

Tiger Okoshi

[Trumpeter, composer, arranger, producer]

Professor, Berklee College of Music in Boston, MA. U.S.A.

Yamaha Artist

Toru "Tiger" Okoshi was born in the Year of the Tiger on March 21 1950, just outside of Osaka (Ashiya city, Hyogo) As a child he was, in fact, devoted to painting as he loves today. At 13, he had an enlightening experience to see Louis Armstrong Perform live in Osaka, Japan, only 6 months after he begun to play the trumpet. "He was painting the air with his trumpet" recalls Okoshi. Today, Okoshi often describes the relationship with his horn: "When I play, I want to paint the air with my colorful tone. Choices between long or short strokes, quick or slow, high in the canvas or low, brighter color or darker, with a fat brush or a pen. Paint the air one note at a time."

In 1972, after graduating from Kwansai Gakuin University with a bachelor of commerce, he married Akemi Usui. They flew to the US to honeymoon, speaking no English. "We took a Greyhound bus across country from Los Angeles, but when we arrived in Boston, somehow we knew that we couldn't go back." They decided to sell their return tickets and paid the tuition at Berklee College of Music. Tiger graduated in 1975 receiving the highest honor of summa cum laude. During his 3 years at Berklee, Tiger performed at Carnegie Hall in New York in 1974 with British composer Mike Gibbs sharing the concert with legendary Bill Evans trio. After graduation, he went on the tour with Buddy Rich orchestra.

In 1976, he formed "Tiger's Baku" the popular Boston fusion group that received many awards: Boston Magazine's Best Jazz Band (1988), Boston Music Awards' Best Jazz Band and the Best Horn Player (1988, 1989 and 1990), and Boston Phoenix/WFNX Best Music Poll in 1992. Grammy Award winner guitarist Bill Frisell was an original member in Tiger's Baku. Baku is a mythical creature that eats people's nightmares.

In 1977, Tiger received Outstanding Composer & Arranger awards from the Collegiate Jazz Festival at University of Nortre Dame, IN. This award helped him acquire his US Permanent Residence status. Word of his abilities spread in no time. He joined in Gary Burton quartet in '78 and recorded "Times Square" (ECM, featuring Roy Haynes and Steve Swallow) and toured the world. Keeping Boston as his base, Tiger has been a Berklee faculty member since 1997.

Performances with Tony Bennett, Dave Grusin's LA-NY Dream band (Grammy nominee, 1982), Pat Metheny, Gunther Schuller, Lyle Mays, Bob Mintzer, George Russell's Living Time Orchestra, Dave Liebman, Mike Stern & Dave Weckle Band, Miloslav Vitous, Bela Fleck, Jerry Bergonzi, Dave Holland, Jack Dejonnet, Joe Lovano, Delfeayo Marsalis's Octet with Branford Marsalis. Pop and R&B performances with Michel Franks, Teddy Pendergrass, Aimee Mann's "Til Tuesday, The O'Jays, The Four Tops, The Stylistics, Little Anthony and The Imperials, Frankie Avalon and Bobby Lydel, legendary rock singer Brad Delp of "Boston" Most recently he performed at the World Music Festival in Hamamatsu, Japan sponsored by the UNESCO on 11/6 in 2016, performed with the Japanese tradition music Gagaku with Kitanodai Gagagu ensemble representing Japan among 15 other groups from other counties. Riva Musica Festival in Riva del Garda in Italy July 2024.

As educator and instructor, Tiger has operated the Hokkaido Groove Camp in Sapporo, Hokkaido, Japan since 2006 teaching jazz to young musicians in Japan. He also operated Domaine Forget Jazz Camp in St. Irinee, Quebec, Canada in 2009~2012. Started another annual jazz camp in Castelnovo Ne Monti in Italy in Septemebr 2017.

Tiger, who loves sports, was invited to perform "The Star Spangled Banner" at the opening game of the 2007 season between Boston Red Sox and New York Yankees at Fenway Park, as well as the playoff games in 2007 and 2008. Tiger's trumpet was surrounded by 20 trumpets, 10 trombones and 7 Japanese Taiko drummers playing his original arrangement. In 1997, Tiger recorded a CD entitled "Hustle Tigers" for Japanese major league baseball team Hanshin Tigers.

