

Akane Nakamura

Producer of performing arts

Born in Tokyo in 1979, Akane Nakamura became involved in performing arts while she was an undergraduate in the College of Art at Nihon University. She founded precog Co., Ltd. in 2006, during her stint as program director at the NPO ST Spot Yokohama (2004 – 2008), and has been its representative director since 2008. From 2016 to 2018, she stayed in Bangkok and New York after receiving a grant from the Asian Cultural Council. She handles tasks in a wide variety of areas, such as production of the activities of contemporary theater and dance artists and companies inside and outside Japan, holding of site-specific festivals, execution of programs for interdisciplinary human resource development, and operation of a platform distributing video works online that is both barrier-free and multilingual.

Major production activities

Since 2004, she has produced the works of numerous artists and companies that are driving Japan's contemporary theater and dance, in Japan and other countries. The list includes chelfitsch & Toshiki Okada, Nibroll, the Mikuni Yanaihara Project & Mikuni Yanaihara, the Azumahashi Dance Xing, Masako Yasumoto, Norimizu Ameya, Yudai Kamisato, and Chiharu Shinoda. Nakamura has handled international tours and co-productions in 70 cities in 30 different countries, and done much to introduce Japan's contemporary theater scene to the international community since the second half of the 2000s. In October 2009, she established NPO Drifters International together with representative director Kao Kanamori and the architect Teppei Fujiwara. She is striving to conceive and produce international programs that cut across fields such as performing arts, fashion, and architecture, and projects with an inclusive perspective. In the process, she is further widening the range of her activities. Awardee of the 72nd Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's Art Encouragement Prize for New Artists (development of the arts) in 2022.

2011: Produced Contemporary Little Theatres of the World vol.1 Germany in a project of co-curation with the theater HAU Habel am Ufer Berlin.

2012 - 2014 : Performing arts program director for the Kunisaki Art Project and Kunisaki Art Festival (organized by the Kunisaki Art Festival Executive Committee).

2012 : Produced "*Irikuchi Dekuchi*" (*Entrance Exit*) (organized by the Kunisaki Art Festival Executive Committee), by Norimizu Ameya and Mariko Asabuki.

2012 : Director of Musicity Tokyo (organized by the British Council)

2012 : Produced KAFE9 (organized by NPO Drifters International and the Kanagawa Arts Theatre KAAT)

2016 - 2019 : Produced performances of *Pratthana - A Portrait of Possession* collaboration among Toshiki Okada, Uthis Haemamool and Yuya Tsukahara (co-organized by the Japan Foundation Asia Center and precog)

*Nominated for the 2020 Yomiuri Theater Award.

2016 : Produced *Inuto Imago*, an Inujima sound project by Kazuhisa Uchihashi at the Inujima Performing Arts Program in the Setouchi Triennale 2016. (co-organized by the Fukutake Foundation and precog)

2019 : Associate director and deputy secretary-general of the True Colors Festival (organized by The Nippon Foundation)

2018 - 2020 : Curated and produced *Jejak- Tabi Exchange: Wandering Asian Contemporary Performance*

2020 : Produced THEATRE for ALL, a high-accessibility video streaming service *Start of service in March 2021

2021 : Produced the theater-related program Meet the Artists at Mori Art Museum, *Ichthys* by Takayuki Yamamoto, and the community engagement program Tomohiko Tsujimoto x Koharu Sugawara Art Camp for under 22, Vol. 7, *Human Begin: What Are We Doing Tomorrow?*

2023: General producer of the All-in Film Festival in Karuizawa

2024: Appointed curator (performing arts producer) for the international

art festival Aichi Triennale 2025

Network-building inside and outside Japan

Since 2007, Nakamura has produced numerous international tours, mainly to Europe and North America, in her work for chelfitsch. The network she built now has links to more than 70 cities in 30 countries around the world. In 2016, she relocated to Bangkok after receiving a grant from the Asian Cultural Council, and embarked on research of performing arts in other Asian countries during her stay, which ended in 2018. The *Jejak-Tabi Exchange: Wandering Asian Contemporary Performance* and other programs also evidence the importance she attaches to projects linking Japan with other Asian countries. She proposed and is one of the directors of the Open Network for Performing Arts Management (ON-PAM). This is a membership-based national and international network of people involved in the task of connecting artists and art groups with audiences.

