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Announcing New Co-Artistic Directors

Kyoto Experiment has introduced a new directorship system from 2025. Kyoto Experiment's program director serves a five-year term, with the option to extend a further five years. From 2020 to 2024, the role of program director was served by a collective of co-directors comprising Yoko Kawasaki, Yuya Tsukahara, and Juliet Reiko Knapp. Following the departure of Knapp at the end of her five-year term, Kawasaki and Tsukahara will oversee programming from 2025 under the title of co-artistic directors.

We will continue striving to develop the festival, harnessing the qualities we have built to date as a pioneering performing arts event unparalleled in Japan.

The full program for Kyoto Experiment 2025 will be announced in late July. We look forward to welcoming you to Kyoto Experiment this autumn.



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Dates 📅 October 4th (Sat) - October 26th (Sun) 2025 (23 days)
Venues 📍 ROHM Theatre Kyoto, KYOTO ART CENTER, Kyoto Art Theater Shunjuza, THEATRE E9 KYOTO and other locations
Organized by Kyoto International Performing Arts Festival Executive Committee [City of Kyoto, ROHM Theatre Kyoto (Kyoto City Music Art Cultural Promoting Foundation), KYOTO ART CENTER (Kyoto Arts and Culture Foundation), Kyoto Performing Arts Center at Kyoto University of the Arts, THEATRE E9 KYOTO (Arts Seed Kyoto)], General Incorporated Association Kyoto Experiment

Please visit our website for the latest information 🌐 kyoto-ex.jp/en

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For five years as co-directors, we explored what it means to hold a performing arts festival like Kyoto Experiment that features international and contemporary artistic practices. Following a change in the directorship, we now enter the sixth year of this endeavor: continuing to engage in international exchange through the performing arts all while the world lurches ever further toward nationalism and isolationism; proposing complexity and fluidity through the contemporary performing arts and their polyvalent perspectives, even as binary, simplistic, and easy-to-understand values hold sway; and initiating dialogue that comes from presenting such artistic practices to audiences in all their complexity, without dumbing them down. Kyoto Experiment aspires to be a place for thinking about such things in playful, experimental ways. Over the course of this, we have discovered how the festival functions as a platform encompassing our various failings, the process of generation, and debates that have no easy solution. And it is this failing, generating, and debating that creates encounters with in-between things, with disquiet and the invisible, and begets footholds for living today and visions of what is to come.

For the 2025 edition of Kyoto Experiment, we are preparing a program that uncovers the appeal inherent to disquiet and uncertainty within the continuity we have demonstrated until now. We look forward to announcing the festival program in July.

We have also launched a training program for the next generation of artists to ensure the legacy of the festival. We hope you follow how Kyoto Experiment develops in the future.

Yoko Kawasaki, Yuya Tsukahara
Co-Artistic Directors, Kyoto Experiment

It has been a huge honour to co-direct Kyoto Experiment from 2020-2024 alongside Yoko Kawasaki and Yuya Tsukahara. Over these five years I believe we successfully built upon Kyoto Experiment's ten year history to further evolve into a festival for radical, daring and boundary-pushing artistic experimentation.

We faced (and the festival continues to face) many challenges, including the knock-on effects of Covid, cuts in public funding and a weakening yen, which have put the festival in an increasingly precarious financial situation. Creating an experimental performing arts festival in the current economic and political environment is immensely challenging, and it is something that is impossible to do without the support of each and every person that contributes to building the festival. I am so proud of the artistic works, spaces and experiences created, the interactions and meetings made possible, and the questions that we have asked and thought about together.

Although I am sad to be stepping down, I am also looking forward to a new chapter and am happy to be leaving the festival in the capable hands of the festival team. The last five years have been an incredibly rich experience and Kyoto Experiment and its artists, audiences and staff have taught me so much. I'd like to extend my deepest thanks to everyone that contributed to making the festival possible.

