

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 10, 2021

Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA) is pleased to present *A Letter from Souls of The Dead*, by Aki Onda. Opening July 10, 2021, and closing September 4, 2021.

Exhibition Opens: Saturday, July 10, 2021 / 12:00–4:00 PM

With intermittent Performances by Aki Onda and Marcus Fischer

Exhibition Dates: July 10 – September 4, 2021

Location: PICA, 15 NE Hancock Street, Portland, OR 97212

Website: pica.org/events/ALetterfromSoulsOfTheDead

Press Contact: Leslie Vigeant, Director of Marketing and Communications
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I'm fascinated by the idea of communicating with the spirits of the dead, the relationship of matter and spirit, and a form of séance to demonstrate the mediumship.

–Aki Onda (excerpt from the forthcoming interview with Kristan Kennedy)

PICA

After decades of a twinned music/visual-art practice, *A Letter from Souls of The Dead* is the first major solo exhibition in the United States by Aki Onda. Commissioned by PICA and curated by Kristan Kennedy, Artistic Director and Curator of Visual Art, this exhibition will feature collections of found objects such as bells, surplus electronics, photographs, and old-fashioned slide projections. The soundtrack for this exhibition was composed by Onda in collaboration with New York-based vocalist Charmaine Lee and New Haven-based musician Zach Rowden.

A Letter from Souls of The Dead will also feature an installation of 60 enlarged prints, 50 broken tape recorders, and a suspended print piece, jointly titled "Collage on Cassettes." These works chronicle Onda's field recordings which over the years have served as a sonic diary, mimicking and manipulating memory over time. This chorus of analog media will create tangible and energetic relationships across PICA's warehouse space forming a kinship between the living and the dead, the functional and the broken, the artist and the audience. According to Onda, collecting is "an extension of my cassette practice to expand the realm of reminiscence beyond my territory and consciousness – a sort of collective consciousness in order to reach out to something universal." *A Letter from Souls of The Dead* is a physical embodiment and energetic transmitter for memories and souls past, present, and future.

A Letter from Souls of The Dead will be presented at PICA from July 10, 2021, to September 4, 2021. On the opening day of the exhibition Saturday, July 10, there will be intermittent performances by Aki Onda and Portland-based sound artist Marcus Fischer. These performances will serve to both activate the objects and acknowledge the trauma of the past year, in the US and globally.

Supported in part by Sarah Miller Meigs, Jane Schiffhauer, Stephanie Snyder, Nomura Foundation, and Stelo Arts and Culture Foundation.

15 NE HANCOCK STREET
PORTLAND OREGON 97212
503 242 1419
pica.org

*****EVENT DETAILS AND ARTIST INFORMATION TO FOLLOW*****

IMPORTANT INFORMATION / DATES / TIMES

Exhibition Title

A Letter from Souls of The Dead

Artists

Aki Onda

Location

PICA, 15 NE Hancock Street, Portland, Oregon 97212

Exhibition Dates

July 10 – September 4, 2021

Open Hours

Thursday & Friday 12:00–6:00 PM

Saturday & Sunday 12:00–4:00 PM

Free / Open to All / 25-Person Capacity / Masks Required

Opening Day

Saturday, July 10, 2021 / 12:00–4:00 PM

With intermittent Performances by Aki Onda and Marcus Fischer

The artists and curators are available for interviews. Please contact Leslie Vigeant at leslie@pica.org for availability, press images, and other questions.

Access

This exhibition is on the ground level of PICA's main warehouse space and is accessible to those with mobility aids. ADA-accessible, gender-neutral restrooms and a water fountain are located inside of PICA. If you have questions about accessibility you can contact us at boxoffice@pica.org or by calling 503-242-1419.

COVID-19

All guests over the age of 2 are required to wear a mask and keep six feet apart. Anyone who is experiencing or exhibiting any symptoms of Covid-19 or who has been in contact with others who are, are asked to stay home to avoid the risk of exposing others.

Transportation

PICA is located in the Boise-Eliot neighborhood of northeast Portland. We are close to bus lines 4, 6, 17, and 44. Stops for the A Loop and B Loop Streetcar are approximately 0.3 miles from our building. The nearest max station is Rose Quarter Transit Center which is approximately 0.5 miles away. On-street parking is available. Please be aware that we reside in a residential area and therefore ask that all PICA guests, staff, and audience members treat our neighborhood and neighbors, housed and unhoused, with the utmost respect.

*****ARTIST INFORMATION TO FOLLOW*****

The logo for PICA, consisting of the word "PICA" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letters are positioned on a yellow rectangular background that is partially visible on the left side of the image.

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ARTIST INFORMATION

Aki Onda is an artist and composer. His musical and visual works are often catalyzed by and structured around memories—personal, collective, historical—such as his widely-known project “Cassette Memories,” drawn from three decades of field recordings (or, as Onda refers to them, ‘sound diaries’). Crossing genres, he has been active internationally in the fields of art, film, music, and performance. His artistic collaborators include Michael Snow, Ken Jacobs, Raha Raissnia, Loren Connors, Alan Licht, David Toop, and Akio Suzuki. Onda has presented his works at documenta 14, the Louvre Museum, Centre Pompidou, Palais de Tokyo, Argos, Bozar, International Film Festival Rotterdam, MoMA, The Kitchen, and Walker Art Center, Nam June Paik Art Center among other institutions. After residing in New York for many years, he currently lives and works in Mito, Japan.

ABOUT PORTLAND INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

Portland Institute for Contemporary Art acknowledges and advances new developments in contemporary art, fostering the explorations of artists and audiences. Since 1995, PICA has championed the practice of contemporary artists from around the world, driving vital conversations about the art and issues of today. PICA presents artists from visual and performance backgrounds and embraces those individuals who exist at the borders of genres and ideas. Through artist residencies and exhibitions, lectures and workshops, and the annual Time-Based Art Festival, PICA constructs a broad platform for contemporary art. More information can be found at pica.org.

PICA

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