

# Motoko Honda *-pianist, composer, creative director*

## *a portfolio*



### Table of Contents

-Artist Statement

-Biography

-Photos and information of Performance/Lecture Highlights

-List of Links for sound and video samples

“ I see myself as a translator of the world surround us, creating bridges between cultural and individual differences, and hopefully giving all of us the hope to live and to be courageous searching and accepting who we truly are.”



### ARTIST STATEMENT

I believe the music is a life itself, often unpredictable and surprising, and I try to let it breath and discover its own course. For me, the sound, often people call it “music” is an art which transcend us as human beings, bringing universal and ageless connection and understanding through the physical and emotional response through vibration of the air and its communal experiences. The sound reveals who we truly are, and creating music is a most humble experience of sharing of who I am, with all the flaws, pains and wonders. It is a process of living our lives itself, and I hope to connect with people beyond our cultural, linguistic and artistic boundaries through the music.

I believe that my art began at my childhood, making up songs at every moments about anything I saw and experienced. As I started to begin my piano study, that early idea seemed to fuse with my instrument, then I was playing and improvising all my emotions, and telling stories around me through piano music. However it took a long troubling road to understand the ways of music, as learning instrument is a study of control at first, but experiencing and experimentation of both life and music was more essential to discover about who I am and that is ultimately what my music is about.

Throughout my life, music gave me the ways to break through the walls of my surroundings and eyes to envision the possibility often found impossible. I embrace my instruments as well as to challenge its limitations, thus using the non traditional approach to play the instrument is also essential but not merely for the experimentation purposes. My music is not about the greatness nor creating surprises but rather simply reflecting the stories of what I am experiencing each moments, and our lives which often is unpredictable. I see myself as a translator of the world surround us, creating bridges between cultural and individual differences, and hopefully giving all of us the hope to live and to be courageous searching and accepting who we truly are.

## BIOGRAPHY

**Motoko Honda is a concert pianist, composer, and sound artist** who has created a distinctive sound through her holistic approach to music, and her exceptional sensitivity in relating to other art forms and technologies. Employing a *"virtuoso technique paired with her intensely imaginative mind"* (Susan Dirende, L.A. Splash Magazine), and with stylistic influences ranging from jazz to Indonesian music to contemporary prepared piano with electronics, **Motoko's compositions and structured improvisations are intended to affect the skin, organs and minds of the listener rather than simple recitations of rhythmic and harmonic themes.** Called both a *"keyboard alchemist"* (Chris Barton, L.A. Times), and the *"embodiment of a muse"* (Greg Burk, Metaljazz), **Motoko's performances transport audiences on sonic adventures that transcend the boundaries and conventions of contemporary music.**



Since 1997, Motoko has been performing at various national and international festivals and concerts such as Angel City Jazz Festival, 19th San Quirico Estate Festival, and Spark International Electronic Music Festival ranging from classical to experimental music, and through her Sound Escape Project, founded in 2003, has been presenting numerous collaborations with artists and improvisers such as Wadada Leo Smith, Jeff Gauthier, Vinny Golia, Alex Cline, Nels Cline, Joe Berardi, Mike Watt, Emily Hay, Steuart Liebig, Elliott Sharp, Pheeroan Aklaflaff, Maggie Parkins, Kris Tiner, Theresa Wong, William Winant, Larry Ochs, dancer OGURI, Roxanne Steinberg, Maureen Whiting, visual artist Carole Kim and projection artist

Jesse Gilbert. A notable interdisciplinary collaboration is the on going research project with Jesse Gibling, using his sound-visual program Spectral GL, integrating music and visual information into one cohesive experience in concerts and installation settings.

At home in classical, improvised, or electronic music, Motoko is a musical force of nature, bringing a unique creative sound to her wide-ranging collaborations. Motoko has been invited to give lecture/performances regarding contemporary compositions, method for structured improvisation in collaborative settings, and extended piano techniques from national and international universities and institutions, and her collaborative projects have taken her to major venues such as the Ford Amphitheater, Barnsdall Gallery Theater, REDCAT, Duomo di Siena, as well as museums, jazz clubs and underground venues.

