

## Hogaku: New Sounds of Japan Profiles of Musicians

### Passion of Asia

**Tetsuro Kawashima** (*tenor saxophone / soprano saxophone / flute*) is known as one of the best tenor saxophone players on the Japanese jazz scene. Born in Toyama Prefecture in 1966, he began practicing piano at the age of six. He started playing the trumpet at the age of 12 and also the tenor saxophone when in high school. After graduating from college, he worked for a company in Nagoya as a businessman, while performing the tenor saxophone at local jazz clubs on weekends. There he had the chance to join in sessions with musicians such as trumpeter Tomonao Hara and drummer Masahiko Osaka. At the age of 27, he moved to Tokyo as a professional jazz musician. Starting with the HARA-OSAKA Quintet, he participated with many groups of Japan's top jazz musicians, including pianists Mikio Masada and Junko Onishi, trumpeter Terumasa Hino, and drummer Motohiko Hino, and also joined in a variety of recording sessions. In 2000, he formed Tetsuro Kawashima Quartet and released albums of his original compositions. From 2002 to 2003, he released four albums recorded in New York. Besides the saxophone, he plays the flute, the piccolo, and the bass clarinet. Since 1999, he has been voted the most popular tenor saxophonist of the year by readers of Japan's jazz magazine *Swing Journal*. Most recently, he released the album "Passion of Asia" in collaboration with the *koto* player, Etsuko Takezawa.

**Etsuko Takezawa** (*13-string koto / 17-string koto / shō*) is a highly esteemed master of *koto* (Japanese zither). Born in Ishikawa Prefecture, she studied under *koto* masters Tadao Sawai, Kazue Sawai and Takeshi Nakai. After graduating from the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, she formed several *koto* groups and has been performing in the National Theater of Japan. Takezawa is known as a versatile *koto* performer of classical as well as contemporary works, gaining trust from numerous composers. She has also attracted attention for her successful collaborations with musicians of other genres such as jazz pianist Fumio Itabashi, vocalist Sizzle Ohtaka, and saxophonist Tetsuro Kawashima. Takezawa currently teaches part-time at Fukushima University, Joetsu University of Education and Kinjo Gakuin University. Takezawa is scheduling to join the concert of Kronos Quartet at Carnegie Hall on April 24, 2009.