as an influence within Cage's art. On the other hand, David Tudor, who accompanied Cage on this 1962 trip to Japan, became more interested in Japanese engineering techniques than traditional Japanese culture. In particular, meeting with Shigenosuke Okuyama at The Sogetsu Arts Center (the organization which hosted Cage's trip) inspired Tudor's developing interest in electronics. Tudor's inspiration in this area contributed to Cage's most creative period in the 1960s.

Tonight's program features works by Cage and Toshi Ichiyanagi, many of which were performed during Cage's first visit to Japan in 1962. Some of the

recordings from this visit remain; however, while carrying on the spirit of those performances, my intention is not to attempt to reproduce them.

— Tomomi Adachi

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

### *Haiku* (1958)

Written as a gift from John Cage to David Tudor, this piece was probably performed by Tudor only once, in 1987. It is written as one of a variety of notations used in his *Solo for Piano*. The notation can also be described as a “fixed version” of that employed for *Variations* and *Variations II*, in which musicians perform the lines (i.e. notes) appearing through overlapping several transparent sheets with lines drawn on each sheet. It is a three-page work with five, seven and five “events” on each page—the reason for the title “Haiku.” Among the pieces on tonight's program, this is the only work that was not performed at any of John Cage's concerts in Japan in 1962.

### *Sapporo* (1962)

Specified for conductor and “less than 15 performers,” this piece premiered at the Sapporo International Contemporary Music Festival during Cage's first visit to Japan, on October 26 and 27, 1962. The conductor for the first day was Seiji Ozawa. The conductor for the second day was John Cage, with performers including Yoko Ono, Yuji Takahashi, David Tudor, Toshinari Ohashi and a few others, plus the composer Toshi Ichiyanagi himself. There is a similarity between this work and Cage's compositions, in the aspect of using a graphic score that results in different sounds for each performance. At the same time, it differs significantly in that the performance does not require much preparation, and the music progresses according to the relationship between the performers.

### *04'33" (NO. 2) (0'00")* (1962)

*0'00"* was composed and performed by Cage during his stay in Tokyo, and dedicated to Yoko Ono and Toshi Ichiyanagi. It is a performance piece of dedicated action based on the personal choice of the performer, with extreme amplification. It is also titled “No. 2” of the famous *4'33"*.



### ***Aria and Solo for Piano with Fontana Mix (1957 – 1958)***

*Aria*, *Solo for Piano* and *Fontana Mix* are three independent pieces. Cage remarked that each of these pieces can be performed independently or with various other pieces simultaneously. *Solo for Piano* is the piano part of *Concert for Piano and Orchestra* (1957-1958), This piano part could be considered a full exhibition of Cage's experimental and invented notation styles, employing 84 different methods of notation in total. Some of these notations are shared with *Fontana Mix* (1958), a notation/instruction for creating tape music. *Fontana Mix* is not limited to use only for tape music, and other musical mediums—such as for voice—are also permitted. In this way, the voice piece *Aria* (1958) was created using the materials from *Fontana Mix*. *Aria*, *Solo for Piano*, and *Fontana Mix* were performed simultaneously by Yoko Ono (*Aria*), David Tudor (*Solo for Piano*) and John Cage (*Fontana Mix*) at Cage's 1962 concert in Japan.

## **ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

**Tomomi Adachi** (conductor, voice and electronics) is a performer, composer, sound poet, instrument builder and visual artist. Known for his versatile style, he has performed his own voice and electronics pieces, sound poetry, improvised music and contemporary music works and also presented site-specific compositions, compositions for classical instrumental ensembles, and choir pieces for untrained musicians. He has performed at many prominent international venues, including Tate Modern (London, UK), MaerzMusik (Berlin, Germany), Hamburger Bahnhof Museum (Berlin, Germany), Centre Pompidou (Paris, France) and Poesiefestival Berlin (Germany). He uses a wide range of materials in his work, including self-made physical interfaces and instruments, artificial intelligence, brain waves, artificial satellite, Twitter texts, fractures and even paranormal phenomena. Adachi presents an intermedia space which is composed of the acts of seeing, reading, listening to and touching texts using audio, visuals, holograms and 3D printing. He also performs vocal, live-electronics or performance works by other composers such as John Cage, Cornelius Cardew, Christian Wolff, Tom Johnson, Dieter Schnebel, TAKAHASHI Yuji, YUASA Joji and others who belonged to Fluxus. Adachi's major projects on John Cage's work include *Variations VII*, *Europera 5* and *Waterwalk*. Most recently, he directed Cage's late work, *Europeras 3 & 4*, commissioned and presented by Aichi Triennale 2022.

