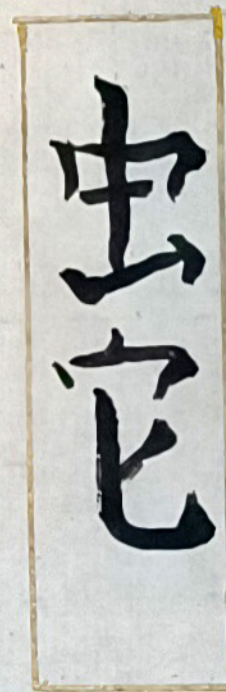
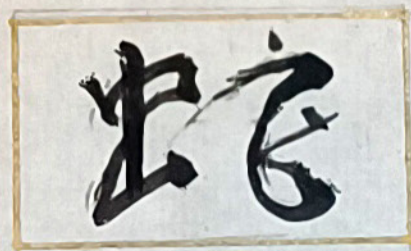


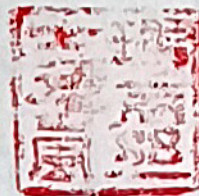


**ESS NEW YEAR
CONCERT 2025
on ZOOM**

Sunday 19. January
14h00 to 16h30 CET



Haruo



WSF2025 Texas special!

The European Shakuhachi Society presents

ESS NEW YEAR CONCERT 2025 on ZOOM

WSF2025 TEXAS SPECIAL, ESS MEMBERS & GUESTS

SUNDAY 19 JANUARY 2025

14h00 – 16h30 CET

Overview of Programme

as concert progresses times may vary...

13h45 Zoom room opens

14h00 Welcome/concert starts

~15h10 Short break

~16h30 End of concert

16h45 Zoom room closes



2025 being a WSF year, naturally this year's concert will have a special focus on the upcoming World Shakuhachi Festival taking place from 17. to 20 April 2025 at Texas A&M University and will feature a selection of WSF invitees too.

Additionally there will be a presentation of the WSF2025 by **Marty Regan**, as well as a short talk by the winner of the Composition Competition, **Peter Dayton**, about his new work for WSF2025.

The performers (*in alphabetic order*) are:

Performers / WSF2025

Christopher Yohmei Blasdel, Cornelius Boots, Kyle Chōmei, Hélène Seiyu Codjo, Martha Reika Fabrique, Zenyoji Keisuke, Jean-François Suizan Lagrost, Akihito Obama, and James Nyoraku Schlefer.

Performers / ESS guests & members

Felix Brander, Joseph Pepe Danza, Alfredo Garcia (& Jesús & Kanoko), Ramon Humet, Chris Molina, Tamara Rogozina, and Andrea Rother.

WELCOME (14h00)

5'

1. Zenyoji Keisuke – Shishi (Nezasa-ha Kimpu-ryū)

8'

This piece is said to be a piece of “wisdom” because it is a lion that follows Monju Bosatsu (Manjusri).

Also, in Japanese New Year’s local entertainment, the lion is a “deer,” and like this “lion dance,” I would like to play this piece to pray for peace in the coming year.

ZENYŌJI Keisuke was initiated into *komusō* shakuhachi at the age of six. He graduated from Tokyo University of Fine Arts from the Department of Japanese Traditional Music and studied under ‘Living National Treasure’, YAMAGUCHI Gorō. He performed his first solo recital in 1999. ZENYŌJI won among others, the prestigious Grand Excellence Award of the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs in 2017. He also published a shakuhachi practice book *Shakuhachi for the First Time*.

2. Christopher Yohmei Blasdel – Sagariha no Kyoku (Kinko-ryū/Chikumeisha)

10'

Sagariha no Kyoku dates from the late 18th century is one of the most endearing pieces in the Kinko *honkyoku* repertory. Its elegant rhythmic phrases and delicate ornamentation conjure images of brightly colored autumn foliage fluttering down from the trees, while its quiet rhythm suggests the distant sounds of a flute music performed during a fall matsuri festival in Japan.

