

wexner center for the arts
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESENTS

chelfitsch

Five Days in March

THU–SAT, FEB 12–14 | 8 PM

Performance Space

Air Conditioner

SAT, FEB 14 | 7 PM

Performance Space

CREDITS

Major support for the Wexner Center's 2008–09 performing arts season is generously provided by **Huntington Bank** and the **Doris Duke Charitable Foundation**.

The seven-city North American tour of chelfitsch is organized and produced by the **Japan Society** and supported by the **Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan**; **The Japan Foundation** through the *Performing Arts JAPAN Program*; and **The Saison Foundation** for the **Japan Society's Japanese Theater NOW initiative**.

Accommodations are provided by **The Blackwell Inn**.

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EVENT SUPPORT



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ACCOMMODATIONS



PROGRAM

chelfitsch Theater Company

Five Days in March

THU–SAT, FEB 12–14 | 8 PM

Written and directed by **Toshiki Okada**

In Japanese with English surtitles

Performers: **Taichi Yamagata**, **Luchino Yamazaki**, **Hiromasa Shimonishi**, **Kohei Matsueda**, **Tomomitsu Adachi**, **Riki Takeda**, and **Izumi Aoyagi**

Air Conditioner

SAT, FEB 14 | 7 PM

Written and directed by **Toshiki Okada**

In Japanese with English surtitles

Performers: **Taichi Yamagata** and **Luchino Yamazaki**

All ticketholders for *Five Days in March* are invited to this FREE performance of *Air Conditioner*, but **separate tickets are required** and are available from the Wexner Center ticket office.

Air Conditioner is 25 minutes in length and hilariously depicts a young Japanese “salaryman” office worker’s interaction with a female colleague.

Stage Manager: **Koro Suzuki**

Sound Technician: **Ayumu Okubo**

Lighting Technician: **Tomomi Ohira**

Producer: **Akane Nakamura**

Company Tour Manager: **Fumiko Toda**

Japan Society Tour Manager: **Eriko Ogawa**

English Translations: **Aya Ogawa**

Special thanks to Yokohama Arts Platform: Steep Slope Studio.

Dis, rien à voir avec
je peux te demand



RESIDENCY ACTIVITIES

In addition to organizing public presentations of contemporary work in the performing, media, and visual arts, the Wexner Center actively seeks to provide opportunities for interaction among visiting artists, students, faculty, and staff of The Ohio State University, and members of the community. These activities and associated discussions led by authorities in many fields offer our audiences a better understanding of the creative process and the work of artists engaged by the Wexner Center.

While at the Wexner Center, chelfitsch's playwright and director Toshiki Okada met with students in Ohio State's Department of Theatre to discuss his approach to youth culture in his work. At this session, students also gained insight into the contemporary trends of performance in Japan.



ABOUT CHELFITSCH THEATER COMPANY

The company was founded in 1997 by Toshiki Okada, who writes and directs all of chelfitsch's productions. Named after a deliberate mispronunciation of the English word "selfish," chelfitsch made its debut with *Kyokoku (Canyon)* at the Yokohama Sotetsu Honda Theater. With its subsequent productions, the company began to refine its textual aesthetic of using colloquial language to represent contemporary youth culture (as in *Surprised by Their Hopes*, March 2001) and to juxtapose noisy choreography derived from everyday mannerisms with the text (as in *Mansion*, 2002, and *Five Days in March [Sangatsu no Itsuka-kan]*, 2004). The company began to garner attention in the dance scene, and *Air Conditioner* was chosen as a finalist at the Toyota Choreography Awards in July 2005.

The company made its international debut in 2007 with the performance of *Five Days in March* at the Kunstenfestivaldesarts in Brussels. In 2008, *Freetime* was jointly commissioned by and premiered at Kunstenfestivaldesarts, Wiener Festwochen (Vienna), and Festival d'Automne (Paris). Works by chelfitsch have been presented to great acclaim at leading international theater festivals and venues in cities throughout Europe and Asia, including Brussels, Paris, Cardiff, Salzburg, and Singapore. This performance of *Five Days in March* is part of the company's North American debut tour produced and organized by the Japan Society.

BIOGRAPHIES

Toshiki Okada (writer/director) was born in Yokohama in 1973 and formed chelfitsch in 1997. As the writer and director of all of the company's productions, he practices a distinctive methodology for creating plays and has come to be known for his use of hypercolloquial Japanese and unique choreography. In 2005, Okada and his company garnered attention with many awards, including the prestigious 49th Kunio Kishida Drama Award for Best Script for *Five Days in March* and the Yokohama Award for Art and Cultural Encouragement. He participated in the Stücke'06 International Literature Project as a representative of Japan and presented *Enjoy* at New National Theatre, Tokyo, in December 2006. He was also the director for the 2006–07 Summit, an annual drama festival at the Komaba Agora Theater, with playwright/director Oriza Hirata.

In February of 2007 his collection *The End of the Special Time We Were Allowed* (*Watashitachi ni Yurusareta Tokubetsu na Jikan no Owari*) was published, which included the novel version of *Five Days in March* and his first novel, *Our Many Places* (*Watashitachi no Basho no Fukusu*). It was awarded the Kenzaburo Oe Prize. As a director, he has directed Samuel Beckett's *Cascando* for the Tokyo International Arts Festival and the Beckett Centennial Memorial Festival; Kobo Abe's *Friends* at the Setagaya Public Theater; *Strangeness*, with local actors at the Itami Ai Hall in Hyogo prefecture; and *Ghost Youth*, created through collaboration with students of Obirin University. He recently wrote a new play called *Three Women* for director Naoto Takenaka and is working on numerous other projects as well.

