

FURO

WORLD PREMIERE MARCH 24 AT THE JEWISH THEATRE

*By Ohad Naharin and Tabaimo.
Produced by the Jewish Theatre.*

SOUND DESIGN

Ohad Fishhof

LIGHTING DESIGN

Avi Yona Bueno "Bambi"

TECHNICAL PRODUCTION

Tomas Franck and Kenneth Björk

COSTUMES

Rakefet Levy

THEATRE DIRECTOR AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR THE JEWISH THEATRE

Pia Forsgren



A MEETING

The Jewish Theatre is a laboratory for performance art. Each and every production is intentionally jeopardised by the wish to experiment and make new discoveries, both artistically and technically. Furo is a completely new experiment. A meeting between dance, visual arts and music. A collaboration spanning three continents and countries: Japan, Israel and Sweden.

Furo grew out of the Jewish Theatre's friendship with Ohad Naharin and his Batsheva Dance Company. For Ohad Naharin experimentation has also been a motivational force, making him one of the most important innovators of modern dance. At the age of 22, he was discovered by Martha Graham. In 1980, he made his debut as a choreographer and formed his own Ohad Naharin Dance Company. Since 1990, he has been the artistic director of the Batsheva Dance Company, with dancers who practise Naharin's own technique, Gaga.

When Naharin saw the Japanese artist Tabaimo's video work "Japanese Bathhouse" in New York, he sought out the possibility to realise his idea of a unique encounter.

In the course of many meetings, discussions and technical and artistic attempts together with the Jewish Theatre and Tabaimo, he created Furo, based on "Japanese Bathhouse".

The space is that of the theatre. The movement and music are from the realm of dance. The projected scenes are from video art. The fusion of art forms creates the potential for experiments also for the onlooker. For the first time, the audience at the Jewish Theatre is encouraged to behave as if they were at an art exhibition, to enter and leave the auditorium as they wish.

Is it a theatre gallery? Is it a dance installation? It's Furo at the Jewish Theatre.

Welcome in!



CONVERSATION WITH OHAD NAHARIN ...ON TIME AND SPACE

By Lena Andrén

She came to me in a dream... Ohad Naharin smilingly interrupts himself. In reality, he was wide awake when he first saw Japanese artist Tabaimo's work "Japanese Bathhouse – Gents" at a New York gallery a year or so ago. This exquisite animated video work, with an aesthetic evocative of Japanese woodcuts, inspired in him the wish to create a choreography based on Tabaimo's animations. The opportunity to do this came when he was invited to produce a new work for the Jewish Theatre in Stockholm. The surrounding space contributes to

giving the work the form that Naharin was striving for, so he has decided to create a space with the same proportions if he is presenting the work in a larger venue in the future.

ABOUT THE TITLE.

Naharin gave his work the title *Furo*, a Japanese word meaning bath and a reference to both Tabaimo's video work and the setting, a traditional "Japanese bathhouse", that the video depicts. Obvious, one may think, but since I was familiar with Naharin's complex approach

to titles, I wanted to know what caused him to choose this title. It turned out that the word for bathhouse is “ofuro”, but he preferred the sound of the shorter word “furo”, which also relates to traditional Japanese bathing. I am also given to understand that if the word for bathhouse had been different, say, “kubi ni naru”, he would probably have chosen a title that had no connection to baths at all.

TIME.

In Furo the choreography and the animation are two autonomous units that together form a unity, without losing their individual integrity. The interplay of choreography and animation takes place on an abstract level, and by manipulating time in the video Naharin expands time in the work. In these expanded time segments, which Naharin calls “moments”, the narrative of the dance develops in form and symmetry. The result of this process can be described as resembling a still-life, an arrangement of objects that we know belong to the real world although they are now immobile.

When I read through what I’ve written so far, I see I have formulated a thought that was present in our conversation but remained unverbilised. A thought that arose from Naharin’s repeatedly expressed frustration

with time, in that its most dominating characteristic is that it runs out. The only thing to do about time, he says, is to split it up; you can’t create time in the way that you can create and shape space. What Naharin attempts to do in Furo, can be interpreted as creating time. By interrupting the flow of time in Tabaimo’s animations and expanding an existing time unit many times over he creates a new temporal space.