**Tania Caroline Chen** (piano, sound and found objects) is based in New York and London and has made a name for herself as a compelling and unpredictable sound artist working in the realms of piano and astro-electronics with electroacoustic, electro-pop and ambient elements. She is adept at revisiting scores from a 21st-century perspective—her recent album, John Cage's *Electronic Music for Piano*, was nominated for a Grammy Award in 2018. She has collaborated extensively with David Toop and John Tilbury of AMM, among many other significant experimental musicians. As a newcomer to New York, she has performed at Issue Project Room, Roulette, The Max Fish Basement and Pioneer Works. She also curates *Micro Micro*, an experiential sound series at Synesthesia, Brooklyn. Chen has appeared at Colour Out of Space Festival in Brighton, UK; the Festival of Britain—an experimental music festival curated by Stewart Lee at the Southbank Centre in London, UK; Spitalfields Festival in London, UK; All Tomorrow's Parties in Wales; and the Cornelius Cardew Festival in Porto, Portugal. Chen has performed in the U.S., Asia and Europe and has broadcast on Resonance FM, London, KPFA Radio, Berkeley and BBC Radio 3.

**Victoria Shen** (electro-acoustic devices), also known as Evicshen, is a sound artist, experimental music performer and inventor based in San Francisco. Shen's sound practice is concerned with the materiality/physicality of sound and its relationship to the human body. Her music features analog modular synthesizers, vinyl/resin records and self-built electronics. Shen's music eschews conventions in harmony and rhythm in favor of extreme textures and gestural tones. Shen is notably the inventor of Needle Nails, acrylic nails with embedded turntable needles allowing her to play up to 5 grooves of a record at once. Shen's DIY approach extends beyond just instruments but also music releases. Her debut LP, *Hair Birth*, features copper album art that transforms the cover into a loudspeaker through which the record can be played. Recently, Shen has started releasing handmade resin records embedded with found materials. Each piece functions not only as playable music media but as a unique art object.

**Kyle Armbrust** (viola) started playing the viola through the Suzuki Program at age three. Since giving his New York solo debut with Kurt Masur and the Juilliard Orchestra, he has created a multi-dimensional career performing and recording a wide range of music. Armbrust is a founding member of the Knights Chamber Orchestra, a member of the International Contemporary Ensemble, and a substitute member of the Philadelphia Orchestra. A dedicated chamber musician and active collaborator, he has worked with artists such as Laurie

Anderson, Yuri Bashmet, Elliot Carter, J. Cole, Herbie Hancock, Lauryn Hill, Vijay Iyer, Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman, Steve Reich, Kaija Saariaho, Tyshawn Sorey, Chris Thile, Anna Thorvaldsdottir, Mitsuko Uchida and John Zorn. He has recorded for the Ancalagon, Cedille, Interscope, Kairos, Naxos, Nonesuch, Ondine, Phil.harmoni, Pi Recordings, Sony and Tzadik labels. Armbrust is Associate Professor of Viola at Ithaca College. He received three degrees from The Juilliard School, where he studied with Heidi Castleman, Misha Amory and Michael Tree.

