

EUROPEAN SHAKUHACHI SOCIETY

Newsletter: Issue 1

July 2006

Logo will go here!

Welcome everyone to the first ever ESS newsletter – lets hope it's the first of many! This newsletter is only a preliminary version of what is to come – we will launch properly after the Pan-European Shakuhachi Summer School 19-22nd July 2006, after which time we will have tons to talk about, plus lots of photos to include! See the end of this newsletter for further information on the Summer School.

We look forward to, and welcome, any additions to future newsletters from **all** readers – so please start them rolling in! We aim for this to be a quarterly newsletter, so the next one will come out around beginning of October.

Please send all Articles / Photos / Concert; CD; Book reviews / Diary Dates / Recommended Websites, etc, etc by **end of August** to: stephaniehiller9@yahoo.co.uk

News Flash - COMPETITION TIME.....

ESS needs a logo – we have been running a 'design a logo' competition which you may be aware of. All entries have now been received – the winner will be announced at the Summer School.

The prize will be: **Free membership of the ESS for the first year plus a free ESS T-shirt sporting the winning logo (as soon as they are printed!).**

ESS and Newsletter

(in English, with German and French translations below)

By Kiku Day with Jim Franklin

These are exciting times for the *shakuhachi* in Europe! The first Pan-European *Shakuhachi* Summer School with *Koto* and *Shamisen* will soon take place in London, we now have a *shakuhachi* list (Euroshak) dedicated to European issues (although all, including non-Europeans, are welcome to participate), and we are in the midst of establishing a European *Shakuhachi* Society.

Our aim is to create a forum where *shakuhachi* players and aficionados can meet and share our common interests and also embrace the differences that we find both in the *shakuhachi* itself - the different styles, schools and genres - and also on the European continent itself, in culture and language. The basic idea is to build on the thing that we share – a love of music which comes from blowing a bamboo tube – and use that as a starting point for mutual enrichment through awareness of the diversity of ways in which we play that tube. We believe that the time has come to attempt to create a community and network, as the group of European *shakuhachi* players, while not yet constituted as a community, is ready and large enough to become one.

Our main concern is to create a space in which everyone from all corners of our continent can interact and share the *shakuhachi*. However, this is not so easily done in our multi-cultural Europe. Thus, on our newly created Euroshak list we already see a dominance of English-language postings. Our aim, however, is to create a platform on which people of all languages can share our common interest, the *shakuhachi*.

We are beginning our European activities with the Summer School, to be held this year 19-22 July in London. We hope to make it an annual event which rotates among European countries. In that way, depending on the host country, the Summer School will have a different emphasis each year. The host group can invite its own teachers from Japan and the language of the host country can play a role as well.

In order to provide a formal platform for our common interest in this beautiful instrument, we plan to establish the European *Shakuhachi* Society. It will hopefully become a sister organisation to and collaborate with such already existing organisations as the International Shakuhachi Society and the Australian Shakuhachi Society. The organisation will provide a forum where all the extant (and hopefully, new) local *shakuhachi* societies can come together, communicate, and create and support such activities as the summer school, concerts, and other activities relating to the *shakuhachi*. This first Newsletter of the European *Shakuhachi* Society serves as an example of how we can share our experiences and inspire each other. We intend to publish articles written in 2-3 languages (German, French and English), but with a certain amount of flexibility, so that, for example, an article written in Spanish, in addition to being published in the original, could be translated into German and English.

We hope that you will join us in this attempt to create a polyglot *shakuhachi* society, based upon an as equal representation and respect for all *shakuhachi* styles, schools and genres as humanly possible, so that we can hear and learn from *shakuhachi* players from all corners of Europe.

German translation below by Kiku Day and Holger Preut:

Die europäische Shakuhachi Gesellschaft und das Rundschreiben

Dies sind aufregende Zeiten für die shakuhachi in Europa! Die erste paneuropäische Shakuhachi Sommerakademie mit Koto und Shamisen findet bald in London statt. Wir haben jetzt eine shakuhachi Liste (Euroshak) für europäische Angelegenheiten eingeweiht (obwohl alle, einschließlich NichtEuropäer, willkommen sind teilzunehmen) und wir sind gerade dabei, eine europäische Shakuhachi Gesellschaft zu errichten.

Unser Ziel ist es ein Forum herzustellen, indem shakuhachi Spieler und Anhänger sich treffen, unsere öffentlichen Interessen teilen können und indem es darüber hinaus ermöglicht wird, die Unterschiede von der shakuhachi selbst – die unterschiedlichen Stile, Schulen und Arten- und die auf dem europäischem Kontinent bestehenden Unterschiede in Kultur und Sprache mit einzubinden. Die Grundidee ist dabei die Dinge auszubauen die wir teilen - nämlich die Liebe zu der Musik die durch das Blasen in ein Bambusrohr entsteht - um somit einen Ausgangspunkt für gegenseitige Bereicherung durch das Bewußtsein der Verschiedenartigkeit der Weisen in denen wir dieses Rohr spielen zu haben. Wir glauben, dass es an der Zeit ist zu versuchen, eine Gemeinschaft und ein Netzwerk auf die Beine zu stellen, da die Gruppe der europäischen shakuhachi Spieler die bisher noch nicht als Gemeinschaft verankert worden ist gross und bereitwillig genug ist, eine zu werden.

Unser Hauptinteresse ist es einen Raum zu schaffen, indem jeder von allen Ecken unseres Kontinentes aufeinander einwirken und die shakuhachi teilen kann. Jedoch wird dieses nicht so leicht in unserem multikulturellen Europa zu verwirklichen sein. Daher sehen wir bereits, dass sich auf unserer kuerzlich erstellten Euroshak Liste eine Herrschaft der englischsprachigen postings ergeben hat. Unser Ziel ist es jedoch eine Plattform zu erstellen, auf der Leute aller Sprachen unser gemeinsames Interesse teilen können - die Shakuhachi.

Wir fangen unsere europäischen Tätigkeiten mit der Sommerakademie an, die dieses Jahr vom 19-22 Juli in London statt findet. Wir hoffen daraus ein jährliches Ereignis zu machen, bei dem jedes Jahr ein anderes europäisches Land an die Reihe kommt. Auf diese Weise wird die Sommerakademie jedes Jahr, abhängig von dem Gastland, verschiedene Schwerpunkte haben. Der Gastgeber kann dabei seine eigenen Lehrer von Japan einladen und die Sprache des Gastlandes kann außerdem eine Rolle spielen.

