

Autumn/Winter 2020

BAMBOO

Newsletter of the European Shakuhachi Society

NOWHERE II FESTIVAL

INTERVIEWS: UEDA RYŪ / JSPN / ARAKI KODO VI

MA / 間

SHAKUHACHI & CORONAVIRUS

CD REVIEWS / LOCKDOWN CULTURE / POETRY



Acknowledgements

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p. 6-7: Utagawa Hiroshige, Evening Snow at Kanbara,
from the series "Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō", ca. 1833–34

p. 8-27: Utagawa Hiroshige - Kisō Mountains in Snow, 1857

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European Shakuhachi Society Newsletter – 2020 Autumn/Winter

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INDEX

European Shakuhachi Society Newsletter – Autumn/Winter 2020

Letter from the editors	4
Letter from the chairperson	5
ESS Announcements: Nowhere II ESS Winter Festival 2021	6
Shakuhachi Terminology: MA – What is it?	8
尺八用語集: 間 – どうやって定義しますか?	18
Tanabe Houei – The heir of Ueda Ryū iemoto? <i>Interview by Kiku Day</i>	28
Japanese Shakuhachi Professional-players Network (JSPN) <i>Interview by ESS Newsletter</i>	36
Shakuhachi & Coronavirus – <i>Research Report by Dr. Osamu Kobayashi</i>	42
日本尺八演奏家ネットワーク (JSPN) インタビュー ESSニュースレターによる	44
Araki Kodo VI – <i>Interview by James Long</i>	50
The Bigger Picture – Images from Japan	54
Shakuhachi Resources:	
- Comprehensive Fingering Chart <i>by Ramon Humet</i>	65
- Min'yō Music <i>by David Hughes</i>	70
CD Reviews <i>by Brian Ritchie</i>	74
Lockdown Culture – Is there Anybody Out There?	80
Ha-Ha-Ro – Shakuhachi Humour, Poetry & More	84
ESS Members' Area – What's New? NowHere2020 Teaching Videos	86
ESS Membership	88
ESS – Ways to get In touch	89
ESS Newsletter guidelines for contributions	90

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear ESS members & shakuhachi people!

We are excited to present the first issue as the new publication team of the ESS: The Winter/Autumn edition 2020.

The ESS newsletter has had already a long history with the first issues having been published in July 2006 and it is of course a honour and responsibility to build on the work done by all the previous publication teams, but we hope we were able to expand the format with new flavours and also keeping it true to its purpose and tradition.

Starting with some general, cosmetic changes, we opted to call the newsletter 'Bamboo' as well as changing the format to a more landscape oriented presentation to be able to work more visually and create more possibilities to accommodate text and images according to the needs of the content.

As for new sections in the newsletter, we have now a dedicated part for Shakuhachi Resources. This will feature articles on shakuhachi techniques, playing guides as well as resources as notation with references to audio/video materials if available. This edition features a playing guide to a *min'yō* song presented by David Hughes as well as a comprehensive fingering chart by Ramon Humet.

The Shakuhachi Terminology section will feature explanations and discussions about important concepts in shakuhachi tradition and practice. This time we wanted to know about *ma*.

With our efforts to present a wide range of school and styles, we have interviews with Tanabe Houei (Ueda Ryū), Araki Kodo VI (a Kinko Ryū lineage) and the Japanese Shakuhachi Professional-players Network (JSPN), a cross-ryū organisation. The JSPN also made research into shakuhachi playing in the time of pandemics, and we are able to share a special contribution from Dr. Osamu Kobayashi with the shakuhachi community here.

One word about languages/translation - we chose to have the NL in English but we will present the original text/language when articles were received in other languages.

Pursuing more visual content we also feature now The Bigger Picture section where images tell stories instead of words. For our Review pages, we asked Brian Ritchie to give us his reflections on three recent CD releases. And for the lighter side of the shakuhachi you can visit our new HA-HA-RO/more merry pages, an area which acts as a sammelsurium of creative musings.

Last but not least we tell you what's new in the ESS Members' Area, this time you will be able to access numerous NowHere2020 teaching videos.

But everything starts at the beginning, so don't miss the letter from ESS chairperson, Horacio Curti, and the ESS announcement of the NowHere II Winter Festival on the next pages.

Happy reading & thanks again for all your contributions!

ESS Newsletter publishing team
Thorsten Knaub / Emmanuelle Rouaud

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Welcome shakuhachi enthusiasts

This year 2020 is reaching an end, and some might think 'not a moment too soon'. It has been a hard year at a global scale due to the pandemic and all its consequences on so many different fronts.

For some, it has been harder than for others, but I am sure all of us have been touched by it one way or another. My sympathies to those who are going through difficult times, and the hope that things get better soon.

Shakuhachi-wise, it has touched us in relation to lessons, concerts, events and many more things. We faced the postponement of our annual Summer meeting that was taking place in Dublin in July 2020. It was a pity, but at the same time it offered us the opportunity to have our very first shakuhachi online event, the NowHere2020. This was made possible by the efforts of the organizing team: Jim, Christophe, Thorsten and Markus, and the support of many others like Nigel and Nina; to all of them my gratitude.

On this event we found a strong tool (of a different nature than any face to face meeting) for our shakuhachi path together, and we believe on further exploring the format.

In this volume you will find the information for our second online event that hopefully will make the winter feel not so cold. This time we have to thank Michael, Nina, Jean-François and (again) Christophe and Markus (with the support of surely many others).

Finally, a word on the move of our association into France:

- Our association and our statutes are now legally registered in France.
- You might have received a communication by email including the attachment of a document in order for you to request us the transfer of your membership from the British based association into the French one. We need your expressed indication via that form so please fill it in and send it back to us following the instructions contained in that email (in case you have not received it, please contact our secretary Nina for support: member@shakuhachisociety.eu)
- Note that all membership periods will be kept untouched and that you need not worry about anything other than sending your filled in form to us

These are strange and hard times that call for many changes in our lives, maybe also in our shakuhachi ways. I hope that we can discover together new opportunities, that we can find ourselves inside shakuhachi and that we can share it the best way we can.

With my every best wish and the hope to meet face to face soon.

Horacio Curti
ESS chairperson

ESS ANNOUNCEMENTS

NowHere II

ESS Winter Shakuhachi Festival 6th & 7th February, 2021

A real potpourri just for you. To chase away those winter blues. Yes, it's NowHere II. Following on from the very successful online event in August, the ESS is pleased to announce that it will holding a 2 Day online Winter NowHere II Festival in February showcasing some of the finest players and teachers from Japan and Europe.

A real potpourri

John Kaizan Neptune who has written more pieces for shakuhachi that anyone else ever and in a wide variety of genres will share with us his approach to the art of composition and show us how we can do it ourselves.

Three leading performers will teach us how the same piece, the iconic *Tsuru no Sugomori* (The Nesting of Cranes), is approached and played by three different schools of shakuhachi. This is a unique opportunity made possible by ESS's remit to disseminate the rich diversity of shakuhachi styles which should be very insightful and of benefit to players of all levels.

A chance to learn two more honkyoku at Elementary-Intermediate level:

Shingetsu from Kokusai Shakuhachi Kenshūkan (KSK)
Higo-Sashi from Hijiri-kai

Tips and Techniques: Two sessions on how to approach and improve your daily practice by two leading performers.

Fee: 30 Euros for non-ESS members, 25 Euros for ESS members
Registration: Will be available shortly so please keep checking the ESS website.
Technology: Zoom

Schedule (all times are Central European Time)

Saturday 6th February

10.00 – 10.30 Tips & Techniques: John Neptune
10.45 – 12.00 Composing for Shakuhachi: John Neptune
1.00 – 2.15 KSK *Shingetsu*: Emmanuelle Rouaud
2.30 – 3.45 Hijirikai *Higo-Sashi*: Helene Seiyu Codjo

Sunday 7th February

10.00 – 10.30 Tips & Techniques: Antonio Enzan Olias
10.45 – 12.00 Kinko Ryū *Tsuru no Sugomori*: Mizuno Kohmei
1.00 – 2.15 Tozan Ryū *Tsuru no Sugomori*: Christophe Kazan Gaston
2.30 – 3.45 Miyata-kai *Tsuru no Sugomori*: Antonio Enzan Olias

Michael Soumei Coxall
on behalf of the NowHere II Team

nowhere2021.shakuhachisociety.eu

(Registration opens on 10th December)

NOWHERE II

SHAKUHACHI TERMINOLOGY

MA / 間

Often in Japanese aesthetics, and in particular in the context of honkyoku music we come across the concept of ‘Ma’ (間). ESS NL asked seven leading shakuhachi performers in Japan, representing a wide selection of schools and styles, to share with us their understanding of this important part of shakuhachi practice.

WHAT IS IT?

When being asked what is ‘ma’, I find it is something that is very hard to put into words.

In Western music, there are conductors, but in the Japanese performance arts, there are no conductors. Still, there are performers of different guilds who perform together on concert stages. I, personally, was warned several times by my teacher when I was young about the playing of sankyoku music with koto and a shamisen: If I try “to probe the other musicians’ intentions” as a guideline for my own playing, I would lose my own ‘ma’, and my playing would sound like a stretched rubber band. I was therefore told to keep my own ‘ma’. I believe it was because I was then still an inexperienced player and my ‘ma’ were not yet solid.

Once you enter the world of honkyoku, breathing techniques become really important. Are you able to breathe properly for each phrase? An inexperienced player will finish a phrase, take a shallow breath and play the next phrase with no ‘ma’ between. This will result in a performance in which the shape of the piece has crumbled. I believe ‘ma’ is an important part of a breathing technique.

I play a honkyoku style called Kinpū Ryū which has been handed down in the area of Tsugaru in northern Japan. In Kinpū Ryū there is a characteristic technique called komibuki (pulsating breath). I play komibuki from the abdomen, while many play komibuki with their mouths with a shallow, breath.

The late YAMADA Koyū, who was a shakuhachi aficionado and researcher of koten shakuhachi, told me about komi in nō, a style traditional Japanese theatre. In the world of Noh, different lemoto get together and perform on stage. They perform together without rehearsing in advance. Nevertheless their ‘ma’ fits perfectly. Apparently they call the ‘ma’ for komi.

For more on this, see YouTube [<https://youtu.be/iq0j86eiRqE>] Traditional Performing Arts Perspectives through Demonstrations and Stories<Part 4> The Vibrating “Sky” and Condensing “Nothingness”: Exploring the Secrets of Ma in Shakuhachi, Calligraphy and Noh<Part 2> Lecture 2. (Japanese)

But it seems that it is difficult to explain about ‘ma’.

In any case, the word ‘ma’ has been used in the ancient world of Japan’s classical arts and also in the world of samurai swords.

I think this is not something that can be expressed in words, but something that can be embodied in the body through practice.

MAEKAWA KOGETSU

Nezasaha Kinpū Ryū, Okamoto Chikugai lineage

Deep silence / ‘ma’

In shakuhachi honkyoku music where there is no beat, the silence between a sound to the next sound acquires a special significance. However, just leaving a gap without any aim makes it a dull ‘ma’.

In order to make the silent part meaningful, there are three processes that are important:

Firstly, to end the previous sound so quietly that you do not notice when it ended.

Secondly, although difficult to do, it is important to maintain a silent moment before the next inhalation. Once the sound is over, many would want to inhale immediately. It may be painful, but needs perseverance in order to preserve the vacuum.

The third process is to wait a short moment after inhaling before playing the next note. Ensuring this process will improve the impression of the space without sound, the ‘ma’.

There is one more method to deepen the ‘ma’ without sound, and I find this to be more important.

During the process of the silence after the previous note ends, before the inhalation, and the small amount of time it takes to produce the next note, one can create the next note in your head. Especially, if the next note is a meri note, it is important to create the meri sound in your mind based on the previous note that was played. Thereafter, one can actually play that sound. Of course, one has to make the right note in your mind, and the sound played has to match that right note in the mind. This requires deep concentration.

The concentration of the performer is transferred to the listeners. It creates deep silence. And the presence of deep silence makes the piece better.

In a sense it is the act of silence that makes the pitch more correct. The players’ efforts to play in tune will deepen the ‘ma’. There is no doubt about that.

KAKIZAKAI KAORU

President of Chichibu branch, Kokusai Shakuhachi Kenshūkan

Regarding the ‘ma’

Generally speaking, the ‘ma’ in music is the space in time between the reverberation of a fading sound and the next sound to come. There may be a more accurate definition, but since I am a Zen Buddhist monk, I will speak from the perspective of Zen and from the premise that I play the shakuhachi koten honkyoku.

In the practice of Zen, it is thoroughly taught that “heaven and earth are the same root, and all things and oneself are one. When we stand at a level of consciousness that transcends the sense of separation, we experience that we and the universe are one. In the Fuke school of Buddhism, “Ichion jōbutsu” (One note become a Buddha) means to reach the state of enlightenment by focusing on one note of the shakuhachi. In the process, it is necessary to unify one’s mind and become one with the shakuhachi and to become one with the sound of the shakuhachi. Simultaneously, it is necessary to become one with ‘ma’.

The only way to achieve this is to become completely mindless (or free from obstructive thoughts) and selfless. You have to get away from yourself. When we become mindless, a new thing is born from the absolute “emptiness”. Isn’t that the best thing that can happen to us, the ‘ma’ that emerges spontaneously, when not being caught up in anything?

ISO GENMYO

Head Priest, Itchoken Temple, Myoan Ryū

'Ma' is a concept that is brought up in discourses in various aspects of Japanese traditional culture. Academically, a large number of writings, which one ought to consult, exist as it is a concept hard to define. I will, therefore, describe my perceptions as a jinashi shakuhachi performer and researcher, which is also how it examples from my teaching.

Elements of Western music has during actively been incorporated into traditional Japanese music during the twentieth century, and I believe 'ma' is a very important concept in the performance of Japanese music from before that time (often referred to as *koten ongaku* or classical music). However, "classical music" in Japanese culture differs from "classical music" in the Western world because the musical style continuously changes, and the 'ma' played in *koten ongaku* at various venues today differs greatly from performer to performer. This is because in Japanese classical music, there is no "original version" or "urtext edition" (such as a musical score) to refer to as in Western classical music, and therefore changes in the structure and style of the music can happen. I have, therefore, sought to explain 'ma' by scrutinising references in other classical arts than shakuhachi music and in traditional cultures from before the Meiji era that did not involve sound.

When trying to explain 'ma' in a short sentence, I say it is "an unpredictable interval before the next note" in a musical performance. In a piece of music with a beat-like rhythm, the sound after the rest is predictable, and I believe that an optimal interval of time can be obtained. On the other hand, 'ma' is something we need to practice by sensing the timing of the 'ma' in music without any beat. Furthermore, this sense cannot be expressed in terms of time. It is rather a "spatial concept" because it may change depending on the place where the performance takes place, the distance between the performers and the audience, and the acoustic characteristics of the place.

For example, it can be compared to the parts in paintings, calligraphy, and flower arrangements where there is space or not drawn with ink. The way it is important in *kendo* and *judo* sense the distance to and breathing of the opponent, may be applied to the playing of the shakuhachi. I believe that the Zen way of thinking has also influenced the performing arts.

I think one of the most important aspects to keep in mind when playing the shakuhachi is not to make the listener sense that he or she is inhaling. Particularly in piece with no beat (free rhythm), the sound should be played in such a way that the listener does not know when it ended. It is then connected to the next sound. In the space of silence created before and after the sound, 'ma' comes alive. However, if you become aware of it, it seems to me that it ceases being 'ma'.

SHIMURA ZENPO
Chikuhō Ryū, Myōan Taizan Ha

I would like to answer your question on 'ma', but it is a very difficult one.

I think 'ma' is used in different situations.

The simplest example is to mark time with intervals of equal length.
For example to mark a tempo, such as a beat = 60

The second example is the insertion of non-determined length of time interval (vacuum) in the transition from one musical phrase to the next. The mechanism that enables multiple performers to begin the next phrase at the same time despite the absence of a conductor is 'ma'. How can performers start playing simultaneously? I cannot explain it, but there must be some mental factor, like *chi* or something else that allows them to start without a physical trigger. The same principle exists in sumo wrestling when the wrestlers stand up simultaneously to fight.

