

# Toshio Iwai

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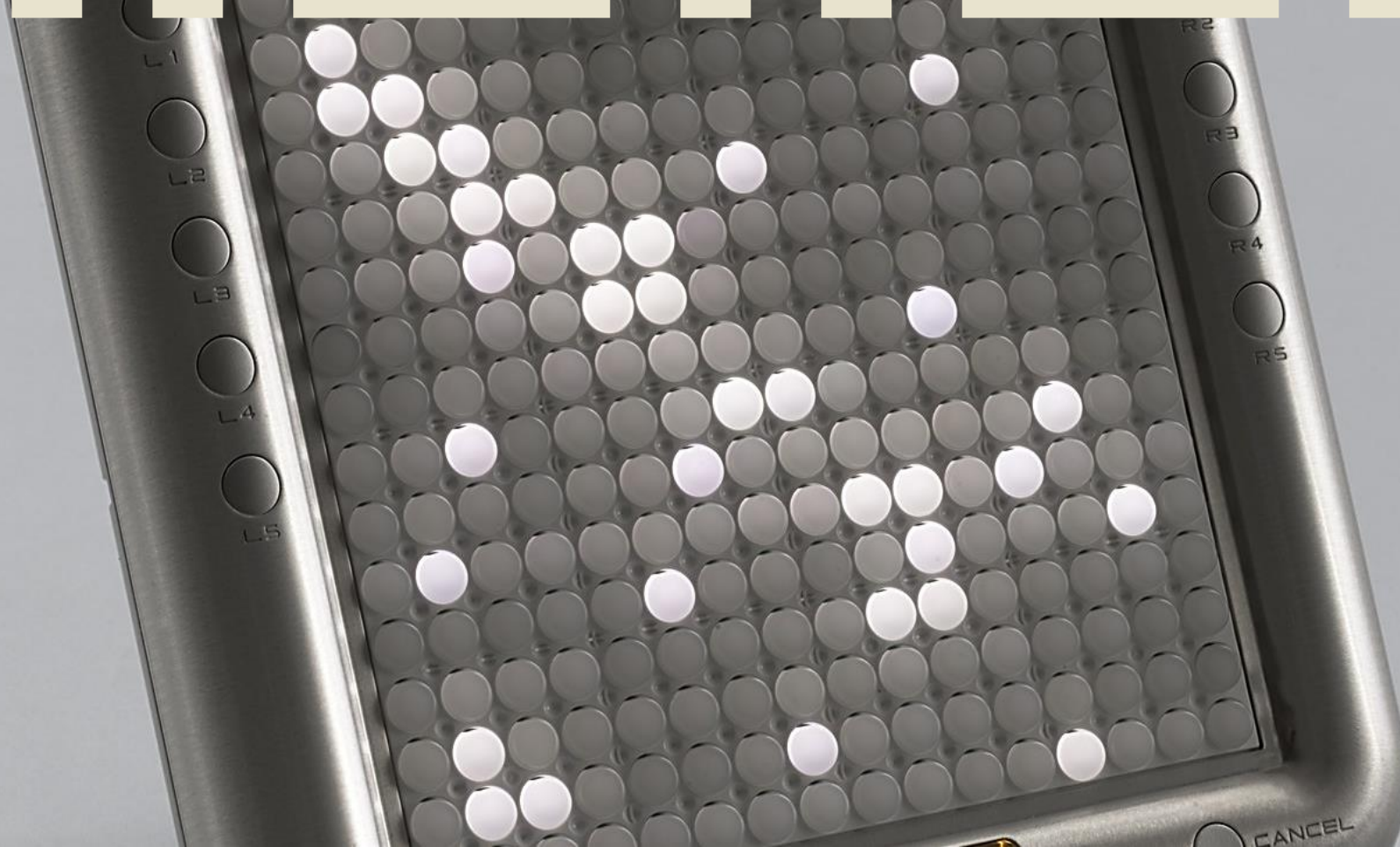
BY YUKI TAN

# History

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- Born in 1962, Kira, Aichi in Japan.
- Works with interaction of sound, light and music.
- Designs electronic games and interactive musical devices as well as creating installation works in an art context.
- As a child, he created flip book-style animations and making motor-driven mechanical toys.
- Enrolled in Fine Art Department in University of Tsukuba and graduated with a master's degree in Plastic Art and Mixed Media in 1987.
- Influenced by the work of Norman McLaren, he began producing installation art.





