



**Department of Housing, Economic Development & Commerce**  
**Artist Certification Board**

**Inter-Office Memorandum**

**DATE:** April 8, 2025  
**TO:** Christopher Langston, Chairman  
**FROM:** Joey-Ann Morales, Division of City Planning  
**SUBJECT:** Artist Certification Approval

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*The Following individual was recommended for approval by the Artist Certification Board (ACB) and await certification at the next Planning Board Meeting.*

<u>Name</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
Nobuki Takamen	Music	1,2,3,4,5

*\*The following shall serve as criteria to be used by the ACB in certifying an artist: 1) the artists' commitment to the fine arts as a career; 2) the need for large loft space in which to create his or her art; 3) education; 4) current body of work; 5) exhibition record; 6) references from other artists or art professionals. In no event shall the content of the art created be used as a criterion to determine eligibility to occupy work/live space in the WALDO.*

# Artist Certification Application

(Each individual applicant should submit a separate application.)

**Date**

2/24/2025

**Name**

Nobuki Takamen

**Home Phone**

(201) 284-9462

**Mobile Phone**

(201) 284-9462

**Email Address**

nobukitakamen@hotmail.com

**Address**

30 Erie Street #2, Jersey City, New Jersey 07302

**Fine Arts Discipline**

Music (Guitarist/Composer)

**Do you currently reside in a work/live space?**

No

**What is your current amount of work space?**

36

**How much work/live space will you need?**

250

## PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

**1. Describe your particular art form and explain why a large space is necessary for its creation.**

As a jazz guitarist and composer, I have toured and performed my original compositions internationally. In recent years, I've been focusing on music education, and my first guitar method book was published last year, with a second book to follow in March of this year. In order to share my performance experiences, I post weekly lesson videos on my YouTube channel.

The reason why I need a large space is to film lesson videos, and to record sound sources for instructional material and my upcoming musical projects.

**2. Submit a fine arts (non-commercial) resume pertinent to your work. Include educational background, professional training, public exhibitions and/or performances, critical reviews, awards and fellowships. Be sure to include dates.****Fine Arts Resume**

Resume Nobuki Takamen.pdf

3. Submit dated documentation appropriate to your particular art form. Your documentation should reflect a body of work over the last 5 years, up to and including recent work. Student work, in and of itself, will not meet the criteria for certification. Below are examples of the kinds of support materials that should accompany your application: *(Applicants must upload or mail in examples. Staff does not have access to certain websites)*

- 15-20 examples; CD, website or slide sheet, scores, tapes or photographs of work completed in the last 5 years; dated announcements, catalogs, reviews, articles, etc.

#### 15 - 20 Examples

02 Just One Story.mp3

All documentation should include, where appropriate, the date of creation, medium, size and title of the work.

In some cases, the Artists' Certification Board may request more support materials such as recommendations, transcripts, and or an interview with the applicant.

**ALL SUPPORT MATERIALS BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE JERSEY CITY PLANNING DIVISION AND WILL BE KEPT IN A PUBLIC RESOURCE REGISTRY. THEY WILL NOT BE RETURNED.**

**DO NOT SUBMIT ORIGINAL WORK.**

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The undersigned hereby certifies that he or she is currently engaged in the fine arts as a career, and that the statements and information set forth above and/or annexed to this application are true to the best of his or her knowledge, and that the materials submitted in support of this application represent the applicant's own work.