Um eine formelle Plattform für unser gemeinsames Interesse an diesem schönen Instrument zur Verfügung zu stellen, planen wir die europäische Shakuhachi Gesellschaft aufzubauen. Es wird hoffentlich eine Schwesterorganisation werden und mit solchen bereits vorhandenen Organisationen wie die internationale Shakuhachi Gesellschaft und die australische Shakuhachi Gesellschaft zusammen arbeiten. Die Organisation liefert ein Forum, in dem alle bestehenden (und hoffentlich neuen) lokalen shakuhachi Gesellschaften zusammen kommen, kommunizieren und solche Tätigkeiten wie die Sommerakademie, Konzerte und andere Tätigkeiten in Bezug auf die Shakuhachi mitteilen, erschaffen und unterstützen können. Das erste

Rundschreiben der europäischen Shakuhachi Gesellschaft dient als Beispiel von dem, wie wir unsere Erfahrungen teilen und uns gegenseitig anspornen können. Wir beabsichtigen Artikel zu veröffentlichen, die in 2-3 Sprachen geschrieben werden (Deutsch, Französisch und Englisch). Dies aber mit einer bestimmten Menge Flexibilität, so dass zum Beispiel ein Artikel der auf Spanisch geschrieben worden ist, zusätzlich zur Veröffentlichung im Original auch ins deutsche und englische übersetzt werden kann.

Wir hoffen, dass Sie sich unseren Versuch eine polyglot shakuhachi Gesellschaft basierend auf den Grundgedanken von gleicher Darstellung und Respekt für alle shakuhachi Stile, Schulen und Arten wie menschlich möglich zu erstellen anschliessen werden, damit wir von den shakuhachi Spielern aus allen Ecken von Europa hören und lernen können.

French translation below by Kiku Day and Veronique Piron:

Fédération Européenne du *Shakuhachi* et Bulletin d'Information

C'est une période bien passionnante pour le shakuhachi en Europe! Le premier séminaire européen, estival, de *shakuhachi* et de *koto* et *shamisen* va bientôt voir le jour à Londres, il existe déjà une liste électronique pour le *shakuhachi* (*Euroshak*) consacrée aux projets européens (où tous sont les bienvenus, non-européens y compris), et nous sommes sur le point d'établir une Fédération Européenne du *Shakuhachi*.

Notre but est de créer un forum où les joueurs et les passionnés de *shakuhachi* pourront prendre connaissance de nos intérêts communs, de les partager et de pouvoir aussi saisir toutes les différences relevées autant au sein du *shakuhachi* lui-même - les différents styles, écoles et genres –que celles existantes en matière de culture et de langue sur l'ensemble du continent européen. L'idée fondamentale est de pouvoir construire à partir de ce que nous partageons - un amour de la musique né du souffle dans un bout de bambou - et d'utiliser cela comme point de départ pour un enrichissement mutuel créé grâce à l'attention portée à la diversité de nos différentes techniques de jeu. Nous pensons que le temps est venu de créer une communauté et un réseau internet: l'ensemble des joueurs européens de *shakuhachi* est maintenant suffisamment en nombre important et suffisamment prêt pour former une seule et même communauté, même si pour le moment celle-ci n'est pas encore réellement constituée.

Notre intérêt principal est de créer un espace dans lequel les personnes des quatre coins du continent puissent partager cet instrument et agir réciproquement. Cependant, ceci n'est pas chose facile dans une Europe pluri culturelle. Ainsi, dans notre liste électronique récemment créée "*Euroshak*" nous pouvons déjà constater une dominante nettement anglophone. Cependant notre objectif, est de créer une plateforme où toutes les langues auront la possibilité de partager 1 seul intérêt commun: le *shakuhachi*.

Nos activités européennes débuteront avec le séminaire d'été du 19 au 22 juillet à Londres. Nous espérons en faire un événement annuel qui puisse tourner dans les différents pays européens. De cette façon et suivant le pays d'accueil, ce séminaire d'été prendra chaque année une architecture différente. Le groupe d'accueil pourra inviter les professeurs du Japon avec lesquels il est habituellement relié et la langue du pays en question pourra jouer un rôle majeur.

Afin d'offrir une structure formelle à notre intérêt commun pour ce magnifique instrument, nous projetons d'établir La Fédération Européenne du *Shakuhachi*. Il serait souhaitable qu'elle soit jumelée aux autres organisations déjà existantes tout en collaborant avec elles, telles la Fédération Internationale et la Fédération Australienne du *Shakuhachi*. L'organisation établira un forum où toutes les associations locales de *shakuhachi* existantes (et les nouvelles à venir) pourront coopérer, communiquer, créer et soutenir des activités telles que des cours d'été, des concerts, et autres activités autour de cet instrument. Ce premier bulletin de la Fédération Européenne va servir d'exemple pour illustrer la manière dont nous pourrions partager nos expériences et nous en inspirer. Nous avons l'intention de publier certains articles en 2 ou 3 langues (allemand, français et anglais), tout en restant suffisamment flexible de sorte que, par exemple, un article écrit en espagnol dans son édition originale pourra être traduit en allemand et en anglais.

Nous espérons que vous voudrez bien vous joindre à cette tentative de créer une organisation polyglotte sur le *shakuhachi*, basée sur une représentation égalitaire et respectueuse des différents courants existants, autant en ce qui concerne les écoles et les genres de cet instrument que sur le plan humain, de sorte que nous puissions découvrir et apprendre de tous les joueurs de *shakuhachi* des quatre coins de l'Europe.

SHAKUHACHI POEM:

The Dreamy Sound
of Bokushitsu's Shakuhachi
Awakened Me from Deep Sleep
One Moonlit Night

A wonderful autumn night, fresh and bright;
Over the echo of music and drums from a
distant village
The single clear tone of a shakuhachi brings a
flood of tears--
Startling me from a deep, melancholy dream.

from "Wild Ways: Zen Poems of Ikkyu"

First Steps on A Healing Journey with Long Flutes

by Stephanie Hiller



My journey began last summer. I was having a browse on Monty's site (www.shakuhachi.com), reading the articles, as you do, and I came across 2 by Veronza Bowers, Jr. Veronza has been in prison for 32 years, having been imprisoned for a murder he did not commit - based on the word of two government informants, both of whom received reduced sentences for other crimes in return for their testimony. Veronza has completed his life sentence of 30 years, but is still in prison (I urge you to check out his website, www.veronza.org for more information).

Anyway, the articles I found told of Veronza's healing work in prison with fellow inmates. Over the years he has been incarcerated, he has learned many different therapies, including Massage, Reflexology, Reiki, Touch for Health, Shiatsu and many more. Also, being an experienced musician already, in 1987 he began to learn shakuhachi, having contacted, and been sent one by, Monty Levenson.

All this led to him eventually starting to run 'Meditation Healing Groups with Shakuhachi' with his fellow prisoners. One of the articles, '**Meditation Healing with Shakuhachi**' described one of these sessions. The other, '**The Journey of Three Tei Hei**' was a message from Veronza to the participants of the World Shakuhachi Festival in Boulder, Colorado. (Check them out under 'Articles' on Monty's site).

Being a fellow therapist, trained in virtually the same therapies as Veronza, and also a fellow shakuhachi player (having played for virtually the same length of time), I felt a strong connection with him and decided to write and ask about his healing work with shakuhachi. The idea of combining my therapeutic work with my shakuhachi playing really appealed to me and I wanted to find out more. We have been writing to each other since that time – he is a truly amazing guy and I have learned a great deal from him.