A third example is the expression "bad ma" (*ma ga warui*) which is used when it is hard to follow the flow of the conversation or the flow of the conversation is disrupted.

In the context of *honkyoku*

The music of *Kinko Ryū* is not based on the concept of a fixed tempo. However, it does not mean that you can play at any length you like. It is played at a fairly fixed tempo as taught by the teacher. When foreigners hear *honkyoku*, they often ask "Is that improvisation?" However, *honkyoku* is entirely different from improvisation.

The *Kinko Ryū* pieces, which have been handed down to us, are not a purely religious music, nor is it "music" the same way as Western music is. It is probably somewhere in between.

It expresses the beauty of the music while encompassing spirituality. If the interval of time when taking a breath is 'ma' I do not think there is any restriction on the length. Often taking a long and slow inhalation would make the music flow better.

MIZUNO KOHMEI
Head of Chikumeisha, Kinko Ryū

Regarding your question about the concept of the 'ma' in shakuhachi music,
"What is this 'ma'?" It is a "sound without a sound" if you ask me.

"What do you mean by that?" If you ask me, "This is not a rest" is the only way
I can think of describing it.

How do you use it?
How do you use it when you play?

Well, these question cannot be explained in words unless it is practiced, experienced.

One has to convey it directly through practice, not in words. (Futa-moji)

OKUDA ATSUYA
Zensabo

Ma/間 - What is it?

About 'Ma'

Various philosophical and spiritual studies have been made on the
subject of 'ma' in Japanese art. I am only a shakuhachi player, thus I will
speak from what I have noticed in my personal experience.

Before anything else, when looking up the meaning of 'ma' in a
Japanese-English dictionary, it is translated with many different English
words such as "while," "time," "interval," "space," "pause," "chamber,"
"chance," "apartment," "room," "entracte," "intervening," "as," etc. The
word 'ma' is an image with the meaning of all these words joined
together to form a complete whole or complete harmony. I believe
therefor that each performer has a different image of what is 'ma'.

My personal image of 'ma' is strongly inclined towards the meaning of
the following words: pause, silence and timing.

I am a performer, thus I therefore treat 'ma' as one of the techniques
available. It is a technique of not making a sound, so that I can focus
my mind and at the same time it can draw the attention of the
audience's.

Also, and this is my personal experience, but for me a 'ma' is like a
small window through which I can from this world peep onto the
other world. To me music is like a thin curtain at the border of this
world and the other world. There are a few small holes in the curtain.
These holes are 'ma' for me. When I was a child, it was sometimes
terrifying experience to listen to the sounds of Japanese instruments.
When there was space between sounds, or a 'ma', I felt a shiver as if
time stops and something comes into view through the blank space,
something that should not be seen. For me, 'ma' was also like an evil
spirit at the time.

KURAHASHI YODO
Director of Mujuan Shakuhachi Dojo, Kinko Ryū



尺八用語集

間 / MA

どうやって定義しますか？

日本の美学、特に本曲の世界では「間」という概念がよくでてきます。様々な流派とスタイルを代表する7人の尺八演奏家に、尺八の重要な部分である「間」についての理解を深めていただきました。

間についての質問のようですが、言葉には出せないものですね。

洋楽ならば指揮者がいますが、日本の芸能には指揮者はいません。それでも派閥の違う先生たちが演奏会の舞台では一緒に演奏をします。私、個人として、若い時に、お琴、三味線との三曲合奏で先生から注意をされたことは、お琴、三味線の人の演奏する間を、相手をたよりに「腹で探る」とすると、自分の間が無くなって

ゴムのように延びた演奏になってしまうから、自分の間を持ちなさいと言われたことが何度もありました。まだまだ稽古が未熟で、自分の間がしっかりしないからでしょう。古典本曲の世界に入ると、今度は呼吸法が大切になります。フレーズごとにきちんと呼吸ができているか。未熟な人は、フレーズで浅い息で、間を持たずに次のフレーズを演奏してしまいます。そうすると形の崩れた演奏になってしまいます。間とは呼吸法の大切なことだと思います。

私は津軽に伝わる錦風流本曲を吹きますが、この奏法にはコミという呼吸法が出てきます。腹からの呼吸法でコミ息を演奏しますが、皆さんは浅い息で口先でコミらしいような奏法をしています。このコミについて、竹友で古典尺八研究家でした故・山田虚悠さんから、日本の伝統芸である能のコミについて話を聞いたことがあります。能の世界では、それぞれ違う家元が集まり、舞台上で能を披露しますが、この方々が事前にリハーサルをしないで本番で、きちんとお互いの間がぴたりと合う。この間のことをコミと言うとのこと。

これについては、YouTube [<https://youtu.be/iq0j86eiRqE>] 実演とお話による伝統芸能パースペクティブ＜第4回＞振動す「空」／凝縮する「無」―尺八、書道、能における「間」の奥義をさぐる―＜Part 2＞講座2

でお話をされていますが、間のことについては解説が難しいようです。

いずれにせよ、日本の古来からの古典芸能の世界でも、また武士の剣の世界でも間という言葉が使われてきましたが、これは言葉に現わされることでなくて、稽古により体に覚えさせることではないでしょうか。

前川耕月
根笹派 錦風流, 岡本竹外弟子

深い無音

尺八本曲のような無拍の音楽で前の音から次の音への無音の部分は大きな意味を持ちます。ただ、漫然と間(あいだ)を開けただけでは「間」としては退屈なものになってしまいます。

この無音の部分を意味のあるものにするために3つのプロセスが大切です。まずは、その前の音を、いつ音が終わったかわからないように静かに終わらせる。そして、これがとても難しいのですが、息を吸う前に無音の部分をしっかり確保する。音が終わったらすぐに息を吸いたくなります。苦しいですがそれを我慢して空白を維持する。3つ目のプロセスとして、息を吸った後にほんの少し待ってから次の音を出す。このプロセスを確保することで音のない「間」の印象が断然良くなります。

更に音のない「間」を深いものにする方法がありますが、こちらの方がより重要です。

それは、前の音が終わった後の無音の部分、息を吸う時、そして音を出すまでのわずかな時間、これらのプロセスの中で次に出す音を頭の中で作るのです。特に次の音がメリの音の場合、直前の音を基準にしてそのメリの音を頭の中で鳴らすのです。その後、実際にその音を出す。もちろん頭のなかで正しい音を作らなければなりませんし、出す音は頭の中のその正しい音と合っていないければなりません。これらのためには深い集中力が必要です。

演奏者の集中は聴いている人に間違いなく伝わります。それは深い無音を作り出します。そして深い無音があることでその曲はより良い曲になっていきます。

これはまさしく音程をより正しくする行為に他なりません。音程を正しく出そうとする努力が、「間」をも深いものにしていける。疑いの余地はありません。

柿堺香
国際尺八研修館

「間」について

一般的に音楽における「間」とは、消えゆく音の余韻と次に出る音までの時間的空間を言うのでしょうか。もっと緻密な定義があるのでしょうか、私は禅僧ですので禅の観点から、また尺八古典本曲を吹奏する前提で話をさせていただきます。

禅の修行では「天地と我は同根であり、万物と我は一体である」という事を徹底して教えられます。分別する意識を超えた境地に立つと自分と宇宙は一体だと体感します。普化宗で言う「一音成仏」は、尺八の一音に徹底する事で悟りの境地に至ることです。その過程には精神を統一して尺八に成り切る、尺八の音に成り切る、同様に「間」に成り切る必要があります。

いかにしたら「成り切る」ことができるのか、それは無心無我になることのみです。自分自身から離れなければなりません。無心になり絶対的「空」から新たな物が生まれるのです。何にも囚われず自然と出てくる「間」こそ最上ではないでしょうか。

磯玄明
一朝軒伝法竹継承者

「間 “ma”」は、日本の伝統文化の様々な局面における言説で持ち出される概念ですが、学問的には、多くの参照すべき文献があり、簡単には定義できない問題です。そこで本論説は、地無し尺八吹奏家／研究者としての認識と、教育の中で説明している事例を記します。

日本の伝統音楽は、20世紀には西洋音楽の諸要素を、積極的に組み込んできましたが、間のイメージは、それ以前の音楽（一般には古典と呼ばれている音楽種目）を演奏する際に、非常に大切な概念であると私は考えています。ただし、日本文化としての「古典音楽」は、西洋の「クラシック音楽」とは異なり、現在も音楽様式が変化し続けていますので、こんにち、様々な場で古典として演奏されている音楽における間の表現は、人それぞれに大きく異なっていると感じます。なぜならば、日本の古典尺八には「西洋音楽のように、参照すべき原典版（たとえば楽譜）」が存在しませんので、楽曲構造も演奏様式も自由な変更が起きやすいからです。そこで、私は、尺八音楽以外の古典芸能や、明治以前の音を伴わない伝統文化に参考となる現象を求めて、間を説明してきました。

音楽演奏において間の表現方法を、一言で表すときには「次の音が予測できない間隔です」と説明しています。拍節的なリズムで表現される楽曲においては、休止符の後の音は予測可能であることが前提となっており、最適な時間間隔で発音することが、よい効果をえられると思います。一方、間の表現においては、拍節的な時間感覚が感じられないタイミングを測る稽古を積みます。また、その感覚は時間では表せません。演奏する場所や人との距離、その場の音響特性などによって変化させますので「空間的概念」であるといえるでしょう。

たとえば、墨で描かれた絵画や書道、あるいは華道などにおいて、物が描かれない部分があることも参考になります。また、剣道や柔道などにおいて、相手との距離や呼吸を図ることが大切であることを、尺八の吹奏時にも適用しています。おそらく「日本において極められた禅のものの考え方」が、芸能にも影響を与えたのだと思います。

尺八演奏において心がけることとしては「息を吸ったことを意識させない」ということに尽きると思います。特に無拍（フリーリズム）の本曲においては、音がいつ消えたのかが分からないように吹奏し、次の音に繋がりますが、それらの音の前後の「無音」の空間に「間」が生じていると考えられます。ただし、それを意識すれば「間」ではなくなるようにも思います

志村禅保(哲)
竹保流, 明暗対山派

ご質問にお答えしたいと思いますが、とても難しい質問です。

間(ま)について：
間というのは、いくつかのシチュエーションで使われると思います。

一番単純なのは、等間隔で時間を刻むことです。一拍=60 のようなテンポを刻むこと

二番目は、ある音楽のフレーズから次のフレーズに移行する間に、決まった長さでない時間間隔(空白)を取る。次のフレーズの開始のタイミングは、指揮者のいない状態で複数の演奏者が同時に開始できるメカニズムは、「間」であるという。どうして同時に開始できるのか。私は説明できませんが、気とか、何か物理的なきっかけ無しに開始できる精神的な要因があるのでしょうか。相撲の立ち合いも同じ原理で、同時に立ち合いをします。

三番目は、間が悪い、というような表現があり、話の流れについていけない、あるいは流れを乱してしまう場合に言います。

本曲の間(ま)について

琴古流本曲は古曲と違って、一定のテンポで刻むという概念はありません。そうかといって、自由にどんな長さで吹いても良い、というわけではありません。師匠から教わった、かなり固定的なテンポで吹きます。本曲を聞いた外国人は「それはimprovisationですか?」と聞かれることが多いですが、本曲は即興演奏とは全く異なるものです。

私たちが伝承する琴古流本曲は、純然たる宗教曲というわけでもなく、洋楽と同じ音楽というわけでもありません。たぶんその中間に位置することになると思います。精神性を重んじつつも、音楽としての美しさも表現したい、というものです。息継ぎ(ブレス)による時間間隔を間というなら、古曲のように、可能な限り短くしなければならない、という制約はないものと思っています。ときにはゆっくり息を吸った方が、音楽としての流れが良いときもあると思っています。

水野香盟
琴古流尺八竹盟社, 竹盟社



ニュースレターへの尺八の「間」についての概念ですが、“「間」はなんですか?”と、問われれば「音のない音」

であり、“どういう意味ですか?”と、問われれば「これは休符ではない」としか言葉では思いつかないですね。

どのように使用されますか?
演奏なさる時はどのように使いますか?

この間には実践でないと言葉では説明不可。

不立文字(文字に説かれるのではなくお稽古や実践で直接伝える意)

奥田敦也
「禅茶房調べ会」主宰

「間 (Ma) について」

日本の芸術における「間」については、いろいろ哲学的あるいは精神的な研究がなされていますが、私は一介の尺八演奏家に過ぎないので、経験の中から気付いたことだけを述べてみます。

まず、「間」の意味を和英辞典で調べてみると、いろいろな英単語が出てきました。「while」「time」「interval」「space」「pause」「chamber」「chance」「apartment」「room」「entr'acte」「intervening」「as」などなど。「間」というのは、これらの意味が混然一体となった一つのイメージなのです。ですから、演じる人それぞれが、それぞれ異なる「間」についてのイメージを持っていると思います。

私が持つ「間」のイメージは「pause」「silence」「timing」という意味が強いものです。

私は演奏家ですから、「間」を技巧の一つとして扱っています。音を出すのではなく「出さない」ことによって自分自身の精神を集中させ、同時に聴衆の注意を引き寄せる技巧です。

また、これは私の全く個人的な「感じ」なのですが、私にとって「間」というのは、「この世」から「あの世」を覗き見る小さな「窓」のようなものなのです。私は音楽を、「この世」と「あの世」の境界にある薄いカーテンのようなものだと思います。そのカーテンの所々にいくつかの小さな穴が開いています。それが私にとっての「間」です。子供のころ、日本楽器の音を聞くのは、ときどき恐怖でもありました。音と音の間の空白のとき、つまり「間」のとき、時間が止まり、その空白から何かが見えてくるような、見てはいけないものが見えるような、戦慄を感じました。私にとって、「間」は「魔」でもありました。

倉橋容堂
琴古流

INTERVIEW by Kiku Day

Tanabe Houei

The heir of Ueda Ryū iemoto

Tanabe Houei contacted Seian Genshin, the *kansu* of Myoanji and myself because he wanted to become an ambassador for World Shakuhachi Day. I have always read about the Ueda Ryū but had never met anyone and did not really know what kind of group they were. I, therefore, decided to interview Tanabe.

Kiku Day: Here in Europe, and I believe it is the same in the USA and Australia and other places. People may have heard about Ueda Ryū but don't really know what it is. I think it would be nice if you could tell people about it. Please tell us about the history of Ueda Ryū.

Tanabe Houei: The history of Ueda Ryū. Yes, I better speak while looking... [smiling while looking for a book] Ueda Ryū was founded by a person called Ueda Kiichi. He was my great grandfather. His shakuhachi name was Ueda Houdo. He began playing shakuhachi when he was 15 years old and was originally a student of Nakao Tozan.

At that time, the world of shakuhachi or perhaps the whole of *hōgaku*, Japanese traditional instruments, had strict rules and restrictions for communication between *ryūha*. It was very rigid. For most players in a *ryūha*, it was forbidden to perform with musicians from another *ryūha*. Also, within your own *ryū*, you could not freely compose and perform your own pieces. Your *iemoto* has to accept it and tell you it is alright first, then were you able to compose. And you had to obtain the acceptance from the *iemoto* for each piece you wanted to compose! Otherwise you could not perform it within the *ryūha*. There were severe constraints. You could not freely compose and perform your pieces within your own *ryū*. That did not go down very well with Ueda Houdo, so he started his own *ryū*.

Tanabe Houei,
event at Toyata factory, China

KD: Just to clarify. Was it to get his own compositions recognised as official pieces of the ryūha that was a problem? Was it possible to compose and play your own pieces in other places outside the ryūha system?

TH: No, even that was not possible. How shall I say... I don't think it is a good thing... but if you did something that is not considered to be obeying the rules, people would bully. He was accused of being selfish in regard to the ryūha. Many people in the Tozan Ryū environment were angry and complained and it became very difficult for him. He stopped because there were problems in his relationship to the others, who complained about him because he was composing and for not respecting the *iemoto*. The others criticised him, and he left because of that. He had close to 100 students and he told them: 'Please stay in Tozan Ryū. I will leave the ryūha alone'. So, after leaving Tozan Ryū he founded Ueda Ryū. After a few years the students who remained in Tozan Ryū began to feel it was too strict and they also wanted to play with Ueda Houdo. So, it is said they left Tozan Ryū one by one and came to Ueda Ryū.

