

Akio Suzuki

An Encouragement of Dawdling – “o to da te” and “no zo mi”

2018-2019

Collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo

“o to da te” is a series of signature works by the pioneering sound artist Akio Suzuki that has been performed in over 30 cities around the world since 1996. Symbols that combine feet and ears are placed at various echo points in public spaces, and participants are invited to awaken their “listening mind”. The work aims to create a sensation of engaged dawdling that can cleanse our quotidian sensibilities.

For “o to da te” at the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, visitors will be invited to various locations inside the museum and in our grounds. As a finale, a newly commissioned work called “no zo mi” involving staircase forms awaits you in our open air gallery.

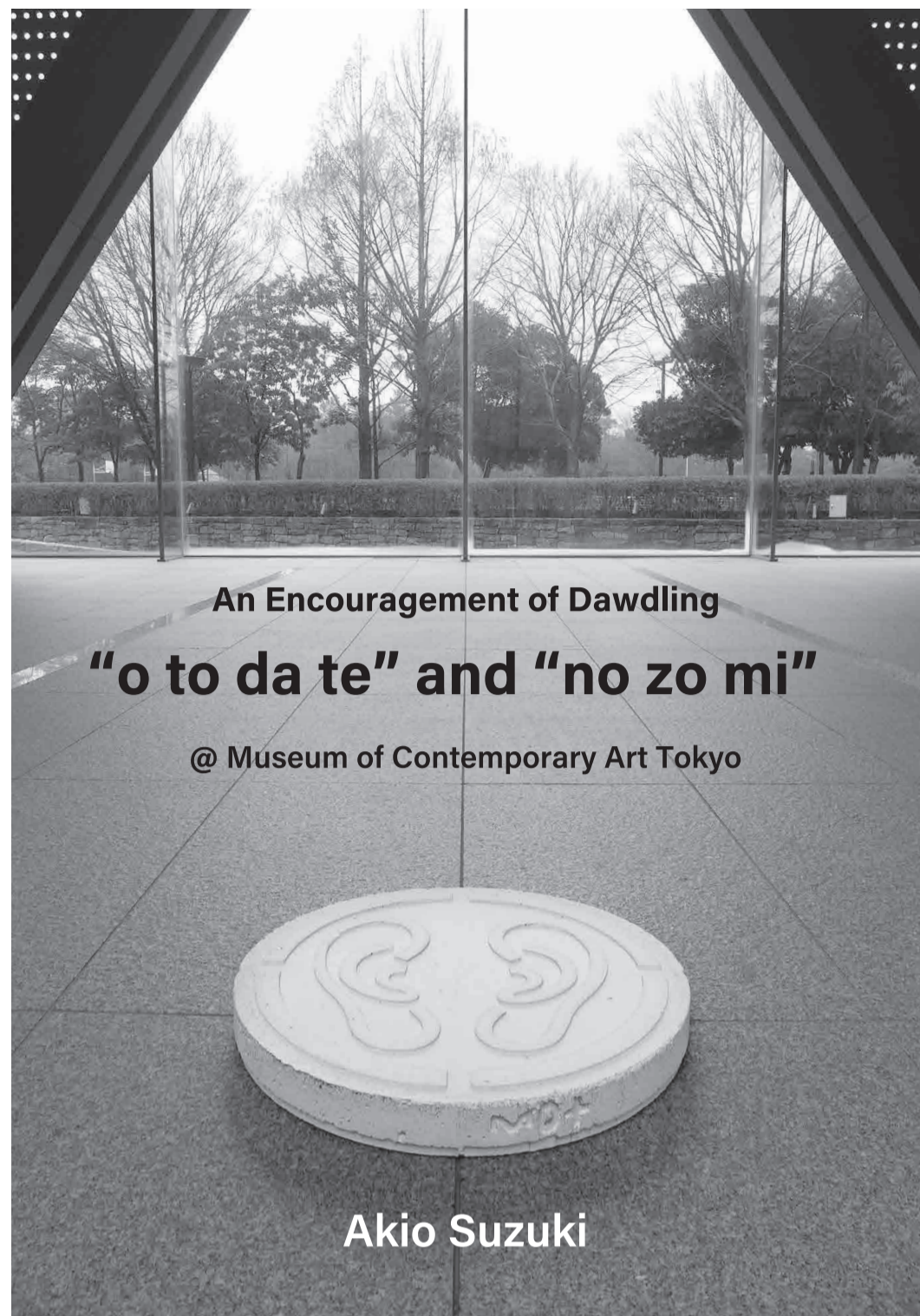
Please use the map in this pamphlet to visit the different echo points. Try lingering awhile at each to purify your sense of hearing.

