

EnsembleArts
Philly

A new presenting brand from
Kimmel Cultural Campus.

Share it!

🌿 ✨ The enchanting @ichikoaoba (Instagram/X)/@ichikoaoba.info (Facebook) is bringing her ethereal soundscapes to the Miller Theater, presented by @EnsembleArtsPhilly (Facebook/Instagram) on 5/17! For more info, visit www.ensembleartsphilly.org

Press Contacts:

Lauren A. Woodard Hall
484-832-1963

lhall@ensembleartsphilly.org

Taylor Hord
267-765-3723

thord@alliedglobalmarketing.com

**ENSEMBLE ARTS PHILLY, IN ASSOCIATION
WITH R5 PRODUCTIONS, PRESENTS
INTERNATIONAL POETIC ARTIST,
ICHIKO AOBA, IN HER
LUMINESCENT CREATURES TOUR,
MAY 17, 2025**

**“... a remarkable feat of musical world-building...”
– *The Guardian***

**“... the gentlest singer-songwriter out of Japan...”
– *The Needle Drop***

**“[Aoba’s] crystalline voice and classical guitar are arresting, exuding a quiet
patience that seems to lower the volume of everything around it.”
– *Pitchfork***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (April 24, 2025) – Ensemble Arts Philly, in association with R5 Productions, is thrilled to present Japanese singer, songwriter, composer, multi-instrumentalist, and international sensation, **Ichiko Aoba**, in her *Luminescent Creatures Tour*, coming to the Miller Theater on May 17, 2025, at 7:30 p.m.

Ichiko Aoba has the power to bend space around her, pulling listeners from reality and surrounding them in the comforting fabric of her imagination. She’s been casting these spells since her debut at 19 years old, making picturesque dioramas with only her voice and guitar. In recent years she’s tapped into the full breadth of her ability, marrying the classical guitar of her earlier work with lofty orchestral sweeps.

She went big with *Windswept Adan* (2020), crafting a story about her deepening bond with nature. Collaborating closely with arranger Taro Umebayashi and creative director Kodai Kobayashi, the three of them freely shared ideas – both aural and visual – crystallizing a collective vision. The universe of *Windswept Adan* was so vast that it also included the script for an imaginary movie, drawings by Ichiko, and stunning photos by Kobayashi.

As Aoba's star continues to rise, she's committed to being her truest self. Along with her creative partners Umebayashi and Kobayashi, she's returned to the recesses of her reverie for her latest project: *Luminescent Creatures*. Her compositions have become grander, her songwriting more refined, but her ability to make listeners feel like they're inside a private cosmos alongside her remains as strong as ever. She was well known in Japan – collaborating with artists like Haruomi Hosono, Cornelius, and the late Ryuichi Sakamoto – but *Windswept Adan* connected her with an international audience. Her Instagram reels, sometimes snippets from shows and sometimes private concerts from her home, attract hundreds of thousands of viewers. Fans create TikToks using her songs as the backdrop to scenes from their lives, letting her music be their soundtrack in the moments they choose to be vulnerable. No matter where she performs – whether it's an intimate venue, a huge festival like Big Ear, or Walt Disney Concert Hall – the entire room looks on in stunned silence, hanging on every breath.

"Ichiko Aoba's music has an ethereal quality that invites listeners into her intentional, dreamlike soundscapes," said Frances Egler, Vice President of Theatrical Programming and Presentations. "With her premiere performance on our stage, her unique sound joins a diverse spring lineup of comedy, jazz, storytelling, dance, Broadway, and more."

"This album, *Luminescent Creatures*, was born from *Windswept Adan*," Aoba says. "It began when I started wondering what happened after the protagonist of *Windswept Adan* disappeared along with the music of the island's inhabitants. What would be left?" The album's title makes the link clear, bearing the name of the closing track from her previous record. She pushes the envelope further, exploring themes of connection through musings about the origin of life with dreamy musical vistas.

While visiting Japan's Ryukyu Archipelago and conducting field research, she was enamored by the boundless beauty – and occasional terror – of the ocean. She'd go diving with only the breath in her lungs, submitting herself to the whims of the tides. "I feel unable to resist the pull of the ocean," Aoba says, "and know how easy it would be for my small body to be swallowed by the sea." That contradiction, gentleness and power, instilled a sense of awe that is expressed in the soundscapes of *Luminescent Creatures*. The flurry of strings on "COLORATURA" bring to mind choppy waters, whereas the warbling electronics of "pirsomnia" paint a moment of calm. "When I'm surrounded by the timbre of the ocean, I feel like I've come home."

Luminescent Creatures is about making meaningful connections against impossible odds. The sea is immense and ancient, mirroring the harsh conditions that life sprang forth from – but it is also reminiscent, housing a deep record of fossils that once swam through its waters and recollections of how we've treated our planet. "When I stare into the seemingly bottomless black depths of a trench," Aoba reflects, "I occasionally see the blinking light of some rainbow-colored lifeform." That organism may not speak any language known to man, but in that moment it managed to communicate in a universal way. "My beloved Luminescent Creatures."

Other featured upcoming performances include **Mo Amer: *El Oso Palestino Tour*** (May 4, 2025, Miller Theater); **Somi** (May 9, 2025, Perelman Theater); **Penn & Teller 50th Anniversary Tour** (May 15, 2025, Academy of Music); **NARUTO: The Symphonic Experience**

(May 13 – 14, 2025, Miller Theater); **Martha Graham Cracker Cabaret 20th Anniversary Extravaganza** (May 16, 2025, Miller Theater); **Sarah Millican: Late Bloomer** (June 17, 2025, Miller Theater); **Jimmy Carr: Laughs Funny** (June 23, 2025, Miller Theater); and **Paul Simon: A Quiet Celebration** (June 26, 28, and 29, 2025; Academy of Music).

Tickets

Tickets can be purchased online at www.ensembleartsphilly.org or by calling 215-893-1999. In-person ticket sales can be conducted daily from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. at the Academy of Music Box Office, located at 240 S. Broad Street. See www.ensembleartsphilly.org for more information.

Ichiko Aoba: Luminescent Creature Tour

Miller Theater

Saturday, May 17, 2025, at 7:30 p.m.

###

ABOUT ENSEMBLE ARTS PHILLY

For more information about ENSEMBLE ARTS PHILLY, visit www.ensembleartsphilly.org.

###

For photography, please visit www.ensembleartsphilly.smugmug.com