

Sankai Juku

Utsushi

Between Two Mirrors

Tuesday, October 22, 2019

7:30 pm



Photo: ©Sankai Juku



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Sankai Juku

Utsushi *Between Two Mirrors*

Tuesday, October 22, 2019, at 7:30 pm
Hancher Auditorium, The University of Iowa

Choreography, Concept and Direction by

USHIO AMAGATSU

Music by

YAS-KAZ, YOICHIRO YOSHIKAWA

Assistant Director

SEMIMARU

Dancers

**SHO TAKEUCHI, AKIHITO ICHIHARA,
DAI MATSUOKA, NORIHITO ISHII,
SHUNSUKE MOMOKI, TAIKI IWAMOTO**

Costume Realization

MASAYO IIZUKA

Co-produced by

**CNCDN, Centre National de Création et de diffusion,
Châteauvallon (France), Sankai Juku (Tokyo, Japan)**

North American Tour Produced by

POMEGRANATE ARTS

LINDA BRUMBACH, Executive Producer

ALISA E. REGAS, Associate Producer

Sankai Juku's 2019 North American tour is supported by the Agency for Cultural Affairs,
Government of Japan through the Japan Arts Council, and Shiseido Co., Lt



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SANKAI JUKU

Artistic Director, Choreography, Design
USHIO AMAGATSU

Music
YAS-KAZ
YOICHIRO YOSHIKAWA

Assistant Director
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Dancers
SHO TAKEUCHI
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NORIHITO ISHII
SHUNSUKE MOMOKI
TAIKI IWAMOTO

Stage Manager
KAZUHIKO NAKAHARA

Lighting Technician
GENTA IWAMURA

Sound Technician
JUNKO MIYAZAKI

Set Technician
KEISUKE WATANABE

Costume Realization
MASAYO IIZUKA

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About the Artists

USHIO AMAGATSU (Director, Choreographer, and Designer) was born in Yokosuka, Japan, in 1949, and founded Sankai Juku in 1975. He created *Amagatsu Sho* (1977), *Kinkan Shonen* (1978), and *Sholiba* (1979) before the first world tour in 1980. Since 1981, France and Théâtre de la Ville, Paris, have become his places for creation and work, and in this year he created *Bakki* for Festival d'Avignon. At Théâtre de la Ville, Paris, he has created successfully *Jomon Sho* (1982), *Netsu no Katachi* (1984), *Unetsu* (1986), *Shijima* (1988), *Omote* (1991), *Yuragi* (1993), *Hijomeki* (1995), *Hibiki* (1998), *Kagemi* (2000), *Utsuri* (2003), *Toki* (2005), *Tobari* (2008), *Kara•Mi* (2010), *Umusuna* (2012), *Meguri* (2015), and *ARC* (2019). *ARC* was world-premiered in March at Kitakyushu Performing Arts Center and presented at Théâtre de la Ville, Paris, in April and May this year.

Amagatsu also works independently outside 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 as Artistic Director of the Spiral Hall where he directed *Apocalypse* (1989) and *Fifth-V* (1990). In February 1997, he directed *Bluebeard's Castle* by Bartók, conducted by Peter Eötvös, at the 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 and in Teatr Wielki, Polish National Opera, in Warsaw in April 2013.

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 the 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 Sankai Juku received the KIRIN Special Grant for the Dance. In July 2011, he has 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 Awards. In July 2014, he received the "Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres" of the Ministry of Culture and Communication of France. In July 2016, he was given the Flying Mercury Prize by the 27th international Florence Dance Festival.

His latest book, *Des rivages d'enfance au butô de Sankai Juku*, was published in 2013 in France. It was published in 2015 in Japan as a special edition, combining another book, *Dialogue avec la gravité*, and adding a chapter of essays and drawings.

SANKAI JUKU is a Butoh dance company, founded by Ushio Amagatsu in 1975. It has toured internationally since 1980, and it world premieres a new piece approximately once every two years at Théâtre de la Ville, Paris, the center of contemporary dance of the world. It is one of the few dance



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About the Artists

companies that Théâtre de la Ville, Paris, has commissioned continuously for more than 35 years.