Christopher Yohmei Blasdel studied under Living National Treasure Goro Yamaguchi from 1972 until 1999 and received an MFA in ethnomusicology from Tokyo University of the Arts in 1982. In his musical activities, Christopher balances the traditional and modern, improvisation and cross-genre work with musicians, dancers, poets and visual artists. His semi-autobiographical book, *The Single Tone—A Personal Journey through Shakuhachi Music* and *The Shakuhachi, A Manual for Learning* (both available on Kindle) are two of the most important English language resource books on the shakuhachi. www.yohmei.com

3. Chris Molina – *Stargazer's Lullaby* (C. Molina, 2021)

9'30"

While dreaming of distant planets, murky nebulae, and the radiant suns they give birth to, I wrote this lullaby — partly for a friend with a baby boy, partly for my own insomnia. The music joins Korean or Japanese zither with Japanese or Korean bamboo flute, interchangeably in four combinations. Inspired by the songs of Meredith Monk, a gentle and hypnotic rhythm lulls us to sleep, as whimsical melody muses with the occasional shooting star. 25-string gayageum played by Hae In Lee.

Chris Molina is a composer and shakuhachi performer based in Tokyo. His music draws on East Asian and Western classical traditions, jazz and folk, as well as aesthetics relating to the natural world. A graduate of the Universities of Michigan and Hawai'i, his dissertation addresses the vocabulary of Tōru Takemitsu's mature orchestrations. His works have been premiered by the Takács and St. Petersburg Quartets, the Shanghai Philharmonic, the University of Michigan and Sage City Symphonies, by gayageum virtuoso Jiyoung Yi and koto virtuoso Mieko Miyazaki. His music can be heard at youtube.com/stonechapelmusic

4. Alfredo Garcia (& Jesús & Kanoko) – *A Butterfly* (A. Garcia & J. Huedo, 2024)

7'

Improvisation with dance. The piece and the video performance will be based on Yosa Buson's haiku:

釣鐘に止まりてねむる胡蝶かな
tsurigane ni tomarite nemuru kocho kana
on the temple bell
sleeping
a butterfly

Jesús Saiz Huedo and **Alfredo García Martín-Córdova** have been performing as a duo since 1986. After years of interpreting music from the 19th century to today, they focus on developing expressive resources both from printed music of various genres and from improvisation. They incorporate the unique sound of the shakuhachi and have started collaborating with Kanoko Tamura, a performer trained in contemporary dance and butoh, who also explores expressiveness and improvisation.

5. Tamara Rogozina – *Daha*

5'50"

Daha (Pounding Wave). There are times when strong, intense, and unyielding determinations, like the ocean waves pounding at the cliff face, is appropriate. Other times, gentle, patient and unceasing will power, like the quiet waves lapping at the base of the cliff, gives better results.

Tamara Rogozina has been perfecting her shakuhachi flute skills since 2012. She attended the Shakuhachi Summer School in 2016 and in 2017 as well as the World Shakuhachi Festival in London in 2018. Her teachers are Sergey Maksimenko and Kiku Day with whom she is studying the Zensabo style of shakuhachi. Tamara also likes to acquaint herself with other styles.

6. Akihito Obama – *The Voice from the Sacred Places* (A.Obama, 2024)

9'

The “Sacred Places of the Shakuhachi” are home to statues of Buddha, monuments, architectural structures, and nature. Long before I arrived there, it must have been a place where many people offered their thoughts, prayers, and the sound of the shakuhachi resonated. Just standing before it fills me with profound emotion. I listen intently to the silent voices of those who came before me and reflect on the meaning of playing the shakuhachi in this world.

OBAMA Akihito studied Kinko style shakuhachi and classical *honkyoku* with ISHIKAWA Toshimitsu. He studied min'yō (folk music) shakuhachi with YONEYA Satoshi. A graduate of the National Broadcasting Association's (NHK) Japanese Music Artists, OBAMA also won the New Performers Competition in Tokyo and completed a 'Performance Pilgrimage Tour of Shikoku's 88 Temples' and studied in New York on an Asian Cultural Council scholarship. He has performed in 35 different countries around the world and released several CDs, including one with his original compositions entitled *Sui* (Water), and Lotus Position with pianist YAMASHITA Yosuke. He is a part-time faculty member at Gakushuin University.

