

## TAKUYA KURODA // *EVERYDAY*

**Genres:** jazz, funk, post-bop, neo-soul

**RIYL:** Makaya McCraven, Herbie Hancock, Kamasi Washington, Soulquarian collective, *Night Music*, Thundercat, Robert Glasper, Erykah Badu

---

Kobe-born, Brooklyn-based trumpeter **Takuya Kuroda** is dedicated, and his eighth studio record, *Everyday* is proof of that. Since the release of his soulful seventh effort, 2022's *Midnight Crisp* — a record praised by *PopMatters* as a “future classic” — Kuroda has not missed a beat. In his desire to achieve the “perfect blend of production and organic performance” the 45-year-old musician has continued to throw himself into his practice daily, nearly thirty years into his musical life. *Everyday* builds on and dives ever deeper into the hip hop and neo-soul elements of his previous work. It is a deliciously rhythmic enterprise and a triumph of genre-blending modern jazz. Kuroda's playing is sure-footed and pure — whether on the horn, synth, or Rhodes— and he virtuosically dances among infectious rhythms of his own creation.

Kuroda's twenty-one years in the United States have been fruitful. After studying composition at The New School, he threw himself into work, playing with **DJ Premier's Badder Band** and **Akoya Afrobeat** and recording as a sideman and bandleader for records on the likes of **Blue Note** and **Concord**. But as Kuroda himself says, “the only way to make the music that I want to make is to work hard, every day.” And so we have *Everyday*, a title which reflects, as Kuroda puts it, “that simple message.”

There is a certain duality to the title that taps into something profound about this music. “Everyday” of course means both daily and commonplace. While Kuroda's music is anything but average, there is something about the intrinsic and embedded nature of the day-to-day, the incidental rhythms of life, that is reflected and seductively expounded on here. Kuroda describes the process of recording *Everyday* like this: “Make tracks at home, bring them to the studio, add or replace sounds, invite musicians, repeat the process to polish the track — as I hear it.” There is both a no-nonsense work ethic here and also a sort of embeddedness, an *everydayness*, that Kuroda achieves through this practice which perhaps cannot be accessed if one simply waits to get to the studio to begin work. Kuroda builds, tweaks, plays and polishes until what's coming through the speakers matches what's been playing in his head *everyday*. This is exactly what ensures Kuroda's skillful synthesis of influences which Dean Van Nguyen noted while reviewing 2020's *Fly Moon Die Soon* for *Pitchfork*. One is left with that sense that Kuroda has been tapping it all out everywhere he goes, drumming his fingers on the diner counter, shuffling his feet along the pathway in the park, manifesting the rhythms of his mind. “Groove,” Kuroda says, “is the foundation for all the tracks on *Everyday*.”

And atop that strong foundation, brought to life by the energy of **David Frazier's** drumming, Kuroda's shimmering lyricism dances all over *Everyday*. His trumpet playing pops and weaves and rings on the title track and his melodies are, as he puts it, “singable” — profoundly so on

the album closer, “Curiosity,” on which Kuroda trades trumpet for flugelhorn. Before that, “Bad Bye” is a glittering and classic sounding neo soul effort, featuring a stunning performance from vocalist **FiJa**. It’s as though Kuroda plucked this track from a dream of **Mama’s Gun** — but, unmistakably, it’s Kuroda’s dream and so the song is Kuroda’s, entirely. Likewise with “Iron Giraffe,” in which Kuroda makes space for tenor saxophonist **Craig Hill** to weave a contemporary reverie of *Night Music*.

*Everyday* is hyperaware of a panoply of old ideas and a pantheon of old gods but as Kuroda engages these tropes and personalities day in and day out, he turns it all around in a style that’s undeniably cool and personal. As *Pitchfork* put it, “Kuroda’s skill is not drawing influence from so many different forms, it’s radiating joy in doing so.” And as Kuroda puts it, “I’m still learning everyday and trying to express myself more clearly in the form of music that I love.” It’s this sterling dedication that makes Takuya Kuroda and *Everyday* anything but commonplace.