



IZANAMI

Body & Sound performance

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Here is a description of the composite Izanami # project



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Izanami

Izanami # is a butoh/noise serial performance about transformation. An immersive experimental trip into death throes, a shape-shifting poetic sacrifice and metamorphosis that transcend body and matter, exposing the invisible.

The many faces of life and death



Definitely a dark joke, the *Izanami #* series is a brash suicidal gibe, an oniric **descent into the underworld**, a sinuous path through *transmogrifying* forces, in an eternal quest for **catharsis**.

Myths



In the Japanese cosmogony, Izanami is the **creation goddess** of life and death. We rely on Japanese myths and magic (a complex mesh of supernatural forces like deities, spirits, **yōkai** and conjured objects) that combine both ancestral tradition and modern technology, to perform this **mutation** process.

Modern era

We are interested in modern myths as well (when industrial estates and commercial centres have become temples, artificial intelligence challenges our conception of the living, and robots can acquire souls and become forces of creation and destruction...) (cf. [Tetsuo](#)).

Butoh

This ritual and symbolic journey is embodied by a dance that freely draws from **butoh's energy and imagination**. Often referred to as "the dance of darkness", butoh places life and death in a cyclical continuum. The body pursues a progression in dynamics and tension, creating **hypnotic motives and expressive tableaux**, inherent to each tale and performing space.

Creative process

Izanami # is devised as a series of **site-specific** performances, following a **stage protocol** that combines dance, music, light and video (when practicable).

We conceive a **choreographic and musical trajectory** in space, reflecting a storyline that shapes a **flexible structure** into which we **improvise** motion and sound for about **40 to 50 minutes**, following preset baselines.

Constant features & variations



The consideration of **death as the first principle of transformation** is the main common feature of the works' ensemble.

Our research focuses on the Japanese supernatural entities and spirits known as **yōkai**: magical creatures, monsters, humans whose life turned the wrong way, among which many representations of women deceived by life, war, men...

With each opus of *Izanami #* being **autonomous, unique and site-specific**, we use an intuitive approach to envision a performing space, while relating to the **background and special aspects of the location** (such as architecture, history, usage, acoustics...) as an **inspirational** starting point. Each new site brings **unique singularities** to the piece (narrative elements, materials, pictures and sounds...).

Consecutively, music/sound design and dance/body motion's style **infer** from these elements. The relative **emergency** of creation conditions the **rawness** of the act.

Depending on the type of space, the performance can be devised for a frontal audience or other forms of representation (circulation within the audience, promenade...).



*"Jiko", first variation premiere at l'Embobineuse (November 1, 2024, for the 20th anniversary's opening) taking the **car accident** as the starting point.*



Ascension and transformation on stage, arrival point.

The Masks

"The mask is the expression of the man who has no masks", Peter Brook

With the idea of "**possession**" by the mask, the oni masks were created as a concrete instrument of impersonation. A way for the wearer to **transcend into a demon** and even exorcise it.



The eye openings are not empty holes, but a **channel symbolically connected with what lies beyond**. The difference in the materials characterizes the soul of the mask.

Artists

We are no experts on Japanese culture, but it still nourished us for all our lives. We approach this cultural patrimony with a necessary humility, but nonetheless aware of this old tradition between Japan and Western countries, France among them, consisting in mutual inspirations going back and forth since at least the 19th century.

[Impressionnists, Paul Grimault, The Nouvelle vague movement, Moebius, Édith Piaf altered Japanese culture the same way that japonism, Miyazaki, *Akira* and all the mangas, video games, Kurozawa, Issei Myake, Murakami... nurtured us here... On each side, these inspirations are partially intuitive, sometimes born from misunderstood cultural elements, diverted from their original meaning, transformed to be translated... sometimes completely transmitted and incorporated to the "receiving" culture.]

This never-ending exchange always carries a part of mystery and incomprehension. We honor it and will be waiting for the opportunity to share our work with a Japanese audience to get feedback and if needed, adjust what needs to be.

Barbara Do



Barbara Do is a dancer, actress, and director. She composes and interprets experimental choreographic performances following stage frameworks in which she reactively commits her body.

Her movements are mostly influenced by her butoh practice and a radical and aesthetic form of contemporary theatre, in order to create hybrid and symbolic partitions in which dramatic intensity is conveyed by organic presence and movements.

She studied and lived in Marseille, London and Chicago, played in several theatre and cinema productions (directed by Mati Diop, Pascal Tessaud, Manon Worms, Edith

Amsellem...), and is now working on her own creations as performer, choreographer and director.

Her last notable works include performer in *Matsuri*, choreographed by Yumiko Yoshioka and Natsuko Kono (BIG, Schlöss Brollin, August 2024), and director of *Red Black and Ignorant* by Edward Bond in Marseille and London, (Théâtre de la Mer/Dartmouth House June/July 2024).

> [Instagram: bebajoans](#)

Nora Neko



Nora Neko is a musician, performer, and visual artist who mixes electronic instruments and DIY objects to build multiple layers between Ambient-Noise and bruitist Techno.

Other artworks involve video, primitive electromechanics, interactive or autonomous art (cinetic machines, coded visuals...), performance. Toured in France, Poland, Belgium, Turkey, Greece, Serbia, Netherlands, Germany, Czech republic, Switzerland...

> [2023 Book](#) | [Soundworks](#) | [Installations](#)

> [Instagram: noranekomars](#)

Rah Cerere



Rachele Cerelli, art name Rah Cerere, has been working as a tattoo artist for ten years, during which she experimented with new interpretations of the ancient practice. In this activity, she constantly investigates the body and the relationship of the graphic sign engraved on the skin, its ritual and social value.

She started making masks in 2017. Produced in different materials, from paper mache to wood, up to a single piece in aluminum, the masks are created as a ritual and therapeutic tool. They have their own energy and when worn they reveal a hidden side of those who let themselves be possessed.

As an illustrator she has collaborated with magazines and fashion brands (Givenchy, 2018). In the meantime, she has been working on ritualistic performances. She participated in festivals in the UK (*Emergency 2019*, *Threshold Festival*, *Spill Yer Tea*), and collaborated with the experimental music projects *Spine Liverpool* and *The Mekano Set*. The documentary version of her performance *Solve et Coagula 22* participated in the First Hermetic Film Festival.

> [Instagram: rah cerere](#)