Juliet Reiko Knapp
Former Kyoto Experiment Co-director

Kyoto Experiment Training Platform

The Kyoto Experiment Training Platform launched in 2024 with the aim of nurturing future program directors and expanding opportunities to share the work created at the festival with overseas audiences.

The platform is organized across five initiatives.

- (1) Echoes Now Training Program for Future Festival Directors
- (2) Echoes Around Artist Training Program through Overseas Performances
- (3) Performing Arts Criticism Project
- (4) Training Program for Producers and Technical Directors
- (5) Overseas Curator Residency

(1) Echoes Now Training Program for Future Festival Directors

Echoes Now is a performance program by Kyoto Experiment that introduces the next generation of curators and artists. It provides training for three curators from various fields and backgrounds to serve as program directors through organizing a showcase of performances. By developing curators' insights and broadening their perspectives via working across overseas and domestic networks, it aspires to nurture internationally viable talent.

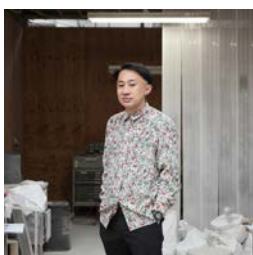
The curators are Maki Kawaguchi, Takuya Tsutsumi, and Nagara Wada. Wada also serves on the directors' team as an associate director from 2025.

Maki Kawaguchi



After withdrawing from the Art Planning program at Seian University of Art and Design, Maki Kawaguchi worked in agriculture for four years. From 2009, she joined the office staff of Art Area B1, a community space in Nakanoshima, Osaka, where she was involved in producing exhibitions, music events, and performances. Art Area B1 incorporated in 2013, and Kawaguchi presided as the director and secretary general until 2023. Since February 2023, she has worked in public relations in the business planning and promotion office of the Kyoto City Kyocera Museum. Independent of her work at the museum, she also collaborates with artists working in various fields by organizing exhibitions.

Takuya Tsutsumi



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Born in 1987, Takuya Tsutsumi is a Kansai-based curator and graphic designer. He graduated with an MA in cultural studies from Adam Mickiewicz University in 2019. In addition to designing exhibition spaces, Tsutsumi creates one-off performative experiences and is particularly interested in non-institutional practices, especially across Asia. His directing and curatorial credits include *Share-Meeting 2: The Successive Gathering and Momentum of Becoming* (2025, Shiga), *MEET YOUR ART FESTIVAL 2024: SSS—Super Spectrum Specification* (Tokyo), Takuya Yamashita's solo exhibition *Hope Embedded in Darkness: Bear, Munch, Cheeseburger, and Others* (2023, Taipei), and *Aichi Triennale 2022*. Tsutsumi is Program Co-director for the shared studio space *Yamanaka Suplex*, Program Director at ICA Kyoto, and an associate professor at Kyoto University of the Arts.

Nagara Wada



©Yuki Moriya

Nagara Wada graduated with a degree in film and performing arts from Kyoto University of Art and Design, and then completed the art studies master's program at the same university. In February 2011, she began working as a theater director based in Kyoto and founded her own theatre unit, shitatame. With a deep interest in the act of acting, Wada deciphers texts and motifs as if zooming into them, aiming to establish a distinct language for acting with each performance. She actively pursues collaborative projects, and through the medium of theater, she connects with artists from various fields, including visual art, photography, architecture, music, sculpture, and dance. Since 2018, she has served as a member of the booking team for the multidisciplinary art space UrBANGUILD, where she organized 3CASTS, a performance series that focuses on actors. She is chairperson of the Kyoto Performing Arts Organization from 2020 and The Saison Foundation 'Saison Fellow I' from 2025.

Artists featured in "Echoes Now" will be announced when all programs are announced.

(2) Echoes Around Artist Training Program through Overseas Performances

Kyoto Experiment has actively engaged with premiering new work by experimental artists. Building on that legacy, this program nurtures artists by providing opportunities for them to stage the work they produce at the festival overseas.

