



Strings of my Soul

[Tak Matsumoto](#)

[335 Records](#) - CD335-1208

Available from [335 Records](#).

A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange
by **Mark S. Tucker**
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Pity the critic. He has to undo all the false hype surrounding the poor artists who otherwise would have to labor under the burden of errant attributions. Promo lit claims Tak Matsumoto to be "the most renowned guitarist in all of Asia", a patently untrue arrogation on someone's part. Kazumi Watanabe and Masayoshi Takanaka, to name just two among many more, far exceed this guy...which is not to disparage him at all but only to remove what can only work against a guy who himself never made any such claim. In fact, as shown on *Strings of my Soul*, Matsumoto is a very lyrical player who often reaches for Jeff Beckian flash to get his outside contrasts. In terms of approach, Tak's more like Blonker and some of the obscurer Euro stringbenders who favored a measured and mostly upbeat style, very close to lite jazz if indeed not the thing itself...appropriately.

American whiz-bang Larry Carlton joins Matsumoto on one cut, the immortal *Sukiyaki*, and—now this is weird—monsterfingers guitarist Steve Vai sits in on another, the closer, *Romeo & Juliet*, but only to intone the introductory very short poem. Yep. Don't ask me why, I couldn't even begin to guess, but I dig that kind of eccentricity. And the cut itself is an adagio approach to the famed Rota song sounding like a combo of the old Ferrante & Teicher duo teamed with Gabor Szabo, more than once offset by lively interpositions. Neil Schon's sky-high solo New Agery even enters in as well for some vaulting interludes, but *Strings of my Soul* in whole is a mellow E-Z Listening gatherum designed to sooth the spirit and nerves after a tough day at the office and maddening freeway home.

Track List:

- The Moment (Tak Matsumoto)
- Live Life (Matsumoto / Reynosa / Brown)
- Trinity (Tak Matsumoto)
- Blue (Tak Matsumoto)
- Hana (Tak Matsumoto)
- Koi-Uta (Tak Matsumoto)
- Sasanqua - Winter Sun (Tak Matsumoto)
- The Wings (Tak Matsumoto)
- Sukiyaki (Nakamura / Ei)
- My Favorite Things (Rodgers / Hammerstein)
- Romeo & Juliet (Nino Rota)

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