

Sound Performance Platform Special Performance
Taro Yasuno's Zombie Music "Mausoleum IV -The Breaking Down-"
announced winning performance of the 23rd Keizo Saji Prize for 2023



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The Suntory Foundation for the Arts (Directors General: Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi and Shingo Torii) has announced that the 23rd (2023) Keizo Saji Prize, bestowed on candidates selected from among those who gave predominantly music-based public performances held in Japan during the year, with winner chosen based on a willingness to challenge and on superior performance that engender a strong reaction, has been awarded to Sound Performance Platform Special Performance Taro Yasuno's Zombie Music "Mausoleum IV -The Breaking Down-".

▽**Selection process**

A qualifying round was held on Saturday, March 9, 2024 at the conference room of the foundation to consider applicants who had given public performances in 2023. After careful consideration, Sound Performance Platform Special Performance Taro Yasuno's Zombie Music "Mausoleum IV -The Breaking Down-" was chosen as the recipient of the 23rd (2023) Keizo Saji Prize, a decision that received the formal agreement of the Board of Directors of the Foundation on Monday, March 25, 2024.

▽Prize-money ¥2,000,000

▽The members of the selection committee

Yuta Asai, Seiji Choki, Seiko Ito, Takayuki Komuro, Mikako Mizuno, Yoshihiko Nonomura, Yuji Numano, Akeo Okada, Miyuki Shiraishi (In alphabetical order)

▽Reason for the award

The “Zombie Music*” series that Taro Yasuno has continued to work on has, in recent years, evolved into a new form of performance. Since last year, Yasuno has focused on “career-building for music students,” an issue that is, in some senses, extremely non-artistic. Taking myself to an actual performance, I found Yasuno treading on a bellows, getting hurt by a kickboxer, and talking aimlessly with his colleagues. The process itself presents no particularly sharp insights, and in the first place, the moments when “zombie music” resounds are much less frequent than in the past.

In a sense, you could say that the performance was quite boring. That said, in contrast to other clever attempts to incorporate the latest fads, this performance has an originality that cannot be easily imitated, in that it borrows the medium of “zombie music” in an attempt to give shape to questions bubbling up from within the composer himself (and is thus a truly physical “movement”).

Naturally, given the unprecedented nature of the performance, the opinions of the Selection Committee members varied widely. Some assessed it as a Dadaist theater piece attempting to break through the traditional confines of a concert; others were of the opinion that, compared to his “Mausoleum III: Circle of Life” from two years ago, he has, if anything, taken a step backward. Much discussion ensued, including both for and against the piece. Still, the value of this performance was in part that it provoked these kinds of diverse discussions, and all agreed that they would like to honor Yasuno’s ongoing series of projects in some way. It was thus decided to present him with the Keizo Saji Prize.

*Zombie Music: A form of music generated by a hand-made mechanical instrument that plays the recorder.

(Yuji Numano, Committee Member)

▽Outline

Title : Sound Performance Platform Special Performance

Taro Yasuno’s Zombie Music “Mausoleum IV -The Breaking Down-”

Date : 14th / 15th October 2023

Venue : Aichi Prefectural Art Theater, Mini Theater

Cast : [Bellowers] Takako Imai (Flutist)

Takao Ouchi (Professor at Nagoya University of the Arts)

Honoka Naito (3rd Year Student at Aichi University of the Arts)

Taro Yasuno (Associate Professor at Aichi University of the Arts)

[Punchers] Airi Oishi (4th Year Student at Aichi University of the Arts)

Fumia Mochizuki (3rd Year Student at Aichi University of the Arts)

[Music Boxer] Satoko Nakamura (Voice Performer)

[Kickboxer] Shunsuke Oishi (Former Kickboxing World Champion)

Staff : [Composition, Playwriting, Direction] Taro Yasuno

[Direction Assistant & Brain] Kei Onodera

[Stage Manager] Keisuke Watanabe

[Sound] Go Yamaguchi (Next Stage LLC)

[Lighting] Koji Azegami (Aichi Prefectural Art Theater)

[Production coordinator] Kazuki Sugai

[Producer] Akiko Fujii (Aichi Prefectural Art Theater)

[Visual Image Design] Takatoshi Takebe

[Documentation] Ryuichi Maruo, Masanobu Nishino

Organized by Aichi Prefectural Art Theater

Supported by Aichi University of the Arts

See [here](#) for more on the Keizo Saji Prize

See [here](#) about the Suntory Foundation for the Arts