



*The Place* presents

# RONIN

By *Yukiko Masui*

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# ABOUT

Enter the world of **RONIN**, where dance, swordplay, and cutting-edge digital projections come together to tell the story of a lone female swordfighter navigating honour, resilience, and survival in a male dominated world. Inspired by the legacy of Japan's ronin—masterless samurai who lived by their own code—this performance follows the journey of a fearless woman swordfighter who faces off against powerful adversaries, challenging both herself and those who stand in her path.

Through a captivating blend of movement and technology, **RONIN** takes audiences on a journey through Japan's four seasons, each reflecting a new chapter of our heroine's path. The projections transform the stage, from spring's cherry blossoms to winter's silent snowfall, creating an anime-inspired realm that merges ancient traditions with modern visual storytelling.

Award-winning choreographer **Yukiko Masui** crafts **RONIN**'s intense physicality, combining contemporary dance with martial precision to embody the fierce spirit of a warrior. Digital artist **Barret Hodgson** enhances each scene with dynamic projection mapping, immersing audiences in a vivid, animated world that magnifies the intensity of every movement and duel, creating a stunning intersection of tradition, technology, and timeless themes.

 [Link to Trailer and Sharing](#)



# INSPIRATION

**Yukiko Masui**, a Tokyo-born dance artist, blends movement with narrative in **RONiN**, a powerful piece inspired by her multifaceted journey through dance, martial arts, and love of anime. **Yukiko** began with hip hop and ballroom Latin dance in Tokyo before moving to London, where she immersed herself in contemporary dance and working as a performer internationally. When the pandemic hit in 2020, she found herself reflecting on the essence of what she missed most in her practice: purpose, connection, and the supportive strength of community.

Revisiting her roots in Kendo – a discipline she once led as a young captain in Japan – **Yukiko** reunited with her sword teacher and friend, Kashmir. This reconnection reignited her dedication, fueling her desire to reclaim the power of the female narrative through a blend of swordplay and dance.

**Yukiko**'s vision for **RONiN** draws inspiration from anime such as old classic Naruto and New Generation Animes Demon Slayer and Jujutsu Kaisen. Driven by her own experiences and love for these stories, Yukiko set out to create a central female character who embodies strength, resilience, and leadership. Through this, **RONiN** aims to empower and inspire audiences, challenging traditional narratives.

To create a unique world, **Yukiko** integrates immersive projections, inspired by the boundary-pushing visual work of TeamLab. The projections bring a dynamic environment to life on stage, transporting the audience to a sensory-rich world that deepens the audience's engagement with the piece and immerses them in its powerful themes.

**RONiN** invites audiences into a captivating journey of self-discovery, blending **Yukiko**'s artistry in contemporary dance, martial arts, and cutting-edge technology, with an unforgettable narrative that resonates across cultures and generations.





# ARTIST

## YUKIKO MASUI: CHOREOGRAPHER

**Yukiko Masui** has been the recipient of a Choreography Award from DanceXchange and an Akram Khan mentoring Award from Sky Arts, and is a Work Place Artist at **The Place**.

Originally from Tokyo, Japan, **Masui** started her training in Hip Hop, Ballroom and Latin where she developed her passion for dance and movement. She moved to London to train in Contemporary Dance, where she completed her MA as part of Transitions Dance Company.

**Masui** has worked as a choreographer and movement director in theatre, including *Miss Julie* at Southwark Playhouse; *Toy Show the Musical* by RTE at Dublin Convention Centre; *A Little Night Music* at Story House; *Say Yes to Tess*, Leeds Playhouse; *Guy: a New Musical* at The Bunker; *Taming of the Shrew for Two Gents*; and *Urine Town* at the London College of Music.

Contemporary Dance choreography credits include *Say Something* at National Dance Company of Wales; *SAY AF* at Dance Umbrella; *Femme Spreading* at Norrdans; *TNIDBD* at National Youth Dance Wales; *For Seasons* at Map Dance; *Dream Deprivation* at the London Contemporary Dance School; *Drowning in Your Own Sins* at the Northern School of Contemporary Dance; *State of Readiness* at London Studio Centre; and *Break it Down* at Trinity Laban. Her own works *Unbox*, *It Takes Two Too* and *Falling Family* have been commissioned and toured internationally by Birmingham Hippodrome, Norrlands Opera and more.

