

BlackBox Ensemble and The Noguchi Museum Present *Space/Time/Memory: Sonic Landscapes by Thorvaldsdottir, Takemitsu, Figgis-Vizueta, and Fujikura*

Wednesday, November 8, 2023, 7–9 pm
The Noguchi Museum, 9-01 33rd Road, Long Island City, New York
Free with RSVP: tickets.noguchi.org/space-time-memory



Isamu Noguchi, *Memorial to the Dead, Hiroshima* (unrealized; designed 1952, model c. 1982). Granite. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 00351. © INFGM / ARS



Blackbox Ensemble. blackboxensemble.org

New York, NY – **BlackBox Ensemble** and **The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum** present a concert program of sonic landscapes designed to explore our relationship with space, time, objects, and memory. The performance by the BlackBox Ensemble, a New York City-based contemporary music collective, takes place in the main first-floor indoor gallery of The Noguchi Museum on Wednesday, November 8, from 7–9 pm. The program features the world premiere of the English-language version of *Borrowed Landscape*, a narratorio written and directed by playwright duo **tauchgold** (Heike Tauch and Florian Goldberg) and composer **Dai Fujikura**, performed by BlackBox Ensemble musicians **Teagan Faran**, **Yifei Xu**, and **Samuel Zagnit** and actors **Liz Dutton**, **Michael Bertolini**, **Melani Camille Michiko Carrié**, and **Thomas Deen Baker**. The program will also include compositions by **Anna Thorvaldsdottir**, **inti figgis-vizueta**, and **Toru Takemitsu** conducted by BlackBox Ensemble Artistic Director and Conductor **Leonard Bopp**. Tickets are free with RSVP: tickets.noguchi.org/space-time-memory. Learn more: noguchi.org/events.

Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988) conceived of his Museum as a continuously changing “total environment” where one’s awareness may be celebrated and expanded. Each of the musical compositions presented in this program maps unique sonic spaces for contemplation. Presented amidst and in dialogue with Noguchi’s sculpted environment, they will take on new and unexpected resonances.

The final work in this four-part program will be the premiere of *Borrowed Landscape*, which originated as a German-language radio play with music by Dai Fujikura and text, scenario, and direction by tauchgold. BlackBox Ensemble and The Noguchi Museum are honored to present this work for the first time in a live concert setting, with a new English translation.

The play tells the story of three special instruments: a Stradivarius violin walled up in a cellar in Budapest, a double bass left behind on the flight to Erez Israel, and a piano left behind after the bombing of Hiroshima. As the musicians of the trio play these instruments, they unlock the histories and secrets they carry.

The work is inspired in part by the story of Akiko Kawamoto, a young American-born Japanese girl living in Hiroshima during the time of the 1945 atomic bombing. Though she tragically did not survive that horrific incident, her piano, an upright Baldwin, did, and is played every year on the anniversary of the bombing. Honoring Akiko's life and her piano, and other surviving instruments that were almost lost to history, the work is meant to reflect on the nature of memory and loss contained within objects. The title of the work alludes to the ancient Asian gardening technique in which faraway views—perhaps of distant mountains—are incorporated into the garden design, and speaks to the worlds gathered and contained within the environments we construct.

The performance of this work coincides with The Noguchi Museum's reinstallation of Isamu Noguchi's model for his unrealized *Memorial to the Atomic Dead*. In 1952, Noguchi designed a memorial for Hiroshima Peace Park to honor the victims of the bombing of Hiroshima, a proposal which was ultimately rejected. In the 1980s, Noguchi adapted his original concept and proposed an updated memorial—meant to honor all victims of atomic weapons in Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and beyond—to be installed somewhere in the United States. Although this was also never realized, Noguchi placed his model for the memorial on permanent display at the Museum.

PROGRAM

Anna Thovaldsdottir (b. 1977)

Ró, 2013, 11 minutes

Toru Takemitsu (1930–1996)

Rain Spell, 1982, 10 minutes

inti figgis-vizueta (b. 1993)

Form the Fabric, 2020, 7 minutes

Dai Fujikura and tauchgold

Borrowed Landscape, 2022, 60 minutes (English language premiere)

Broadcast premiere: June 18, 2022, Deutschlandfunk

CAST: *Borrowed Landscape*

Voice 1: Liz Dutton (a Female Concertmaster)

Voice 2: Michael Bertolini (Double Bass Player)

Voice 3: Melani Camille Michiko Carrié (Pianist)

Voice 4: Thomas Deen Baker (Chorus Voice)

ENSEMBLE

Leonard Bopp, Conductor and Artistic Director

Teagan Faran, Violin*

Yifei Xu, Piano*

Samuel Zagnit, Bass*

Annie Nikunen, Flute
Tyler Neidermayer, Clarinet
Lauren Conroy, Violin
Dudley Raine IV, Viola
Jordan Bartow, Cello
J Clancy, Percussion

