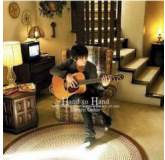


Kotaro Oshio - Hand To Hand [2011]

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 17 April 2012 16:35 - Last Updated Tuesday, 06 January 2015 12:33

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1. BRAND NEW WINGS 2. HEART BEAT! 3. JET 4. NAYUTA 5. GOOD TIMES 6. MOTTO TSUYOKU 7. YOKAN 8. LITTLE PRAYER 9. GO AHEAD 10. AME AGARI 11. TENOHIRA 12. KUSABUE 13. OVER DRIVE 14. FLY TO THE DREAM 15. MATA ASHITA.

Kotaro Oshio was born in Osaka, Japan on February 1st, 1968. While there are many solo guitar players who play nylon-string guitar, Oshio took the challenge of mastering a steel-string acoustic guitar in a highly unique style. It was Oshio's strong desire to bring out the maximum capacity of an acoustic guitar that impelled him to boldly employ various techniques such as open tuning and tapping. Oshio artfully infuses those inventive techniques into the emotional core of each of the songs on "STARTING POINT" - rather than overpowering, Oshio's astonishing technique enhances his lyrical interpretations. From the whimsical to the bittersweet, Oshio brings science and poetry into perfect harmony.

Listening to his music for the first time, one would think there are a number of different musicians performing together in a room - but in reality, it's just Oshio alone that does absolutely everything on one acoustic guitar. His music is full of emotions backed with state-of-the-art technique, often treated with percussive arrangement. Oshio not only performs self-penned original tunes, but he also covers great music of various fields, from movie themes to animation themes to nursery rhymes to school songs.

It was in December 1999 that Oshio recorded an album on his own as an indie effort. The album gradually caught people's ears in Osaka area, leading him to release the second indie album in March 2001. "Blue sky" from the second album was selected the theme music on a TV talk show, and his music was introduced to the general public on various TV/radio programs and magazines. A two-hour special program on Oshio was also aired on nationwide cable radio

networks around that time.

Oshio also made a stunning debut at the prestigious Montreux Jazz Festival in July 2002. Not only did he amaze the audience with his solo performance, but he was also invited to the jam session with BB King in the main hall, where everyone was talking about "that incredible Japanese guitarist"!

July 2002 saw the release of Oshio's first major-label album "STARTING POINT" which includes his original tunes, covers of movie themes and a track that he has composed for a movie for the first time. "STARTING POINT" portrays a musician's pure love for music and one extreme example of what acoustic guitar is capable of offering.

The talent of the guitarist was soon recognized by the national TV station NHK for whom Oshio wrote and recorded the original main theme "Kaze no Kanata" for the documentary series that NHK produced about the Antarctica in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the station's founding.

While constantly keeping himself busy with live dates all over Japan, the second album "Dramatic" was released in June 2003. Living up to everyone's expectation, "Dramatic" debuted on the national sales chart at #24, quite remarkable for an instrumental album. Various tracks from the album were selected the theme music on different TV/radio programs.

"Dramatic" further showcases Oshio's creativity as a songwriter, and also his rendition of the famous classical pieces "Canon" and "Bolero", the latter of which was later placed in the soundbed of the TV campaign for a revitalizing drink in Japan. His promotion activities included interviews with Tuck & Patty and Pat Metheny.

Oshio returned to Montreux Jazz Festival in July 2003 to fascinate more crowds. The Jazz Club located just outside the main Stravinski Hall was nearly 'dominated' by the solo guitarist who performed there for the last three nights of the festival. Oshio also opened the main stage on the last night for ZZ Top and one of the top Swiss rock bands Krokus. It was on one of the nights when Oshio was asked to perform a few songs each for Chrissie Hynde (The Pretenders) and Cassandra Wilson personally in the dressing room, receiving extremely high praise. The fact that the Festival has not invited an artist two years in a row except for very few selected

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jazz/blues giants also shows the level of the potential that people find in Oshio.

After another round of Japan tour and various collaborations with other musicians, Oshio's 3rd album "Be HAPPY" hits streets on June 23rd, 2004 in Japan. The album is again full of beautiful melodies and percussive rhythms, all generated on one guitar, and most of the tracks are familiar to people's ears through TV commercials. TV program themes and movie. For a wider range dynamics, he adopted baritone guitar on "Fight!", in addition to his usual selection of guitars.

Twice at Montreux Jazz Festival was just not enough to satisfy Oshio's desire as a live performer. In love with the beautiful site and people, he's returning to the festival once again in July 2004, for three years in a row. ---kotaro-oshio.com

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