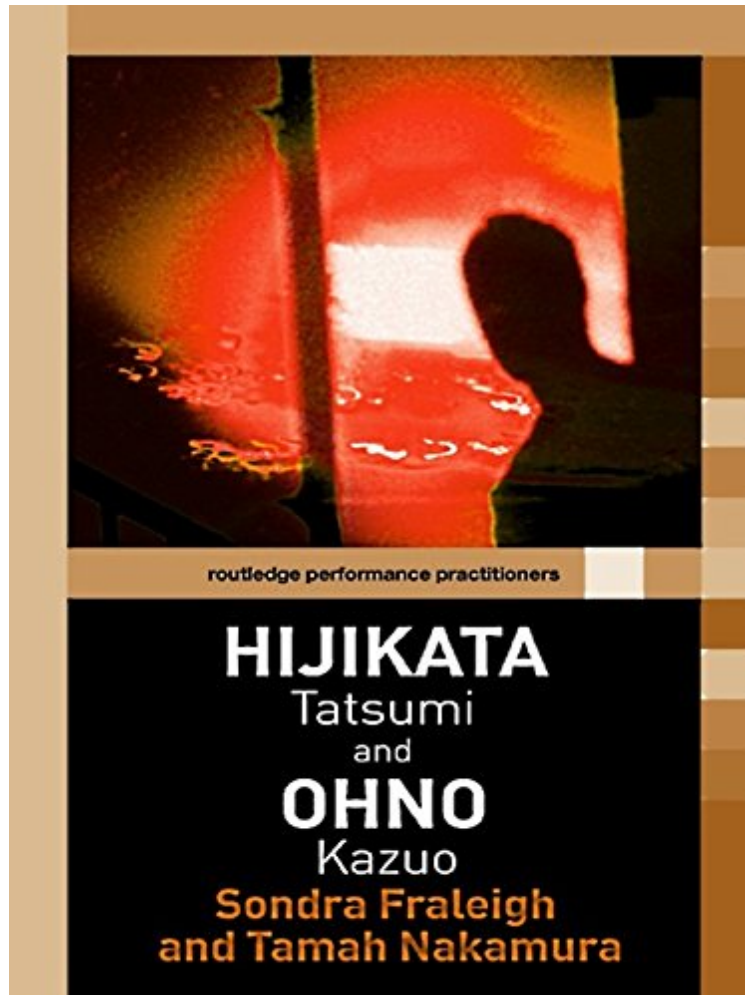


[E-BOOK] Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo (Routledge Performance Practitioners)

Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo (Routledge Performance Practitioners)

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Tamah Nakamura, Tamah Nakamura : Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo (Routledge Performance Practitioners) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo (Routledge Performance Practitioners):

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Inaccurate, judgmental, a travesty of academiaBy VirditasThe first "textbook" about butoh dance was released last year. It is by Sondra Fraleigh and Tamah Nakamura. Published by the famous Routledge Press. Please do not pick up this book unless you are informed enough to know where the book fails. One of the first warning signs is in a picture "Ohno in his modern dance days, before going to war," with a picture clearly taken from his full length dance work "The Old Man and the Sea," which played in 1959. This is a petty mistake, one we can forgive, but the true measure of this book's worth is in the words of the text. We find them

misquoting Wurmler's PhD thesis on Hijikata; we find historical inaccuracy, and bad scholarship. For example, they use Hijikata's words from the nineteen seventies to explain his work in the late fifties and early sixties. One can't use his words talking about a nineteen seventies performance to explain an earlier one. Especially given the extreme change his work gradually underwent! After the word "butoh" was coined, Hijikata called his earlier work butoh, but when they were performed they were called, in English, "Dance Experiences". They also read intent and meaning in Hijikata's work, work that they have never seen except in the fragments of film that survive. It is like they have an agenda: the way they stuff words into his mouth, going way beyond the pale of standard scholarship and not backing up their claims. For example, we learn that "Hijikata Tatsumi and the Japanese: Rebellion of the Flesh" is a 'shamanistic' work, and that his original models were bawdy kabuki. Hijikata never said so himself, and nor do we find any sources to back this up. In the course of this one page they contradict themselves several times, and never with any citations to back their words. In their analysis of "Forbidden Colours" called the first "butoh" performance, they fail to give a concrete account of the performance, instead weaving subjective impressions and reading meanings into a performance they have never seen, making the reader confused. Although she manages to keep away from the widespread rumour that the chicken at the end is sodomized, neither does she correct it, saying instead that the chicken gets 'sacrificed in the end' and 'dies'. In fact, that chicken went on to live a happy life, as Hijikata and Motofuji stressed at the time [cf. Baird], but because it was held (but not molested) between the thighs, a sexual element was indeed present (a mistranslation of an early butoh commentary is responsible for the mistake). One expects a text written in 2007 to correct the rumours, and if they had done their scholarship, maybe they would have done so. Writing in butoh in English is certainly welcome and needed, but the misinformation of butoh and highly subjective readings of performance do not belong in any book published by reputable companies like Routledge. Since butoh is in fact highly subjective, writers need to keep careful about how they proceed. I highly recommend primary source material, such as Ohno and Ohno's book "Kazuo Ohno's World" or Kurihara Nanako's translations of Hijikata's essays. (in the journal TDR, Spring 2000) But even better yet, go to a workshop! Now you can find good workshops in every major city and state, even Hawai'i! Book reading won't help you dance, so go out and dance!

