

Ikutaro Kakehashi Roland Corporation Founder & Inventor Of The 808 Drum Machine Dies At 87



Ikutaro Kakehashi, who founded the Roland Corporation and invented the TR-808 drum machine died April 1st in Japan at the age of 87. Mr. Kakehashi's work is behind the sound of some of the most influential music of the past four decades. Hip-hop, house, pop and R&B have all been touched by the 808 drum machine.

Mr. Kakehashi started his career in the '50's as the owner of a watch and then radio repair shop. He was an engineer with an interest in music and in 1960 he started Ace Electronic Industries where he started designing organs and drum machines. In 1972 he launched the Roland Corporation and under his direction, the company would invent the TR-808, TB-303 and TR-909 drum machines.

The TR-808 was introduced in 1980 and since then has been heard in music from Afrika Bambaataa, Marvin Gaye, Whitney Houston and Depeche Mode among many others. Kanye West named *808's and Heartbreak* after the iconic machine.

[youtube id="9lDCYjb8RHk"] In 2015, *808*, the documentary was released and it featured several artists talking about the machine's influence over their artistry. [youtube id="LMPzuRWoNgE"] Â Kakehashi collaborated with then Sequential Circuits president Dave Smith to create the MIDI standard interface that allows computers and electronic devices to communicate with each other.

[youtube id="rjlSiASsUIs"]

[youtube id="Co0tTeuUVhU"]

In 2002, Mr. Kakehashi published his autobiography, *I Believe In Music*. Despite his previous successes he continued to work co-founding the ATV in 2014 after retiring from Roland in 2013.

[youtube id="Si58ujc6Lpw"]