STRUCTURE.

One could even see the shape of the work – a loop – as an attempt to break free from the tyranny of chronology. Ever since the renaissance, western time has been formulated chronologically, as a linear, forward progress. Contrary to this idea, the loop is based on a circular concept of time, on repetition, on returning to a certain point in time and space.

REPETITION.

To walk into a loop is thus a way of liberating oneself from chronological time, but that does not mean that circular time is synonymous with immobility. Naharin describes how repetition resembles walking; the motion of placing one foot in front of the other is repeated, but the result is a movement in space. In circular time another form of activity takes

place than in chronological time. The movement does not chase ahead towards an ending – temps mort – but rotates around its own axis, creating a potential for experiences to be superimposed and deepened and become more real. This heightened sense of reality can give rise to a feeling of total presence and openness to the inner and outer world. This feeling goes by many names, and Naharin calls it the “groove”, an essential component to his feeling of being alive.

SPACE.

Since chronological time is dethroned in Furo, space is the element that delineates the audience’s experience. Naharin has long had a fascination for spatial design, since he is a dancer and spatiality is central to dance. A dancer is constantly dealing with the concept of his or her own space, the space between one body and the next, and between the body and the universe. But until he created Furo, this was something that went on at an intuitive level. In creating this work, Naharin has pushed himself to formulate this intuition in thoughts and words – and to implement it.

The liberation of the dance installation from the chronologically rigid time scale of the conventional dance performance leaves the audience free to reshape Furo by deciding for

themselves when to enter or exit the work. The audience also decides how long they want to be present, and in this way each individual can create their personal experience of the work, an experience that is beyond the control of the choreographer. This is something new for Naharin, who has departed for the first time from the chronological format of the traditional performance concept and its defined space, and consequently he is excited about finding out how the audience will deal with this work.

THE STORY.

It is through an exploration of the space, in the narrative of the site itself which is not formulated in words but in spatial qualities such as structure, inherent atmospheric charges, the distance between points, and textures, that the audience encounters Naharin. The abstract narrative contains fragments from Naharin’s own biography, and it expresses the humanly sensuous, the sensual, along with the ridiculous. The associative form, liberated from the time-flow, evokes a state of mind redolent of dreaming, where the experience is shaped by the space rather than by time. The Jewish Theatre is an important factor, since the venue itself constitutes the framework for the audience’s experience. It is fairly

small compared to the spaces that Naharin is used to working with. Nevertheless, he experiences the Theatre to be an infinite space, since the limitations he experiences here are merely the limitations he sets for himself. Like time, space ultimately exists only in our mind. It is in our mind that the limits are set – and dissolved – and it is only when our mind experiences freedom from limitations that we can make our dreams come true.

Since time and space exist primarily in our mind and can thus be regarded as constructs,

they can and should be challenged. No matter how I phrase my questions, Naharin refuses to attribute characteristics and opinions to people according to their geographic origins. He experiences his audience as more similar than different, regardless of where in the world they are when they see his work. Consequently, it would be unthinkable for him to try to adapt his creative work to a specific geographic place. This reminds me of an old saying: Home is not where you hang your hat but where you are in your dreams.



CONVERSATION WITH TABAIMO

By Yukiko Duke

Over the past fifteen years, manga and anime – Japanese comics and animations – have grown popular in the west. This has led to an international breakthrough for a new generation of Japanese artists. An artist generation which, coloured by growing up in the Mecca of manga culture, is refreshingly playful in borrowing elements from traditional Japanese art and the manga and anime imagery.

