



# **JIRO YOSHIDA**

*“To weave a melody, emotion must be threaded with skill.” – Jiro Yoshida*

The fresh air that this non-American brings into the genre is reminiscent of a modern day Django Reinhardt.

When Jiro plays his guitar, the magnetic pulse beckons. Abstract structures build on traditional roots. Melodies fuse with earthy, almost tactile rhythms; the ensuing tensions make musical revelations. It’s a carnal, rich, and textured sound-painting - a sultry invitation into the vibrations that make up his world. But the emotion evoked is tied to consummate skill.

*“Expression is the energy that turns the lock, but technique is the key. Many artists have emotion, but can’t build on it; they can only make a castle in the sand that sinks under its own weight.” – Jiro Yoshida*

For the purist, there are solid concepts behind the sound. Among Jiro’s many notable talents are considerable polyphonic skills, a mastery of complex strumming patterns, and a remarkable ability to function in a highly chromatic environment. Like musical predecessor West Montgomery, Jiro revels in a deep respect for tradition. Influencers like Miles Davis and John Coltrane spice his playing, but there are classical nods as well. Some phrases channel the passion of Tchaikovsky. Others echo the eclecticism of Stravinsky or the powerful energy of Bartok, whose harmonic language influenced generations of Jazz musicians.

Jiro Yoshida was born in Fukuoka, Japan in 1958.

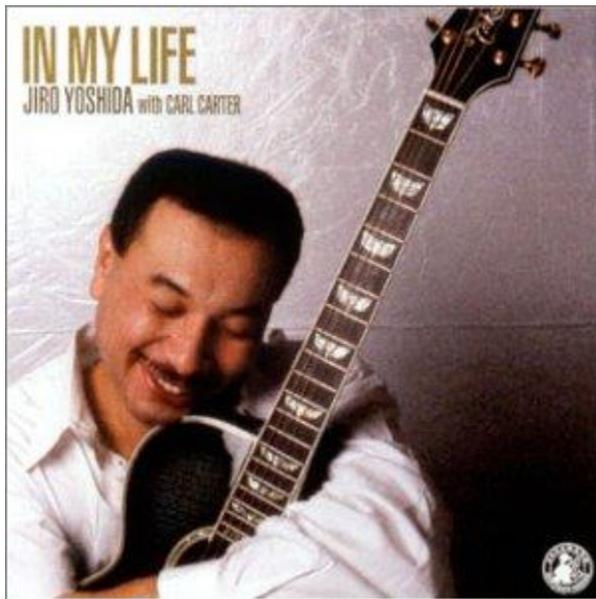
He started his musical education with piano lessons at the age of 5 and classical guitar lessons at age 6, but when fifteen year old Jiro first heard a John Coltrane record, his path was set. Just three years later, Jiro was accepted at college in Tokyo and began working as a studio musician.

A ticket to the *Miles Davis Comeback Concert* in Shinjuku inspired Jiro to study music in the United States and after graduation from Berkley College of Music in 1989, Jiro's New York career began. Aided by seasoned players like Slide Hampton and Grady Tate, Jiro soon became a regular on the New York City studio musician circuit. Jiro joined Joe Chambers Jazz Band and Phyllis Hyman's group and worked with well-regarded Jazz greats like The Breaker Brothers, Ron Carter, Joe Henderson, Astrud Gilberto. About this time, Jiro started to produce his first large scale project "Airs to Jabirs, a Tribute to the Carpenters", featuring New York Voices and Manhattan Transfer.

Jiro, ever popular in Japan, arranged orchestral music for *Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra*, internationally recognized as one of the world's most accomplished wind orchestras. From 1998-2001, Jiro wrote all the thematic music for a Japanese-based nighttime talk show called "Insert Name Here".

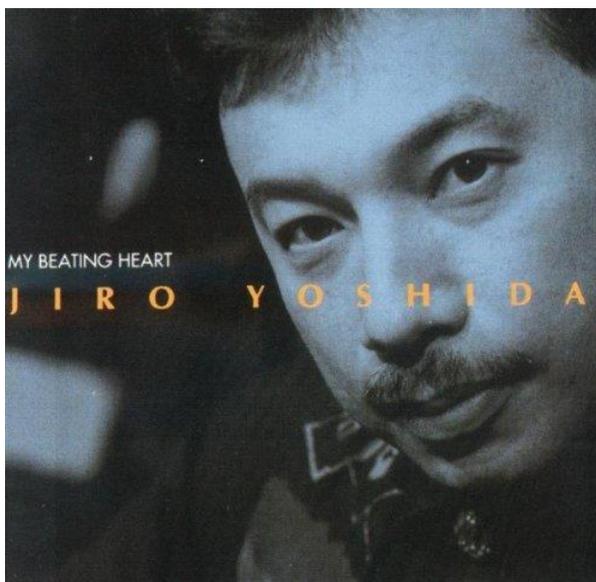
Back in the United States, Jiro was hired as a musical director of a 'Save the Rainforest' documentary, and parlayed that into film score work and TV commercials for products like Diet Coke, Singapore Airlines, JC Penny, LA Symphony, and the London Philharmonic. His recording label upgraded from King Records to Polystar, a subsidiary of Polygram.

