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Digital Garage Hosted “Digital Garage First Penguin Award 2017”, which Honors Leaders who Creatively Challenge The World ~2017 recipient : world-renowned artist Ryuichi Sakamoto~

Digital Garage, Inc. (TSE first section: 4819, HQ: Shibuya-ku, Tokyo; Representative Director, President Executive Officer and Group CEO: Kaoru Hayashi; DG) held the “Digital Garage First Penguin Award 2017” on August 29, 2017 to honor and celebrate those who engage in creative challenges in the global fields of science, art, and sports. This year’s award ceremony honored the world-renowned artist Ryuichi Sakamoto.

From the time of its founding, DG has referred to the stance of tackling challenges without fear of risk as the “First Penguin Spirit”. The phrase is an analogy evoking the bravery of penguins, which place themselves in peril by diving from the tips of the iceberg into the cold water to catch prey. “Digital Garage First Penguin Award” celebrate those who embody the First Penguin Spirit by simultaneously engaging in creative activities on a global scale and actively contributing to the education of future generations.



Since his debut, Ryuichi Sakamoto has brought cutting edge technology to the global music scene by conducting Japan’s first ever Internet concert and utilizing social media for the “skmtSocial Project”, as well as other creative initiatives that rode the wave of the Internet which exceeded existing frameworks in the process. In recent years, he has founded charity organizations such as the forest preservation project “more Trees” and the “School Music Revival” Fund, which raised money to inspect and repair the musical instruments owned by kindergarten, elementary, middle, and high schools affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami. After completing the instrument repair efforts, he founded the “Tohoku Youth Orchestra” that has continued to use music to support recovery efforts in the Tohoku region. Sakamoto has also organized television and web video programs where he spreads the joy of music through discussions, instructions, and performances. It was this ability to break new ground with his creativity and his efforts to communicate his experiences to audiences around the world that led us to select him for the Digital Garage First Penguin Award 2017.

<Comments from Ryuichi Sakamoto>

“Upon hearing that Digital Garage, a company that was co-founded by my friend Joi Ito, had chosen me as the recipient for the “Digital Garage First Penguin Award 2017”, my first thought was that it is a very clever name for an award. I decided without hesitation to accept the award because of its modest name. However, it does beg the question, “what is a first penguin?” It is true that in the 70’s, I composed songs with computers and became the first in the world to record an album using a sampler. In 1995, I was the first in Japan to broadcast a concert over the Internet. (It still burns me that in global terms, I was the second to do so by losing out to the Rolling Stones). In 1996, I also became the first Japanese artist to hold a concert in China. The next year, I organized the MAA Study Group to raise awareness of disputes involving musical copyright management methods. During my concert tour that year, we incorporated a number of interactive elements using the Internet. Backstage, we had an entire room filled with dozens

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of network and computer engineers, with enough computers to easily exceed a billion yen in costs. In those ancient times, everyone would happily participate in what they saw as a “great experiment”.

All of these actions were indeed leaps from the edge of the ice.

In all honesty though, Joi Ito and Mr. Hayashi, the current Digital Garage CEO, are first penguins too. I hope that we can continue to dive into the deep seas together. Please accept my gratitude for honoring me with this wonderful award.

- Ryuichi Sakamoto

<Photos from the press conference>





Digital Garage

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Digital Garage, Inc.

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Digital Garage is continuously supporting those who are challenging globally and creatively while contributing to nourish future generation by inheriting the First Penguin Spirit in Sports, Technology, Marketing Technology, Financial Technology and the Arts.