Sankai Juku
UMUSUNA - Memories Before History
Choreography, Concept and Direction by Ushio Amagatsu

Fri, Oct 16 at 8pm
Sat, Oct 17 at 8pm
Royce Hall

RUNNING TIME:
Approximately 90 minutes; no intermission

Music by
Takashi Kako, Yas-Kaz, Yoichiro Yoshikawa

Dancers
Ushio Amagatsu, Semimaru, Sho Takeuchi, Akihito Ichihara, Ichiro Hasegawa, Dai Matsuoka, Norihito Ishii, Shunsuke Momoki

Co-produced by
Biennale de la Danse / Opéra National de Lyon; Theatre de la Ville Paris, France; Kitakyushu Performing Arts Center, Fukuoka Pref. Japan; Sankai Juku, Tokyo.

Production Management
Pomegranate Arts
Linda Brumbach, Founder and President


This presentation of UMUSUNA is supported by the Japan Foundation through the Performing Arts JAPAN program and made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts’ National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, with additional support from the National Endowment for the Arts Challenge Grant Endowment.
MESSAGE FROM THE CENTER:

Here at the Center we often talk about the importance of the audience for the ephemeral performing arts. Not only does your presence here tonight help make welcome this extraordinary company as we bear witness to its latest creation, but you also are the thing that makes the elusive ephemeral experience something of permanence in this world.

We, the viewers of the performing arts, and most especially so in the most ephemeral form of dance, become the permanent collection of the work—a living, walking, breathing testament to its powerful impact and lasting effect on our culture at large. UMASUNA is not a work of art that might hang on a wall in a gallery for time out of mind. But, the ways in which this thoughtful and artful creation works inside you...the memory of it that will linger, the energy you bring to the space and share with all of us—that is something we all can carry with us and which, we believe, is one of the precious building blocks of human empathy.

You are taking your place as a standard-bearer for this company, and indeed for the entire form of dance.

We believe in dance as an integral tool of experience, understanding and empathy for our culture. In ancient non-Western traditions, long before the written word became the preferred (and often flawed) tool of communication for human beings, dance, song, performance—these were the ways in which histories were transferred, memories were stored and civilizations were evolved.

The deep traditions and movement vocabularies that are embedded in each performer you will witness tonight are unparalleled in form, in focus, in persistent vision. We are extremely grateful for what Sankai Juku brings to every space it inhabits. And, we’re grateful to have you be part of it.

SANKAI JUKU

Artistic Director, Choreography, Design
Ushio Amagatsu

Music
Takashi Kako
Yas-Kaz
Yoichiro Yoshikawa

Dancers
Ushio Amagatsu, Founder
Semimaru, since 1975
Sho Takeuchi, since 1987
Akihito Ichihara, since 1997
Ichiro Hasegawa, since 2004
Dai Matsuoka, since 2005
Norihito Ishii, since 2010
Shunsuke Momoki, since 2011

Stage Manager
Kazuhiko Nakahara

Lighting (World Premiere)
Genta Iwamura

Lighting Technician
Satoru Suzuki

Sound Technicians
Akira Aikawa, Junko Miyazaki

Set Technician
Tsubasa Yamashita

Costume Realization
Masayo Iizuka

Administration
Midori Okuyama, Yasuko Takai

North American Production Supervision
Doug Witney

Production Management
Corps Liminis

North American Company Manager
Pat Kirby

UMUSUNA – Memories Before History

UMUSUNA is a very old word originating from ancient Japan that has the same root as ubusuna (one’s place of birth). Ubusu means birth, the beginning of life, or entering the world. The word umusu also embodies the concepts of everything and nothing, existence and nothingness. Na evokes the land, the ground/soil and one’s native place.

| I | Atokata: Imprints               |
| II | All that is born               |
| III | Memories from water           |
| IV | In winds blown to the far distance |
| V  | Mirror of forests              |
| VI | Sedimentation and erosion, ad infinitum |
| VII | Ubusu                        |
Ushio Amagatsu


Amagatsu also works independently outside of Sankai Juku. In 1988 he created Fushi on the invitation of Jacob’s Pillow Foundation, in the U.S., with music by Philip Glass. In 1989, he was appointed the artistic director of the Spiral Hall in Tokyo where he directed Apocalypse (1989), and Fifth-V (1990). In February 1997, he directed Bluebeard’s Castle by Bartok conducted by Peter Eötvös at Tokyo International Forum. In March 1998, at Opéra National de Lyon, France, he directed Peter Eötvös’s opera Three Sisters (world premiere), which received “Prix du Syndicat National de la Critique, France.” Three Sisters has been seen in the 2001-2002 season at Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, at Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, at Opéra National de Lyon, and at Wiener Festwochen 2002 in Austria. In March 2008, Amagatsu directed Lady Sarashina, Peter Eötvös’s opera at Opéra National de Lyon (world premiere). Lady Sarashina again received “Prix du Syndicat National de la Critique, France” and it was seen at Opéra Comique in February 2009.

Amagatsu has also presided over the Jury of the International Meeting of Dance of Bagnolet in 1992, and in this year was awarded the “Chevalier de l’Ordre de l’Art et des Lettres” by French Cultural Ministry. In February 2002, Hibiki won the 26th Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Dance Production. In 2004, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology awarded Geijyutsu Sensho Prize (Art Encouragement Prize) to Amagatsu for his outstanding artistic achievement. In 2007, Toki won the Grand Prix of the 6th The Asahi Performing Arts Awards and Sanakai Juku received the KIRIN Special Grant for the Dance. In July 2011, he presided over the Jury of the 10th International choreographic competition of National Academy of Dance Grand Theater, Italy. In 2011, he received the Purple Ribbon Medal of the Japanese government. In October 2013, Sankai Juku received the Japan Foundation Award. In July 2014, he received the “Commandeur de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres” of the Ministry of Culture and Communication of France.

