



The Place presents

RONIN

By **Yukiko Masui**

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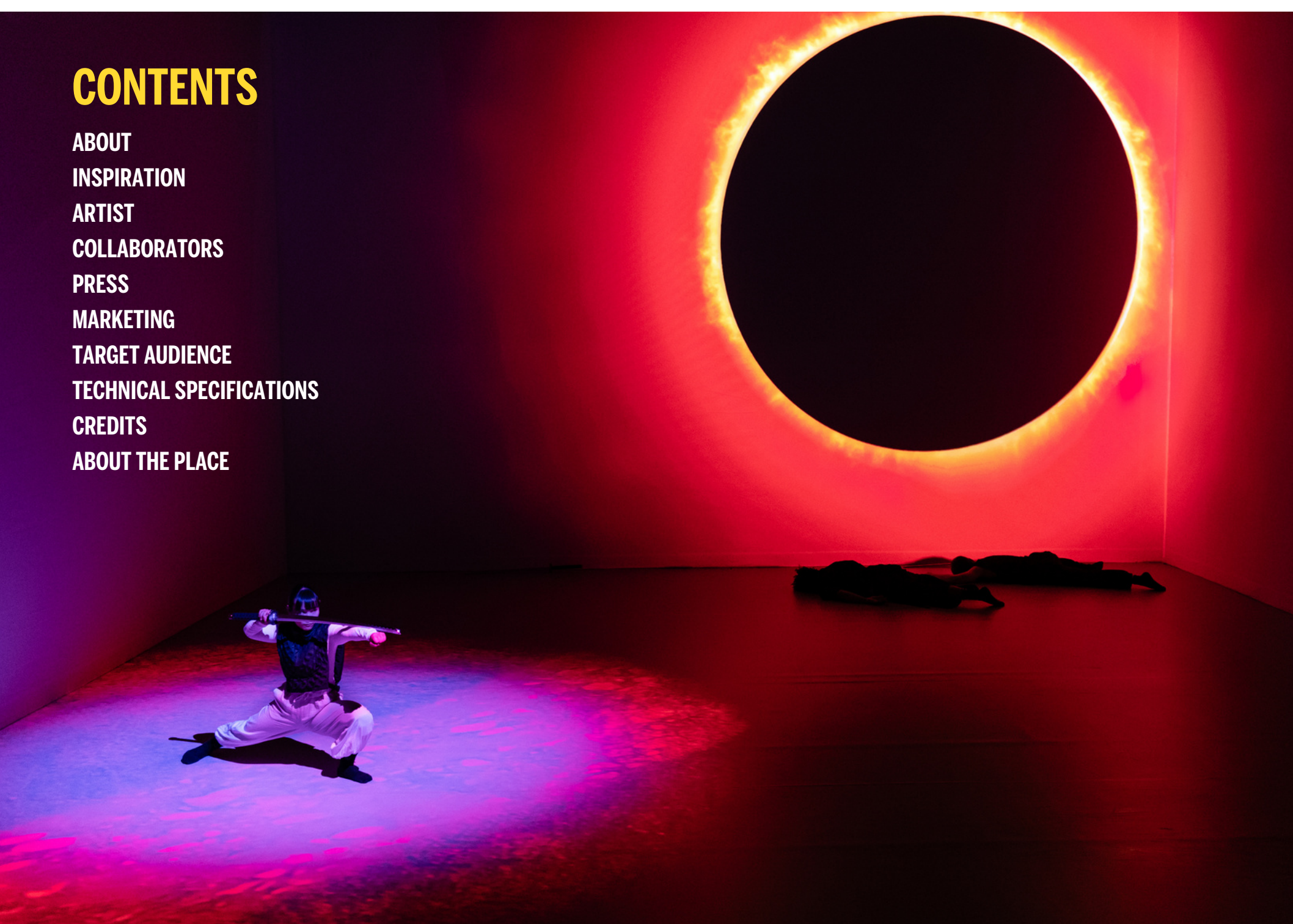
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ABOUT

A fearless woman swordfighter faces off against powerful adversaries, challenging both herself and those who stand in her path.

Inspired by the legacy of Japan's ronin - masterless samurai who lived by their own code - this performance combines dance, swordplay, and cutting-edge digital projections to tell the story of an unlikely hero navigating honour, resilience and survival in a male-dominated world.

Through a captivating blend of movement and technology, RONiN takes audiences through Japan's four seasons, from spring's cherry blossoms to winter's silent snowfall, creating an anime-inspired realm that merges ancient traditions with modern visual storytelling.

RONiN is a new collaboration between award-winning choreographer Yukiko Masui and digital artist Barret Hodgson, produced by The Place

 [Links to Trailer and Full Length Recording](#)

 [Yukiko Masui discusses her inspiration for RONiN](#)

RONiN sold out seven shows during its 2026 tour and is now booking for Autumn 2027



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 Leese. 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 is a Tokyo-born, London-based choreographer and movement director. She is a recipient of the Choreography Award from DanceXchange and the Akram Khan Mentoring Award from Sky Arts, and was a Work Place Artist at The Place.

Masui began her training in Hip Hop, Ballroom and Latin dance in Tokyo, developing a distinctive movement language rooted in musicality and energy. She later moved to London to study contemporary dance, completing her MA with Transitions Dance Company, and has since built a career spanning theatre, contemporary dance, film, and commercial work.

