

**Comprising historic archive footage and texts,
this DVD box enlightens us greatly about Yoshito Ohno's here and now.**

Butoh has a distinct starting point in 1959, with *Kinjiki* a duet featuring Tatsumi Hijikata and Yoshito Ohno. In 1977, the legendary Kazuo Ohno created another epoch-making opus with *Admiring La Argentina*, with Yoshito Ohno as production manager. These links are no mere coincidence. To date, we've tended to overlook Yoshito Ohno, barely granting him the recognition he merits. Just as dance requires a lengthy gestation period in which to evolve, Yoshito Ohno's dance has finally come into our field of vision, in all its freshness and stark-nakedness, linking Butoh's origins to its zenith, to a point where he now stands at a crossroads.

Audio-visual Footage with English subtitle

Historic avant-garde film *The Navel and the A-Bomb* (directed and written by Eikoh Hosoe. 14 min.)

Tatsumi Hijikata's spoken choreography for Yoshito Ohno in *The Dead Sea* (24 min.)

The acclaimed performance by Yoshito Ohno with Antony & the Johnsons (2010 / 17 min.)

The première of *Flower and Bird* (Kazuo Ohno Dance Festival 2013 / 12 min.)

From *Water Lilies* (Singapore in 2011 / 7 min.)

The Rabbit Dance (Munich in 2014 / 6 min.)

An interview recounting his experiences of the making of *Kinjiki*. (16 min.)

The booklet headlines

(with complete Japanese/English translations)

p.25 Before the early 60s, "Butoh" as such was unknown.

p.26 Back then modern dance was all the rage.

p.28 I regard gentleness or a sense of delicacy as a flower-like quality.

p.30 My earliest memory is standing in our garden in Katsuura as a two-year old.

p.39 I constantly put everything I have into my performances,

p.42 There was hardly any mention of *Kinjiki* until Hijikata completed *The Old Man and the Sea*.

p.71 In thinking back over my career, I've always furnished the frame.

p.72 Suddenly, Kazuo Ohno started falling on stage.

p.81 After Kazuo Ohno's death, a marked change came over me.

p.84 I heard students working under Hijikata that he used to choreograph their movements precisely.

p.88 The coastline of northern Japan was devastated by the tsunami in 2011

p.90 Butoh is something that penetrates one's entire life.

p.92 Butoh has its origins in painstakingly tending to the soul and existence itself.

Yoshito Ohno Dance Film on DVD with a bilingual booklet in a specially produced box-set

Flowerbird Butoh : A Way of Life

Duration: 85 minutes. Additional footage: 14 minutes. Booklet: 112 pages

Price: 5,000¥ + tax

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Yoshito Ohno Dance Film on DVD
大野慶人ダンスフィルム DVD

Flowerbird
花と鳥
Butoh : A Way of Life
舞踏という生き方

illuminating Butoh
as it is today
with archive footage
and documentary material
featuring Yoshito Ohno

大野慶人
Yoshito Ohno
DANCE Videology

With this DVD featuring historic archive materials, footage of recent performances with Antony, and sequences in which Yoshito Ohno performs Tatsumi Hijikata's choreographic instructions, we gain precious insights into Butoh's real nature.



The Navel on the A-Bomb (1960)



Antony and the Ohnos (2010)



Yoshito Ohno

Born in Tokyo in 1938, Yoshito Ohno played the role of the young boy in *Kinjiki* [Forbidden Colours] directed by Tatsumi Hijikata in 1959. Throughout the 1960s performed widely at Butoh happenings until he retired after his solo performance in 1969. His made a comeback in 1985, as he appeared alongside Kazuo Ohno in *The Dead Sea*. Thereafter, he continued to direct all of Ohno senior's performances. In recent years, he has collaborated with the Tanztheater Wuppertal dancers Julia Anne Stanzak and Eddie Martinez in *The Promising Morning* (2010), co-performed with Antony and the Johnsons in *Antony and the Ohnos* (2010). He has toured his solo work *Flower and Bird* (2013) in Europe (2014), Brazil (2015) and China (2016). Author of: *Kazuo Ohno: Food for the Soul* (Film Art Sha) and *Butoh: A Way of Life* (Canta Co.Ltd).



Yoshito Ohno in conversation

Butoh : A Way of Life

舞踏という生き方

Yoshito Ohno

大野慶人

Even before the early 60s "Butoh"³² as such was unknown. Before its inception there was the whole modern dance³³ movement. Kazuo Ohno³⁴ had studied it and was to develop it in his own particular manner—as did Tatsumi Hijikata³⁵ and I for that matter. Our roots were similar, namely, modern dance. The unique genius of Hijikata was that he crystallised all he had learnt and attempted thereby to forge a different meaning for the body by reducing it to its essential components. Hijikata's radical changes not only fostered an other approach to the body itself, but also to the implications of the creative act and performance. These changes became the kindling point for a radical shake-up of the status quo. I, too, was involved in this sea change within the dance world.

「舞踏」^{註32}というものがあつたわけじゃない。その前にモダンダンス^{註33}があつた。大野一雄^{註34}も習って、自分なりに発展させてやってた。土方巽^{註35}も。僕も。根っちは同じ、モダンダンスだった。それを、ひとりの、土方巽という天才が、それをひっくり返して、もっと元に戻った形で、違った意味の肉体をつくりあげようとした。肉体に対する考え方、それから創造する、つくるといふことの意味あいが変わつた。革命の発火点になつた。自分はそういう革命の場に立ち会つた。

Annotated with fifty-four essential end-notes.

32. Butoh

With its origins in the radical *Ankoku Butoh* pioneered by Tatsumi Hijikata, Butoh is the generic name attributed to a physical form of expression widely developed in Japan in the latter half of the 1970s by those who studied under and were influenced by Hijikata. Following Kazuo Ohno's appearance at the Nancy International Theatre Festival in 1980, Butoh was to garner worldwide attention as a form of contemporary dance epitomising post-war Japan. Not only did it eschew existing dance techniques, its innovative approach to the crucial role of the body in performance influenced the art, philosophical and dance worlds in Japan and overseas. Among the numerous Butoh performers still performing: Akira Kasai, Akaji Maro, Mitsutaka Ishii, Natsu Nakajima, Saga Kobayashi, Ushio Amagatsu and Ko Murobushi.

33. Modern Dance

Broadly speaking, modern dance alludes to the modernist dance form pioneered in the early 20th century by Isadora Duncan, that involved discarding conventions and techniques used in classical ballet. During the Taisho era (1912-1926) in Japan, dancers the likes of Baku Ishii, Masao and Seiko Takada introduced this innovative form of western dance and were subsequently to build the foundations of the Japanese modern dance movement. In the post-war years it was also referred to as contemporary dance. In those early years Kazuo Ohno and Tatsumi Hijikata studied under Takaya Eguchi and Misako Miya who in turn had studied under the Takadas. Ohno and Hijikata, however, to part ways from contemporary dance circles in 1959 and launch their individual careers.

In this finely-edited text, drawn from twelve hours of interviews, Yoshito Ohno revisits his private trajectory, his conception of Butoh, his experiences with his father and Tatsumi Hijikata. In addition seventy photographs spanning his beginnings to most recent times have been selected. A complete English translation is provided.