**Signature**

**Date**

2/24/2025

*Nobuki Takamen*

## ARTICLE II

## LAND USE BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND ADVISORY BOARDS

## 345-11 ARTIST CERTIFICATION BOARD

### A. Establishment of an Artist Certification Board

1. There is hereby created an Artists' Certification Board (ACB), which shall serve as a citizens advisory board to the Planning Board, pursuant to N.J.S.A.40:55D-27.a. The ACB shall be in, but not of, the Division of City Planning. The ACB is essentially an artists peer review committee. In order to reside in a work/live studio in the WALDO, an artist must be so certified by the Planning Board. The Planning Board shall be guided in this certification by the recommendation made by the ACB. The Planning Board may reject the recommendation of the ACB, but the reasons for such rejection must be clearly stated in the resolution approved by the Board.
2. The ACB shall be comprised of persons knowledgeable in the arts. It shall consist of five (5) full members, with no more than two (2) additional alternate members who may vote in the absence of full members. A minimum of three (3) full members of the ACB shall be professional artists. All members shall be appointed by the Mayor. After the initial appointments are made, all terms shall run for four (4) years.
3. The ACB shall review applications filed by persons who are interested in occupying work/live space in the WALDO as either owners, tenants or sub-tenants, to determine if the applicant can be certified to occupy such space.
4. The following shall serve as criteria to be used by the ACB in certifying an artist: 1) The artists' commitment to the fine arts as a career; 2) The need for large loft space in which to create his or her art; 3) Education; 4) Current body of work; 5) Exhibition record; 6) References from other artists or art professionals. In no event shall the content of the art created be used as a criterion to determine eligibility to occupy work/live space in the WALDO.
5. The recommendation of the ACB to the Planning Board shall be submitted to the Planning Board within thirty (30) days of the ACB's decision, and shall state the reasons for the decision with specific reference to one or more of the criteria set forth in paragraph four 4 (above).
6. Once an artist is certified by the Planning Board, the Planning Board shall forward a copy of its certification decision to the Zoning Officer, who shall retain the certification in the Zoning Officer's files. The certification shall expire ten (10) years after the date of the decision by the Planning Board. Renewal applications may be filed. In the event a certified artist is divorced or dies, the family of the artist occupying the work/live space shall be given a two (2) year grace period.

HEDC/Artist Certification Board

1 Jackson Square

Jersey City, NJ 07305

(201) 547-5010

**Nobuki Takamen**  
30 Erie Street #2  
Jersey City, NJ 07302  
Phone: (201)284-9462  
Email: [nobukitakamen@hotmail.com](mailto:nobukitakamen@hotmail.com)

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

### **Educator (September 2004 - Present)**

- Teaching credentials including Guitar Weeks at Berklee College of Music, jazz master class at C-Jazz Camp as part of the Calgary Jazz Festival (Canada), and jazz workshops at the Nisville Jazz Festival (Serbia), at the Medicine Hat Jazz Fest (Canada), and the Lethbridge Jazz & Blues Festival (Canada)
- Collaborative jazz guitar workshop with John Stowell at JazzYYC (Canada)
- Teaching average of 70 jazz guitar students each month on a regular basis, and having taught hundreds of students in the USA, Canada, Europe and Japan since 2004
- Published the first guitar method book "Fretboard Visualization for Guitarist" (Shinko Music, March 2024)

### **Jazz Guitarist - Bandleader (June 2007 - Present)**

International Tours and Performances at

- Montreal International Jazz Festival - multiple times with different instrumentations
- Rochester International Jazz Festival
- Vancouver International Jazz Festival
- DC Jazz Festival
- Greater Hartford Festival of Jazz
- Jersey City Jazz Festival
- Riverview Jazz Festival
- Medicine Hat Jazz Fest (Canada)
- Lethbridge Jazz & Blues Festival (Canada)
- Calgary Jazz Festival (Canada) - shared the bill with Hiromi's Sonic Boom
- Jazz YYC Summer Jazz Fest (Canada)
- ECU (France)
- JazzVez (Croatia)
- Nisville Jazz Festival (Serbia) - shared the bill with the Original Blues Brothers Band
- Petrovac Jazz Festival (Montenegro)
- Sumida Jazz Street (Japan)
- Santo Music Street (Japan)
  
- Iridium Jazz Club
- Blue Note New York
- Smalls Jazz Club
- Blues Alley

- Martha Cohen Theatre (Canada)
- Malmitalo (Finland)
- iF Cafe (Hungary)
- Foojohn Jazz Club (Thailand)
- Tokyo TUC (Japan)

### **Jazz Guitarist - Solo (July 2009 - Present)**

International Solo Performances at

- Montreal International Jazz Festival (Canada) - as part of 100% Guitare
- Lethbridge Jazz Festival (Canada)
- Medicine Hat Jazz Fest (Canada)
- Esplanade Arts & Heritage Centre (Canada)
- Residence of the Japanese Ambassador in Washington, D.C.
- NAMM Show 2018