# *TENORI-ON*

Digital music instrument

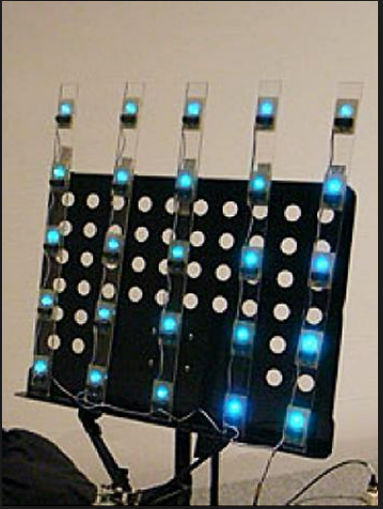
2004



# TENORI-ON 2004

- Tenori-on is Japanese for "sound in your palm".
- 16x16 button handheld digital music instrument.
- Step sequencer that creates and displays synthesized music and light patterns.
- When pressed, each LED pixel emits a preprogrammed sound.
- Users program a specific sequence of sounds, which are activated with corresponding bursts of light.
- These patterns can be stored in the device and used during performance.
- Yamaha financed the prototype and put the instrument on the market.
- Used in the performance the Sonar in Barcelona along with Sound-Lens.



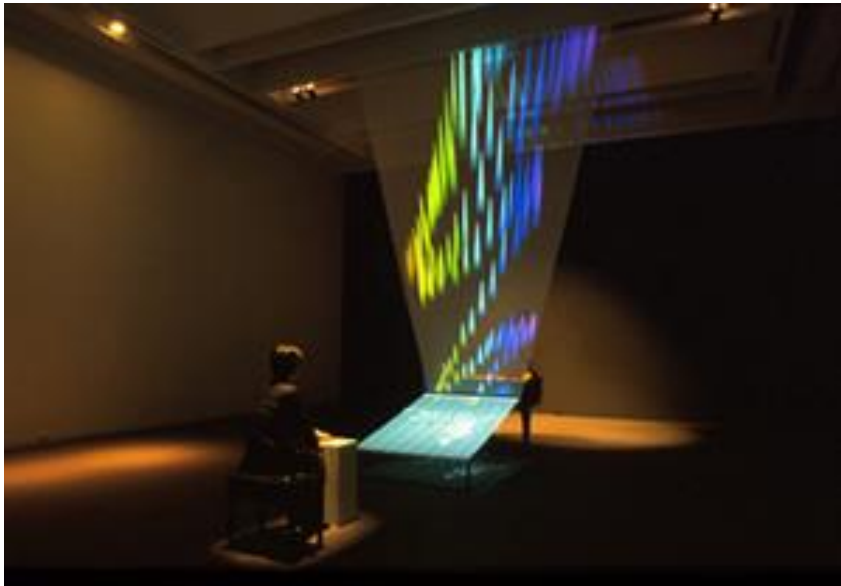


# *Sound-Lens 2001*

- First realized as an installation piece then used at Sonar performance as a musical instrument.
- For the installation version, participants are given Sound-Lens receiver and headset.
- Participants walk around the exhibit in search for light sources on the walls and ceilings.
- Sounds will be heard when the receiver is held up against the lights.
- Transformation of sounds interactively by moving the receiver around, adjusting its distance or angle towards the light sources.
- For the performance, the LED lights were played in a musical scale and played by moving the across the lens vertically or horizontally with the receiver.