Since its first world tour in 1980, Sankai Juku has performed in over 700 cities and in 48 countries throughout Europe, North, Middle, and South Americas, Asia, and Oceania. It has been highly praised in different cultures for over 35 years, which itself shows the universal nature of its work. Crossing over several geographical borders as well as generations, its work has reached to an original form of aesthetics that brings the audience to grasp her/his inner movement. By performing for audiences from different backgrounds, it has continuously been developing its theme, and searching for and moving toward a new realm.



Photo: ©Sankai Juku

FUNDAMENTAL THEME OF SANKAI JUKU'S WORK

All Sankai Juku's works have been directed, choreographed, and designed by Ushio Amagatsu, founder of the company. Amagatsu defines Butoh as a "dialogue with gravity." From there, he has developed his own method of pursuing internal nature that is universal to all human beings, such as "birth" and "death." Amagatsu's work has been recognized internationally by his choreographical language, the universality of its subject, and his aesthetics.

Each of the meetings with Sankai Juku is a promise of a vague beauty...In his way, and not so different to that of a painter, Ushio Amagatsu creates universes like interior worlds.

—Philippe Noisette, dance critic
Théâtre de la Ville 2015–2016 program

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, published by Actes Sud



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Pomegranate Arts is the North American representation of Sankai Juku.
pomegranatearts.com
info@pomarts.com

Founder and Director Linda Brumbach
Managing Director, Creative Alisa E. Regas
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Unetsu, 1990
Photo: Philip Martin

From the Archives

Performances by Sankai Juku, presented by Hancher Auditorium

1987/1988

Kinkan Shonen (The Kumquat Seed)

October 26, 1987, at 8:00 pm

1990/1991

Unetsu (The Egg Stands Out of Curiosity)

November 16-17, 1990, at 8:00 pm

1993/1994

Shijima (The Darkness Calms Down in Space)

October 5, 1993, at 8:00 pm

1999/2000

Hibiki (Resonance from Far Away)

October 1-2, 1999, at 8:00 pm

Co-commissioned by Hancher Auditorium

2019/2020

Utsushi (Between Two Mirrors)

October 22, 2019, at 7:30 pm



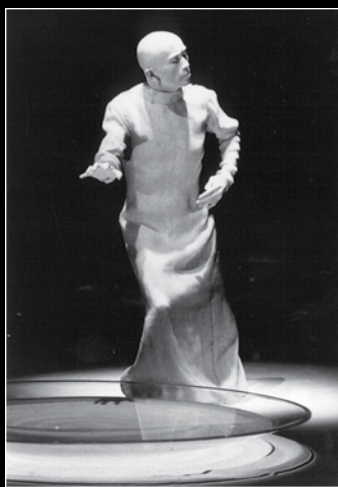
Kinkan Shonen, 1987



Unetsu, 1990



Shijima, 1993



Hibiki, 1999



Utsushi (2019)
Photo: ©Sankai Juku

Program Notes

by Mark Rheame

Typically, the program notes at Hancher aim to synthesize the historical context of a work with an artist's presentation. But for tonight's program, that job is particularly challenging. Sankai Juku exercises Butoh, a medium that resembles dance, but evades such a simple definition. Author Sondra Fraleigh describes it as "...a borderless art for a borderless century," but the enigma of Butoh doesn't stop there. The term and the act itself are morphing as time progresses and as each artist seeks a new or a purer Butoh.

So in place of an historical profile or an archaic and rigid definition, it might be more fruitful to share the rich tapestry of definitions for Butoh, and to invite you, our audience, to imagine perhaps how Sankai Juku might define Butoh.

The dancer through the Butoh spirit confronts the origins of his fears. A dance which crawls towards the bowels of the earth...I don't believe this is possible with European dance.

—Tatsumi Hijikata

. . .

While the Western dances or dancers want to express their energies or powers toward the sky, Butoh dancers look for the energies down toward the earth. As if you have the god in the heaven, and also the god in the earth. Though the energies go downward, it means they are looking for their identity in their own inner world. You can also say that the energy or the power of the Butoh dancers is just as the root of a pine tree filled with much energy. But the western dancers like a tall straight tree going upward and upward and upward, trying to reach heaven. I think that is the main difference between Butoh and Western dancers.

—Hosoe Eikoh

. . .

