

Japanese Music Project

~Arabian Tour~

● Programme

1. 「Arabesque」 about 25 min

YAS-KAZ(Percussion)
Akikazu Nakamura(Bamboo Flute)
Toshiko Kuto(Japanese Traditional Harp)

2. 「Sand Storm」 about 25 min

Yuji Tsunemi(Oud)
Koto(Japanese Traditional Flute)
Yoshio Ueno(Japanese Large Hand Drum)

3. 「Grand Finale: Basara」 about 10 min



Date: 9th October, 2012
8:00 p.m. (Doors open at 7:30 p.m.)

Venue: Ministry of Education Auditorium (in Wattayah)

Inquiries: Cultural Section, Embassy of Japan (Phone +968-24 601028 ext. 38)

Production: Office K2

Free Admission

In cooperation with the Ministry of Education



Embassy of Japan

Supported by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan



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~ ARABIAN TOUR ~



👉 **YAS-KAZ** (Percussionist, Composer)

In 1970, he started to collaborate with Tatsumi Hijikata (Butoh dance founder) and Takehisa Kosugi and some of the leading Jazz players in Japan. In the 80s, he was invited to many music festivals for solo concerts in and out of Japan. He also collaborated with Sankaijuku and Wayne Shorter and many artists of different categories. Since 1984, he has issued 22 albums, and during 2001-2006, he was invited to Venice Biennale and had Europe tours.



👉 **Akikazu NAKAMURA** (composer, shakuhachi)

Akikazu Nakamura studied under Katsuya Yokoyama and several masters of the komuso shakuhachi tradition. A graduate of the NHK School of Traditional Music, Nakamura went on to study composition and jazz theory at Berklee College of Music, graduating summa cum laude. He was then awarded a scholarship to pursue a master's degree in composition and third-stream music at the New England Conservatory. He has performed in more than 30 countries worldwide under the sponsorship of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Japan Foundation among others. While still grounding his roots in the classical tradition handed down by komuso monks, Nakamura has delved into different musical genres including rock, jazz, and contemporary music. He leads a fusion pop/rock/jazz band, Kokoo, which features shakuhachi and koto. Nakamura is one of the first shakuhachi players to make use of the circular breathing technique which enables him to breathe in as he plays the instrument, thus ensuring a continuous sound. Nakamura has received much recognition for his performances and recordings: he was awarded the 19th Matsuo Performing Arts Prize; he received the Columbia Golden Disc Prize for his CD entitled *The World of Zen Music: Saji*, and was twice honored with the Prize for Excellence at the Arts Festival sponsored by the Agency for Cultural Affairs in 1999 (for the *Saji* recording) and in 2005 for his most recent CD, *The World of Zen Music: Sanya*. Also active as a composer and arranger, Nakamura has been commissioned by NHK, WDR (Germany), the Jean Sibelius String Quartet (Finland), and the Ravel String Quartet (France), etc. He was awarded the Encouragement Prize by the Agency for Cultural Affairs for his work as a composer. A member of the Japan Society of Contemporary Music, Nakamura currently teaches at the Toho Gakuen College of Drama and Music, and Graduate School of Senzoku Gakuen College of Music.



👉 **Toshiko KUTO** (koto)

Toshiko Kuto studied koto, 20-string koto and 25-string koto under Keiko Nosaka (later Soju Nosaka II). In 1981, she joined the traditional Japanese music ensemble, Promusica Nipponia, and finished studying at NHK School for Performers of Traditional Japanese Instruments. In 1987 she passed the prestigious NHK's traditional Japanese music audition. She has pursued the world of 20-string koto and actively composed and arranged for koto. She has organized groups such as "20-string LIVE" in 1989, and "Kotouta-za" for soprano, violin and 25-string koto in 2000. Her numerous concerts include a 20-string koto concert in 1986, 20-string koto recitals in 1989 and 1990, "Toshiko Kuto 25-string Koto Live" in 1998, and a 25-string koto recital in 2009. In 2010, at the Museum of Modern Art and the International House Philadelphia, she played the film music "A PAGE OF MADNESS" (directed by Teinosuke Kinugasa) with string ensemble, and performed in Boston. In 2011, she was invited by the Republic of Kazakhstan with British musicians. She performed and held lectures for TV, Radio, and a concert hall. She has performed in France, Australia, Korea and so on and her performance has been broadcast by NHK. She appeared in the art festival sponsored by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, a musical at Yokohama Expo, concerts sponsored by Musicians Union of Japan, and lectures at schools in various parts of Japan. Presently she is Master Instructor of the Ikuta School Matsunomi-kai, a member of prestigious organizations such as Promusica Nipponia, Japan Sankyoku Association, and Ikuta School Association, and President of Kotouta-za and Kotone-kai. She is actively making an effort to popularize Japanese music as the instructor of Koto and Shakuhachi School for Children sponsored by the Agency for Cultural Affairs.



👉 **Yuji Tsunemi** (Oud Player)

Born in 1960 in Tokyo, Japan. One of the very few players of the musical instrument, oud, in Japan. Yuji Tsunemi started learning Arab music while attending Ethnic Music Centre Japan (directed by Tadahiro Wakabayashi). He began to play the oud under Hamza El Din, a Sudanese oud player (d. May, 2006), and then moved to Tunisia in 1989 to make a full-fledged start to study Arab music under the late Ali Sriti (Professor of Oud Studies, Tunis National Conservatory of Music [d. 5 April, 2007]), a renowned oud player in the Arab world. In 1993 he performed together with Muhammed Zine-el-Abidine, a young Tunisian oud player, for Tunis National TV and at the Medina Festival in Tunisia. He has also been actively taking part in various cultural and international exchanges through music such as performances with "El Azifat" (directed by Amina Srafi), an all female band from Tunisia, as well as organizing a concert (hosted by the Japan Foundation) together with local musicians at the Opera House in Cairo, Egypt in the spring of 2006, and participating in the International Festival of the Sahara held in Douz, Tunisia in 2006 to name a few. In Japan, he has been performing solo focusing on Arab-Turkish classical music while also performing with various musicians, dancers and performers through his Arab music ensemble, Farha, or Arabindia, another ensemble also directed by him. He has also taken part in the music recordings of a TV program, NHK Special "The New Silk Road Part 2", broadcasted in April - December of 2007. He is also a part-time instructor at the Open University of Japan.



👉 **KOTO** (Japanese Bamboo Flute Player)

KOTO was born and raised in Hiroshima. She encountered her first and lifelong musical experience as a Japanese Bamboo Flute Player because of the influence of her father who was a member of a Shinto musical and dance company. She started playing the flute at the age of 5. And at the age of 15, she joined the Shinto musical and dance company, "Kariyakata Kaguradan". She won a variety of awards of Shinto music and dance competitions which were held throughout Hiroshima. She began to play Shino-bue, at the age of 19. At the same time, she started her career involving collaborations with various musicians. In 2006, she moved her base to Tokyo, and engaged in various activities including live solo performances, support for other performers, recordings and collaborations with musicians and artists active in various artistic fields.



👉 **Yoshio UENO** (Otsuzumi—Big hand drum Player)

Born in 1952, as a son of Asatarou UENO, Shite Noh Performer, he studied otsuzumi (big hand drum) under Yoshida Taichiro. As an Okura school otuzumi player, he has been most active performing in Kyoto and Osaka areas of Japan. He presides over "Shoushun-kai," his own otsuzumi group in Nishinomiya City.