



## Makoto Ozone

### Pianist and composer

“thrilling, virtuosic and unabashedly personal”

*The New York Times*

Makoto Ozone is a unique force in both jazz and classical music, blending sound worlds and a host of influences into his performances. Born in Kobe, Japan, he was self-taught in jazz, under his father’s guidance, first on the organ, then piano. He first came to public attention when he gave his solo recital at the Carnegie Hall in 1983, following his graduation from Berklee College of Music. Makoto then became the first Japanese artist to sign an exclusive contract with CBS and released his first album, *Ozone*, a year after his Carnegie debut.

His stellar career in jazz, which earned him a Grammy nomination in 2003, has brought him regularly to the forefront of the international jazz scene, recording and touring with musicians such as Gary Burton, Chick Corea, Paquito D’Rivera, Anna Maria Jopek, Branford Marsalis, and others. In 2004, he formed his own big band in Japan, “No Name Horses” which has regularly toured to Europe, North America and Asia since its creation. In more recent years, Makoto has expanded into classical repertoire, alongside his jazz engagements. Having first performed Gershwin *Rhapsody in Blue* in 1996, he now performs concertos by Mozart, Bernstein, Prokofiev, Shostakovich and Rachmaninov with major orchestras. Alongside his performing schedule, Makoto composes music, with over 300 pieces to his name, many for ‘No Name Horses’, as well as a symphony and piano concerto.

In 2014, Alan Gilbert and the New York Philharmonic invited Makoto to join their Asian tour. Following this, he performed with the orchestra at the Lincoln Center, New York, in 2014 and again in 2017, from which a recording ‘Beyond Borders’ with performances of Gershwin *Rhapsody in Blue* and Bernstein *The Age of Anxiety* was released. He has collaborated with a prestigious list of conductors including François-Xavier Roth, Marin Alsop, Alan Gilbert, Carlos Miguel Prieto, Lahav Shani, Thomas Zehetmair and Charles Dutoit and orchestras including San Francisco Symphony, Sao Paulo Symphony, NDR Radiophilharmonie, Stuttgarter Philharmoniker, as well as many orchestras in Japan, such as the NHK Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo Metropolitan Orchestra and Sapporo Symphony.



Recent highlights include performances with the NDR Elbphilharmonie, National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra and Los Angeles Philharmonic at Hollywood Bowl, as well as with his jazz trio at Dizzy's Club in New York.

Makoto is Artist in Residence with the Hangzhou Philharmonic, performing with them several times throughout the 23/24 season. Other upcoming performances include with the WDR Big Band, a tour of Europe, North America and Asia with bass player Avishai Cohen (including Blue Note New York, the Philharmonie de Paris and Auditorio Nacional de Música, Madrid) and performances with Scottish National Jazz Orchestra and Royal National Scottish Orchestra in collaboration with Tommy Smith.

Makoto Ozone has an extensive discography, releasing over 30 albums under his name and as a composer in solo, duo and trio settings, as well as performing as a collaborator on many others. His many awards include the Kinokuniya Theatre Award (2000), Kobe City Culture Award (2005), Fumio Nanri Prize (2007), Hyogo Prefecture Culture Award (2009), Art Encouragement of Education, Culture, Sports, Science Minister's Prize (2014). In 2018, Makoto received the Medal of Honour with Purple Ribbon by the Government of Japan. This is Japan's highest award to individuals who have made significant contributions to the nation's academic or cultural life.

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Intermusica represents Makoto Ozone worldwide excluding Japan.

Lucy Saunders, Senior Artist Manager  
+44 7766 914 279, [lsaunders@intermusica.com](mailto:lsaunders@intermusica.com)

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