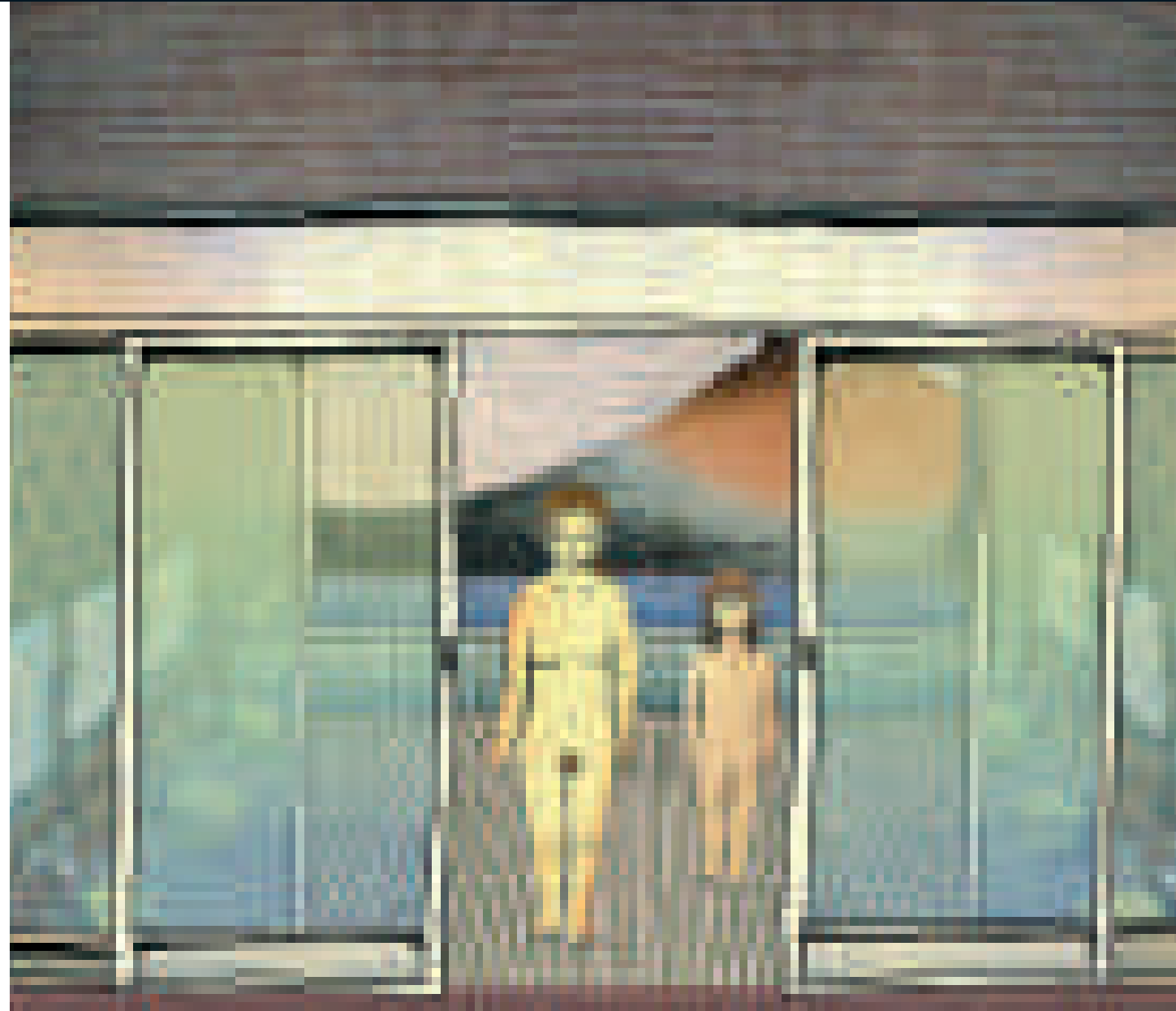
One of the foremost representatives of this generation is Ayako Tabata, 31, better known as Tabaimo. At 24, she became famous in Japan for her animation “Japanese Kitchen”, her graduate project at university. This won her the Kirin Contemporary Award, a prestigious prize for interesting new artists. Since then, her works have been acclaimed in Japan and internationally. Today, she alternates between working as an artist and teaching at Kyoto University of Art and Design, where she is a professor.

“‘Japanese Kitchen’ was my first piece in a series that explores everyday Japanese life. Like many other young Japanese, I feel there’s so much going on in Japan today that I don’t understand. There are unsettling tendencies in society that need to be examined more closely,” says Tabaimo.