Artist Biography

Born in 1941 in Pyongyang. Since his infamous “Throwing Objects Down a Staircase” event at Nagoya Station in 1963 and the self-study events which followed, where he explored the processes of “projection” and “following” in the natural world, Suzuki has pursued listening as a practice. In the 1970s he created and began performing on a number of original instruments, including the echo instrument Analapos. In 1988 he performed his piece “Space in the Sun”, which involved purifying his ears for twenty-four hours in nature on the meridian line that runs through Amino, Kyoto. In 1996, he began his “o to da te” project where he seeks out echo points in the urban environment. Suzuki has performed and exhibited at many venues and music festivals around the world, including Documenta8 (Germany, 1987), the British Museum (2002), Musée Zadkine (France, 2004), Kunstmuseum Bonn (Germany, 2018), etc.

Acoustic design for “ki zu ki” and “a bi ru”: WHITELIGHT
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Pamphlet design: O-DESIGN CHANNELS
English translation: Alan Cummings
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An Encouragement of Dawdling:

“o to da te”

As the contemporary world moves ever faster, it feels like we are gradually losing the art of dawdling. It feels good to refocus our minds on purifying our sense of hearing, like taking a really deep breath. “o to da te” presents you with an invitation to do precisely that. The word is derived from no-date, a type of tea ceremony where the tea is prepared and served outdoors. I have no doubt that the value of that ceremony, too, is located in its power to revitalize the senses of the participants.

You can think of “o to da te” as a musical notation, written on the environment. When you linger for a while on the half-ears, half-feet symbols, you become simultaneously audience and conductor.

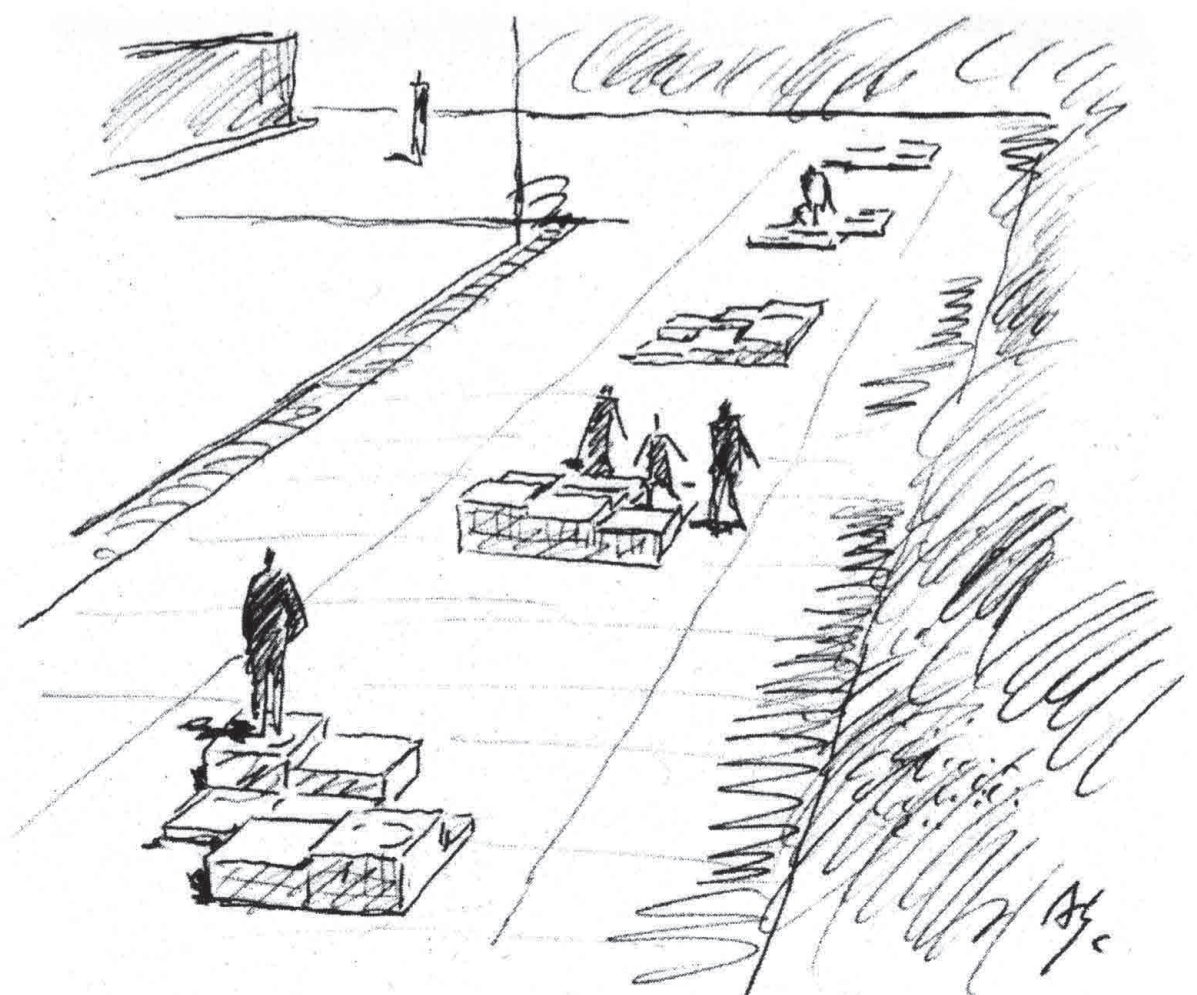
* “o to da te” is pronounced in Japanese as four separate and equal syllables, o-toe-da-te.

