



SFCM

SAN FRANCISCO CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

Faculty Artist Series

Akira Tana, *percussion*

Sunday, September 18, 2022, 2:00 PM

Barbro Osher Recital Hall

Selections will be announced from the stage.

Personnel

Art Hirahara, piano

Ken Noriyuki, bass

Masaru Koga, reeds & percussion

Akira Tana, percussion

*Cameras, recording equipment, food and drink are not permitted in Conservatory performance halls.
Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic equipment before the performance begins.*

Artist Profiles

Art Hirahara is a New York-based jazz keyboardist, composer, and producer. From the traditional to the avant-garde, Art has found a sound of his own that cuts across genres and boundaries. He has recorded six albums as a leader on jazz label, Posi-Tone Records, and is featured on the recordings of dozens of other artists. He has toured as a performer in Europe, Asia, South America, the Middle East and extensively around North America. Art has had the privilege to perform with Don Braden, Freddy Cole, Stacey Kent, royal hartigan, and Akira Tana, among many others.

Bassist **Noriyuki Ken Okada** was born in New York and raised in Brazil before moving to Japan. Reflecting the background that he grew up in multiple different cultures, Ken enjoys playing in various styles, from bebop to contemporary Brazilian pop to electric jazz fusion. After winning the largest national college big band jazz competition in Japan, he started playing professionally in Tokyo. After moving to the Bay Area in 2002, he has been playing with artists such as John Worley, Destiny Muhammad, Kristen Strom, Leon Joyce, Jr. and Akira Tana. He has appeared in jazz clubs such as Yoshi's, Dizzy's, Kuumbwa Jazz Center and SFJAZZ Center, and in jazz festivals such as Monterey Jazz Festival, Stanford Jazz Festival, San Jose Jazz Summer Fest and SFJAZZ.

New York-based wind-instrumentalist, composer, and educator **Masaru Koga**, or Mas, as many would call him, has performed, recorded and traveled with creative arts and jazz luminaries such as Fred Ho, Anthony Brown, Brenda Wong Aoki, Mark Izu, Akira Tana, Wayne Wallace, Kenny Endo, and Kat Parra, as well as his mentors Hafez Modirzadeh and Royal Hartigan. Through his international upbringing and his diverse musical journey, he has developed a unique and creative approach to music. His first recorded album as a leader entitled "Flower Fire" featuring his genre-bending original compositions was released in 2018 and is available on various online music platforms worldwide. www.maskoga.com

Artist Profiles

A self-taught drummer, **Akira Tana** played semi-professionally while still at college. He attended Harvard University where he gained a degree in East Asian Studies/Sociology. He then studied at the New England Conservatory of Music, also taking private lessons from Vic Firth and other percussionists with the Boston Symphony and Boston Pops Orchestras and from jazz drummer Alan Dawson. During his studies he had the opportunity of working with Helen Humes, Milt Jackson, Sonny Rollins, Jaki Byard, George Russell, Sonny Stitt and other leading jazz musicians. He also played with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and several of the classical music ensembles at the New England Conservatory and at the Berkshire Music Festival at Tanglewood.

In the early 80s he continued to accompany major artists such as Al Cohn, Art Farmer, Benny Golson, Jim Hall, Jimmy Rowles, Zoot Sims and Cedar Walton. He also performed with artists outside the jazz world, including Charles Aznavour, Lena Horne, and Van Dyke Parks. Tana recorded extensively during these years and in addition to albums with some of the foregoing also appeared with Ran Blake, Chris Connor, Carl Fontana, Jimmy Heath, Tete Montoliu, Spike Robinson, Warne Marsh and many others. In the early 90s Tana worked with James Moody, Dizzy Gillespie, Frank Wess, Ray Bryant, J.J. Johnson, and the Manhattan Transfer, among others. With the bassist, Rufus Reid he formed the band TanaReid and, with Reid and Kei Akagi, the Asian American Jazz Trio.

A technically accomplished drummer, Tana's wide range is hinted at by the musicians with whom he has worked. Comfortably at home accompanying singers and instrumental ballads, Tana is equally in his element playing hard bop. In the bands he co-lead with Reid he generated an excitingly propulsive rhythmic drive.

In addition to playing, Tana has also produced and co-produced several albums including those by TanaReid, the Asian American Jazz trio and Project G-7: A Tribute to Wes Montgomery featuring Kenny Burrell. Tana also has nine recordings as a leader, "Secret Agent Men" and "Moon Over the World," and "Kiss Kiss Bang Bang," on Sons of Sound recordings. Another is "JAZZaNOVA" that features Branford Marsalis and Arturo Sandoval with vocalists, Cláudia Villella, Sandy Cressman, Claudio Amaral, Jackie Ryan, and Carla Helmbrecht. The most recent projects are four recordings by his group, "Otonowa." These recordings feature jazz interpretations of Japanese folk and pop melodies that date back decades and even centuries. This group has completed seven tours of the earthquake/tsunami stricken areas of northern Japan since March 2013. Akira plays Yamaha Drums, Vic Firth Sticks and Sabian Cymbals exclusively.