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



Portfolio Page 3 of 9

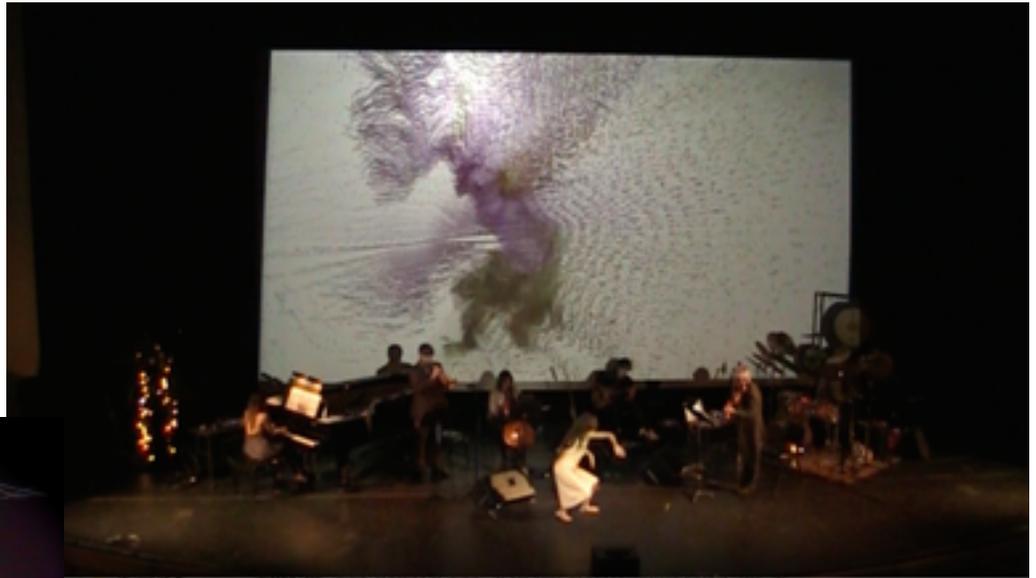


[www.motokohonda.com](http://www.motokohonda.com)

[motokohonda@gmail.com](mailto:motokohonda@gmail.com) 323-605-3677

## Performance and Projects Highlights

***“Dreams of a Flower”* by Motoko Honda’s Sound Escape Project;** an original multi-media composition for electro-acoustic piano, electro-acoustic violin, cello, trumpet, electric bass, and drums and gongs, Butoh dance, live visual projection using *Spectral GL* system, and with live video. Commissioned by JACCC and performed at L.A. Bloom Festival, Aratani/Japan Theater, Los Angeles, CA. 2011



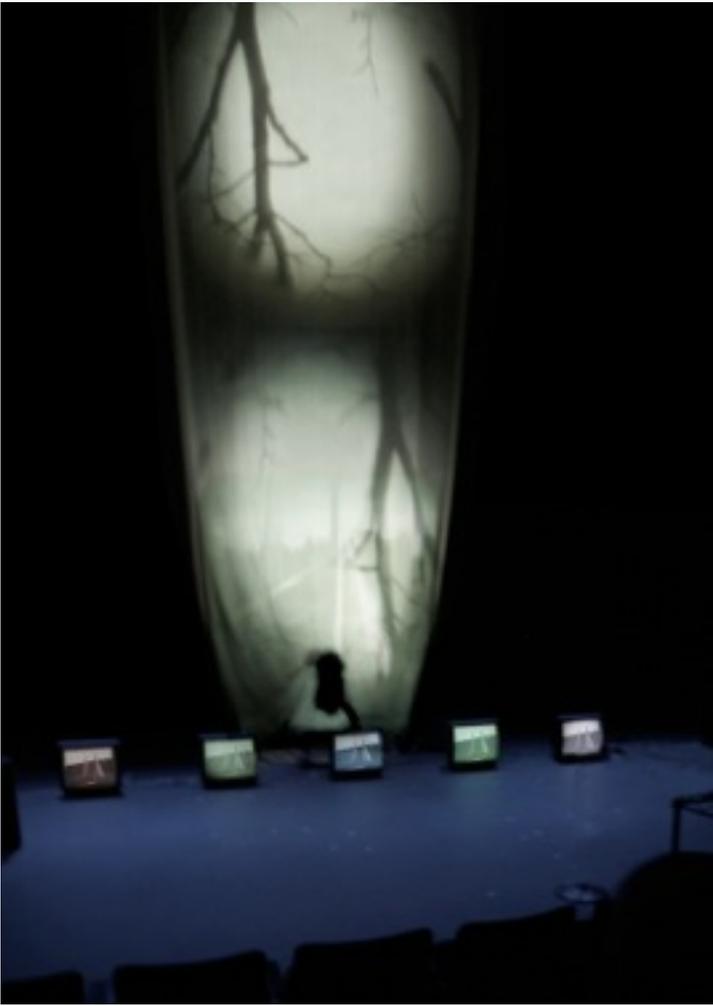
***“Dreams of a Flower”*** is 7 suites composition in 45min. total length, featuring various style of music, from chamber ensemble, jazz, experimental, acoustic and electro-acoustic. The flower in the theme embodies the resilience of our humanity and creativity. It comes from our hearts, overcoming difficulties to blossom and achieve something greater by virtue of a collective efforts.