“no zo mi”

The five staircase-shaped works placed in the open air gallery are composed of concrete plates, placed on top of each other. You can enjoy climbing each of them in five different ways. Raising the level of your eyeline brings a new freshness to your field of vision, creating a variation on “o to da te”'s revitalization of your hearing.

An “o to da te” relief plate has been placed on the topmost step of the staircases. Place your feet on the half-ears and half-feet marks, orientate your body in the direction they point, and let your ears run free for a while. However, one of the staircases has no “o to da te” symbol. Stand there and let your own ears discover the best direction for their purification...

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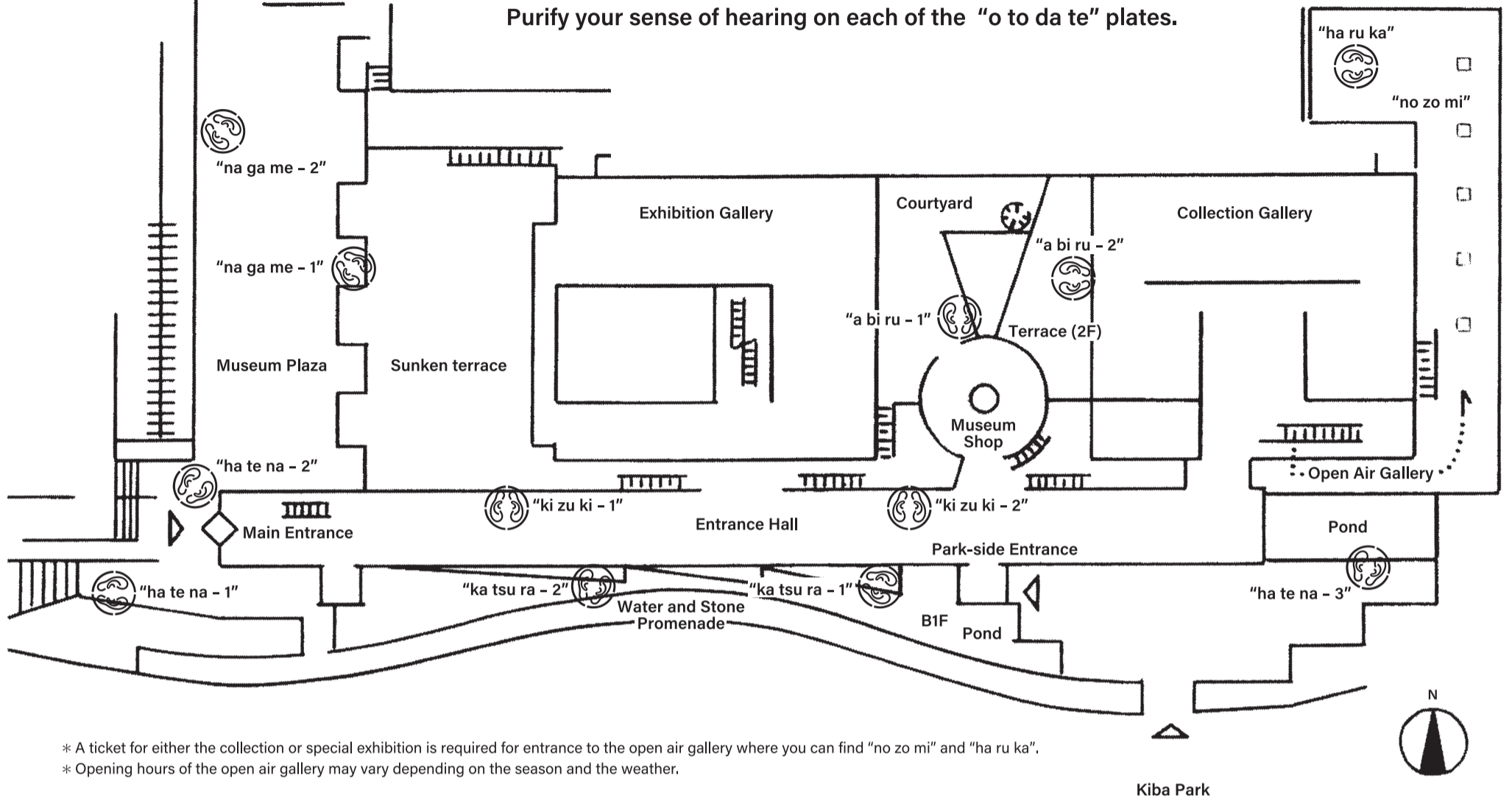


