



SHUGO TOKUMARU

The upbeat simplicity of Tokyo-born singer/ songwriter Shugo Tokumaru's fourth album 'Port Entropy' is refreshing. Layering flute, accordion, harmonica and xylophone over uplifting guitar melodies, the singer creates a technicolour tapestry full of warmth and innocence.

His gentle Japanese vocals draw you into his dream-woven soundscapes. In his signature blend of layered sounds in 'Lahaha' and 'River Low', the listener discovers new depths with every listen. His skill at composing beautiful, self-contained pop songs stems from a childhood spent listening to Japanese pop and Beatles cassettes, and seven years of classical piano training. 'Drive-thru' for example, reveals a strong 60s influence, and the hopeful ballad 'Linne' is driven by a melancholic piano line, performed by Shugo himself.

As a teenager, Tokumaru taught himself how to play guitar, and had his first musical experience in a high-school punk band. However, he quickly realised that the type of songs he wanted to write didn't quite fit with his band's sound, and decided to record them all by himself. Soon Music Related, a small independent record label from New York, got hold of his demo and released his debut album 'Night Piece' in 2004.

The prolific Shugo went on to release two more albums and an EP within the next three years. His second album 'L.S.T.', put out by Paris-based label Active Suspension the following year, led to his first European tour in 2006. Notoriously stage-shy at the beginning of his career, Tokumaru transformed this reticence into a unique stage presence, translating his densely textured pop into equally refreshing yet decidedly different settings. Having released 'Exit', his third record, on P-Vine in 2007 and licensed for release on New York label Star Time International, he embarked on a short North American tour in September 2008, including support slots for the likes of Magnetic Fields and Beach House, which culminated in a sold-out headliner show at Mercury Lounge in New York, with Shugo leading a five piece band including members of Beirut, The National and So Percussion.

In the wake of his 2009 EP 'Rum Hee', he played another short European tour with shows in the UK, Spain and Norway amongst other countries. His performance at Roskilde Festival and a special collaboration with Icelandic quartet Amiina at the Nordic House in Reykjavik marked the highlights of his musical excursion to Europe.

Incorporating compelling harmonies, imaginative arrangements and Tokumaru's charming voice, his upcoming album 'Port Entropy' is destined to put a smile on his listeners' faces – even without them comprehending a word.

Notoriously stage-shy at the beginning, Shugo soon turned into a hard act to follow as a live performer in his own right, translating his densely textured acoustic pop into equally refreshing yet decidedly different settings, be it solo or with a band. He embarked on his first overseas tour in 2006 with shows in France, Spain, Sweden and Denmark, following the European release of "L.S.T." on Active Suspension, a French label based in Paris.

In October 2007, Shugo released his third album "EXIT" on P-Vine Records. Boasting exquisite melodies one after another and joyful noise made from a seemingly bottomless pit of instruments, it was much brighter in tone than his previous records and was greeted with both critical and popular acclaim.



In 2008 "EXIT" was licensed for release on New York based label StarTime International, a Sony / Columbia subsidiary. He did a short North American tour in September to support the album, which included a sold-out headlining show at the Mercury Lounge in New York, with him leading a 5 piece band comprised of various members from Beirut, the National and So Percussion. He was back in the States the following month for CMJ Music Marathon and for supporting The Magnetic Fields' east coast tour. In the same year he composed his first film score for Koji Hagiuda directed "Kodomo no Kodomo (Child by Children)."

2009 saw the release of his new EP "Rum Hee" featuring 3 new songs, 3 re-recordings of previous classics as well as 2 remixes by Deerhoof and Oorutaichi, respectively. In June and July he set out for a tour in Europe for 2 weeks, visiting UK, Spain, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Iceland. The highlights included an appearance at Roskilde Festival and a special collaboration with Icelandic quartet Amiina at the Nordic House in Reykjavik.

www.myspace.com/shugotokumaru

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