My great grandfather had died before I was born so I have not heard this story from him directly. But there are quite some books describing the history of Ueda Ryū, and these stories are vividly described. In those days they of course did not have internet. And there were Tozan Ryū members all over Japan If you wonder how they communicated together... they did that through magazines. The Tozan group published something that was similar to a newspaper or magazine once a month. Members of Tozan Ryū wrote articles to be published in the magazine. One day an article criticising Ueda Houdo was published. In the issue of the following month Ueda Houdo replied, and then in the next a reply again. This continued for a while. For Tozan Ryū at the time this was a rather big dispute.

KD: How old was Ueda Houdo when all this happened:

TH: He was young. It was 103 years ago from now. He was born in 1892. That means he must have been 25 years old.

KD: And he had already 100 students?

TH: Yes, he already received his *shihan* after 2 years of shakuhachi study. I believe he was skilled. So, this is the story behind him leaving a big ryūha and founding his own. And of course, at the time they were worried about whether he could make a living from it or not.

KD: It also means there were many shakuhachi players at the time. It was during the first shakuhachi boom.

TH: Yes, there were many players during that boom. In Taichō 6 (1917), which is before WWII Japanese people's way of living became influenced by western style. They began to wear western clothes. It was after the Meiji period [1603-1867] and a time with many changes. Before that during the Edo period the *komusō* had *tengai* on. It is so that only monks or samurai were allowed to play shakuhachi. Historically, the shakuhachi has been under various restrictions. It was a culture which only a limited group of people were able to enjoy. But even after it was set free, this culture of exclusion remained. For example, only music recognised by the ryūha could be played. To have interaction with players from other ryūha was not permitted.

KD: How would you describe the difference between the then newly established Ueda Ryū and Tozan Ryū that your grandfather had just left, and other ryūha at the time?

“Only music recognised by the Ryūha could be played. To have interaction with players from other Ryūha was not permitted. ”

TH: The big difference was the freedom allowed by the founder of Ueda Ryū. Ueda Ryū members could compose as pleased, they could freely arrange concerts with players from other ryūha, and they were not restricted under a contract to pay money to *iemoto*. I think these points are the biggest differences.

KD: Was it like this already from the beginning of Ueda Ryū?

TH: Yes, from the beginning.

KD: That is quite impressive. I mean we usually say that collaboration across ryūha began in the 1960s. So, that means Ueda Houdo was very ahead of his time.

TH: Uedo Houdo was ahead of his time, and there were several episodes, since he founded Ueda Ryū, where he was showing the way forward. He also tried to change shakuhachi notation to staff notation. He wanted the shakuhachi to be an instrument loved by many not only in Japan but across the world. He aimed at making the shakuhachi an instrument that could play together with western musical instruments. But that was beyond his power. He really wanted to do it but for many people who had played the shakuhachi for a long time, it was too much of a hassle to change notation system so drastically. They asked *iemoto* not to do it. It is written in books that because of the other players' wishes he abandoned the idea.

KD: Is it the 3rd *iemoto* now?

TH: Yes, now it is the 3rd *iemoto*, head of Ueda Ryū. The founder is my great grandfather Ueda Houdo. He had two sons. The second *iemoto* was his oldest son Ueda Kadou. When the era of the second *iemoto* was finished, it was not passed on to Kado's children but to his younger brother Ueda Housei, who is my grandfather. He is 91 years old now.

KD: Is he well?

TH: Yes, he is.

KD: How do you come into the picture?

TH: As you have noticed my family name is not Ueda. I am Housei's grandchild. He has two daughters and I am a child of one of his daughters.

KD: If you look at the website of Ueda Ryū, you are already in line to become the next *iemoto*.

TH: The *iemoto* is a blood related lineage. It is not like a company, the *iemoto* decides. I have been asked to continue the *iemoto* role.

KD: I see. When I look at the website, there are also photos of a woman. Who is that?

TH: That is my younger sister.



100th Anniversary Event, Ueda Ryū.



Tanabe Houei and his wife Chiharu

KD: Does she play shakuhachi?

TH: Yes, she does.

KD: Is she active as a shakuhachi player?

TH: No, she has two small children and is almost not active at all as a performer. She supports the *iemoto* by helping him with administrative work. She does perform at the *dōjō* of the *iemoto*, but she is not able to perform in concerts.

KD: I see. But it makes me happy to see another female shakuhachi player. Now please explain to us what the Ueda Ryū repertoire is.

TH: Since composing is free in Ueda Ryū, there are many compositions of various people. The largest amount of the compositions is composed by the founder Ueda Houdou. Like in other *ryūha*, there is the repertoire to be played with *itomono* (string instruments). We also have many solo pieces, and they form what we call Ueda Ryū *honkyoku*.

KD: When you say Ueda Ryū *honkyoku*, do you mean the compositions of Ueda Houdou?

TH: It is not entirely so. When we say *honkyoku* we mean shakuhachi solo pieces. Among *honkyoku* there are some

pieces that are technically difficult and we regard as important to hand on as Ueda Ryū pieces. If you say *honkyoku* there are more pieces but often we talk about this group of pieces. They are compositions of the founder.

KD: Do you play *koten honkyoku* in Ueda Ryū?

TH: We do play *koten honkyoku*. But if you say Ueda Ryū *honkyoku* most of the time you will be thinking of the compositions of Ueda Houdou.

KD: I see. But since it is free you can play many other pieces.

TH: Yes, that is entirely fine. The *shihan* players of Ueda Ryū play pieces from other *Ryūha* at our concerts.

KD: How many members are there in Ueda Ryū?

TH: In Ueda Ryū we have around 300 players with a *shihan* license. They have their own students. But in Ueda Ryū we do not keep track of those. That means we do not really know how many there are. We imagine it is somewhere between 1000 and 2000 players.

KD: That is quite a big group.

TH: When the founder was alive and Ueda Ryū was at its peak, I have heard there were around 20,000 players. So in comparison with that, the groups has been declining.

KD: Yes that is the sad story many places in Japan. Outside Japan it is different because it was not there before. Now, can you explain to us how Ueda Ryū *honkyoku* sounds like? What kind of pieces are they?

TH: I think many of the pieces are similar to music you hear while meditating. It is said that Ueda Houdou composed most of the pieces while he was confined in a temple. Pieces that would fit playing at a temple situated in the middle of a bamboo grove.

KD: Did Ueda Houdou live in a temple?

TH: Yes, when he was composing, he would go to a temple for some months and come back with some new composed pieces.

KD: How interesting. So Houdou sensei did not change his notation into staff notation. But how does the notation look like? Is it similar to Tozan Ryū? Do you have barlines like in Tozan Ryū?

TH: It is similar to Tozan Ryū but there are no barlines. The length of the notes is expressed with lines on the left side and *meri* notes are written in smaller prints. Here is also the book I talked about earlier called Ueda Ryū Shakuhachi michi: *sengo no ayumi* (The Way of Ueda Ryū Shakuhachi: The course of history during the postwar period). I have read in this book to learn about the beginning of Ueda Ryū since my great grandfather had died before I was born.

“Ueda Houdou would go to a temple for some months and come back with some new composed pieces.”

KD: You must also have heard stories from your mother and grandfather.

TH: Yes of course.

KD: Do you play *koten honkyoku* yourself?

TH: Well, I am working in a company as a salaryman (office worker) so I cannot play shakuhachi that much. But I really love *honkyoku*.

KD: Ahh you are working. Yes shakuhachi time must be limited if you are working in an office.

TH: Yes, I have almost no time. But *iemoto* is 91 years old. He is really doing fine but his age is what it is, and I am thinking I have to begin preparing the succession of *iemoto*.

KD: I actually wanted to ask you how you see the future of Ueda Ryū. But would this mean you have to continue working as a salaryman even when you become the Ueda Ryū *iemoto*?

TH: Yes, I think so. The scope of Ueda Ryū is not so big that I can make a living for myself and my family. So it means I would try to make a space for people who enjoy playing shakuhachi while continuing to work as a salaryman.

KD: Would you consider that to be a ‘modern *iemoto*’?

TH: Maybe. But this is something valuable to keep for the future, and I think it would be great if more people could get to know about Ueda Ryū. I would like to think about teaching shakuhachi online using Zoom or Teams. It could be really great if we could do online concerts using Zoom or something else. And I am hoping many new people would begin to play shakuhachi. The shakuhachi itself is quite expensive. It is my hope that Ueda Ryū in collaboration with shakuhachi craftsmen can produce cheap but good shakuhachi. A shakuhachi that for example children would like to try to play. We are thinking about producing something out of wood or plastic. I know of course there are already some out there but they have not become that popular. I am thinking of making the design so beginners and children would want to try to play.

KD: I am looking forward to that. It is always a problem that a person, who has never played shakuhachi, would need to buy without knowing if he or she will continue to play.

TH: I have in mind the production of this beginners’ shakuhachi. But at the same time, I would also love people to use a real shakuhachi. I am therefore thinking in the direction of shakuhachi rental or subscription. And to the people who rent a shakuhachi, we can offer online lessons. And if they like playing shakuhachi, they can buy the shakuhachi.

KD: That would be a fantastic system. I experience that people, who are attracted to the shakuhachi, are often not that satisfied with a PVC shakuhachi.



Ueda Ryū guardian deity

TH: Yes, indeed. And I think this idea has to go beyond Ueda Ryū. It has to be teachers who are good at using the various online systems, and who has the skills to teach shakuhachi. I often hear from older men: ‘I can play shakuhachi but I am not good with computers’. My idea is not to limit it to Ueda Ryū because one of our characteristics is that it has an open attitude. It would be great if we could make a platform where teachers from various *ryū* could teach online.

KD: That is really a good idea to have that kind of open space. I will be waiting for it to be reality.

TH: When asked about Ueda Ryū’s future direction I think like this. That we should all get together and work for the preservation of shakuhachi as a part of Japanese culture – not limited to a specific *ryūha*. The aim of Ueda Ryū today is to follow with the times and create a system, that as many as possible can use, in a convenient way.

KD: Is there anything you would like to say to the shakuhachi aficionados in Europe?

TH: I did not know there were so many shakuhachi players in Europe, and somebody like you who can speak Japanese and know about Japanese culture. That makes me really happy, and I imagine we could collaborate. I am sure if more people realise, Ueda Ryū players may want to go and perform in Europe, and we can show European players around, we could take them to shakuhachi makers, and also make spaces for them in concerts. I would like to make this kind of cultural exchange. That is what I felt when we emailed each other prior to the interview.

KD: I would love to tell everybody in Europe this. Let’s keep on communicating about this.

TH: I imagine there must be many people under pressure and stress due to Covid-19. Even if you are not directly affected, you may still feel the lock-down. I think an exchange between shakuhachi aficionados in Europe and Japan would ease this kind of stress. If we could contribute a little to this. If we could make an event of some kind together, it could be really nice.

KD: It is a hard time indeed. Thank you so much for letting me interview you.

Interview video available later in December, on www.youtube.com/c/KikuDay + ESS members’ website

UEDA RYŪ WEBLINKS

<http://www.uedaryu.jp> (only Japanese)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdsH2LccS-Dkg3svJD2XCVg>

<http://www.komuso.com/schools/index.pl?school=20>
<http://www.komuso.com/people/people.pl?person=216>
<https://www.komuso.com/people/people.pl?person=1998>
<http://www.komuso.com/people/people.pl?person=531>

<https://www.amazon.co.jp/上田流尺八道-上田芳懂演奏録-上田芳懂/dp/B01NBDH3S5>
<https://www.amazon.co.jp/-/en/上田芳誠/dp/B01MYT21XE>

KIKU DAY is a shakuhachi player and ethnomusicologist. Currently she is Visiting Research Fellow at Goldsmiths, University of London. Day is based in Nørre Snede, Denmark.

INTERVIEW by ESS Newsletter

THE JAPANESE SHAKUHACHI PROFESSIONAL-PLAYERS NETWORK

Looking at recent developments in shakuhachi in Japan, we wanted to know more about the Japanese Shakuhachi Professional-players Network (JSPN). The shakuhachi players Akihito Obama and Kawamura Kizan, both members of the JSPN, were so kind to answer our questions.



ESS NL: Hello, thank you for taking time to take part in this email interview. Could you tell us what The Japanese Shakuhachi Professional-players Network is? And what was the main idea behind its foundation?

Akihito Obama: The JSPN was established in 2018 and is the only organization of professional shakuhachi players in Japan. At present, more than 70 performers (regular members) participate in the group, and researchers, composers, producers, and experts also participate as special members. The advisor is Mr. Junsuke Kawase, the representative is Kuniyoshi Sugawara, the vice-representative is Hozan Nomura, and the secretariat is Retsuzan Tanabe. Until now, there have been no shakuhachi groups in Japan that transcend the school system, so the group was formed in order to provide a more uniformed approach and to promote the appeal of the shakuhachi particularly in view of the age and decreasing number of shakuhachi enthusiasts in Japan and the spread of the shakuhachi abroad.

ESS NL: What kind of public events have you organised with the JSPN?

AO: On May 10, 2019, the group held a performance to celebrate its founding. The theme was the “Nesting of Cranes”, and the first part of the performance featured the “Nesting of Cranes” from various schools that have been handed down in various styles, while the second part was a contemporary piece based on the theme of cranes. Two of the pieces were commissioned by the JSPN and were world premieres. A video of the concert is available on DVD.

ESS NL: Are there any workshops, masterclasses or other types of educational events you are pursuing as a group?



L to R: Akihisa Kominato, Takuya Iwata, Hiromu Motonaga, Kohei Matsumoto, Bizan Tomotsune, Ken-ichi Tajima, Akihiito Obama and Junya Okochi

AO: In 2020, three “Playing Techniques” courses were held for students from different schools, with Kuniyoshi Sugawara speaking in January, Hozan Nomura in July, and Keisuke Zenyoji in September. With many events postponed or cancelled this year due to COVID-19, we thought about what we could do to help, so we decided to make the second and subsequent workshops entirely streamed online. As a result, we had people from outside of Tokyo and other parts of the world participate in these events and they were very successful. (We will be streaming all three videos of the recording in December for a fee, so please keep an eye out for them. In addition, to overcome the situation where face-to-face lessons are not possible, we planned an “online lesson” to connect members and enthusiasts (At present, it is still ongoing). In terms of the greatest concern of performers which is ‘the droplets which form whilst playing’, an experiment was carried out to scientifically analyze the spread of droplets during playing and the amazing results were published on the website. A symposium on the spray test and a concert which took place on 10th November will be described later. In addition, a video recording of this experiment will be available for two weeks from 1st December for a fee.

Kizan Kawamura: JSPN’s activities under the Corona pandemic began with an online playing technique course. There were only three instructors and staff members at the venue. Participants from all over Japan, Europe, Taiwan, Singapore, and other countries also participated, and they listened to the lecturer’s detailed talks and asked questions at the end of the session. The two full hours were a great reminder of the success of the playing technique course in the new environment.

ESS NL: What are the plans for next year and do you also commission new music for shakuhachi?

AO: Next year, online playing techniques lectures will be offered by, Kifu Mitsuhashi and Ryozan Sakata on 24th January and 21st March respectively, and the second regular concert will be held on 14th May. The theme of the concert will be ‘Musical Sound + Noise ⇄ Shakuhachi Sound - How does the sound of the shakuhachi go back and forth between “musical sound” and “noise sound” and try to discover the secret of the complex acoustic sound effects of the shakuhachi. This year’s event will also feature the premieres of new works by Shiroto Aizawa and Ichiro Seki. The final piece which is Ichiro Seki’s work, will be performed by a 30-member ensemble highlighting the enthusiasm of the JSPN in the concert.

ESS NL: We heard you were conducting some research into the possibilities of shakuhachi performances as the Covid-19 pandemic continues to restrain ‘real-world’ cultural activities. Could you tell what steps JSPN took in that direction?

KK: The next step for us was to organise a successful concert for our audience, and we felt that by having JSPN take the lead in this proactive activity, we could give courage to shakuhachi players around the world. However, in order to hold a concert, it was necessary to ascertain its safety. Therefore, with the cooperation of Shin Nippon Air Technologies Co., Ltd., under the supervision of Dr. Osamu Kobayashi, a specialist in infectious diseases, a droplet test was conducted.

