



## John Coltrane's 1966 Yamaha Nippon Gakki Alto Saxophone

### Date

1966

### Primary Maker

John Coltrane

### Medium

Metal; Plastic

### Description

John Coltrane's 1966 Yamaha Nippon Gakki Alto Saxophone, made in Japan, serial #015, with case. The saxophone is brass construction with the Yamaha logo and "Nippon Gakki" below the bell. This alto saxophone was produced in 1966 and was one of the first productions

of Yamaha's alto and tenor instruments. It was gifted from the Yamaha Corporation in Japan to John Coltrane to inspect and evaluate it. This prototype saxophone later became the model "YAS-1" in 1967. When Coltrane toured Japan in 1966, representatives of Yamaha approached him about sponsorship. Two years earlier they had begun the research and development that would lead to the introduction of their first saxophones to be brought to market, in 1967. Reportedly, Mr. Ota of Yamaha's wind instrument division brought Coltrane a variety of their horns to try, as models for his own custom saxophone the company would make. Coltrane chose this horn, and gave Yamaha feedback about how they could improve their instruments, however he passed away a year later, before his custom instrument was finished (the company gave a similar prototype alto to Coltrane's band-mate, Pharoah Sanders.) Coltrane played this horn during his two-week Japanese tour, which Coltrane biographer Eric Nisenson called "probably the single greatest triumph of his life". He can be heard playing the Yamaha alto on various live albums recorded in Japan including *Coltrane in Japan* and the four CD collection *Live in Japan* (Coltrane is pictured on the cover of *Live in Japan* playing the alto). Notably, Coltrane used the alto on a 57-minute version of "My Favorite Things" recorded at Sankei Hall in Tokyo, which biographer Nisenson calls "astonishing," noting "the change from his usual soprano sax aids him in rediscovering new beauty along the way for this, his signature tune". On Coltrane's return to the United States, he played this alto sax in concert and during at least one recording session, the posthumously released *Stellar Regions* (1995). John Coltrane (1926-1967) was an American jazz saxophonist, composer, and bandleader who was one of the most influential figures in 20th century American jazz music. Coltrane began playing saxophone at a young age. Coltrane spent one year in the Navy, where he played saxophone with Navy musicians. After leaving the military, Coltrane moved back to Philadelphia, PA, where he became a

member of the city's burgeoning jazz scene. He studied music theory at the Granoff School of Music and played with groups led by Jimmy Heath, Dizzy Gillespie, and Charlie Parker. Although Coltrane started his career playing alto saxophone, he switched to tenor saxophone around 1947. In 1955, Coltrane was asked by jazz trumpeter Miles Davis to join a new quintet, where he appeared with the band until 1957 - including on four albums that were recorded in 1956. In late 1957, Coltrane began playing with jazz pianist Thelonious Monk for a brief period, but rejoined Davis where he remained until 1960. Coltrane appeared on Davis' seminal album *Kind of Blue* (1959). The 1960s saw Coltrane creating his own compositions, with his album *Giant Steps* (1960) foreshadowing his experimental sound of later recordings. From 1962 to 1965, Coltrane assembled what was known as the "classic quartet," consisting of him, pianist McCoy Tyner, bassist Jimmy Garrison, and drummer Elvin Jones. Their 1964 album, *A Love Supreme*, was the Coltrane's best-selling work. In 1965, Coltrane took his music in an avant-garde direction, which featured more spontaneous and improvisational music. The Classic Quartet disbanded, and were replaced by Pharoah Sanders on saxophone, his wife Alice Coltrane on piano, Garrison on bass, and drummer Rashied Ali. This lineup was intact during the group's tour of Japan in 1966. Coltrane died of liver cancer on July 17, 1967, aged 40.

3D Model

John Coltrane Saxophone

by Znyth Technologies

on Sketchfab

Dimensions

Overall: 30 x 8 in. (76.2 x 20.3 cm)