



Saburo Teshigawara / Ph. Toshiaki Yamaguchi

Saburo Teshigawara_KARAS
Saburo Teshigawara

a project for Collezione Maramotti and Fondazione I Teatri di Reggio Emilia

31 October – 5 November, 2017
Teatro Ariosto and Collezione Maramotti

The Saburo Teshigawara project, presented as part of the Festival Aperto 2017 programme and made possible through the long-standing partnership between Collezione Maramotti, Max Mara and Fondazione I Teatri, will feature the European premiere of the show *Tristan and Isolde* at Teatro Ariosto (31 October), an exclusive site-specific performance in the spaces of the Collection (1-5 November – five repeats) and a talk with the choreographer (Collezione Maramotti, 5 November).

This collaborative journey began in 2009 with a performance by the Trisha Brown Dance Company, and has consolidated over the years with biannual events (Shen Wei Dance Arts in 2011, Wayne McGregor | Random Dance in 2013, and Hofesh Shechter/Shechter Junior in 2015) in the hopes of fostering a new and exciting dialogue between the world of dance and the visual arts.

On 31 October, Teatro Ariosto will host the European opening of *Tristan and Isolde* (the world premiere took place in Tokyo in June 2016), starring Rihoko Sato and Teshigawara himself. The work is constructed upon excerpts from Richard Wagner's monumental opera *Tristan and Isolde*, re-imagined and rearranged as an original music and dance piece. The composition, with a musical texture characterised by repetition, rests on a belief in the fatality of doomed romance, in the infinite spiritual and metaphysical bond that exists between lovers, and in death as the only possible conclusion to love's journey. In keeping with Teshigawara's artistic vision, the choreography is a poetical voyage which spans diverse means of expression. Ostensibly lacking in narrative, the work gives precedence to the sensual over the rational: the bodies of the dancers, who play the star-crossed lovers, reach for our souls as ineffable messengers of the unspeakable.

Teshigawara, known for writing lines of poetry to accompany his own works, penned the following for *Tristan and Isolde*:

*Music in constant rippling waves and bodies which fill the space
A melody is born, modular and incessant, and reaches no place
Love and death are thus impossible*

From 1 to 5 November, the rooms of the Collezione Maramotti will house *Pointed Peak*, an original site-specific performance which Teshigawara created specifically for the occasion. The five repeats, starring the choreographer himself along with Rihoko Sato and Eri Wanikawa, represent a once-off opportunity to attend the show in the very place that inspired it and to which it is dedicated. When Teshigawara first visited the site last March, the history-rich spaces and the works of art housed inside triggered a strong emotional response in the choreographer, who immediately connected those sensations with important elements of his own artistic vision, such as his concept of movement as an existential condition. His is an intense, fluid and elegant physicality – one which is traversed by air and where air is both space and spirit. The inner and outer world come together in a style which has its roots in Japanese and martial tradition yet opens itself to western aesthetics, in creating sensory, poetic experiences laden with symbols and allusions.

During his visit at the Collezione Maramotti, the artist/choreographer shared a number of thoughts on life and its constant flux, on death as a passage of regeneration, and on the fluid metamorphosis of body and energy – all topics which will be explored during the talk scheduled for 5 November, following the performance's final repeat.

The site evoked within him a poem of existence and perception, of darkness and light, of transformation, conjuring images of a dancing body who strives to touch that supremely elusive point: the peak of the air.

Programme

31 October 2017

Teatro Ariosto, 8.30 p.m.

Tristan and Isolde

European Premiere

choreography and lighting design Saburo Teshigawara

dancers Rihoko Sato, Saburo Teshigawara

music Richard Wagner

production KARAS

1-5 November 2017

Collezione Maramotti

Pointed Peak

site-specific performance

Wednesday, 1 November, 7.00 p.m. (free visit to the permanent collection is possible 4.30 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.)

Thursday, 2 November, 8.30 p.m.

