

Miyama McQueen-Tokita

Koto, bass koto

Miyama is a koto and bass koto player and improviser. Constantly in search for her own style, she fuses ancient traditions with new ideas that are relevant to the music and people of the present day. She performs contemporary works, improvisation and original music, and in addition to performing solo, Miyama regularly plays with such artists as Naoki Kita (vln), Tetsu Saitoh (cb), Bruce Huebner (shakuhachi), Masao Tajima (cb) and Keiki Midorikawa (vc). As her free expressive style gained reputation with a wide audience, she began performing often with artists coming from all around the globe to perform in Japan. She has been invited to perform overseas as a soloist in festivals such as the Powell Street Festival in Canada, Tokyo Jazz Festival, Melbourne International Arts Festival and Mapping Melbourne. Ensembles she has performed as a guest soloist include the Vancouver Intercultural Orchestra, the Australian Art Orchestra and the Japan Philharmonic Orchestra. In recent years she has been putting energy into improvisation and collaborating with young composers from various countries, looking to create music for the koto in a style and soundscape that has never before been explored. In 2015 and 2017 she took part in IMPULS Academy & Festival held in Graz, Austria, as a bass koto performer, where she performed improvisation, and premiered many new works written for bass koto. Miyama has been taught by Satsuki Odamura and Kazue Sawai. She graduated with a Masters in music from the Tokyo University of the Arts, and is a 2018 grantee for the Asian Cultural Council New York Fellowship. Miyama is based in Tokyo, Japan.