At the same time, I decided to experiment myself. I already spent time each morning sending distant healing and had recently been exploring the use of sound (through overtone chanting) during this session. I thought "Well, if overtone chanting, why not shakuhachi?". I started playing around with sounds, sending my distant healing through the tones of the shakuhachi. It worked well and my excitement and enthusiasm for this medium of healing grew.

Around this time, Kiku Day, the well-known jinashi player, moved to London to begin a PhD. I had already started to ponder the benefit of playing a totally natural, un-lacquered, unrefined piece of bamboo during healing and felt that Kiku's arrival in the UK was too good an opportunity to miss.

I began lessons with Kiku in January, first borrowing one of her 2.4's and more recently acquiring a 2.6 of my own. She is an experienced player and teacher and I am making leaps forward on my healing shakuhachi journey, thanks to her.

These long, Hocchiku flutes do require a different approach from jiari – a much more relaxed embouchure, not to mention the need to reach those fingers down to holes which are much further apart. I had to start gently and gradually, using lots of finger-mobilising exercises and self massage (of hands, fingers and forearms), but now I can reach the holes with ease.

The flute itself requires a bit more care and attention than a lacquered one. I bought a large piece of muslin and kept ripping a length off until it would fit through the wide bore of the flute – I now have the biggest cleaning cloth the world has ever known. After using the cleaning cloth, I leave the flute out for c1/2 hour to air dry before putting it away. Lastly, when oiling the flute, I use a special mixture of anti-fungal essential oils in the base to guard against any possible mould (2-4 drops each of lavender, lemongrass and tea tree in a 30ml bottle of base oil). Oh, and oiling inside and out, making sure some oil goes into the finger holes. Not to say all this is strictly necessary, but I prefer not to leave anything to chance!

I'm very much at the start of my sound healing journey, but experimentation with the jinashi sounds have led me to use some unusual techniques during healing. These include playing the flute like a didgeridoo; playing purely whistle tones to achieve an ethereal sound; blowing across the flute to sound like the wind in the trees; playing Ro whilst vocalising intervals over the top. I still use some pure vocalisations without shakuhachi (overtone chanting) and if you actually whistle gently into the flute you can get any note you wish and it still sounds like those delicate whistle tones.

Keen to explore the range of sounds more, I was further tempted by a Perry Yung 2.8 I saw on ebay (!). A Hocchiku, but with inlaid horn utaguchi and urushi-lacquered bore, it makes a beautiful sound – still deep and resonant but with a brighter and slightly 'purer' tone. Perfect as a half-way step between my cast bore Monty Levenson 1.8 and my unrefined pure bamboo Kodama 2.6.



The connection to the earth I feel with Hocchiku flutes is powerful indeed – energetically speaking, their roots are still deep in the soil and this provides a wonderful source of healing energy, straight up from the earth. In addition, I have never felt ungrounded whilst using the shakuhachi in healing – a potential hazard with other forms of healing, if you are not careful.

Exciting times! I'm also enrolled on a sound healing course, so I will be a qualified Sound Healer this time next year. So, watch this space – I may write again once I'm further along the path and give you all an update on my sound healing experiences.

Happy playing,
Stephanie Hiller, Somerset, UK
(Massage Therapist/Aromatherapist, Reflexologist, Reiki Master, Trainee Sound Healer and amateur Shakuhachi player)

PHOTO GALLERY



Kees Kort sent this great photo of himself and Nakamura Akikazu in Paris, after a concert given there.



**Thanks to John Neptune for sending this picture of him proving that shakuhachi really can be played anywhere.
(photo by Nathan Cremisino)**



Also, here is J Coltrane trying to play shakuhachi
(thanks Kiku for sending in this one)

TEACHER'S TALES:

Veronique Piron has kindly provided an article in French and English. The French is below, with the English translation immediately below that. Enjoy!

Véronique Piron:

Pour ce 1^{er} numéro il m'a apparu important de pouvoir faire le point sur les situations existantes dans nos différents pays, aussi similaires, différentes, en avance ou en retard soient-elles, pour permettre de mieux nous comprendre et d'envisager une coopération fructueuse. Aussi j'ai choisi d'y exposer le cadre de l'enseignement musical dans lequel j'évolue ici en France de façon assez globale en sachant qu'il ne représente qu'une partie de mon travail.

Introduire le Shakuhachi et la Musique Japonaise dans le circuit de l'Enseignement Musical en France: un pari ou une utopie...?



Le pari date de quelques années. D'autres l'avaient déjà imaginé bien avant, mais sans concrétisation possible, le contexte n'étant ni structuré

et ni favorable pour une telle démarche. Ainsi l'ouverture des structures d'Etat aux musiques traditionnelles est-elle assez récente, majoritairement fin des années 1980 au moment où sous le 1^{er} gouvernement du président François Mitterrand l'enseignement musical s'est déployé sur l'ensemble de tout le territoire français de façon très démocratique jusque dans les campagnes (écoles communales, intercommunales et écoles d'Etat venant s'ajouter aux écoles nationales et des conservatoires déjà existants).

La première étape, non encore achevée à ce jour, a consisté en l'intégration des traditions francophones, la deuxième étape étant l'intégration des musiques dites "du monde", en commençant par les percussions (africaines, brésiliennes, indiennes, etc.). Aujourd'hui nous en sommes toujours à ce stade, en dehors de quelques rares traditions instrumentales comme la guitare flamenca, et cela soulève toujours beaucoup de questions: dans quelle mesure peut-on institutionnaliser des musiques qui ont une pratique de terrain et qui englobent toute une culture, différente? On avait déjà vu cela avec l'incorporation du jazz...

Ainsi déjà intégrée dans l'enseignement musical depuis plus de 16 ans, sur un poste de professeur de flûte traversière, dirigeant des ensembles de flûte ou pluri instrumentaux, présentant le shakuhachi et me produisant avec lui, mais l'enseignant hors de ce cadre, j'ai construit, au fil des années, de mes expériences et réflexions, un projet, incluant un séjour d'études au Japon et l'obtention nécessaire de titres là-bas et ici, et dont la concrétisation a véritablement vu le jour il y a seulement 2 ans et en plusieurs étapes.

La 1^{ère} étape: créer le programme d'un "Atelier de Musique Traditionnelle Japonaise"

C'est un pari qui est devenu une réalité.

C'est le fruit d'un travail allant au-delà de la seule connaissance du shakuhachi qui serait insuffisante, mais complétée par les autres répertoires traditionnels abordés grâce à l'initiation aux flûtes traversières en bambou (shinobué et nohkan) que j'ai pu faire au Japon. Simplement le juste nécessaire pour nourrir un travail pédagogique global autour de la musique japonaise et son esprit particulier pouvant toucher un large public.

Cet atelier fonctionne à 2 vitesses: soit comme un atelier hebdomadaire sur 1 ou plusieurs années, soit sous forme de stage d'initiation, d'une demi journée à 2 jours, dans divers lieux comme les structures musicales, musées nationaux, festivals, etc.

