



MAR. 3 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM (JST)

Theatre festivals: past, present & future

日本の演劇祭

Moderator : Cody Poulton, University of Victoria

The pandemic has had a deadly impact on making and presenting theatre all around the world, not least in Japan. This session, moderated by **Cody Poulton**, University of Victoria, examines the difficulties faced by programmers of international theatre festivals here in the time of Covid. How to invite and involve artists and companies from overseas when Japan has become a closed country? How much work to present online? How safe it is to stage work live? These are some of the questions and challenges we will discuss.

Part 1 “Mounting a theatre festival” consists of presentations by artistic directors for two of the most innovative performing arts festivals in Japan today: **Chiaki Soma**, Artistic Director of Theatre Commons Tokyo, and **Juliet Knapp**, Co-Director of Kyoto Experiment. Their presentations will be followed by a brief question and answer period.

Part 2. “Roundtable” will invite **Chiaki Soma** and **Juliet Knapp** to discuss their experiences programming festivals with the moderator and two panelists, **Peter Eckersall**, City University of New York, and **Andrew Eglinton**, Konan Women’s University.

Profiles

Moderator **Cody Poulton** is Professor Emeritus at the University of Victoria, Canada, specializing in Japanese performance. Author of numerous studies on and translations of Japanese theatre, he has also translated kabuki and contemporary Japanese drama for such multivolume series as *Kabuki Plays on Stage* and *Half a Century of Japanese Theater*. Author of *Spirits of Another Sort: The Plays of Izumi Kyōka* (Michigan Monographs in Japanese Studies, 2001) and *A Beggar’s Art: Scripting Modernity in Japan, 1900-1930* (University of Hawai’i Press, 2010), he is also co-editor of *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Japanese Drama* (2014) and served as contributing editor to *The Cambridge History of Japanese Theatre* (2016). He is editor and chief translator of *Citizens of Tokyo: Six Plays*, by Oriza Hirata (Seagull Press, 2019) and co-editor of *Okada Toshiki and Japanese Theatre* (Performance Research Books, 2021).

<https://www.uvic.ca/humanities/pacificasia/people/faculty/poulton-cody.php>

Chiaki Soma is Founder and Representative Director of Arts Commons Tokyo. She is a curator-and-producer specializing in transdisciplinary contemporary art crossing over theatre, visual arts, and media arts with AV/VR technologies. She has produced or curated various projects over the last twenty years in Japan and Asia, including: Program Director of Festival Tokyo (2009-2013), Performing Arts Curator of Aichi Triennale (2019, 2022), and Executive Producer of Toyooka Theatre Festival (2021). Together with Kyoko Iwaki as Head Dramaturg, Chiaki will serve as Programme Director of Theater Der Welt in 2023.

<https://theatercommons.tokyo/en/about/>

<https://theaterderwelt.de/en/people/>



Juliet Reiko Knapp is currently co-director of Kyoto Experiment. She graduated Oxford University with a BA in English Literature and Language and began working in Japan in 2013 on the JET Programme as an English teacher at Elementary and Middle Schools in Shizuoka Prefecture. After interning and volunteering for Kyoto Art Centre and Shizuoka Performing Arts Centre she later became Communications Manager and Project Manager for Music and Performance at Ryoji Ikeda Studio. Following this, from 2017-2019 she was part of the PR team at Kyoto Experiment and assisted the director in the programming of the festival. She also has experience in editing as well as translation and interpretation related to the performing arts.

<https://kyoto-ex.jp/en/>



Peter Eckersall teaches in the PhD Program in Theatre and Performance at the Graduate Centre, City University of New York. He is an Honorary Professorial Fellow in the department of Culture and Communication, University of Melbourne. Research interests include Japanese performance, dramaturgy and theatre and politics. Recent publications include *Okada Toshiki and Japanese Theatre* (CPR, 2021), *Curating Dramaturgies* (2021), and *Performativity and Event in 1960s Japan* (2013). He was co-founder/dramaturg of Not Yet It's Difficult. Recent dramaturgy include: *Sheep #1* (Sachiyo Takahashi, Japan Society), *Phantom Sun/Northern Drift* (Alexis Destoop, Beursschouwburg, Riga Biennial).

<https://www.gc.cuny.edu/people/peter-eckersall>

Andrew Eglinton is a lecturer in theatre and performance studies at Konan Women's University in Kobe, Japan. Research interests include theatre and documents, disability, migration, and education. He is a contributor to the Japan Times stage section and presents regularly at international theatre conferences. Currently researching performance practice in AR and VR.

<https://andrewglinton.com>