Friday, 3 November, 8.30 p.m.

Saturday, 4 November, 7.00 p.m. (free visit to the permanent collection is possible 4.30 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.)

Sunday, 5 November, 6.00 p.m. (free visit to the permanent collection is possible 3.30 p.m. – 5.00 p.m.)

choreography and lighting design Saburo Teshigawara

dancers Rihoko Sato, Saburo Teshigawara, Eri Wanikawa

supported by The Japan Foundation, Tokyo

Tickets on sale starting Monday, 26 June, on the website www.iteatri.re.it and at the ticket office of the Teatro Municipale Valli (days and hours of operation on the website www.iteatri.re.it)

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5 November 2017

Collezione Maramotti

Saburo Teshigawara in conversation with Stefano Tomassini

7.30 p.m.

Free admission on a first come first serve basis, reservation is recommended:

tel. +39 0522 382484 / email: info@collezionemaramotti.org

Editors' Notes

Saburo Teshigawara

Saburo Teshigawara (born 1953) is widely regarded as one of the world's leading contemporary choreographers. A versatile artist of sorts, he is also a painter, illustrator, sculptor and film maker. His extraordinary creative career began in 1981 in his native Tokyo, after studying plastic arts then taking up classical ballet at the age of 20. In 1985 he formed KARAS with Kei Miyata, and they began developing group choreographies as well as projects in several other areas (dance, film, exhibitions, opera, artistic and video installations). In Teshigawara's vision, dance is the central element of a vaster visual and sensory experience, for which he himself creates the set designs, costumes, musics and lighting. From the start, his work displayed the clear influence of butoh, a semi-improvisational form of dance theatre which originated in Japan in the 1950s, where very slow movements will suddenly give way to jerky, frenetic convulsions. Teshigawara's original style has always been defined by the extraordinary ability to modify the material state of his body, transitioning from slow, suspended moments, which seem to dilate time, into extremely quick sequences and sudden accelerations. His dancing, at once graceful and intense, embraces an amazing variety of expressions – from elation to despair passing through suspensions, wriggles, decelerations – through which the artist leads us into the elegant depths of his mystery.

In the words of the choreographer himself: *"Dance is sculpture. Sculpture of air, sculpture of places, sculpture of time... dancing, to me, means playing with the air. To feel the body as air and air as part of the body. Dance isn't limited to the movements of the body. It also incorporates the movements of the mind and those of the senses."*

In addition to his solo productions and those for the KARAS group, Teshigawara has received major international awards for his dancing, choreography and directing, and has been regularly invited to perform in the world's most important cities. In 1994-95 he was invited by William Forsythe to create choreographies for the Frankfurt Ballet, while in 1999 he staged *Le Sacre du Printemps* for Munich's Bayerisches Staatsballet and in 2000 he worked with the Nederlands Dans Theater. In February 2003 he was commissioned a new choreography, *AIR*, by the Ballet de l'Opéra National de Paris. In 2002, he created *Para-Dice* for the Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève, and *Vacant* in 2006. In 2010, Venice's Teatro La Fenice entrusted him with the direction, set design and costume design of the opera *Dido and Aeneas*. In July of 2011 he was hired by the Aix-en-Provence Festival to direct the opera *Acis and Galatea*. Saburo Teshigawara has also received international attention for his work in the visual arts field, which includes installations, film and video, in addition to the set, lighting and costume design which he personally creates for all of his pieces. He possesses a strong sense of composition and remains passionate about sculpture; his interest in music has led to collaborations with several musicians, while his fascination with the notions of space and time has resulted in unique site-specific works.