VIDEO SAMPLE: <https://vimeo.com/90562796>



***“for[NEVER]now”*: The Perpetual Visitors, Multi-media project** produced with visual/projection artist Carole Kim and cellist Theresa Wong; is a story about how our lives can intersect and/or interact with imaginative alternate realities. It encourages us to use our senses of hearing, seeing and feeling to transcend our place in space-time, and let us travel freely to alternate realities that might or might not be as real. Piano and cello with electronics, double weaved screens with dual projection, with live improvised music and visual projection. Motoko Honda as a project director, composer, performer. Duende, Oakland, CA. 2013

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



**“Synaesthesia”** by M.Rare Quartet M. Rare Quartet in “See Hear Now !” series at REDCAT/MOCA/Disney Hall. Los Angeles, CA. 2005 04/16

M-Rare Tri os an interdisciplinary trio that integrates audio-visual improvisation with spatial and architectural form. Digital technologies are balanced by the human hand in a reciprocating dialogue between sound and image.

Co-presented with MOCA, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, See Hear Now! was a performance series exploring the resonance between contemporary music and visual art and showcasing international artists and musicians on the vanguard of time-based media.

M.Rare Quartet:

Motoko Honda: piano/improvisation/composition

Jesse Gilbert: sound design/engineering

Carole Kim and Astra Price /Visual Projection



**“13 Images of Los Angeles”** by **Motoko Honda’s Sound Escape Project.** Commissioned and premiered at Angel City Jazz Festival at Bardsall Art Gallery Theatre, Hollywood, CA. in 2008. Also performed in Jazz Bakery in 2009.

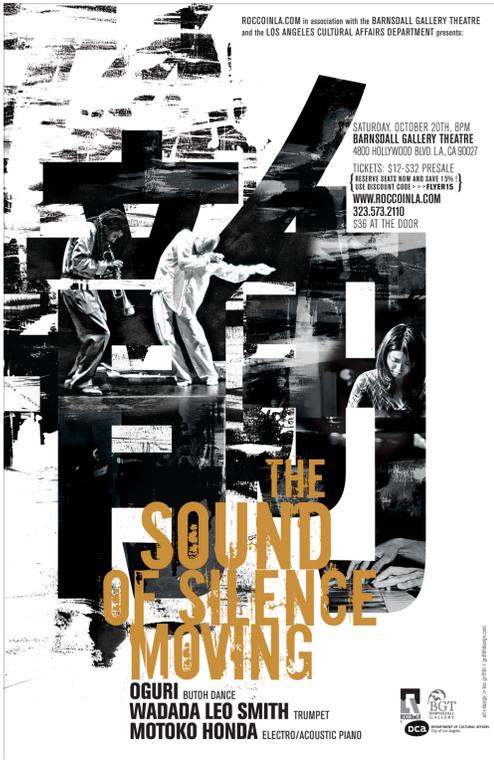
**“13 Images of Los Angeles”** is 13 suites composition/improvisation utilizing traditional and nontraditional methods, drawing out the images of Los Angeles’ landscape, city dynamics and diversity.



Photos: Motoko Honda conducting and performing with Vinny Golia (multi-woodwind), Jeff Gauthier (violin-electronics), Jessica Catron (cello-electronics), Joe Berardi (drums), Stuart Liebig (bass), and Kris Tiner (trumpet).

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

[motokohonda@gmail.com](mailto:motokohonda@gmail.com) 323-605-3677



**“Sound of Silence Moving”**  
 Collaborative performance at Barnsdall Gallery Theater in Los Angeles, CA. 2007, With Pulitzer prize nominee Wadada Leo Smith (trumpet) and

