

Motoko Honda (Japan/U.S.)

Pianist/Composer/Sound Artist

Genre: Improvisation/Jazz, Contemporary Classical, Experimental, Electro-Acoustic, Interdisciplinary Sound Art

Active: 1997-Present

Website: www.motokohonda.com

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/motokohonda/>

Booking: info@motokohonda.com



Lectures/Workshops/Speaking Engagements

Originally from a conservative family in Northern Japan, Motoko Honda emigrated to central Kansas (U.S.) in 1995, relocated to California in 1999 and was later awarded a green card as an Alien of Extraordinary Ability by proving to be one of the most cutting edge and respected composer-performers in the United States.

Motoko first began her career as a classical concert soloist and chamber pianist in 1997, and branched out as an improviser/composer and interdisciplinary sound artist after earning her MFA at CalArts where she studied composition, improvisation, electronic music and world music (African, Indian, Indonesian, Latin, East European). Motoko has presented a multitude of original works at major festivals and venues throughout the U.S. and abroad, becoming an expert on improvisation, extended techniques, electro-acoustic music and interdisciplinary project creation. She has been invited to conduct lecture-workshops at various universities and institutions such as University of California Santa Cruz, Rice University in Houston TX, University of Illinois, and Chukyo University in Japan.

Motoko also earned a film scoring certificate from UCLA in 2012. Her colorful and unorthodox musical journey offers unique insights and thrilling material which inform her lecture-performances, workshops and speaking engagements for the benefit of students and/or the general public. She's available to conduct workshops, lecture-performances, presentations, coaching and private sessions. Multi-day workshop can result in culminating students' performance. Please see a list of sample programs below.

Links

Lecture/Workshops/Speaking Engagements EPK: <https://www.motokohonda.com/lecture-workshop>

Motoko Honda's Music Overview: <https://youtu.be/LL8EOnU3qMA>

Concert Article: <https://www.motokohonda.com/press>

Sample Programs

Improvisation Workshop for Classically Trained Pianists:

This very interactive, hands on workshop is specifically intended for classically trained pianists. Classes can either include students with varying improvising experience or can be formed based on a specific experience level (beginner or intermediate). Using both traditional and graphic notation system along with extended piano techniques, students will be able to experiment with several styles of improvisation based on their interests (tonal, atonal, jazz and free improv) and discuss its challenges and practical solutions.

The goal of this workshop is to expose students to a wide range of improvisation techniques and show them how to apply them in a performance and/or practice context. Students will learn how to exploit their strengths and unique character and use improvisation to develop their own voice.

*Please have students bring sheet music of classical repertoire they like or are currently working on, as they may be used as a starting point for improvisation.

*Required equipment: Piano, Dry Erase Board or Chalkboard

Philosophy of the Prepared Piano and Piano Extended Techniques:

Interactive workshop for pianists, composers, and composer-pianists. Listen to demonstrations, try out various extended piano techniques and learn about their applications. Composers will learn how to incorporate the piano's expanded sonic possibilities into their compositions. Pianists will learn how to incorporate new techniques into their performance and how to interpret compositions involving extended piano techniques.

*Required equipment: Grand Piano

Improvisation Workshop for Classically Trained Musicians:

Classically trained students and professionals can join in a spontaneous music making workshop and learn how to play structured improvised music and interpret graphic scores and systems, such as the "Ankhrasmation" notation system by Wadada Leo Smith. Experienced improvisers are also welcome.

*Participant will bring their own instruments

*Required equipment: Dry Erase Board or Chalkboard, (Piano if available for pianists)

Composing for Improvisers from Multiple Background:

Workshop for composers. Participants will learn how to create structured music scores for improvisers using both traditional and graphic notation system including "Ankhrasmation" by Wadada Leo Smith. Composition students will create a short musical score that will be performed and/or recorded later by Motoko and/or a group of students.

*Please bring blank paper, staff paper, pencils & erasers. Students may bring their own instruments to play if they wish to try playing their own composition at end of the class.

*Required equipment : Piano, Dry Erase Board or Chalkboard

Creating and Composing for Interdisciplinary Project: Interactive Workshop/Open discussion/Q&A for composers, performers, dancers, visual artists and anyone with an interest in interdisciplinary project. Topics include working with creators from different disciplines, how to facilitate cohesive teamwork, working with technology and its creative process from start to finish. How to compose music and/or create structures for time based interdisciplinary project. If time allows, participants may learn by creating a small project during the workshop.

*This class can also focus on a specific discipline and a topic based on request.

*Required equipment : Piano, Dry Erase Board or Chalkboard

"Graphic Scores" - Creative Process and Possibilities:

Keynote Presentation/Lecture/Q& A for Composers and Composer-Performers. This presentation will provide a detailed look at the creative process used by Motoko to write graphic scores by looking at archived photographs portraying the various steps from inspiration to final score. This presentation can include the musical demonstration if provided with a piano or keyboard.

*Required equipment :Video Projector and related cables for Mac computer, Piano (optional).

"The Emergent Piano" - Performance/Lecture/Q&A:

This presentation highlights some of the compositions and improvisations from Motoko's solo acoustic piano concert program "The Emergent Piano". Motoko will perform some of the compositions and improvisations, talk about her creative process and answer any questions the audience may have.

*Required equipment : Grand Piano

Forging Your Own Path and Voice as an Artist: Speaking Engagement/Open Discussion/Q&A

When we embark on the endeavor to become an artist, we often have dreams driven by passion but are often unprepared to face the reality of life challenges and their effect on our ability to create art. Although we all come from different backgrounds and we all have individual strengths and weaknesses, we are equally affected by unpredictable events: sometimes we get lucky and sometimes we encounter unfortunate situations. How do we deal with ourselves and others in this intensely competitive art world often disrupted by unpredictable life events? How do we own our own mistakes and find our strength and artistic identity? Motoko shares her unorthodox musical journey and explains how she has fought to become a professional musician against all odds, navigated the delicate balance between life and music, and ultimately found joy in perpetual growth.

Working as a Female Artist in the Music Industry: Speaking Engagement/Open Discussion/Q&A

Motoko grew up and studied classical music while living in a patriarchal society in Japan. After emigrating to the US, she learned to navigate in a completely new but still male dominated environment as an independent freelance artist in the improvising and experimental music world. This candid discussion will focus on topics around the specific challenges and reality of working as a female artist in the music industry and Motoko will guide and motivate students to find ways to stay positive and thrive.