

## Ryuichi Sakamoto

### Profile

In 1963, at the age of eleven, Ryuichi Sakamoto, whose musical interests ranged from the Beatles to Beethoven, began studying music composition under Professor Matsumoto at Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music. Eight years later, he entered Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, earning a B.A. in composition, and then a masters degree with a concentration in electronic and ethnic music. In 1977, Sakamoto began working as a composer, arranger and studio musician with Japan's most popular rock, jazz, and classical artists, and within a few years, he became a noted producer, arranger and keyboardist.

In 1978, Sakamoto released his first solo album and formed Yellow Magic Orchestra along with Haruomi Hosono and Yukihiro Takahashi. Y.M.O. was immediately recognized as an international sensation from Japan. Their second album sold well over a million copies, led to a world tour, and made them, with Kraftwerk, the kings of technopop. Releasing eleven albums over the next five years, YMO developed a following that continues to the present day. Fans have constructed WorldWideWeb-sites dedicated to them, and YMO and Sakamoto's influence on the rave, techno and ambient movements is widely recognized.

Sakamoto's interest in different types of music-- jazz, bossa nova, modern classical, dub and gamelan-- was evident in his writing for YMO, his own solo albums, and starting in 1983 with 'Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence', a series of soundtracks. That year, Sakamoto left YMO to pursue his career as a solo artist and to pursue his interest in "world music". He said at the time, "I have a kind of cultural map in my head, where I find similarities between different cultures. For example, domestic Japanese pop music sounds like Arabic music to me - the vocal intonation and vibrato, and in my mind Bali is next to New York. Maybe everyone has these geographies in their heads; this is the way I've been working."

So far, this work has led to collaborations with, among others, Youssou N'dour, Brian Wilson, Iggy Pop, Robbie Robertson, David Bowie, David Byrne, and David Sylvian, Caetano Veloso, writers; William Burroughs and William Gibson and composing and conducting the opening ceremonies of the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona.

Sakamoto's best-known work is probably the soundtrack to 'Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence', but in 1987, his score for Bertolucci's 'The Last Emperor' won him an Oscar, a Grammy, a Golden Globe and the New York, Los Angeles and British Film Critics Association awards for best original soundtrack. Since then he has worked with Bertolucci twice, Oliver Stone, and Pedro Almodovar ('High Heels'). Sakamoto also maintains a career as an actor, having starred with David Bowie in 'Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence', 'The Last Emperor', Madonna's 'Rain' music-video and has appeared as a celebrity model for Barney's New York, fashion designer Antonio Miro, and the Gap, and from time to time has appeared as menswear model in the world's most prestigious magazines.

Few musicians have a career as rich and diverse as Sakamoto's. Even fewer have his gift for melody sometimes romantic, sometimes melancholy and nostalgic, sometimes playful and humorous. And this is what Sakamoto is presenting on his next album. "This time," he says, "I didn't worry about trends or statements. There are no masks on this album. Just melodies. Lots of melodies."



## Ryuichi Sakamoto biographical info (chronological)

1952 Born January 17 in Nakano, Japan.

1974 Received B.A. with a major in music composition from the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music .

1977 Received MFA with a concentration in electronic and ethnic music from the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music. Worked as a studio musician, arranger and producer.

1978 Released his first solo album Thousand Knives.

Formed Yellow Magic Orchestra (YMO) with Haruomi Hosono and Yukihiro Takahashi.

1979 Yellow Magic Orchestra world tour.

1980 Yellow Magic Orchestra's Technopolis 2000-20 Japan tour. Released B-2 Unit.

1981 Released Left Handed Dream. Co-produced Akiko Yano's album.

1982 Released Ikenai Rouge Magic with Kiyoshiro Imawano. Published Watching Sounds, Listening to Times with philosopher Shozo Ohmori from Asahi Publications.

1983 Released Coda. Composed the soundtrack for the film Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence by Nagisa Oshima. Performed in Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence along with David Bowie and Beat Takeshi. Disbanded Yellow Magic Orchestra.

1984 Released Illustrated Musical Encyclopedia. Formed his own publishing company Hon Hon Doh. Published Long Calls; a dialogue with Yuji Takahashi.

1985 Released Esperanto. The subject of the documentary Tokyo Melody, created by the French National TV for the First Tokyo International Film Festival. Performed for the multi media event TV WAR at Tsukuba Science Expo with Radical TV and Akira Asada.

1986 Released Future Boy. Launched Media Bahn, a concert tour for the album -- released Media Bahn Live .Composed the soundtrack for the film Kitten Story. Produced Virginia Astley's album Hope In a Darkened Heart. Produced the soundtrack for the animated film Aile de Honneamise.