L'atelier d'1 heure hebdomadaire, ouvert à un grand nombre d'instruments, concerne autant les élèves de l'école que les instrumentistes extérieurs dont les "musiciens intervenants en milieu scolaire", chacun devant avoir une connaissance minimum de son propre instrument. Cet atelier entrera en septembre prochain dans sa 3^{ème} saison, et le programme de travail que j'avais conçu sur une période de 2 années va finalement se prolonger (sur 1 ou 2 ans) avant de revenir à son point

initial. C'est à dire que les participants qui y seront restés depuis le début auront finalement une pratique aussi longue que celui d'un cycle d'étude en soi!

Ces ateliers ou stages sont plus basés sur l'expérimentation et l'ouverture sur un "autre" monde musical (nippon) qu'une véritable pratique de "La" musique japonaise, ce qui serait purement utopiste, irréalisable, car là il faudrait y introduire tous les instruments traditionnels nippons et aussi les musiciens (japonais) experts en la matière. C'est d'ailleurs ce que recherchent parfois les participants, mais la proposition est en fait plus profonde, à la grande surprise de certains et à la joie des autres.

Le programme est basé bien sûr sur un certain nombre de mélodies et œuvres des répertoires populaires et "classiques" (ou savants, "koten"), mais l'accent est mis sur l'expérimentation d'un apprentissage oral et l'utilisation de l'improvisation (autour d'éléments caractéristiques): 2 méthodes qui obligent les musiciens-lecteurs à sortir du contexte habituel de la musique écrite, ce qui est le cas d'une grande partie des élèves des structures musicales, et qui d'autre part permet de faire participer tous les autres musiciens. Puis sont abordés les 2 grands piliers de la musique japonaise: l'exploitation du timbre et des modes de jeu des instruments (音楽 "on-gaku") et la relation au temps et au silence (間 "ma") incluant le geste et l'énergie, soit l'esprit particulier de cette musique, aussi largement exploité dans les oeuvres contemporaines et partie intégrante de toute la culture nipponne.

Soit tout simplement une relation très directe au son, au temps et un retour vers soi.



La 2^{ème} étape: créer un cours et un cursus d'enseignement du Shakuhachi

Ce volet devrait être logiquement le plus important du projet, mais il n'en est en fait qu'à ses balbutiements, le pari n'est pas encore gagné.

Pour cette année 2006 est annoncé un nouveau "schéma d'orientation pédagogique des écoles de musique et de danse" (rédigé par la Direction de la Musique et de la Danse du Ministère de la Culture), son édition est imminente, l'ancien datant de 1996. Il devrait encourager les écoles et conservatoires (du niveau local au national) de proposer aux élèves et étudiants des cursus (ou "parcours") aux contenus et vitesses variables, intégrant des pratiques plus diverses, plus d'ateliers, la coutume à ce jour n'étant encore quasiment que le classique cursus instrumental avec ses 3 ou 4 cycles d'apprentissage (environ de 3 ou 4 ans chacun, avec examens de changement de cycle et diplôme de fin d'études) incluant les pratiques collectives dont les ensembles, orchestres et certains ateliers, et le

fameux cours de Formation Musicale (anciennement nommé "solfège", ce cours obligatoire pose un problème d'intégration ou de non intégration des pratiques dites "orales" ou non occidentales), appelé nouvellement "parcours complet".

Nouveaux types de parcours: parcours "libre", parcours d'ateliers, parcours "traditionnel", etc. Dans ce cadre il devrait être donc plus aisé que ce ne fût jusqu'à présent, d'y faire entrer d'autres pratiques traditionnelles dont le shakuhachi, de l'inclure dans 1 ou 2 des parcours proposés et/ou à plusieurs vitesses et dans une structure de niveau nationale: un atelier de "découverte" sur plusieurs mois (1 trimestre ou 1 semestre) ou un an ouvert à tous – grands adolescents et adultes -, un cursus court au départ de 3 ou 4 ans sur les bases du répertoire traditionnel qui peut être un cours collectif ou un atelier s'acheminant vers un cursus long en cours individuel recouvrant les répertoires majeurs du traditionnel au contemporain et intégrant au moins une pratique collective.

Ce dernier est pour l'instant un peu utopique, car il n'existe actuellement en France qu'une seule formation complète en musique traditionnelle concernant les percussions, cité précédemment, plus la difficulté de travailler une partie indispensable du répertoire avec des chanteurs joueurs de shamisen et/ou de koto pas toujours présent sur le sol français. Mais dans le cadre du projet européen ici naissant, on pourra imaginer pour l'avenir la circulation de ces musiciens, ainsi que celle de professeurs de shakuhachi invités pour des master-class ou la validation du parcours des étudiants si on en arrive à ce niveau, évitant ainsi l'isolement dans lequel nous nous retrouvons habituellement pour travailler autour de cette pratique.

*La rentrée de l'automne 2006 sera le point de départ de cette 2ème étape, une opportunité de faire entrer un de mes cours de shakuhachi dans un conservatoire de région étant à l'étude actuellement, et d'autre part le démarrage de nouveaux cours de cet instrument dans différents lieux à la portée de tous et hors du cadre musical comme nous le faisons tous.
C'est donc une affaire à suivre!*

English translation by Veronique Piron:

Veronique PIRON

For this 1st edition it seems to me important to review the existing situations in our various countries; their similarities, differences, whether before or behind the times, to be able to understand each other better and create a fruitful cooperation. So I chose to introduce the frame of the musical education system which I am evolving here in France in a rather global way, knowing that it represents only a part of my work.

Introducing the Shakuhachi and Japanese Music into the Musical Education System in France: a bet or an utopia?



The bet was born years ago. Others had already imagined it, without being able to work it out, the context being neither structured, nor favourable for such an initiative. So, the opening of the Musical Institutions to traditional music is rather recent, mainly from the end of the 1980s as, under the 1st government of the president François Mitterrand, musical education spread across the whole French territory in a very democratic way (with municipal, community and "state" schools added to the already existing national schools and conservatoires).

The first step, not achieved yet, consisted of the integration of French traditions; the second step being the integration of so-called "world music", beginning with percussion (from Africa, Brazil, India, and so on). Today we are still at this point, except for some rare instrumental traditions such as "flamenco" guitar, and it still raises many questions: to what extent can we institutionalize music which contains a whole culture and works inside a very different system? We have already seen that with the integration of jazz...

So, already a member of the musical education system for more than 16 years as a flute teacher, conducting flute ensembles or instrumental groups, making presentations of the shakuhachi, performing with it, but teaching it out of this system, I built a project over the course of years, according to my experiences and reflections, including studies in Japan and obtaining the necessary certificates over there and here, whose realization was only born 2 years ago and in several steps.

**The 1st step:
creating the program of a "Workshop of Japanese Traditional Music"**

It is a bet which became a reality.

This is the result of work going beyond simply the knowledge of the shakuhachi, which wouldn't be enough, but including the approach of other Japanese musical traditions, being introduced to other bamboo flutes (shinobue and nohkan) in Japan. Simply the need to build up global educational work on Japanese music and its spirit, being able to reach a large public. This workshop works in 2 directions: as a weekly workshop over 1 or several years, or as an "introductory workshop", from half a day

to 2 days, in different places such as musical schools, conservatoires, national museums, festivals, etc.

