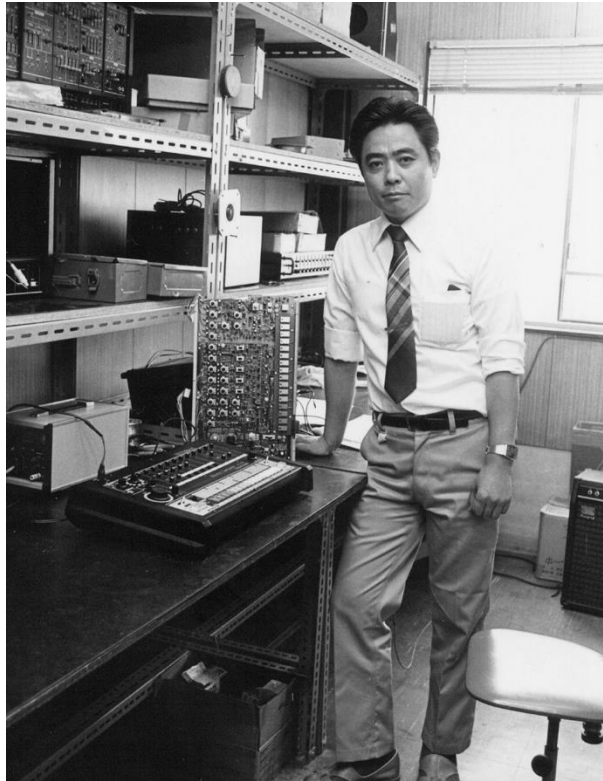




Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Roland Announces MIDI Association to Honor Roland Innovator Tadao Kikumoto with MIDI Lifetime Achievement Award



While Leading Roland R&D Kikumoto Offered Innovative Ideas for Early MIDI 1.0 Development and Helped Revolutionize Digital Music Production

Anaheim, CA, January 21, 2025 — [Roland](#) proudly announces that the [MIDI Association](#) will honor Tadao Kikumoto, a visionary innovator from Roland, with the MIDI Lifetime Achievement Award during The NAMM Show 2025. Kikumoto played a pivotal role in shaping the MIDI 1.0 protocol, which revolutionized music production by creating a universal communication standard for musical instruments and equipment. As head of Roland's R&D team at the time, his contributions helped drive advancements in digital music technology and revolutionized music creativity. Paul McCabe, Roland's Vice President of Research and Innovation and head of the Roland Future Design Lab, will accept the award on Kikumoto's behalf.

During his 30+ years with Roland, Kikumoto helped shape the history of music by designing the TB-303 Bass Line synthesizer and the TR-909 Rhythm Composer drum machine. As chief engineer, he also led the development of the world-renowned Roland TR-808 Rhythm Composer drum machine. During his tenure at Roland, he also served as President, Chief Operating Officer, as well as the Senior Managing Director and the head of the R&D Center.

These groundbreaking products, along with other innovative Roland creations, not only showcased Kikumoto's dedication and decades of expertise but also served as the foundation for the emergence of revolutionary musical genres such as hip-hop and techno.

Kikumoto's suggestions for the early MIDI 1.0 spec included adding Tempo, Start, and Stop messages, which are vital to ensuring multiple pieces of gear work together in synchronization—key to contemporary music production and live performances with products that continue to evolve today. The development of DCB, a dedicated communication system for the original, now legendary, Roland JUPITER and JUNO keyboard synthesizer models, was also happening parallel to MIDI's development and led by Kikumoto.

Roland CEO and Managing Director Masahiro Minowa stated, *"The intersection of innovation and creativity has always been at the core of Roland's research and development mission. This mission, initiated decades ago by Roland's founders, was championed by trailblazers like Kikumoto and continues to inspire the future of music. Our teams at Roland are deeply excited by the ongoing evolution of music and creator technology and are honored to play pivotal roles in designing the future."*

Learn more about MIDI and the latest innovations to Roland's growing product line [here](#). Check out Kikumoto's groundbreaking contributions to the development of early MIDI protocols [here](#).

NAMM All Access from the Roland Studio

Roland will bring together its renowned brands—Roland, BOSS, Drum Workshop (DW), PDP, and Latin Percussion (LP)—in a Roland-exclusive NAMM All Access from the Roland Studio showcase, located on the second floor of the Anaheim Convention Center during The NAMM Show 2025. In addition to in-person brand and product experiences, NAMM All Access from the Roland Studio will provide a curated stream of digital content, allowing music fans worldwide to get a behind-the-scenes look at the NAMM experience, directly from Roland. Sign up here for the latest NAMM All Access from the Roland Studio details: https://www.roland.com/us/news_events/global_events/namm_2025/.

To learn more, visit [Roland.com](https://www.roland.com).

About Roland Corporation

For more than 50 years, Roland's innovative electronic musical instruments and multimedia products have fueled inspiration in artists and creators around the world. Embraced by hobbyists and professionals alike, the company's trendsetting gear spans multiple categories, from pianos, synthesizers, guitar products, drum and percussion products, DJ controllers, audio/video solutions, gaming mixers, livestreaming products, and more. As technology evolves, Roland and its expanding family of brands, including Roland Cloud, BOSS, V-MODA, Drum Workshop (DW), PDP, Latin Percussion (LP), and Slingerland, continue to lead the way for music makers and creators, providing modern solutions and seamless creative workflows between hardware products, computers, and mobile devices. For more information, visit [Roland.com](https://www.roland.com) or see your local Roland dealer. Follow Roland on [Facebook](#), Twitter ([@RolandGlobal](#)), and Instagram ([@RolandGlobal](#)).

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