An Encouragement of Dawdling "o to da te" and "no zo mi" @ Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo MAP

Akio Suzuki



Purify your sense of hearing on each of the "o to da te" plates.



* A ticket for either the collection or special exhibition is required for entrance to the open air gallery where you can find "no zo mi" and "ha ru ka".
 * Opening hours of the open air gallery may vary depending on the season and the weather.

"ha te na - 1"

1 F, outside

When you linger awhile on the "o to da te" plate to the right of the path that leads to the main entrance, you will notice the sky and the beautiful green scenery of Kiba Park reflected symmetrically in the museum's plate glass windows. Does the reflection affect your sense of hearing?

"ha te na - 2"

1 F, outside

The "o to da te" plate on the left side of the main entrance is situated to allow your eyes to sweep across the museum plaza. It is also placed there to catch the attention of and bewilder visitors to the museum.

"ha te na - 3"

1 F, outside

The "o to da te" plate by the pond to the right of the park-side entrance is sited here to spark your curiosity about the open air gallery directly in front of you.

"na ga me - 1"

1 F, outside

A point where you can peek over the museum plaza's railing and down into the sunken terrace. It gives you a dramatic, bird's-eye view of the special exhibitions and the visitors coming and going.

"na ga me - 2"

1 F, outside

An "o to da te" plate has been placed on one of the benches in the museum plaza. Sit here and let the wide open space purify your sense of hearing. The more relaxed your sitting pose, the more open your ears will become.

"ki zu ki - 1"

1 F

As you pass through the main entrance and into the entrance hall, you will spot an "o to da te" plate in a corner. Line up your feet on the plate and linger awhile. Even though you are in a glass-walled space, don't you think you can hear the sounds from outside as clearly as if you were outside?

"ki zu ki - 2"

1 F

A second plate awaits you a little further inside the entrance hall. The two "ki zu ki" plates also provide you with practice exercises to prepare you for the plates inside the museum that will follow.

(NB the location of the "o to da te" plates may change due to exhibition constraints).

"a bi ru - 1"

1 F, outside

The courtyard has been created as a space in which you can experience the sounds of Akio Suzuki. There are two "o to da te" plates here. The plate to your right as you exit the museum shop is a great location to be showered in sound, but you can have similar experiences anywhere within the courtyard.

"a bi ru - 2"

2 F, outside

You can find this plate on the terrace, up the spiral staircase from the courtyard. Stand with your back against the wall and cleanse your hearing with the sounds of relaxed chatter from the café. Linger here and look up at the apertures to the left and right of the roof in front of you. Doesn't it look like the building has ears?

"ka tsu ra - 1"

B1 F, outside

Place your feet on the "o to da te" plate on the edge of the coping stones around the pond in the basement. The L-shaped form is reminiscent of a traditional *magariya* building like the Katsura Detached Palace in Kyoto, and here you can enjoy the string of reflected echoes of the sounds from Kiba Park. It is also a spot where you can practice ignoring the stares of the museum visitors through the windows.

"ka tsu ra - 2"

B1 F, outside

This "o to da te" point works with the reflections in the glass in front you. I am sure you will notice how the tiniest adjustments in your position can rearrange your visual field. Within the peace of that moment, depending on the weather and the time of day, it even seems that reflections from the surface of the water will cuddle up to your sense of hearing.

"ha ru ka"

1 F, outside

By a strange coincidence the location of this "o to da te" plate is connected by the 65°38'N line of latitude to Mt. Takaten in Amino-chō, Tango, where my "Space in the Sun" piece once stood. They are separated by a vast distance: 430km. The plate faces due west and is placed 7m away from a stone wall that resembles the two walls of sun-dried blocks that Akio Suzuki created for his 1988 "purifying my ears for one day in nature" project.

