

TOSHIKI OKADA

e ball, when is it good,  
nd what's the difference?

After they hit the b  
when is it bad, and



PHOTO BY ASIAN ARTS THEATRE (MOON SO YOUNG)

Artist Partner Program presents

**TOSHIKI OKADA**  
**GOD BLESS BASEBALL**

Friday, February 12, 2016 . 8PM

Saturday, February 13, 2016 . 8PM

Dance Theatre

## TOSHIKI OKADA

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Playwright/Director: Toshiki Okada  
Translating/Interpreting: Hongyie Lee  
Performers: Yoon Jae Lee, Pijin Neji, Sung Hee Wi, Aoi Nozu  
Set design: Tadasu Takamine  
Costume: Kyoko Fujitani (FAIFAI)  
Dramaturgs: Sugatsu Kanayama (Tokatsu Sports), Hongyie Lee  
Stage Directors: Koro Suzuki, Tsubasa Yamashita  
Stage Assistant: Susumu Kumaki  
Lighting Director: Ayumi Kito  
Lighting Operator: Yukie Shibata  
Sound Director: Yuji Tsutsumida (WHITELIGHT)  
Sound Operator: Masahide Ando  
Video Director: Takaki Sudo  
Production Manager: Tamiko Ouki (Precog)  
English Translation: Aya Ogawa  
Japanese Surtitles (from English): Kaku Nagashima  
Voice: Jerome Young  
Surtitles Operator: Eun Choi  
Publicity Design: Ruka Noguchi  
Production: chelfisch, precog

*God Bless Baseball* made its world premiere at the Opening Festival of the Asian Culture Complex – Asian Arts Theatre, Gwangju, South Korea in September 2015. The production made its Japan premiere at Owlspot in Tokyo, presented as part of Festival/Tokyo in November 2015. Tonight's performance is part of *God Bless Baseball's* North American premiere tour organized by Japan Society.

This performance will last approximately  
**1 hour and 45 minutes with no intermission.**

**Join the artists for conversations following each performance.**

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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**Toshiki Okada** (playwright/director) was born in Yokohama in 1973 and formed the chelfitsch theater company in 1997. Since then, Okada has written and directed all of the company's productions, practicing a distinctive methodology for creating plays. In 2005, his play *Five Days in March* (2004) won the prestigious 49th Kunio Kishida Drama Award, his *Air Conditioner* was a finalist for the Toyota Choreography Award and he won the Yokohama Cultural Award/Yokohama Award for Art and Cultural Encouragement. As a representative of Japan, Okada took part in the Stueck'06 International Literature Project in 2006 and in December of that year he created *Enjoy*, commissioned and presented by New National Theatre, Tokyo. (The English translation of *Enjoy* was produced in New York in 2010 by New York-based The Play Company, directed by Philadelphia-based Dan Rothenberg.) In 2007 Okada's collection of novels *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*). This collection was awarded the Kenzaburo Oe Prize in the following year. In addition to commissions such as writing *Three Women* for director Naoto Takenaka (2008) and directing *Tattoo* (*Taetowierung*) by Dea Loher for a New National Theatre, Tokyo, production (2009), Okada continues to write and direct plays for chelfitsch theater company, including *Freetime* (2008, co-commissioned by KUNSTENFESTIVALDESARTS, Brussels, Wiener Festwochen, Vienna and The Festival d'Automne à Paris), *We Are the Undamaged Others* (2010) and *The Sonic Life of a Giant Tortoise* (2011) (the English translation of *The Sonic Life of a Giant Tortoise* was produced in New York in 2014 by The Play Company, directed by Dan Rothenberg). Japan Society produced chelfitsch theater company's North American debut tour of *Five Days in March* in 2009 and presented *Hot Pepper*, *Air Conditioner* and the *Farewell Speech* as part of The Public Theater's Under the Radar Festival

in 2012. In 2013, The Public Theater's Under the Radar Festival included the English language translation of Okada's *Zero Cost House*, performed by Pig Iron Theatre Company. In recent years, Okada has drawn attention widely, not only from the contemporary and experimental theater worlds, but also from those in fine arts and literature. He has been invited to numerous art centers, museums and festivals throughout the world to present his works and lectures. Okada's plays continue to be published in Japan and translated into many languages.

**Tadasu Takamine** (set design) was born in Kagoshima in 1968 and currently lives in Shiga, Japan. Takamine studied at Kyoto City University of Arts and Music and the Institute of Advanced Media Arts and Science (IAMAS) and was a long-time member of the influential Japanese multimedia-performance group Dumb Type. For more than a decade, Takamine has been active as a freelance director and artist creating installations, projections, photographs and performances among other types of expressions, and has devoted himself to a theater practice where he develops works experimentally through workshops with local participants. Both in his theater and visual art projects, Takamine is interested in provocatively addressing social questions. Recent projects include *Good House*, *Nice Body* (2010), about issues surrounding the rise of mail-order culture, and Takamine Tadasu's *Cool Japan* (2012), which focuses on the Fukushima nuclear plant disaster, among others.

**Sugatsu Kanayama** (dramaturg) began work on artistic projects with his theater unit Tokatsu Sports in 2008. In addition to staging theatrical performances, Kanayama has participated in events such as Azumabashi Dance Crossing and X-Point. His works are known for their genre-defying sound samplings and lines delivered in the style of rap. Kanayama appears in some of his own productions as a DJ/VJ. Drawing heavily on hip-hop culture and infusing elements of cynicism, he has built a unique place for himself in the contemporary theater scene.