**Katinka Kleijn** (cello), hailed by *The New York Times* as “a player of formidable expressive gifts,” enjoys a genre-defying, interdisciplinary career. Classically trained, she has cultivated an exploratory creative practice at the intersection of improvisation, composition, performance and visual art. Much of Kleijn’s work illuminates the cello’s anthropomorphic qualities, often by placing the instrument in thought-provoking new contexts. In 2019, Kleijn and cellist Lia Kohl waded with 30 cellos in Chicago’s Eckhart Park Pool for their devised work *Water on the Bridge*, and in 2023, they opened *Augmented Geology*, an exhibit with sculpture and video at the Chicago Design Museum. Kleijn’s *The Body as a Variable Resistor* (2021) shares a 9V synthesizer circuit between a cello and its player. Kleijn often presents projects as co-constructions with the performer or audience, as in her situation-based composition for 11 improvisers *Forward Echo* (2019), performed at Big Ears Festival by Ensemble Dal Niente, and her silent video project *Screenplay in 4* (2021). A Drag City recording artist, Kleijn is a member of International Contemporary Ensemble and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and presented solo multimedia presentations at the Library of Congress, North Carolina Performing Arts and the Chicago Humanities Festival.

**Michael Nicolas** (cello), a “long-admired figure on the New York scene” (*The New Yorker*), enjoys a diverse career as chamber musician, soloist, recording artist, improviser and teacher. He is the cellist of the intrepid and genre-defying string quartet Brooklyn Rider, which has drawn praise from classical, world music and rock critics alike. As a member of the acclaimed International Contemporary Ensemble, he has worked with countless composers from around the world, premiering and recording dozens of new works. Another group, Third Sound, of which Nicolas is a founding member, made its debut with an historic residency at the 2015 Havana Contemporary Music Festival in Cuba. Earlier in his career, he played with the wildly popular South Korean chamber group Ensemble Ditto, and also held a post as Associate Principal Cellist of the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal. His solo album *Transitions*

is available on the Sono Luminus record label. Of mixed French-Canadian and Taiwanese heritage, Nicolas was born in Canada, and currently resides in New York City, where he is on the cello faculty at The Mannes School of Music at The New School. He is a graduate of The Juilliard School.

**Mike Lormand** (trombone) is a New York City-based trombonist who performs eclectic contemporary and classical music. He is a member of the International Contemporary Ensemble, Talea Ensemble, Weather Vest, IRIS Collective and Riverside Symphony. Lormand’s love for the orchestral repertoire has led to performances with the New York Philharmonic, the Metropolitan Opera, Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, The Knights, New York City Ballet, New York City Opera, American Ballet Theater and St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. Lormand has commissioned numerous new solo works, with notable premiere performances at the Ojai Music Festival, Lincoln Center Out of Doors Festival, and Alice Tully Hall. As an instructor at Brooklyn College and Saint Ann’s School, Lormand encourages the development of lasting personal relationships with music, sharing the insights of his teachers: Per Brevig, David Taylor, Marta Hofacre and Bob Schmaltz. Lormand is a graduate of the Manhattan School of Music (MM) and the University of Southern Mississippi (BM).

**International Contemporary Ensemble**, described as “America’s foremost new-music group” (*The New Yorker*), has become a leading force in new music throughout the last 20 years, having premiered over 1,000 works and having been a vehicle for the workshop and performance of thousands of works by student composers across the U.S. The Ensemble’s composer-collaborators—many whom were unknown at the time of their first Ensemble collaboration—have fundamentally shaped its creative ethos and have continued on to highly visible and influential careers, including MacArthur Fellow Tyshawn Sorey; long-time Ensemble collaborator, founding member and 2017 Pulitzer Prize-winner Du Yun; and the Ensemble’s founder, 2012 MacArthur Fellow and first-ever flutist to win Lincoln Center’s Avery Fisher Prize, Claire Chase.

A recipient of the American Music Center’s Trailblazer Award and the Chamber Music America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming, the International Contemporary Ensemble was also named Musical America’s Ensemble of the Year in 2014. The group has served as artists-in-residence at Lincoln Center’s Mostly Mozart Festival (2008-2020), Ojai Music Festival (2015-17) and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (2010-2015). In addition, the Ensemble has presented and performed at festivals in the

U.S. such as Big Ears Festival and Opera Omaha's ONE Festival, as well as abroad, including GMem-Centre National de Création Musicale (CNCM) de Marseille, Vértice at Cultura UNAM, Warsaw Autumn, International Summer Courses for New Music in Darmstadt and Cité de la Musique in Paris. Other performance stages have included the Park Avenue Armory, ice floes at Greenland's Diskotek Sessions, Brooklyn warehouses, The Metropolitan Museum of Art and boats on the Amazon River. The ensemble performed in one of Japan Society's fall 2018 programs, *Hidejiri x ICE: Shamisen Evolution*.