In the world of contemporary dance, Masui's choreography credits include SAY Something(National Dance Company Wales), SAY:AF (Dance Umbrella), The Night Is Darkest Just Before the Dawn (National Youth Dance Wales at Sadler's Wells), 153' 8s (Emergence Dance Company), Femme Spreading(Norrdans), and / (The Place & HKAPA). Her own creations — including Unbox, It Takes Two Too, 33, Falling Family, and RONiN 0— have been performed internationally, touring to venues such as The Place, Korzo, Norrlands Opera, Birmingham Hippodrome and more. Her work has been praised by The Guardian's Sanjoy Roy as creating "performances that make you sit up and pay unwavering attention."

Her recent theatre and musical choreography credits include Jekyll and Hyde (Umeda Theatre, Tokyo), Miss Julie(New Earth Theatre), Toy Show The Musical (RTE, Dublin Convention Centre), Say Yes to Tess (Leeds Playhouse), Guy: A New Musical (The Bunker), and A Little Night Music(Storyhouse). She has also worked on Othello (R&D) at Shakespeare's Globe, produced by New Earth Theatre.

As a performer, Masui has appeared with Agudo Dance Company, Cathy Waller Company,Rhiannon Faith and TRIBE, as well as in projects for Sadler's Wells, The Barbican, and Curve Theatre. She also served as Dance Captain for the Commonwealth Opening Ceremony. Her commercial and screen credits include work for The Marvels (Marvel Studios), Nike, Coldplay, So You Think You Can Dance (UK), and Ministry of Sound.

Masui is the co-founder of SAY, a dynamic performance duo whose work the album has toured internationally. SAY has collaborated with director Jamie Lloyd as movement directors on Romeo & Juliet(West End, starring Tom Holland) and The Effect (National Theatre and The Shed, 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

‘YUKIKO MASUI’S PRODUCTION COMBINES DANCE, SWORDPLAY AND CUTTING-EDGE DIGITAL PROJECTION TO CREATE A THEATRICAL EXPERIENCE THAT IS BOTH VISUALLY ARRESTING AND INTELLECTUALLY PROVOCATIVE.’

Nicola Claire (Seeing Dance) review, *RONiN* at The Place

‘HIGHLY STYLISED POSES COME STRAIGHT FROM THE ANIME PLAYBOOK; BLADES TWIRL AND SLASH.’

Siobhan Murphy (The Stage) review, *RONiN* at The Place

‘CERTAINLY ONE TO SEE FOR BOTH ANIME FANS AND NEWCOMERS ALIKE, AND A WONDERFUL INTRODUCTION TO BOTH DANCE AND SWORDPLAY.’

Ruth Jepson (The Reviews Hub) review, *RONiN* at Lawrence Batley Theatre

‘IT’S A MULTI-MEDIA DANCE SHOW THAT MAY WELL SEDUCE A LOT OF PEOPLE... INTO DANCE’

David Whetstone (Cultured. North East) review, *RONiN* preview performance at Dance City



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 an exciting 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.

'TAKE THE KIDS..., TAKE YOUR UN-ARTY UNCLE, TAKE PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT DANCE INSIDERS, AND THEY ARE NOT GOING TO FEEL EXCLUDED.'

Sanjoy Roy (The Guardian) review, *RONiN* at The Place



WORKSHOPS

Version 1. (Dance Only/ No Sword)

Award-winning choreographer Yukiko Masui invites you to dive into her new show, RONiN.

This high-energy workshop combining hip hop dance, contemporary dance and martial arts allows you to experience a fusion of rhythms, fluid movement, and dynamic technique, whilst exploring Masui's unique style and creative vision.

Participants will explore Masui's choreographic style through dynamic technique and repertoire from RONiN offering an insight into Masui's creative approach and performance demands.

Ages 12+ / Some dance experience preferred

Version 2. (Sword/ Sticks workshop)

Award-winning dance and choreographer Yukiko Masui invites you to join us for an intro to swordplay workshop.

Using bamboo sticks, participants will learn the foundation of Sword practice (Kendo) and swordplay. Creatively using the technique to create their own sword dance (Kenbu). Participants will learn how to move with and create beautiful pathways with swords.

Ages 12+ / No movement experience needed



[See what was created during RONiN's Sword Workshop in Gloucester](#)

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Duration (runningtimeandinterval)	80 Minutes (inc Interval)
Performance Space (size requirements)	Minimum 10m wide x 8m deep x 6m height
Get-In (time)	1 day get in / set up performance to take place the following evening
Get-Out (time)	3 hours
Set (any travelling setpieces and anything thevenue wouldbe required to provide)	The company will bring: 4 projectors Cycloramas Light Grey Dance Floor Plus rigging equipment for cycloramas, transported in a Long wheel based van.
Touring Party (total number, including number of dancers, choreographer, the team etc. if touring)	6 on tour 3 dancers 1 Production Manager 1 Technician 1 Producer
Contact (for any technical enquiries)	chris.burr@theplace.org.uk
Staffing (from venue)	Minimum 2 x Technician from the venue



RONiN Technical Plans (flying venue)



RONiN Technical Plans (non-flying venues)

CREDITS

RONIN is produced and toured by The Place, and co-commissioned by Dance East, Dance City, The Gillian Dickinson Trust and Certain Blacks. Supported using public funding by Arts Council England, Cockayne-Grants for the Arts, The London Community Foundation, The Sasakawa Foundation and Kakilang.

Choreographer and Director: Yukiko Masui

Digital Artist: Barret Hodgson

Composer: Ruth Chan

Sword and Stunt Specialist: Kashmir Leese

Supporting Writer: Si Rawlinson

Original Performers: Cher Nicolette Ho, Jacob Lang, Nathan Bartman

Associate Costume Designer: Mio Jue

CONTACT

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

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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



