

Questions for Hide

Briefly describe yourself as an artist/guitar player. What are you known for?

OK, the short answer is - I'm known as 'Magic Fingers'. The longer one would be - Classically trained at Guildhall School of Music with a bachelor, performance and composer degree. Now I'm playing electro-nylon, using many pedal board, playing many indescribably different styles from classical to metal!

Do you have any guilty pleasures when playing the guitar? Something your usual fans would not expect of you.

Many! :-D

When I'm practising alone and successfully hit the sweetest, tastiest 'e' on 12th fret on high e string, or tremolo picking so well controlled and so fast, ah, maybe this is noticeable as I look so satisfying on the stage. Apart from that, I sing some songs like Ed Sheeran or some Japanese pop songs with my guitar, but I'm not good enough to share them with you yet!

Describe your main equipment in brief detail. How you made those choices and whether or not the cost of that equipment was relevant to your decisions.

Cordoba Stage Traditional electro-nylon guitar, Vanilla House Sound Lab acoustic guitar cables, Boss TU-3 (apps!), Boss GE-7 EQ, Wampler Ego Compressor, Boss RE-2 tape echo, Electro-Harmonix Oceans 11 reverb, Universal Audio Golden reverb, Boss RC-5 looper. They are all necessary equipment I must have - some of them, like Boss GE-7 can be upgraded by TGI System Enieqma or Source Audio EQ2, and I should get a nice tuner pedal, but, you know what, it's usually just me on the stage so I often play whatever my guitar is tuned, whether A=432 or 440Hz! And, as I had long been a 'normal' classical guitarist, I should be fine just with my guitar and fingers, in fact, I once had my guitar broken and disconnected on the stage, ended up playing standing still with SM57 in front of my sound hole and it was one of my best show!

But don't get me wrong, I enjoy playing with best of best equipments whether expensive or not, but the truth is, quality equipments doesn't only make great sound but also make you feel great, hence you play with so much more joy and inspiration. It's a chicken-and-egg things.

Differences between operating as a guitarist/musician in Japan vs the UK in your experience?

Oh yes, voltage, temperature and humidity! To be honest, there's no simple answer. I play the exact same song in the U.K. and in Japan, then the audience's reaction can be totally different, while it may feel the air is too cold and dry/wet in London especially during winter which isn't nice for an acoustic guitar (and fingers!), but we don't have many churches in Japan where the acoustic guitar sounds the best in my opinion! But saying that, it's the best when you play the guitar with your best mates right next to you and have the best time, doesn't really matter where you are, or what the acoustic is!

Some career highlights, in the UK or Japan.

I'm definitely waiting for the one in Japan! It's been nearly 8 years since I had my debut CD in the U.K. and I have 5 albums I have to tour and promote in Japan, but in the U.K., I had so many amazing opportunities playing for so many gigs and festivals as well as playing in Spain, France, Czech, and my first tour with TSUJI, a legendary Japanese singer and author (and a great cook!), oh, and being Yamaha Music London ambassador in 2024!

Advice for young or inexperienced guitar players at the start of their journey.

Well, I'm not sure if I'm the right person to ask, because I made an epic failure when I had my exam to get to Osaka College of Music. I didn't know how to put a new string on my classical guitar and my top e string snapped off! I still remember when I first performed in public, I was too nervous so I was looking down for the entire show!

I think, let's say, 99% of the reason I play the guitar is the love for the guitar and not much else. You practise (I wouldn't call it 'practice', you just enjoy having time with your guitar. That's what we call 'practice'), only because you love your guitar.

I've been playing guitar for more than 30 years and still can't imagine my life without guitar. Every time you touch the strings, then it resonates with your skin, sometimes your entire body or heart, and if you can deliver that on the stage, you're a pro. It's totally up to you to spend time with your guitar at home or on stage!

Are you working on anything cool at the moment?

My biggest project right now is to play with TSUJI in Corsica in September, but I'm currently playing music for the Handel Hendrix House in London this summer. I'm practising hard to play my guitar over head!

I'm also making a review video for a Vanilla House Sound Lab cable, which should be available by the time this interview is published, but I'm super excited about this project. Can you believe my guitar sound finally comes out from the amp as the same as the unplugged, just by switching to this new cable? It's like my tone searching journey has finally been completed - lived happily ever after!

日本語

Questions for Hide

Briefly describe yourself as an artist/guitar player. What are you known for?

短かく言うと、僕は "マジック・フィンガーズ" として知られてるよ。もっと長いのは、ギルドホール音楽院でクラシック・ギターの訓練を受け、学士、演奏、作曲の学位を取得した。今はエレガットと、たくさんのエフェクターを使い、クラシックからメタルまで、説明不能なほど色んなスタイルで演奏している、って感じかな！

Do you have any guilty pleasures when playing the guitar? Something your usual fans would not expect of you.

