YCAM dance performance / work in-residence (new piece, world premiere)

Hiroaki Umeda “Holistic Strata” (commissioned by YCAM)

February 19 (sat) 19:00 start / 20 (sun) 14:00 start, 2011

* The program also includes a performance of “Accumulated Layout” (2007)
* Talk events after each performance

Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM] Studio A

YCAM performing arts original production 2010 unveiled.
The criticality of perception highlighted in a spectacle of light, sound, and the human body

Hiroaki Umeda, a choreographer who has been attracting attention in Japan and abroad with his “visual performances” blending imagery, sound and dance, presents his brand new dance piece at the Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM]. Holistic Strata is a YCAM original production developed with the Center’s expert staff during the artist’s stay in Yamaguchi, with the aim to break new ground in the filed of body expression integrating media technology. Based on his own set designs mixing imagery and sound, Hiroaki Umeda equivalently combines in his pieces elements of light, sound, and the human body. For his audiences, these performances are opportunities to experience their own bodies’ primary reactions triggered by intensely stimulating light and sound. Visitors to the performance at YCAM are likely to witness another leap forward by the choreographer who has been harnessing information technology to conquer the world with nothing but his body and a computer. Look forward to a novel type of performance that will rock your body senses and challenge your perception.

http://holistic-strata.ymcajp/

INQUIRY
Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM]
Public Relations: Fumi Hirota
tel: +81-83-901-2222 fax: +81-83-901-2216 e-mail: information@ycam.jp
7-7 Nakazono-cho Yamaguchi-city 7530075 JAPAN http://www.ycam.jp/
Designing everything from choreography to imagery and sound
Hiroaki Umeda’s “visual performance” - Installations centering on the human body

Hiroaki Umeda takes charge not only on the choreography and dance, but also the optical designs and acoustic aspects of his stage productions. Interested in the effects of visual impact on the audience, he creates stimulating settings of intense lights and colors, which he synchronizes with his own improvised dance. The style that he creates is especially acclaimed in Europe and the USA. Most recently he was awarded an Honorary Mention for Adapting for Distortion at the Ars Electronica media art festival (digital music & sound art category) and enjoys a growing international reputation in various fields beyond the boundaries of dance.

Light, sound, and the human body as equivalent elements on stage
Lighting and sound are fundamental components of a stage production. In Umeda’s works, they don’t play a subordinate role in the presentation of dance, but they are equivalent elements on a level with the third component that is the artist’s body. These performances in which Umeda illustrates such abstract ideas as colors or lines based on his own emotions, and establishes connections between light, sound and the human body, are sometimes likened to installations.

Controlling the viewer’s sense of vision
How do we have to define dance in an age where various levels of “reality” mix against a backdrop of imagery and network environments? As if raising protest against the conception of dance as a form of art with an emphasis on the sense of vision, Umeda calls his style “visual performance” to highlight an even greater excess of sight. Aiming to control the images received by the viewer as visual information - separately from the representation of the body in performing arts - Umeda works with an extraordinarily ambitious and challenging attitude. He analyzes the body as a receptor of light, and composes pieces out of lights and colors for his audiences to experience the criticality of perception.

The portability of making flexible use of media technology
Hiroaki Umeda continues to present his works at the world’s leading festivals and performing arts venues. His compact tour setup - including not more than his own body and a computer - represents a very up-to-date style that surely benefits from the improvement and popularization of media technology in general. The multi-angle approach pursuing methods of realizing imagery and sound ideas in addition to choreography and dance hints at a contemporary type of performance that impresses with a high level of “portability”.
Holistic Strata: Layers of light, sound, and the human body
Spatial exercise by physical data - Engulfing the audience with sharp imagination

In addition to the characteristic elements of light and sound in his previous works, Hiroaki Umeda’s new piece Holistic Strata introduces a new system built around a key component of “physical data” generated by the dancer’s body and its movements. During his two-month residency at YCAM, Umeda’s creative work with an eye to touring the result on a global scale was based on the development of technologies and plans according to the piece’s concept, assisted by the YCAM InterLab team of media art specialists.

A further leap forward from Umeda’s tried and tested concept of treating light, sound and the human body as equivalent means of expression on stage, Holistic Strata revolves around the body as a complex cluster of information that configures actual spaces. The conversion into data for manipulating light and sound of dancer Umeda’s body data (movements of muscles and locomotion coordinates) with the help of sensing technology results in the creation of a scenery that incorporates dance, sound, and intensely blinking light. It will be challenging to see how the data of the body, broken up into the data (bit) as light and sound, will be represented in the viewer’s perception when Umeda implants his improvised dance in the surrounding space, and lets it arise right in front of the audience. Based on this system of freely generated imagination, Holistic Strata proposes “dance” as a spatial expression, while highlighting the criticality of our perception.

