

# LOUDNESS



Loudness was formed in May 1981, after Akira TAKASAKI and Munetaka HIGUCHI left the Japanese pop band Lazy to explore heavier styles of music. Based on their early sound, it would seem that they wanted to become the "Van Halen" of Japan. Joined by the extremely capable vocalist Minoru NIIHARA (formerly from EARTHSHAKER) and Akira's childhood friend, Masayoshi YAMASHITA on bass guitar.

The band recorded their first album in August 1981, and upon release, it quickly made it up to the top of the Japanese charts. It was clear that Japan was looking for hard rock, and Loudness was the answer! The band toured Japan constantly, while pumping out ever more albums for their fans, until in 1984, they went overseas to record their fourth album- Disillusion. After recording, they toured Europe, thus gaining popularity on the international Metal scene.

The band continued to tour throughout the United States and Europe until 1988, when Minoru decided to call it quits and pursue his own musical career. Determined to push on, Loudness continued searching for a replacement, which they found in American vocalist Mike Vescera (formerly of Obsession). With Mike's supersonic vocals, the band released two more albums, with some of the most amazing guitar solos that Akira had ever played. After a few years, Mike quit the band, and was quickly replaced with former EZO vocalist Masaki YAMADA's raw style.

It was during this time that the band started exploring some new sounds, evolving their sound into a more basic, rhythmic expression combined with edgy, almost surreal vocals. While these albums didn't sound like much when stacked up against the operatic Loudness of old, the sheer power of their music had a tendency to grow on the listener.

In 1999, Akira decided that it was time to have a reunion, and by 2001, the band had started recording together once again, twenty years from when they were born. Even though the original members are all back, Loudness retained much of the same raw sound borne of the Yamada years, and with this sound, they will continue their sonic assault well into the new millennium.