**Yoon Jae Lee** (performer) was born in 1972. Lee graduated from Seoul Institute of the Arts and began his own company that focuses on physical theater. Lee has participated in a number of Japanese productions including *Romeo and Juliet*, directed by Japanese director Junnosuke Tada (founder of Tokyo Deathlock theater company), and *Kamome and Electra* directed by Tadashi Suzuki. Following his performance of Kiwoong Sung's *One Day of the Novelist*, Mr. Kubo, he became a member of the 12th Tongue Theatre Studio.

**Pijin Neji** (performer) was a member of acclaimed butoh company Dairakudakan from 2000 to 2004. After leaving Dairakudakan, Pijin began his career as choreographer/dancer. Pijin is a recipient of the Yokohama Dance Collection Jury Prize, and his piece *The Acting Motivation*, an autobiographical documentary based on his own experience with part-time work, won the Festival/Tokyo F/T Award.

**Sung Hee Wi** (performer) was born in 1984 and majored in philosophy and minored in theater at Daegin University. Wi began the creation of her piece *Dry Monologue* in 2011, which was presented at four venues and festivals. Wi participated in *Form Form* directed by Kyung Ae Ro, which was selected as a New Arts Trend by the Seoul Arts Foundation in 2012 and in *Decoding Movement*, selected as a Young Art Frontier by the Arts Council Korea in 2013. Wi also works as a dancer and choreographer.

**Aoi Nozu** (performer) was born in Tokyo in 1985 and began her acting career while a student at university. In 2008 Nozu participated in Shu Matsui's Sample theater company production *Kazoku no Shouzou* and became an official member of the company in 2011. Nozu has performed in *Hi no Kao* (Festival Tokyo 2009) written by Marius von Mayenburg and directed by Shu Matsui, *The Treasured Son* (2012) written and directed by Shu Matsui and *Invisible Neighbors* (2014) written and directed by Kaori Nishi.

**Jerome Young** (voice) was born in the Chicago area (USA), but has lived overseas for a long time. He is currently a long-term resident in Japan and resides in the seaside town Zushi (Kanagawa). Shortly after arriving in Japan, in 1994, he started teaching at Keio University, and continues to teach there. He has two graduate degrees, one from Temple University (USA) and the other from The University of Warwick (England). He does research in psychopathology and has published many articles in various academic journals. In his spare time he enjoys being creative, with both poetry and song. As a singer-songwriter, he has released two full-length albums to date. Currently, he is working with a band on a Blues project and aims to release a new album later this year.

**Kyoko Fujitani** (costumes) was born in 1981 and is a costume designer for the theater company FAIFAI. Fujitani's style is to collage items from unique areas, eras and genres. In addition to working with theater and dance, Fujitani is also involved in workshops, film, TV and live performances by musicians. She has also worked with artists including Teppei Kanetuji.

**Hongyie Lee** (Korean translation/interpretation/dramaturgy) is a member of the Korean creative theater company DIRECTURG42. Foreign plays that she has translated into Korean include *I Was Punched for Sticking Out Slightly*, *Rai-Rai-Rai-Rai-Rai*, *Outer World*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *Shonen B*, *The Devotion of Suspect X* and *Remote Backwater Island*, among others. As a dramaturg Lee has been involved in works including the opera *As If the Moon Slithered on the Surface of the Water* which won the second Edaily Culture Award Grand Prix for Extraordinary Production and the play *Karumegi* (50th East Asian Theater Award Production Award).

## GOD BLESS BASEBALL

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*God Bless Baseball* is commissioned by Asian Culture Complex – Asian Arts Theatre; co-produced by Asian Culture Complex – Asian Arts Theatre, Festival/Tokyo, and Taipei Arts Festival; additional commissioning support provided by FringeArts, Philadelphia, Japan Society, New York, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland and Wexner Center for the Arts at The Ohio State University; research and workshop support by Doosan Art Center; in cooperation with Kinosaki International Arts Center, Steep Slope Studio and Sample.

Toshiki Okada's *God Bless Baseball* U.S. tour is funded by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan in the fiscal year 2015, Tokyo Metropolitan Government, The Japan Foundation through the *Performing Arts JAPAN Program*, and the Asian Cultural Council. This project is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.



The Clarice's engagement of Toshiki Okada's *God Bless Baseball* is made possible through the ArtsCONNECT program of Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.



## THE CLARICE AND THE COMMUNITY

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The Clarice is building the future of the arts by training, mentoring and presenting the next generation of artists and creative innovators. As artists develop their craft as performers, they must become instigators of meaningful dialogue, creative research and audience connection. These skills are developed through engagement activities both on and off campus. Engagement at The Clarice is characterized by facilitated audience interactions with artists, scholars and community leaders that are focused on process and research rather than product and performance. The Clarice supports artists in their quest for a connection with audiences through its engagement work.

### ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

- Company members of the production crew, during the setup of this performance, met with students of faculty member Cary Gillett's Production Management class who observed the load in and asked questions.
- Actors from the company taught in faculty member Jennifer Barclay's Introduction to Acting class, conveying ideas and techniques of Toshiki Okada.