

Kenta KOJIRI

Choreographer and Dancer



Biography

Born in 1981, in Chiba, Japan, Kojiri started classical ballet at the age of three. After being awarded the Apprentice Scholarship at the Prix de Lausanne in 1999, he moved to Europe and danced at **Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo** for four years before joining the **Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT2)** in 2003. Three years later, he was the first male Japanese dancer to join the prestigious main company, **NDT1**. During his years at NDT he worked with Jiří Kylián, Mats Ek, William Forsythe, Wayne McGregor, Paul Lightfoot, Ohad Naharin, Crystal Pite, Alexander Ekman and several other leading choreographers. He left the company in 2010 with Jiří Kylián's final creation for NDT "*Mémoires d'Oubliettes*".

Since 2010, he has been working as an independent choreographer both in Japan and internationally. In 2017, he started **SandD** (*Project "Surface and Destroy"*), a collective project with artists, researchers and technicians, and created "Study for Self/portrait" (2017), "COROLI" (2022) and several other works. In 2023, Kojiri was invited by **La maison de la culture du Japon à Paris** and the **Centre national de la danse (CND)**. The same year, he performed "*At the core*" for the first time abroad with a live performance by the Arditto Quartet. As a dancer, he was invited to perform with Sylvie Guillem's "6000 Miles Away" at **Sadler's Wells Theatre London**, **The Royal Swedish Ballet** and **The New National Theater Tokyo**.

Other activities include choreographing for operas, musicals and figure skating. He was involved in the launch of **Dance Base Yokohama** as artistic coordinator, was teaching for the Saitama Dance Laboratory (Saitama Arts Theater) and the Japanese national team of figure skating.

Currently, he is an artist-in-residence at **PLAT Toyohashi Arts Theatre**, an ambassador for **Vitality.Swiss** (The Embassy of Switzerland in Japan) and an associate choreographer at **Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse No1** (Yokohama arts foundation).

Artist Statement

At a certain moment, we sensually realise that we do not exist as a single self, but exist based on intimate relationships with others.

Throughout our lives we rely on the recorded sensations of our bodies. The ever changing environment and social reality outside inscribe itself into our bodies. I believe that it is the expression of dance and the performing arts that can reveal and celebrate these body memories.

The reason why I am constructing my works around the theme of “Recording” and “memories” is my longing to preserve the feelings that existed at a certain moment in time that is changing. The sensibility for the fragile co-existence of the universally fixed and ephemeral dynamic is linked to the intersection of my roots in classical ballet and Japanese culture.

SandD (Project “Surface and Destroy”)

SandD is a collective project launched in 2017 by choreographer and dancer Kenta Kojiri that is aimed at collaborative research and creation between artists, researchers and engineers.

At the core of SandD stands the collaborative research with the sound artist Yasuhiro Morinaga and more recently, with the architect/artist Hannes Mayer. The collective has been working with artists from various fields to create projects on the theme of the “boundary” and on the translation of the recording of memories derived from the actions of daily life into performative artistic practice.

Released from the conventional framework of institutional dance practice, we aim to create a space open to the possibilities of the intersection of everyday life and stage space, while integrating and reconstructing this process of creation in various places around the world.

Work

Creations:

- 2024 *Study for Self/portrait 2024* (Les Franciscaines, Deauville France)
- 2023 *At the Core* (La maison de la culture du Japon / Centre national de la Danse, Paris France)
- 2022 *Study for Self/portrait 2022* (Kanagawa Arts Theater, Yokohama Japan)
COROLI / ころり (Kanagawa Arts Theater, Yokohama Japan)
- 2021 *The Threshold* (Goethe-Institut Tokyo)
Study for Self/portrait 2021 (Saitama Dance Laboratory, Saitama Arts Theater)
- 2020 *Study for Self/portrait 2020* (Embassy of the Netherlands in Tokyo)
- 2019 *Arditti Quartet x Kenta Kojiri* (Kanagawa Music Hall and Aichi Arts Theatre)
- 2017 *Study for Self/portrait* (Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo)
- 2011 *Toki* (Architanz Tokyo 10th anniversary, invited to Japan-China-Korea Art Festival 2013)
Inscription (Noism2, Japan)
- 2010 *Thought of After Parting* (Korzo Theatre in Netherlands, Kawasaki Art Center)

Choreographic contributions:

- 2022 Figure Skating | Kana Muramoto and Daisuke Takahashi, “*The Phantom of the Opera*”
Musical | “*Next to Normal*” (Toho, directed by Ikko Ueda)
Figure skating | “*Stabat Mater*” by Satoko Miyahara
- 2019 Opera | *Pygmalion* (Izumi Hall Osaka, directed by Tatsumune Iwata)
Figure skating | Stéphane Lambiel “*Beethoven String Quartet*”
- 2018 Figure skating | Stéphane Lambiel & Deniss Vasiljevs “*Nocturne*”
- 2017 Operetta | *The Merry Widow* (Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre, directed by Doji Shigeyama)
Musical | *Romeo & Juliet* (Umeda Arts Theatre, directed by Shuichiro Koike)
- 2015 Musical | *Elisabeth* (Toho, directed by Shuichiro Koike)