EVERYDAY SETTINGS.

“I chose a few settings I think most Japanese would consider ‘commonplace’, such as the kitchen, the commuter train, the road crossing. And then I filled these places with stereotype characters: bespectacled gentlemen in pinstripes carrying briefcases, sturdy housewives with aprons and their hair in a bun, school girls in uniform. Then I added elements of threat and pain.”

Tabaimo’s exquisite, skilfully drawn animations have an imagery and colour scheme that evoke the old woodcarving masters. Her





works start with an ordinary, everyday situation but soon change character and become dreamlike, absurd, forming complex, pessimistic visions of contemporary Japanese society.

“From childhood my generation has had a close relationship to comics. For many of us in this generation, absurdly, manga and anime often feel more real than the TV news broadcasts. We are living in an era of information overload, which makes it difficult for many of us to sort the information. It is easier to turn away and immerse oneself in a more coherent world,” Tabaimo explains.

THE MANGA WORLD.

“My works are based on events in the news. I want my animations to shock the viewers, to get them to understand that the action in the film has actually taken place in reality. The thing my films deal with in various ways is the powerlessness of modern man. Even if we are all protagonists in our own reality, we have no way whatsoever of influencing the events that govern our lives. That frightens me.”

Tabaimo’s classic style and colour scheme have prompted Japanese and foreign critics to compare her to the great master wood engraver, Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849), mostly known in the west for his “36 views of Mount Fuji” and “The Great Wave”.

“I often get asked about my relationship to traditional Japanese art. But the fact is that I haven’t studied it especially. I was always surrounded by books on art at home when I grew up. I discovered Hokusai and the old master wood engravers there and liked them a lot. When I started developing a style to convey my own intentions, I was reminded of the woodcuts,” Tabaimo continues.

“My generation’s approach to traditional Japanese culture is not that different to how foreigners approach it. Sadly, we don’t have the same immediate link to our tradition that previous generations had. The Second World War runs like a thick dividing line between generations in Japan with regard to a lot of things, including art. The postwar generations are simultaneously drawn to tradition and feel alien to it.”

Tabaimo explains that “Japanese Bathhouse”, while being part of her series of explorations of Japanese society, is nevertheless an independent work.

“Unlike the other settings I’ve chosen, I have no personal bond to the bathhouses. Very few people in my generation do. But since the bathhouse has played such a central part as a social space in Japan over the ages – and is now on the verge of disappearing – it was tempting to use it as a setting,” she says.

At one time, the bathhouse was the heart of the small community, a place for discussions and encounters. In the mid-1960s, there were still 23,000 bathhouses in Japan, but in the early 2000s only 9,500 remained. No wonder Tabaimo was intrigued by the thought of using the bathhouse as an image of traditional society. In “Japanese Bathhouse” the artist primarily looks at the dissolution of identity and norms in contemporary Japan.

“My animations are created mainly for a Japanese audience, but I’m happy and grateful that they also seem to have an appeal abroad. But since the bathhouse is such a typically Japanese phenomenon, I imagined that ‘Japanese Bathhouse’ would be a bit tricky for a non-Japanese audience to understand,” says Tabaimo.

AN E-MAIL.

That was not the case, however. One day, she received an e-mail from Tel Aviv. It was sent by the dance artist Ohad Naharin, who was proposing a collaborative project. Naharin had visited a gallery in New York and had been enthralled by “Japanese Bathhouse”. He wanted to create a choreography in which the dancers would perform in Tabaimo’s installation.

“Initially, I had very mixed feelings about

this. I was pleased that Ohad appreciated my work, but worried about handing my work over to someone else. At first, I was actually going to say no,” Tabaimo reveals. “When I deliver a work, I consider it to be completed. If someone else uses it for something other than my original intention, the work changes, and I didn’t want that to happen. I had previously had bad experiences of that.”

So, what persuaded her to change her mind? “Somehow, all artists, who sit there alone in their rooms creating, dream of doing things together with others. And dance is an artistic form of expression that I am very fond of.”

