

Mamiko Watanabe

Pianist/Composer

“Unafraid to explore and incorporate different styles, Mamiko Watanabe plays and composes with passion and direction” - jazzreview.com

“Watanabe's piano playing and leadership on both discs is deft, challenging and always solid.” - All About Jazz NY Magazine

"Like the best Piano trios, Watanabe's threesome has the focus and interplay of a working band."
- Jazz Inside Magazine

*"Throughout **Mother Earth** Watanabe displays talents as a pianist,composer and arranger that makes a listener smile and shake their head with the pleasure of it all. And on this disc, the pleasures are many." - The New York City Jazz Record*

“Ms.Watanabe already has a sound of her own plus impressive technique. Her creativity is impressive throughout these modern mainstream performances and she is a skilled songwriter.” - Scott Yanow; The Los Angeles Jazz Scene Magazine

In 1999 she revived a scholarship to attend Berklee College of Music and studied Jazz piano, Improvisation and Composition. She was a semi-finalist at the prestigious Montreux Jazz Festival Solo Piano Competition in Montreux, Switzerland both in 2002 and 2003. She has toured Germany, Italy and Japan and has performed with several jazz greats such as Joe Lovano, Kevin Mahogany, Bobby McFerrin, Tiger Okoshi and Phil Wilson while in college.

In 2003 she received the DownBeat Student Award in the Jazz Soloist Category before she made the decision to move to New York and expand her musical horizons. Since then, Mamiko has performed in the 2010 Clifford Brown Jazz Festival, the 2012 Super Jazz Ashdod Festival in Israel, 2013 Penang World Music Festival in Malaysia and many other notable venues such as The Kitano NY, Blue Note NY Sunday Brunch & Late Night Groove Series, The Iridium, Dizzy's Club , The Lenox Lounge, Blues Alley (in Washington, D.C.), The Kennedy Center, Victoria Theater (at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center), Joe's Pub and S.O.B.'s, just to name a few.

She is currently working with Valery Ponomarev Big Band & His Septet besides leading her own group.

As a leader, Mamiko recorded her album, "**One After Another**" in 2005 and released her second album, "**ORIGIN/JEWEL**" in 2007 which in fact is actually the combination of two separate discs; "**ORIGIN**" is a collection of the Funk and Latin influences compositions and "**JEWEL**" contains works recorded in a more straight-ahead jazz piano trio format. Her third release, entitled "**Mother Earth**" was completed in 2010 received excellent reviews from the writers of Jazz Inside Magazine, New York City Jazz Record and Jazziz Magazine. She released her fourth piano album "**Flying Without Wings**" in 2018.