**Borrowed Landscape* trio

Stage Direction: tauchgold
(with the artist duo in attendance)

ABOUT BLACKBOX ENSEMBLE

The BlackBox Ensemble is a collective of young contemporary music performers based in New York City dedicated to exploring the experimental boundaries of the music of our time through projects that are innovative, impactful, and resonant with our times. Founded in 2018, their 2023–24 season is their most ambitious to date, with major performances in New York City and beyond, including touring engagements in Washington, DC, Florida, Michigan, and throughout the Northeast. The ensemble believes that music, as a cultural medium, fills the role of the “black box,” enacting an ambiguous but vital relationship between artistic expression and social life. In doing so, they strive to follow the inspiration of the theatrical definition—to foster experimentation, innovation, and human connection.

blackboxensemble.org



ABOUT DAI FUJIKURA

Born in 1977 in Osaka, Japan, Fujikura was fifteen when he moved to the United Kingdom. The recipient of many composition prizes, he has received numerous international co-commissions from the Salzburg Festival, Lucerne Festival, BBC Proms, Bamberg Symphony, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra and more. He has been Composer-in-Residence of Nagoya Philharmonic Orchestra since 2014 and held the same post at the Orchestre national d’Île-de-

France in 2017/18. Fujikura was the youngest composer ever to win the Serocki International Composers Competition in 1998. Since then, he has been awarded many other prizes including the Ivor Novello and Royal Philharmonic Society Awards, the Internationaler Wiener Composition Prize, the Paul Hindemith Prize, the 19th Akutagawa Composition Award, the Silver Lion from Venice Biennale and the WIRED Audi Innovation Award. He is currently focusing his attention on upcoming works including an opera on the life of Hokusai, a concerto for two orchestras, and a double concerto for flute and violin. Fujikura regularly works with artists from many other musical genres such as experimental pop and improvisation including with Norwegian improvisers Jan Bang and Sidsel Endresen. Since 2015, he has been leading composition classes for children from 4 to 14 years old in Soma, Fukushima, as a part of El Sistema Japan and sponsored by LVMH Japan. Since 2017 he has been the Artistic Director of the Born Creative Festival at the Tokyo Metropolitan Theater. His works are recorded by and released mainly on his own label Minabel Records in collaboration with SONY Music and his compositions are published by Ricordi Berlin. **daifujikura.com**



ABOUT TAUCHGOLD

Since 2007, tauchgold (Heike Tauch und Florian Goldberg) have been realizing projects together at the interface of radio and stage. Their works include social satires, historical dramas and philosophical material. Individually composed music always plays a central role in these works. In 2019, their stage work *Das Gläserne Meer – Ein Narratorium für Streicher und Stimmen* (*The Glassing Sea – A Narratorio for Strings and Voices*) premiered in Munich, with a composition by Cathy Milliken based on the radio play *Metamorphoses*. For *Borrowed Landscape – A Narratorio for Piano Trio and Voices* (DLF, 2022), composer Dai Fujikura contributed the music. In 2022, tauchgold took on the conception and direction of *Mensch, Musik!*, an experimental, interdisciplinary concert series by the Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin (RSB) with the goal of exploring the future of symphonic music. tauchgold.de



ABOUT ANNA THORVALDSDOTTIR

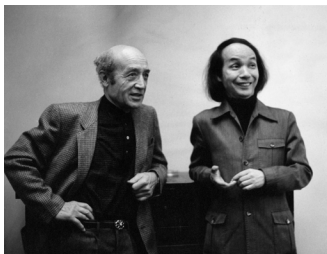
Anna Thorvaldsdottir's (b. 1977) "seemingly boundless textural imagination" (*New York Times*) and striking sound world has made her "one of the most distinctive voices in contemporary music" (NPR). Her music is composed as much by sounds and nuances as by harmonies and lyrical material—it is written as an ecosystem of sounds, where materials continuously grow in and out of each other, often inspired in an important way by nature and its many qualities, in particular structural ones, like proportion and flow. Thorvaldsdottir's music is widely performed internationally and has been commissioned by many of the world's leading orchestras, ensembles, and arts organizations. Portrait concerts with her music have been featured at several major venues and music festivals, including Wigmore Hall, Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart Festival in NYC, London's Spitalfields Music Festival, Münchener Kammerorchester's Nachtmusic der Moderne series, the Composer Portraits Series at NYC's Miller Theatre, the Leading International Composers series at the Phillips Collection in Washington DC, Knoxville's Big Ears Festival, Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art, Brooklyn's National Sawdust, and Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra's Point Festival. Thorvaldsdottir is currently Composer-in-Residence with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra. In 2023, she will also be in residence at the Aldeburgh Festival and at the Tanglewood Festival of Contemporary Music. She holds a PhD (2011) from the University of California in San Diego. annathorvalds.com



