

Translation:

*New York Event Journal YOMITIME*

< Vol.120. September 4, 2009. Page 8. >

**Sanshin/Jazz vocalist Satoko Kajita**

**Breaking New Ground by Singing to Her Own Sanshin Accompaniment  
Complete Improvisational Concert on 14th**

Ms. Satoko Kajita creates her own unique music which combines a stringed instrument from Okinawa “sanshin” with her jazz vocal.

This June she has just released her debut album “Life” by singing to her own sanshin accompaniment. It includes 12 songs, of which 7 are by self-accompaniment, 5 are by duo with the piano and vocal, and 2 are her original. “I created the album with the various genres like American folk songs, Okinawan folk songs, jazz, etc., focusing on the sanshin and vocal.”

From September to the end of this year, She will perform at a series of concerts “Music and Meditation” as a member of OPEN MUSIC ENSEMBLE in NYC.

“I wanted to play the guitar at first, but I gave it up because my hands were too small to play it,” she says, laughing. The sanshin, a small stringed instrument whose total length is about 80 centimeters, fitted her small figure very well.

Ms. Kajita was born in Nagoya, and started learning to play the piano when she was 4 years old. She majored in English literature at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies. She could not lose her passion to music, so she started learning jazz vocal at Ozone Music School after entering the master course at graduate school. After entering the doctoral course, she became an adjunct lecturer at the university and also started singing at jazz club, cafe, nursing home and a variety of festivals in Kobe area.

In those days, she got interested in Okinawan music and bought the sanshin in Kobe which she plays now. At the same time she won a scholarship from Berklee College of Music in Boston, and in 2003 moved to US to study there. She studied jazz vocal there, and also learned the sanshin by herself.

After receiving the Two Year Certificate from Berklee, she moved to New York in 2006. The purpose was to obtain the teacher certification of the Alexander Technique which she met at the voice production class at Berklee.

During that time, she improved her sanshin skills by taking the lesson when she went back to Japan. She obtained the official teacher certification of the Alexander Technique, and now here in New York, performs in the music scene with the whole things which she has learned so far.

She says, “The Alexander Technique is deeply related to music. I was so impressed when my voice was smoothly coming out from my mouth without any tension around my vocal

cords and my whole body by using the Technique at the voice production class at Berklee.”

At a series of concerts from 14<sup>th</sup> this month, Ms. Kajita will show her self-accompaniment with the sanshin. The concert of OPEN MUSIC ENSEMBLE consists of about 12 musicians with their various instruments, and the complete improvisational music all the time.

She says, “At the concert, without notation, we musicians create music, communicating through the sound each other. I’ll perform there playing the sanshin, with other musicians like saxophonists, cellist, and so on. It’s going to be an interesting concert with the effect of meditation.”

Open Music Ensemble:

Music & Meditation Program

Performance schedule:

September 14 (7-9pm), October 16 (7-9pm),

November 22 (2-6pm), December 17 (7-9pm)

Location: Tibet House

22W. 15<sup>th</sup> St. (bet. 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Aves.)

TEL 212-807-0563

Tickets: \$10 donation

[www.tibethouse.org](http://www.tibethouse.org)

[www.satokokajita.com](http://www.satokokajita.com)