

TARO ISHIDA

Composer, Music Producer, Arranger



Biography

Compose

2011

NHK "Petit Anime Teach": Composed for NHK's children's program.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/teach/

Centre Pompidou / Kazumasa Teshigawara "Is Anyone There?": Composed music for the exhibition held at the Centre Pompidou in France.

<https://qubibi.org/839e7bc2160f40a9a3edd713e50319d6>

2012

UNIQLO "New HEATTECH '100,000 Support Project'": Composed for UNIQLO's Japanese commercial.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/the-sun-goes-down-for-uniqlo-heattech-project/

HONDA "Pucheco": Composed for HONDA's special website "Pucheco."

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/hondasmile/

2013

DRIFTER: Composed for an internet service provider, So-net. This work inspired the name of my current company, symbolizing the various experiences and events in life.

<https://qubibi.org/44790cc1cca14491a0de84d8301b58b3>

2014

Tokyo University of the Arts "Horyuji Kondo Mural Exhibition": Composed background music for the exhibition on Horyuji at Tokyo University of the Arts. Began composing with Gagaku instruments "Sho" and "Gakubiwa" for the first time.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/thebonesong/

2015

Japan Design Center / AGF "Sen Image Movie"

A piano solo piece composed on commission for Japanese coffee maker AGF. This composition aims to express the beauty of Japan and the essence of traditional Japanese aesthetics through a single piano, creating a simple yet refined musical experience.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/sen-agf/

2016

Miraikan "Gaia: The Man from the 9th Dimension": Composed for the most famous planetarium program in Japan.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/the-man-from-the-9-dimensions-ost/

2018

Tokyo Metropolitan Teien Art Museum "Chair Exhibition of Indigenous People of Brazil": Composed for the exhibition held at one of Tokyo's representative art museums, housed in a former historical building.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/burajiru/

2019

Nasu Town "Song of Toyohara Station": Composed a Japanese-style piano and vocal piece commissioned by Nasu Town in Tochigi Prefecture. This composition successfully expresses the Japanese aesthetic through the combination of piano and vocals, creating an evocative and culturally rich musical experience.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/toyohara-station/

2020

Cado Brand Image Movie: Composed for the image movie of a brand known for its sophisticated design air purifiers. This piece is a solo piano composition that successfully captures and expresses the refined Japanese aesthetic. The music has been very well received, praised for its ability to convey the elegant and serene atmosphere associated with the brand.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/cado-for-cado-brand-movie/

Agency for Cultural Affairs, Craft Technology Documentary Film 2020 "Yoshito

Yamashita's Skill": Composed for a documentary film recording traditional Japanese craft techniques, produced annually by the Agency for Cultural Affairs.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/yyamashita/

2021

The National Art Center, Tokyo "Kashiwa Sato Exhibition UNLIMITED SPACE"

Provided music for a section of the exhibition by one of Japan's leading designers. This piece is an electric sound composition that enhances the exhibit's innovative and dynamic atmosphere, aligning perfectly with Kashiwa Sato's vision.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/satokashiwa/

Original soundtrack for the planetarium program "10,000 Light Years Binoculars"

Composed the theme song and all background music for a planetarium program based on a popular Japanese manga.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/10000lightyearsbinoculars/

2023

CHOPRO CM Song "Because You Were Here": Composed the theme song for a gas company based in Nagasaki.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/namami/

Music produce

2017

NHK Fukushima Reconstruction Project "Shirakawa Hanakagari Haruka 2017":

Served as music director for NHK's large-scale projection mapping event supporting Fukushima's earthquake recovery. Took over from Ryuichi Sakamoto, who handled it until 2016, and continued for five years until 2021.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/haruka/

2018

Music For New Itami Airport: Composed the background music for Itami Airport's central area, featuring a large-scale video installation. The music enhances the airport's atmosphere, subtly blending into the environment while reflecting the beauty and elegance of the newly renovated space.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/music-for-new-itami-airport/

2019

Square Enix "CRYSTAL STORY": Worked as music director for Square Enix's first night walk event, handling space music, sound effects, and speaker setup.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/square/

1→10_LIL "Nagoya Castle Night Festival": Provided comprehensive music and sound direction for the winter event held at Nagoya Castle.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/nagoya-castle-night-party/

Hoshino Resorts Aomoriya "Michinoku Matsuriya" Music Director: Directed music for a large-scale daily event in Aomori, utilizing the intense traditional music of Nebuta, a popular drum-heavy festival.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/aomori/

2024

Ransho Fujima Project [Japanese Dance]: A new project with Ran Sho Fujima, one of Japan's leading Japanese dance performers, has begun. This collaboration will see the release of numerous works over the coming years. I will also be serving as the overall music director for her project.