ABOUT INTI FIGGIS-VIZUETA

New York-based composer inti figgis-vizueta (b.1993) braids a childhood of overlapping immigrant communities and Black-founded Freedom schools—in Chocolate City (DC)—with direct Andean and Irish heritage and a deep connection to the land. "Her music feels sprouted between structures, liberated from certainty and wrought from a language we'd do well to learn" writes *The Washington Post*. inti's work explores the transformative power of group improvisation and play, working to reconcile historical aesthetics and experimental practices with trans and Indigenous futures. Recent highlights include the Carnegie Hall premiere of her string quartet concerto, *Seven Sides of Fire*, written for the Attacca Quartet and American Composers Orchestra, conducted by Mei-Ann Chen; performances of *Coradh (bending)* by the Spoleto Festival, PODIUM Festival, and Oregon Symphony; and the REDCAT premiere of her evening-length show *Music for Transitions*, created in collaboration with two-time Grammy Award-winning cellist Andrew Yee, praised as "thrilling" and

“revolutionary” by *I Care If You Listen*. Upcoming projects include *clay songs* for Kronos Quartet’s 50th Anniversary, a new Carnegie Hall-commissioned work for Ensemble Connect, continued development of *Earths to Come* for vocal ensemble *Roomful of Teeth*, and a new piano concerto for Conrad Tao and the Cincinnati Symphony, conducted by Matthias Pintscher. inticomposes.com



Isamu Noguchi and Toru Takemitsu, c. 1973. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 06654. © INFGM / ARS

ABOUT TORU TAKEMITSU

Toru Takemitsu was born in Tokyo on October 8, 1930. He resolved to become a composer at the age of 16. During the post-war years, he came into contact with Western music through radio broadcasts by the American occupying forces—not only jazz, but especially classical music by Debussy and Copland and even by Schoenberg. Although Takemitsu was essentially a self-taught composer, he nevertheless sought contact with outstanding teachers: Toshi Ichiyanaqi acquainted the composer with the European avant-garde of Messiaen, Nono, and Stockhausen. Alongside

his musical studies, Takemitsu also took a great interest in other art forms including modern painting, theatre, film and literature. His music frequently incorporates elements of traditional Japanese music with the deliberate juxtaposition of Eastern and Western musical cultures, as well as musical representations of natural phenomena and the art of Japanese gardens.

Takemitsu was the recipient of numerous awards and prizes including the Prix Italia, first prize at the Festival of Contemporary Music in Karuizawa (both in 1958), the German Consulate prize at the Tokyo Contemporary Music Festival (1960 and 1961), the major prize at the Japanese Art Festival (1966), the Otaka Prize (1976 and 1981) and the Los Angeles Film Critics Award (for the film *Ran*, 1987), the UNESCO-IMC Music Prize (1991), the Grawemeyer Award for Music Composition (1994) and the Glenn Gould Prize (1996). Takemitsu was composer-in-residence at the Canberra Festival of Musica Viva in Australia (1960), at the London Music Digest (1973) and the Evenings for New Music at the State University of New York in Buffalo (1977). In 1979, he was appointed as an honorary member of the Academy of Arts in the German Democratic Republic, a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1984, a member of the Ordre des arts et des lettres in 1985 and in 1994 as a member of the Royal Academy of Music in London. Takemitsu taught composition at Yale University and received numerous invitations for visiting professorships from universities in the USA, Canada and Australia. He died in Tokyo on February 20, 1996.

ABOUT THE NOGUCHI MUSEUM

Founded in 1985 by category-defying Japanese American sculptor Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988), The Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum (now known as The Noguchi Museum) in Queens, New York, was the first museum in the United States to be established, designed, and installed by a living artist to show their own work. Itself viewed as among the artist’s greatest achievements and holding the world’s largest collection of his works, the Museum features open air and indoor galleries in a repurposed industrial building and a serene outdoor sculpture garden. Since its founding, it has served as an international hub for Noguchi research and appreciation. In addition to managing the artist’s archives and catalogue raisonné, the Museum exhibits a comprehensive selection of Noguchi’s material culture, from sculpture, models, and drawings, to his personal possessions. Provocative installations drawn from the collection, together with diverse special exhibitions and collaborations with practitioners across disciplines, offer a multifaceted view of Noguchi’s art and illuminate his enduring influence. noguchi.org | [@noguchimuseum](https://www.instagram.com/noguchimuseum)

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