Profile

Hiroaki Umeda
Choreographer, dancer, visual artist

Born 1977 in Tokyo. Commenced his creative activities in 2000, when he launched the “S20” dance company. When the piece while going to a condition was staged at the Rencontres Choreographiques Internationals festival in France in 2002, the festival’s director Anita Mathieu referred to Umeda by speaking of “the emergence of a promising young choreographer.” In 2003, Umeda unveiled Finore in Montreal, and in 2004, Duo in Rio de Janeiro. Following a residency at French leading choreographer Philippe Decoufle’s studio, in 2007 he presented Accumulated Layout, a co-production with the Theatre National de Chaillot (France) that was subsequently invited to the Kunsten Festival des Arts (Belgium), London’s Barbican, the Romaeuropa Festival, the Centre Pompidou (Paris), and other prime festivals and venues around the world. In 2008, Umeda presented Haptic and Adapting for Distortion, two co-productions with the Festival d’Automne (Paris) and Romaeuropa Festival respectively. He began to work as a choreographer in 2009, and showed T. centrifugal, his first piece for a group of dancers, in Japan and Finland. In 2010, he was awarded a Honorary Mention at the international media art festival Ars Electronica (Linz, Austria). At the “Aichi Triennale 2010” international art festival, he showed a dance performance and an interactive installation incorporating light and sound.

http://hiroakiumeda.com/
**Event data**

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(new piece, world premiere)

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(commissioned by ycam)

**February 19 (sat), 2011 19:00 start**  
**20 (sun) 14:00 start** (Venue opens 30 minutes prior to the start)

* The program also includes a performance of “Accumulated Layout” (2007).
* Talk events after each performance

**Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM]**

**website**  
http://holistic-strata.ycam.jp/

Choreography/ Dance: Hiroaki Umeda

Organized by: Yamaguchi City Foundation for Cultural Promotion  
In association with: Yamaguchi City, Yamaguchi City Board of Education  
Grants from: Japan Foundation for Regional Art-Activities (JAFRA), THE SEASON FOUNDATION, EU-Japan Fest.Japan Committee  
Equipment cooperation: Color Kinetics Japan Incorporated  
Supported by the Agency for Cultural Affairs Government of Japan in the fiscal 2010  
Co-developed with: YCAM InterLab  
Produced by: Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media [YCAM]

**Related Events**

**YCAM Backstage Tour**

**February 5 (sat), 6 (sun) 14:00-15:00**  
Admission free

Full tour on each day; number of participants limited to 30 per tour (reservation required)

Navigator: Hiroaki Umeda , YCAM education staff

Target group: Elementary school students and older  
(students in grade 1-3 must be accompanied by a parent)

In another installment of the popular backstage tour, attendants will again have the opportunity to witness the creation of a new dance piece. A fun event for the whole family, this year’s tour around the venue will once again include explanations of technologies used in the work that gradually takes shape in front of the participants’ eyes, as well as exclusive behind-the-scenes stories and opportunities to study the stage equipment.

* English-speaking participants are welcome to the workshop.  
Email workshop10@ycam.jp for more information.

**Talk event**

Talk events with Hiroaki Umeda will take place after each performance.  
* Admission only with performance ticket

19 (sat) Guest: Kazuhiko Hachiya (Media artist)  
20 (sun) Guest: Satoru Higa (Artist / Programmer)

Talk events with Hiroaki Umeda will take place after each performance. On February 19 (Sat), Umeda will discuss the main appeal of Holistic Strata, while the event on the following day will include a presentation introducing the technology used in the piece.  
* Japanese only

**Ticket information**

**Admission:** (Free seating)

[Advanced tickets] ¥2,800  
‘any’ members & special discounts ¥2,500 / Under 26 ¥2,000  
[Tickets at the door] ¥3,300

YCAM ticket information desk:  
Phone: +81-83-920-6111  
(10:00-19:00 / closed on Tuesdays or on Wednesdays in case Tuesday is a public holiday)

Online:  
http://www.ycfcp.or.jp/  
(open 24 hours, user registration required: Japanese only)

* Special discount: A special discount is available for seniors over 65, as well as for handicapped persons and one accompanying care person each. Children of preschool age or younger are not admitted.
* Please note that the performance involves intense light and sound, and therefore may not be suited for small children and visitors sensitive to strong acoustic/visual impact.
* Childcare service: This service is available for children aged six months or older.  
Times: From 30 minutes prior to the performance until 30 minutes after the performance  
Fees: ¥500 for one child; ¥300 per child for two or more children  
Application: Applications must be made one week prior to the event at the latest via the ticket information desk.
* Wheelchairs: Please contact the venue for information