On 10th November, at a concert hall which seated about 100 people, an event was held. The first part was a symposium involving the “Report on the analysis of respiratory particle emission during shakuhachi performance and possible preventive measures,” followed by a “salon concert featuring works by JSPN members,” which was the first time the JSPN had attempted to hold an event with audience participation since the start of the corona pandemic. As a measure against infection, the number of seats was limited to 50. All performers, staff and the audience were temperature tested upon entering the venue and were all strictly required to wear masks.

ESS NL: Was there any encouraging news for the shakuhachi community?



JSPN Symposium: (L to R) Retsuzan Tanabe, Shozan Tanabe, Seizan Ishigaki, Dr. Osamu Kobayashi, Takafumi Tanaka and Emi Maehara

KK: The results of the first part of the droplet test were a welcome relief to the shakuhachi world. The results showed that the droplets flying during the performance were not as many as those experienced during everyday conversation. Even in the case of *muraiki* and intense tonguing with physical movements, the spray was about 90cm to the front and 40cm to each side. The second part of the concert took place on the advice of the specialist, who said that the space around the performer should be 2m to the front and 1m to each side. The concert consisted solely of works by the members. There were 11 performers who supported the event, and four of them presented their own works. They were mainly young and active in their respective genres.

The 50 seats, which were limited, were sold out. The audience, who hadn't been to a live performance for a long time, was overflowing with enthusiasm, and the performers responded with a refreshing performance that seemed to blow away the corona. It was a great success. The event became a guideline for the future activities of shakuhachi players.

ESS NL: Where can people find the full report of your research?

KK: The results of this experiment have been posted on the JSPN website and we hope that they will be disseminated to the world's shakuhachi community. Also, we will be distributing a video of this event on a fee basis from 1st December, so please go to our website. *[see link in blue box on page 43]*

ESS NL: Putting the pandemic aside for a moment, how do you see the JSPN organisation evolving in the future?

AO: It has only been a year since the group was founded, so it is still very much in a state of exploration, but we are trying our best to convey the appeal of the shakuhachi from Japan. The ESS newsletter is a great pleasure for all of us as it gives us the opportunity to spread the activities of JSPN in English to people all over the world. Thank you very much.

KK: I hope that someday shakuhachi lovers from all over the world will get together again to talk about shakuhachi. Let's take care of each other's health and keep playing the shakuhachi! Thank you for this opportunity.

ESS NL: Thank you very much. We look forward to hear more from the JSPN in the future. Arigato gozaimasu!



L to R: Kozan Shiba, Soh Tanomura and Seizan Ishigaki

JSPN WEBLINKS

<https://jspnweb.wixsite.com/jspn> (japanese site)

<https://jspnweb.wixsite.com/jspn/english> (english site)

<https://www.facebook.com/日本尺八演奏家ネットワークjspn-634308333707177>

Report: Analysis of respiratory particle emission from shakuhachi flute play and its precaution

COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths are rising across worldwide. WHO notes that if COVID-19 is spreading in our community, stay safe by taking some simple precautions, such as physical distancing, wearing a mask, keeping rooms well ventilated, avoiding crowds, cleaning hands, and coughing into a bent elbow or tissue [1].

The shakuhachi flute lovers will be seized with a desire to hear each other's performances under COVID-19 pandemic. From these backgrounds, this analysis was started. In October eleventh 2020, three shakuhachi flute expert/professional players A(outside blowing), B(outside blowing) and C(inside blowing) gathered in Shin Nippon Air Technologies CO., LTD. special studio as subjects of this analysis. The LED and laser sheet rays were observed for using special camera to catch the droplet range both forward and lateral sides.

As the results of this analysis,

1. Shakuhachi flute playing is prone to droplet at the moment of sound is produced.
2. When using some special techniques (as tonguing, "notes using intense air attack" and flutter tongue (tamane) much more droplets were exhausted.
3. The spread of the droplets were almost within 90 cm to the front and 40cm on either side from the players. It well known that droplet transmission occurs when a person is in close contact (within 1m) with someone has respiratory symptoms [2].

On May 12, 2020, a hair stylist salon A and B continued to operate at the day's work until they both were found positive by SARS-CoV-2 PCR testing on the 8th. And 5th. Day after onset of COVID-19. During at the time, 139 customers were served over 15 minutes per person in both salon A and B, who wore a double layer cotton masks while on duty. All of the 98% of 139 customers who with a universal face covering policy were negative in SARS-CoV-2 PCR testing [3]. This report suggests that, broader implementation of masking policies could mitigate the spread of infection in the general population.

In conclusion,

1. For the prevention from SARS-CoV-2 droplet infection in Shakuhachi flute performance, each players and audience should be spread from diameter 1m.
2. Universal face covering policy might be mitigate the spread of infection in a general population.
3. Perform hand hygiene before drinking and eating is most important standard precaution in COVID-19 pandemic.

Acknowledgements

1. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
2. <https://www.who.int/news-room/commentaries/detail/modes-of-transmission-of-virus-causing-covid-19-implications-for-ipc-precaution-recommendations>
3. Hendrix MJ, Walde C, Findley K, et al. Absence of apparent transmission of SARS-CoV-2 from two stylists after exposure at a hair salon with a universal face covering policy – Springfield, Missouri, May 2020. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep. 2020 Jul 17;69(28):930-932

This study was conducted in cooperation with the Japan Shakuhachi Professional-players Network (JSPN) and Shin Nihon Air Technologies Co., Ltd.

Osamu Kobayashi M.D., Ph.D.
Head of Medical Staff, Department of Infectious Disease, National Cancer Center Hospital, Tokyo, Japan

Research Outline prepared by Shin Nippon Air Conditioning Co.

RESEARCH OUTLINE

When playing the shakuhachi in the dedicated visualisation room, a full visualisation system was used to detect the presence or absence of fine droplets and the scattering amount was evaluated.

Deep-clean of equipment in the laboratory before the performance. The experiment was conducted after removing the particles.

Experimental procedure: • Driving/using laboratory cleaning equipment (to remove airborne particles in the room)
• Cleaning equipment stopped
• Start playing after camera starts

Experimental conditions: (1) evaluation of particle/droplet generation approximately 60 cm angle from the original
(2) droplet diffusion evaluation about 1m angle from the origin

Subject: A, C, 2 people

Shakuhachi: 1. shakuhachi 1.8 and 2. shakuhachi 2.4 (in A)

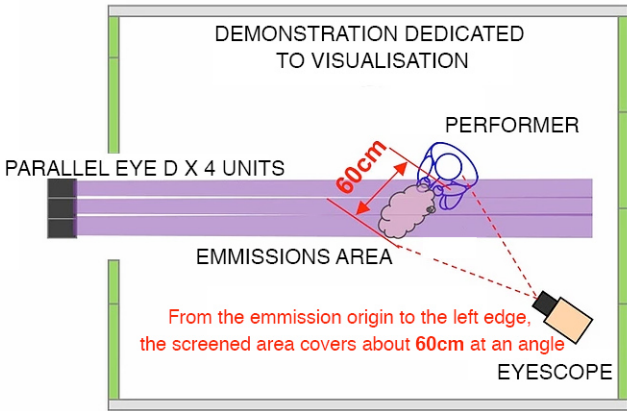
Playing method: Sound output, long tones, special playing techniques, etc.
Play while putting in/making body movements

Subject: Avoidance of the generation of particles by the player by wearing a clean suit and hair cap

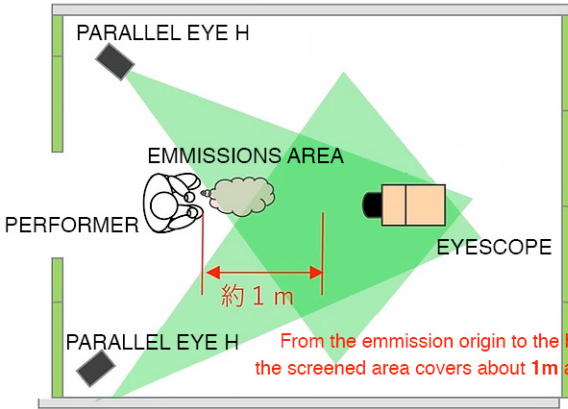
PROCESSING THE STILL IMAGE



<① DROPLETS EMISSIONS EVALUATION



<② DROPLETS EMISSIONS EVALUATION



USING THE IMAGE PROCESSING SOFTWARE "PARTICLE EYE VIEWER", WITH THE SOFTWARE PACKAGE, A COMPOSITE STILL IMAGE IS CREATED BY LAYERING VIDEO STILLs FROM A PARTICULAR INSTANT IN TIME. THE DROPLETS EMISSION AREA CAN BE COMPARED WITH COMPOSITE IMAGE

JSPN REPORT WEBLINKS

http://en.twitcasting.tv/c:jspn_live/shopcart/39912?hl=en concert video (from 1.12 to 16.12 / Fee ca. € 16)

<https://jspnweb.wixsite.com/jspn/飛沫検証報告> (report of symposium (Japanese) + images and video

インタビュー ESSニュースレターによる

日本尺八演奏家ネットワーク (JSPN)

最近、日本の尺八世界の動向を見ていると、「日本尺八演奏家ネットワーク (JSPN)」についてもっと情報を知りたいとききました。尺八演奏家である小濱明人氏と川村葵山氏が親切に質問に答えていただきました。





この度は、メールでのインタビューをお受けいただきありがとうございます。まず、JSPNについて教えてください。また、どのような考えで設立したのでしょうか？

小濱明人: JSPNは、2018年に設立した日本国内のプロ尺八演奏家による唯一の団体。現在は70名以上の演奏家（正会員）が参加し、また特別会員として研究家・作曲家・制作者・有識者にも参加していただいている。顧問は川瀬順輔先生、代表は菅原久仁義、副代表は野村峰山、事務局は田辺冽山の各氏。今まで日本には流派を超えた尺八団体は存在しなかったが、国内の尺八愛好家の高齢化や減少、また国外での尺八の広まりに刺激を受けて、日本からも団結して尺八の魅力を発信していくことを目的に結成された。

ESS NL: JSPNとしてこれまで一般向けに開催したイベントは何でしたか？

小濱明人: 2019年5月10日には設立記念公演を開催。テーマは「鶴の巣籠り」で、1部は様々な形で伝承されている各流派の「鶴の巣籠り」を、2部は鶴をテーマにした現代曲を披露した。そのうち2曲はJSPNが委嘱し、世界初演となった。このコンサートの映像はDVDとして販売されている。

ESS NL: JSPNとしてワークショップ、マスタークラス、その他、どのような教育目的のイベントを考えていますか？



L to R: Akihisa Kominato, Takuya Iwata, Hiromu Motonaga, Kohei Matsumoto, Bizan Tomotsune, Ken-ichi Tajima, Akihiito Obama and Junya Okochi

小濱明人: 2020年は、流派を超えて学べる「奏法講座」を3回開催。1月に菅原久仁義、7月に野村峰山、9月に善養寺恵介各氏が登壇。今年はCOVID-19の影響で様々なイベントが延期・中止となる中で、今私たちが出来る事は何かを考え、まず2回目以降の奏法講座を完全にストリーミングで行うことにした。結果、東京以外の地方や海外からも参加下さる方もいて、充実したイベントとなった。（12月に全3回の記録動画の有料配信を行いますので、どうぞ注目ください。）その他、対面レッスンが出来ない状況乗り越えようと、会員と愛好家を繋ぐ「オンラインレッスン」を企画した。（現在も継続中）そして、演奏家として最も気がかりな「吹奏時の飛沫状況」を科学的に分析するために検証実験を行い、その驚くべき結果をWebsiteで公開した。11月10日に行った飛沫検証実験に関するシンポジウムとコンサートについては後述。また、この模様を記録した動画は12月1日より2週間限定で有料配信する。

川村葵山: コロナ禍でのJSPNの活動はオンラインでの奏法講座から始まった。会場には講師とスタッフ三人のみ。日本各地、さらにはヨーロッパ、台湾、シンガポール等と海外からの参加もあり、講師の丁寧な講義を受け、時間いっぱいまで参加者の熱心な質疑が行われた。充実した二時間に、新たな環境での奏法講座の成功を実感した。

ESS NL: 来年の計画について教えてください。また、尺八の新作を委嘱していますか？

小濱明人: 来年もストリーミングでの奏法講座を計画しており、1月24日は三橋貴風、3月21日は坂田梁山の各氏が登壇する。5月14日には第二回目の定期演奏会を開催する予定。テーマは「楽音＋噪音＝尺八音 ～尺八の音は“楽音”と“噪音”をどう行き来しているのか～」とし、尺八の複雑な音響の秘密に迫る。また今回は、愛澤伯友・関一郎両氏の新作が初演される。終曲の関作品は30名による大合奏。JSPNの熱気が感じ取れるコンサートになるだろう。

ESS NL: コロナ禍が長引き演奏会などの実演活動は中止になっている中、尺八演奏に関する実験研究を実施したと聞いています。それに向けて、JSPNはどのようなステップを踏まれたか教えてください。

川村葵山: 私たちが次にすべきは、お客様を入れたコンサートを開催し成功させること。JSPNが先頭に立って積極的な活動をする事により、世界の尺八演奏家の方へ勇気を与えられると考えた。しかし、コンサートを開催するには尺八を演奏する時の安全性の検証が必要である。そこで、新日本空調株式会社の協力、感染症の専門医である小林治先生の監修で飛沫検証を行った。そして、その実験結果の報告と、各有識者・尺八演奏家による対策シンポジウム、その結果を反映した感染拡大対策をした上でのコンサートを、11月10日に開催。

会場は100席ほどのコンサートホールで、第一部に「尺八吹奏における飛沫検証報告と対策シンポジウム」、第二部に「JSPN会員作品による サロンコンサート」とし、JSPNとしてコロナ禍後、初めてお客様を入れてのイベントに挑戦した。感染対策として、50席限定。出演者、スタッフ、お客様すべて入場の際に検温。マスクの着用を徹底した。

ESS NL: 尺八界にとってうれしいニュースがありますか？

川村葵山: 第一部、飛沫検証の結果は尺八界にとって喜ばしいものとなった。吹奏の際に飛ぶ飛沫は日常会話をする時とほぼ同じ、それほど飛んでいなかったのである。体動を伴うムラ息や激しいタンギングでも、前方に90cm、左右に40cm程度。前は2m、横は1m空ければ良いという、専門医のアドバイスをもとに、第二部のコンサートは行われた。コンサートは会員の作品のみで構成した。このイベントへ賛同してくれた11名の出演者、その中から4名が自作品を発表した。それぞれ各ジャンルで活躍する、若手を中心としたメンバーである。



JSPN Symposium: (L to R) Retsuzan Tanabe, Shozan Tanabe, Seizan Ishigaki, Dr. Osamu Kobayashi, Takafumi Tanaka and Emi Maehara

限定であった50席は完売。久しぶりの生の演奏を楽しみに来場したお客様は熱気にあふれ、それに応えるように出演者達は、コロナを吹き飛ばすような清々しい演奏を披露した。大成功。この先の尺八演奏家達の活動の指針ともなるイベントになった。

ESS NL: JSPNの実験研究についてフルレポートが閲覧できますか？

川村葵山: 今回の検証結果はJSPNホームページに掲載されているので、世界の尺八界への拡散を望みます。また、12月1日より今回の動画を有料配信するので、ぜひチェックしてください。

ESS NL: コロナの話とは別に、JSPNは将来、組織としてどのように変化してゆくと思われますか？

小濱明人: まだ発足して1年なので手探りの状況ではあるが、何とかして尺八の魅力を日本から力強く発信しているところと奮闘している。このESSのニュースレター執筆のお話は、JSPNの活動が英語化され、世界中の方に活動を知っていただける機会になるとして、会員一同大いに喜んでます。心から感謝申し上げます。

川村葵山: まだまだ大変な時間が続きますが、またいつか世界中から尺八愛好家達が集まって、尺八談義に花を咲かせる事を楽しみにしております。お互いに健康に気をつけて元気に尺八を吹き続けましょう!この度はこのような機会をいただきありがとうございました。

ESS NL: ご協力に感謝いたします。また近いうちに、JSPNのお話を聞かせてください。重ねてありがとうございました。



L to R: Kozan Shiba, Soh Tanomura and Seizan Ishigaki

JSPN リンク

<https://jspnweb.wixsite.com/jspn> (ホームページへのリンク)

<https://jspnweb.wixsite.com/jspn/english> (英語)

<https://www.facebook.com/日本尺八演奏家ネットワークjspn-634308333707177>

INTERVIEW by James Long

ARAKI KODO VI

Hanz Araki is Araki Kodo VI, the 6th iemoto in a lineage that started when Katsuguro Toyoda conferred the title Kodō on his apprentice, the youngest son of a samurai class family from Minakuchi in Shiga Prefecture, Hanz Araki's great-grandfather, and thus began the Araki Legacy.

