

Fun Chronology of Yoko Matsuo

1953

Yoko is born in Nagoya on a snowy day.

1957

Yoko enters Ooe Kindergarten. She cries every day there. She misses about half of her classes in the two school years.

1959

Yoko enters Taisei Elementary School. Isewan Typhoon hits Nagoya and Yoko becomes a friend of the typhoon. Yoko starts learning the piano. She cries in every piano lesson.

1965

Yoko enters Nanko Junior High School. Yoko gets obsessed with playing tennis with three others in the classroom. She stays as late as she can. The third act intermezzo of *The Jewels of the Madonna* by Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari becomes Yoko's favorite song.

1968

Yoko enters Meiwa High School. The male students call her, "Boss." Yoko joins the volleyball club as well as the railway club. Yoko listens to Mahler's Symphony works. Yoko becomes interested in orchestral scores.

1971

Yoko enters Ochanomizu University, majoring in music education. Yoko is surprised by seeing only female students on campus. She is planning to write on Mahler for her graduation thesis.

1972

Yoko encounters *It Only Happens to Others* by a French pop singer, Michel Polnareff, which is a major turning point in her life. Her interest in French music begins.

1973

Yoko conducts Ravel's opera, *The Child and the Spells* for the first time in her Junior year. Yoko complains to the orchestra though she does not know conducting.

1974

Yoko is apprenticed to Ken-Ichiro Kobayashi, who gives her intimidating lessons. She

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decides to become a conductor.

1975

After graduating from the Ochanomizu University, Yoko enters the Tokyo University of the Arts, majoring in conducting. Yoko yells at her judge during her entrance examination. Yoko is the only student enrolled in the Department of Conducting that year. Yoko spends a freshman year for the second time.

1976

Yoko travels various places as the assistant conductor for Niki-kai's opera performance of *Yūzuru*. Between studies at the university, Yoko conducts for many amateur orchestras. She attends classes when she is not conducting.

1979

Yoko conducts Saint-Saëns' *Symphony No.3* for her graduation performance. She continues to study at the graduate school. She decides to study abroad in Paris and to enter the International Besançon Competition for Young Conductors.

1980

Yoko becomes the conductor of the Gunma Symphony Orchestra for its music education program. Yoko is busy performing daily, which keeps her from attending classes at the university.

1981

After completing her graduate study, Yoko studies abroad as the recipient of the scholarship program by Rotary International, and enters the Department of Orchestral Conducting at the École Normale de Musique de Paris. Yoko studies under Professor Pierre Dervaux. Yoko begins living in Paris, her favorite city. Yoko makes lots of French friends.

1982

Yoko wins the International Besançon Competition for Young Conductors sharing the Golden Lyre Award with Osmo Vanska from Finland. After returning to Japan, Yoko becomes an instructor at the Department of Conducting at the Tokyo University of the Arts. She is continuously interviewed by magazines.

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1983

Yoko conducts the NHK Symphony Orchestra for its concert for young talented musicians. Yoko conducts her debut concert (in a thunder storm). Yoko attends the university entrance examination as a test examiner for the first time, but the campus guard asks her for her student ID. Yoko conducts various orchestras such as the Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse and Orchestre Symphonique de la RTBF. Yoko also performs at Salzburg and Vienna. Yoko receives the Avon Awards to Women.

1984

Yoko conducts an orchestra made up of only female players, though she wonders why. Yoko conducts *The Merry Widow* as her opera debut and tastes the fun of conducting in an orchestra pit.

1985

Yoko conducts the Orchestre Lamoureux at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. The concert is delayed for thirty minutes due to a snow storm which has paralyzed transportation in the city.

1986

Yoko gets her driver's license and exclusively drives a Toyota Chaser. Yoko meets the Nerima Symphony Orchestra.

1987

Yoko meets the Ashiya Symphony Orchestra for the first time before her relationship with the orchestra over the years. Yoko conducts an operetta, *The Bat*.

1988

Yoko conducts a difficult opera, *Carmen*.

1989

Yoko conducts an opera, *Hamlet* by Thomas, the first performance in Japan.

1990

Associations to support Yoko are founded in Tokyo and Nagoya, and Yoko is blessed with their reliable support. Yoko receives the TOYP Grand Prize.

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1991

Yoko conducts an opera, *Così fan tutte*. Yoko has a hard time with the Italian language.

1992

Yoko's water painting is selected for the first time for the Daichokai exhibition. She finished the painting, working through the night before. She starts aerobic exercises.

1993

Yoko tours Berlin and Vienna with the Ashiya Symphony Orchestra. Her first book, *Madomoazeru Ga Shefu Datte*, is published. In 2003 the book is revised and published as *Shikisha Ni Myuuzu Ga Hohoenda*.

1994

Yoko conducts Mahler's *Resurrection Symphony*, a magnificent and complex composition!

1995

Yoko falls down the stairs and dislocates her right shoulder. She spends inconvenient but vigorous days with only her left hand.

1996

Yoko conducts an opera, *The Fallen Woman*. Then Yoko attends the Italian language school.

1997

Yoko conducts the opera, *Aida* in Nerima for the first time. Yoko has conducted the opera many times since then.

1998

Yoko becomes the guest resident conductor of the Central Aichi Symphony Orchestra. Yoko leads the Silvester Concert at the Biwako Hall Center as the conductor and presenter.

1999

Yoko becomes the resident conductor of the Central Aichi Symphony Orchestra and keeps the position until 2004. Yoko is preoccupied with producing various events.

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Yoko holds a piano recital with the students of the Conducting Department at the Tokyo University of the Arts, who reluctantly perform at the concert. Yoko appears in NHK's *Yōkoso Senpai*. The program is recorded at the elementary school in Nagoya where she attended.

2000

Yoko conducts the opera, *Don Giovanni* at the Noh stage theatre, wearing *kimono* and *hakama* with a *tasuki* cord.

2001

Yoko serializes her article for Chunichi Shimbun (*Kami Ttubute*) and Tokyo Shimbun (Hōshasen), and becomes busy writing an article every week. Yoko conducts Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 at Carnegie Hall in New York.

2002

Yoko holds a concert for the twentieth anniversary of winning the International Besançon Competition for Young Conductors with the musicians whom Yoko has taught.

2003

Another Romance of Carmen, an opera choreographed with jōruri and Japanese traditional dancing, is performed with great success. Yoko founds *The Female Chorus Madonna Kakitsubata* in Nagoya. Yoko starts arranging songs.

2004

Yoko stays in Paris for eighty days as the recipient of the overseas study program of the Agency for Cultural Affairs, and devotes herself to her study with the Orchestre de Paris. Yoko is impressed by how convenient it has become to live in Paris.

2005

Yoko conducts *Another Romance of Carmen* at the Aichi EXPO Dome. Yoko organizes the Ensemble FORTE and somehow performs Beethoven. The Triphony Junior Orchestra is born, and Yoko makes friends with many children.

2006

Yoko's song book arranged for female chorus, *Six Pieces of Esprit*, is published. Each song arrangement by Yoko is well received. Yoko serializes her articles for Chunichi

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Shimbun (*Enta Me*). She makes effort to find concerts in order to write her articles.

2007

Yoko conducts the opera, *Macbeth*. She reads the story William Shakespeare wrote for the first time in many years. Yoko tours around Japan with the Orchestras for the concert events sponsored by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, and its hard schedule is beyond imagination. Yoko flies from place to place though she dislikes airplanes.

2008

Yoko teaches at the Department of Conducting at the Tokyo University of the Arts as a visiting professor. She spends more time working with her computer, which led her to begin exercising at a sports gym. As a result, she becomes more vigorous.