Kenta Saito, Saxophone

Born in 1992 in the Adachi ward, Tokyo, Kenta Saito graduated from the Senzoku Gakuen College of Music receiving an award for excellence, before completing the special graduate course at the Tokyo University of the Arts. He studied saxophone under Hiromitsu Kanai, Kazuhiro Ninomiya, Nobuya Sugawa, Masato Ikegami and Hirokazu Hayashida as well as chamber music under Masato Ikegami and Sumichika Arimura. Saito was also trained by jazz saxophonists Tatsuya Sato and MALTA.

Saito was the recipient of the third prize at the 31st and 34th Japan Wind and Percussion Competition (saxophone division). He was selected to be a jury-recommended artist when he gained the grand prize at the 27th Omagari Newcomer Music Festival Competition (wind instruments division) organized by the city of Daisen, Akita, Japan. Saito was also the second prize winner at the 9th International Saxophone Competition held in Nova Gorica, Slovenia.

In 2019, Saito won the first prize at the Adolphe Sax International Saxophone Competition held in Belgium, receiving as well the award for the best performance of a new work, to become the first Japanese winner in seventeen years of this most prestigious competition in the saxophone world. To celebrate his brilliant success, a gala concert was held at the Bunkyo Civic Hall, Tokyo, in January 2020.

Currently an adjunct lecturer at the Senzoku Gakuen College of Music and a member of the saxophone quintet “Five by Five”, Saito also serves as a concertmaster of the Blitz Philharmonic winds based in Tokyo.