James Long: Please tell me about yourself/a brief history of your family

Hanz Araki: It's a challenging story to tell briefly! My father is Kodō Araki V, born in 1938 in Akasaka, Tokyo. He is the fifth iemoto of the Kodō line, a name that came into my family with my great-great grandfather, Araki Hanzaburō (Kodō II). I was named Kodō VI in 2009 with my father taking the name Chikuō II; the same name his great-grandfather took upon passing the name Kodō to his son.

JL: When did you start playing? Were you encouraged by your family early on?

HA: My first lesson was in April of 1988 when I was still 17. My father had a difficult youth and was under tremendous pressure to take over Kodō Kai at just 12 years old. Because of this, he never pressured – or even suggested – any of his children take up the instrument. I took to the music very quickly though and debuted in August of that same year taking the name Baikyoku.

JL: What does it mean to you to be part of such a long lineage?

HA: I am proud of the accomplishments of my forefathers and what they brought to the tradition. I'm comfortable with my interpretation of our family's style, and I aspire to contribute to the tradition in whatever way I can.

JL: What was it like being a young "non-Japanese" player at that age? How were you received in Japan?



HA: Japan at that time was a fairly xenophobic nation. (I suppose that hasn't really changed much.) There were very few people my age playing traditional music, which alone made me somewhat of a novelty. It was an almost entirely closed world even within Japan, so I felt a bit like an outsider regardless of my parentage. That I didn't drink was a much bigger issue. The occasions I was treated with outright hostility were very rare.

To some degree, even my father was treated as an outsider because he lived abroad for 25 years and married a foreigner. Prejudice was pretty low-key. Disagreements were difficult to resolve because I couldn't possibly understand language subtlety or cultural nuances due to my non-Japaneseness. The constant surprise that you can use *hashi*, or like *nattō*, or whatever got old quickly.

JL: Do you remember what it was like to be a beginner? If you could give your beginner self any advice what would it be?

HA: My beginner self didn't have much say in the matter and I played at least six hours a day! I'd tell him to take a break and see some of Japan so you don't get burnt out, which ended up being the case. That said, my advice to beginners is practice everyday. Even if it's just for 15 minutes. 15 minutes a day is better than 3 hours on Saturday. Plateaus happen. Practice and you'll surmount them.

JL: Do you see any crossovers or parallels between shakuhachi and Irish music?

HA: I find that the dance music of Ireland – the jigs, the reels, etc. – don't translate well on shakuhachi, but the slow airs are often quite well suited. Embouchure, breathing, and the mechanics of playing shakuhachi crossed over very nicely to the Irish flute and penny whistle.

JL: Are there any pieces in particular you enjoy playing, or that have a particular significance for you?

HA: I deeply miss *sankyoku*. I loved Nakanoshima Kinichi's *Seki Heki no Fū*. I also loved playing *Kon Kai*, *Zan Getsu*, *Miyama Jishi*; I can go on and on. I still love *Hi Fu Mi Hachigaeshi*, and never tire of *Shika no Tōne* (Kodō III's almost superhuman performance of that piece gives me chills). One piece I'm so delighted to be teaching now is *Tsuki no Kyoku* by Chikuō I.

JL: Up until recently you've been quite quiet on the international shakuhachi "scene", (if there is such a thing), why is that?

HA: I'm really glad you asked! Mostly, it's because I don't typically enjoy playing solo. The joy of playing music for me is in interaction, the language of music when it's shared with other players. When I lived in Japan, I dearly loved *sankyoku* music. Not to the exclusion of *honkyoku*, but it definitely was more motivating.

It has always been easy for me to shift my focus to playing ensemble, even to this day. And if I'm being perfectly honest, being a part of this long line of shakuhachi masters, I couldn't bring myself to jump through the hoops I had to jump through in Irish music. Booking gigs and releasing albums is a demoralizing process. The thought of encountering those same roadblocks in a style of music that has been in my family for generations, and one that I'm quite good at, was overwhelming to me.

"The joy of playing music for me is in interaction, the language of music when it's shared with other players."

If there was one upside to the pandemic, it's that isolation meant being forced to play on my own. In playing hours a day, I found myself going back through my old *orihon* and revisiting the *honkyoku* canon. I also came into a tremendous shakuhachi.

JL: Tell me about the Chikuo flute - how did you come to own it, how does it feel to play your great great grandfather's flute and how does it play as an instrument?

“Every degree removed from the true masters is an exponential shift away from the tradition.”

HA: Some time last year, a man contacted me for lessons in Irish flute. He was interested in taking lessons from me because he had studied shakuhachi a little and what are the chances there would be someone who taught both? He is a lot more connected to the current market of instruments than I am – I have only ever played whatever instrument my dad put in my hands, so I never had to buy one. My student mentioned there was a Kodō II flute on the market and he made the connection for me to buy it. Even though the purchase of an extremely expensive instrument was not the best financial decision during a work stoppage, it was too tempting to pass up.

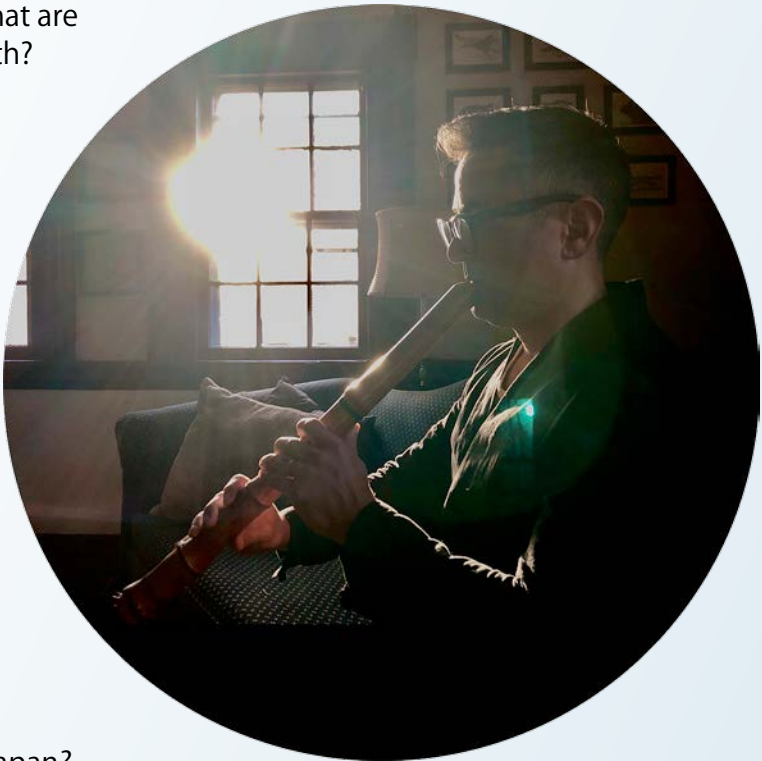
It is an absolute joy to play. It's incredibly light, but very responsive with a deep resonance. I'm not one given to superstition, but I can't deny it feels very much like I'm speaking to my ancestors through it. In a way, when I first played it, it felt like it was playing itself.

JL: How do you see the shakuhachi world outside of Japan?

HA: When I first returned to America, I was discouraged by the number of times I had to refute the “warrior monks” mythos. That was pre-internet. As I've opened the door back up to the shakuhachi world, I see it's just as, if not more, pervasive than it was twenty years ago. I'm non confrontational by nature and play an almost singular style from a family people seem to want to forget. Thankfully, at this point, I don't feel the need to prove anything.

For many people, their exposure to shakuhachi is through *jidai-geki*, anime, or video games, where the playing often treads close to parody. Every degree removed from the true masters is an exponential shift away from the tradition. The farther people get from the source, the closer we get to its extinction. There is a tendency to play almost a caricature of shakuhachi music, and a bit of a rush to compose. I don't discourage anyone from creating original music, but personally, I believe it's important to know the tradition first. The truth is, without the world outside of Japan, the shakuhachi's days are numbered.

JL: How does it feel being the last “Araki Kodo”? What's next?



HA: I'm turning 50 this year. My hope is that it's not too late to generate a little interest in our style of playing and to get it out there a bit more among the shakuhachi community.

JL: What are your shakuhachi plans for the future?

HA: At this stage (meaning, age), touring isn't getting any easier, and logistics are always a nightmare for bands. I will always love the energy of playing in a group, but I hope to make more room for shakuhachi in the coming years. 10 to 12 shakuhachi concerts a year is the goal I've set for myself. I've really been enjoying teaching, if we're looking for pandemic silver linings. I still love performing; hopefully we'll see a return to live music in the not-too-distant future.

JL: You have a CD coming out soon, please tell me more about it!

HA: Since moving to New England, I haven't performed shakuhachi at all, except on trips back to the Northwest and Japan. I had planned on producing a concert to celebrate 30 years since my debut. I had even begun making inquiries to a few collectors and retired players to see if I could borrow a Chikuō I flute for the occasion. Coming into this shakuhachi from my great-great-grandfather meant a great deal to me. Again, live music is nothing but a distant memory (in the States, at least), but I'm no less compelled to put music out there. I really don't enjoy creating online content, and streaming concerts for me just feel a bit awkward.

In 1995, I played on a compendium of Kinko Ryū *honkyoku* with my father. Since then, a solo effort kept finding its way to the back burner. A break from touring has meant a return to teaching, and with that, the necessary deep exploration of each piece I teach. The timing for a solo album felt right.

I'm including one of the very first pieces I learned, 雲井獅子 (*Kumoi Jishi*), followed by a piece I played at my final concert in Japan before moving back to Seattle, 秋田菅垣 (*Akita Sugagaki*); 月の曲 (*Tsuki no Kyoku*), composed by the man after whom I was named, and 銅鏡 (*Dōkyō*), written by my father. Digital copies will be available December 7th, and physical CDs will start to ship out the end of January.

JL: Thank you very much for your time.

HK: My pleasure!

HANZ ARAKI WEBLINKS

<http://hanzaraki.com> (homepage)

<https://www.youtube.com/c/HanzAraki> (YouTube channel)

<http://arakikodo.com> (about the Araki lineage)

JAMES LONG is a Chikumeisha Kinko Ryū player from Oxford, his teachers are Michael Soumei Coxall/UK and Ito Inmei/Japan.



反響 *Hankyō* (Reverberation)

IMAGES OF JAPAN

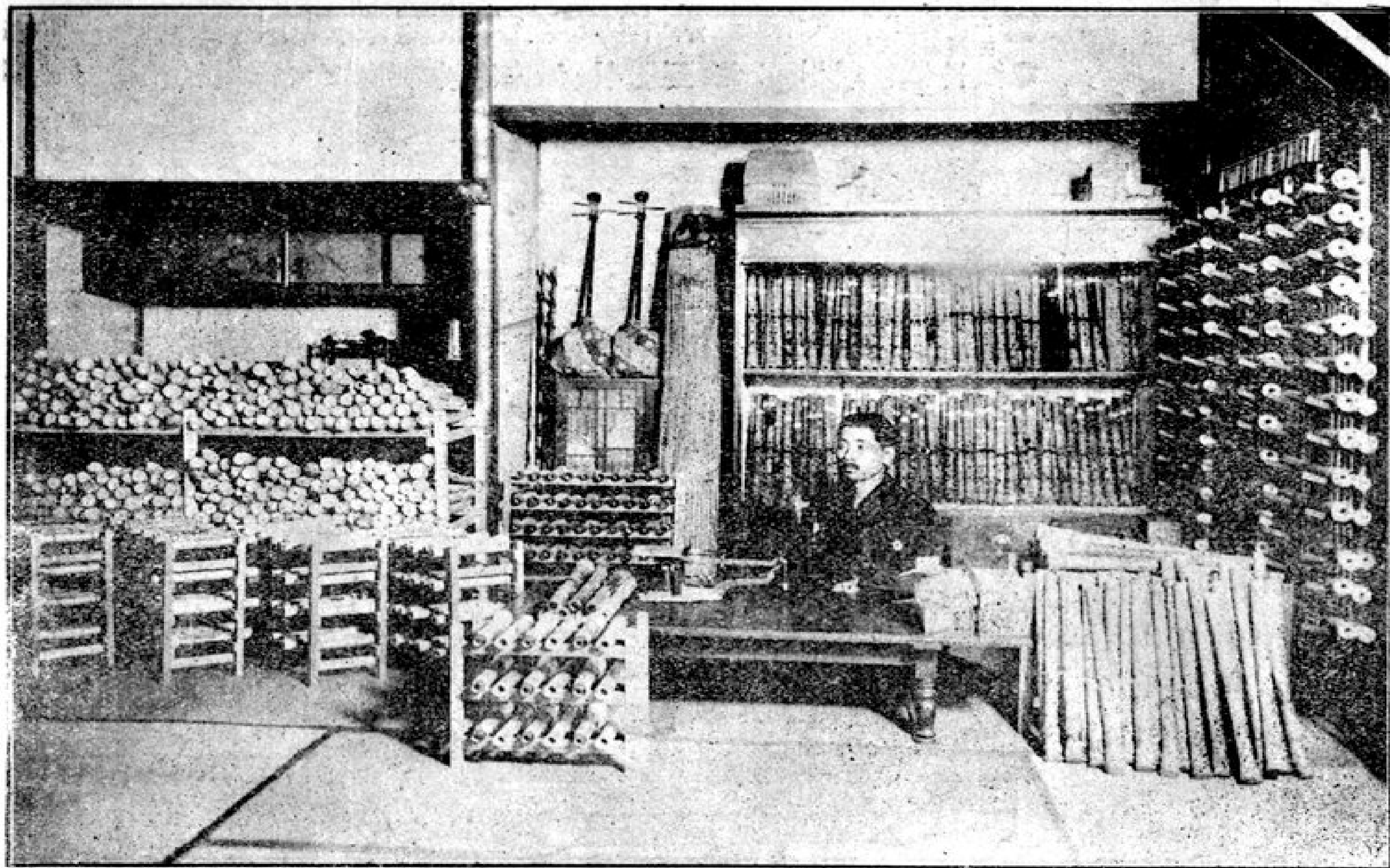
THE BIGGER PICTURE

The Bigger Picture is a new section in our newsletter – it is an attempt of a visual essay assembling images taken from archives, personal collections and contemporary sources to give us a snapshot of the past and present of shakuhachi's homeland, and in turn to flavour and energise our memories and imagination.