Accessibility programs

Her participation in the planning for the True Colors Festival organized by the Nippon Foundation in 2019 led Nakamura to add accessibility and inclusion to the themes of her activities. *All the Sex I've Ever Had*, by Mammalian Diving Reflex and Darren O'Donnell, was part of the official program of this festival. It is a participation-oriented project by a group of Canadian artists, and this was the first production and performance of the Japanese original edition. The performance also provided high accessibility in various ways for the audience and created connections among people with differing backgrounds. In October 2020, Nakamura produced THEATRE for ALL as a precog project. This is an online theatre platform through which people can view all sorts of videos in fields including theater, dance, movies, and media arts, in a highly accessible and multilingual format. This platform was given high ratings as an approach to improving access to the arts for persons with disabilities, heightening understanding of accessibility by artists, and enabling artists to explore modes of expression from new perspectives. It was selected for the GOOD DESIGN Award in fiscal 2021.

Projects for human resource development

Nakamura held the Drifters Summer School program, which is based in Yokohama, over the years 2010 - 2013. She produced a human resource development program in the areas of production, dance, architecture, fashion, and domains of cross-genre expression. She also served as a part-time instructor in the Nihon University College of Art from 2011 to the present. In addition, she was involved in the development and examination of Conneling Study together with workshop designer Takashi Usui for a period of three years beginning in 2019. This is an art appreciation project that applies the viewing of performances for a learning experience. In 2020, she served as co-director of Re / Creation, a school for the conception, planning, and publicizing of interdisciplinary projects. This program is sited in Shibuya QWS, a members-only facility on the 15th floor of SHIBUYA SCRAMBLE SQUARE, and brings together creators, business persons, artists, and other people. In 2021, Nakamura launched THEATRE for ALL Learning, a project for the diffusion of education about THEATRE for ALL. In this project, she strove to develop inclusive workshops with sign language interpretation, textual support, and other aids. Besides holding expression- and dialogue-type workshops, she conducted programs to develop workshop designers and facilitators. She remains active in efforts to increase the ranks of people who have the skills needed to create venues where all kinds of persons can confidently take part in dialogue and creation revolving around questions without any right answers, and have the ability to manage workshops. She is also involved in a program launched by the Agency for Cultural Affairs for development of human resources with disabilities.

Site-specific approaches

In 2012, she helped to organize the Sumidagawa Parade, which featured 100 cheerleaders, along the Sumida River in collaboration with the Tokyo Metropolitan Government. Over the years 2012 - 2014, she was performance program director for the Kunisaki Art Festival (co-sponsored by Oita Prefectural Government and the governments of the cities of Kunisaki and Bungotakada). She also produced "*Irikuchi Dekuchi*" (*Entrance Exit*), a 12-hour bus-tour work that became one of the signature works of Norimizu Ameya and Mariko Asabuki. In addition, she produced *Inujima Sound Project Inuto Imago*, a collaborative piece by Kazuhisa Uchihashi and the Indonesian musical unit Senyawa, in the Setouchi Triennale 2016. The project included the opening of an eponymous temporary venue that holds live performances once a month on the island of Inujima, and hosts sessions and workshops with all sorts

of musicians from other Asian countries. As the above evidences, Nakamura is energetically promoting activities rooted in local areas.

Space management

In a project of co-production with Mujinto Production and Azumabashi Dance Xing, she established SNAC (2010 - 2013), a place for socializing to breed new value, in a downtown district of Tokyo. She opened PUNTO PRECOG, a creative space which is likewise a site for the birth of new projects, in the city of Beppu, Oita Prefecture, in May 2012. Nakamura opened the free space Yamabuki Factory in what had been a printing factory in Yamabuki-cho, a district in Tokyo's Shinjuku Ward. She offers this space for use as a studio for theater and dance performances and rehearsals, and also holds workshop programs there.