Awards received

- **The Ministry of Foreign Affair Commendation award received from Japanese government in August 2014 for distinguished contribution for the better relations between U.S and Japan**

- * The Best Producer and planning award by Jazz Tokyo magazine for producing Mizuho CD "Romantic Gershwin" in February 2015
- * John Thayer Award for the contribution to the better relation between US and Japan. Awarded by the Japan Society of Boston on 5/28 '08
- * Contribution to the Advancement of International Music, Understanding and Good Will from Berklee College of Music in March 2007
- * Outstanding Contribution to Teaching Excellence from Berklee in 2005
- * Global Appreciation to individuals who volunteer their time and talent to further and advanced global awareness of contributions made by people with autism. in '97 presented by Boston Higashi

School in Randolph, MA.

- * Distinguished Alumni Award in '97 from Berklee.
- * Best Recording of the Month in Stereophile Magazine, February '95 for the CD "Two Sides to Every Story"/JVC
- * Top Ten Albums of 1993 in UPI (United Press Release) poll for the CD "Echoes of a Note" tribute to Louis "Pops" Armstrong (JVC) Ranked No.5
- * Best Local Jazz Act, Boston Phoenix/WFAX Music Poll in '92
- * Best Jazz & Fusion Group '88 & 89, Boston Music Awards
- * Best Brass & Reed Player '90, Boston Music Awards
- * Best Jazz Band, Boston Magazine '88
- * Hit Record award, Victor Music in Japan, '82 for the CD "Tiger's Baku" and for "Face to Face" CD '90

Educational;

Jazz camp, Master Classes and Clinics

Master class:

The 1st Yamaha Trumpet Camp in Shanghai, China July 2019.

Sichuan University of Music in Chengdu, China, July 2019.

*Tiger directs his own annual jazz camp in Castelnovo Ne Monti, Italy since 2016~2019.

Also in Sapporo city, Japan called "Hokkaido Groove Camp" since 2006~2019.

*Another jazz camp Tiger directed called "Domaine Forget Jazz Camp" in St. Irinee, Quebec province in Canada in August since 2009 to 2012

*Japan Trumpet Association at Dolce in Shinjuku, Tokyo 3/20 2015

*Yonsei Conservatory in Seoul, Korea, March 18 2015

*Shizuoka University jazz big band at Hamamatsu Yamaha January 2015

*Artist in Residency in Augsberg, Germany in August 2011

*Japan Trumpet Association in Tokyo in '08

*University of Montreal, Canada in '07

*Hamamatsu Yamaha Center, Japan '07

*St. Laurent College in Montreal, Canada '06

*International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE) conference in Long Beach, CA in 2002 and in New York, NY in 2007

*Yamaha Trumpet day in New York, NY in December '06

International Trumpet Guild (ITG) conference appeared as performer, clinician and judge for the jazz competition finalist

In Evansville, IN in 2001, in Bangkok, Thailand in 2005, Banff, Canada in 2008, in Harrisburg, PA in 2009 and scheduled to appear in Columbus, Ohio in May 2015 as a judge, performed in Anaheim, CA in June 2016. As a jazz competition judge in Hersey, PA in June 2017.

Carmine Caruso Trumpet Competition in 2003, appeared as performer and judge for the jazz competition finalists.

.....And many other places such as; Universtad de San Francisco in Ecuador, Hawaii International Jazz Festival, New York Brass Conference, Hot Summer Jazz Fest in Minneapolis, MS, Halifax Jazz Festival, U of Minnesota, Clayton State College "Musicians on the Road" "Truly, True" for the Ashiya International Exchange Association in GA, U of Southern Maine, Topika Jazz Workshop in KS and many more. Appeared as clinician and guest performer in high schools such as Foxboro High, MA, Wellesley High, MA, Olive Ames High, MA, Westbrook High in Maine and more.