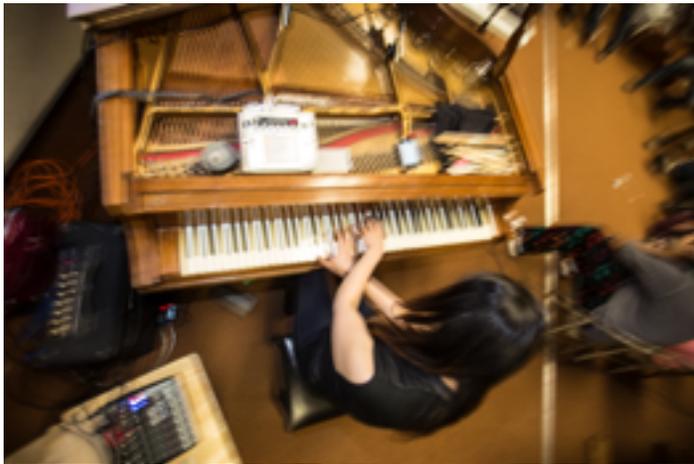
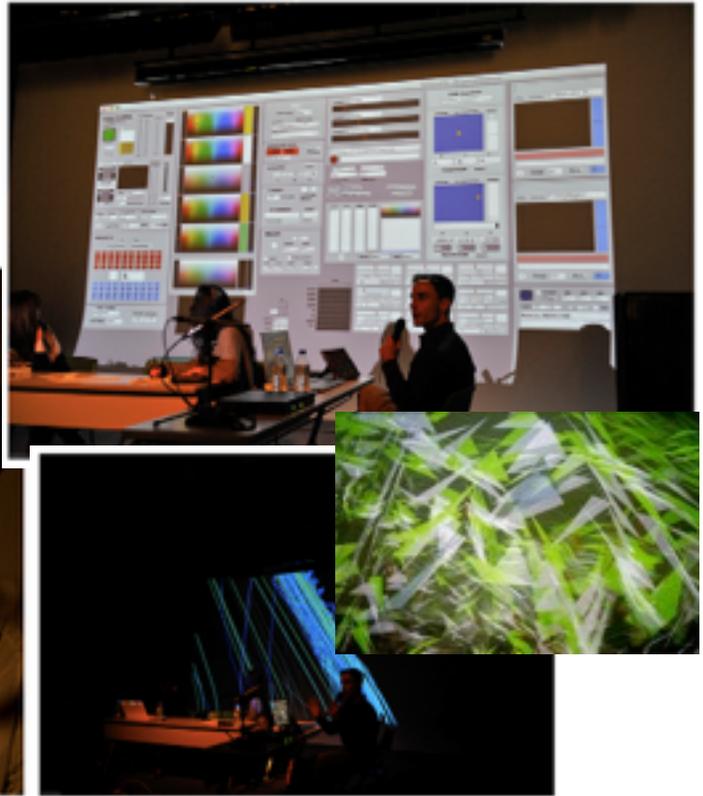


**POLARITY TASKMASTERS** : Motoko Honda (Piano/Electronics, Emily Hay (Flute/Vocal) and Brad Dut (Percussions) in Wayward Music Series.  
 Chapel Performance Space: 4649 Sunnyside Ave. N, Seattle, 2012.

**Lectures/Performance at Chukyo University, Osaka, Japan 2011**

Motoko Honda and Jesse Gilbert discuss about their collaborative works and the relationship with art and technology at Chukyo University and Tokyo Zokei University.

Motoko Honda, pianist/composer/collaborator with Jesse Gilbert, visual artist/programmer.



**Idyllwild Arts Academy Master Class and Lecture/ Performances**

Motoko Honda presenting improvisational language and collaborative process in integrated media and interdisciplinary collaboration. With Jesse Gilbert.

Visiting Artist Master Class @ Jazz Program and InterArts Program



**Verde Valley School Master Class**  
Brady Hall, 3511 Verde Valley School Rd.  
Sedona, Arizona  
Motoko Honda: Lecture/Workshop on “Basics  
of Improvisation”  
2011 02/04



Photo: Motoko Honda conducting her  
composition and recording with union musicians  
in Los Angeles, CA. 2012



Photo: Motoko  
Honda  
collaborating with  
Croatian Artist,  
Peter Curic.  
Croatia

Photo:  
Motoko  
Honda at  
Piano  
Forte,  
Portland,  
CA.



Photo: Motoko Honda at Chapel of the Chimes,  
Oakland, CA. 2012

## **LIST OF LINKS for Sound and Video Samples**

General Sound Samples: Please go to [www.motokohonda.com](http://www.motokohonda.com) and click Sound/Video Tab.

Video excerpt of Dreams of a Flower Live: <https://vimeo.com/90562796>

Full video from Ear Meal Live, Duo with Joe Berardi: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GX7MFmio2BU>

Video, Motoko Honda solo: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUg6kBI-uf8>

Video excerpt with Projection Artist Jesse Gilbert: <https://vimeo.com/28250502>

Video excerpt Duo with Joe Berardi Live : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YjGtYAfqOFU>

Video excerpt Trio with Jeff Gauthier and Michael Dessson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5iV6ylasuM>

Video excerpt, collaboration with Dancer/Choreographer Maureen Whiting: <https://vimeo.com/88721667>