Taichi Yamagata (performer) was born in Yokohama in 1979 and made his stage debut in the Yamagata Family Theater Company's *The People of the Hinode Family*. He has appeared in many productions by Toshiki Okada, including *Mansion*, *King Ubu*, *Journey to the Heart of the Projects*, *Three Days and Three Nights and One Hundred Years*, *Time That Has Nothing to Do with the Body*, *Destination*, *Enjoy*, and *Freetime*. He has also worked with director Akio Miyazawa and choreographer Natsuko Tezuka, among others, and continues to perform with Yamagata Family Theater Company.

Luchino Yamazaki (performer) was born in 1976 in Kanagawa prefecture. From 1983 to 1994 she was part of the Japan Broadcasting Corporation's Children's Theater Company and was a member of the P.E.C.T. theater company from 1995 to 2002. She is also a vocalist with the band yara-go and recently appeared in Toshiki Shu Matsui's *Consumption of Calories*. She has been in numerous productions by Okada, including *Three Days and Three Nights and One Hundred Years*, *Time That Has Nothing to Do with the Body*, *Post* * *The End of Toil*, *Enjoy*, and *Freetime*.

Hiromasa Shimonishi (performer), born in Hiroshima in 1977, is the artistic director, writer, director, and actor for Kotsubone, a company he founded in 2000. He produces two new works every year for Kotsubone and received the 11th Playwright's Association Emerging Writer Award for *Dirty Moon (Kitanai Tsuki)* in 2005, an honorable mention in the 5th Kanagawa Play Competition for *Tanebi*, and the Outstanding Performance Award at the 6th Kanagawa Play Competition for *Watami* in 2006. In February 2007 he directed his script *Watami* at Kirari*Fujimi Theater. He has appeared in several productions with chelfitsch including *Enjoy* and *Destination*.

Kohei Matsueda (performer) was born in Saitama prefecture in 1980 and joined chelfitsch with its Singapore performance of *Five Days in March*. A graduate of the College of Literature at Aoyama Gakuin University with a major in American and English literature, he began acting as a student. After spending two years working for a production company, he began working again in theater in 2005.

Tomomitsu Adachi (performer) was born in 1979 in Shizuoka prefecture and graduated from Nihon University College of Art, where he began his acting career. He has appeared in numerous productions including *Dry Flower* and *no direction*. by Nibroll, *Third Year Second Class (San-nen Nikumi)* and *The Blue Bird (Ao no tori)* by Mikuni Yanaihara Projects, and *Moon Classroom (Tsuki no kyoshitsu)* by Akio Miyazawa, as well as other works with Bokudeath, Team Megane, and All Two-Step School. He starred in the award-winning short film *The Last Monster (Saigo no kaijuu)*, directed by Akihiro Takahashi, and also performed with chelfitsch in *Freetime*.

Riki Takeda (performer) was born in 1983 in Kumamoto prefecture and joined chelfitsch with its Singapore performance of *Five Days in March*. After graduating from Rikkyo University, he worked as a kindergarten teacher in Kawasaki City and later began developing his stage career. Recent performance credits include Nibroll x Ong Keng Sen's *Asia Ai* (directed by Ong Keng Sen and choreographed by Mikuni Yanaihara), *La Marea Yokohama* (written and directed by Mariano Pensotti), and Katsuhiko Hibino Art Project's '*Home → And ← Away*' *Method meets Noda [But-a-I]* (written and directed by Katsuhiko Hibino and Hideki Noda).

Izumi Aoyagi (performer) was born in Tokyo in 1986 and joined chelfitsch for its performances of *Five Days in March* at the Salzburg Festival. She appeared in *Ghost Youth*, written and directed by Toshiki Okada, when it was presented by Obirin University Performing Arts Program, where Okada is a guest lecturer. She is currently a student at Obirin University.

Aya Ogawa (translator) is a New York–based writer, director, performer, and translator for the theater. She is the founder and artistic director of *knife inc.*, a company that presented her play *oph3lia* at HERE Arts Center in 2008. Her work has been performed in Thailand, Japan, and the Philippines. Notable credits include the International Theater Institute's *Ifdentity* project in Madrid and a guest performance in Rinko-gun Theater Company's award-winning *The Emperor and the Kiss*. She is a Usual Suspect at New York Theater Workshop and has received grants, fellowships, and residencies from several organizations including HERE Arts Center, New Dramatists, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, and the Brooklyn Arts Exchange. Her translation of Okada's *Enjoy* will have its English language premiere in autumn of 2009 produced by the Play Company. Visit knifeinc.org for more information.

ABOUT THE JAPAN SOCIETY

Founded in 1907, the Japan Society is dedicated to bringing the people of the United States and Japan together through understanding, appreciation, and cooperation. Since 1953, the Japan Society's Performing Arts Program has presented over 600 events of the finest Japanese theater, dance, and music. In addition to its annual season of about a dozen separate programs with education workshops, lectures, and demonstrations, the society supports the creation of new work through commissions and reaches a wide audience through organizing and producing national tours. The range of work presented varies from traditional and ancient art forms to the most cutting edge, hybrid experimental performances. For more information, visit japansociety.org

WEX UP NEXT

Japan Dance Now

Nibroll, BABY-Q, and Sennichimae
Blue Sky Dance Club

THU-SAT, FEB 19-21 | 8 PM
Performance Space



PHOTO: BANRI

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List reflects annual gifts and pledges of \$25,000 or more, as of January 20, 2009.

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