Author: "Practice Method" (Berklee Press, 2002)

"Yamaha Etude and Exercise book for Trumpet" the Secrets of Eight Master Artists and Teachers (Carl Fischer, 2013)

Columnist: Art's magazine of Hamamatsu, Shizuoka in Japan (2005 --)

Articles for Canadian Musician magazine, "Warm Up to Calm Down" (11/97) "Concentration, A Bow and an

Arrow, An Instrument and a note" (1/98) "Highs from Lows" (2/98)

Lecturer:

"History of Jazz" at Sapporo Cultural Hall, Japan (2007)

"Music and Autism" at Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies, Harvard University (2001)

"The Difference in Music Education in U S and Japan" for the Massachusetts/Hokkaido Association (2000) (1998~2002)

"Japanese Jazz Man in US" for Showa Women's Institute (1997~2000)

Berklee Commencement speech as a distinguished alumnus (1992)

Recordings as leader:

"Tiger Okoshi Plays Jazz Standards" (Jeneon A-60 Jazz, 2008)
"Hustle Tigers" (Victor, 2003) for Japanese major league baseball team Hanshin Tigers
"Color of Soil" (JVC, 1998) w/ Kenny Barron, Mino Cinelu, Hank Roberts and Jay Anderson
"Two Sides to Every Story" (JVC, 1995) w/ Jack DeJohnette, Dave Holland, Mike Stern and Gil Goldstein
"Echoes of A Note" (JVC, 1993) tribute to Louis "Pops" Armstrong,
w/ Bela Fleck, Mike Stern, Peter Erskine, Jay Anderson and Gil Goldstein
"That Was Then, This Is Now" (JVC, 1990)
"Face to Face" (JVC, 1989) used for the T.V. commercial by Cabin Cigarette in Japan
"Mudd Cake" (JVC, 1981)
"Tiger's Baku" (JVC, 1980)

Recordings as producer, arranger and performer

"Waltz for Moonlight" by Mizuho, featuring Bill Frisell on guitar, released on January 18 2017. Pony Canyon.
"Now and Then" by Tiziano Bianchi 2016 (released in Italy, will be released by Pony Canyon in Japan in November 2016)
"Romantic Gershwin" (Pony Canyon 2014) by Mizuho featuring Gary Burton
"Dear Duke" (House of Jazz 2012) by Mizuho
"Stars and A Moon" (House of Jazz 2010) by Mizuho
"Tsubasa" (House of Jazz, 2008) by Mizuho

Recordings as guest soloist:

"What's next" by Mehmet Sanlikol 2016 with Dave Liebman, Anat Cohen and Antonio Sanchez.
"Such Sweet Thunder" (Troubadour Jazz Label, 2011) by Delfeayo Marsalis with Branford Marsalis
"Common Language, Common Sense" (Hipjazz 2011) by Wolfgang Lackerschmid
"Orpheus Again" (BAM 2010) Bruce Arnold
"Portrait" (2008) by Diane Richardson
"Live Club Soda" (Analekta, 2007) by Lorraine Desmarais
"Love & Beauty" (Hawklite Records, 2005) by Stan Strickland
"I Colori Del Mare" (Splasc(H) Records 2004) by Daniela Schachter
"Ohana" (RSCD 2003) by Noel Okimoto
"Chasing Tales" (Invisible Music Records, 2001) by Mark Kleinhaut
"Call Me Al" (Norac, 2001) by Alain Caron
"It's About Time" Living Time Orchestra (Label Bleu, 1996) by George Russell
"Meditation" a tribute to John Coltrane, (Arkadia, 1996) by Dave Liebman
"Peek a Boo" (Label Bleu, Evidence Music 1995) by Jerry Berganzi
"Another Season" (JVC, 1993) by Kevyn Lettau
"Lorraine Desmarais" (Sodec, 1991) by Lorraine Desmarais
"All The Way To Sendai" (Enja, 1990) by Mordy Farber
"Everything's Different Now" (Epic, 1988) by Aimee Mann's "Til Tuesday
"The Story Of Moses" (Gramavision, 1987) by Bob Moses
"Lookin' Up From Below" (GM, 1986) by George Schuller
"NY-AL Dreamband" (GRP, 1984) by Dave Grusin
"Angelica" (Toshiba EM, 1984) by Lew Tabakin
"Visit With The Great Spirit" (Gramavision, 1984) by Bob Moses
"Times Square" (ECM, 1978) by Gary Burton
"Transparence" (RCI) by Jean Robitaille
and more.....

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