たくさん！笑

一人で練習していて、①弦の12フレットで一番甘くて美味しい感じのミの音をうまく弾けたときや、トレモロ・ピッキングが完全にコントロールできていて、とても速いとき。それ以外だと、エド・シーランの歌や日本のポップスを弾き語りしたりもしてるけど、残念ながらまだみんなに見せられるほど上手くないんだ！

Describe your main equipment in brief detail. How you made those choices and whether or not the cost of that equipment was relevant to your decisions.

Cordoba Stage Traditional エレガットギター、Vanilla House Sound Labアコースティックギターケーブル、Boss TU-3 (アプリ!) チューナー、Boss GE-7 イコライザー、Wampler Ego コンプレッサー、Boss RE-2 テープエコー、Electro-Harmonix Oceans 11 リヴァーブ、Universal Audio Golden リヴァーブ、Boss RC-5 ルーパー。例えばBoss GE-7は、TGI System EnieqmaやSource Audio EQ2にアップグレードできるものもあるし、チューナー・ペダルも買った方がいいんだけど、でも、ステージに立つのはたいてい僕一人だから、A=432だろうが440Hzだろうが、その時のギターのチューニングに合わせて弾くことが多いんだ！実際、ステージ上でギターのピックアップが壊れて断線し、SM57をサウンドホールの前に置いて一歩も動かさず演奏したこともあるんだけど、それがまた最高のショーだったんだよ！

ただ誤解しないでほしいのは、値段が高くても安くても、最高の機材を使って演奏するのは楽しくて嬉しい、っていうこと。つまり、いい音や機材は僕をいい気持ちにさせてくれるだろ？だから楽しくてインスパイアされていい演奏になるんだと思う。鶏と卵のようなものだよね。

Differences between operating as a guitarist/musician in Japan vs the UK in your experience?

そうだね、電圧、温度、湿度かな！正直なところ、単純な答えはないと思うんだけど。例えばイギリスと日本で全く同じ曲を演奏しても、お客さんの反応は全然違うし、ロンドンには、特に冬は寒すぎたり、乾燥しすぎたり湿気がすぎたりで、アコースティックな楽器（と指！）には良くない、と感じるけど、例えば日本にはアコースティックギターが一番気持ち良く響く教会はあんまりないと思うしね！まあ、でも、最高の仲間と一緒にギターを弾いて、最高の時間を過ごせれば、国や音響は関係ないよ！

Some career highlights, in the UK or Japan.

日本でのその瞬間が待ち遠しいよ！イギリスでファースト・アルバムが発売されてからもうすぐ8年になるし、日本でツアーやプロモーションをしなければいけないアルバムが5枚もあるんだ。ただ、イギリスではたくさんのライブやフェスティバルで演奏したり、スペイン、フランス、チェコに行って演奏したり、日本の伝説的な

歌手であり作家でもある辻仁成さん（料理も超上手！）と初めてのツアーをした。あっ、それから、2024年のヤマハ・ミュージック・ロンドンのアンバサダーに就任したよ！

Advice for young or inexperienced guitar players at the start of their journey.

うーん、その質問にはうまく答えられるか分からないな。というのも、僕は大阪音楽大学の入学試験で、超恥ずかしい大失敗をしたんだよ。クラシックギターの弦の張り方もろくに知らなくて、演奏直前にチューニングしてたら①弦が切れてしまったんだ！初めてのコンサートのときも、緊張しすぎて演奏中も演奏前後もずーっと下を向いていたのを今でも覚えてるよ！

まあ、僕がギターを弾き続けてる理由の99%は、ただギターが好きだからで、それ以外の理由はないと思う。練習するっていうのは（僕はそれを『練習』とは呼びたくないんだ。ただ楽しい時間をギターと過ごすだけ。それを『練習』という言葉に置き換えてるだけなんだ）、ギターを楽しんでる、っていうことなんだと思うよ。

僕は30年以上ギターを弾いてるけど、今でもギターのない生活は考えられない。弦に触れるたびに、それが肌と共鳴し、時には身体全体や、もしくは心と共鳴して...それをステージで伝えることができたら、君はプロだね。それを家の中でするのがステージでするのは君次第だよ！

Are you working on anything cool at the moment?

今一番大きなプロジェクトは、9月にコルシカ島で辻仁成さんと演奏することなんだけど、今はこの夏ロンドンでヘンデル・ヘンドリックス・ハウス(偶然、ヘンデルとジミヘンが隣同士に住んでいた建物が現在博物館になっている)のために音楽を演奏しているんだ。ギターを頭の上で弾けるように一生懸命練習しているよ！

それから、バニラハウス・サウンドラボのケーブルのレビュー動画も作っていて、このインタビューが掲載される頃には完成しているはずだけど、このプロジェクトはめちゃくちゃ楽しみなんだ。ケーブルを変えただけで、アンプから自分のギター・サウンドが生音と同じように出てくるなんて想像できる？最高のトーンを追求し続けてきた長い旅が、ついに完結したような気分なんだ！