7. Marty Regan –WSF2025 presentation + Q&A

5'-10'

WSF2025 is a unique gathering of the global shakuhachi community and with 55+ invited international guests it will feature the highest level of international shakuhachi performers. A WSF registration gives you admission to 10 concerts, participation in more than 72 workshops, R/T chartered coach transportation to Round Top Concert Hall, three catered events, including the gala dinner in Round Top, Tote bag, T-shirt, festival badge and the WSF 2025 programme booklet.

Marty Regan, chairperson of the ESF2025 Planning Committee, has composed over 70 works for traditional Japanese instruments and since 2002 has been affiliated with AURA-J, one of Japan's première performance ensembles of contemporary-traditional Japanese music. He graduated from Oberlin College in 1995 with a B.M. in Composition and a B.A. in English and East Asian Studies. From 2000 to 2002 he studied composition and took applied lessons on traditional Japanese instruments as a Japanese government-sponsored research student at Tokyo College of Music. In 2015 he was the recipient of a Helen Wurlitzer Foundation Artist Residency Grant as well as a Clare Hall Visiting Research Fellowship from Cambridge University, UK. He is an Associate Professor of Music at Texas A&M University.

8. Kyle Chōmei – San'An

8'

San'An, often known as the 'Safe Birthing prayer,' is a traditional Shakuhachi *honkyoku* piece that symbolises protection, new beginnings, and the nurturing of life. Its flowing, dynamic phrases and meditative depth evoke a sense of care, tranquility, and stillness, inviting listeners to reflect on themes of renewal and hope.

Kyle Chōmei, born in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1973, moved to Wayne, PA, in 1987. A graduate from the Philosophy Department of Villanova University, he is currently a shakuhachi performer, teacher, and ji-nashi shakuhachi maker based in Dubai. Awarded the professional name Chōmei by the Chikumeisha, he teaches both Kinko Ryu and Watazumido shakuhachi methods. Kyle's holistic approach integrates the discipline of martial breathing with the meditative practice of shakuhachi, offering a unique blend of cultural and personal development.

SHORT BREAK (ca. 15h10)

5'

9. Joseph Pepe Danza – *Tonbo No Tochi* (Arrang. J. Danza)

6'

This composition was written based on an improvisation recorded at a retreat center in Lithuania called Dragonfly Land. I liked what I heard so I arranged it a bit and notated it. A modern piece with a *honkyoku* spirit.

Joseph Pepe Danza heard the shakuhachi for the first time in 1978, while living in Washington DC, and was instantly hooked. Pepe Danza finally landed in Japan, where he lived for three years dedicated intensively to the study of shakuhachi, with Tanaka Komei *sensei* (Kinko-ryū) and John Kaizan Neptune, where he also deepened his study and practice of Buddhism. As a recording artist Danza has received several awards, while living in Canada, for his compositions in film and theatre. He presently resides in Slovakia and tours intensively around Europe.

10. Felix Brander – *Geese Flying Southward* (F. Brander, 2024)

5'

Geese Flying Southward is a piece created during the recent ESS online workshop with Chris Molina and it is Felix's first attempt at composing music. The piece is a wish for safe passage and safe return for birds flying south for winter.

Felix Brander first found the Shakuhachi in 2020 and fell in love with it. He struggled for 3 years by himself before finding the ESS and is currently studying Myoan and Zensebo styles with Kiku Day.

11. Ramon Humet – Cuckoo (R. Humet, 2024)

2'

Cuckoo is part of a collection of seven easy pieces that I am composing aimed at beginners, but with a musicality and expression to be concert pieces. *Cuckoo* is an evocation of the song of the bird based on the *chi-re* motif.

