



The Fabric Workshop
and Museum

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The Fabric Workshop and Museum Presents
Eiko Otake: I Invited Myself, Vol. III: Duets

November 9, 2023–March 24, 2024
Press Preview: Thursday, November 9, 11:00 am



“The Duet Project: Distance is Malleable,” July 9, 2019. Performed by Eiko Otake and DonChristian Jones. Photo credit: Ben McKeown.

Philadelphia, PA, October 26, 2023 — The Fabric Workshop and Museum (FWM) is pleased to present *Eiko Otake: I Invited Myself, Vol. III: Duets*, a solo exhibition of media works by internationally acclaimed movement artist Eiko Otake (b. 1952, Tokyo). **On view from November 9, 2023–March 24, 2024**, the presentation will feature Eiko Otake’s collaborative works created with artists such as John Killacky, DonChristian Jones, and Merián Soto, among others, through projections and video sculptures installed in the museum’s first floor gallery.

The works presented at FWM are part of Eiko’s Duet project, an evolving series of experiments and collaborations that negotiate differences of race, age, culture, ethnicity, religion, discipline, and gender. Each project seeks to maximize the potential of the encounter. Eiko states:

“Working with others, pushing beyond our norms, is densely performative. I think better with effortful conversations. Two artists getting to know each other on a deeper level feels radical, but doable. Once that happens, we cannot go back to our prior selves.”

For forty years, from 1972–2013, Eiko performed with Koma, under the name Eiko & Koma, who had collaboratively handcrafted all aspects of their theatrical works, including costumes, sets, and props. The pair became known for their movement styles characterized by delicate slowness studded with bold dramatic strokes of their bodies. Their wide range of influences include literature, film, and visual works of post-war Japan and the world.

Since 2014, Eiko has performed and directed her own interdisciplinary projects. After five decades of an active performance career, Eiko, now in her early 70s, is compelled to create a time and space for people to experience her artistic production that is not dependent on the artist’s physical presence. In her media works and installations, Eiko explores how her art can exist beyond her body she has depended upon for the majority of her career.

Each volume of Eiko’s *I Invited Myself* project includes exhibitions, screenings, and public conversations along with performative interventions and installations. Its multi-volume form enables Eiko to collaborate with curators in creating programs and selecting works that consider space and the mission of each presenting organization as well as her own history with a specific community.

Co-presented by Asian Arts Initiative (AAI) and The Fabric Workshop and Museum (FWM), *I Invited Myself, vol. III* in Philadelphia is a two-venue exhibition. Part One, *I Invited Myself, vol. III: A Body*, on view at AAI through December 9, 2023, focuses on Eiko’s body in solitude. Part Two, *I Invited Myself, vol. III: Duets* at FWM, opening on November 9, 2023, highlights her collaborative projects with other artists.

About Eiko Otake

Born and raised in Japan and a resident of New York since 1976, Eiko Otake is a movement-based, interdisciplinary artist. She worked for more than 40 years as Eiko & Koma, but since 2014 has been working on her own projects. Eiko & Koma created numerous performance works, exhibitions, durational “living” installations, and media works commissioned by American Dance Festival, BAM Next Wave Festival, the Whitney Museum, the Walker Art Center, and the Museum of Modern Art, among others. Eiko has performed her solo project *A Body in Places* at over 70 sites, including a month-long Danspace Project PLATFORM (2016) and three full-day performances at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (2017). Collaboratively created with photographer and historian William Johnston, *A Body in Fukushima* (2014–) is a multifaceted project that records Eiko’s solo performances in post-nuclear disaster Fukushima. It consists of photo exhibitions, book publication, video installations, mix-media performances, lectures, and feature length film which premiered at 2022 MoMA’s Doc Fortnight Film Festival. *The Duet Project* (2017–) is a series of experiments with artists of different disciplines, races, genders and generations. The project has produced performances and media works, including feature length documentary *No Rule is Our Rule*, collaboratively created with Wen Hui. Eiko is currently working

in her ten-year project, *I Invited Myself* (2022–), a series of exhibitions and screenings of her film/video works.

Recipients of two Bessies (1984 and 1990), Eiko & Koma were the first collaborative pair to share a MacArthur Fellowship (1996). They were the first Asian choreographers to receive the Samuel H. Scripps American Dance Festival Award (2004) and the *Dance Magazine* Award (2006), and were honored with the inaugural United States Artists Fellowship (2006). Eiko was honored with the first Doris Duke Artist Award (2012), a Special Bessies Citation (2016), the Anonymous Was a Woman Award (2016), and the Sam Miller Award for Performing Arts (2020).

About the Curator

Eiko Otake: I Invited Myself, vol. III: Duets at The Fabric Workshop and Museum is organized by DJ Hellerman, Chief Curator & Director of Curatorial Affairs, and Eiko Otake.

Eiko Otake: I Invited Myself, vol. III: A Body at the Asian Arts Initiative is co-curated by Joyce Chung, Curator, and Eiko Otake.

Related Programs

Reception

Opening Celebration + Project Kick-off

Thursday, November 9, 2023, 6:00–8:00 pm

FREE and open to the public

Be among the first to experience *Eiko Otake: I Invited Myself, Vol. III: Duets*, and help kick-off new studio projects underway in *ProcessLAB* with artists Michelle Lopez, Sa’dia Rehman, and Paper Buck. Light refreshments served.

Tour

Curators’ Tour: Eiko Otake: I Invited Myself, Vol. III: A Body and Duets

Saturday, November 18, 2023, 2:00–4:00 pm

Tour starts at Asian Arts Initiative, 1219 Vine Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

Free | suggested donation of \$5

Experience this co-presentation of a singular movement-based artist’s celebrated works across two venues. Led by DJ Hellerman, Chief Curator & Director of Curatorial Affairs at FWM, and Joyce Chung, Curator at the Asian Arts Initiative (AAI), this tour begins with AAI’s presentation, *A Body*, which features Eiko’s lone body moving within different landscapes and absorbing what they hold. The group will then head down the street to FWM to experience *Duets*, which highlights the Eiko’s collaborative projects with artists of different races, identities, cultures, disciplines, and ages.

Organized in conjunction with *Eiko Otake: I Invited Myself, Vol III: A Body* at the Asian Arts Initiative (on view through December 9, 2023) and *Eiko Otake: I Invited Myself, Vol. III: Duets* at The Fabric Workshop and Museum (on view through March 24, 2024).

Support

Major support of The Fabric Workshop and Museum is provided by the Marion Boulton “Kippy” Stroud Foundation. FWM receives state art funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment

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At the Asian Arts Initiative, *Eiko Otake: I Invited Myself, vol. III: A Body* is made possible with the support of William Penn Foundation, The Culture and Community Power Fund, Pennsylvania Council for the Arts, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Ford Foundation, and the National Performance Network.

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