

Tomoko Mukaiyama (Pianist/Artist/Director)



The Dutch-Japanese pianist, visual artist and director Tomoko Mukaiyama was the first Japanese pianist to win the prestigious Gaudeamus interpreters competition in 1991. In 1993 she received the Japanese Muramatsu Prize for outstanding artistic talent. Tomoko has built a strong reputation as a leading artistic innovator. As a pianist she performs with the most renowned orchestras and ensembles, including the Ensemble Modern in Frankfurt, the London Sinfonietta and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. In her creative work, as an artist and director, Tomoko traverses the traditional concert setting with new artistic dimensions. She develops performing art projects and art installations, combining various forms of music, dance, fashion and visual arts with themes that are close to her heart, such as the physical dynamics of women's lives, our relationship to each other and to our natural environment.

The Tomoko Mukaiyama Foundation (TMF, founded in 2007, the Netherlands) and the Multus foundation (founded in 2015, Japan) form the supporting 'House' from which Tomoko creates and organizes new projects and collaborations. Tomoko lives in Amsterdam.

<https://tomoko.nl/>

selected works

2023 ***Delirium***

Delirium is a work for four pianos composed by the Ukrainian-Dutch composer Maxim Shalygin and produced by TMF, among others. *Delirium* is the fourth part of the cycle, *Similar*. It is a very virtuoso piece in which the listener loses the sense of space and time, where going along with the musical flow seems the only option. The premiere was on April 16, 2023 in the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ in Amsterdam during the Minimal Music Festival. The pianists were: Tomoko Mukaiyama, Gerard Bouwhuis, Laura Sandee and Antonii Baryshevskyi.

EAT

EAT zooms in on the material and sensory aspects of our daily beginnings. A pianist, a composer, a ceramist, a painter who uses natural paints and the audience are together in a ritual that sharpens our senses. *EAT* is a recurring installation performance in which Tomoko experiments with local morning routines and the impact of our cultural and natural environment on them. *EAT* started with the theme of fermentation during the 2022 Oerol Festival. Tomoko organized a workshop on making fermented Terschelling fruit juice, a lecture on soy sauce and a workshop on making miso. The miso was carefully stored on the island of Terschelling for a year and was tasted during the *EAT* performance of the 2023 Oerol Festival.

figurante

The installation-performance *figurante* in the Terrada warehouse formed the main program of the TENNOZ ART WEEK 2023 in Tokyo. *Figurante* was created from a collaboration between Tomoko (piano recital and concept) and the Japanese thatching artist Ikuya Sagara. The floor, ceiling and walls of an enormous concrete warehouse were covered with plants and natural materials. This formed the basis for equalizing different means of expression, whereby the separation between pianist (Tomoko) and audience disappeared. The audience itself became storyteller, translator, explorer of space and responsible for light-objects, with the big question of how we are connected to each other and how we can change something in the world we live in.

SADO

In *SADO*, Joruri, a traditional form of Japanese puppet theatre, is combined with 3D animation and electronic music. Together with the famous Japanese puppeteer Hachirobe Nishihashi, Tomoko (electronic music) tells the story of unrequited love, weaving together techniques from the various makers involved. Contemporary expression is combined with Buddhist and Shinto traditions.

2022 ***Love Song***

Love Song is a local and eco-social project with a love for the artistry and craft of a community. Tomoko (piano and concept) works with local governments to draw attention to certain regions to raise awareness of its cultural wealth and creators. The project focuses on the potential of female artists, singers, musicians and craftsmen in particular. Participants work with Tomoko on planning and design to optimally present their work and products to an audience. The starting point of *Love Song* is always the indefinite encounter, not knowing what could happen, and trusting the possibilities of people and location. The project will be continuously repeated and already serves as a model for local presentations in some regions.

2021 ***TWO – in transit Hara Museum***

Together with cinematographer Reinier van Brummelen, Tomoko developed music-cinema, a multimodal performance in which music, sound, images and film are performed as much as possible in real time. *TWO – in transit Hara Museum* is such a form of music-cinema. Music and dance were performed in the deserted museum and its courtyard (Tomoko, piano, and Mirai Moriyama, dance and acting). It was produced, filmed and streamed on the occasion of the closure of the Hara contemporary art museum in Tokyo.

