

Makoto Ozone

Jazz Pianist

Brought up in a musical rich environment, Makoto Ozone taught himself organ at a very young age. He first appeared on TV at the age of six and was performing regularly on Osaka Mainichi Broadcasting. Ozone turned his attention towards jazz piano at the age of twelve, after attending an Oscar Peterson concert. He moved to the United States in 1980 to study jazz composition and arranging at the Berklee College of Music in Boston. In 1983, Ozone graduated at the top of his class and gave a solo recital at the Carnegie Hall, and became the first Japanese musician to sign an exclusive contract with CBS.

In 1983 he joined vibraphonist Gary Burton's quartet and has since toured the world extensively with them. In addition to composing for and playing with Gary Burton, Ozone has also worked with many other top international jazz musicians including Chick Corea, Ellis Marsalis and Branford Marsalis.

In 2004, he formed the "No Name Horses" big band in Japan. The band has been performing successfully in France, Austria, the US, the UK, Singapore and Japan ever since.

In recent years, Ozone has been performing works from the classical music repertoire. Under internationally known conductors such as Charles Dutoit, Thomas Zehetmair, Joseph Swensen, Alexandre Rabinovitch, Arie van Beek, Francois-Xavier Roth, Tadaaki Otaka, Eiji Oue and Michiyoshi Inoue, he has played concertos by Gershwin, Bernstein, Mozart, Beethoven, Rachmaninov and Shostakovich, in collaboration with the NDR Sinfonieorchester, the Orchestre de chambre de Paris (former Ensemble orchestral de Paris), the Orchestre d'Auvergne, the Sinfonia Varsovia, the NHK Symphony Orchestra , etc.

In 2003, on a commission from the famous playwright Hisashi Inoue, Ozone performed and conducted his own composition, a piano concerto titled "Mogami." In 2006, he was invited to the "Chopin and His Europe" International Festival in Warsaw. In 2008, Ozone performed with the NDR Sinfonieorchester at the Schleswig-Holstein Festival. In 2010, Ozone released "Road to Chopin," an album dedicated to the 200th anniversary of

Chopin's birth. His 2012 highlight is a trio tour in Japan with the prestigious jazz masters Christian McBride and Jeff "Tain" Watts. In 2013, in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of his world debut, he toured with Gary Burton in Japan for a month. In addition to his performing career, Ozone hosts a popular jazz music radio program and writes music for live theater and TV. In 2014, he will tour Asia with New York Philharmonic conducting under the baton of Alain Gilbert (Seoul, Tokyo, Osaka, Yokohama, New York/Gershwin Rhapsody in Blue)

Same year Makoto made a jazz arrangement of Mozart's piano concerto No. 9 "Jeunehomme" for Scottish National Jazz Orchestra, performing world premier together in UK.

Among features of his future projects, one can name performance with NDR Radiophilharmonie for subscription concert on May 2014, "The Jazz Orchestra: Bernstein and Gershwin" special concert with San-Francisco Symphony Orchestra and others. Makoto will undertake All-Japan tour with his big band No Name Horses and new CD release dedicated to 10th Anniversary of the band.

Makoto spreads his activity all over the world, performing in such cities as Vienna, New York, Sao Paolo, etc. together with such famous jazz musicians as Gary Burton, Paquito D'Rivera, Arturo Sandoval, Branford Marsalis, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Christian McBride, Dave Weckl, Mike Stern and others.

He is an often guest in such classical music festivals as Festival de la Roque d'Anthéron in France and La Folle Journee in Nantes and Japan.

He has released several albums on Universal Music including the Grammy nominated "Virtuosi" (2002), a duet album with Burton, "Live & Let Live - Love for Japan" (2010), a charity project for 3.11 earthquake and tsunami victims in Japan, and "Time Thread" (2013), his third duo album with Burton.

Ozone is currently a professor at the Kunitachi College of Music.

Makoto Ozone official website <http://makotoozone.com/>

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KAJIMOTO