Tabaimo decided to visit Ohad Naharin in Tel Aviv. After discussing the project in depth, and taking the opportunity to see some of Naharin’s work, she decided to say yes to the project.

“I realised that this was something I could not achieve on my own, a way of developing my work. I also felt I could confidently hand my work over to Ohad, knowing that he would deal with it respectfully. I hope the audience will have as much fun as we had in the process,” Tabaimo says and smiles.

TABAIMO, BIOGRAPHY

- 1975 Born in Hyogo
- 1999 Received Grand Prize, Kirin Contemporary Award 1999
- 2001 Received Sakuya-konohana Prize (Art Department)
- 2002 Received The Goto Memorial Prize (Art department)
- Lives in Tokyo

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2000 Kirin Contemporary Award 1999: Grand Prize Commemoration Exhibition, Kirin Plaza Osaka, Osaka
- 2003 TABAIMO YUMECHIGAE, Hara Museum ARC, Gunma
- 2005 TABAIMO, James Cohan Gallery, New York
- YUBIBIRA, Gallery Koyanagi, Tokyo

(2006 planning to have solo exhibition at Hara Museum in Tokyo and Fondation Cartier pour l’art contemporain in Paris)

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2001 International Triennale of Contemporary Art Yokohama 2001: MEGA WAVE – TOWARD A NEW SYNTHESIS, Yokohama
- 2002 The 25th São Paulo Biennale: METROPOLITAN ICONOGRAPHIES, São Paulo
- FORWART: A CHOICE, Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique and other places, Brussels
- 2003 HOW LATITUDES BECOME FORMS: ART IN A GLOBAL AGE, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis
- ODORO ODORO, Tokyo Opera City, Tokyo
- NIPPONN NO NANAKAMURA, Kirin Plaza Osaka, Osaka
- 2004 MEDIARENA, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Zealand
- 2005 FAIRY TALES FOREVER, ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Denmark
- RISING SUN, MELTING MOON, The Israel Museum, Israel
- 2006 ARS 06, Kiasma, Finland

FUTURE EXHIBITIONS

- 2006 Hara Museum, Tokyo – Solo Exhibition, opening June
- Biennale in Sydney – Group Exhibition opening June
- Cartier, Paris, opening October