His latest book “DES RIVAGES D’ENFANCE AU BUTO DE SANKAI JUKU” was published in 2013 in France. It was published in 2015 in Japan as the special version, combining another book “DIALOGUE AVEC LA GRAVITE” and adding a chapter of essays and drawings.

About Sankai Juku

SANKAI JUKU is a Butoh dance company founded by Ushio Amagatsu in 1975. The company has premiered a new piece approximately once every two years at Théâtre de la Ville, Paris, a center for contemporary dance. Sankai Juku is one of the few dance companies that Théâtre de la Ville, Paris has commissioned continuously for 35 years.

Ushio Amagatsu, artistic director, trained in both classical and modern dance before he became immersed in Butoh. For Amagatsu, Butoh expresses the language of the body. In the 1970s, Amagatsu drew mostly on his own individual experience for inspiration. During the 1980s he spent most of his time working in Europe and the inspiration for his work became more universal. In his works, Amagatsu presents an abstract vision of the infinite and explores evolutionary movement. Major themes that he examines are the relationship of the body to gravity and the relationship between gravity, the earth and the environment.

In 1980, Sankai Juku was invited to perform in Europe for the first time. The company went to the Nancy International Festival in France with the firm conviction that Butoh would be accepted. This engagement marked a major turning point and made a name for both Sankai Juku and the term Butoh throughout Europe. The company has toured internationally
since 1980 and performed in over 700 cities in 45 countries throughout Europe, Asia, Oceania and the Americas. They have been highly praised in different cultures for over 35 years which is a testament to the universal nature of Sankai Juku’s work. While crossing over geographic boarders and appealing to diverse audiences, the company has been developing the themes of their work while searching for and moving towards new realms. Sankai Juku received the Japan Foundation Award in 2013.

For more information please visit www.sankaijuku.com.

Fundamental Theme of Sankai Juku’s Work
All of Sankai Juku’s work has been directed, choreographed and designed by Ushio Amagatsu, the founder of the company. Amagatsu sees Butoh as a “dialogue with gravity.” Using this as a starting point, he has developed his own method of pursuing themes that are universal to all human beings, such as “birth” and “death.” Amagatsu’s work has been recognized internationally for its originality and utilization of the language of the body, the universal nature of the themes and the aesthetic strength of the expression.

“Dance is composed of tension and relaxation of gravity just like the principle of life and its process. An unborn baby who is floating inside mother’s womb faces to the tention of the gravity as soon as s/he is born. The baby is just lying down in the beginning, and then started to crawl, stand with two feet, and then with one foot... That is why the dance is born with tension and relaxation.” Ushio Amagatsu, Vogue Hommes 98-99

“I have a vision that always exists inside of me, that is, two plates searching for a balance on the both ends of the scales by rotating and moving up and down. One plate carries culture, each of which has its own unique characteristic that might often appear mysterious and difficult to understand to the others. However, the difference is the basis of the culture, and thus, is important. The other plate carries universality that is common to all human beings. The difference and commonness are constantly moving for seeking a balance between two.”

Ushio Amagatsu. “Dialogue avec la Gravité” in ACTES POMEGRANATE ARTS
Pomegranate Arts is an independent production company dedicated to the development of international contemporary performing arts projects. Since its inception, Pomegranate Arts has conceived, produced, or represented projects by Philip Glass, Laurie Anderson, London’s Improbable Theatre, Sankai Juku, Dan Zanes, Lucinda Childs and Goran Bregovic. Special projects include the revival of Robert Wilson, Philip Glass, and Lucinda Childs’ Olivier award-winning production of Einstein on the Beach; Dracula: The Music And Film with Philip Glass and the Kronos Quartet; the music theater work Shockheaded Peter; Brazilian vocalist Virginia Rodrigues; Drama Desk Award winning Charlie Victor Romeo; Healing The Divide, A Concert for Peace and Reconciliation, presented by Philip Glass and Richard Gere; and Hal Willner’s Came So Far For Beauty, An Evening Of Leonard Cohen Songs. Current and upcoming projects include the international tour of Available Light by John Adams, Lucinda Childs and Frank Gehry, Taylor Mac’s A 24-Decade History of Popular Music, and a new work in development by Lucinda Childs, Philip Glass and James Turrell.

COMING UP AT CAP UCLA

Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker/Rosas
Then & Now
Fase, Four Movements to the Music of Steve Reich
Tue, Nov 10 at 8pm
Royce Hall
Verklärte Nacht
Fri, Nov 13 at 8pm
Royce Hall
Rosas danst Rosas
Thu, Nov 12 at 8pm
Royce Hall
Vortex Temporum featuring Ictus String Quartet
Sat, Nov 14 at 8pm
Royce Hall

POMEGRANATE ARTS
Producer
Linda Brumbach
Founder and President
Alisa E. Regas
Managing Director, Creative
Kaleb Kilkenny
Managing Director, Operations
Linsey Bostwick
Associate General Manager
Katie Ichtertz
Company Management Associate
Eva Amessé
Office Manager

Special Thanks: Kyoko Yoshida

Ann Carlson
The Symphonic Body UCLA
Sat, Nov 21 at 4pm & 8pm
Royce Hall