

FUTARI SHIZUKA

THE MAIDEN FROM THE SEA

the new opera by TOSHIO HOSOKAWA



"My lover was a warrior. A very strong samurai"

For **Toshio Hosokawa's** latest opera, **Oriza Hirata** has written a libretto based on the Noh play Futari Shizuka [The Two Shizukas]. In this work, the departed spirit of Shizuka Gozen, or Lady Shizuka, possesses the body and soul of a refugee woman who made it to the Mediterranean Sea, and sings her sorrow for wars and hateful disputes. Lady Shizuka's story is more than 900 years old, but it continues to move us as it is filled with timeless dramatic elements: absolute love beyond death, abandonment, bravery, fratricidal quarrels, unquenchable pain and a quest for liberation.

This opera is sung in both English and Japanese: the mesmerising German soprano **Sarah Wegener** plays the part of Helen while the ghost of Lady Shizuka is unbodyed by the exceptional **Ryoko Aoki**, Japanese Noh singer and dancer for whom the part was written.



"I will enter you, and show you."

This first stage creation of the opera, directed by the Belgium multi-media artist **Thomas Israel**, premiered on March 2019 at the Tongyeong International Music Festival, one of the most important musical events in South Korea. Thomas Israel has been recently in Kanasawa & Tokyo with Marc Minkowski's interpretation of *Pelléas et Mélisande*, for which he has contributed with the video stage design. This version of the famous Debussy's opera was voted third best music event of 2018 by critics in Japan (Ongaku No Tomo Magazine).

For *Futari Shizuka*, Thomas Israel's approach was to create a fluid "in-between space" space with multiple video projections that unite several technologies developed specifically for this piece, such as generative video that evolves and reacts symbiotically with the music of Toshio Hosokawa. As a result, the audience is taken into an extraordinary immersive and sensorial experience.

In *Futari Shizuka*, Western and Eastern traditions meet, mixing the codes of Noh theatre and contemporary opera, in order to give shape to the unique story of the encounter of an ancient Japanese ghost with a present-day refugee.

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"Where do I come from? Where am I Going?"



"Please mourn for me."

Video recording:

<https://vimeo.com/331759278/c58e6b8d95>

[more picture here](#)

Opera: Toshio Hosokawa

Libretto: Oriza Hirata

With: Ryoko Aoki (Noh Singer & Dancer) &
Sarah Wegener (Soprano)

Director – stage & video design: Thomas Israel

Conductor: Shiyeon Sung

Software & generative video: François Zajéga

Costumes design: Moon Sou Cho

Light design: Jeonghun Lee

Artistic Assistant: Kika Nicolela

Technic video: Antoine Goldschmidt

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Production: TIMF - Tongyeong International Music
Festival - Asian premiere & stage creation @ TIMF
29-3 to 31-9-2019

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