**Masui**'s performer credits include the international tour of *Carmen* for Agudo Dance Company; *Tempo* for Sadler's Wells; the Commonwealth Opening Ceremony for Corey Baker Dance; the UK tour of *Speak Louder Than Words* for Cathy Waller Company; *Still I Rise* at TRIBE; *Smack That* at the Barbican; and *Saving Face* at Curve. Her film and commercial credits include The Marvels, Nike, Coldplay, So You Think You Can Dance (UK) and Ministry of Sound.

**Masui** is a co-founder of **SAY**, who are associate artists at DanceEast and have toured their own show **the album** internationally. They were recently on the creative team as movement directors for *Romeo and Juliet*, starring Tom Holland, at The Duke of York's Theatre and *The Effect*, directed by Jamie Lloyd, at London's National Theatre and The Shed in New York.

@yukiko.masui



# COLLABORATORS

## BARRET HODGSON: DIGITAL ARTIST

Nottingham based artist and digital projection specialist, **Barret Hodgson**, is the founder of Vent media, an award-winning digital media production company specialising in both content creation and the integration of digital media into live performance, installation, digital projection and video mapping. **Barret** brings an integral knowledge of projection mapping and experience of working with dancers and choreographers.

**Barret's** long career across artistic and technical disciplines has developed a rare creative, aesthetic and technical talent with a sensibility for the collaborative process, whatever the size or how complex the project is.

## RUTH CHAN: COMPOSER

**Ruth Chan** is a composer for theatre, opera, dance, film and concert music. Credits: *The Power of Camelot*, (British Youth Music Theatre, Exeter Northcott); *The Jungle Book* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *Untitled f\*ck m\*ss s\*\*gon* (Royal Exchange/Young Vic); *Further than the Furthest Thing* (Young Vic); *The Doncastrian Chalk Circle* (National Theatre); *The Hatchling* (The Platinum Jubilee Pageant); *Beauty and the Seven Beasts* (The Opera Story); *Mokita* and *From the Top* (Hong Kong Arts Festival); *Snow in Midsummer* (RSC - nominated for The Stage Debut Award 2017); *The Triumph of Time* (Thailand International Composition Festival, Pianoforte Studio Chicago) and *Between Constellations* (Pittsburgh Opera Festival and Grimeborn Festival). Ruth's re-orchestration of Puccini's *Madam Butterfly* for Opera Up Close toured nationally in 2020.

**Ruth's** soundtrack for silent film *Around China With A Movie Camera* (British Film Institute) has been performed at Flatpack Film Festival and China Changing Festival at Royal Festival Hall. She has also composed for television documentaries including *A Very British Airline* (BBC); *Attack of the Pentagon* (Discovery Channel) and *The Trouble With Pirates* (BBC).

## KASHMIR LEESE: SWORD AND STUNT SPECIALIST

**Kashmir Leese** is a multi-skilled artist from Birmingham but currently based in London, trained in acting and martial arts (Kung Fu). He started training in the styles Muay Thai, Taekwondo and XMA; which specialises in performance martial arts as well as the three weapons Kashmir is well versed in (Katana, Bo Staff and Nun Chucks). Using that background, he started working in the action and stunt industry. He was recently a stunt performer in *Heart of Stone*, *Rings of Power S2*, *The Beekeeper* and *Wicked Part 1*.

## PRESS

**'ONCE IN A BLUE MOON, ALONG COMES A PERFORMANCE THAT MAKES YOU SIT UP AND PAY UNWAVERING ATTENTION. YUKIKO MASUI'S UNBOX IS ONE SUCH.'**

Sanjoy Roy (The Guardian) review, *Unbox*

**'A TREMENDOUS MUSICAL ARRANGEMENT, AND CHOREOGRAPHY OF THE HIGHEST LEVEL FROM YUKIKO MASUI, THIS ALL BLENDS TO CREATE A PERFECT THEATRICAL STORM.'**