Beyond the many workshops organized at the KARAS studio in Tokyo, Teshigawara is involved in numerous educational projects. Recently, young members of the KARAS group are being selected through "Dance of Air", a yearly educational project culminating in the creation of a new choreography, which is then produced by Tokyo's New National Theatre. In the same spirit, in 1995 he launched S.T.E.P. (Saburo Teshigawara Education Project) together with partners from the United Kingdom. In 2004 he was selected as dance mentor for the *Rolex Mentor and Protege Arts Initiative*, where he got to work with a young "protégé" for a full year. Since 2014, he has been a Professor in the Department of Scenography, Theatre and Dance at Tama Art University. From 2006 to 2013, he taught at the College of Contemporary Psychology of St. Paul's (Ryukkyo) University. Through his projects, Teshigawara continues to nurture and inspire countless young dancers.

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Rihoko Sato

Rihoko Sato studied gymnastics in England and the United States, where she lived until age 15.

Having attended a KARAS workshop in 1995, she joined the Company the following year. She has performed in every KARAS production since, and has assisted Saburo Teshigawara in each of his creative projects. She is now recognised as one of the central figures in Saburo Teshigawara's creative universe. Her solo show *SHE*, directed by Teshigawara, was especially impressive and moving.

Thanks to her stunningly sensible body, she possesses an extraordinary dynamic variety which ranges from melting frailty to rapid intensity, reaching new dimensions of physical expressiveness.

Rihoko Sato has also assisted with KARAS' educational S.T.E.P. project, and has served as ballet mistress for Teshigawara's works commissioned by other companies.

In 2005, she received the Best Dancer Award at Les Étoiles de Ballet2000 in Cannes for *Scream and Whisper*, her pas de deux with Václav Kunes. In 2007 she received the Japan Dance Forum Award, and in 2012 she received the "Léonide Massine" Positano Award for Dance.

KARAS

KARAS was established in 1985 with Saburo Teshigawara and Kei Miyata as its principal members. The group's goal was to seek "a new form of beauty". Dance is an art form which eludes easy descriptions, as it includes elements of art and music as well as a methodology of consciousness and a vision of history. KARAS began delving into all these entities through a symbiotic exploration of body movements, visual arts, classical music and modern musical forms such as rock. Being an artist means facing those conservative socio-psychological restrictions which hide beneath a seemingly content surface.

"Everything moves forward, doesn't it?" Likewise, KARAS believes that art should never stagnate conservatively. "New discoveries must be made. Rather than make art in the conventional sense, according to the deep-rooted norms which have taken hold throughout history, we hope to act with our personal methods, seeking those possibilities which are still hidden. It may be that all we uncover are doubts or questions. But we wish to express them through action."

collezione maramotti

A place to be experienced as an open space for research and knowledge: this is the philosophy behind the **Collezione Maramotti**, brainchild of Achille Maramotti – entrepreneur, founder of Max Mara and passionate art collector.

Opened to the public in late 2007, the permanent collection is housed inside the company's former Reggio Emilia headquarters. It includes over two hundred works of art – by about one hundred international artists from 1950 to the present, including Acconci, Bacon, Basquiat, Burri, Clemente, Cragg, Fischl, Fontana, Gallagher, Manders, Manzoni, Merz, Ontani, Paladino, Sachs, Schifano, Schnabel, Twombly and Viola – and can be visited free of charge via appointment.

The Collection also organises temporary exhibits and commissions *ad hoc* projects to Italian and international artists, which then become part of its holdings. It is also a partner in the Max Mara Art Prize for Women in collaboration with Whitechapel Gallery.

www.collezionemaramotti.org

MaxMara

The **Max Mara Fashion Group**, founded by Achille Maramotti in 1951 and currently run by his children, is a leading international fashion house and the largest clothing company in Italy, with 2,300 stores around the world and 22 different collections sold in 105 countries.

www.maxmara.com

I TEATRI

The activities of Reggio Emilia's **Fondazione I Teatri** cover just about every area of live performance. For its many initiatives ranging from dance to drama, concerts to opera, kids' theatre and musicals to operetta, the foundation uses a theatre system which is unique in Italy: three theatres gathered around a single square in the heart of the city, each one unique both architecturally and in its schedule.

www.iteatri.re.it

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