

June 1, 2015

Press Release

Japanese *Koto* and *Shamisen* Concert held in Karachi

On May 31, 2015, Japanese *Koto* and *Shamisen* concert titled “Japanese Traditional Music and Improvisation” was held at Pearl Continental Hotel, Karachi, with the attendance of Her Excellency Ms. Sharmila Farooqui, Minister for Culture and Tourism and Special Assistant to the Chief Minister, Sindh, as Chief Guest. This concert was co-organized by the Consulate-General of Japan in Karachi, National Academy of Performing Arts (NAPA) and Pakistan Japan Cultural Association- Sindh (PJCA), in cooperation with Pearl Continental Hotel, Karachi.

Ms. Sumie Kaneko is an internationally-recognized *Koto* and *Shamisen* player, Jazz singer and songwriter. Playing since the age of five, Ms. Kaneko had studied at prestigious Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music; and Barkley College of Music, and performed at Washington DC Jazz Festival; Carnegie Hall; Lincoln Centre; and Blue Note New York among others. She is widely acknowledged for her unique chromatic use of instruments and has collaborated with many renowned instrumentalists and international artists.

Ms. Sumie Kaneko had especially come to Karachi for this performance and was joined by eminent Pakistani musicians such as Sitar Nawaz Ustad Nafees Ahmed Khan, who is the head of Music Department at NAPA, and Tabla Nawaz Ustad Bashir Khan, who is a faculty member at NAPA, and an alumni of NAPA Mr. Nadir Abbas along with four vocalists who are students at NAPA. On this occasion, Ms. Kaneko also had an interesting collaboration with Mr. Muhammad Hassan Muhano, who is a highly recognized maestro of *Surando*, which is a very old and rare musical instrument in Sindh Province.

Speaking at the ceremony, Mr. Akira Ouchi, the Consul-General of Japan in Karachi, stated that he is very pleased to present Japanese traditional music in Karachi. He also mentioned that Japan and Pakistan developed their own string instruments in their history, and that when we listen to a collaboration of the musical instruments of the two countries, we will find a great harmony. Consul-General Mr. Ouchi further stated that this event will be a great opportunity to experience fascinating diversity of Japanese traditional music and memorable fusion of Japanese and Pakistani compositions, thereby contributing to further promotion of cultural exchange and friendship between Japan and Pakistan.

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For further information, please contact the Japan Information and Culture Center at the Consulate-General of Japan in Karachi: 35220800 (Ext. 134). Also please kindly visit our web-site: <http://www.kr.pk.emb-japan.go.jp/> in regard to this Concert.