The weekly workshop of 1 hour, open to a large number of instruments, concerns as much the students of the school itself as the outside instrumentalists, including "professional musicians working at primary schools", and each of them must have a minimum knowledge of their own instrument. This workshop will enter its 3rd season next September, and the program which I built over a period of 2 years will finally go on (over 1 or 2 years) before returning to its initial point. It means that the participants who have stayed there since the beginning will finally have a practice as long as that of a "cycle" in itself!

These workshops or trainings are more based on an experiment and the opening to "another" musical world (Nipponese) than a real practice of Japanese music, which would be purely an utopia and impractical, as it would be necessary to introduce all Japanese traditional instruments and also specialist (Japanese) musicians for each instrument. That said, it is what the participants sometimes look for, but the proposition is deeper, so some of them are very surprised and others are happy.

The program is naturally based on a number of melodies and pieces from the popular and "classical" (koten) repertoires, but first I emphasize an oral learning experiment and the use of improvisation (on typical elements): 2 methods which encourage musicians accustomed to reading music to behave outside the usual context of written music, to leave their classic musical training behind and allow all musicians to participate. Then we approach the 2 main ideas of Japanese music: the exploitation of timbre, the use of several playing techniques of the instruments (音楽 "on-gaku"), and the relationship between time and silence (間 "ma") including gesture and energy, exploring the spirit of the music: which is very much used in contemporary music and is the main point of the whole of Japanese culture. So, simply a direct relationship to sound, time and a look back upon oneself.



**The 2nd step:
create a course and an educational program for the Shakuhachi**

This step should normally be the most important one, but in fact it is just starting up - the bet is not won yet.

In this year, 2006, a new "plan of educational orientation for the music and dance schools" has been announced (written by the Music and Dance Direction of the Ministry of Culture). Publishing is imminent, the former

one dating from 1996. It should encourage schools and conservatoires (from local up to national) to offer their students courses (or "programs") with variable content and progression, integrating more diverse practices, more workshops, with the custom still being the classic instrumental course with its 3 or 4 cycles of learning (each approx. 3-4 years, with examinations going from one cycle to the next and a diploma at the end). It will include collective practices like ensembles, orchestras and some workshops, and the famous course called "music theory" (this compulsory course raises the problem of integration or non integration of the "oral" or non western practices), all of the above would comprise the "full course".

New types of courses: "free" programmes, workshop programmes, "traditional" programmes, etc. In this frame it should be easier than it has been up to now, to admit other traditional practices like shakuhachi, to include it in one of the new courses and/or in several possible progressions and in a conservatory at national level: an "introductory" workshop over several months (1 trimester or half a year) or one year, open to everyone – grown teenagers and adults, a course running over 3-4 years at the beginning built on the basic traditional repertoires which can be a collective lesson or a workshop, being developed to become a long-running course with individual lessons covering the major repertoires from traditional to contemporary, also integrating at least one ensemble lesson ("gassou").

This last point looks a little bit utopian at the moment, because currently we have in France only 1 full course concerning traditional instruments (the percussion one mentioned previously). Then there is the difficulty of working with the shamisen/koto players and singers who might not stay long in the country. However, within the framework of the European project being born here, we can imagine in the future that those musicians could travel around the different European countries, shakuhachi teachers could be invited for master-classes or to validate the end of the studies if students reach that level. This also avoids us continuing to work isolated, as we have become used to doing with such a practice.

Autumn 2006 will be the starting point of this second step, an opportunity to admit one of my shakuhachi classes into a national conservatoire is being discussed now, and at the same time the starting up of new shakuhachi lessons in new places open to anybody, outside the musical education system as we all used to do. So let's wait and see!

The *Iemoto Seido* in Japan, and Europe? And, is Efficiency an Aesthetical Necessity?

by Gunnar Jinmei Linder

In Japan there is a saying you all might have heard: "*kubi-furi san nen, koro-koro hachi nen*" or "It takes three years to learn the right way of doing *kubi-furi*, and

(another) eight to learn the technique of *koro-koro*". The eight years can be understood as a total of years, thus "after three years you will have learned how to do the *kubi-furi*, and after eight the advanced techniques". In either case we are talking about a long time, 8 years or 11, to learn what someone could tell you in ten minutes. I don't know when this saying became known, but many older to middle-aged people in Japan, with no direct relation to shakuhachi, know about the first part of this saying (*kubi-furi san nen*), and to them it means that shakuhachi is a difficult instrument to master. The saying must be at least a couple of decades old, and in even older times, to learn the shakuhachi you would have almost daily access to your teacher. Why then, would it take three years to learn how to create a vibrato?

My own learning experience in Japan, having studied directly with Yamaguchi Gorô from 1985 until he passed away in 1999 on a weekly or twice weekly basis, tells me that you have to get it yourself. The idea is not to be taught how to do things, but to find it within yourself. Gorô-sensei would never 'teach' a piece twice he said. The 'teaching' consisted of playing a part of the piece in question together, and then I would play this part again while he were singing the notation and clapping the time intervals (*ma*). No words! No explicit teaching! No explanations! Gorô-sensei would admonish his students to "use your ears". Intentional or not, the result is that you go to the sound material directly, not using any intervening meta-language to structure the material for the student. Some people would say that this is a reflection of the connection to Zen Buddhism, but then the whole art world would be connected to Zen (as Daisetsu Suzuki would say). There are other aspects to this as well, though.



There has been a vivid discussion going on about lineages, masters being more or less close to the 'original' (what ever that is), and who studied with whom. The discussion on lineages is quite intriguing, since it more or less presupposes an acceptance of a master that leads his or her students through the material (the music), and whose word is law, i.e. an *iemoto*.

The Iemoto Seido (*iemoto* = head (actually 'basis' or 'ground') of the house, *seido* = system) is a system that has developed during the centuries, in a country where strict hierarchical systems sometimes have a value in themselves; long ago and still today. In past times, large men could become *sumô* wrestlers (and sometimes still do); blind women could work as masseuses. Many fields were open only for some people, and completely closed to others. In the world of the arts, several guilds existed. Let me just concentrate on a few: the shakuhachi guilds, and the guilds for the musicians in the world of *sankyoku*, or preferably the *sôkyoku-jiuta* (a term coined by the Japanese scholar Koizumi Fumio). The latter genre consists of pieces for *koto*, *shamisen* and vocals, sometimes as *sankyoku* ('music for ensembles of three instruments'), together with the bow instrument *kokyû* or shakuhachi.



