

MEDIA RELEASE

Oren Ambarchi introduces

Onkyo-ha

(Japanese minimalist electro-acoustic improvisation)

@ “Japan in Stereo”

The Japan Foundation, Sydney welcomes Melbourne-based musician **Oren Ambarchi** on **Friday, March 1** as the second guest in the [Japan in Stereo](#) music series.

In conversation with series presenter **Zacha Rosen**, Ambarchi shares his experiences with Japan's **avant-garde Onkyo-ha scene**, which thrived in the early 2000s and influenced experimental musicians in the US and Europe.

Literally translatable as “**Resonance School**”, the Japanese term “Onkyo-ha” was coined by music journalists to describe a genre of largely improvised **non-narrative music** that exists at the **friction point between music and sound**. While the [musicians never embraced the term “Onkyo-ha”](#) themselves, it gained traction among critics and fans in Japan in the absence of an alternative expression for the genre. The original Onkyo-ha scene was **based in Tokyo**, however many of its better-known musicians (including [Yoshihide Otomo](#), [Toshimaru Nakamura](#) and [Sachiko M](#)) also **perform regularly in Europe**.

Like Japan's Onkyo-ha musicians, **Oren Ambarchi** is also an avid explorer of the possibilities of sound and resonance, and has **collaborated extensively with Onkyo-ha musicians**. He has **performed in Japan over 20 times** in the past two decades, and lived in Tokyo in 2002, right near the Offsite live space (a former Onkyo-ha hub).

Says Ambarchi, “I play in Japan every year and have had some great experiences working with these musicians. This will be a little about my work, a little about their work when Onkyo-ha was in its prime, and a little about **how our respective artistic practices are continuing to evolve**.”





Coming up in **Japan in Stereo**:

Feb 22

Japanese Rock:

Western rhythm and Japanese sound



Prof. Carolyn Stevens, Monash University

Mar 1

Onkyo-ha:

Minimalist electro-acoustic improvisation



Oren Ambarchi, Musician

Mar 8

Enka:

Postwar pop—Karaoke favourites of the golden generation



Dr. Shelley Brunt, Lecturer, RMIT University

Mar 15

Koto:

Traditional Japanese harp



Satsuki Odamura, Musician (plus guests)

Mar 22

Gagaku:

Imperial court music



Lewis Cornwell, Sydney Conservatorium of Music

Dates: Fridays, Feb 22 – Mar 22, 2013

Time: 6.30pm (Doors open 6.00pm) – 8pm

Venue: **Japan Foundation Gallery**

The Japan Foundation, Sydney
L1 Chifley Plaza, 2 Chifley Square,
Sydney

Admission: Free. Bookings Essential. (Book online at www.jpff.org.au)

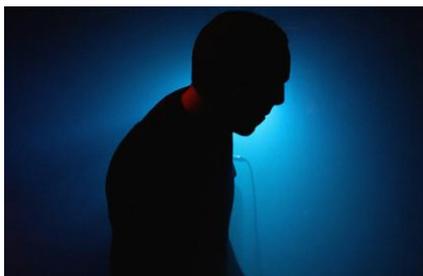
Enquiries: reception@jpff.org.au / 02 8239 0055

Website: www.jpff.org.au

Audience members can also look forward to **free tastings of umeshu (Japanese sweet fruit liqueur)** at the venue, courtesy of [Choya](http://Choya.com).



ABOUT OREN AMBARCHI:



[Oren Ambarchi](#) is a **Melbourne-based composer and multi-instrumentalist** with longstanding interests in transcending conventional instrumental approaches. He **has worked with internationally renowned artists** such as John Zorn, Jim O'Rourke and Keith Rowe, and has performed at **major international events** such as the UK's ATP festival, and Iceland's Tectonics festival with the Icelandic Symphony

Orchestra. His recent solo release *Sagittarian Domain* was **[voted #1 in Spin magazine's Best Avant albums of 2012](#)**. Oren **has performed in Japan over 20 times** since 1993, collaborating and recording with leading Onkyo-ha artists such as Otomo Yoshihide, Sachiko M, Toshimaru Nakamura, Atsuhiro Ito and Keiji Haino.

ABOUT JAPAN IN STEREO:



[Japan in Stereo](#) is a music listening series designed for people who are interested in knowing more about Japanese music but aren't quite sure where to start. Presented by Sydney arts writer and radio producer [Zacha Rosen](#), the series invites **five passionate music aficionados** to introduce their favourite genres of Japanese music through conversation, music, video and live performance. *Japan in Stereo* showcases a wide variety of music, from traditional genres such as **Imperial court music** and the music of the **koto (Japanese harp)**, to contemporary genres such as **minimalist improvisation**, Japanese **classic rock** and sentimental **post-war pop**.

ABOUT THE JAPAN FOUNDATION:

The Japan Foundation aims to promote cultural and intellectual exchange between Japan and other nations through a diverse range of programs and events. The Japan Foundation, Sydney runs a gallery space, library and Japanese language courses for all levels catering from beginner to advanced. The Japan Foundation was established in 1972 with a global network of 23 offices in 21 countries. The Australian office was founded in 1977.

For more information please see www.jpj.org.au or contact:

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