1987 Composed the soundtrack for Bernardo Bertolucci's film The Last Emperor with David Byrne and Cong Su. Performed in The Last Emperor with John Lone and Peter O' Toole. Released Neo Geo, co-produced by Bill Laswell, with vocals by Iggy Pop in the song Risky. Neo Geo Japan tour.

1988 Awarded Academy, Golden Globe, Los Angeles, New York Film Critics Association and British Academy Award for best original score for The Last Emperor. Neo Geo tour in the U.S.. Released Playing The Orchestra. Performed Playing the Piano, a piano concert at Terada Warehouse T- 33 in Tokyo.

1989 Awarded Grammy Award for the best original score for The Last Emperor. Released Gruppo Musicale. Performed Playing the Piano with Yosuke Yamashita and Jiang Jiang Hua.



1990 Released Beauty -- world tour. Composed the music for Volker Schlöndorff's film The Handmaid's Tale. Composed the music for Bernardo Bertolucci's film The Sheltering Sky. Performed Playing the Piano with Arto Lindsay for Asahi Broadcasting Company at the Apollo Theater in N.Y.

1991 Awarded Golden Globe and Los Angeles Film Critics Association Award for the best original music score for The Sheltering Sky. Released Heartbeat. Composed music for the opening ceremony of The World Athletic Championships in Tokyo. Performed at WOMAD 1991 Festival in Yokohama, produced in part by Peter Gabriel. Produced Aztec Camera's Dreamland. 1992 Heartbeat tour. Composed the music for Pedro Almodovar's film High Heels. Performed at the 1992 World Expo in Seville, Spain. Composed and conducted El Mar Mediterraneo for the Opening Ceremony of the

1992 Barcelona Olympics. Composed for and performed in the Opening Ceremony of the 1992 Paralympics. Composed the music for Peter Kosminsky's adaptation of Wuthering Heights. Composed the music for Oliver Stone's ABC TV series Wild Palms. Performed Playing the Piano at NHK Hall in Tokyo with Jacques Morelenbaum and Everton Nelson.

1993 Released the re-united Yellow Magic Orchestra's album Technodon - concert at Tokyo Dome. Featured in Madonna's Rain video. Composed the music for Bernardo Bertolucci's film Little Buddha. Performed Playing the Piano with Jacques Morelenbaum, Everton Nelson and L. Subramaniam.

1994 Released Sweet Revenge -- world tour.

1995 Nominated for a Grammy for the film score of Bernardo Bertolucci's film Little Buddha. Concert in Brazil (Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo) with Caetano Veloso and Jaques Morelenbaum. Released new solo album Smoochy in Japan -- D&L Japan Tour. D&L Budokan show was multi-casted through M-bone and the internet.

1996 TRIO album 1996 released from Milan records world-wide (except Japan - Japan distribution from For Life/gut records). TRIO album 1996 world tour -- Europe, Asia, Australia, Japan and US. The Trio shows at Knitting Factory in New York, at Royal Festival Hall in London and Orchard Hall in Tokyo were broadcast through the Internet (the show at Orchard Hall in Tokyo was also broadcast through M-bone). Performed at Summerstage 96 in Central Park, New York City with Caetano Veloso, Jaques Morelenbaum, Arto Lindsay, Vinicius Cantuaria, Marcelo Costa and Everton Nelson. Produced a track featuring Caetano Veloso and Cesaria Evora for the Red Hot Organization's Aids benefit album, Red Hot & Rio (Antilles/Verve, Polygram distribution worldwide). Launched gut-bounce records in Japan: a new indie label created by the joint effort of gut/For Life records and Tower Records Japan's bounce label. Held a concert entitled "Music Plays Images X Images Play Music" with Japanese visual artist, Toshio Iwai at Art Tower Mito in Ibaragi, Japan. The performance of piano and computers was broadcast live on the internet with the support of the Internet World Expo '96. There was also an Internet broadcast of the MIDI transmission of Sakamoto's piano on the remote end, and a remote control of a MIDI piano in Art Tower Mito by users on the Internet.

1997 Ryuichi Sakamoto Playing the Orchestra 1997 "I" Japan tour -- 7 major cities throughout Japan. The Yokohama Arena show was broadcast live on the Internet on January 23rd. Produced 7 tracks of Taeko Onuki's forthcoming album expected to be released Spring 1997 in Japan.



## **Toshio IWAI**

### **Profile**

Toshio IWAI was born in Aichi prefecture, Japan, in 1962. As an interactive media artist, Iwai began making experimental animations in 1981, moved on to working with pre-cinematic toys such as flipbooks and zoetropes, and since 1986 has been interested in the computer game as a visual music system.

In 1987 he graduated from the Plastic Art and Mixed Media master's course of the Tsukuba University, Japan and in 1992 he finished the Artist-in-Residence Program at the Exploratorium, San Francisco. His pieces 'Well of Lights' and 'MUSIC INSECTS' are now in the permanent collection of the Exploratorium.