The latter guild was established in the 14th century for the blind male *biwa-hôshi*, monks who recited The Tale of Heike, accompanying themselves on the *biwa*, what is referred to as *heikyoku*. The patron was Akashi Kakuichi (?-1371), and this system, the *tôdô-za*, lived on until 1871. In the late 16th century, the *biwa-hôshi* began performing both the *shamisen* and the *koto*, which became their main livelihood at

least from the early 17th century and on until our days. The *tôdô-za* developed further in the Edo period, and to become the socially high ranking top master within this guild, a *kengyô*, you would have to pay the equivalent of tens of thousands of Euros. This is an amount which still today is not uncommon in order to get a higher rank in the seniority system that prevails; long service and economical aid is sometimes a necessary and sufficient condition to rise in rank.

In the Edo period the *tôdô-za* did get economical aid from the authorities, but from Meiji 4 (1871) and on, this aid was cut off. In Meiji 10 (1877) a separate guild was established to protect the interests of the people involved in these activities. The blind monks who used to have monopoly on performing and teaching activities (teaching even to seeing people, for their pleasure), had lost their right. More seeing people would begin performing and teaching. The *iemoto seido* was of course handy in order to protect their assets and their interests. Lineages had been worked out already in the Edo period, but the control of the *iemoto* became even more strict (in the Edo period professional use was prohibited, so there was no competition).



In the world of shakuhachi, there was no strict hierarchy to begin with, outside the Fuke School of Zen Buddhism. The Fuke School was acknowledged by the authorities for a variety of reasons, one being a good way to keep unruly samurai in a controllable unit (Kamisangô and others). However, already during the Edo period a number of lineages started to take shape; the first being the *kinko-ryû* and the *ikkan-ryû*. In the 19th century Kondô Sôetsu developed the ‘profane’ and prohibited ensemble playing.

The same year the *tôdô-za* was abolished (1871) the Fuke School was prohibited, some say in line with the anti Buddhist movement in the Meiji period, and some even that the school was abolished in order to hide the activities that the authorities had had the Fuke monks to take part in, such as spying and maybe even assassinations. In either case, it is a fact that the school disappeared in its official ranking, and the monks had no means of supporting themselves. Very soon several lineages took shape, and performance activities, especially on stage in ensemble with *koto* och *shamisen*, became popular. The shakuhachi people supported themselves by teaching within their *iemoto* lineage, and performing with the string players.



Thus, the *iemoto seido* has been a necessary means of support for artists, who used to have other ways to make a livelihood. In Japan it still is. To be head of your own group of students gives you a socio-political ranking, a force to count with. I studied with Yamaguchi Gorô, from 1985 until he passed away, continued my activities within his lineage and at the same time established my own body of students. I had all in all around 30 students in Japan, now taken care of by one of my junior colleagues.

To a great extent the *iemoto seido* requires socio-political positioning. The development of ‘true’ or ‘less true’ lineages in Europe is quite interesting to see. The same seems to have happened in the U.S. and maybe in other parts of the world, where the social systems are quite different from that of Japan, with much less of

strict hierarchies.

Apart from these socio-economical-political aspects, there are also a number of aesthetical aspects that have to be taken into account, the most important being that shakuhachi has been transmitted in a semi-oral tradition. Oral and semi-oral traditions are not known to be the most efficient in conveying an artistic ideal or the technical aspects.



As stated in the beginning of this article, the ‘lack of efficiency’ (in a Western sense of the word) in teaching a basic technique is an ideal per se. Whether linked to Zen Buddhism or not, there exists an idea that you have to work hard to get things. Nobody can tell you the right way of playing the shakuhachi, it has to be found within yourself.

In my experience, the best aspect of the *iemoto seido* is that it keeps you concentrated on the sound. After a number of failures in asking my teacher for detailed information, I realised that I had to find the information in my own way. Gorô-sensei never got irritated with my questions, but the most common reply would be: “Let's play!”, rather than any lengthy elaboration on the question.

This way of teaching felt very foreign to me in the beginning; when I came to Japan in 1985 I think I tended to demand efficient and rational explanations of any material that I was supposed to learn, but gradually I ‘learned’ how to cope with this new approach.

On the backside of the coin, the *iemoto* is the word and the law, and critical comments are more or less out of context. This leads to an overwhelming lack of constructive critique, and aesthetical discussions tend to end with “it's his (or her) way of playing”. End of discussion. Students have less freedom of expression within the *iemoto* system, since a different way of interpretation would in itself be against the law of the *iemoto*. In order to develop your own way of playing you have to, not only learn the tradition, but internalise the tradition in your own playing, a process that requires that you strictly follow the rules of the lineage.

It is fascinating to follow the ongoing discussion about lineages in Europe, with so many different ways of teaching and learning. It will be interesting to see how both the socio-political aspects and the aesthetical aspects of the hierarchical *iemoto* lineage way of thinking develops on European soil.

The following article, kindly written by Jim Franklin, appears below in English and then below that, in German.

Shakuhachi: Acculturation into a culturally diverse Europe – a Questioning

By Jim Franklin

With the first European Shakuhachi Summer School in the air, and together with it, the formation of a European Shakuhachi Society, I'd like to offer some observations about the process of integrating shakuhachi into European cultural life. These suggest questions rather than dictates, since the worlds of the shakuhachi and of European cultural life are diverse and polyglot, and the assertion of a single direction or line of acculturation would be inappropriate, to say the least. I consider my observations here to be neither exhaustive nor prescriptive, but as starting points for discussion. While the process of emergence of shakuhachi in Europe has been underway for some time, the focus which a European Shakuhachi Society will provide seems to me to be a milestone or turning point, and I believe it will be good for us to consider how the ongoing encounter can take shape.

Obviously, the shakuhachi is foreign to the European musical and cultural traditions, and we can work at reducing this foreignness in a number of ways. One way is simply the presentation of the shakuhachi in its Japanese form and with its Japanese music to European audiences: playing honkyoku, sankyoku, shinkyoku etc. as far as possible in adherence with the ways that have been handed down to us by teachers in Japan or trained in Japan. This is a fundamentally conservative activity – which I view as necessary and positive, and I attach no (negative) value-judgement to the word “conservative”. The hope here is that audiences in Europe, small but gradually growing with familiarity, will learn to love this music (or at least some of it), as those of us who play shakuhachi have done.

Allied to this is the process of educating the potential audience. Informally, this takes place through every performance of shakuhachi that takes place in Europe. Formally, though, there is the possibility of integrating training in Japanese (and other) traditional musics (both practically and musicologically) into the education systems of our various countries – such as Véronique Piron is doing in France. This is a daunting task, but an important one.

Parallel with the conservative and educative approach is the process of encounter and integration. Viewed purely as a musical instrument, with potentials and limitations, the shakuhachi offers a unique set of possibilities. One realization of this set is in the various Japanese genres, which for most of us has been the first point of contact with (and love for) the instrument. It seems to me, though, that a further valid approach is to employ the instrument in a context of new composition, improvisation etc., making use of the possibilities of the shakuhachi, without necessarily attempting to be (or sound) “Japanese”. I believe that this by no means supplants the “conservative” side of things; the only way to use the instrument effectively in a context of newly-generated music is to be intimately familiar (technically and to some degree culturally) with the traditional music(s) of the shakuhachi; otherwise the result tends to be a Japanese-flavoured exoticism. On the other hand, I believe that the development of

new musics with shakuhachi can be viewed as an enrichment of the cultures, both Western and Japanese, and something which we in Europe can validly contribute to the shakuhachi's musical world. The directions of such work are multiple – from (respectful) reinterpretation of traditional Japanese material, through encounters with non-Japanese instruments, through composition which brings the aesthetics of the shakuhachi (what I think of as the “inner life of the single tone”) into an encounter with European musical and compositional aesthetics (approaches to form, polyphony and so on) – something which promises an enrichment on both sides of the divide.

