



# Ekotumi

## — Japanese Mythology Performance Art

Singer, dancer, storyteller bringing Japanese mythology into  
contemporary art



## Artist Statement (excerpt)

When I sing, “I” do not sing  
— I listen to the voice of my body.  
When I dance, “I” do not dance  
— I let my body remember.

Countless memories live within me:  
the sunlight of childhood, the pain of falling, the fear  
that once bound me,  
the songs that set me free.  
These memories,  
together with stories passed down  
through generations, form my body and soul.

In Japan, mythology is not only in books  
— it breathes in shrines, mountains, and rivers.  
When I encounter twilight (tasogare),  
I remember that its name once meant  
“Who are you?”  
When I gaze at the moon,  
I sense the ancient poets  
who saw the same light.

Through song, body, and myth,  
I seek the boundary  
where the visible and invisible meet —  
the space between heaven and earth.

Here, my art becomes a dialogue  
between memory and voice,  
between the living body  
and the ancient stories  
that still resonate within it.

# Why Mythology?

I was born and raised in Tokyo and spent many years in Christian schools. Although I knew Japan had a long history, I was unaware that it also had mythology. Kojiki—Japan's oldest chronicle—was just a word in textbooks, not a living tradition. I believed that Japan lacked the grand myths I admired in Greek or Norse culture.

Only after graduating from university and beginning my journey as a performer did I encounter Kojiki. I was shocked to discover such powerful stories in my own land—and even more so to realize that their “characters” are still alive in Japan's shrines today. These shrines, descendants of what might be dismissed as legends, remain central to people's prayers and everyday spirituality.

Every culture has mythology, but each reflects the environment and necessities of its people. To understand mythology is to understand a nation's relationship with its landscape and its collective mind. Japanese mythology, rooted in coexistence with nature, still lives in our daily life.

As I perform abroad, I realize that these stories—little known outside Japan—offer a unique worldview. They suggest harmony over division, coexistence over control. I feel a responsibility to share them through my performances, not as fixed tales of the past, but as living, breathing narratives that connect us to both the earth and to each other.

# Representative Works: Japanese Mythology Concert



**A one-woman show in which Ekotumi portrays characters from Japanese mythology through singing, dancing, and delivering monologues in Japanese.**

New Translation Kojiki series

'Izanami' in London, 2021 ; Supported by Kansai–Osaka 21st Century Association

'Izanami' in Vilnius, 2019 ; Special assistance of Vilnius city, Assistance of the Lithuanian

Japanese embassy, Under the auspice of The Japan Foundation, Supported by METI

(Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan)

'Amaterasu' in Paris, 2016 ; Supported by METI





# Performance Art

## — Performing the Inner God



My performance begins with a belief that the body is more than a tool of conscious control—it is a vessel of deep, ancestral memory.

Our lungs, hands, and posture carry the evolutionary memory of moving from ocean to land. But they also remember other things: the sound of waves, the color of early sun, the layered stories of place. These memories live beneath awareness.

In my performances, I engage in deep improvisation to access what I call the “inner god”—a voice beyond ego. I don’t sing melodies from my mind; I let them rise spontaneously. I don’t move by intention; I let my body respond to the energy of the space.

My body is both archive and oracle.

When I perform, I do not “sing.” I listen to the body’s voice.

When I dance, I do not “move.” I allow the body to remember and respond.

This approach lets me connect myth to place—not as a fixed story, but as a living, sensory encounter. I hope to awaken something ancient and collective in the audience—something that transcends culture, and brings us back to a shared human core.

**Image Clip (1.5 min)**

<https://youtu.be/2zblRtVkPxU>

# Social Art

The distance between individuals, the fragility of society, and the desire for human connection were all brought to light by the Covid-19 pandemic. In response, I felt the necessity to create works that could not be produced by the "individual" alone as an artist. This led me to create a series of social art projects.



"On the way to the Earth"

2021 (selected for Grand Prize, MMM Regional Arts Festival)

Community Art Project : An outdoor performance that takes place while traveling between two local shrines deeply rooted in the community. Inspired by the Japanese myth of the heavenly descent (Tenson Kōrin), the project was created with the participation of local volunteers. The performance also included elements from the postponed Hassaku Festival, an intangible cultural asset, Motomachi Miroku. I wrote lines to match the sounds of Miroku, and by adjusting Miroku's tempo to the rhythm of the dialogue, we created a work that fused local traditional culture with contemporary art.



"Covid19-20" (2020-2023)

These sounds were incorporated into compositions, designed so that the audio corresponds with actual geographic coordinates, allowing listeners to hear sounds from their real-world directions. For example, [Starting Point] WHO: World Health Organization (Geneva, Switzerland); [Central Reference Point] the direction of the sunrise on November 22, 2019, when the first case of unexplained viral pneumonia was confirmed, is set at 0 degrees directly in front. This work, made possible through the cooperation of people from many countries and regions, encapsulates the memories of that time in music.