The artists are Masamitsu Araki, team chiipro, Ayaka Nakama, and Takuya Murakawa as well as the artists showcased in the Echoes Now program.

Masamitsu Araki

Masamitsu Araki is a Kyoto-based artist, composer, and sound designer. His practice is both music-centered and located on the fringes of music, pursuing the creativity of listening through humorous approaches and prompting us to rethink contexts and effects by reconnecting that creativity with music. He constructs sound fields via unique interpretations and processes, which he presents in a wide range of formats, including theater pieces, installations, performances, tours, and recordings. His recent work includes *Vacant TT* (2024), a performance created with workshop participants, and the outdoor concert *Soundtrack for Midnight TAMURO* (2021), featuring an "orchestra" of custom cars. Araki is also a member of the music group NEW MANUKE.



team chiipro

team chiipro is a performance group currently consisting of members Nanako Matsumoto and Kengo Nishimoto. The group's practice revolves around the theme of the body and potential for gesture as critique. In recent years, the group has focused on identifying specific dance steps from particular places or times, and thereby creates dance works in which it integrates multiple contexts evoked by the dance steps, the physical sensations, and the memories of the performers. Some of their major works include *Kokyo Running Man* (2019-20), *Kyoto Imaginary Waltz* (2021), *Menstruation Sumo Dance* (2022) and *nanako by nanako* (2024).



Ayaka Nakama

Born in Oita Prefecture in 1992, Nakama is a dancer based in Kobe, Japan. She has worked with Mika Kurosawa, contact Gonzo, and Toshiki Okada (chelfitsch), among others. She has recently pursued her own practice, in which she seeks out phenomena impossible to call anything but dance, and makes "mechanisms" for sharing the moments when such phenomena arise with others. Her previous works include *Freeway Dance*, a four-hour solo dance in which she dances in a garden to reenact the memories of others, and *The Odoriba Legend*, in which she ran a temporary theater built in an empty lot and witnessed its demolition. From 2018 to 2020, she was an associate artist of Dance Box (Kobe). Since 2022, Nakama has been a fellow of The Saison Foundation (Tokyo). She was awarded the 16th Kobe Nagata Cultural Encouragement Award.



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Takuya Murakawa

Employing documentary and fieldwork approaches, theater director and filmmaker Takuya Murakawa's practice traverses multiple fields from moving image to theater and visual art. Emanating from the boundary between fiction and reality, his work not only questions methods of artistic expression but also inquires into what reality is in the real world. His recent work includes *Independent Living* (2017), *Moonlight* (2018), *Pamilya* (2020), *The Incident* (2021), and *Playing Work and Working* (2022-). In 2016, he visited Shanghai and Beijing as an East Asian Cultural Exchange Envoy for the Agency for Cultural Affairs. *The Incident* won the Special Prize at the 21st Aichi Arts Foundation Drama Award. Murakawa also teaches part-time in the Department of Film Production at Kyoto University of the Arts and the film and moving image major in the Tokyo Zokei University Department of Design.



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(3) Performing Arts Criticism Project

The Performing Arts Criticism Project is an incubator for reviews and critically engaged essays about experimental performing arts. Creating discourse about experimental contemporary performance will boost the international profile of the festival as well as revitalize the performing arts scene in Japan and the Kansai region.

(4) Training Program for Producers and Technical Directors

This program offers training for internationally active producers and technical directors through working on the overseas performances of artists featured in the Echoes Now and Echoes Around programs.

(5) Overseas Curator Residency

This initiative invites curators and programmers at overseas theaters and festivals to Kyoto Experiment to experience the festival. By watching the events and performances the festival as well as attending presentations by the artists, the invited curators deepen their understanding of the performing arts scene in Kyoto and Kansai, and meet and build relations with the curators, artists, producers, and production crew members on the training programs, leading to further international opportunities.

Kyoto Experiment Training Platform

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