

→ Born and raised in Tokyo, Naoko studied at *Denenchofu Futaba Gakuen* from primary school through high school. In pursuit of a career in music, she entered *Tokyo College of Music* where she graduated at the top of her class. After completing her post-graduate studies at the Tokyo College of Music Graduate School, she was invited to appear at the prestigious *Yomiuri Shinjin Ensoukai* (Yomiuri Concert of New Musicians and Artists), *NHK-FM Fresh Concerts* and other venues for up-and-coming artists. During these early years, Naoko's achievements in major domestic competitions include award-winning performances at the 28th *Bunka Radio Broadcasting Co. Music Competition*, the 18th & 20th *Japan-Italy Vocal Concorso* and the 51st *Music Competition of Japan* as well as excelling at high-profile auditions such as the *NHK-FM Western Music Auditions* and *Tokyo Bunka Kaikan Concert Auditions*.

In 1994 and 1998, Naoko travelled to Italy, the home of opera, where she studied in Milan. Her operatic debut in the role of *Frau Fluth* in *Die Lustigen Weiber von Winsdor* was followed by numerous principal roles including *Cio Cio San* in *Madame Butterfly*, *Lady Fiametta* in the operetta *Boccaccio*, *Violetta* in *La Traviata*, *Susanna* in *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Lucy* in Menotti's comic opera *The Telephone* and *Angèle* in *Der Graf von Luxemburg*.

From 1988 to 2008, Naoko has hosted an annual recital entitled the *Naoko no Kigaru ni Classic Shima Show*. With the aim of breaking the conventional classic concert mould, she engages the audience with insights, anecdotes and comments between pieces, striving to make the classical music experience more relaxing and approachable in inimitable way.

She also has been delighting her growing fans with annual *Christmas dinner* shows held at the *Kihinkan Guest House, Grand Prince Hotel* from 1993 to 2008.

Since launching concert activities in China with her debut concert in Shanghai in November 2005, she has performed before audiences in Shenyang, Fushun, Changchun, Beijing, Dalian and other major venues in China.

In October 2009, Naoko planned and held the 2008 *Sichuan Earthquake* charity concert in Chengdu to raise money for the victims of this tragedy, personally calling on Japanese companies for their cooperation and support.

Between 2007 and 2010, she invited top-class Chinese performers to Japan where their talents were showcased in joint concerts before Japanese audiences.

Her many contributions to Japan-China Friendship through the borderless language of music were recognized by the Chinese government in October 2010 when she was chosen as one of the “60 Japanese Who Have Made a Valuable Contribution to Japan-China Friendship” and received a commendation at an event celebrating the 60th anniversary of the founding of Japan- China Friendship Organization held in the Great Hall of the People.

After her concert at the *Beijing National Theatre* in June 2011, she decided to suspend her production and related performance activities in China to focus on Europe.

In July 2011, the concert *Enchantement d'été à Paris* was held at the venerable Salle Gaveau and was a resounding success! In 2012, Naoko continued her activities in France with a concert at the famous *Théâtre Musical du Châtelet* à Paris in April followed by events in Massy and Yerres with the *Orchestre de Massy* in September and finally a performance with the *Orchestre Symphonique Lyonnais* at *La Grange au Lac* in Evian in October.

2013 opened with a New Year's concert at *Oratoire du Louvre* church in the heart of Paris, auspiciously on a date that celebrated both the Western and Chinese new year. It was followed by a soprano recital at the *Salle Cortot* in April, and two concerts in May – Opéra de Vichy (France) on May 11 and *Victoria Hall* (Geneva, Switzerland) on May 17.

Autumn of 2013 began with concerts in Austria in memorable musical sanctuaries like the *Musikverein* in Vienna and the *Mozarteum* in Salzburg.

In 2014, Naoko decided to have a better proximity with her audience in choosing smaller concert halls (but with perfect acoustic) and adding original pieces to her classical repertoire: Japanese, Chinese and French songs. The success was always “*au rendez-vous*” as demonstrated by the happiness of the public in the two concerts held at *Théâtre Adyar* in Paris with pianist Emma Sangar, or at *Hôtel Intercontinental* and in the *Abbaye de Saint-André* en Avignon.

In 2015, again in Avignon and, after a concert in Tokyo, a memorable performance at *Moulin d'Andé*, a mythic place for music and shooting of movies (among them, the famous Jules et Jim - dear to Naoko, fan of French films).