

Kazutoki Umezu

KIKI BAND

Kazutoki Umezu – alto & soprano sax, bass clarinet

Natsuki Kido - electric guitar

Takeharu Hayakawa – electric bass

Joe Trump – drums



Kazutoki Umezu is generally considered a jazz musician, but the scope of his playing goes far beyond this characterization, and in many directions. He has played sax and clarinet, often inventively improvising, in a wide range of situations and in more than 30 different countries. Umezu was born and raised in the city of Sendai, and began studying music from an early age. While still attending Kunitachi Music College, he made his first recording with his band Seikatsu Kojou Iinaki. In 1974 he relocated to New York and began playing with musicians like Lester Bowie, Oliver Lake, Sunny Murray, Ted Daniels and Rashied Ali. When he returned to Japan in 1976 he reformed Seikatsu Kojou Iinakai, and recorded two albums. In 1980 he joined the well known rock band RC Succession.

In 1981 he began recording under the name **Doctor Umezu**, and recorded eight albums under this moniker, the last of which in 1989. During the 80s **Umezu** performed in jazz festivals, concert halls and clubs all over the world, often with internationally known figures such as John Zorn and Tom Cora. He also maintained membership in other groups, including Third Person, a group which also includes Tom Cora and Samm Bennett, who were also part of his New York based groups Eclectism and First Deserter, groups which also included amongst their ranks Marc Ribot, Dougie Browne, Wayne Horvitz and Curtis Fowlkes.

In the 1990s **Umezu** became interested in Klezmer music. To play this type of music he founded the eighteen member group called Betsuni Nanmo Klezmer. He has also recorded four albums of Klezmer music.

Umezu also collaborated and recorded with many other musicians, including B.B. King, Ian Dury, Barre Phillips, Peter Brötzman, Don Byron, Bernard Purdie, as well as with legendary Japanese jazz pianist Yosuke Yamashita, guitarist Otomo Yoshide, taiko drummer Leonard Eto, and musicians from Okinawa, Korea, Africa and the Middle East.

Umezu's most current ensemble is the **KIKI BAND**. This power group features Japan's most important progressive rock guitarist Natsuki Kido, bassist Takeharu Hayakawa, known from the Dr. Umezu Band, from Shibusha Shirazu, and from Satoko Fujii's ensembles, as well as Joe Trump, Elliott Sharp's drummer with Carbon and Terraplane. The high-energy **KIKI BAND** mixes elements of Middle Eastern, progressive rock and jazz music full of unusual beats, wild breaks and stunning ethnic melodies.

KIKI BAND's latest release is the live album "Alchemic Life" (2009) and is out on Nottwo Records.



Steffen Wilde
Huttenstraße 76
D-06110 Halle / Germany
www.subtone-concerts.de

fon +49-(0)345-80 63 707
fax +49-(0)345-80 63 708
mobile fon +49-(0)172-356 27 88
email info@subtone-concerts.de