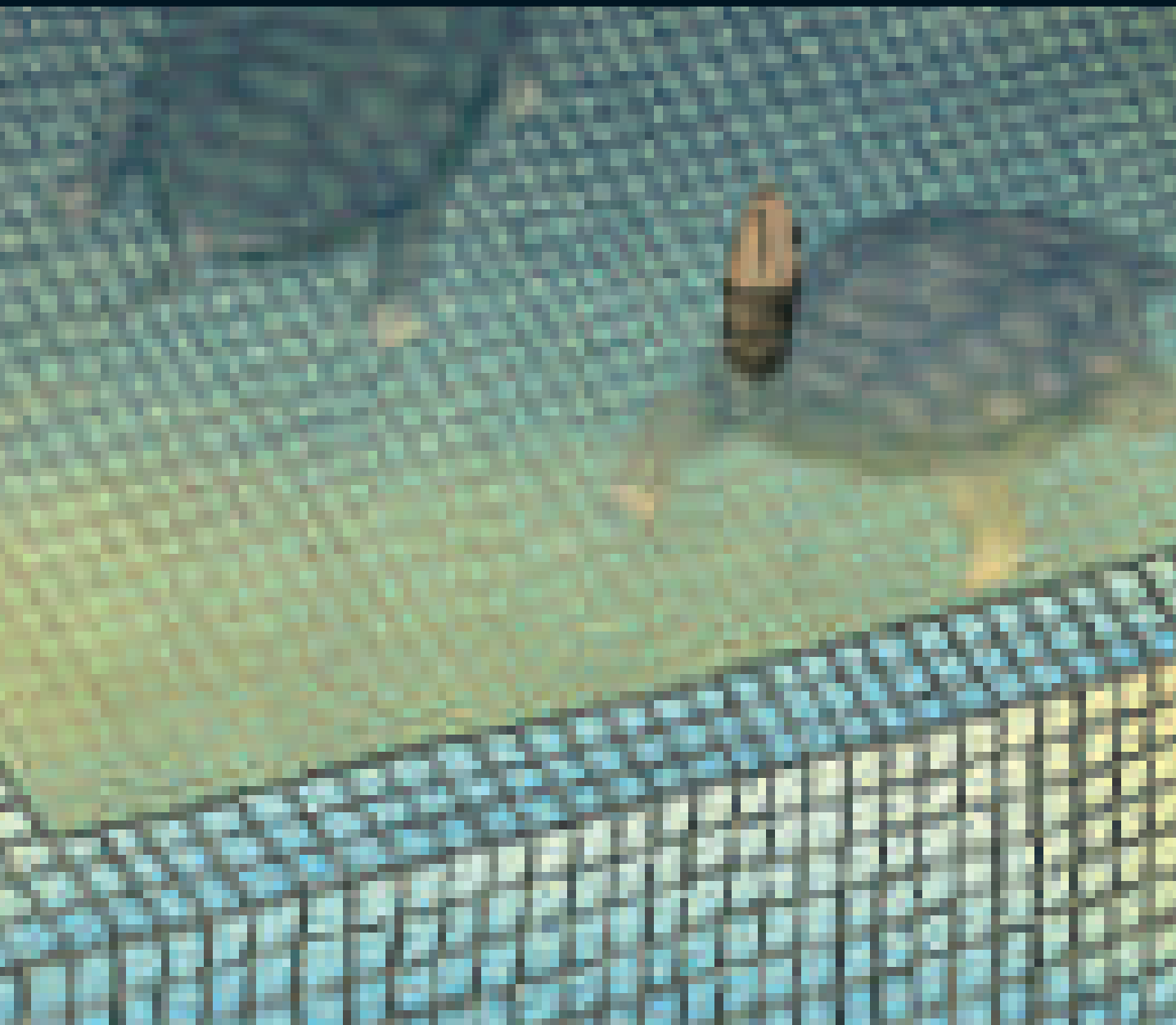












wash. In the garden the water is perhaps not apparent to the eye, but you can nearly always hear it trickling. Some ryokan offer their guests a tea ceremony. This requires pure water. Thus, we are constantly reminded of water at the inn, and the most important thing is usually the access to the hot springs that determine where the inns are built.

In modern society, the little walk to the public bath has come to be a pleasurable pastime in itself. People step confidently, tub in hand and small towel on head, to their furo. In the past, the special Japanese wooden shoes, geta, were more common, and many people associated the clapping sound they made with bathing. Nowadays, you don't hear this as often, and the public baths are also becoming more rare as bathrooms grow more common and standards improve.

The public baths are always divided into sections for men and women. In between, an attendant sits with a full view of both sections, but with a knack for seeing without seeing. Peeking into the other section has, of course, been known to happen over the years and is the subject of many jokes in Japan. Usually, the culprits would be young men who climbed up and poked their noses over the dividing wall, but even women have joked about the same thing. But in older times,

nudity was no big matter, and there used to be roten-buro, hot outdoor baths where men and women bathed in the same pool, all over the country. In modern Japan, however, nudity is more charged than it used to be.

FRAGRANCE.

Since an inn has nature on its doorstep, smell is inevitably of great consequence. The salt sea air, a pine forest, the moss in the garden after a rainfall, wild flowers, or simply the intense August heat, stimulate the olfactory sense. The hot springs nearly always smell slightly of sulphur. In general, the same is true of the public baths, which may not be able to provide as many fragrances, but instead illustrate nature with paintings on the tiled walls.

Foreigners have always found the rules of bathing a little difficult. You have to start by washing yourself before stepping into the bath, and you are not really supposed to wear a swimming costume. Foreigners who visit a bath will therefore usually be regarded with some degree of suspicion before they prove that they can master the rules of bathing.

The public baths are disappearing, but bathing in various kinds of ofuro will never cease in Japan. The Japanese culture is a culture of purity, and to break against this tradition of cleanliness is very serious.