It is clear that no single teacher or school of playing can embody every possible direction, of conservation, encounter and integration. What is important is that we create a space and an attitude which allow for these directions to exist and to thrive – with respect for, and interest in, the efforts of other practitioners.

To place this in a less theoretical context, I'd like to describe briefly my perceptions of the situation in my adopted home, Germany, and my place in it as a relative newcomer to that country. As a western-trained composer, I bring with me to shakuhachi the attitude of “let's see what can be done here musically”. As a shakuhachi performer and teacher, trained firstly in Australia (Riley Lee) and then in Japan (Teruo Furuya and Katsuya Yokoyama), I bring a deep respect and love for tradition as I was taught it. In my work, I try to embrace both these areas: I teach honkyoku (primarily), gaikyoku and min'yō (to a lesser degree), as faithfully as I can to the way I was taught. I compose for shakuhachi, everything from solo pieces, through pieces with traditional Japanese instruments (I love the koto as well, although I only play it very poorly), through pieces with Western instruments (such as my *Four Fleeting Star-Dreams*, composed for Japanese-German pianist Yayoi Takano and myself), through pieces with electronics (such as my *Songs for the Not-Born #3*, for shakuhachi, theremin and live electronics, played simultaneously by one performer). I engage, often through improvisation, with other (non-Japanese) musicians, and in my teaching I encourage interested students to experiment with improvisation and composition, especially as they develop technical facility and understanding of the instrument and its background. In concerts I attempt to balance traditional and newly-developed material.

Of course, I'm not alone on German turf, and other teachers and schools have other directions and emphases– for instance Tilo Burdach, representing Nishimura Kokū's direction of honkyoku for jinashi-kyotaku but also engaging with other musicians and instruments, or Prof. Ikkei Hanada's Ichion-Kai, with intense focus on the Itchoken honkyoku tradition, played with jinashi instruments. My point here is that I see a variety of approaches present in Germany, from those which emphasize the conservation of the Japanese tradition, to those (such as mine) which attempt faithfully to pass on the tradition (or a specific branch of it) and simultaneously to enrich it through encounter and development of new material. I view the different teachers and attitudes as complementary, rather than antithetical, and hope that we can all profit from one another.

In any event, I believe it is our responsibility as shakuhachi players in Europe to decide, individually and collectively, what attitude(s) we wish to embody – recognizing our individual strengths and weaknesses, and beyond these, respecting the attitudes of others. With luck, the mosaic that arises will be rich, multi-faceted and astonishingly beautiful, like the shakuhachi itself.

German translation:

Shakuhachi: Einbindung in ein kulturell vielfältiges Europa – eine Fragestellung

By Jim Franklin

Jetzt, wo die erste European Shakuhachi Summer School und damit der Gründung einer Europäischen Shakuhachi-Gesellschaft in der Luft hängt, möchte ich einige Beobachtungen zum Prozess der Integration der Shakuhachi in das kulturelle Leben Europas bieten. Diese werfen Fragen statt Dekrete auf, da die Welten der Shakuhachi und des Kulturlebens in Europa äußerst vielfältig und polyglott sind, und die Behauptung einer einzigen Linie oder Richtung der kulturellen Integration wäre unpassend am besten. Obschon eine Integration der Shakuhachi in Europa seit einiger Zeit im Gang ist, wird die Gründung einer Europäischen Shakuhachi-Gesellschaft meines Erachtens einen Meilenstein oder Wendepunkt setzen, und ich glaube, dass es jetzt gut wäre, uns zu überlegen, wie die fortschreitende Begegnung gestaltet werden kann.

Klar ist, dass die Shakuhachi bei den europäischen musikalischen und kulturellen Traditionen fremd ist, und wir können auf verschiedene Art und Weise daran arbeiten, diese Fremdheit zu vermindern. Eine Möglichkeit besteht ganz einfach in der Vorführung der Shakuhachi in ihrer japanischen Form und ihrer japanischen Musik an das europäische Publikum: Honkyoku, Sankyoku, Shinkyoku usw. spielen, und zwar so weit wie möglich auf die Art und Weise, die an uns durch Lehrer in Japan oder mit japanischer Ausbildung weitergegeben worden ist. Dies ist eine im Grunde genommen konservative Tätigkeit – die ich für notwendig und positiv halte, und das Wort “konservativ” impliziert für mich kein (negatives) Werturteil. Die Hoffnung ist, dass das Publikum in Europa, klein aber stetig durch Vertrautheit wachsend, diese Musik (oder wenigstens einen Teil davon) lieben lernt, so wie bei uns, die Shakuhachi spielen, der Fall ist.

Damit verbunden ist ein Prozess der Erziehung des potentiellen Publikums. Informell kommt dies durch jede Aufführung der Shakuhachi in Europa zustande. Formeller besteht doch die Möglichkeit, dass Ausbildung in japanischen (und anderen) traditionellen Musiken (praktisch sowie musikwissenschaftlich) in das Erziehungswesen unserer verschiedenen Länder integriert wird – so wie Véronique Piron in Frankreich anstrebt. Dies ist eine überwältigende aber notwendige Aufgabe.

Parallel zu den konservativen und erzieherischen Haltungen steht ein Prozess der Begegnung und Integration. Rein als Musikinstrument betrachtet, mit sämtlichen Potentialen und Beschränkungen, bietet die Shakuhachi einen einmaligen Satz der Möglichkeiten. Eine Verwirklichung dieses Satzes besteht schon in den unterschiedlichen japanischen Musikgattungen, die für die meisten von uns den ersten Kontaktpunkt mit (und Liebe zur) Shakuhachi darstellen. Es scheint mir aber, dass ein weiterer möglicher und gültiger Ansatz darin besteht, das Instrument im Umfeld neuer Kompositionen, Improvisationen usw. einzusetzen. Hierbei kann man von den Möglichkeiten der Shakuhachi Gebrauch machen, ohne unbedingt zu versuchen, “japanisch” zu sein (oder zu klingen). Ich glaube überhaupt nicht, dass diese Haltung die “Konservative” ersetzt. Im Gegenteil besteht die einzige Möglichkeit, das Instrument wirksam bei neu erschaffener Musik einzusetzen, nur darin, dass man

technisch wie auch bis zu einem gewissen Grad kulturell mit der traditionellen Musik der Shakuhachi innig vertraut ist. Sonst ergibt sich Exotisches, japanisch angehaucht. Auf der anderen Seite glaube ich, dass die Entwicklung neuer Musiken mit Shakuhachi zu einer Bereicherung beider Kulturen, westlich sowie japanisch, werden kann, und etwas darstellt, was wir in Europa zur Welt der Shakuhachi beitragen können. Die möglichen Richtungen solcher Arbeit sind mannigfaltig: von (respektvoller) Reinterpretation traditionellen japanischen Stoffes, über Begegnungen mit nichtjapanischen Instrumenten, bis hin zu einer Kompositionstätigkeit, die die Grundästhetik der Shakuhachi (ich betrachte sie als “Innenleben des einzelnen Tones”) in Berührung mit einer europäischen Kompositionsästhetik der Formgebung, Polyphonie usw. bringt – etwas, was eine Bereicherung in beiden Richtungen verspricht.