## JOHN CAGE TIMELINE

- 1912:** Born in Los Angeles, California on September 5
- 1930:** Begins composing
- 1933:** Moves to New York, and begins composition lessons with Henry Cowell and Adolph Weiss
- 1935:** Studies with Arnold Schoenberg
- 1938:** Meets Merce Cunningham
- 1940:** Invents the prepared piano technique by placing objects between the instrument's strings to emulate a percussion ensemble
- 1942:** Meets Marcel Duchamp
- 1944:** Tours with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company and pianist David Tudor throughout Europe
- Late 1940s – early 1950s:** **Begins attending lectures on Japanese Zen Buddhism by D. T. Suzuki**
- 1949:** Receives awards from The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation and The American Academy to travel to Europe
- 1951:** **Begins using chance operations in his music, inspired by his relationship to Eastern philosophy and the *I Ching*, a Chinese classic text, and composes *Music of Changes***
- 1952:** **Composes and premieres *4'33"*, marking the admission of silence into Cage's compositional repertoire**
- 1956:** Starts teaching courses at The New School for Social Research in New York City
- 1959:** Includes **Toshi Ichiyanagi**, who moved to New York in 1952, as one of his students at The New School
- 1961:** **Writes first and most widely read book, *Silence*, in which he states "...without my engagement with Zen... I doubt whether I would have done what I have done."**
- 1962:** **Tours Japan for the first time, visits Tokyo, Kyoto, Nara, Osaka, Matsushima, and Sapporo**

- 1964:** Visits Japan with Merce Cunningham, concluding the Cunningham Dance Company's first world tour. Meets Japanese traditional music instrumentalists through the introduction of Toru Takemitsu
- 1967:** Begins incorporating computer-generated chance operations into his compositions
- 1976:** Composes and premieres *Renga* (連歌), commissioned by the Seiji Ozawa-led Boston Symphony
- 1979:** Visits Japan to participate in the Pan Asian Festival II in Tokyo for the performance of *Aria* and *Song Books*
- 1981:** Attends the opening of the *Exhibition of Marcel Duchamp* at the Museum of Modern Art, Seibu Takanawa, Japan
- 1981:** Cage begins composing *Europas 1 & 2*, written by the chance operation method to incorporate all the elements of opera, such as voice, orchestra, costumes, stage props, and lighting
- 1983:** Begins writing *Ryoanji*, inspired by his initial visit to Ryoanji temple in 1962
- 1984:** Begins working with a computer to make large-scale computer-assisted compositions
- 1985:** Completes *Ryoanji*
- (March)  
**1988:** Interviewed about *Ryoanji* by WNYC at Music from Japan's concert at Asia Society, New York City; when asked if it is accurate to say that Japan has been an important part of his life and influenced his ideas, Cage responds with "It is."
- (April)  
**1988:** Writes a letter to conductor Hiroyuki Iwaki to describe intended plans for his project *Noh-Opera: Or the Complete Musical Works of Marcel Duchamp* (unrealized)
- (December)  
**1988:** Elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters
- 1989:** Visits Japan to receive Kyoto Prize
- 1992:** Dies on August 12 in New York City, following a stroke

#### **International Contemporary Ensemble Staff:**

**Executive Director:** Jennifer Kessler

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Japan Society Performing Arts' 2023-2024 season  
continues in January with:

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**Wednesday, January 10, 7:30 pm**

—Followed by an opening night reception

**Friday, January 12, 7:30 pm**

—Followed by an artist Q&A

**Saturday, January 13 at 2:30 & 7:30 pm**

TRADITIONAL & CONTEMPORARY DANCE

## ***Nihon Buyo in the 21st Century From Kabuki Dance to Boléro***

**Wednesday, January 24, 7:30 pm**

—Followed by a *Private Gathering for Artists and Members*

**Thursday, January 25, 7:30 pm**

—Followed by an artist Q&A

**Friday, January 26, 7:30 pm**

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