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For Immediate Release

Press Release

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Noh Reimagined 2018: Sublime Illusions

FRI 29 - SAT 30 June 2018, Kings Place, London

Following the highly successful 2016 edition, **Noh Reimagined** is returning to Kings Place with an exciting new theme and line-up. The two-day festival explores the art of Noh, the iconic theatrical tradition that originated in fourteenth-century Japan. This edition will shed light on the unique dramaturgy of **Mugen ('phantasmal') Noh**, in which the main actor (*shite*) appears as a ghost in the dream of a travelling monk performed by the supporting actor (*waki*). The ghost then tells the tragic story of its past life, expressing deep regret and lamentations, hoping to find peace.

Top Noh performers from Japan will work with innovative British artists and neuroscientists in genre-defying collaborations to examine the surreal artistic elements of Noh. Join us to explore time, space and symbolism in Noh theatre through interdisciplinary performances, workshops and talks.

Noh Reimagined 2018 will connect the sublime illusions and transformative power of Noh's 650-year-old tradition with the creative energy of contemporary arts and culture, posing new questions about who we are.

- Link to photos for press use on Google Drive: <https://goo.gl/CLSQmn>
- Full listings are available on the Kings Place website: <https://kingsplace.co.uk/noh>
- Dedicated project microsite: <http://noh.muarts.org.uk>

Overview of the two-day festival:

- In **The Sublime Illusion of Mugen Noh**, six leading Noh performers from Japan will present highlights from the masterpiece of Mugen Noh, **Izutsu (The Well Cradle)**, written by Noh playwright and actor **Zeami** (1363–1443), along with some of the finest instrumental and dance sections from the classical Noh repertoire.
- **The Transformative Power of Noh** will celebrate the ability of Noh to create otherworldly figures that transcend time and space by inviting cutting-edge British artists to perform new works that push artistic boundaries. **Clod Ensemble**, the London based multi-award winning performance company, will present **Snow**, a piece inspired by the restless female spirits and demonic figures of Noh theatre, featuring original music informed by this 650-year-old tradition. At a **pre-concert talk**, co-directors Suzy Wilson and Paul Clark will discuss their creative process, including their workshops in Japan with Noh performers.

In a new piece embracing ghosts and phantoms, **Wiebke Leister's** photo performance is joined by sound artist **David Toop** and **Yukihiro Isso** on nohkan flute. **Echoes and Callings** will work with photographs of life-casts and death-masks and improvised sound to express the out-of-body experience of **Hannya**. **Hannya** is a Noh mask representing a jealous female demon. We will also see the *shishi* ('lion dance') from the

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celebrated classical Noh play **Shakkyo (Stone Bridge)**, based on an ancient Chinese story, and the premiere of *nohkan* flautist **Yukihiko Isso's** Mugen Noh-inspired piece, based on a story by neuroscientist Atsushi Iriki.

- In **Noh + Neuroscience: Glimpsing the Invisible**, **Professor Semir Zeki**, a pioneer of *neuroaesthetics*, will talk about the objectivity of subjective states. When a white object is set against a white background and illuminated with projections, for example, we see coloured shadows that are not really there. Zeki will demonstrate the power of the mind to conjure these coloured shadows, working in collaboration with Noh performers, so audiences will experience reality and illusion at the same time.

In addition, **Professor Atsushi Iriki** of the Riken Institute in Japan will present his research into the notion of **Riken-no-ken**, a concept from a text by the Noh master Zeami, which refers to the ability of Noh actors to separate themselves from their bodies and their performances in order to judge their technique objectively.

- In **Noh: Space in Between**, **Leon Michener**, the architect of the Klavikon system, will sculpt the feedback he creates by amplifying a piano's soundboard, then using the space between the piano and the audience in Hall Two as an ascetic counterpoint to the music created by Noh performers.
- In the seminar **Noh Mask, Noh Movement: Illusory Devices**, two professors from the Noh Theatre Research Institute of Hosei University, the leading Noh research centre in Tokyo, will unveil the secrets of Noh movement through narrative and scientific analyses, discussing how Noh masks represent the spirits of ghost, deities and demons.
- The workshop **Noh Movement: Acting from Inside** will provide a chance to learn the basic *kata* (movement patterns) of Noh. Focusing on centre of gravity and concentrating energy, participants will turn these basic movements into a series of fluid motions that enable subtle emotional expression.
- **Phenotypica** is an initiative created by multi-award winning artist **Neus Torres Tamarit** and computer scientist **Ben Murray**. They will exhibit the installations and sculptures of their **Biomorpha (Evolving Structures)** project and a site-specific installation called **Confined Mutations** at Kings Place. Working at the intersection between art, science and technology, they seek to create evocative and immersive artworks about genetics and evolution that engender an emotional response. www.phenotypica.org

Noh Reimagined 2018 takes place in partnership with Kings Place, Japan Foundation, and Noh Research Institute, University of Hosei. The festival is generously supported by Yakult UK, Arts Council England, Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation and JSPS.

About Yakult

Yakult was founded by the Japanese scientist Dr Shirota, who in the 1930s selected and cultivated *Lactobacillus casei* Shirota, a unique strain of bacteria that is scientifically proven to reach the gut alive. Every bottle of Yakult contains at least 6.5 billion *Lactobacillus casei* Shirota. Every day, more than 35 million bottles of Yakult are consumed in 38 countries around the world. There are two products available in the UK, Yakult Original and Yakult Light - the less sugar and lower calories version. Both products are gluten free, fat free and suitable for vegetarians. For more information, please visit www.yakult.co.uk.

Noh Reimagined 2018 is produced and curated by Akiko Yanagisawa (mu:arts).

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