The Reviews Hub on *A Little Night Music*



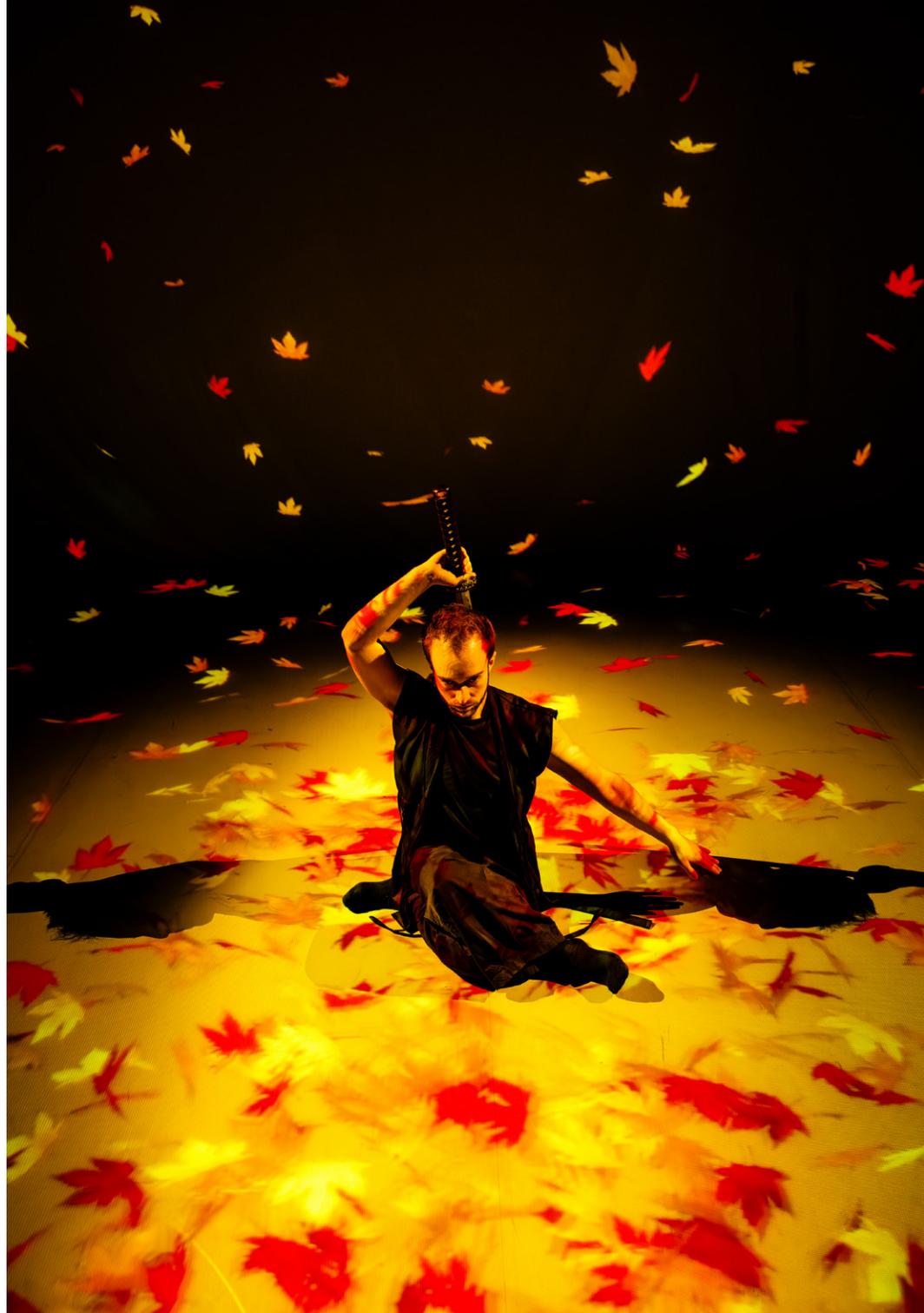
# MARKETING

## Key Selling Points

- **Unique Fusion of Art Forms:** **RONiN** blends contemporary dance with martial arts and immersive projection, creating a visually and physically dynamic performance that pushes the boundaries of traditional dance.
- **Narrative-Driven Dance:** In a rare fusion of dance and storytelling, **RONiN** follows a female fighter's journey in a male-dominated realm, engaging audiences with a compelling storyline of resilience, defiance, and self-discovery.
- **Cultural Depth:** The production draws on **Yukiko Masui's** Japanese heritage, incorporating elements of Kendo and Hip Hop culture, which adds rich cultural narratives and themes of community and identity.
- **Immersive Experience:** The use of immersive projection enhances the audience's engagement, allowing them to experience the performance in a multi-sensory way that complements the movement and storytelling.
- **Themes of Resilience and Community:** **RONiN** explores themes of connection, discipline, and personal growth, resonating with audiences seeking meaningful and relatable narratives.
- **Innovative Choreography:** The choreography incorporates both traditional sword techniques and contemporary dance, showcasing a unique vocabulary of movement that captivates and inspires.
- **Cross-Disciplinary Appeal:** The production attracts a wide range of audiences, from dance enthusiasts and martial arts fans to technology lovers and anime aficionados, creating a diverse viewing experience.

## Age Recommendation (or guidance)

- **Suitable for 10+**





# TARGET AUDIENCE

## Target Audiences

- **Cultural and Community Groups:** Audiences connected to Japanese culture, martial arts, or the hip hop community, who may resonate with Yukiko's background and experiences.
- **Action and Anime Fans:** Enthusiasts of anime and action films who appreciate dynamic storytelling, visually striking aesthetics, and martial arts themes.
- **Technology and Multimedia Art Lovers:** Individuals intrigued by the integration of technology and performance, particularly immersive projection and digital art.
- **Experiential and Adventurous:** Younger and digital savvy audiences, keen to try new things, will be drawn to the immersive nature of the show.
- **Dance Enthusiasts:** Individuals with a strong interest in contemporary dance, martial arts, and innovative movement styles.
- **Families and Youth:** Engaging younger audiences and families through accessible themes of friendship, community, and self-discovery reflected in the performance.



# TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

<b>Duration</b> (running time and interval)	60 minutes
<b>Performance Space</b> (size requirements)	Minimum 10m wide x 8m deep x 6m height
<b>Get-In</b> (time)	1 day get in / set up performance to take place the following evening
<b>Get-Out</b> (time)	3 hours
<b>Set</b> (any travelling set pieces and anything the venue would be required to provide)	The company will bring: Minimum of 4 projectors Cycloramas Light Grey Dance Floor Plus rigging equipment for cycloramas, transported in a Long wheel based van.
<b>Touring Party</b> (total number, including number of dancers, choreographer, the team etc. if touring)	7 on tour 3 dancers 1 Production Manager 1 Technician 1 Choreographer 1 Producer
<b>Contact</b> (for any technical enquiries)	<a href="mailto:chris.burr@theplace.org.uk">chris.burr@theplace.org.uk</a>
<b>Staffing</b> (from venue)	1 x Flys (non-flying, sub with 1 x Stage) 1 x Stage 1 x LX 1 x Sound

 **RONiN Technical Plans** (flying venue)

 **RONiN Technical Plans** (non-flying venues)

# CREDITS

**RONiN** is commissioned and co-produced by The Place and supported using public funding by Arts Council England, Cockayne - Grants for the Arts, The London Community Foundation and The Sasakawa Foundation. Supported by Kakilang.

**Choreographer:** Yukiko Masui

**Sword and Stunt Specialist:** Kashmir Leese

**Digital Artist:** Barret Hodgson

**Composer:** Ruth Chan

# CONTACT

To book or for more information, please contact **Courtney Beadle**,  
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COCHAYNE

 Funded by  
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THE PLACE

# ABOUT THE PLACE

The Place, London's creative powerhouse for dance development, has been leading the way in dance training, creation and performance for 50 years. In a changing landscape, our vision for the future remains steadfast: We are powering imagination through dance, championing new ideas, embracing risks and creating a dance ecosystem unlike any other in the world, with optimal conditions for dance artists and enthusiasts to realise their full potential. The Place is home to London Contemporary Dance School, an extensive theatre and artist development programme, education projects, a range of classes and courses and a nationwide touring model. As a pioneering dance organisation, we are committed to creating no-barriers access to exciting dance experiences and opportunities for everybody, offering a diverse and dynamic theatre programme for audiences, empowering artists and dance makers and giving young people access to the highest quality opportunities to touch their lives with dance.

[theplace.org.uk](http://theplace.org.uk)