He became a cult figure in Japan with his computer generated virtual sets for the science news show Einstein TV(1990-91) and his virtual sets and characters for the immensely popular daily interactive children's show for Fuji TV, UgoUgo Lhuga (1992-94).

He has had one-person exhibitions mounted in Tokyo, Osaka, Antwerp, Karlsruhe, Espoo and Amsterdam, and taken part in group exhibitions in Canada, Australia, the San Francisco Exploratorium and the Japan Pavilion at the Seville EXPO, Spain.

In 1994-95, he was the Artist-in-Residence at ZKM / Institute for Image Media in Karlsruhe, Germany. And he is currently an Artist in Residence at IAMAS.



## Toshio IWAI

### One-person Exhibitions

#### 1986

Electro-Visual Evolution, INAX Gallery, Tokyo

#### 1990

TOSHIO IWAI EXHIBITION - Machine for Trinity, LaForet Museum

ESPACE, Tokyo

Art Gallery ARTIUM, Fukuoka

LOFT Forum, Osaka

#### 1993

Another Time, Another Space, Antwerpen Central Station, Belgium

Media Epoch Exhibition / MUSEUM ON THE AIR, Itabashi Art

Museum / Fuji Television, Tokyo

#### 1994

TOSHIO IWAI EXHIBITION, ZKM Medienmuseum, Karlsruhe/Gallery

OTSO, Espoo, Finland/the Netherlands Design Institute, Amsterdam

### Selected Group Exhibitions

#### 1985

High Technology Art Exhibition '85, Shibuya Seibu, Tokyo, awarded Gold prize

#### 1986

6th Hara Annual, Hara Museum of Contemporary of Art, Tokyo

High Technology Art International Exhibition 1986, Sunshine City, Tokyo

#### 1987

Images du Futur '87, Montréal

Arts on Computer - Japanese Computer Graphic Art, O Art Museum, Tokyo

High Technology Art International Exhibition 1987, Shinjuku NS Building, Tokyo

#### 1988

Evolution Theory of Animation - Japanese Experimental Animation

Today, O Art Museum, Tokyo

Expression of Movement, Saitama Prefectural Museum of Modern Art

Japanese High Technology Art Exhibition, Taiwan Art Museum

#### 1989

ImageForum Festival 1989, Seed Hall, Tokyo

Art Exciting, Queensland Art Museum, Queensland

ARTEC '89, in association with World Design Exposition, Nagoya

The 3rd Fukui International Video Biennale, Phoenix Plaza, Fukui

Wonderland of Science Art - Invitation to Interactive Art, Kanagawa Science Park

#### 1990

ImageForum Festival 1990, Seed Hall, Tokyo

Tokyo Hyper-real Show, Shibuya Seibu, Tokyo



**1991**

The Museum Inside The Telephone Network, NTT/ICC, Tokyo  
High-Tech Art 1991, Ginza Matsuya, Tokyo

**1992**

Science Art Exhibition, Japan Pavilion in Sevilla EXPO, Spain  
Tracing Time, Exploratorium, San Francisco

**1994**

Interactive Media Festival, Los Angels

**1995**

Video Positive 95, Liverpool  
MultiMediale 4, ZKM, Karlsruhe  
The Interaction '95, Suito-pia Center, Ogaki, Japan  
IC '95 on the Web-The Museum Inside The Network, NTT/ICC, Tokyo  
Moving Image-The 100th Anniversary of Cinema, Tokyo Metropolitan  
Museum of Photography, Tokyo  
Biennale d'art contemporain de Lyon 95, Musée d'art Contemporain,  
Lyon, France

**1996**

Fantasmagoria, The Museum of Contemporary art, Sydney  
Mediascape, The Guggenheim Museum SoHo, New York  
Sculpture Garden at G7 summit, Musée d'art Contemporain, Lyon, France  
Serious Games The Laing Art Gallery, New Castle, U.K.  
Music plays images x Images play music ACM Theater, Art Tower Mito,  
Japan

**1997**

The Interaction '97, Softopia Japan Center/IAMAS, Ogaki, Japan  
Serious Games, The Barbican Art gallery, London, U.K.

**Collections**

'Time Stratum II' awarded Grand prize of 17th Contemporary Japanese  
Art Exhibition, Meguro Art Museum, Tokyo  
'Well of Lights' Exploratorium, San Francisco  
'Music Insects' Exploratorium, San Francisco  
'JUMPING GRAND PRIX !' Science Museum, Tokyo  
'STOP MOTION PERFORMER' Science Museum, Tokyo  
'Piano~as image media' Nagoya City Youth Cultural Center, Artpia 7F,  
Nadya Park, Nagoya