

# Directed by Koichi Onishi Supervised by Makoto Kubota

## Genre ; Music Documentary Japan / 2011 / 104 min / HD / 16:9 / Color / Stereo



### Starring

Makoto Kubota, Harnys Sarahama, Toyo Nagasaki, Matsu Takara, Kiyu Murayama, Hiroshi Morishima, Sada Tomori, Kimi Motomura, Haruko Hamakawa, Yuta Fukushima & others

### Staff

Producer, Director, Camera, Editor : Koichi Onishi  
Sound Processing : Makoto Kubota



Kubota eventually finds the sugarcane farmers and the fishermen's wives who sing their own unique songs about their Gods and ancestors. He then successfully organized showcase concerts and brought them to Tokyo to perform. Some of the members are over 90 years old and came to Tokyo for the very first time.

This film also tells about the cultural heritage of the islands, Miyako-jima (Locally pronounced as Myahk). It is exemplified by old songs known as "Aagu", based on medieval or ancient song improvisation. There are also "Kamiuta", which are sacred songs sung when shamanic women pray in frequent rituals, sometimes in a trance-like state. The residents have been singing and passing on these songs for many generations.

Faced with the crisis of extinction, this documentary explores the long hidden rituals, where the "Kamiuta" the sacred songs are sung and how related memories are passed on.

This film showcases many of their songs as well as interviews about the lifestyle and religious beliefs of Miyako, Myahk.



### Koichi Onishi

Born in Osaka, Japan, Aug. 5th 1965.  
Directed two movies(drama) in the 1990s.  
Working on TV programs, commercial videos,  
music clips since.  
This film was his first time in 16 years.

### Makoto Kubota

Since he started his recording career in '73,  
Kubota has always continued offering  
alternative ideas and approaches till today.  
His production includes Blue Asia, Dettu Kurnia,  
Dick Lee & The Boom, so on.  
"Blue Asia has a trancy, laid back ambience filled  
with exotic samples of traditional instruments blended  
with electronica and dub."  
Quoted from Putumayo World Music release named  
WORLD LOUNGE (put 198-2).  
[www.kubotamakoto.com](http://www.kubotamakoto.com)

### Koichi Onishi Filmography

1991 : "Kichijoji Muei"  
1995 : "April in the Sentimental Northern Town"  
2009-2011 : Production on "Sketches of Myahk"

### Koichi Onishi Film Office

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# Sketches of Myahk

“A journey to discover the lost music and shamanistic culture of Japan's South Sea Islands” —Gregory Rood



**Directed by Koichi Onishi**  
**Supervised by Makoto Kubota**

The musician and the producer Makoto Kubota took a research journey to the Miyakojima islands, south of Okinawa after some spiritual experience deep in the Kumano mountains in 2007. There he met enormous musical and cultural heritages in conjunction with the spiritual roots of Japan. He discovered elaborate religious rituals and songs held by selected village women and work songs with strong beat to give them the strength to survive through 3 centuries of feudal slavery. Their language also contains a higher rate of Japanese ancient words than modern Japanese does.

The film director Koichi Onishi followed in the footsteps of Kubota and took his camera along to film their performances and the unique daily life which is full of religious rituals.