

Eiko Otake Begins Three-Year Appointment at Wesleyan University

Free lecture on **Wednesday, November 5, 2014 at 4:30pm**

Middletown, Conn. - **Eiko Otake** will return to **Wesleyan University** on a three-year appointment as a **Visiting Artist in Dance and the College of East Asian Studies**. She will be giving a lecture, titled "Nakedness," on **Wednesday, November 5, 2014 at 4:30pm** in the Seminar Room of the **Mansfield Freeman Center for East Asian Studies**, located at 343 Washington Terrace on the Wesleyan campus in Middletown, Connecticut. She will discuss physical, metaphorical, and metaphysical nakedness, and explore what it means for an artist to be naked. Admission to the lecture is free.

Since 1972, Japanese-born choreographer/dancer Eiko has collaborated with **Takashi Koma Otake** in creating a unique theater of movement out of stillness, shape, light, sound, and time. **Eiko & Koma** have received two New York Dance and Performance Awards, or "Bessies," as well as Guggenheim, MacArthur, and United States Artists Fellowships. They have also received the Samuel H. Scripps American Dance Festival Award and the *Dance Magazine* Award for "Lifetime Achievement in Modern Dance." In 2012, Eiko & Koma were among the first round of artists selected for the Doris Duke Performing Arts Awards.

Eiko has a thirteen-year performance history at the Center for the Arts, which began with a three-hour performance of "Offering," Eiko & Koma's response to 9/11, in the Ezra and Cecile Zilkha Gallery. Since then, Eiko has visited campus many times as a Center for Creative Research Artist-in-Residence, and then as a Wesleyan University Creative Campus Fellow to teach, to offer workshops, to curate events, and to give lectures.

"We are delighted to have Eiko at Wesleyan for an extended stay," said **Andrew Curran**, Wesleyan University's Dean of the Arts and Humanities and Director of Curricular Initiatives. "Her classes—which bring together movement, politics, and history—are among the most sought after within the entire curriculum. Eiko has also been a bridge among numerous faculty and departments, creating long-lasting links among different parts of the university community."

In the spring of 2015, Eiko will teach an interdisciplinary seminar called "Delicious Movement: Time is Not Even, Space is Not Empty." The course will cover literature on the atomic bomb, post-war Japan, and environmental violence, including the Fukushima nuclear explosions, and will have students contemplate metaphorical nakedness and human and bodily experiences of time and space.

In 2014, Eiko and long-time collaborator **William Johnston**, Professor of History and East Asian Studies at Wesleyan, made two extended visits to Fukushima, Japan. They went into areas severely affected by the explosions of the Daiichi plants, which were damaged during the massive earthquake and tsunami that hit the northeast Japanese coast in 2011. "In placing my body in these contaminated places, I danced again in mourning and remorse," said Eiko.

Over 70 haunting photographs from this trip are the basis of Eiko and William Johnston's exhibition "**A Body in Fukushima**," which will be displayed in all three Wesleyan art galleries between February and May 2015, the first time that the three galleries have collaborated on the presentation of a single exhibition. In conjunction with the exhibition, Eiko will perform a series of work-in-progress solo performances, a part of her "A Body in Places" project, in various non-theatrical and "odd" locations across campus. The performance schedule will be announced later this fall.

"A Body in Fukushima" was co-commissioned by Wesleyan University and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia; made possible by funds from the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, the Japan Foundation, the Center for the Arts Creative Campus Initiative and the Office of Academic Affairs, Wesleyan University. "A Body in Fukushima" will also be exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art, Philadelphia, and the Galleries of Contemporary Art, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs before traveling to Wesleyan.

"A Body in Fukushima" will be on display in all three Wesleyan University art galleries as follows. Admission to all three galleries is free. All three galleries are closed on Mondays.

- Tuesday, February 3 through Thursday, March 5, 2015 from Noon to 4pm: **Davison Art Center**, 301 High Street, Middletown, Connecticut.
- Tuesday, February 3 through Sunday, February 15, 2015 from Noon to 5pm: **Ezra and Cecile Zilkha Gallery**, South Gallery, 283 Washington Terrace, Middletown, Connecticut.
- Tuesday, February 3 through Sunday, May 24, 2015 from Noon to 4pm: **Mansfield Freeman Center for East Asian Studies Gallery**, 343 Washington Terrace, Middletown, Connecticut

An artist conversation and opening receptions will be held in all three galleries on **Thursday, February 5, 2015** from **5pm to 7pm**. (The snow date is Tuesday, February 10, 2015 from 5pm to 7pm.) The openings will begin with an artist conversation with Eiko Otake and William Johnston at 5pm in the CFA Hall, located at 287 Washington Terrace on the Wesleyan campus, followed by receptions in all three galleries. Admission to the artist conversation and opening receptions is free.

About the Center for the Arts

Wesleyan University's Center for the Arts exists to catalyze people's creativity by engaging them in the dynamic work of diverse artists.

Three inter-related activities enable the CFA to realize its purpose:

- supporting the research, public productions and in-studio teaching needs of the departments of Art and Art History, Dance, Music, and Theater;
- leading inter-disciplinary collaborations and other initiatives that integrate artists into creative curricular and co-curricular initiatives; and
- organizing powerful encounters between visiting artists and diverse elements of the

Wesleyan community, the greater Middletown community, statewide, and regional audiences.

The Center for the Arts' eleven-building complex on the Wesleyan campus opened in the fall of 1973, and includes the 400-seat Theater, the 260-seat Hall, the World Music Hall (a non-Western performance space), the 400-seat Crowell Concert Hall, the Ezra and Cecile Zilkha Gallery, and classrooms and studios.

The Center for the Arts gratefully acknowledges the support of its many generous funders and collaborators, including the Association of Performing Arts Presenters, the Connecticut Office of the Arts, Dance/USA, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the New England Foundation for the Arts, as well as media sponsors the Hartford Courant, Shore Publishing, WESU 88.1FM, and WNPR.

For more information about Center for the Arts, please call (860) 685-3355, or visit <http://www.wesleyan.edu/cfa>.

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