

The Noguchi Museum Presents the World Premiere of
Dana Tai Soon Burgess Dance Company's
Landscapes

Commissioned piece pays tribute to artist Toshiko Takaezu

Friday, June 14 and Saturday, June 15, 2024
Performances at 11:30 am, 1 pm, and 2:30 pm
at The Noguchi Museum
Free with Museum admission



Dancers: Joan Ayap (left) and Yvonne Faith Russell (right). Photos: Jeff Watts.

(New York) – In connection with the major retrospective *Toshiko Takaezu: Worlds Within* on view at **The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum**, Dana Tai Soon Burgess Dance Company will premiere a site-specific choreographed work titled *Landscapes* in the Museum's open air galleries. *Landscapes* is a tribute to the artist Toshiko Takaezu and an abstract, kinesthetic response to *Toshiko Takaezu: Worlds Within*.

Performances will take place on Friday, June 14, and Saturday, June 15, 2024, at 11:30 am, 1 pm, and 2:30 pm. Free with Museum admission. Advance reservations are recommended but not required. [noguchi.org/events](https://www.noguchi.org/events)

Landscapes is a suite of solos and duets inspired by the form, texture, and colors of Toshiko Takaezu's glazed ceramic forms. Performed among Isamu Noguchi's late stone works, *Landscapes* also serves as a reflection of the unique cross-connections between Takaezu and Noguchi's work and the choreographer's personal connection to both artists. As a child, Burgess met both Takaezu and Noguchi through their friendship with his parents, visual artists Joe and Anna Kang Burgess.

He has drawn inspiration from their work ever since; like Takaezu and Noguchi, Burgess' artistic process explores his cultural heritage in both content and form, centering themes such as belonging in choreography that fuses traditional Korean dance with ballet and contemporary techniques.

Landscapes will feature the music of **Leilehua Lanzilotti**, Kanaka Maoli sound artist, composer, and a co-curator of *Toshiko Takaezu: Worlds Within*. In addition to performing accompanied by Lanzilotti's composition *with eyes the color of time* (2020), recorded by the String Orchestra of Brooklyn, DTSBDC will respond to live activations of Takaezu's bronze Bell performed by Lanzilotti. Dancers will wear original costumes by Icelandic artist Sigríð Jóhannsdóttir.

Audience members will be encouraged to stand and follow the performance as it moves throughout the space, but folding seats will also be available. Museum admission is \$16 general / \$6 students and seniors. A list of free admission partnerships is available at noguchi.org/visit.

LOCATION

The Noguchi Museum
9-01 33rd Road (at Vernon Boulevard)
Long Island City, NY 11106
Tel: 718.204.7088
noguchi.org/events

ABOUT DANA TAI SOON BURGESS

Dana Tai Soon Burgess is the first ever choreographer in residence of the Smithsonian Institution. He is currently based at the National Portrait Gallery. His interest in the intersection of the visual arts and dance has resulted in commissions from the Smithsonian, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Kreeger Museum, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, and the National Gallery of Art, among others. Burgess is the founding artistic director of Dana Tai Soon Burgess Dance Company (DTSBDC), Washington, DC's premiere modern dance company. Now in its 31st season, DTSBDC creates and performs modern dance works that explore the universal language of dance, and cultural and artistic confluence—the flowing together of original stories, diverse perspectives, histories, and traditions. DTSBDC is a national leader in new collaboration between visual arts museums and the performing arts. The repertoire often focuses on the “hyphenated” person in America—those of mixed ethnic or cultural heritage—and the desire to belong in society. DTSBDC is a culturally diverse company whose performances uplift, inspire, and bring new insights to seasoned dance lovers and new audiences alike in Washington, DC, across the United States, and around the world. dtsbdc.org

ABOUT LEILEHUA LANZILOTTI

Leilehua Lanzilotti is a Kanaka Maoli composer, multimedia artist, curator, and scholar. A “leading composer-performer” (*The New York Times*), Lanzilotti's work is characterized by expansive explorations of timbre. Lanzilotti's practice explores radical indigenous contemporaneity, integrating community engagement into the heart of projects. By world-building through multimedia installation works and nontraditional concert experiences/musical interventions, Lanzilotti's works

activate imagination around new paths forward in language sovereignty, water sovereignty, land stewardship, and respect. Uplifting others by crafting projects that support both local communities and economy, the work inspires hope to continue. Lanzilotti is a co-curator of the exhibition *Toshiko Takaezu: Worlds Within*. leilehualanzilotti.com | [@annezilotti](https://www.instagram.com/annezilotti)

ABOUT TOSHIKO TAKAEZU

Toshiko Takaezu (1922–2011) was one of the twentieth century’s greatest abstract artists. Gifted with prodigious drive and vision, she combined inspirations from her own cultural background with currents from contemporary painting and sculpture, arriving at a unique expressionist idiom. Takaezu was born in Pepe‘ekeo, Hawai‘i, to Okinawan émigré parents, and received her early training in ceramics, weaving, and sculpture in Honolulu, as a student at the University of Hawai‘i, Manoa (1948–51) with teachers including Claude Horan. She continued her studies at the Cranbrook Academy of Art (1951–54) under the instruction of Maija Grotell, who would become a mentor of profound influence, as well as Marianne Strengell, and Bill McVey. In her early career Takaezu expanded the possibilities of the vessel, exploring multiple spouts and lobed forms, and made plates that were essentially canvases for freeform composition. Though made using traditional pottery techniques of wheel-throwing and glazing, the innovative ceramic works that she soon developed, and for which she is best known—the closed forms—are best understood as sculptures, or perhaps as paintings-in-the-round. Through her expressive brushstrokes, dynamic glazes, exploration of sound, and trust in chance, Takaezu imbued clay with a life that existed far beyond when it emerged from the kiln. Across her seven-decade career, Takaezu also pursued media apart from ceramics, including large-scale textiles, acrylic paintings, and cast-bronze sculpture, which extended her vocabulary of vivid abstraction. During her lifetime, Takaezu was also a profoundly influential teacher and mentor, who trained generations of younger artists at the Cranbrook Academy of Art, The University of Wisconsin, the Cleveland Institute of Art, and Princeton University, and other institutions. Her legacy lives on in these students and apprentices, and above all in her own work, which both exemplifies and transcends the ideals of modernist ceramic art. Another testament to her legacy, Takaezu was named a Living Treasure of Hawai‘i (1987), received the Gold Medal Award from the American Craft Council (1994), and the Konjuhoshō Award (2010), conferred by the emperor of Japan on individuals who have made significant contributions to Japanese society, as well as many other accolades.

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 widely 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 permanent 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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