

Yodo Kurahashi:
Shakuhachi Performance and Talk



Friday, November 9, 2012

6:30 pm – 8:00 pm

Japan Information and Culture Center, Embassy of Japan

Kurahashi Yodo Shakuhachi Program

With Ayako Kurahashi koto, sangen, and Miyuki

Yoshikami, koto

November 9, 2012

Classical Japanese music moves in *jo-ha-kyu*, a format that at begins slowly, then gradually accelerates through the course of the music, and then ends quietly. The unfolding music is like an audio "scroll painting" that has an ever-changing melody "line", and "color" from the different timbre of the instruments, and "theme" from the title or lyrics.

1. Mukaiji (Flute Melodies from the Foggy Ocean)

Kurahashi Yodo, shakuhachi solo

A Zen monk spent a night on a mountain admiring the moon and fell in and out of sleep. A dense fog stole over the landscape and obscured the moon, but through the fog he heard a beautiful shakuhachi melody stealing in from the sea. He remembered his dream to pass the music to other shakuhachi players.

2. Taki-Ochi (Waterfall)

Kurahashi Yodo, shakuhachi solo

Ryogenji temple of the Fuke sect is near Asahi waterfall. This anonymous composition was inspired at this temple.

3. Chidori no Kyoku (Composition on the Plovers)

By Yoshizawa Kengyo, (1800-1872)

Ayako Kurahashi (koto honte), Miyuki Yoshikami (koto kaede) and Yodo Kurahashi (shakuhachi)

This venerated koto piece begins with ancient gagaku koto techniques to introduce the eternal Japanese scene of the sea and seabirds. See lyrics below.

Lyrics (Composition on the Plovers):

The *chidori*'s plaintive cries evoke loneliness. For the 1st poem, the syllable "*chi*," in the word "*Yachiyo*" expresses its cries. The 2nd poem empathizes with the barrier keeper who hears the *chidori*'s nightly plaintive calls.

Poem 1

Shio no yama	[Proper noun literally] Salt Mountain
Sashide no iso no	of its peninsular beach
Sumu <i>chidori</i>	reside the <i>chidori</i> (plovers).
Kimi ga miyo oba	"May the Reign [humanity] last
Yachiyo to zo naku	forever," they cry [<i>chi</i>]

From 10th century, KOKINSHU

Instrumental interlude:

1. Wave section: Waves at first quiet, builds up and then dissipates
2. Bird section (with *kaede* koto): Plovers call, fly, and play over the waves

Poem 2:

Awajishima	[To and from] Awaji Island
Kayou Chidori no	commutes the <i>chidori</i> .
Naku koe ni	Their plaintive cries steal
Ikuyo nezame nu	many sleepless nights
Suma no sekimori	from the guard at Suma pass.

From 12th century KINYOSHU

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4. Mushi no Musashino (Insects of Musashi Field)

by Michio Miyagi (1895-1956)

Miyuki Yoshikami (koto), Ayako Kurahashi (sangen)
and Yodo Kurahashi (shakuhachi)

A symphony of insect musicians is celebrated with the
koto, sangen and shakuhachi.

Lyrics (Insect Songs of Musashi Field):

The lyrics by Isobe Tsuyako compares the elegance of
Tokyo's Musashino with that of Sagano of East Kyoto
where Heian Courtiers once collected singing insects to
write poetry. The poet captures the idyllic Musashino
scene by listing famous autumn herbs (*italics*) and by
weaving in the names of seven singing insects (*italics*).
italics). With the moon reflecting off the Tama River we
are treated to a symphony of nature's music makers.

1. Chiyo no furu michi Fumi wakete
Down an ancient trail, trudging through
2. Sagano no oku no Aki no yo ni
the Saga Fields on an autumn evening,
3. O-miya bito no Furi haete
noble courtiers long ago selected
4. Mushi wo erabishi Furu koto mo
singing insects just as we do today —
5. Ima sara nagara Shino barete
a recollection of an ancient past while
6. Musashino yuke ba Hono bono to
strolling down Musashino's misty pathway.
7. *Murasaki* ni hou. Usugiri ni
The *purple grass* in the light fog
8. Mietsu ka kuretsu Uchi mane ku
appears and disappears like beckoning
9. *Obana* no sode mo Natsu kashiku
obana kimono sleeves, yearning longingly.

10. Tamerau hodo ni Yugure no
While wandering leisurely, the sun sets—
11. Tsuki matsumushi no Mazu naki te
The moon rises, the waiting bug sings first.
12. Tsuyu no tamaneku Ito hagi ni
Beads of dewdrop strung by bush clover.
13. Hana no nishiki no Hataori ya
A flowery brocade by the weaver bug—
14. Tsuzure saseteu Kirigirisu
“Patch rags, sew seams!” cries the katydid.

(*Tegoto*: Instrumental interlude depicting a symphony of singing insects)

15. *Kusa* no makura ni Uta ta ne no
On a pillow of magical grass
16. Yume no Kantan Utsushiyo wo
dreams of Kantan are transient—
17. Ikani satoru ka Kanetataki
wake-up alarm of the bell-ringer!

18. Kaesa wo iso gu Umaoi no
As if in a rush homeward, the horse tender
19. Sono magouta ni Obo tsuka no
sings his song in a melancholy voice—
20. Aah! Suzumushi Kutsuwamushi
Aah! The bell insect and the bridle-rein bug!
21. Tsuki kage sarasu Tamagawa ni
Moonbeams blanch the Tama River on this
22. Aki no ahare wo Koe goe ni
autumn scene with voices of insects
23. Nagasu shirabe no Omoshiro ya
in melodious concert. How delightful!
24. Nagasu shirabe no Omoshiro ya
in melodious concert. How delightful!

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5. Jimbo Sanya

Kurahashi Yodo, shakuhachi solo

Matsunosuke Jimbo (1841-1914), one of the last wandering monk of the Fuke sect, arranged his favorite piece, "San'ya" (literally "Three Valleys"). It is now called

"Jimbo Sanya." This composition is considered Kurahashi Yodo's signature piece.