

TOPAZ ARTS, Inc.
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Eiko at Indian Point Energy Center, New York, photo by William Johnston

TOPAZ ARTS, Inc. presents

A Body in Places: Queens Edition

an exhibition by artist **Eiko Otake** and photographer **William Johnston**
co-curated with Todd B. Richmond & Paz Tanjuaquio

on view May 6 – 28, 2017

opening event: Saturday, May 6, 2017:

1-3pm: Delicious Movement Workshop with Eiko

3-6pm: Opening reception

4pm: Performance by Eiko

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TOPAZ ARTS, 55-03 39th Avenue in Woodside, Queens, NY

#7 to 61st/Woodside or R/M to Northern Blvd. Gallery hours by appointment – visit@topazarts.org

(Queens, NY) — **TOPAZ ARTS** is pleased to present ***A Body in Places: Queens Edition*** – an exhibition by renowned artist **Eiko Otake** and photographer **William Johnston** – on view **May 6 to 28, 2017**. The exhibition at TOPAZ ARTS presents new images from the photographic series where the collaborators visited Indian Point Energy Center, the nuclear plant in Buchanan, New York in 2016, along with selected images from ***A Body in Fukushima*** (2014-16), which shows their extensive work in irradiated areas in Fukushima, Japan after the 2011 nuclear meltdowns. The photographic series accompanied by a movement workshop and live performance by Eiko form a poetic response to disaster and proximity.

On Saturday, May 6th, TOPAZ ARTS is pleased to offer a **Delicious Movement Workshop 1-3pm** and a **live performance by Eiko at 4pm** during the **exhibition opening reception from 3-6pm**. Admission is complimentary.

Free workshop with Eiko: Saturday, May 6, 1-3pm. Space is limited for the workshop – please rsvp@topazarts.org.

Delicious Movement Workshop is designed for all people who love to move or who want to love to move with delicious feelings. You don't have to be a dancer to enjoy the experience. The workshop is appropriate to all levels of training and ability. The exercises employ images, body articulation, floor work, and largely slow movement.

"Move to experience a body as part of a landscape and landscape as a body; both breathe and move," a statement from the [Delicious Movement Manifesto](#), aptly describes Eiko's *A Body in Places*. The photographs by Johnston capture Eiko's movement and gestures among evolving landscapes, from Fukushima, Japan to the Indian Point Nuclear Plant in New York, drawing upon distance and potential disaster as a malleable experience.

This project is part of Eiko's solo series [A Body in Places](#) and [A Body in Fukushima](#) – for full details, please visit the websites <http://eikoandkoma.org/abodyinplaces> and <http://eikoandkoma.org/abodyinfukushima>

Eiko and Johnston met in 2005 and, prior to this artistic collaboration, had co-taught courses in Wesleyan University on the atomic bombings and mountaintop removal mining. Eiko first conceived of the photo project *A Body in Fukushima* as a part of her first solo project *A Body in Places*, which began in October 2014 with a series of three-hour durational performances of *A Body in Station* at 30th Street Amtrak station in Philadelphia. Eiko had previously visited Fukushima alone in 2011 soon after earthquake, tsunami and nuclear meltdowns hit the area. She invited Johnston to collaborate.

In 2014, Eiko and Johnston made two extended visits to the irradiated areas surrounding the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear reactors, where all residents had been evacuated. Following the abandoned train lines, Eiko and Johnston visited the empty stations and their neighborhoods, places that formerly bustled with life and people. In these locations, Eiko embodies bitter grief, anger and remorse, sometimes in vulnerable gestures and at other times dancing fiercely. They returned to the area again in the summer of 2016 and found many of the places they had visited in 2014 have been radically changed. New sea walls have been built, and many workers have been brought in to clear houses and buildings. They decontaminate the fields and roads. Fukushima has become a very dusty and busy place though people have not returned to live there. The only places left untouched by bulldozers are shrines and forests. Eiko danced in these places that remain highly irradiated.

*By placing my body in these places, I thought of the generations of people who used to live there.
Now desolate, only time and wind continue to move. — Eiko Otake*

*By witnessing events and places, we actually change them and ourselves in ways that may not always be apparent but are important.
Through photographing Eiko in these places in Fukushima, we are witnessing not only her and the places themselves,
but the people whose lives crossed with those places. — William Johnston*

On May 17, 2016, Eiko and Johnston visited the area surrounding Indian Point Energy Center, nuclear plant in New York and created the images exhibited here, to draw the connection between a disaster far away and a potential disaster close to home.

About the Artists:

William Johnston is Professor of History, East Asian Studies, and Science in Society at Wesleyan University and an accomplished photographer. Born in Rawlins, Wyoming, Johnston received his PhD from Harvard in History and East Asian Languages. As a photographer Johnston works with digital color, 35mm B&W, large-format cameras and platinum prints. Johnston has collaborated with Eiko since 2014 in her *A Body in Places* project. During the 2014-2015 academic year Johnston was the Edwin O. Reischauer Visiting Professor at Harvard University. <http://johnstonphotography.photoshelter.com>

Born and raised in Japan, and based in New York since 1976, **Eiko Otake** is a movement-based multidisciplinary performing artist, who, for over forty years, worked with Takashi Koma Otake as Eiko & Koma. They received many awards including a MacArthur Fellowship, the Samuel H. Scripps American Dance Festival Award, as well as inaugural United States Artists Fellowship and Doris Duke Artist Awards. Incorporating both performative and non-performative elements, Eiko's solo project, *A Body in Places*, has toured extensively, and was the subject of the 10th annual PLATFORM, a month-long curated program of Danspace Project in NYC. Her collaborative photo exhibition with William Johnston was last seen at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, which designated Eiko Artist-in-Residence for its Dignity Initiative. www.eikoandkoma.org

Eiko's solo project, *A Body in Places*, was made possible with the support of many agencies and foundations: the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York State Council on the Arts, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, the Japan Foundation's Performing Arts Japan program, the MAP Fund and Art Matters. Assistance at critical junctures was provided by the Pennsylvania Academy for the Fine Arts, Wesleyan University and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council.

Eiko's residency at TOPAZ ARTS was made possible in part with support from the Japan Foundation, New York and its Performing Arts JAPAN program.



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TOPAZ ARTS, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization founded in 2000 by artists **Todd B. Richmond & Paz Tanjuaquio**. An artist-run creative development center, TOPAZ ARTS supports the creative process, offering public programs for contemporary performance and visual arts. For more details, please visit the website www.topazarts.org

The TOPAZ ARTS Visual Arts Program is made possible, in part, by the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs. TOPAZ ARTS, Inc. is made possible, in part, by public funds from the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and by the generosity of private individuals; TOPAZ ARTS Dance Programs are made possible by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency; The Mertz Gilmore Foundation; NYS DanceForce with funds from NYSCA Dance Program.

This event is made possible by TOPAZ ARTS, Inc. with support from The Mertz Gilmore Foundation and by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

