

Noh singer Ryoko Aoki



Ryoko Aoki holds a unique position in the field of Noh theatre as a female singer and performer. She has performed in several traditional Noh plays, historically the reserve of male actors. Above all, she is the pioneer of and inspiration for a new artistic form combining Noh with contemporary music. More than 50 works have been written for her by various composers including Peter Eötvös, Toshio Hosokawa, Stefano Gervasoni, José María Sánchez-Verdú and Oliver Schneller.

The singer and performer has made appearances in Tokyo, Kyoto, Long Beach, Paris, Rome, London, Dublin, Bilbao, Budapest, Berlin, Munich, Cologne and Karlsruhe among others, and at festivals including the Asia-Pacific Weeks Berlin, Bartok Festival Szombathely, Xenakis Festival in New York and the Takefu International Music Festival. She has performed with ensembles and orchestras including the Arditti Quartet, the Quatour Diotima and the Munich Chamber Orchestra.

In 2013, Ryoko Aoki made her debut at the Teatro Real de Madrid in Wolfgang Rihm's opera *The Conquest of Mexico* in the role of Malinche, in a production directed by Pierre Audi. In 2016 she premiered Noriko

Baba's "Nopera" AOI with the Ensemble 2e2m in Paris. During the 2017/18 season Ryoko Aoki performed the world premieres of two works composed for her: Toshio Hosokawa's *Futari Shizuka (The Maiden from the Sea)* with the Ensemble intercontemporain at the Philharmonie de Paris and Kölner Philharmonie as well as Federico Gardella's *Two Souls* at the Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino. She also gave her debut at the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in a concert conducted by Matthias Pintscher.

Highlights of Ryoko Aoki's 2018/19 season included performances of Toshio Hosokawa's *Futari Shizuka* at the University of Toronto and during the TIMF Festival in Tongyeong/Korea as well as the world premiere of Peter Eötvös' *Secret kiss* with the Gageego Ensemble at the Konserthus Gothenburg, followed by performances at Tokyo Bunka Kaikan, at Casa da Musica Porto with Remix Ensemble and at Auditorio Nacional Madrid with Plural Ensemble.

Ryoko Aoki starts the 2019/20 season with *Secret kiss* with Ensemble Musikfabrik in Berlin, Cologne and Budapest. Another highlight will be the performance of *Futari Shizuka* with the Talea Ensemble in New York in March.

As part of her NohxContemporary Music project, Ryoko Aoki has commissioned a series of new works for Noh singer. In 2014, she released a NohxContemporary Music recording, including Peter Eötvös' *Harakiri*. As a workshop leader, she has worked with the dance company Sasha Waltz and Guests.

Ryoko Aoki obtained a BA and a Master of Music from the Faculty of Music at the Tokyo National University of Fine Art and Music with a focus on the Kanze school of Noh theatre, before obtaining a PhD at the University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies, with a thesis on "Women and Noh". She was appointed "Japan Cultural Envoy" by the Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japanese government in 2015 and was a featured artist at the Aichi Triennale in 2016.

2019/20 season

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