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33rd Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award
for Music Composition
Nominated works announced



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Hiroki Tanaka



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Junichi Matsumoto



Wataru Mukai

The Suntory Foundation for the Arts (Directors General: Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi and Shingo Torii) has announced the three works to be nominated for the 33rd (2022) 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 Wednesday, March 8, 2023, 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, 2022 to December 31, 2022, based on the music score and the recording of the first performance.

The three members of the selection committee were Yasutaki Inamori, Kunitaka Kokaji and Yukiko Watanabe. (In alphabetical order)

▽The 33rd Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award for Music Composition nominated works

Hiroki Tanaka: *Trace/Spiral (Différance II)* for orchestra (2021-22)

Premiered “Subscription Concert for the Introduction of New Graduates by the Geidai Philharmonia Orchestra, Tokyo” on May 21, 2022 at Tokyo University of the Arts, Sogakudo Concert Hall

Junichi Matsumoto: *Half-Forgotten Floors, or Rooms*

for Scordatura Group and Orchestra (2016/2018/2022)

Premiered “The 91st Music Competition of Japan” on Nov.10, 2022 at NHK Broadcasting Center 505 Studio

Wataru Mukai: *DANCING QUEER* for Orchestra (2022)

Premiered “ENSEMBLE FREE EAST The 17th Concert” on September 17, 2022 at Suginami Koukaidou Main Hall

▽Biography

Hiroki Tanaka

Hiroki Tanaka was born on 23 June 1999 in Kobe, Japan. After attending the Music High School attached to the Faculty of Music, Tokyo University of the Arts, he graduated from composition class in Tokyo University of the Arts with first class-honours in 2022. His graduation work was purchased by the university and it's now permanently housed in the university museum. In 2021, he gained "38th Japanese Society of Contemporary Music Award for Composers". He studied composition with Yumi Saiki, Kunitaka Kokaji and Toshiyuki Orikasa. Currently, he is studying composition in master's course of Dresden University of Music "Carl Maria von Weber" Germany with Mark Andre and Stefan Prins.

Junichi Matsumoto

Junichi Matsumoto was born on April 20, 1973 in Kushiro City, Hokkaido. Graduated from Kunitachi College of Music, Department of Composition. He won the Queen Elisabeth International Music Competition of Belgium Finalist Prize, the Japan Academy Prize Excellent Music Award ("Like Father, Like Son", directed by Hirokazu Koreeda), and the 2nd Prize in the Composition Division of the 91st Music Competition of Japan. His works and activities include "Ryugu" (written and directed by Kaiji Moriyama), commissioned by National Ballet of Japan (New National Theatre, Tokyo), and "The Little One-Winged Plane" for the opening ceremony of the Tokyo Paralympics 2020.

Wataru Mukai

Wataru Mukai was born on July 22, 1993 in Shizuoka. After graduating at the top of his class from the Department of Composition in the Faculty of Music at Tokyo University of the Arts, he moved to Germany. Awards include first prize at the International Composer's Competition NEW NOTE in Croatia(19'), second prize at the Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy Conservatory Competition(17'), second prize and the Iwatani Prize in the composition category at the Japan Music Competition(17'), finalist for the 27th Akutagawa Award for Music Composition(17') and the Ataka Prize(16'). He is currently a doctoral researcher at the Anton Bruckner Private University.

▽The 33rd Competition of Yasushi Akutagawa Suntory Award for Music Composition

Date/Time : Saturday, August 26 2023 at 15:00

Venue : Suntory Hall Main Hall

Performers : Seitaro Ishikawa, Conductor

Reison Kuroda, Shakuhachi

Hidejiro Honjoh, Shamisen

New Japan Philharmonic

Open Screening : Miyuki Shiraishi, MC

Yasutaki Inamori, Kunitaka Kokaji and Yukiko Watanabe, Jury

Programme : Yu Kuwabara : *Falling Leaves Moon Steps* (2023)

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

The 33rd 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