

The 36th Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award
for Music Composition
Yuki Nakahashi's *And I sole ear*



Yuki Nakahashi

©Anne-Laure Lechat

The 36th Competition of Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award for Music Composition was held at Suntory Hall in Tokyo on Sunday, August 30 at 5pm. Yuki Nakahashi's '*And I sole ear*' won the award. He received both the award certificate and cash prize of 1.5 million yen.

The Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award for Music Composition was established by Suntory Music Foundation (now Suntory Foundation for the Arts) in April 1990 with the support of the Japan Federation of Composers, in honor of the achievements of Yasushi Akutagawa (1925-1989), one of the leading composers in the latter half of 20th century in Japan. In memory of his passion and knowledge to music, this competition has also unique steps for up-coming composers, that is, winner is selected at the public concert.

In addition, the winner is commissioned a new orchestral work, premiered two years thereafter. At the day's concert, '*Odorant Receptors* for 2 Keyboards and Orchestra', a commissioned work by the 34th award winner Kento Ishikawa, had world premiered.

▽The 36th Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award for Music Composition

Yuki Nakahashi's Work

And I sole ear

▽Reason for the award

This work demonstrates meticulous craftsmanship, with each electroacoustic sound material created individually by hand, achieving a beautiful fusion with instrumental music. The composition and dramaturgy of the piece are fully realized. Through a beautiful inner sonic world that unifies with nature, it raises the deepest questions.

▽Biography

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.

▽Selection process

1. On Tuesday, March 3rd, 2026, the three jury members, 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 during the period from January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025, based on the music score and the recording of the first performance.

The jury members were Malika Kishino, Yu Kuwabara, Somei Sato.

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” (KOBÉ International Music Festival 2025) on August 3, 2025 at Kobe Bunka Hall, Main Hall

2. At Suntory Hall Main Hall on Sunday, August 30, 2026, the above three works were performed by the New Japan Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Kanako Abe. Following the concert, the three jury members— Malika Kishino, Yu Kuwabara, Somei Sato —discussed the compositions in public (moderated by Seiji Choki) and finally Yuki Nakahashi’s composition ‘*And I sole ear*’ was selected as the winner of the 36th Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award for Music Composition.

3. At the award ceremony held on the stage immediately, Suntory Foundation for the Arts Director General, Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi awarded him.

Suntory Foundation for the Arts will also commission a new orchestral work to Yuki Nakahashi which, upon completion, will have its premiered performance at a concert organized by the foundation. (Commission fee: One million yen)

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

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