Mount Fuji, Lake Yamanakako, as seen through a webcam
on 30th November 2020 at 8h30 JST
© live.fujigoko.tv

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Ad for Mr Komatsu's shop, 1924

Photo courtesy of the Archives of the International Shakuhachi Society



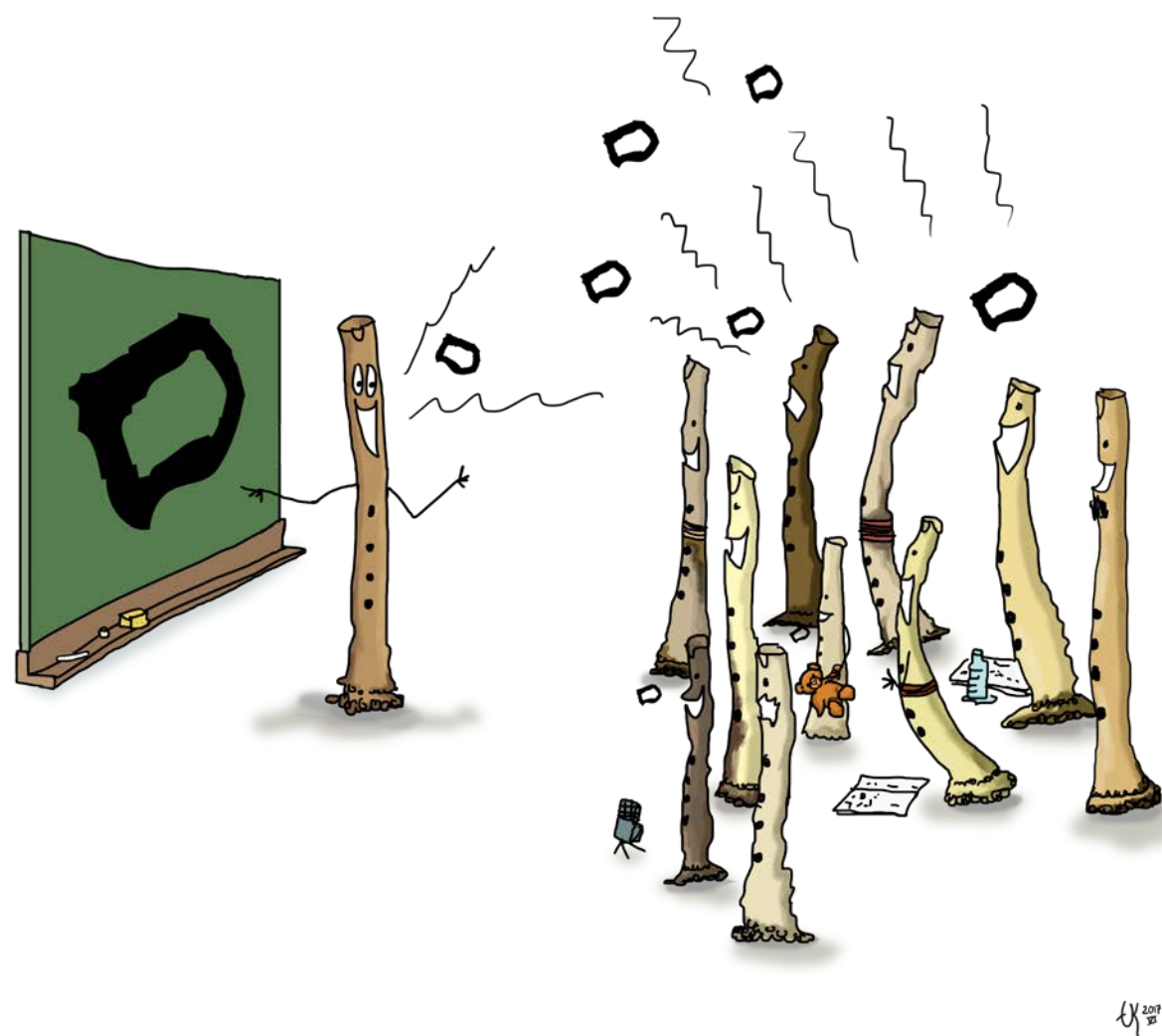
Tairyūji Temple on Shikoku Island on 28th February 2019
Tairyūji is no.21 on the Shikoku88 Pilgrimage route.
Photo Kiku Day/Kenneth Larsen



Father & son – Shiro Yamaguchi teaching his son Goro (possibly late 1940s)
Photo courtesy of the Archives of the International Shakuhachi Society



Sunset in Aomori City, Aomori Prefecture on 27th August 2019
Photo Thorsten Knaub



SHAKUHACHI RESOURCES

1.8 shakuhachi fingering chart

The techniques of the shakuhachi

In our new resources section we start with a comprehensive 1.8 fingering chart for shakuhachi. Part of a wider project of creating an in-depth study of the instrumental techniques of shakuhachi directed towards both composers and performers, its author, Ramon Humet, shared with us the initial stage of his project, which will on completion be available on a webpage.

Introduction

The 1.8 shakuhachi fingering chart has been elaborated with a *jiari* shakuhachi. There can be very small variations between instruments.

The fingering chart is an introductory part of a deeper study of the techniques of the shakuhachi that will include trills, harmonics, bisbigliandi, multiphonics, and other extended techniques. This study is intended for the use of composers and performers who wish to explore the techniques of contemporary music for shakuhachi.

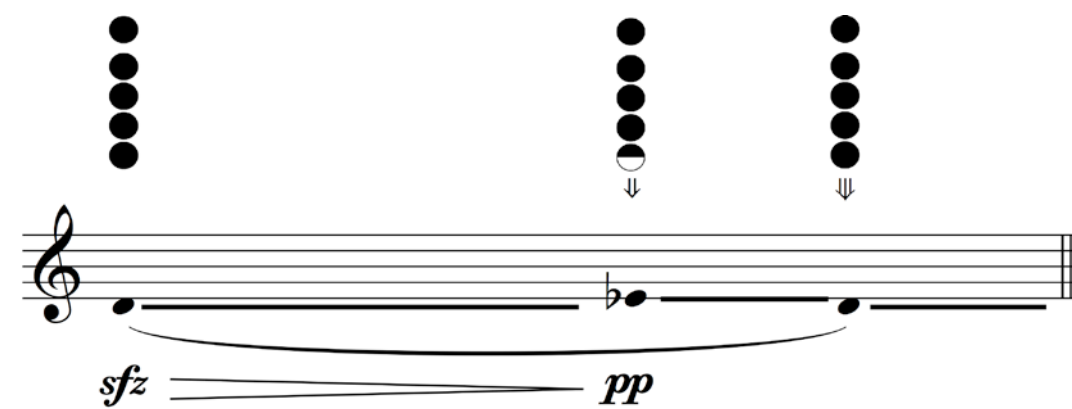
As I have delved deeper into the study of extended shakuhachi techniques, I have realized the importance of establishing a complete fingering table that is outside the traditional schools, with an objective view of the instrument, exploring each fingering with a spectrum analyzer.

Meri / kari

The *meri / kari* notation on the fingering chart is inspired by Yoshikazu Iwamoto's article *The Potential of the Shakuhachi in Contemporary Music*. The *meri / kari* technique indicates the angle of the head with respect to the mouthpiece. When no arrow is indicated, it is understood to be played in the normal position.

Any note in the normal position has a family of notes derived from the *meri / kari* technique. It is possible to get more pitches with the same fingering using *meri / kari* technique than those indicated in the fingering chart. The chart describes the fingerings with the normal position, and some interesting variations with *meri / kari* position.

As a general rule, a *meri* or *dai meri* note does not allow you to play at a loud volume, due to the angle of the mouthpiece. The more *meri*, the softer dynamics. In the normal position, all dynamics can be achieved. In the *kari* position, the tendency of the instrument is to play stronger dynamics.



Example 1: Idiomatic phrase where the Eb and the last D in meri position are played with pp dynamics.

Fundamental tones

The notes produced by the shakuhachi may be the fundamental of the harmonic series, or one of the higher harmonics of the fundamental. When it comes to a fundamental tone, the fingering chart indicates it with the letters FT. Approximately, the fundamental tones correspond to the otsu register. In the range of notes C#-D-Eb there are fingerings of “fundamental tone” type and of “harmonic” type. This is the region of the instrument where a greater number of different fingerings accumulate, with a wide variety of colors.

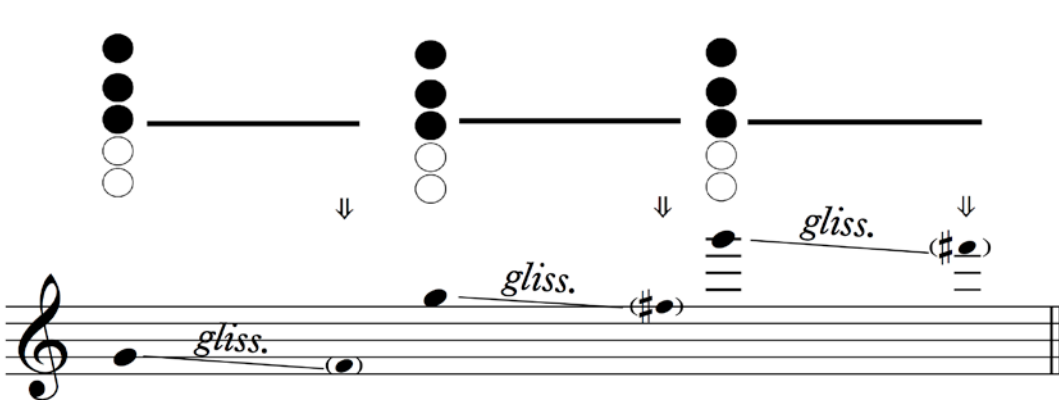


Example 2: Range of notes where fundamental and harmonic notes coexist

It is important to distinguish between fundamental tones and harmonics because the color changes substantially. The former have a richer harmonic spectrum, with more body, and with a more relaxed execution. The latter are more penetrating, with a more directional sound projection and a more closed mouth.

The kind of sound especially affects the range of sound inflection when played with the meri technique. In the fundamental tones, the meri easily lowers one whole tone, and in good performers a tone and a half or beyond can be reached. On the other hand, in harmonics it is much more difficult to lower a tone in the meri. In fact, the higher in the harmonic series is the pitch, the harder it will be to make the technique meri.

For this reason, at the sharp end of the instrument register there is a region of notes where the meri / kari technique is especially difficult and, even in good performers, makes it difficult to make inflections beyond the descending semitone in the meri.



Example 3: In this example, the fingering is maintained, while doing a transition from the normal position to meri position. The first glissando with G as the fundamental tone in otsu is very easy and it is affordable to drop one whole tone, or even more. The second glissando in kan with a G as the second harmonic of the spectrum is difficult, and it is challenging to drop more than a semitone. The third glissando in dai kan with a G as the fourth harmonic of the spectrum is extremely difficult, and quite impossible to drop more than a semitone.

Harmonic structures

Each note has a harmonic structure determined by the spectrum and generated by a set of elements: fingering, head angle, air direction, and air intensity. In most fingerings, the harmonic structure is maintained even if changes in angle, direction, or intensity are made.

In some notes, the harmonic structure may change when there is a change in angle, direction, or intensity. The change in harmonic structure implies that the fundamental or harmonics of the spectrum change, and therefore the tuning also changes while the fingering is maintained.

Often there is a predominant harmonic structure, more stable than the others. The fingering chart indicates the most stable harmonic structure.

Bibliography

Iwamoto, Yoshikazu: *The Potential of the Shakuhachi in the Contemporary Music*. Contemporary Music Review, 1994, Vol. 8, Part 2, pp. 5-44
Fingering charts by Kinko school, Tozan school, KSK school and Zensabô school
Fingering chart by John Kaizan Neptune

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to Kakizakai Kaoru Sensei for his helpful comments in the revision of the fingering chart. I also want to express special gratitude to Horacio Curti, for his encouragement and generous support.

RAMON HUMET is a composer and shakuhachi performer based in Barcelona, Spain.
www.ramonhumet.com

1.8 shakuhachi fingering chart by Ramon Humet

The fundamental tones can modulate the pitch as far as one whole tone in meri position. The non-fundamental tones can modulate the pitch half tone in meri position. As the pitch becomes higher, pitch modulation becomes smaller in kari/meri position. In C#4, D4 and Eb4, some fingerings are fundamental tones (marked with FT) and others are non-fundamental tones.

FT: fundamental tone
 (1) changing the direction of the air flow, the harmonic structure changes
 (2) airy sound
 (3) changing the opening of the third hole, the harmonic structure changes
 (4) shading the root hole

The image displays a musical score for a piece, likely in a traditional East Asian style, featuring a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The notation includes various note values and accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals). Below the staff, a large, complex diagram illustrates the pitch modulation and melodic structure using a series of black and white dots arranged in vertical columns. This diagram is annotated with numbers (1), (4), and (5) and includes arrows indicating the direction of pitch modulation (up, down, or both). A bracket at the top right of the diagram indicates a section where 'pitch modulation becomes smaller in meri/kari position'. The diagram is organized into several rows, with the first row containing the most dots and subsequent rows showing a decreasing number of dots, suggesting a descending melodic line or a specific rhythmic pattern.

SHAKUHACHI RESOURCES

MIN'YŌ

As part of our shakuhachi resources we want to present to you in every issue a min'yō song with notation and audio/video references, so you can practice, play along or simply enjoy the flavour of min'yō music.

We will travel around the country and come across songs, places and customs of some of Japan's prefectures. This time we stop off at Miyagi Prefecture and discover *Nagamuchi Uta* as introduced by min'yō expert David Hughes.

About min'yō

Min'yō (民謡) is a genre of traditional Japanese music. The term is a translation of the German word *Volkslied* (folk song) and has only been in use since the twentieth century.

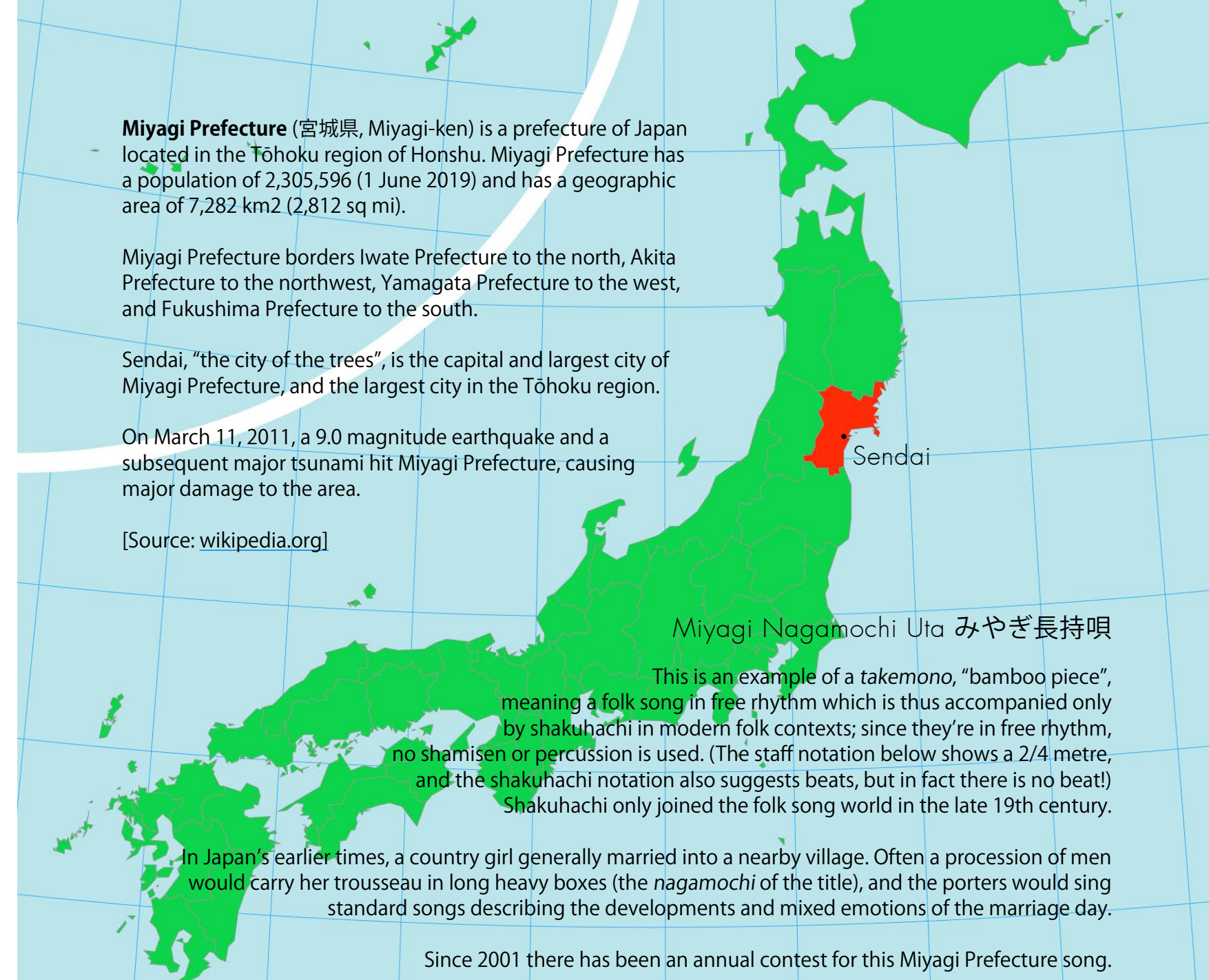
Japanese traditional designations referring to more or less the same genre include *inaka bushi* (country song) *inaka buri* (country tune), *hina uta* (rural song) and the like, but for most of the people who sang such songs they were simply *uta* (song).