"Spray Chorus"

A work that transforms the obligatory act of sanitization during the pandemic into a musical experience. When visitors use a spray, a voice is emitted from speakers attached to each spray bottle. As multiple visitors use the sprays simultaneously, the emitted voices create a harmony.



"You Are Still Sleeping"

(music & video performance from the covid19–20 series), 2023

Performed and filmed in the ninth month of pregnancy, this work expresses life's transformation through voice and movement.



# Other Media Works

The distance between individuals, the fragility of society, and the desire for human connection were all brought to light by the Covid-19 pandemic. In response, I felt the necessity to create works that could not be produced by the "individual" alone as an artist. This led me to create a series of social art projects.



Hologram "Little God SUKUNABIKONA" ; A project that explores the pursuit of a real music experience through 360-degree singing and dancing holograms during a time when live performances were canceled due to the pandemic. Created during a period when overseas performances were not possible, this work synchronizes the movement of visuals and voices, offering a realistic musical experience without the concern of airborne droplets, allowing for safe viewing.



## NFT "Maternity Eternity"

A collection of works that, while drawing upon the artist's own unique physicality, explore expressions that transcend individual life. These pieces delve into themes that surpass the boundaries of the self, such as the timeless narrative of Japanese mythology and the creation of new life through pregnancy. These maternity photos capture the artist's experience of pregnancy, not as an idyllic "perfect pregnancy," but as an expression of the anxiety, determination, and worldview shaped during a pregnancy that followed recurrent miscarriages.



Short Film "Dream which you can see in the backside of your eyelids"

After giving birth and reflecting on early childhood memories through parenting, the artist revisited the place of her upbringing, reinterpreting various emotions, regrets, and vague fears from that time. This short film was produced in collaboration with a French screenwriter and created as a promotional video for Minato City. The artist served as the project planner, director, composer, and performer.



## Projection Mapping "Airly Color"

(Winner, Performing Arts Category, KDCC Kitakyushu Digital Creator Contest, 2018, Kitakyushu, Japan)

In contrast to traditional projection mapping, this experimental piece utilized real-time projection mapping, allowing the dancers to move freely as the visual elements responded to their movements. This work, created in collaboration with Anderson Sudario, won the KDCC Performing Arts Award.



# Performance overview

This section presents three performance formats developed by Ekotumi — collaborative improvisations with local communities, concert-style myth performances, and narrative storytelling forms.



# Collaborative Art Performance



This performance program explores a creative dialogue between Japanese and local mythology. Through workshops and concerts, Ekotumi collaborates with local people and musicians to co-create sound and story.

Each project unfolds over several days and culminates in both participatory and staged performances.

The work begins from a simple yet profound awareness: in modern cities, our bodies have long been subordinated to the brain and our thoughts.

It has become a common belief that being conscious of and controlling the body is a virtue. However, as expressed in my artist statement, our bodies retain memories of their many forms before evolving into the present—lungs that once belonged to creatures of the sea, hands and feet that recall the movement of the earth, the rhythm of walking upright.

These memories go beyond evolution; they are also memories of sensation—of waves, of light, of ancient time.

They remain dormant within us, waiting to be remembered.

Through deep improvisation—singing melodies that rise unconsciously and allowing the body to move by its own internal rhythm—I seek to reach a vast collective memory that transcends the self, an inner divine force that connects us all.

In this process, mythology becomes a living language of coexistence, shared between cultures, voices, and generations.

**“Between Sky and Earth” (Tokyo, 2024)**

<https://youtu.be/rktWIWcac28> (Highlight from 7:54)



# Concert Style

Original compositions inspired by Kojiki,  
performed with voice and dance.

Solo concert

[https://youtu.be/HHkkuG\\_7YN8](https://youtu.be/HHkkuG_7YN8) (16 min)





# Story style

A one-woman show in which Ekotumi portrays characters from Japanese mythology through singing, dancing, and delivering monologues in Japanese.

**“New Translation Kojiki – Izanami” (Lithuania, 2019)**

<https://youtu.be/ckABfK2rc-w> (2 min)





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- Official Website : <https://www.ekotumi.jp/>
- YouTube (Official Channel) : <https://www.youtube.com/c/ekotumi>
- Instagram : <https://www.instagram.com/ekotumi/>

## [Links]

- Performance Image Clip (1.5 min)  
<https://youtu.be/2zblRtVkJxU>
- “New Translation Kojiki – Izanami” (Lithuania, 2019)  
<https://youtu.be/ckABfK2rc-w> (2 min)
- “Between Sky and Earth” (Tokyo, 2024)  
<https://youtu.be/rktWIWcac28> (Highlight from 7:54)
- Solo concert (2022)  
[https://youtu.be/HHkkuG\\_7YN8](https://youtu.be/HHkkuG_7YN8) (16 min)
- Story-style Performance (No PA System) at Kanda Myoujin Shrine (18 min)  
<https://youtu.be/90TdvpmW-Jc>
- Short Film “Dream Which You Can See in the Backside of Your Eyelids” (2024)  
<https://youtu.be/lAAE7oiCwbQ?si=svVNokxvR3exd49W>

