

# Aki Sasamoto's Life Laboratory

**August 23 – November 24, 2025**

From August to November 2025, the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo will host the first mid-career retrospective for Aki Sasamoto (1980–). The exhibition will provide an introduction to the New York–based Sasamoto's oeuvre and explore how her themes and methods have evolved over two decades as a working artist.

From performance and dance to installations and video, Sasamoto combines and crosses media freely as her ideas demand. She is best known for improvisational performances inside custom-built spaces incorporating sculptures and devices she prepares herself. Her early works skillfully blended everyday gestures and acts with witty narration reminiscent of the Japanese literary form known as the *shishosetsu* or “I novel,” examining propensities, habits, and patterns of activity to analyze the nature of the individual personality. In more recent years, she has incorporated observations of the weather and of plant and animal ecosystems into her narratives and the structure of her work. More than mere tools for accentuating these narratives, her elaborately crafted sculptures become scores prompting unexpected turns in her improvisational performances.

Visitors to the exhibition will have the opportunity to examine these spaces as installations before and after the performances to be held periodically throughout the exhibition period. The exhibition will be a dynamic survey of Sasamoto's unique talents, from notable early works to more kinetic recent creations.



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## Exhibition Highlights

### 1. Covers entire career to date of internationally acclaimed artist Aki Sasamoto, from early to latest works

The exhibition will survey twenty years of activity by Aki Sasamoto, from notable early achievements to recent works with more pronounced kinetic elements. Changes in Sasamoto's themes and methods will be revealed through multifaceted exhibits including photographs, models, diagrams created during performance, video, and reconstructions of Sasamoto's most acclaimed performance/installation spaces.

### 2. Four important performance/installation works performed by Aki Sasamoto multiple times during the exhibition period

Sasamoto will stage improvisational performances in installation spaces multiple times within the exhibition period. A total of four pieces will be performed: *Strange Attractors*, which debuted at the 2010 Whitney Biennale; *Skewed Lies* from MoMA PS1 (New York) in 2010; *Spirits Cubed*, commissioned by the Hirosaki Museum of Contemporary Art during the COVID-19 pandemic; and *Sounding Lines*, which was first performed last year in Hong Kong.

### 3. Reconsideration of the link between performance and museums through Aki Sasamoto's work

Sasamoto's oeuvre roams freely between the two domains of the museum and the performing arts. This exhibition will explore this fluidity and the possibilities it suggests for various approaches to recording, preserving, and handing down performances. Discounted "twin tickets" will also be available, permitting a second visit to the venue to see a performance and affording deeper insight into Sasamoto's work.

### 4. Release of first Aki Sasamoto monograph to coincide with exhibition

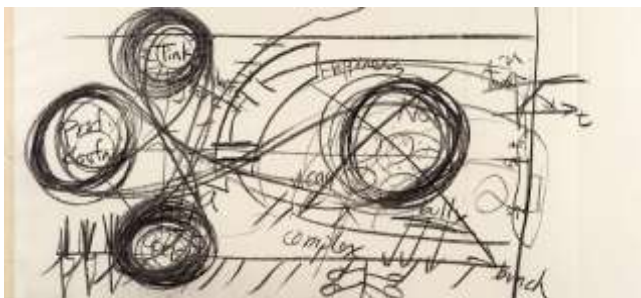
A monograph will be published during the exhibition offering a midcareer survey of Sasamoto's oeuvre, focusing chiefly on the works at the exhibition itself. The book will include commentary from Sasamoto herself, new photographs of her installations, essays by exhibition curators, and a chronology of works.



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## Aki Sasamoto

Aki Sasamoto is a New York-based artist who works in performance, sculpture, dance, and whatever medium is effective for conveying her ideas. She has collaborated with musicians, choreographers, scientists and scholars, and she plays multiple roles as performer, sculptor, or director, working across the fields of visual art and the performing arts.

Born in 1980 in Kanagawa, Japan, Sasamoto left home for the UK as a teenager. She then moved to the USA, where she studied dance, art and mathematics at Wesleyan University. In 2007, she received her MFA from Columbia University in New York. She is currently Professor and Director of Graduate Studies at Yale University's Sculpture Department.

Sasamoto's institutional solo exhibitions include SculptureCenter, New York (2016); The Kitchen, New York (2017); the Queens Museum, New York (2023–2024); and Para Site, Hong Kong (2024). She has participated in international exhibitions including the 59th Venice Biennale (2022); the Aichi Triennale (2022); the Busan Biennale (2022); the Kochi-Muziris Biennale (2016); the Shanghai Biennale (2016–2017); the Whitney Biennale (2010); and the Yokohama Triennale (2008).

She is the winner of the Calder Prize 2023, which honors a contemporary artist whose innovative work reflects the continuing legacy of Alexander Calder's genius.



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## Information

Exhibition Period 23 August – 24 November, 2025

Opening Hours 10 AM – 6 PM (Tickets available until 30 minutes before closing.)

\*Open until 9 PM every Friday in August and September

Closed Mondays (except 15 Sept, 13 Oct, 3 and 24 Nov.), 16 Sept, 14 Oct, 4 Nov

Venue Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Exhibition Gallery 3F

Admission Adults – 1,500 yen / University & College Students, Over 65 – 1,000 yen /  
High School & Junior High School Students – 600 yen / Elementary School Students &  
Younger – free

Twin tickets: 2,500 yen (allows for two entries)

### [Students Day supported by Bloomberg]

Students can view the exhibition for free by presenting a valid ID at the museum's ticket counter on 13 & 14 Sept.

Organized by Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo operated by Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture

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Inquiries 03-5245-4111 (main line)

Curated by Keiko Okamura (Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo)

WEB [https://www.mot-art-museum.jp/en/exhibitions/Aki\\_Sasamoto/](https://www.mot-art-museum.jp/en/exhibitions/Aki_Sasamoto/)

## Also on View

•The 30th Anniversary of the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo *Choreographies of the Everyday*

August 23 – November 24, 2025

•MOT Collection 30th Anniversary Exhibit *Nine Profiles: 1935→2025*

August 2 – November 24, 2025

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### Credit lines

**01** *Strange Attractors*, 2010 [Installation view from the solo exhibition at Take Ninagawa, Tokyo]

Private collection Photo: Kei Okano

**02** *Strange Attractors*, 2010 [Performance scene from solo exhibition at Take Ninagawa, Tokyo]

Photo: Kei Okano

**03** *cooking show*, 2005 Photo: TJ Hellmuth

**04** *Diagram (1.9.2011)* from *Strange Attractors*, 2010 Private Collection Photo: Kei Okano

**05** *Sounding Lines [detail]*, 2024

[Installation view of Aki Sasamoto: 'Sounding Lines', 2024, Para Site, Hong Kong]

Collection of Mr. Shane Akeroyd Photo: Studio Lights On

**06** *Delicate Cycle*, 2016

[Performance scene from the Yebisu International Festival for Art & Alternative Visions 2017: Multiple Futures]

Photo: Takaaki Arai. Courtesy of Tokyo Photographic Art Museum

**07** *Skewed Lies*, 2010/2015 [Performance scene at Luxembourg & Dayan, New York] Photo: Allison Hale

**08** *Spirits Cubed*, 2020, Collection of Hirosaki Museum of Contemporary Art

Photo: Naoya Hatakeyama. Courtesy of Hirosaki Museum of Contemporary Art

**09** *Wrong Happy Hour*, 2014 [Installation view at JTT, New York] Photo: Charles Benton

**10** Still from *Point Reflection (video)*, 2023

**11** Photo: Paul O'Reilly