In 2000, Jiro released “In My Life.” As a nod to his growing popularity, Takamine Guitars made a signature model instrument for Jiro, called the JY130.



**IN MY LIFE** (December 2000)

In 2001, re-released “My Beating Heart” and he released “Be Careful”. Also in 2001, Jiro accepted invitations to play several Jazz festivals including Montreal Jazz, JVC Jazz fest in NY, and others.

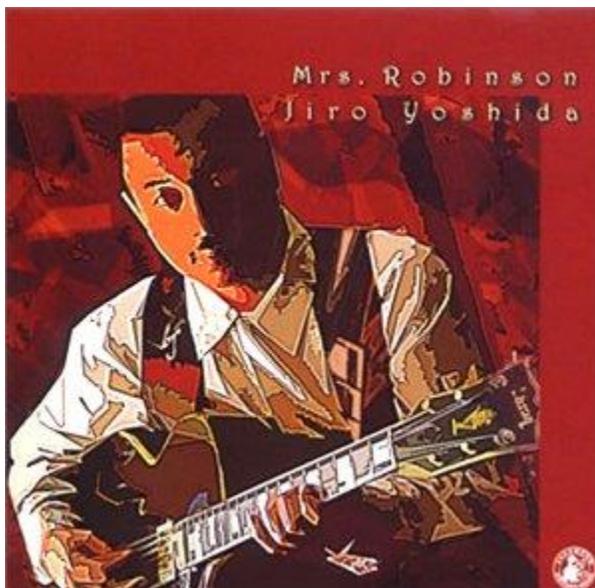


**MY BEATING HEART** (June 2001)



**BE CAREFUL** (October 2001)

In 2002, the success of Jiro's 7<sup>th</sup> album, "Mrs. Robinson" extended his popularity. In addition to playing at Jazz festivals like *Mt. Fuji Jazz Festival* and *Montreal Jazz Fest*, a popular Acoustic Guitar magazine in Japan printed an extend profile of Jiro's life and career.

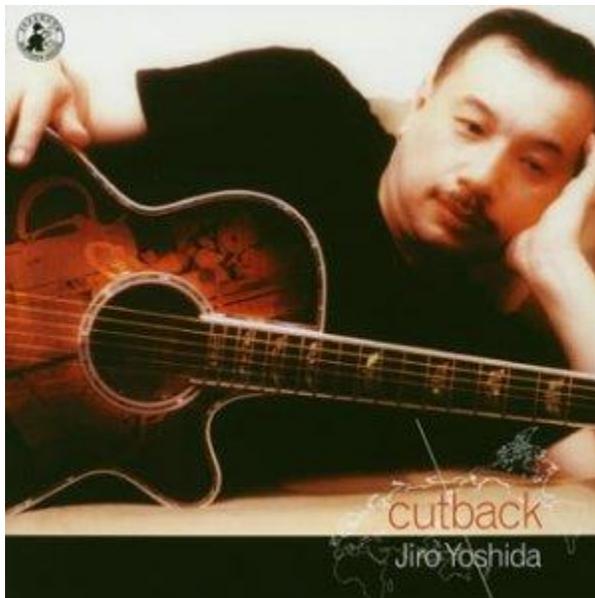


**MRS. ROBINSON** (November 2002)

In 2003, fresh off touring with Cindy Lauper, Jiro hosted “Koen Dori De Aimashou” a popular daytime talk show for a full week. Guests included Japanese stars Aki Yahiro, Yuji Miyake and comedienne/musician Jucci Yuzo.

Also in 2003, Jiro was chosen as the 51<sup>st</sup> United Nation’s WAFUNIF Goodwill Ambassador. To mark the honor, Jiro performed in a memorial concert for the representatives of twenty-four countries.”

In February of 2004, Jiro’s eighth album, “Cutback” was released, and less than a year later, his 9<sup>th</sup> album, “Made in NY” dropped. Both albums were very well received, and featured fresh arrangements, daring steel string work, technical prowess, complicated changes, and alternative picking.



**CUTBACK** (February 2004)



**MADE IN NEW YORK (2005)**

In 2009, Jiro made another strong career move; he became the spokesman for Eneloop batteries, creating all the music for the ad campaign and starring in their commercials. Jiro also created a concept album, “Platonic”, to mark the occasion, featuring among others, the great David Sanborn. The album echoes Jazz greats such as Weather Report and Pat Metheny while unmistakably carrying Jiro’s original signature.

Jiro’s current work centers on the twin approaches of steel and nylon strings. His Jazz roots are evident, but the music he creates has crossover appeal from diverse disciplines like Classical music and Hip Hop, providing a unique listening experience. During his career, he has been privileged to record and/or play with Janis Ian, Cindy Lauper, Dizzy Gillespie, Rickie Lee Jones, Phoebe Snow, The Temptations, Barbra Streisand and Sting.