Ramon Humet (Barcelona, 1968) began his shakuhachi journey in 2004 with Horacio Curti. He currently studies with Kakizakai Kaoru, focusing on the KSK *honkyoku* repertoire, although he also studies contemporary music repertoire for shakuhachi. Ramon is a professional composer with a catalog of works that embraces opera, electronic music, choir and, of course, the shakuhachi! His concerto for shakuhachi and symphony orchestra *Desert* was premiered by Horacio Curti and the National Orchestra of Spain. www.ramonhumet.com

12. James Nyoraku Schlefer – Tommy (J.Schlefer, 2024)

9'30"

Tommy is a musical interpretation of a real historical event; the first ever visit of Japanese ambassadors to New York City in 1860. It brings together two of my worlds; that of a native New Yorker and of someone who has a profound interest in Japanese music and history. The music is written for sankyoku and string quartet. J. Schlefer, shakuhachi; Sumie Kaneko, shamisen & voice; Yoko Reikano Kimura, koto; voice; Arianna String Quartet: John McGrosso, Julia Sakharova, violin, Joanna Mendoza, viola, Kurt Baldwin, cello

James Nyoraku Schlefer is an American Grand Master of the shakuhachi and a teacher in the Kinko school following the lineage of Jin Nyodo. He received his dai-shihan certificate in 2001, and his second shihan certificate in 2008, from the Mujuan Dojo in Kyoto. His teachers included Yoshio Kurahashi, Reibo Aoki, Katsuya Yokoyama, Kifu Mitsuhashi and Ronnie Nyogetsu Seldin.

As a composer, Nyoraku specializes in chamber and orchestral works combining Japanese and Western instruments. In 2015, he was recognized by Musical America Worldwide as one of their "30 Top Professionals and Key Influencers" for his work both as a composer and Artistic Director of Kyo-Shin-An Arts.

13. Hélène Seiyu Codjo – *San'ya* (Hijiri-kai)

6'30"

This version of *San'ya* version is by Miyata Kōhachiro, handed down through Fukuda Teruhisa. "This piece is in arch form, with a central section higher in pitch and more agitated than the opening and closing sections. The title means Three Valleys".

Hélène Seiyu 聖優 is a shakuhachi teacher and performer living in the Netherlands since 2013. In 2023, she received her *dai-shihan* licence from Fukuda Teruhisa, founder of Hijiri-Kai. The spirituality of shakuhachi and playing in nature are essential for her. She likes to bring shakuhachi music elsewhere than in concert halls. She has released two solo shakuhachi CDs with her own compositions: *African Memories* (2020) and *Reflection* (2021).

14. Peter Dayton – Winner of the WSF2025 Composition Competition / Q&A

5'-10'

Peter will talk about the composition commission, which is for soprano, shakuhachi, 13-string koto, and cello. Also he will talk about the text that the soprano will sing and its author, his relationship to Japanese music, his ideas about the structure of the piece, and the challenges of notation for the instrument as a composer who does not perform on a traditional instrument with different technique schools.

Peter Dayton, described as a "composer whose heart and care are palpable," writes lyrical and powerful vocal, solo, and chamber music. His recent releases, *All in the Sound: New Vocal Music* by Peter Dayton (Navona Records, 2023) and *Stories Out of Cherry Stems: Katie Procell sings works by Peter Dayton* (2022), were each nominated for Critic's Choice by Opera News, which praised Dayton's "fresh and interesting sounds." Dayton holds degrees from Vanderbilt University and Peabody Conservatory. He has been a proud resident of Baltimore, Maryland since 2014. www.peterdaytonmusic.com

15. Martha Reika Fabrique – Ryugenji Takiochi

10'

Ryugenji Takiochi – South of Izu-Ohito is found the Asahi Waterfall which is said to be 33 jo (1 jo = 10 shaku or 3.31 yards) high. Near the pool below the falls was the *komusō* temple called Ryugen-ji and it is said that this piece was composed there. There is also a Kinko version of this piece, however, the Ryugen-ji piece is much more classically ordered in form and has a clearer sense of formality. Jin Nyodo learned and passed on Ryugenji Takiochi from Horiguchi Zeku of the Fudai-ji tradition.

