

31st Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award
for Music Composition
Nominated works announced



Yu Kuwabara



Yoichi Sugiyama



Takuya Harashima

(C) Masanobu Yamanoue

The Suntory Foundation for the Arts (Directors General: Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi and Shingo Torii) has announced the three works to be nominated for the 31st (2020) 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.

The year before last, 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 9, 2021, the three members of the selection committee, after careful consideration, came to a decision on the three nominated works by online. 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, 2020 to December 31, 2020, based on the music score and the recording of the first performance.

The three members of the selection committee were Keiko Harada, Jo Kondo and Naoki Sakata. (In alphabetical order)

▽The 31st Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award for Music Composition nominated works

Yu Kuwabara : *Time Abyss* for Seventeen Musicians Divided in Two Groups (2019-20)

Premiered “cresc...Biennale für aktuelle Musik

CRASHKURS HUMAN__MACHINE” on Mar.1, 2020

at Albert-Schweitzer-Schule Offenbach, Offenbach am Main, Germany

Yoichi Sugiyama : *Autoritratto* for orchestra (2020)

Premiered “Suntory Hall Summer Festival 2020

The Producer Series TOSHI ICHIYANAGI-2020 Tokyo 'Avant-garde'

Orchestra SPACE XXI-2” on Aug.30, 2020

at Suntory Hall Main Hall

Takuya Harashima : *YOSEGI fashion* for Biwa and Orchestra (2020)

Premiered “The 89th Music Competition of Japan” on Nov.19, 2020
at NHK Broadcasting Center 505 Studio

▽Biography

Yu Kuwabara

Yu Kuwabara was born on December 7, 1984 and has completed her master's degree at Tokyo University of the Arts. She investigates Japanese sounds and language from their origins, and her creativity is focused on connecting between the past and the present, and also between Japan and the rest of the world. She was commissioned internationally by the National Theatre of Japan, Kanagawa Kenritsu Ongakudo, Concert Hall Shizuoka AOI, Transit 20/21, I&I Foundation, and others, and her works have been performed in prestigious festivals and projects around the world. She is one of Awai-Za's members, a chamber ensemble mixed with new music and Japanese Edo culture.

Yoichi Sugiyama

Yoichi Sugiyama was born on December 19, 1969 in Tokyo and graduated from Toho Gakuen School of Music. As a composer, he has received many commissions from Japan and abroad, including the Milano Musica and the Venice Biennale. As a composer, he received the 13th Keizo Saji Prize and the 2nd Toshi Ichianagi Contemporary Prize. As a conductor, he was awarded the 2018 Art Encouragement Prize for New Talent by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, received the Order of the Knight of Sant'Agata of the Republic of San Marino in 2010. He teaches at the Claudio Abbado Conservatory in Milan.

Takuya Harashima

Takuya Harashima was born on October 14, 1993 in Tokyo and graduated from Faculty of Music (Flute) of Ueno Gakuen Junior College, Department of Liberal and Fine Arts of Kyoto University of Art and Design, Composition Course (Graduate Course) of Toho Gakuen School of Music. Ze was a finalist at the 33rd JSCM Award for Composers and the 9th JFC Award Competition. Ze was the third place in the 89th Music Competition of

Japan. Ze has studied composition with Hitomi Kaneko, Akiko Yamane, Masahiro Yamauchi and Norio Fukushi. Ze is studying the nishiki-biwa with Oshi Suito.

▽The 31st Competition of Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award for Music Composition

Date/Time : Saturday, August 28 2021 at 15:00

Venue : Suntory Hall Main Hall

Performers : Yoichi Sugiyama, Conductor

Shinichi Shiino, Piano

Takuya Harashima, Biwa

New Japan Philharmonic

Open Screening : Yuji Numano, MC

Keiko Harada, Jo Kondo and Naoki Sakata, Jury

Programme : Yasutaki Inamori : *Hypomnemata* for Piano and Orchestra (2020-21)

[World Premiere, Commissioned by Suntory Foundation for the Arts]

The 31st Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award for Music Composition

Nominated 3 works

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

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