KUMANO

KUMANO, is an installation-performance with photos, video, stage design, extras, spoken text and music (piano and electronic music), made in collaboration with cinematographer Reinier van Brummelen. Tomoko was born in the Kumano region, known for its overwhelming nature, countless holy places, temples and pilgrimage routes. This Kumano is presented as in-between-time in which Tomoko remembers her childhood and pauses for a moment to search, find and rediscover the things and meanings that always travel with her, and us.

2020 ***ONE***

A series of piano concerts on location where music, images and film stories are interwoven. Cinematographer Reinier van Brummelen creates synchronized images that coincide with the movement of the piano keys and the Tomoko's hands, arms and body. This was projected onto the facade of the cathedral in Mérida, Mexico.

A Live

A Live is a series of streamed installation performances. Together with cinematographer Reinier van Brummelen, Tomoko presented a new way to share the experience of the live concert with a virtual audience during the pandemic. *A live* was performed and streamed from the deserted Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ and from a nocturnal and deserted Van Gogh Museum.

End and Beginning

A concert with light installation in collaboration with Reinier van Brummelen. The starting point is Galina Ustvolskaya's composition *Dies Irae* (1973) for piano, 8 double basses and a wooden box as percussion. Tomoko asked composer Alexander Raskatov, famous for his opera *A Dog's heart*, to write for the same formation in resonance with Ustvolskaya's work. Raskatov wrote the beautiful piece *Bells* with extended percussion.

2019 ***Pianist***

In collaboration with Maison Hermès le Forum in Tokyo, Tomoko gave piano recitals in a stage-setting of stacked and hanging grand pianos. Tomoko played around the clock for a period of 24 days: each concert, lasting an hour and a half, started an hour later every day until the full 24 hours. About 8,000 spectators, young and old, sitting loosely around the grand piano, attended the concerts.

2018 ***GAKA***

GAKA is inspired by the kagura, one of Japan's oldest rituals where the sun is lured out of the cave through theater, dance and music, or in other words, the wonder of the new day is celebrated. *GAKA* was performed in the morning at sunrise, outdoors, on the islands of Terschelling (NL), Shikoku (JP) and Kozu (JP). 20 dancers sang, played traditional wind instruments and drums. To create *GAKA*, Tomoko has brought together an international group of makers and performers, including Un Yamada, choreography, Ting Gong, scenography and Maxim Shalygin, composition. *GAKA* was a co-production of TMF, Oerol Festival and the Museum of Art in Kochi (JP).

In 2020, Tomoko made *GAKA-film* in collaboration with Reinier van Brummelen and Aryan Kaganof, among others. This film was produced by Serious Film and supported by TMF and the Dutch Film Fund.

2016 ***Woman in the Dunes***

Inspired by the novella *The Woman in the Sand* by Kobo Abe. In this version the audience, pianist and concert grand piano are trapped in a dune hollow. It is an installation-performance made in collaboration with Ting Gong (scenography) in which Tomoko is wrapped in an enormous silver/white cloth that spatially accentuates the scene of the dune landscape. It is a production of TMF and the Oerol festival.

La Mode

An installation-performance about fashion as a modern straightjacket *and* as fascinating form of beauty and bodily expression. *La Mode* is a performance with 10 dancers, a catwalk, an architectural installation and a

pianist. TMF created *La Mode* in collaboration with a selection of international artists and dancers. Such as Yannis Kyriakides, composition; Dunja Jovic, in collaboration with Spellbound Dancers, choreography; Toyo Ito, stage design; Slavna Martinovic, costume design.

HOME

The concept of home is more complex than the common idea of a comfort-location, of stability, security and grounding. Home can be a safe haven, but the same stability of place and values also can generate lack of freedom and oppression. Where home and the feeling of home even become a pitfall, something that must be overcome in order to live, in order to allow the 'world' to enter.

HOME is an installation performance on location, in people's homes or in a regular theater, with dance, music, video and photography. Tomoko is involved here as director and as scenographer, the dance is performed by Ema Yuasa.

2014-2015

My Private Odyssey

Originated from the collaboration with the Dutch dance company Club Guy & Roni led by Guy Weizman and Roni Haver. The performance is a metaphor for the path of life; dancers and musicians make their own journey and are put to the test. With Tomoko and David Dramm (composition) and live music by Tomoko (piano), Monica Germino (elec. violin) and Anne La Berge (flute and elec.)