# *Other installations by Toshio Iwai*

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Piano – As Image Media  
1995

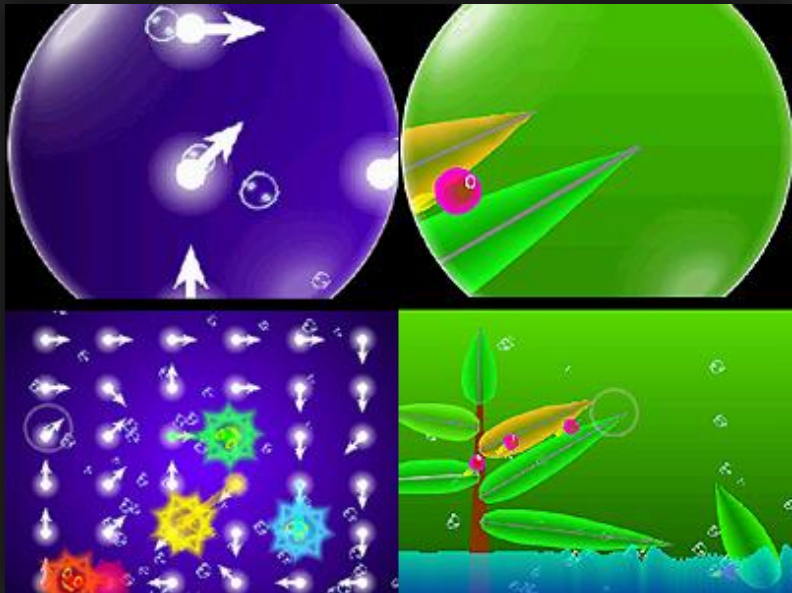


Composition on the Table  
1998/99



# *Electroplankton*

- Developed and released by Nintendo for NDS.
- A water-based world with ten types of “electric plankton” creatures
- Based on user’s touch and voice.
- Different segments such as “Volvoice”, a plankton that modifies the user’s voice with a variety of effects.
- A segment is “Nanocarp”, a screen full of tiny plankton that form shapes and patterns in response to the sound of the user’s voice and clapping of hands.
- Audience mode allowing the user to sit back and let the plankton play music automatically.

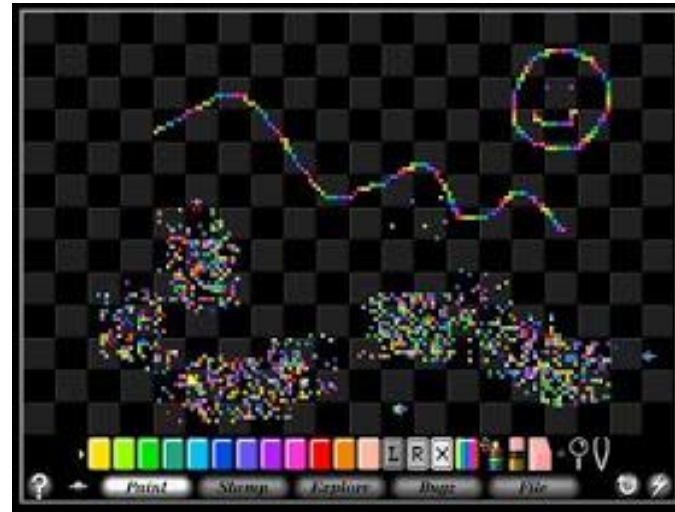


# *Other games designed by Toshio Iwai*

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Otocky 1987



SimTunes 1996



Bikkuri Mouse 2000





## *What inspired me?*

- Interception of mediums he uses
- New sensibility by bringing music visually and vice versa, listening to the lights
- Whimsically and childlike elements

“I've been longing for the feeling of my childhood in the digital world and that is why I've been sticking to relations among media, machine(s), and people through interactive works.”

-Toshio Iwai

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