

Tomoko Mukaiyama Foundation x.

Gearing up for the world premiere of *La Mode*



National Taichung Theater Photo: Courtesy of National Taichung Theater

It's happening. This Thursday, *La Mode* will pre-premiere in Bolzano, Italy during the **Transart Festival**. And in less than a month, *La Mode* will premiere at the newly opened, state-of-the-art National Taichung Theater in Taiwan. This huge show has been years in the making, and it involves a dream-team of internationally renowned artists from all over the world. We have a Dutch production team together with LUFTZUG, Japanese partners (Toyo Ito & Associates, Architects) and textile designer (Yoko Ando), a Cyprian composer (Yannis Kyriakides), a Serbian fashion designer (Slavna Martinovic), an Italian dance company (Spellbound), a Canadian solo dancer (Sarah Murphy), a Serbian choreographer (Dunja Jovic), and a German light designer (Tanja Ruehl).

This international cast isn't just exciting, it's integral to the show's design. *La Mode* is about borders, those spaces where ugly meets beautiful, darkness meets light, male meets female, and here meets there. Though geographical and aesthetic borders separate this group of artists, *La Mode* brings them together in a single, glorious, collaborative spectacle.

Back in May the whole team met for the first time to rehearse the project, in Bolzano, Italy. This is also the location of the pre-premiere of *La Mode*, which will take place during Transart Festival. There, they put everything on the floor, took it apart, and figured out how it worked. Since then, the music's been reimaged, the architects have tweaked the design, and now the show's ready to go.

08 SEP – La Mode – **Transart**, Bolzano (IT) pre-premiere

01 OCT – La Mode – **National Taichung Theater**, Taichung (TW) world premiere

02 OCT – La Mode – **National Taichung Theater**, Taichung (TW)

La Mode in Tokyo



Photo: Gregor Khuen Belasi

Following the world premiere in Taichung, *La Mode* will travel to Tokyo for **Dance New Air**, the biggest contemporary dance festival in Japan. The show explores the tension between fashion as a tool for genuine self-expression and fashion as a shallow facade. Fashion as art and fashion as the opposite of art. But it's more than these binaries: fashion conceals, transforms, constricts, liberates. It's the Japanese high school sailor uniforms that force conformity, but it's also the untamed shelves that beam with brand new selves.

Japanese culture and fashion inform many elements of *La Mode*, from the dresses on the catwalk to the stage design itself, so the team is particularly eager to present this work in Japanese spaces.

08 OCT – La Mode – **Dance New Air**, Tokyo (JP)

09 OCT – La Mode – **Dance New Air**, Tokyo (JP)

10 OCT – La Mode – **Dance New Air**, Tokyo (JP)

HOME comes home



Ema Yuasa in HOME | Photo: Yutaka Endo

Speaking of Japan, *HOME*, my collaboration with contemporary dance phenom, Ema Yuasa, is en route to the Saitama Triennial. The show just wrapped up at the Dutch *Noorderzon Festival*, and the response from audience members and from Yuasa herself has been incredible. Though she could have wowed the audience with her technique, the show challenged Yuasa to be herself, to do nothing, to sing unfamiliar songs, and to dance in a more intimate setting than she's used to.

"It is an intense performance," Yuasa told Dagblad van het Noorden. "So close to the public, and solo, I can't be distracted for even a second. Everything needs to feel real."

Set in an actual residence, *HOME* examines the house as a place of comfort but also if commotion, an altar and a cesspool, an isolation chamber and a commune. In the Netherlands, Yuasa performed the show in a 19th century house with a 15th century facade. In Japan, she'll dance and sing in a 100-year old flat house. The *HOME* team is especially interested to see how European and Japanese notions of home differ, overlap, collide, and bloom.

This [preview](#) of HOME will give you a sense of this piece's quiet intensity.

24 SEP–11 DEC – HOME – [Saitama Triennale](#), Saitama (JP)

Tomoko Mukaiyama / 向井山 朋子