FURO THE JEWISH THEATRE 24 MARCH – 18 MAY 2006

BY Ohad Naharin and Tabaimo

DANCERS: See separate flyer

TECHNICAL CONCEPT, COORDINATION, PRODUCTION
AND VIDEO DESIGN: Tomas Franck and Kenneth Björk

COSTUMES: Rakefet Levy

LIGHTING DESIGN: Avi Yona Bueno “Bambi”

SOUND DESIGN: Ohad Fishof

SOUND TECHNICIAN: Oskar Johansson

LIGHTING TECHNICIAN: Pontus “Bullen” Lagerbielke

STAGE TECHNICIAN: Pär Lundholm

DRESSER: Stina Näslund

PROGRAMME PHOTOGRAPHS: Mathias Johansson

IDEA, CONCEPT AND GRAPHIC DESIGN: Voice the Brand Liberation Company

PRINTING: Wassbergs Tryckeri

REPRO: Dog

STAGE SETS AND TECHNOLOGY: Philipson & Franck

PROJECTION: Vello Hermann, Video Unlimited AB

SOUND TECHNOLOGY: T-Record

LIGHTING TECHNOLOGY: Starlight Stockholm

STAGE TEXTILES: Royal Event

IN-HOUSE CONSTRUCTION, CARPENTRY, PAINTWORK: Westerlund Bygg

TICKET OFFICE AND BAR: Marie-Louise Larsson, Ariella Pass, Eva Fattal,

Filippa Sjögren, Louise Gräslund, Samuel Titelman, Natalie Luxemburg

THE JEWISH THEATRE

www.judiskateatern.se

THEATRE DIRECTOR AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: Pia Forsgren

PROJECT COORDINATOR, PRESS AND MARKETING MANAGER: Leif G. Östman

DIRECTOR’S ASSISTANT: Katja Finkel

ACCOUNTS: Anna-Karin Mårtensson

WEB EDITOR: Catharina Nilsson

BATSHEVA DANCE COMPANY

www.batsheva.co.il

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: Ohad Naharin

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CO-ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: Naomi Bloch Fortis

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Irit Sturm

ARTISTIC COORDINATOR: Eldad Mannheim

ADVERTISING COORDINATOR: Kobi Nathan

TECHNICAL MANAGER: Roni Cohen

COMPANY MANAGER: Yaniv Nagar

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Imoimo, Anja Palmgren, Proventus and Voice the Brand Liberation Company

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SELECTED PREVIOUS
PRODUCTIONS

SHADOWTIME

Scenes from the opera by Brian Ferneyhough
and Charles Bernstein, 2006

WE'RE NOT FALLING!/
VI FALLER INTE!

by Kerstin Perski,
directed by Michaela Granit, 2004

SPOONFACE STEINBERG

by Lee Hall, directed by Pia Forsgren, 2003

STILL WATERS/STILLA VATTEN

Written and directed by Lars Norén, 2002

CRYSTAL ROAD/KRISTALLVÄGEN

by Katarina Frostenson,
directed by Pia Forsgren, 2002

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?/
MEN I FRAMTIDEN DÅ?

by Jonathan Metzger,
directed by Maria Blom, 2001

JEWISH WOMAN/

Film festival and solo exhibition of works
by Channa Bankier, 2001



5 CONCERT WEEKENDS

Scenes from the opera by Brian Ferneyhough
and Charles Bernstein, 2006

LOL

A dance performance by Ohad Naharin, 2000

STOCKHOLM JEWISH
FILM FESTIVAL

In collaboration with Zita Cinema, 2000

ASHES TO ASHES/ASKA

by Harold Pinter, directed by Pia Forsgren, 1999

BEAT NIGHTS/BEATKVÄLLAR

Allen Ginsberg and his generation in film,
photography, music and poetry, 1998

YOM KIPPUR/
FÖRSONINGSDAGEN

by Marianne Goldman,
directed by Pia Forsgren, 1998

ZAHAVA BEN

and her orchestra present songs
by Oum Kalsoum, 1997

AN EVENING ON DJURGÅRDEN

Dance, music and poetry, 1995