The term *min'yō* is now sometimes also used to refer to traditional songs of other countries, though a preceding adjective is needed: *Furansu min'yō* = French folk song; for this reason, many sources in Japanese also feel the need to preface the term with *Nihon*: *Nihon min'yō* = Japanese [traditional] folk song.

Many *min'yō* are connected to forms of work or to specific trades and were originally sung between work or for specific jobs. Other *min'yō* function simply as entertainment, as dance accompaniment, or as a components of religious rituals.

Min'yō are also distinct depending on the area of Japan, with each area boasting its own favorite songs and styles. The songs found in the far northern island of Hokkaidō and sung by the Ainu people are usually excluded from the category of *min'yō*. In the far south, (especially Okinawa) distinct genres of *min'yō*, differing in scale structure, language and textual forms, have developed as well.

[Source: [wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Min'yō)]



Miyagi Prefecture (宮城県, Miyagi-ken) is a prefecture of Japan located in the Tōhoku region of Honshu. Miyagi Prefecture has a population of 2,305,596 (1 June 2019) and has a geographic area of 7,282 km² (2,812 sq mi).

Miyagi Prefecture borders Iwate Prefecture to the north, Akita Prefecture to the northwest, Yamagata Prefecture to the west, and Fukushima Prefecture to the south.

Sendai, “the city of the trees”, is the capital and largest city of Miyagi Prefecture, and the largest city in the Tōhoku region.

On March 11, 2011, a 9.0 magnitude earthquake and a subsequent major tsunami hit Miyagi Prefecture, causing major damage to the area.

[Source: [wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miyagi_Prefecture)]

Miyagi Nagamochi Uta みやぎ長持唄

This is an example of a *takemono*, “bamboo piece”, meaning a folk song in free rhythm which is thus accompanied only by shakuhachi in modern folk contexts; since they're in free rhythm, no shamisen or percussion is used. (The staff notation below shows a 2/4 metre, and the shakuhachi notation also suggests beats, but in fact there is no beat!) Shakuhachi only joined the folk song world in the late 19th century.

In Japan's earlier times, a country girl generally married into a nearby village. Often a procession of men would carry her trousseau in long heavy boxes (the *nagamochi* of the title), and the porters would sing standard songs describing the developments and mixed emotions of the marriage day.

Since 2001 there has been an annual contest for this Miyagi Prefecture song.

Miyagi Nagamochi Uta STUDYLINKS

<https://youtu.be/YkVUta3-tyA> (1.8 shakuhachi solo for teaching, with notation)

<https://youtu.be/8TC2JNlX6o> (1.6, with vocal)

<https://youtu.be/-tjqATjZ6j4> (a bit over-ornamented. There is no standard ornamentation for the melody: singers choose.)

Compare *Akita Nagamochi Uta* from the nearby Akita prefecture: <https://youtu.be/fkguw79gs>

REVIEWS

CD REVIEWS

From the reverberating tones of the Itchōken tradition, to contemporary excursion with jinashi shakuhachi and on to jazz infused relaxation sounds, we asked Brian Ritchie to share with us his impressions of three recent CD releases.

Daiji-fu by Renkei Hashimoto

Daiji-fū by Renkei Hashimoto contrasts the austerity of Itchōken honkyoku with almost surreal acoustic splendour in an unusual and extravagant recording. The aridity of *jinashi nobe chokhan* shakuhachi sound imparts a tactile message of Buddhist philosophy bathed in otherworldly echoing reverb.

Itchōken is historically one of the main temples of Fuke shakuhachi practice. The repertoire has crossover with Myōan Taizan Ha. Most shakuhachi players would be familiar with some standard Itchōken *honkyoku* such as *Kyushu Reibo*, *Banshiki* and *Sashi*, as well as *gikyoku Kumojishi* and *Azuma no Kyoku*, which have passed into other traditions. Hashimoto got her training in Komusō Fuke shakuhachi in Germany from Ikkei N. Hanada. Her previous CD featured some commonly performed honkyoku such as *Tamuke*, *Yamato Choshi* and *Murasaki Reibo*. *Daiji-fū* delves into seldom heard Itchōken-specific pieces and an original (the title track).

It’s undignified to inject oneself into a review but I’m going to do it anyway to illustrate one of the main points about this CD. I got an abrupt lesson in beginner’s mind when I put this CD on, wearing headphones. I wondered what the recording engineer was thinking (or taking) because the levels of reverb are astonishing. So much that it did not seem possible for anyone in a recording studio to consider doing it. So it made me wonder whether it was natural reverb. Reading the liner notes clarified all – the album was recorded in an architectural monument in Germany, the *Befreiungshalle*. One of the features of this building is a 12 second reverb with complex waves of sound. The recording was made with a combination of binaural and standard microphones and presents an amazing acoustic. Liner notes suggest headphones to get the proper effect. On speakers it sounds a bit more conventional.

Hashimoto’s playing counterintuitively suits this lush and sensual sound world, because of the contrast her fundamentalist approach presents. She lays out notes and phrases slowly and deliberately, with minute microtonal and dynamic nuances gaining weight by their interaction with the resonance of the *Befreiungshalle*. An example of this being used cleverly for musical effect is in *Takiochi*. This piece about a waterfall is illustrated during the accelerando sections by a cascading echo which emphasises what is implied in the score. *Shika no Tone* is usually a duet, but Hashimoto’s solo version creates the impression of a ghost duet through interplay with the room.



A refreshing aspect of this recording is the presence of some works we seldom hear. *Ekō*, arranged by *sensei* Hanada is a profound memorial piece, as is *Chikuzen Sashi*. The title track *Daiji-fū* is an original composition combining elements of *honkyoku* and folk music in an appealing mode.

The packaging is elaborate, with recycled cardboard cover and extensive liner notes. Hashimoto expounds on basics of her (and Itchōken’s) approach, including emphasis on breath, Buddhist compassion, eschewing worldly matters, and use of raw bamboo. She plays gigantic long and fat *nobe*. The recording, produced by Klaus-Dieter Eichler and engineered by Rüdiger Sturm, is highly detailed. It captures the echo of the room and the interior of the flute equally.

This album will suit people seeking relatively ego-less playing looking for simple and deep *honkyoku* with luxurious sound to relax into.

<http://pagma-verlag.de/programm/cd-renkei-hashimotodaiji-fu/>

Time Stands Still by Snake Davis

Snake Davis is a UK based saxophonist and multi-woodwind player with broad experience in the worlds of jazz, R&B, rock and soul. He has performed all over the world with his own band and as guest with artists as varied as Eurythmics, Lisa Stansfield and Japanese rock star Eikichi Yazawa. Snake also plays shakuhachi. This has brought his new album *Time Stands Still* to our attention.

Snake has stretched beyond his journeyman roots to create a recording of wind meditations in a variety of unusual electronic, environmental and instrumental settings. Snake calls *Time Stands Still* a relaxation album. It’s a limited concept. But Snake avoids the pitfalls of sameness and repetition by creating flow, and through sheer musicality.

Hēan starts the album with a fat, luxurious and winding *bansuri* voyage accompanied by Ernie Wood's oozing synth pads, wind chimes and a placid ostinato. Because of the blandness of this background Snake's *bansuri* articulations stand out.

The next three tracks of the album explore various shakuhachi approaches. *Kokoro*, *Kisoku* features an underlying groove of heartbeats and breathing sounds and a simple didgeridoo drone. Over this Snake has overdubbed basic shakuhachi improvisation. Snake is typical of woodwind players coming to the shakuhachi as a doubling instrument, in the sense that the playing incorporates habits such as breath vibrato and other techniques not usually part of traditional playing. The piece picks up steam through addition of vocal harmonies.

Lotus Flower features major pentatonic musings over static keyboard chords. It's a mood piece that starts in one place and stays there for the duration. The album structure seems to stagger very simple structures such as this followed by pieces allowing more development.



A Hidden Shrine benefits from Indian percussion from Inder Goldfinger, who creates a gurgling and loose groove including massive bass *ghatam* (clay drum) tones interspersed with gongs and rattles. This earthy setting provides a compelling springboard for Snake to unleash melodic figures displaying more harmonic adventurousness than on the previous two numbers.

That's all the shakuhachi on *Time Stands Still*. Shakuhachi playing on this album is in context of an arsenal of wind instruments played by Snake and probably not intended to be a virtuoso display. In a relaxation context Snake sets out to explore moods attached to various scales and modes. He exercises admirable restraint creating this relaxation music because nothing is less relaxing than listening to someone showing off their chops. Make no mistake, Snake's playing is highly skilled, but subdued. Other tracks feature as the lead instrument dizi, *shinobue* and tenor sax. *Return of the Eagle* has driving tabla from Goldfinger and hypnotic *bansuri* and tenor layerings. The title track is a handpan feature with a mysterious and evocative section for harmonised saxophones. *Stillness* features

a vocal chorus laying down lush chords with saxophone phrasing reminiscent of the spiritual jazz of Pharoah Sanders in a calm mood.

A word should be said about the production and arrangements. This album is well recorded. There are some New Age tropes such as somewhat cheesy keyboards and reverb that is sometimes thicker than necessary. The songs featuring strong input from instrumentalists and vocalists create a rustic contrast with the ones inhabiting a more ethereal electronic world. In summary *Time Stands Still* is for listeners who are open to a synthesis of western and eastern wind instruments in untraditional calm-inducing settings. It's a healthy combination of World and New Age sounds with a jazz sensibility.

<https://snakedavis.rocks/shop>

Wild Ways by Kiku Day

Kiku Day's *Wild Ways* is an album of contemporary compositions by five composers featuring jinashi shakuhachi. *Night Flying Winter Cranes* by Mogen Christenson is an electroacoustic piece. Roxanna Panufnik's *Wild Ways* is a choral suite. Yumi Hara Cawksell's *Nota Bene* is duet with clavichord. Takahashi Yuji's *Sinubi* and Frank Denyer's *Woman With Jinashi Shakuhachi* are solo pieces. Rather than review the album I decided to get the scoop directly from Kiku.

Brian Ritchie: This is an ambitious project. How did you go about commissioning the works? Did you choose the composers or was there an open call out for pieces?

Kiku Day: I had decided to commission five pieces from five different composers for my PhD. They all came about differently. I needed some Japanese. One with experience writing for shakuhachi one without, and others. Frank Denyer had experience writing for shakuhachi. The two other non-Japanese did not. One Danish was good for funding. I had to fund them all. They are all funded differently. Roxanna Panufnik by Arts and Humanities Research Council. Frank Denyer and Takahashi Yuji were self-funded, meaning I paid. Mogens Christensen from Danish Arts Council. and Yumi Hara Cawksell from some other funding organisation. I forgot (laughs).

I tried to choose them after what they had written before and their interest. I love Mogens Christensen's airy compositions where he would break away from pitch conventions. I love Frank Denyer's music. I was interested in Roxanna who really is into composing for various instrument also getting inspiration from other musical cultures. Yumi Hara is fun and I had the feeling she would write something fun. It also just happened that my supervisor Keith Howard passed by Yumi and I and said: Yumi, why don't you write for clavichord and shakuhachi? The idea was planted. So, I chose them.

BR: With Mogens work how was that constructed? Did he create the electroacoustics and you overdubbed? How many shakuhachi tracks are there?

KD: There is one live track and he made live electronics using sounds he had recorded of me before. In the end he has made a pre-recorded track so I can play it even if he is not there.

BR: All of the electroacoustic sounds have their origin in your shakuhachi?

KD: Yes. All of them

BR: Did Keith suggest clavichord because of its sonic similarity to some Asian string instruments?

KD: I think it was just a crazy idea that moment. Keith plays clavichord. And we both said no. But then after a while Yumi called me saying you know what? I think it is a great idea.

BR: It is a great idea. They suit each other. Speaking of crazy, is Wild Ways inspired by Ikkyu? Is the text taken from Ikkyu's poetry?

KD: Yes, it is the title of Roxanna's piece. I sent her the book *Wild Ways* for inspiration. And she took it as title as well. Later on I took it as title for the CD.

BR: Was this piece recorded live?

KD: All pieces are recorded live. *Wild Ways* with a choir in a church in Copenhagen. I did crowdfunding to be able to pay for the choir.

BR: What was the experience like trying to raise the voice of the shakuhachi over such a large group?

KD: Haha! HARD!

BR: I thought so. And how about matching Western pitch, sometimes that seems like a challenge.

KD: And I am not very good at that - or it is not my key competence. My Mujitsu shakuhachi got so sharp at one point that I had to change flute.

BR: In the case of *Nota Bene* it is not as apparent probably because of the staccato nature of the clavichord.

KD: True. I shouldn't be so much out of tune on *Wild Ways* either though.

BR: You are devoted to *jinashi* for contemporary art music which goes against the trend. Most contemporary players play *jiari* and sometimes seven hole and strive for volume and pitch accuracy to Western standards. Could you explain why you have gone this way and what you see as the advantages?

KD: After this experiment I think I should stick to pieces that really bring out the strong point about *jinashi* shakuhachi. I wanted to do it already back then. But composers are composers. Roxanna was very worried that if it was written very shakuhachi-like nobody would play it beyond the premiere. I have played it quite a few times actually. Clive Bell played one movement too!

BR: So is it as simple as the fact that you like *jinashi*, and like contemporary composition and just want to combine them because it represents two facets of your musical personality?

KD: Yes indeed. It began to feel like I wasn't expressing myself completely if I only played *honkyoku*.

BR: That explains the endeavour. There are two solo pieces concluding the album. *Sinubi* has more in common with *honkyoku*. It sounds like an abstract modern *honkyoku* in some ways. Is that your interpretation or is it all in the score?

KD: Not in the score at all. Takahashi chose to write in staff notation so it was more neutral. I played it really boringly for a long time. Then I transcribed it to shakuhachi notation and the piece suddenly made sense.

BR: That's a good collaboration. You have pre-empted my next question, which was about what kind of notation was used. Is it all Western staff, except this transcription, or did any of them use graphic notation? Or *Kinko*?

KD: All western notation. Let me show you *Sinubi*. (BR note: staff notation with a lot of squiggly lines denoting glissandi). In a way it is almost graphic. It is really bare. Takahashi wanted to explore *meri kari*. And he said it HAS to be played on *jinashi*!

BR: So you created most of the glissandi using head, not fingers?



KD: Yes.

BR: I think *jiari* players would try to do it with their fingers.

KD: Very possible.

BR: Mouthpieces are too small on *jiari* for some of those intervals.

KD: Yes indeed. It is an exclusive piece.

BR: Denyer's works are devilishly difficult to play and understand. Even Iwamoto [Yoshikazu] had trouble, with his brilliant technique. Was it daunting to tackle *Woman with Jinashi Shakuhachi*? There are some harmonics that are beyond normal shakuhachi technique.

KD: Frank's pieces are so difficult. But the thing is he really understands the shakuhachi so well. I was surprised by some of the insights he had, that I hardly had. But he writes so difficult! It is not the most difficult piece of Frank I have played. I LOVE the use of voice.

BR: Finally, I recall you saying in one of the fora that you were suffering from anxiety and depression while working on all this contemporary music. And I was wondering if it was the music itself that was causing it. Is it cathartic to finally get it out there? And do you feel differently about the music now, than when you were woodshedding on it?

KD: I don't recall I ever had anxiety. I wonder what that was. There were moments of great pressure. There was one moment when I realised some of the pieces were failure in regard to what I wanted. And that was a great piece for *jinashi* shakuhachi. Several of them might be better on *jiari* or flute. That was quite depressing. But I think it was a good project all in all. I am VERY happy with some of the pieces. Finally getting it out was important. I am better at getting great ideas than finishing projects. And it was a long and windy road when you have to do everything from cover design to finding a label.

BR: I think it's a very accomplished album and one that nobody else would have made.

