

Shusaku Takeushi

(A biography as given by the Nederlands Dans Theater)

He has made the following ballets for the Nederlands Dans Theater:

Garnet (NDT II, Holland Dance Festival, 1999) and A Trilogy, consisting of 3 works that were created in 3 successive years for NDT III: Sight (NDT III, 2000), Windage (NDT III, 2001) and Land (NDT III, 2002).

The Japanese Shusaku Takeuchi, born in 1948, studied painting from 1968 to 1971 at the Osaka Art University, and sculpting, graphic art and interior design at the Yoyogi Design School in Tokyo. During this time, he frequently performed at happenings and events with a group of young artists. In 1972 he traveled to Europe to establish himself in the Netherlands. He began by working with such performers as Japanese Butho dancers Eiko & Koma, Argentinian choreographer Graziella Martines, Jango Edwards, and many others.



Foto: Stefan Chytrek

His own company, founded in 1974, combined visual art and physical expression.

Specialized in mime and dance, it performed mainly in the Netherlands, but also traveled to Italy and Germany. In between tours, he worked on a project at the Centre Culturel de Marais in Paris. Eventually the company evolved into the Shusaku & Dormu Dance Theater.

During this period Takeuchi's artistic interests were heavily influenced by modern art. His company took part in cultural festivals all over Europe, performing in a number of cities in France, Spain, Italy, Switzerland and Germany. In the 1980s the company extended its tours to Eastern Europe, with performances in Hungary, Poland and the Soviet Union. In fact, Shusaku & Dormu Dance Theater was the first western company to perform officially in Moscow's Red Square.

It was during this period that Takeuchi started experimenting with different art disciplines. In order to explore the possibilities of the human body, he combined physical expression with the use of computers, sound effects and virtual reality. His first big stage production, ERA (1982) was performed in the Netherlands, Canada and several European countries. After the success of ERA, other big stage productions followed, such as Oblique (1983) and Noon of the Plant (1985).

From 1980 on, he set up specific projects at summer festivals such as the Freiburg International Theater Festival (1980), the Summer Festival of Copenhagen (1983), the Oeral Festival on the island of Terschelling in the Netherlands (1984) and the Kempnagel International Theater Festival in Hamburg (1986).

After *Eleven Shades of Grey*, which toured through the Netherlands and Germany (1990), Takeuchi stopped performing himself in order to concentrate on directing and choreography. As time went on, his productions grew bigger and more complex. He was also invited by other companies as a guest director and choreographer, and he began to devote some of his time to teaching.

Architectonaal (1990) kicked off a long series of mass site-specific projects, first with the Dormu Dance Company, and later with a second company, Shusaku Bodytorium, founded in 1994, which presented physical theater.

In 1995, Takeuchi was awarded the Sonia Gaskell Award for *The Package*. Another work, *Floating Silhouettes* (1994), which was performed in an old Amsterdam harbor, involved no less than one hundred and fifty people. This was followed by two productions in industrial mausoleums: *Reservoir*, performed on the ruins of an old industrial site on a small island near Dordrecht in the south of Holland (1995) and *Bolt* (1997), performed in a former shipyard in Amsterdam.

What about Man? (1998) was the first of his theater productions in which text played an important role.