### **Composer and Recording Artist (January 2005 - Present)**

Released seven leader albums with mostly original compositions

- Blues Blues (What's New Records 2006)
- FROM NOW ON (What's New Records 2008)
- Live at the Iridium (Summit Records 2010)
- Three Wishes (Summit Records 2012)
- Solo Guitar (Self-Produced 2014 )
- Live in Japan (Self-Produced 2016)
- The Nobuki Takamen Trio (Self-Produced 2018)
- Original USB Memory with High Resolution Audio of the last three albums (2019)
- Life is Now (Self-Produced 2020)

Feature Articles on

- Jazz Podium (Germany)
- Jazz Japan (Japan)
- Jazz Guitar Book (Japan)
- Jazz Guitar Magazine (Japan)

CD Reviews on

- Downbeat
- Vintage Guitar Magazine
- Just Jazz Guitar
- L.A. Jazz Scene
- AllAboutJazz
- New York City Jazz Record
- Jazzwise (UK)
- Jazz Podium (Germany)
- Jazz'n'more (Switzerland)
- Jazz Special (Denmark)
- Musica Jazz (Italy)
- Jazz Life Magazine (Japan)

- Swing Journal (Japan)
- Jazz Guitar Book (Japan)
- Jazz Japan (Japan)

### **Self-Promoting Musician (June 2006 - Present)**

- Planned, booked and organized all the international tours mentioned above as a self manager
- Promoted all of the above mentioned albums as a self publicist and obtained feature articles and CD reviews in many publications worldwide
- Had a successful promotion for the latest album as a self publicist, and gained more than 400,000 streams on Spotify in less than 6 months

## **EDUCATION**

- Berklee College of Music, Boston, MA (2001 - 2004)  
Diploma of Professional Music, Summa Cum Laude
- Obirin University, Tokyo, Japan (1996 - 2000)  
Bachelor of Arts Degree in English
- Studied jazz guitar with:  
Sheryl Bailey, Jon Wheatley, Gene Bertoncini, Bruce Saunders, Bret Willmott, Mick Goodrick, Satoshi Inoue, Nobuyuki Oka and Steve Cardenas
- Studied music theory, arranging and composing with:  
Steve Rochinski and Ted Pease

## **AWARD**

- Winner of the 2019 USA Songwriting Competition (Instrumental Category)
- Professional Education Division Achievement Award 2004, Berklee College of Music

## **COMPUTER SKILLS**

- Proficient in notation softwares such as Finale and Neck Diagrams to support teaching as well as concert preparation
- Basic knowledge of iMovie, Adobe Photoshop and Avid Pro Tools to create videos, sound tracks and thumbnails for YouTube, Instagram and other social media

## ADDITIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

### **Brand Ambassador of Eventide Inc., NJ (April 2015 - February 2018)**

- Worked on social media marketing to promote their products in Japan
- Japanese/English translation on Eventide app, products manuals, video subtitles and press releases
- Created gear demo videos of various algorithms from the company such as gain-staging effects, time effects, modulation effects, and frequency effects

## QUOTE

"the best jazz guitarist Japan has ever produced."

– AllAboutJazz, The Nobuki Takamen Trio CD review (5 stars)

"a mature player with keen sense of composition [and] considerable technical skill"

– Vintage Guitar Magazine, Live at the Iridium CD review

"... an excellent improviser in his own bop-inspired style..."

– L.A. Jazz Scene, Live at the Iridium CD review

"Guitarist Nobuki Takamen has taken his Gibson around the world... and made his name in jazz with range from pensive to passionate!"

– Montreal Jazz Festival

"Nobuki is best in a simple trio setting."

– DownBeat Magazine, Three Wishes CD review

"... Takamen is a master. Beautiful solo guitar."

– Vintage Guitar Magazine, Solo Guitar CD review

"Takamen, like Joe Pass, sounds like a complete group by himself... throughout the set invigorates the tradition of straight ahead jazz guitar."

– Scott Yanow, Solo Guitar CD review

"Apart from his unique phraseology, and a self-evidence for a wide harmonic landscape, he furthermore draws from a multitude of different genres and melts them into something distinctively his own."

– AllAboutJazz, The Nobuki Takamen Trio CD review

"Takamen has been able to distill a personal approach as well as develop considerable compositional skills."

– The New York City Jazz Record, The Nobuki Takamen CD review

"Jim Hall meets Wes Montgomery on their way to a Kenny Burrell show."



– Critical Jazz, Three Wishes CD review