[Butoh] started out as Buyoh. [Hijikata] and others tried to create a new and true Buyoh. It wasn't Butoh then. But he noticed, as he went through trials and errors, that the word Buyoh sounded like something flabby. It sounded soft and unreliable. He wanted something harder sounding. Eventually he found the word Butoh. What he liked was its sound, rather than its meaning, which is "ballroom dancing." I think he intended to give the word an additional meaning...

—Nakamura Fumiyaki

. . .

Butoh begins with abandonment of the self.

—Unknown

. . .

A lightning bolt strikes a Butoh subject like this: it flows through the body and into the floor through the toes. It pulls the body, which begins to walk. And the body turns into an empty shell. This is the starting point of Butoh.

—Unknown

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Program Notes

I like the feeling of the texture of cocoons. A cocoon produces many threads. The threads come out so fast that my body is often left behind. At such times my body is empty. I wonder where my stomach and other organs have gone. But the threads that go out may be my organs or they may go out through all of my pores. They spread out into space, no one can stop them. All that's left of me is contours. In the meantime, my body remains in the cocoon and is suffocated. People often say that I 'm not moving or that I look like an idiot. Is it because I move too fast?

—Akeno Ashikawa

. . .

In Butoh...emotion is unforgettably etched in face and figure.

—Sondra Fraleigh

. . .

There's no philosophy in Butoh. But a new philosophy may emerge from it.

—Tatsumi Hijikata

Mark Rheäume is a PhD candidate in music composition at the University of Iowa, 2019.



Unetsu, 1990
Photo: Delahaye

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César Pelli (1926–2019)

Hancher architect and friend

César Pelli was a brilliant architect, and it was truly an honor to have him design the current Hancher Auditorium. We were even more honored to call him our friend.

That friendship began immediately after Pelli Clark Pelli Architects was selected to design a new Hancher Auditorium following the destruction of the original building by the flooding of 2008. César felt a personal connection to Hancher's work, and he made sure to connect with members of the staff and the University of Iowa community to ensure his ideas honored Hancher's past and elevate its future. At his firm's offices in New Haven, Connecticut, he devoted an entire room to the project, and he was always happy to share his thoughts about the building with visitors.

César was delighted by the beautiful setting—often commenting that it was the most gorgeous site for which he had designed a building—and he was committed to making the most of the space. He brought the indoors and the outdoors together in the lobby spaces and rehearsal room and designed an exceptional performance space.

His joy for the project was palpable from beginning to end. He came to Iowa City for the major milestones of the project, including our Site Ceremony connecting the original Hancher to the new, our Leave Your Mark beam signing (after which he joined hundreds of construction workers on the as-yet-unfinished stage for lunch), and our Gala Opening. On opening night, César took the stage with Hancher Executive Director Chuck Swanson to launch a new era for Hancher. We'll always remember his words that night: "Hancher was built with love."

We are saddened to lose our friend. We are blessed to have the opportunity to serve our campus and community in a building that will always stand as a tribute to César.

Above: César Pelli at the opening night of the Hancher Auditorium, 2016 (Photo: Bill Adams)
Opposite page photos: scale model of Hancher Auditorium at Pelli Clark Pelli offices in New Haven, 2012; Hancher Executive Director Chuck Swanson (seated) looks at scale model while César Pelli (holding glass) looks on from behind, 2012; Pelli and the rest of the Pelli Clark Pelli team in front of Hancher during the Leave Your Mark event, 2014, (Photo: Miriam Alarcón Avila); Pelli and Swanson in 2016 (Photo: Bill Adams); Pelli and Swanson at opening night of the new Hancher Auditorium, 2016 (Photo: Bill Adams); exterior of Hancher Auditorium (Jeff Goldberg/Esto).



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The Vision for Hancher Auditorium: A Lifetime Commitment

This is the first in a series of essays about Virgil Hancher and his vision for the arts in general, and Hancher Auditorium in particular, at the University of Iowa. The essays will appear in playbills throughout this season and will be available on the Hancher website, as well.

