

Hirota was born in Hokkaido, the northern island of Japan. He studied percussion and composition at the Kyoto Arts University and was invited to come to Europe as a musician at the Red Buddha Theatre, and also The Lindsay Kemp Dance Co as a percussionist, where he later became musical director, which won the Time Out Award for the best dance company for their production of ONNAGATA for which Hirota wrote and performed the music.

In 1991 he formed TRISAN with Guo Yue and Pol Brennan. They toured Europe, Canada, the USA and Japan and in 1993 TRISAN's first recorded album obtained the No.1 nomination by Tower Records New York for best contemporary instrumental music.

Joji Hirota founded Joji Hirota and Hiten Ryu Daiko in the early 80's, which is regarded highly as an established Japanese traditional and contemporary Taiko Drumming Group. They have performed at many events and festivals worldwide; the USA, Sri Lanka, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Germany, Turkey, Croatia, Korea, Poland, Australia, New Zealand, and more including many WOMAD festivals, Bruges, Interparla and Sibiu Festival, as well as many others in the UK. They have also been invited to perform in the middle east- to Saudi Arabia, Oman and UAE as part of the Japanese Government projects for the arts in 2007 and 2009.

In July 2000 Joji played a solo performance at the Hanover, Germany EXPO 2000, and it was also around this time that Joji started to play for the Royal Shakespeare Company as percussionist and co-composer for its production of "Macbeth".

During 2001, as part of the Japan UK Festival, Joji performed numerous concerts all over the UK with a new project TOZAI (Violin: M. Kino, Piano: R. Fujisawa, Shakuhachi: H. Kato) and as well as with his Taiko Group. In July, he also played at the WOMAD Reading festival with the London Metropolitan Orchestra String Ensemble.

July 2002 saw the release of the Japanese version the CD "The GATE" (UK version in 1999 from Real World Records) from EMI Japan, followed by the tour in Japan- Sapporo, Esashi and Tokyo with the LMO String Ensemble.

The JJK project comprising of Taiko and Shakuhachi playing (Hirota, John Kaizan Neptune, Kenny Endo) toured the UK (Queen Elizabeth Hall at South Bank, The Sage Gateshead, Bristol and WOMAD Reading) and also performed at the Czech International film festival in 2006 before later releasing an album.

Joji Hirota and the Taiko Drummers were the opening act for the LIVE EARTH concert at Wembley Stadium in 2007, and in the same year, the Czech Republic's most well known music group "Czechomor" invited Hirota to perform as a guest solo artist, then later also with his Taiko Drummers to play on their 2007 tour.

Russia's Terem Quartet invited Hirota to play as guest artist at the Kremlin Palace in Moscow in April 2008 and Hirota's Taiko Group was also the opening act for the 60th Anniversary of Amnesty International ceremony in London 2008.

To commend these and many other achievements throughout his career spanning more than 30 years, Hirota was awarded the Ambassador's commendation award in 2004 by the UK Japanese Embassy, presented by Ambassador Orita for his contribution to musical activity outside Japan, and was chosen as one of the 100 Japanese Respected In The World, in a poll vote in Newsweek 2007.

Now, as well as concert performances, an increasing demand for his compositions has seen his musical creations evolve into even more dynamic and versatile works, ranging from orchestral pieces for theatre and television, piano pieces, flute and string ensemble music, as well as Taiko. Projects include the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Wildlife and Survival documentary TV series- a collaborative project with composer Anthony Phillip, BBC Drama and other commercial works reaching worldwide. On Japanese TV, NHK used his music for the Kumano Kodo episode of the World Heritage series.