Martha Reika Fabrique has been an active performer and scholar of the shakuhachi for over 25 years. She gave performances at the World Shakuhachi Festival 2008 in Sydney, Australia and presented the lecture New Horizons: Women and the Japanese Shakuhachi. Her teachers include KURAHASHI Yōdō II (Kyoto, Japan), Stan Kakudo Richardson (Dallas, TX), David Kansuke Wheeler (Boulder, CO) and Dr. Dale Olsen. Martha received a *shihan* license and the name Reika from KURAHASHI Yōdō II in 2018.

16. Cornelius Boots – Wood Dragon Blues (C. Boots, 2024)

5'

2024 was the year of the Wood Dragon, and it ends this month. Then we will enter the Wood Snake starting in February 2025. Written at the beginning of 2024, and ideally played on a bigger *jinashi* flute (like the 2.74 Taimu I am playing), this piece is the latest in my original solo nature blues repertoire. These pieces require and transmit a distinctive, expressive style and form a subset of the Black Earth Shakuhachi School in-house catalogue which is nearly a hundred pieces thick, including compositions and arrangements.

Cornelius Boots started studying shakuhachi in 2001 with Michael Chikuzen Gould, from whom he earned the name Shinzen 深禅 in 2012, a *shihan* in 2013 and a *dai-shihan* in 2022. From 2016 onward, Boots has played only *jinashi* shakuhachi with an emphasis on big bamboo (Taimu) and original nature blues. He is the founder of Black Earth Shakuhachi School, and the leader/composer of the Wood Prophets, the world's first bass shakuhachi group. He lives in Pennsylvania. corneliusboots.com

17. Jean-François Suizan Lagrost – *Kangetsu* (Tozan-ryu)

10'

Kangetsu (寒月, The Cold Winter Moon) is a *honkyoku* of the Tozan school, composed by school founder Nakao Tozan in February 1911. It is based on a theme from *chokudai* 勅題, a poetic joust that takes place every year during the New Year period: 「寒月梅花を照らす」- '*Kangetsu umebana o terasu*' – 'The cold moon lights up the plum blossom'.

Suizan Lagrost is a recognised artist in both traditional Japanese music and Western music. *dai-shihan* of the Tozan school of shakuhachi, he's regularly invited in France and abroad for concerts, masterclasses or international competition juries. In 2020, he inaugurates a series of portraits dedicated to Western shakuhachi players in *Hōgaku Journal*. Holder of a DEA in 20th century music from Sorbonne University, he currently teaches flute and shakuhachi near Paris. He represents ShinTozan school in France.

18. Andrea Rother – *Nebel* (A. Rother, 2024)

5'50"

My piece is called *Nebel* (Fog) and it imagines the way swathes of fog alternate with clearer fields of vision. And then, once you reached a certain altitude, how it feels to seemingly float above the fog.

Andrea Rother studied music with recorder, cello and piano at the conservatory in Munich and completed a concert degree in 'Early Music' and medieval music with Kees Boeke and Pedro Memmelsdorf. She worked as a freelancer and lecturer at the University of Augsburg. She now works as a Montessori teacher at a private Montessori school, including five years as its headmistress. She has been studying shakuhachi with Jim Franklin since 2019. She lives in southern Bavaria, Germany.

ESS New Year Concert 2025



Special thanks to the performers who all contributed for free!

Concert/programme organisation: Thorsten Knaub, Emmanuelle Rouaud.

Additional thanks to Marty Regan and the WSF2025 Planning Committee for their support.

Front page 'Snake' drawing by Hawwa Morales.

The ESS online events series overview: events.shakuhachisociety.eu

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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.

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

We are looking forward to welcome you!



ESS ONLINE 2024-25

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#4 15/16 Feb 2025

Honkyoku/Sankyoku

Zenyoji Keisuke • Christopher Yohmei Blasdel
Martha Reika Fabrique • Suizan Lagrost

#5 2 Mar 2025

ESS Sunday Brunch

FREE

Hélène Seiyu Codjo

#6 4 May 2025

ESS Sunday Brunch

FREE

Horacio Curti

#7 17 May 2025

Anime & Game Tunes

Seimo Yamaguchi

More info and booking at: events.shakuhachisociety.eu