Es ist klar, dass kein einzelner Lehrer oder keine einzelne Schule jede mögliche Ausrichtung von Konservierung, Begegnung und Integration verkörpern kann. Wichtig ist, dass wir einen Raum und eine Haltung aufstellen, die diese Ausrichtungen existieren und gedeihen lässt – mit Respekt und Interesse für die Bemühungen anderer Ausübenden.

Um dies in etwas weniger theoretischen Zusammenhang zu bringen, erlaube ich es mir, meine Beobachtungen zur Situation in meiner Wahlheimat Deutschland, und zu meinem persönlichen Platz darin als relativ neu Umgesiedelter, kurz zu schildern. Als westlich ausgebildeter Komponist bringe ich mit zur Shakuhachi die Haltung “Schauen wir, was hier musikalisch machbar ist”. Als Shakuhachi-Spieler und – Lehrer mit Ausbildung zuerst in Australien (bei Riley Lee) und dann in Japan (bei Teruo Furuya und Katsuya Yokoyama) bringe ich einen tiefen Respekt und eine tiefe Liebe zur Tradition auf, wie sie mir beigebracht wurde. In meiner Arbeit suche ich dementsprechend, beide Richtungen zu umarmen. Ich unterrichte Honkyoku (primär), Gaikyoku und Min’yō (etwas weniger), so getreu wie möglich zu dem, was ich gelernt habe. Ich komponiere für Shakuhachi, alles, von Solostücken, über Stücke mit traditionellen japanischen Instrumenten (ich liebe auch Koto, obwohl ich sie nur sehr mangelhaft spiele), über Stücke mit westlichen Instrumenten (z.B. meine *Vier flüchtige Sternenträume*, für japanisch-deutsche Pianistin Yayoi Takano und mich komponiert), bis hin zu Stücken mit Elektronik (z.B. meine *Songs for the Not-Born #3*, für Shakuhachi, Theremin und Live-Elektronik, gleichzeitig von einem Musiker gespielt). Ich begegne anderen, nichtjapanischen Musikern, oft in Improvisationen, und in meinem Unterricht ermutige ich interessierte Schüler, sich mit Improvisation und Komposition zu experimentieren, besonders wenn sie ihre technischen Fähigkeiten und ihr Verständnis des Instruments und seines Hintergrunds ausreichend entwickelt haben. In Konzerten bin ich bestrebt, ausgewogen Traditionelles und Neues zu spielen.

Selbstverständlich stehe ich nicht allein auf deutschem Boden. Andere Lehrer und Schulen haben andere Ausrichtungen und Schwerpunkte – zum Beispiel Tilo Burdach, der die Honkyoku-Richtung für Jinashi-Kyotaku von Nishimura Kokū vertritt, der aber auch mit anderen Musikern und Instrumenten engagiert ist; oder das Ichion-Kai von Prof. Ikkei Hanada, dessen intensiver Fokuspunkt bei der Itchoken Honkyoku-Tradition liegt, allenfalls mit Jinashi-Instrumenten gespielt. Der springende Punkt hier ist, dass ich eine Vielfalt an vorhandenen Ausrichtungen in Deutschland sehe, diejenigen, die Konservierung der japanischen Tradition betonen, sowie die, die (wie bei mir) versuchen, diese Tradition (oder einen Zweig davon) getreu weiter zu geben und gleichzeitig sie durch Begegnung und Entwicklung neuen Stoffes zu bereichern.

Ich betrachte die unterschiedlichen Lehrer und Haltungen als komplementär anstatt gegensätzlich, und ich hoffe, dass wir alle von einander profitieren können.

Auf jeden Fall glaube ich, dass wir, als Shakuhachi-Spieler in Europa, die Verantwortung tragen, uns kollektiv sowie individuell zu entscheiden, was für Haltung(en) wir verkörpern wollen – in Anerkennung der eigenen Stärken und Schwächen, und darüber hinaus, in Respekt vor den Haltungen Anderer. Wenn wir Glück haben, wird das daraus entstehende Mosaik reich, vielfältig und erstaunlich schön, wie die Shakuahchi selbst.

FUNNY STORY:

I had been practising 'Ichijo' for a while (written by Kineya Seiho in 1970), struggling with some of the harder sections. I told Hugh (my long-suffering partner) that there were lots of really fast passages that were tricky to get the fingers round.

He said: "That's probably when he's scratching".

I said "What.....Who?"

He said "Itchy Joe".

That kept me chuckling for a while!

GREAT LINKS:

Recommended websites worth checking out, in no particular order, are:

www.komuso.com
www.shakuhachi.com
www.kotodama.net
www.yungflutes.com
www.kikuday.com
www.emptybell.org
www.shakuhachi.org
www.reibo.org
www.mejiro-jp.com
www.torstenolafsson.com
www.zenflute.com
www.nyogetsu.com

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Michael Coxall
Kiku Day
Jim Franklin
Gunnar Jinmei Linder
Okuda, Atsuya
Veronique Piron
Brian Tairaku Ritchie

Strings:

Ari sawa, Shi no (shami sen)
Iwamoto, Michino Gayue (koto)
Nakagawa, Noriko Toshiyu (koto)
Okuda, Kazuko Masako (shami sen)
Okuda, Satoshi Utanoi chi (koto/shami sen)

Please check out the website: www.shakuhachi-summer-soas.com
for more information and booking!



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Until end June 2006:

Japanese Culture Festival in Paris (www.mcjp.asso.fr/cadrgen.html)

19-22 July 2006:

Pan-European Shakuhachi Summer School (In case you hadn't realised already! - www.shakuhachisummer-soas.com)

- This will include the first official meeting of the ESS – all interested people are very welcome to attend. The meeting will be held at(date, time, venue)

22nd July 2006, 7:30 pm:

Contemporary music concert with Joji Hiota (percussion), John Kai zan Neptune (shakuhachi) and Kenny Endo (taiko) at the Royal Festival Hall (www.rfh.org.uk) 08703 800 400 (NOTE: Clashes with Summer School final concert)

25th January 2007 at 8pm:

Takemitsu, Toru's "November Steps". Kiku Day on Shakuhachi with Odense Symphony Orchestra. Biwa: Ueda Junko.

Place: Carl Nielsen Salen, Odense Koncerthus. Claus Bergs Gade 9, DK-5000 Odense C, Denmark. Phone: +45 - 6614 7800