KD: Nobody else is that crazy!

<http://www.kikuday.com/wildways>

BRIAN TAIRAKU RITCHIE is a shakuhachi performer and teacher. He is the curator of MONA FOMA Music & Arts Festival since 2009, music curator at Mona, Museum of Old and New Art and the bassist of the Violent Femmes. He is based in Hobart, Tasmania.

LOCKDOWN CULTURE

IS THERE ANYBODY OUT THERE?

As the different degrees of restrictions continue to grind outside cultural activity to a hold, we witnessed virtual manifestations of the enduring urge to create and share: Robuki wave, the recent World Shakuhachi Day, our very own ESS Nowhere2020 Festival, to name but a few. We gathered some reactions, reflections and introduce some more to blow away that indoor blues.

I enjoyed every moment of Nowhere 2020. What an absolute treat, what a wealth of hugely valuable inspiring teaching and information we received. I'm sure every member is as grateful as I am and as appreciative of the hard work and dedication of the organisers and teachers. During one of the fantastic robuki sessions, I think it was Daniel Lifermann, the experience of enjoying the sensation of the air on the fingers was referred to. It's all too easy to forget to pay attention to this, sometimes for days on end, and it was wonderful to hear it discussed. That same day I wrote this..

Vibration of air
Fingertips receive with love
Bamboo shapes my breath

Snake Davis

Hello to the NowHere 2020 organisation, thank you very much for design and organise this really interesting festival, for me it has been a great event in many aspects: in many cases it was a really very interesting experience to receive the teachings of great masters of the shakuhachi, in others to see the styles and lessons of different schools and the techniques of construction was also amazing. It has been really great to share an experience like this with the other shakuhachi students. Yesterday somebody said the format of the online festival is very interesting, despite this year the festival online has been organized in order of the circumstances of the global pandemic, this kind of festival could be interesting also in "a normal situation", I absolutely agree with this idea.

Thank you very much for all and see you soon.

José Grima

Dear Shakuhachi colleagues,

I just wanted to thank all my friends in ESS for encouragement during these difficult past few months dealing with the Coronavirus pandemic. At the beginning of the first U.K. lockdown in March my anxiety and work was eased by focusing on my Sensei amazing new CD with the very apt title of "Time stands still", please buy it or listen to the download... it's amazing . The haunting melodies were soothing to the soul and then in March began daily midday Robuki practice to participate in a "healing wave of Robuki" round the world which quickly became a focus at the Medical Centre family general practice where I work. Even my weak flat notes were apparently healing to the ears of my stressed out colleagues as we embraced massive changes in our working patterns. Lunch time became a time to stop at midday and play Robuki. A little time of peaceful and mindful reflection. It began a wave of Musical creativity within our health centre. A junior colleague purchased a wonderful "handpan" In the key of D to accompany my shakuhachi. Another started playing a tin whistle.

Then came the amazing weekend of the Nowhere Festival to replace the disappointed Dublin crowd, it far exceeded my expectations and was another lovely weekend of lightness during the summer time. I want to formally thank everyone again who gave up their time to help and encourage especially the newer beginner members like myself, although there were some advanced workshops and interesting lectures too. All I felt I had missed was a professional recital, maybe with koto and a pint of draught Guinness accompaniment. But it was so heart warming to reconnect even remotely with many shakuhachi friends. I felt blessed and inspired by all the lovely people in the world who play shakuhachi. What Then recently we celebrated the first World Shakuhachi Day. I was lucky to be able to zoom or face time my new friends around the world and we played Robuki together. It brought us all closer once more. I spent all day trying to pull some strings and get shakuhachi featured on the Classic FM radio station as i was for years a member of their consumer panel. I felt as I had somehow become a shakuhachi ambassador I wanted to raise the profile of this deserving instrument in the classical world too but alas "twas not to be this year. Maybe I'll try again in 2021!

So what's next for ESS. Moving over the sea to France. I'm hoping for more winter workshops now that England is dark by 4pm in the afternoon. Anyone else interested? And as it's been such a hard year how about a Christmas Robuki on zoom to celebrate our festive season... tonight I celebrate Diwali by playing shakuhachi to the moon and the stars in the clear bright sky . It is mild enough to be able to sit at night in my garden still . Not bad for mid November up North of England .. so thanks for all the shakuhachi goings on , new recordings and videos , meditations etc etc . It's keeping us keeping on.

Looking forward to the next steps in my Zen journey... and eagerly awaiting my new green pvc shakuhachi from Thorsten which I intend to take out into nature with me on my daily dog walks and find some new spots to play in to charm the wildlife...

Sally

A special lockdown composition by Japanese composer Dai Fujikura

Longing from afar, (Dai Fujikura, 2020)

for any instruments or/and voices, to be tele-performed; duration: any length

"I was considering how all musicians make sound together even when we are all physically far apart. ... I designed this work to be performed with leader/conductor, which is unlike many other open score works. The conductor has a direct influence on the sound of the music working ensemble with other musicians."



Shakuhachi ensemble "The shakuhachi 5"

Akihisa Kominato
Akihito Obama
Ken-ichi Tajima
Kizan Kawamura
Reison Kuroda

<https://youtu.be/Phf8AZ6WLC8>

Shakuhachi ensemble "Fuga chikuin"
風雅竹韻

Dozan Fujiwara
Hozan Murasawa
Keizan Shiori Tanabe
Kohzan Shiba
Shozan Hasegawa
Zenji Kazama
Dohju Kasahara
Bunzan Shono



<https://youtu.be/3NZLZMiJvso>

https://daifujikura.com/un/Longing_from_afar_FUJIKURA_13Oct2020_version5 (score)

https://www.daifujikura.com/prog_longing (about the composition)

<https://www.daifujikura.com/open.html> (more versions of *Longing from afar* with other instruments)

Yuko Hagioka - Online Concert



LIVE: 12th December at 14:00 local time (06:00 CET)

Early risers and koto enthusiasts mark your diary for 12 December: Rare chance to hear Yamada Ryū koto music live from Japan. Hagioka a Yamada Ryū koto player, daughter of the famous koto player Hagioka Shoin, will give her PhD graduation concert.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_cY_s6mDwm-MUros9dODqw

John Kaizan Neptune & Hitoshi Hamada

John Kaizan Neptune, guest teacher on next February's ESS NowHere II Winter Festival, celebrated the worldwide release of documentary film *Words Can't Go There* with a concert straight from his home in Japan. If you missed the live stream, here is the link to watch the recording of the event.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/418602219311606/>



Not strictly lockdown culture, but in the light of the ESS NowHere II Festival,

Tsuru no Sugomori



Tsuru no Sugomori being the inspired and inspiring piece it is, two versions for western instruments:

Wil Offermans' 1999 version for silver flute and Kama (Tassos Tataroglou) 2019 rendition & edition for microtone-duplex trumpet.

Enjoy!

<https://incounterpoint.info/releases/tsuru-no-sugomori/>



<https://youtu.be/-suqLFjkMJY>

SHAKUHACHI HUMOUR, POETRY & MORE

HA-HA-RO

In our new HA-HA-RO/more merry section we are looking for the lighter side of the shakuhachi world (unfortunately we haven't found it yet...). In the meantime we welcome contributions from our members to offer personal reflections, share artworks, poetry, writings, musings, etcetera, etceteru...



Cartoon by Thorsten Knaub

Growing, Becoming

Breathe in... Breathe out...
Wait a moment ... Let it go.

Feel the life,
The life around,
As you lay sited on the ground,

As the bamboo grows,
He doesn't know...
He doesn't know what he will be.
He doesn't know that he will become so important to me.

Taketori begins.
Respect is given.
Remember...

All the bamboo that is chosen is pointing to heaven.
As the holes appear so that the air may pass,
You remember his youth as a little piece of grass.

A grass that grows.
A grass that feeds.
A grass that lives
A grass that breathes.
A grass that doesn't know what he will be
A grass that will grow into a beautiful,

Shakuhachi.

Poetry by Julio Magalhaes

Remember

Why do you live so far?
Japan, ...you are in my life
I will hold this flute of yours and take your advice.

Blow slow into the utaguchi.
Let the sound emerge pure and clean.
As tranquility fills my soul I forget where I have been.

With each breath...
I feel...
I fall...
I burn...
With each breath...
I dream...
I rise...
I learn...

Some things are made of feelings,
And others made of sound.
The most important of it all,
Is to remember we are not bound.

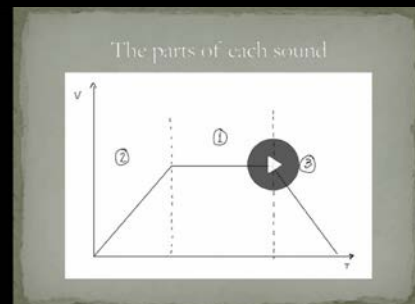
So rise Ro...
Rise as high as you "kan",
But remember that there are others.
Others that are minor, like Tsu.
Remember that Re Chi Ri and I are also part of you.

ESS MEMBERS' AREA - WHAT'S NEW?

NOWHERE2020 VIDEOS

After the successful online festival the ESS presented in August this year, we are happy to announce that the videos documenting the sessions are now available to view on the dedicated ESS members website. A great resource, enjoy!

Kurahashi Yodo II – *Mukaiji* (Mujuan)
 Daniel Lifermann – Robuki
 Fiore Seichiku De Mattia – *Hijiri no Shirabe* (Hijiri-kai)
 Riley Lee – *Fumai Inga* (R. Lee, 2013)
 Marek Matvija – *Chōshi* (Kifu-kai)
 Thorsten Knaub – Jiari Making: Utaguchi
 Horacio Curti – Robuki
 Jose Vargas – Bamboo and Shakuhachi



Horacio Curti - Robuki
 Kurahashi Yodo II – *Kyorei* (Mujuan)
 Gunnar Jinmei Linder – *Ashi no Shirabe* (Chikumeisha)
 Nina Haarer – Robuki
 Kiku Day – *Kudari Ha* (Zensabo)
 Véronique Piron – Breathing
 Alcvin Ramos – *Daha* (KSK)
 Jean-François Suizan Lagrost – *Kogarashi* (Tozan)

Videos: members.shakuhachisociety.eu/nowhere-2020
 nowhere2020 website: nowhere2020.shakuhachisociety.eu

HOW TO BECOME AN ESS MEMBER

The European Shakuhachi Society is a non-profit organisation devoted to the dissemination of the shakuhachi in all its different aspects throughout Europe through a wide variety of events, publications and other activities.

All board members and helpers work on a volunteer basis and receive no financial benefit but the Society needs money for organising a range of events, such as the annual summer schools. This comes from the membership fees.

Membership of the ESS is open to any person, both players or non-players, interested in the music of the shakuhachi in all its forms. Since the ESS is not affiliated with any particular school or aesthetic direction, its members represent a broad cross-section of styles and genres of shakuhachi. Supporting the ESS through joining is a means of helping maintain a coordinating resource of the shakuhachi in Europe.

The benefits of membership include access to information about shakuhachi events and tuition throughout Europe and beyond, as well as discounted participation fees at events such as the European Shakuhachi Summer Schools. (discounts that are generally greater than the cost of the membership fee itself).

Furthermore there is the **ESS Members' Area** at members.shakuhachisociety.eu, which consists of exclusive online resources like e.g. concert recordings of past Summer Schools and events, previous Summer School notations and the ESS Newsletter back-issues.

Once you have a valid membership subscription, our secretary will issue you with the relevant information on how you can access the online content.

The annual membership subscription fee is €20 or for a one-off payment of € 300 you can obtain Lifetime membership.

To join the ESS:

1) Visit the membership page on the ESS website and choose the membership subscription which suits you. <http://shakuhachisociety.eu/about-the-ess/ess-membership/>

2) Please send an email to member@shakuhachisociety.eu or info@shakuhachisociety.eu, giving your name and contact details, and if you wish, a little information about your interest in and experience with the shakuhachi.

3) If you cannot make payment using PayPal, please send an email to member@shakuhachisociety.eu and we will find a way to help you.

We are looking forward to welcome you!

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE ESS

ESS WEBSITE

You can find our website at www.shakuhachisociety.eu

There you will find information about shakuhachi, the ESS structure as well as past events and the ESS calendar of upcoming shakuhachi events in Europe.

General enquiries: info@shakuhachisociety.eu

For questions about membership: member@shakuhachisociety.eu

ESS newsletter: newsletter@shakuhachisociety.eu

The ESS will endeavour to respond quickly to any query.

ESS MEMBERS' AREA (MEMBERS' WEBSITE)

Resources like video, audio and notation for registered ESS members : members.shakuhachisociety.eu

ESS FORUM

The ESS operate a forum: "Practice, Culture and History of Japanese Bamboo Flute 尺八"

www.shakuhachiforum.eu

Please visit the forum and take part in discussions with shakuhachi players, teachers and makers from all over Europe and beyond.

ESS FACEBOOKGROUP

[European Shakuhachi Society Facebook Group](https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanShakuhachiSociety)

Please visit the ESS Facebook page and join the discussions and benefit from the connections worldwide.

ESS TWITTER

Follow us on twitter [@ESS_Events](https://twitter.com/ESS_Events)

To announce an event on the Twitter account of the ESS, please send your message (less than 140 characters please!) to this email address : twitter@shakuhachiforum.eu

ESS NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTOR'S GUIDELINES

The aim of the ESS Newsletter (NL) is to create a platform for members and non-members to further develop an understanding of shakuhachi and place it in a wider context than just their own individual study and experience. It, therefore, includes, among others, a diverse range of topics and new ideas, information, knowledge, materials and reflections on shakuhachi and the people who shape the musical scene.

We encourage everyone to send in ideas for articles you would like to write or topics you would like to read about to the publications office by email at: newsletter@shakuhachisociety.eu

Before each new number, a 'call for contributions' will be issued and a deadline for submission will be set, but please feel free to send us your ideas on possible articles any time you want.

In order to assist the authors in their task and to ensure some consistency, the following brief guidelines have been drawn up:

Article length: The NL includes articles of different lengths up to approximately 2,000 words. In special cases, longer articles focusing on specific topics or issues, which require a more in-depth analysis may also be considered.

Text format: Please send your text in a text document (doc, docx, rtf). You can use any font and format since the text will be adjusted to the NL format.

Audiovisual materials/external links: We encourage the authors to include links to audiovisual materials that can enhance the experience of the reader in terms of material specifically and directly relating to the analysis or review of the topic of the article and avoiding self promotion.

Please send the pictures or other multi-media materials separately and contact the editors beforehand. If the size of the files makes them difficult to be sent by e-mail please use services like e.g. wetransfer.com.

Picture format: Please send your pictures in jpg, png or tiff format with a minimum resolution of 150dpi.

Reviews: Should you wish for any shakuhachi material to be reviewed in the NL (recordings, books, etc.), please contact us with the particulars and the editors will get back to you.

Reviews of materials, such as books and CD's, will appear in the first available issue of the NL after being received by the editors. Reviews of events, such as summer schools, workshops, master classes and concerts, need to be submitted by the deadline for the next edition of the NL, ie. within a maximum of 6 months after the event.

Please provide acknowledgement/credit for the use of any other author's material.

Please avoid self-promotion.

The NL includes announcements on non-ESS events. Should you want your event's information to be included, please note that these events should take place after the publication of the respective NL edition (please consult the editors for exact dates of issue) and you should send the following information:

Date / Period

Description of your event

Venue

Cost

Contact information

Picture (may be edited to fit the needs of the NL format)

After submission, the articles will be proofread and edited, if necessary, with permission of the authors when practically possible. Editors will always try their best to find agreement with the authors but you should note that eventually the editors decision will be final. The publication language is English, any material received in other languages will be translated into English and presented alongside the original language version.

The ESS Newsletter exists thanks to the authors, translators and illustrators who so generously offer their knowledge, time and energy to provide materials. Please, be one of them.

ESS publications office

**The next ESS Newsletter is published around May/June 2021
There will be a call for contributions nearer the publication date, but please do
not hesitate to contact us in the meantime with any questions or suggestions.**





STAY TUNED !

BAMBOO

THE NEXT EUROPEAN SHAKUHACHI SOCIETY NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED
AROUND MAY/JUNE 2021