Performances:

- 2022 *PASSAGE* (video work by Miwa Yanagi and Ryo Noda / Nakanoshima Art Museum, Japan)
Yabu no Naka (choreographed by Yasutake Shimaji / Cerulean Tower Noh Theatre, Tokyo)
- 2021 *A Picture of You Falling* (choreographed by Crystal Pite / New National Theatre Japan)
- 2019 *The Little Great People* (choreographed by Jiri Pokorny / Korzo Theatre, The Netherlands)
- 2018 *OTO NO E* (choreographed by Yasutake Shimaji / Theatre National de Chaillot, France)
PUUR (choreographed by Wim Vandekeybus / Royal Swedish Ballet)
- 2017 *Recall* (choreographed by Vaclav Kunes / Saitama Arts Theatre & Aichi Arts Theatre, Japan)
The Other You (choreographed by Crystal Pite / Saitama Arts Theatre & Aichi Arts Theatre)
- 2016 *HYBRID* (choreographed by Motoko Hirayama / New National Theatre, Tokyo)
- 2015 *Dividual Plays* (Yoko Ando x YCAM InterLab "RAM" / Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media)
- 2014 *Out of the Grey* (choreographed by Antonin Comestaz / Aerowaves Spring Forward Festival)
- 2012 *Solo for 2* (choreographed by Jo Kanamori / Noism1, Niigata City Arts Centre)
- 2011 *14'20"* (choreographed by Jiří Kylián / Sylvie Guillem's "6000 Miles Away", tour 2011-'13)
- 2011 *Chrono* (choreographed by Joeri Dubbe / Korzo Theatre, The Netherlands)

Teaching:

- 2018 - 2021: Saitama Dance Laboratory (Saitama Arts Theatre, Japan)
- 2016 - present: National Training Centre for Figure Skating (Japan Skating Foundation)
- 2016 - 2019: The Pole National Supérieur de Danse (PNSD) Rosella Hightower, France
- 2014: The Royal Ballet School Antwerp, Belgium
- 2014 - 2016: NNT Ballet School (The New National Theatre Tokyo, Japan)
- 2013 - present: The Showa University of Music, Ballet Course (Japan)

Others:

- 2024: **Advisor** | The Ballet company of New National Theatre Tokyo for "NBJ Choreographic Group"
- 2024: **Choreography assistant** | Damien Jale & Kohei Nawa “Mirage [transitory]”
- 2024 - 2026: **Associate choreographer** | Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse No1 (Yokohama arts foundation)
- 2022 - present: **Ambassador** | Vitality.Swiss program (Communication program by the Embassy of Switzerland for the Osaka-Kansai Expo. 2025)
- 2022 - present: **Residence artist** | Honokuni Toyohashi Arts Theatre PLAT, Japan
- 2022 - 2023: **Residence artist** | Dance Base Yokohama, Japan
- 2020 - 2022: **Artistic coordinator** | Dance Base Yokohama, Japan
- 2022: Text | Japan Sports Association Certified Coach 3: Basics of Figure Skating Expression
- 2017: **Artistic director** | 45th Anniversary Performance Celebrating Houston & Chiba Sister City Relations
- 2017 - 2019: **Residence artist** | Kinosaki International Art Centre
- 2014 - 2018: **Research collaborator** | YCAM InterLab 'Reactor for Awareness in Motion (RAM)', Yamaguchi Centre for Arts and Media. Japan

Video

vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/kojirikenta>

< Solo performance >

• *Study for Self/portrait*

2024 <https://vimeo.com/video/1001531742> (Password: SandD)

2022 <https://vimeo.com/video/801693522> (Password: SandD)

2021 <https://vimeo.com/709838872> (Password: SandD)

2020 <https://vimeo.com/493953890> (Password: SandD)

2017 <https://vimeo.com/362218202> (Password: SandD)

• *At the Core* (2023, this work is recapitulation of *Arditti Quartet* × *Kenta Kojiri*)

<https://vimeo.com/852531258> (Password: SandD)

• *The Threshold* (2021)

<https://vimeo.com/554766842> (Password: SandD)

• *Arditti Quartet* × *Kenta Kojiri* (2019)

<https://vimeo.com/618644712> (Password: arditti2019)

• *Surface and Destroy / work-in-progress* (2017)

<https://vimeo.com/223032918> (Password: SandD)

• *Thought of After Parting* (2011, For Project Point Black)

<https://vimeo.com/196264735> (Password: parting)

< Works >

• *COROLI* / ころり (2022)

<https://vimeo.com/714643448> (Password: SandD)

< Short pieces (For dance companies / educational programs) >

• *Prism* (2019, For an educational program of Session House Tokyo)

<https://vimeo.com/video/389383057> (Password: prism)

• *Inscription* (recapitulation in 2019, For Saitama Dance Laboratory)

<https://vimeo.com/388905034> (Password: inscription)

• *L'Après-midi d'un faune* (2017, For The Showa University of Music,)

<https://vimeo.com/video/221518223> (Password: faune)

• *TOKI* (2014, For Trilateral Arts Festival)

<https://vimeo.com/144566901> (Password: toki)