

36th Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award  
for Music Composition  
Nominated works announced



Nozomu Kaneda  
©Kiyoshi Takagi



Yuki Nakahashi  
©Anne-Laure Lechat



Tetsuya Yamamoto

The Suntory Foundation for the Arts (Directors General: Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi and Shingo Torii) has announced the three works to be nominated for the 36th (2025) Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award for Music Composition (previously the Akutagawa Award for Music Composition).

The Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award for Music Composition was established by the Suntory Music Foundation (now the Suntory Foundation for the Arts) in April 1990 with the support of the Japan Federation of Composers, and celebrates the achievements of Yasushi Akutagawa (1925-1989), one of the leading Japanese composers of the post-war era. In fond remembrance of the late composer's love of music, his lucid views on music and the passion that he brought to the promotion of music, this composition prize, which was the first of its kind in Japan, is a unique initiative aimed at up-and-coming composers creating orchestral works full of freshness and steeped in potential, with winners selected from among pieces premiered at public concerts. This is a compound award, as composers winning the prize also receive a commission for a new orchestral work, with the first performance held two years thereafter.

In 2019, marked the 50th anniversary of the founding in 1969 of the parent organization of the Suntory Foundation for the Arts, the Torii Music Foundation, and also a change in the name to “the Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award for Music Composition,” to make the spirit of the award clearer. At the same time, the prize-money was increased to ¥1,500,000. Going forward we will continue to support the young composers of Japan as they emerge onto a wider stage.

### ▽Selection process

On Tuesday, March 3, 2026, the three members of the selection committee, after careful consideration, came to a decision on the three nominated works at the conference room of the foundation. These were chosen from among orchestral pieces created by Japanese composers that were first performed in Japan or abroad during the period from January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025, based on the music score and the recording of the first performance.

The three members of the selection committee were Malika Kishino, Yu Kuwabara, Somei Sato.

### ▽The 36th Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award for Music Composition nominated works

#### **Nozomu KANEDA: *The Play for Skin and Fabric for 2 Orchestras***

Premiered “Toru Takemitsu Composition Award 2025” on May 25, 2025 at Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall, Takemitsu Memorial

#### **Yuki NAKAHASHI: *And I sole ear***

Premiered “Graduation Recital of the Composition Department at Conservatoire national supérieur de musique de Paris” on September 30, 2025 at Salle Remy Pflimlin (Conservatoire national supérieur de musique de Paris)

#### **Tetsuya YAMAMOTO: *Tribute to the birds out of doors***

##### **for Chorus and Chamber Orchestra**

Premiered “Kobe City Chamber Orchestra & Kobe City Philharmonic Chorus Children's Concert 2025” (KOBE International Music Festival 2025) on August 3, 2025 at Kobe Bunka Hall, Main Hall

## ▽Biography

### **Nozomu KANEDA**

Born in 1992, Niigata. He completed the doctoral program at the Graduate School of Kunitachi College of Music, earning a Doctor of Music degree. He received the First Matsumura Prize and won First Prize in the 2025 Toru Takemitsu Composition Award (jury: Georg Friedrich Haas). He currently serves as a part-time lecturer at Senzoku Gakuen College of Music, the Toho Gakuen School of Music, and the Toho Gakuen Music School for Children.

### **Yuki NAKAHASHI**

Born in 1995, Toyama. He studied composition at the Tokyo University of the Arts, earning his master's degree. Supported by scholarships from the Rohm Music Foundation and the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan, he continued his studies at the Conservatoire de Paris, where he received a master's diploma. His works have received several awards, including second prize at the 76th Concours de Genève.

### **Tetsuya YAMAMOTO**

Born in 1989, Nagano. He has 3 master's degree: Two in the composition from Kunitachi College of Music in 2014, National Conservatory of Lyon (CNSMDL) in 2019, and the other in the orchestral conducting from Royal Conservatory of Mons ARTS<sup>2</sup> in 2023. His works have been honored internationally in over 30 composition competitions and open calls. He is the music director/conductor of the contemporary music performance group "Ensemble Recurrence" and a part-time lecturer at the Kunitachi College of Music.

## ▽The 36th Competition of Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award for Music Composition

Date/Time: Sunday, August 30, 2026 at 17:00

Venue: Suntory Hall, Main Hall

Performers: Kanako Abe, Conductor

New Japan Philharmonic

Tomoki Akiyama / Yui Amano, Piano etc.

Open Screening: Seiji Choki, MC

Malika Kishino, Yu Kuwabara, Somei Sato, Jury

Programme: Kento Ishikawa: *Odorant Receptors* for 2 Keyboards and Orchestra  
[World Premiere, Commissioned by Suntory Foundation for the Arts]

and Nominated above 3works

See [here](#) for more on the Akutagawa Yasushi Suntory Award for Music Composition

See [here](#) about the Suntory Foundation for the Arts