By Daniel Boscaljon

Virgil Hancher was born 04 Sept 1896 in Pocahontas County near Rolfe, Iowa, and attended the University of Iowa (called the State University of Iowa [SUI] through the vast majority of his lifetime). He toyed with transferring to Northwestern, but ultimately chose to complete his undergraduate studies and his J.D. at Iowa and received a B.A. from Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar (Hancher returned to Oxford to receive an M.A. when he completed law school). The combination of these experiences in his early years—small town Iowa, SUI, Evanston, and international education—remained important for the rest of Hancher's life. After serving on the board of the Alumni Association and as its president while an attorney in Evanston, Illinois, Hancher became the thirteenth president of the University, serving from 1940-1964. He died unexpectedly in New Delhi, India, on 30 January 1965, while working with the Ford Foundation and thus did not, as planned, return to Iowa as a part of the law school faculty.



Virgil Hancher in 1956

Hancher's recollection of his formative years as an undergraduate offers an initial indication of why he felt an urgency to create a space for community on campus. He wrote:

There were no dormitories for men, there was no student union, there was no orientation, and there were few organized activities in which a freshman could participate...He might make friends through his classes or a church group but, by and large, he led a lonely life.

Hancher's drive to create communities and connections is clear when considering his biography. Not only was he active in the alumni association, and a leader on multiple local, national, and international boards and organizations that ranged from education to religion, he was also relentless in forming and informing organizations that would bring humans together productively.

By 1940, when Hancher returned to Iowa, the campus had grown. Nonetheless, his vision for a space on campus where students could feel like part of a larger whole remained. Hancher sensed that SUI needed a space in which a community could come together that would stand apart from church and class as an essential part of human—and thus also student—life. He believed that the arts offer an essential contribution toward human vitality.

In the State University of Iowa Auditorium report of 1964, Earl Harper—who served as Director of the Iowa Memorial Union when that space had been the artistic heart of the campus—wrote the following as a way to summarize the “twenty years of dreaming, planning, and so many frustrations” about what became Hancher Auditorium:

Today...will be a movement fraught with great good for our community, a visible symbol of the unifying interest of the entire university family, administrators, faculty and staff members, students of every degree of advancement and of every curricular interest, alumni and friends of the university generally in a frequent coming together for those many, varied, and important interests, inspirations, pleasures, and intellectual stimulæ which only can be adequately implemented through such an auditorium, such an opera-symphony hall, such a musical theatre, such a center of convocations, lectures and parliamentary gatherings as is now authorized.

The thought that an auditorium could provide this particular sort of community seems almost quaint, given the current size and complex structure of the university system.

Yet what Harper envisions, and what Hancher Auditorium has continued to offer over the years, is a space for musing rather than amusement. While entertainment provides a way to passively pass the time, distracting audiences from their problems for a time of shared interaction, art's role is more serious. Art invites a level of engagement that harnesses mind and soul. It creates a space of wonder—not just to marvel at how humans can move or the sounds humans can make—but also a space to reflect on the meaning of our lives. Whether through speech, sound, or silence, the space of Hancher steadfastly inspires audiences to engage in meaningful experiences that provide a sense of depth—something remains memorable even if it cannot be put into words. Distractions rarely inspire more than a sense of waking up after it is done: the arts provide a sense of awakening during the performance.

This kind of community event—a coming alive around the space of creation rather than a waking up, individually, afterward—is what Hancher had in mind as a way to interrupt the tendency toward alienation and loneliness. Although Hancher felt that both religious communities and academic institutions provided important resources for a flourishing human life, he felt that the arts inspired a distinct sense of togetherness that was equally important. The Hancher Auditorium that exists today—rebuilt—is a continuation of this initial vision.

Daniel Boscaljon is a longtime contributor to arts writing in the ICR, often providing interviews, reviews, and essays on aesthetics for Little Village and The Englert as well as for Hancher. An independent scholar, teacher, and arts critic, he is committed to inviting others to incorporate wisdom and joy as part of everyday life. In addition to teaching workshops and holding free public conversations in the area, Daniel also has three current ventures including the Center for Humanist Inquiries (professional consultations), Coffee with Dan (spiritual direction and philosophical life coaching), and The Thoughtful Life (a non-profit venture that includes his "Making Space for Yourself" podcast). You can find his writing and more information about his services at danielboscaljon.com.



Photo: Zak Neumann

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