<https://www.ranshou.org/>

KOISHIKAWA XROSS: As the music director and composer for the "Digital Cultural Heritage Museum KOISHIKAWA XROSS®" at TOPPAN, I integrated Gagaku and traditional Japanese music with modern technology. I also introduced Sanukite, an ancient stone from Sanuki, incorporating its live sound into the compositions.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/koishikawa/

Music Arrangement

2022

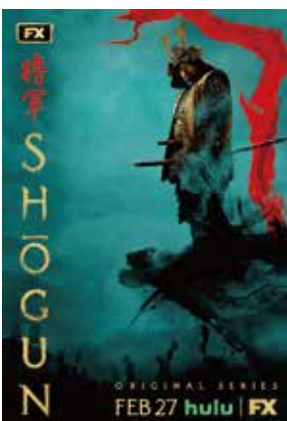
Oorutaichi, Mama!milk, Kyoto Symphony Orchestra Concert at KYOCERA Museum of Art: Arranged the Gagaku piece "Bairo" for performance by the Kyoto Symphony Orchestra.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/nightwith/

2024

DISNEY "SHOGUN" Soundtrack: Worked on arranging and recording traditional Japanese music and Gagaku for the soundtrack of Disney's "SHOGUN." Collaborated extensively with Atticus Ross, Leopold Ross, and Nick Chuba in Los Angeles.

https://drftr.co.jp/works_en/shogun/



Media Exposure

Television & Radio

- NHK 'Ohayo Nippon' + 'Tochigi 630': "The Gagaku Performed in the Taiga Drama 'Hikaru Kimi e!' Composer Taro Ishida from Nasu Town Shares His Thoughts on Gagaku" (April 2024)
- Tochigi TV 'Tochite TV News 9': Scheduled to appear (July 2024)
- Bay FM 'D's Café supported by Disney JCB Card': Scheduled to appear on July 7th and 14th (July 2024)
- NHK: Scheduled to appear in two programs related to Gagaku (January 2025)

Web

- Universal Music uDiscovermusic.jp: "Behind the Scenes of Music Production for 'SHOGUN': An Interview with Gagaku Composer Taro Ishida" (March 2024)
- The RIVER: "How Was the Profound Music of 'SHOGUN' Created? Atticus Ross and Others Discuss the Collaboration with Japanese Music" (March 2024)
- Overseas Drama NAVI: "Collaborating with Composer Taro Ishida for 'SHOGUN'" (March 2024)
- Hollywood Records (International): Featured in the Video "Leopold Ross, Nick Chuba - Shogun (Big Score)" (March 2024)
- Composer Magazine (International): "Leopold Ross on Bridging Sonic Worlds for 'SHOGUN'" (March 2024)

Newspapers

- Yomiuri Shimbun: "Composer Taro Ishida from Nasu Town Takes on Major Role in Hollywood Production Drama Music... Breaking the Mold with Ideas that Transcend Traditional Japanese Music" (March 2024)
- Shimotsuke Shimbun 'Raimyo': "The Sound of Gagaku from the Forest of Nasu" (April 2024)

Lectures

- Iwate Prefectural University 'World of Art Studies': Held a lecture on Gagaku (June 2024)
- Kyoto University: Scheduled to hold a Gagaku lecture (September 2024)

Education

I obtained a Master's degree in Music from Tokyo University of the Arts in 2013, specializing in Composition, Musicology, Electronic Music, and Japanese Traditional Music (Gagaku).

Birth date and Place

November 8, 1979 in Boston, MA., USA

About Gagaku

Gagaku is a unique form of Japanese court music that originated in ancient times. It is a fusion of indigenous Japanese music and performing arts from ancient Asian countries, including the Korean Peninsula and China, which were introduced to Japan over centuries. This blend was perfected during the mid-Heian period. Despite its historical significance, knowledge of Gagaku is rare even among Japanese people. As a composer specializing in Gagaku, I work to bring this ancient music to contemporary audiences.

Strengths of Taro Ishida

There are very few composers of Gagaku music in Japan, and among them, I am uniquely skilled in both film and entertainment music production. I am the only one capable of composing and arranging Gagaku music while being proficient in these modern genres. My extensive network and achievements in Japanese traditional music, particularly Gagaku, have allowed me to produce and compose numerous works in this field. As demonstrated in "SHOGUN," Gagaku holds immense musical and cultural value. I am the only musician capable of seamlessly integrating Gagaku into a wide range of domains, including film, gaming, ambient music for spaces, and stage performances. The complexity and uniqueness of Gagaku instruments and Japanese traditional music make it challenging for others to incorporate them into compositions readily. However, my expertise enables me to do so with authenticity and innovation.

Current Music Project

I am currently creating a unique fusion of music that combines the traditional rules of Gagaku with classical instruments and electronic elements. This innovative blend of Gagaku, classical, and electronic music has never been seen before in the world. I am set to release the first single in September, with the full album scheduled for completion in January next year. This groundbreaking music is designed to perfectly complement various media, including film, video games, and other visual productions. The result is an extraordinary sound that promises to be both captivating and versatile, making it an exceptional addition to the global music landscape.

Collaboration:

Worked with "Reigakusha," one of Japan's leading Gagaku ensembles, on music production and performances.

Reigakusha : <https://reigakusha.com/home/>

My Aspirations and Capabilities

In addition to composing music for films, games, and animations, I have extensive experience as a music director for various venues and stages. This background enables me to produce music for facilities and spaces, incorporating traditional Japanese music. I am also capable of collaborating with dance companies and other performing arts groups. Furthermore, I frequently conduct lectures on Gagaku and traditional Japanese music, both domestically and internationally, making me well-equipped to share this knowledge through educational programs and workshops. As an artist, I also aspire to perform in concerts and other live events, although not on a frequent basis. These performances allow me to connect directly with audiences and showcase the unique fusion of Gagaku, classical, and electronic music that I create. Of course, I am proficient in using DAWs for music production, as well as composing and arranging music through written scores and classical music arrangements.

I am planning to visit Los Angeles in early September and would be delighted to meet and discuss opportunities in person. Remote meetings are also welcome.

Taro Ishida

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