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Small Doors Open New Territory By K.N. Satisfies the impulse for narrative while connecting to the cultural history of Japan and Western intellectual history. Each section is a small door opening up new territory. While researchers from a variety of angles have shown different parts of the work of Hijikata and Ohno, this book synthesizes their findings into one story, using the primary sources available in English. It goes behind these to the foundational Japanese work of Kayo Mikami, predating Kurihara's doctoral dissertation and her English translations of Hijikata's writings quoted in the book. Susan Klein's work appears also, even as her work focuses mostly on a student of Hijikata, Natsu Nakajima. Nourit Masson Sekine's writings and photographs, one of the first accounts of the origins of butoh in English, also help tell the story. Yoshito Ohno's book on his father Kazuo is foregrounded. The authors also include interviews with Yoshito and with Kazuo Ohno himself. I enjoy Nakamura's original translation of some of Ohno's poetry. Historical writing takes the best resources available and writes the broader narrative that links resources, as this book does. History is interpretation. Other histories of Ohno and Hijikata will no doubt be written, but this is a compelling first attempt, which shows feeling for its subjects and wide acquaintance with butoh. Dancers like the last section presenting butoh techniques of nine students of Hijikata and Ohno, contributed directly by them. As such it becomes a primary resource itself. The Routledge Practitioner Series of which this book is a part fulfills its purpose of being a classroom resource for university students. I also appreciate the series book on Anna Halprin. Photographs from the Ohno and Hijikata archives enhance this very readable book. On the whole, it seems to concentrate more on the spiritual aspects of butoh, leaving behind some of the cruelties of Hijikata. What do we want to remember of the lives and works of Hijikata and Ohno? A fuller account remains to be written.

15 of 21 people found the following review helpful. From a Small Collection, The Worst By T. Smith Of all of the books currently published in English on the subject of Butoh this contains the least unique information. It also contains the greatest editorial slant, from Sondra Horton, who extensively quotes from her own, slightly better, "Dancing Into Darkness", and seems ideologically hostile to one of the gentlemen in the title (Hijikata Tatsumi). Furthermore, it features the worst editing of any academic text I have read. Redeemable qualities include passable biographies of both Hijikata and Ohno, excerpts from other, better books already published in English, and some exercises at the end from a range of contemporary butoh performers, which in contrast to the rest of the book are quite good. I consider this book suitable reading for masochistic Butoh scholar completists and fans of Sondra Horton Fraleigh who want a quick, comprehensive and perhaps skewed overview of Butoh. All others can probably skip this one, and instead go straight to the sources, such as "Kazuo Ohno's World", "Ankoku Buto: The Premodern and Postmodern Influences on the Dance of Utter Darkness", or, for Hijikata fans, the Spring 2000 issue of The Drama Review.

This compact, well-illustrated and clearly written book unravels the contribution of two of modern theatre's most charismatic innovators. Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo is the first book to combine: an account of the founding of Japanese butoh through the partnership of Hijikata and Ohno, extending to the larger story of butoh's international assimilation and an exploration of the impact of the social and political issues of post World War Two Japan on the

aesthetic development of butohmetamorphic dance experiences that students of butoh can explore a glossary of English and Japanese terms. As a first step towards critical understanding, and as an initial exploration before going on to further, primary research, this addition to the Routledge Performance Practitioners series is unbeatable value for today's student.

About the AuthorSondra Fraleigh is professor emeritus of dance and somatic studies at the State University of New York at Brockport. She chaired the Department of Dance at SUNY Brockport and has been a Faculty Exchange Scholar for the State University of New York. Her innovative choreography has been seen in theaters in New York, Germany, and Japan, and she is often a guest lecturer in Europe, America, and Asia. Fraleigh is the founding director of Eastwest Somatics Institute for the study of dance and movement therapy, a member school of ISMETA, International Somatic Movement Education and Therapy Association. Tamah Nakamura is a professor at Chikushi Jogakuen University, Fukuoka Japan. Her areas of expertise are contemporary Japan, popular culture and gender. Research interests include artistic inquiry, and butoh. She has published articles and presented on butoh in Japan and internationally. nbsp;