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## Akio Suzuki



b. 1941 in Pyongyang, North Korea

Akio Suzuki is a Japanese artist born in North Korea. At the age of four he moved to Japan, to a town called Aichi. He became well known as a pioneer of sound art, but the breadth of his activities and the form of his works far exceeds the normal boundaries of sound art. It is perhaps more as a “quester after sound and space” that he has received the most attention from artists in many fields. Suzuki’s journey as an artist began in 1963 with a performance at Nagoya station, in which he threw a bucket full of junk down a staircase. The inspiration behind this performance - the idea that if one were to hurl an object down a well-balanced stairway, a pleasant rhythm might be the result - took the desire to “listen” as its subject. That desire to hear, to listen has remained the one constant in Suzuki’s stance as an artist.

During the sixties, Suzuki’s sense of playfulness led him to undertake a series of Self-Study Events, where he explored the processes of “throwing” and “following”, taking the natural world as his collaborator. The experiences he gained in these events led him in the seventies to invent an echo instrument he named Analapos. The instrument’s structure resembles that of two mirrors facing each other, reflecting into infinity. As an extension of the principles underlying Analapos, Suzuki constructed the Space in the Sun in 1988. This space consists of two huge parallel walls, in between which the artist can sit all day and purify his hearing by listening to the reflected sounds of nature. This space leads the artist to discover a new method of listening. Suzuki himself comments, “Sound, which had been conceptually imprisoned in various spaces, is freed to circle the world.”

From the late seventies and through the eighties, Suzuki also developed a form of performance he refers to as Conceptual Soundwork. Applying a number of self-imposed, simple and austere rules, he uses objects close at hand in a mode of “intellectual play”. While these events do on the one hand express a critique of meaningless improvised performance, at the same time Suzuki is constantly aware of the audience’s process of listening and he attempts to create contemporaneous connections with the site of performance. It was



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around this time that Suzuki began to travel frequently to Europe, and his performances at leading music festivals, Festival d'Automne (Paris, 1978) and Documenta 8 (Kassel, 1987) were rapturously received.

As sound art enjoyed a period of prosperity in the nineties, Suzuki was given the chance to create many installations, particularly in Europe. Worthy of special note were his soundless installations, such as Otodate (since 1996) in Berlin, Paris, Strasbourg and Wakayama, Hana (since 1997) in Saarbrücken and Trino. These soundless pieces were not designed to critique the old perceptual theories of music, rather they questioned the very location of music.

To run simultaneously with these experiments, Suzuki has started the Mogari series since 2002. This series centres around unbelievably powerful performances on iwabue - ancient and naturally-sculpted stone flutes which have been handed down in Suzuki's family. Using these ancient instruments Suzuki sculpts time and place, and through their music he searches for his own end. Suzuki's performances and installations have been presented by numerous top class festivals and museums in several continents since the seventies such as The National Museum of Modern Art (Kyoto, 2007), Resonant Space (various locations in Scotland, 2006), Musée Zadkin (Paris, 2004), British Museum (London, 2002), Donaueschingen Festival (Donaueschingen, 1998), Japan House (New York, 1983), and many others. He has awarded many grants and residencies including DAAD (Berlin, 1994) and Rockefeller (Asian Cultural Council) Grant (New York, 1981).

### **Museum and Gallery Exhibitions**

- 2012 *stone*, Audio Visual Arts, New York, USA  
*Otodate*, Tajimi, Japan  
3331 ARTS CYD, Tokyo, Japan
- 2011 *Otodate*, Kashiwa, Japan
- 2010 *Akio Suzuki / Yagi Ryota exhibition*, Yokohama City Art Gallery, Yokohama, Japan  
Around Sound Art Festival and Retreat, Hong Kong
- 2009 Nagoya City Art Museum, Nagoya, Japan  
Kyoto Art Center, Kyoto, Japan
- 2008 Wasserturmquartier, Berlin, Germany  
20 Jahre Romanischer Sommer Köln, Cologne, Germany  
*Ki-date*, Ichinomiya City Memorial Art Museum of Setsuko Migishi, Ichinomiya, Japan
- 2007 Sentier des Lauzes, Ardeche, France  
*Noiseless Akio Suzuki + Rolf Julius*, The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Japan  
Gelbe Musik, Berlin, Germany
- 2006 *Oto-Date in Deutzer Bridge*, Scorecologne Festival, Cologne, Germany  
E/static gallery, Turin, Italy  
Haus der Berliner Festspiele, Berlin, Germany  
Centre d'Art Passerelle, Brest, France  
Arlige Kunst Galleria Museo, Bolzano, Italy  
Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Aichi, Japan



