

Hitomi Shimatani - 島谷ひとみ



Questions by Sean Cruz & Hiroyuki Kozuma

As a teenager you entered “The Japan Audition 1997”, and you were selected from over 200,000 entrants by Avex. How empowering is that for you?

I wasn't particularly self-confident, I think that I was just a lucky girl who took a chance.

What was going through your head during that audition?

I wasn't really thinking about anything, honestly.

You first debuted with an enka song that sold over 48,000 copies, but then you suddenly switched to a more pop sound. Was there any particular reason for the change and do you still try to incorporate elements of enka music in your songs?

Well, in planning for a TV program I was originally going to sing a more pop-ish tune because that's what we had been practicing, but I ended up singing in enka instead! Now I try to have a natural sound, I don't intentionally put an enka or pop or Japanese sound “just because”

Your third single “Papillon” is a cover of the Janet Jackson song “Doesn't Really Matter”. What influenced you to record a cover of her song, and has she heard your version of it?

I don't know if she's heard it or not. It was originally an idea from a staff member.

What separates you from other Japanese pop artists?

No matter what I sing, I think that my songs have a distinctly Asian tune, but I want to challenge all genres

What is a day in the life of Hitomi Shimatani like?

Often laughing, speaking, crying, and singing.

You've also done some acting as well, in the Drama "Boku Dake no Madonna" and on stage in the Japanese production of Anne of Green Gables. What major differences are there between acting on camera and acting on stage, and would you consider pursuing more acting roles in the future?

Acting on stage can bring out rich feelings when you're performing live. You can portray your character 360 degrees. Acting for a camera is more fragmented.



What sort of image do you think you portray to your fans?

I would like to have a variety of images like the 7 colors of the rainbow

You've recorded songs for anime series such as InuYasha, Black Jack 21 and the Law of Ueki, and also for the video game Another Century's Episode 3 The Final. Were there any differences in how you approached composing these songs as opposed to a normal single? For example were there any specific themes that the creators wanted you to portray in these particular songs?

The first consideration is that the song fits the world of the anime, and that the song reflects a faithful representation of the animated world. We want to unite the worlds of the creator and the singer in the anime.

A question more than a few guys want to know, are you single or are you dating?

.I am single. However my heart always beats with desire.

What does success mean for Hitomi Shimatani?

Continuance, effort, and infinity.

What artist or band would you like to record a song or perform with?

I want to sing with Janet Jackson.

Many young girls have aspirations of becoming a famous actor or singer. What advice do you have for them?

Aim for your dream while enjoying it. If it's your favorite thing, just do it without consciously thinking about it, just make the effort to do it.

From this point forward, what would you like to accomplish in your career?

I want to keep expanding the capacity of the life I want to live.



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