

Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo: Pioneers of Japanese Butoh Performance

Japanese Butoh, a uniquely evocative and enigmatic form of dance theatre, has captivated audiences worldwide with its mesmerizing aesthetics and profound exploration of the human condition. Among the pioneers who shaped this captivating art form are Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo, two groundbreaking performance practitioners whose innovative approaches have left an enduring legacy on the world of dance.

Born in 1928, Hijikata Tatsumi emerged as the father of Butoh in the postwar era. Driven by a profound dissatisfaction with conventional dance forms, he embarked on a relentless quest for a new mode of expression that would transcend the boundaries of traditional aesthetics.

Born in 1933, Ohno Kazuo emerged as one of the most influential exponents of Butoh, renowned for his ethereal and poetic performances. While sharing Hijikata's fascination with the body's expressive potential, Ohno's approach was marked by a delicate sensitivity and a profound connection to the natural world.



Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo (Routledge Performance Practitioners)

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

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Hijikata and Ohno's paths intersected during the formative years of Butoh, and their collaboration had a profound impact on the development of the art form. While Hijikata provided the raw and primal foundation, Ohno brought a sense of refinement and poetry that expanded the expressive range of Butoh.

Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo were visionary performance practitioners who forever transformed the landscape of dance theatre with their creation of Butoh. Their pioneering approaches challenged conventional aesthetics, explored the uncharted territories of the human psyche, and inspired countless artists to forge new paths of creative expression.

- **Image 1:** Hijikata Tatsumi performing "Ankoku Butoh" (Alt: Hijikata Tatsumi, the father of Butoh, performing his seminal work "Ankoku Butoh")
- **Image 2:** Ohno Kazuo performing "Admiring La Argentina" (Alt: Ohno Kazuo, the poet of Butoh, embodying the ethereal presence of legendary dancer La Argentina)
- **Image 3:** Hijikata and Ohno collaborating in the early days of Butoh (Alt: Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo, collaborating to develop the art form of Butoh)

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