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- 2005 *Oto-Date in Wakayama*, The Museum of Modern Art, Wakayama, Japan  
*Oto-Date, Sound Out*, Cork, Ireland  
Gallerie Stella A., Berlin, Germany  
*Playing John Cage Exhibition*, Arnolfini, Bristol, UK.
- 2004 *Résonances*, Musée Zadkin, Paris, France  
*Izanai*, Strasbourg, France  
Roskilde Museum, Roskilde, Denmark
- 2003 Soundsphere 2003, British Museum, London, UK  
*ANALAPOSpHERE 2003*, Osaka Arts-Aporia, Osaka, Japan  
Festival Archipel, Geneva, Switzerland  
Yokohama Port Side Gallery, Yokohama, Japan
- 2002 *Otodate, The Landscape of Tamsuei, the City Encounters the River*, Chu-wei, Taiwan  
Klanggalerie, SFB, Berlin, Germany  
Art Space Niji, Kyoto, Japan
- 2001 *Visual Sound*, Mattress Factory, Pittsburg, USA
- 2000 *Gelbe Musik*, Berlin, Germany  
Singuhr, Parochialkirche, Berlin, Germany
- 1999 – 2000 *Tubridge*, DAAD Galerie, Berlin, Germany
- 1999 Soundculture 99, Auckland, New Zealand  
Klang Kunst Festival, Wiesbaden, Germany
- 1998 *Otodate-room*, The 2nd Biennial of Contemporary Art, Enghien-les-Bains, France  
*Donaueschingen Festival*, Donaueschingen, Austria
- 1997 *Otodate III*, Enghien-les-Bains, France  
*Otodate II on the River Rhein*, Strasbourg and Kehl, France and Germany  
Stadtgalerie Saarbrücken, Germany
- 1996 Sonambiente Festival For Eyes and Ears, Berlin, Germany
- 1995 The 7th International Contemporary Music Forum of Kyoto, Japan
- 1994 Museet for Samtidskunst, Roskilde, Denmark  
Kunstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany
- 1993 Xebec, Kobe, Japan
- 1988 *Space in the Sun (Hinatabokko no kukan)*, Amino, Kyoto, Japan
- 1978 Festival d' Automne a Paris, France,
- 1976 Minami Gallery, Tokyo, Japan

### **Selected Performances**

- 2013 Around sound art festival, Hong Kong  
*Soul Cleansing* Opening, Sin Sin Fine Art Ltd., Hong Kong
- 2012 Send + Receive Festival, Winnipeg, Canada  
The Music Gallery, Toronto, Canada  
Abrons Arts Center, New York, USA  
Nameless Sound, Houston, USA  
Vancouver New Music, Vancouver, Canada  
CalArts, Los Angeles, USA



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- PICA's, Portland, USA  
Oki Shiosai Arts Festival, Shimane, Japan  
*Studies in Sonority and Space*, Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media, Yamaguchi, Japan  
*ANALAPOs performance*, ZKM\_Media Museum, Karlsruhe, Germany  
*Dedicated - Music for Friends*, MaerzMusik, Berlin, Germany  
With Hiromi Miyakita, Kohei Suzuki, Kyoto City Museum, Kyoto, Japan
- 2011 Guggenheim House , Kobe, Japan  
Fenn O'Berg (Fennesz, Jim O'Rourke, Peter Rehberg) featuring Akio Suzuki, Club Metro, Kyoto, Japan  
Art at Tokyo Tech, Tokyo, Japan
- 2010 *Mopomoso* (with John Butcher, Lol Coxhill and others), Vortex Jazz Club, London, UK  
Solo performance *Ai-sha*, The 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan  
Cafe Oto, London, UK  
Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre, London, UK  
Creative Music Festival, Noro-Kougen Lodge, Hiroshima, Japan  
CCA Kitakyusyhu, Kitakyusyhu, Japan  
Around Sound Art Festival and Retreat, Hong Kong
- 2009 Kyoto Art Center, Kyoto, Japan  
Around sound art festival and retreat, Hong Kong
- 2007 Asia Pacific Festival, Wellington, New Zealand  
Auckland Festival, Auckland, New Zealand  
Osaka Phoenix Hall, Osaka, Japan  
Yokosuka Museum of Art, Yokosuka, Japan
- 2006 *Resonant Spaces*, site-specific performances in Scotland, UK
- 2005 *Oto-Date in Wakayama*, The Museum of Modern Art, Wakayama, Japan  
Judith Wright Center of Contemporary Arts, Brisbane, Australia  
Pelt Gallery, Sydney, Australia
- 2004 Nuit Blanche Festival, Paris, France
- 2003 *Soundsphere 2003*, British Museum, London, UK  
*ANALAPOsPHERE 2003*, Osaka Arts-Aporia, Osaka, Japan  
Stadtpark Gallery, Krems, Austria
- 2002 *The Sound of Mogari III*, Tokyo, Japan  
Brunei Gallery, London University, London, UK
- 2001 Concert with Ensemble Zwischentoene, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, Germany
- 1999 Adelaide Festival, Adelaide, Australia
- 1997 Performance on the lake in Enghien-les-Bains, France
- 1994 Festival Inventionen, Berlin, Germany
- 1993 Solo performance, Xebec, Kobe, Japan
- 1988 Autumnal Equinox Day, Meridian line, Amino, Kyoto, Japan
- 1987 Documenta 8, Kassel, Germany
- 1984 Pro Musica Nove, Bremen, Germany
- 1983 Japan House, New York, USA
- 1978 American Center, Tokyo, Japan



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### **Award / Grant**

1994 Residency at Berliner Kuestlerprogramm of the DAAD, Berlin, Germany

1981 Grant of the Rockefeller Foundation (A.C.C.), New York, USA