2013 **EAST SHADOW**

East Shadow is musical theater with dance and live music, created in collaboration with director and choreographer Jiří Kylián and the dancers of the Nederlands Danstheater III in memory of the tsunami victims. It was commissioned for the 2013 Aichi Triennial. The work and the title are inspired by Samuel Becket's work *Neither* and *But the Clouds*. With Franz Schubert's piano sonata D959, andantino, and *East shadow* for piano composed by Tomoko. The soundscape was created by Jason Akira Somma.

FALLING

An installation-performance based on the theme of the Aichi Triennial 2013: "Awakening: Where Are We Standing? Earth, Memory and Resurrection." The theme refers to the triple disaster of earthquake, tsunami and the Fukushima nuclear reactor meltdown in Japan, 2011. Tomoko played the piano in an installation in an abandoned shopping center, consisting of pianos lying upside down and a huge amount of newspapers and rubbish through which the audience must find their way. The big question that Tomoko and lighting designer Jean Kalman ask themselves and present to the audience is how we can create anew from the catastrophe.

2012 **SHIROKURO**

A dance performance, made in collaboration with choreographer Nicole Beutler and lighting designer Jean Kalman. The Japanese characters of Shirokuro mean black and white as a reference to the concept of contrast. In the performance this is elaborated as a necessary connection between dark and light, silence and sound, heaven and hell, and playfulness and discipline. Tomoko played Piano Sonata no. 6 by Galina Ustvolskaya. The premiere was during the Tokyo Dance Triennial, 2012. In the Netherlands the performance was part of the Holland festival, 2013. In 2014 the performance was honored with the VSCD dance prize.

2011 **Nocturne**

An installation-performance with two pianos damaged by the tsunami (Japan, 2011). Tomoko plays work by Chopin, Rzewski, Somei and Scarrino, among others, in a performance about the struggle between mourning and hope, about the urge to stand still while the force of life pulls you into the future. In addition to a tour through Japan and Europe, there were presentations of *Nocturne* in New York and during the Setouchi Triennial, 2013 and the Holland festival, 2014.

2009 **wasted**

An installation-performance with a stage setting made of 12,000 off-white silk dresses that form a maze through which the audience moves. In the middle, hung high, an immense dress smeared with menstrual blood, below which stands the grand piano. Tomoko plays the *Goldberg Variations* by J.S. Bach and improvisations. *wasted* found a sequel in the documentary film *Water Children*, 2011, by Aliona van der Horst.

2007 **Show me your second face**

Installation-performance in collaboration with designer duo Klavers Van Engelen. The stage setting consists of Tomoko and the grand piano in which they both coincide with an immense sculpture, a concert dress made of supple white fabric as a fusion between fashion and musical practice. Tomoko plays fragments from Bach's *Kunst der Fuge* and *So gehst du nun, mein Jesu, hin*. Further, compositions of Nicolai Korndorf, Yarilo and from her own work *ha-ra* and *you and bach*.

Sommer Reisen

A series of piano recitals, inspired by Schubert's *Impromptus* in which samples of city sounds compete with Schubert's music as an alienating clash between cultures. It is a work in which the audience participated in

making recordings of city sounds. The premiere was in Japan, followed by a tour through Europe and the United States.

2006 ***You and bach***

An installation with a midi piano in a glass cage, with light design and sound. It was presented in a concert hall. While Tomoko made herself heard with work by J.S. Bach and we saw the keys moving, she was physically absent.

Tar and Feathers

Tomoko improvised around themes by W.A. Mozart sitting meters above the scene at a grand piano with meters high legs. Against this musical background and stage setting, six dancers performed intriguing, mysterious movements in a surreal black-and-white world. The collaboration with choreographer Jiří Kylián and the Netherlands Dans Theater (premiered in 2006) was well received and she has since performed it with the Norwegian National Ballet, Boston Ballet and the Paris Opera Ballet.

2005 ***for you***

A piano recital of approximately 15 minutes for one listener with which Tomoko deconstructs the cultural and social conventions of the recital. A visitor orders a ticket and receives his or her own program, a date and a time. Once in the concert building at the agreed time the visitor is led to the venue by an attendant, i.e. an empty concert hall with one highlighted chair.

2000 ***Amsterdam xTokyo***

Piano recitals as installation performances in four Dutch cities and in Tokyo. In collaboration with the architectural group PBX, numerous plastic bags were hung in the room with goldfish swimming in them, strongly highlighted in a haze of stage smoke. The audience sat loosely around the wing, eye to eye with the goldfish. Tomoko's goal was to confront the audience with questions about ephemerality and the conflict between human intervention in natural phenomena and nostalgic memories.