

Next Concert

Saturday, June 16, 7:30PM

Eriko Sato, Violin, Laura Metcalf, Cello,
David Oei, Piano, James Nyoraku Schlefer,
Shakuhachi

FUJIN STRINGS

Schumann, Schlefer, Eslami, Regan



ARTS AT TENRI promotes the appreciation of international art forms in an effort to foster cultural understanding, harmony and community by presenting both performing and visual arts of the highest caliber in a supportive, intimate setting.

To fulfill its mission, Arts at TCI will host a monthly series of chamber music and world music concerts, and maintain a gallery space with on-going, year-round exhibitions featuring performers and visual artists of every nationality. Audiences will experience exceptional quality in a community-based venue that values a high appreciation of the arts.

The Voxare String Quartet is represented by BesenArts LLC, 508 First Street, Suite 4W, Hoboken, NJ 07030-7823, www.BesenArts.com

JAPAN FOUNDATION 



Lower Manhattan Cultural Council



TENRI
天理
ARTS AT
TENRI

ARTS AT TENRI

MONTHLY CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERTS
FROM TWO CLASSICAL TRADITIONS
EUROPE AND JAPAN

KAMMERRAKU

A PROGRAM OF KYO-SHIN-AN ARTS COMMISSIONS

May 6, 2012

Tenri Cultural Institute
43A West 13th Street
New York, NY

Major funding for Kammerraku® was provided by the Japan Foundation, Meet the Composer Commissioning Music USA, and the TD Charitable Foundation.

ARTS AT TENRI 2011-2012 SEASON

*Presented in Collaboration with Kyo-Shin-An Arts***KAMMERRAKU®**

NAMI KINEIE, SHAMISEN

YUMI KUROSAWA, 20-STRING KOTO

JAMES NYORAKU SCHLEFER, SHAKUHACHI

VOXARE STRING QUARTET

EMILY ONDRACEK-PETERSON, VIOLIN I ERIK PETERSON, VIOLA

YUKI NUMATA, VIOLIN II ADRIAN DAUROV, CELLO

Daron Hagen *Koto Concerto: Genji (2011)**I. Cicada Shell**II. Falling Flowers**III. Maiden on the Bridge**IV. Floating Bridge of Dreams**V. Vanished into the Clouds***Paul Moravec** *Shakuhachi Quintet (2012)**In Three Movements*

- Intermission -

James Nyoraku Schlefer *String Journey (2012)***Somei Satoh** *KyoShin 虚心 (2012)*

Shakuhachi Quintet, a Kyo-Shin-An Arts commission, was commissioned with the support of Meet the Composer's Commissioning Music/USA program, which is made possible by generous support from the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust. The Ford Foundation, the Francis Goelet Charitable Lead Trusts, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York State Council on the Arts, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Helen F. Whitaker Fund.

Arts at Tenri is made possible in part with public funds from the Fund for Creative Communities, supported by New York State Council on the Arts, and the Manhattan Community Arts Fund, supported by New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and administered by Lower Manhattan Cultural Council.

***Koto Concerto: Genji*, by Daron Hagen.** Mr. Hagen is well known as an opera composer, and perhaps not surprisingly, this operatic work was based on the 11th century Tale of Genji. The eponymous character Genji is the son of a Japanese emperor, relegated to commoner status for political reasons. The long and complex story of his life unfolds during the course of the novel – partly in the recounting of his relationships with women. The concerto follows the seminal story of Genji falling in love with a woman, without seeing her, but only after hearing her play the koto from afar for many years. The result is a concerto in five “scenes”, based on five psychological situations from the novel, each three to five minutes in length, with the conceit being that their love is consummated in the final moments.

***Shakuhachi Quintet*, by Paul Moravec.** Shakuhachi Quintet was commissioned by Kyo-Shin-An Arts and I wrote it for James Nyoraku Schlefer. It is a chamber concerto in three movements for the shakuhachi with string quartet. The third movement is based on the six-note melody, C-D-G-A-E-F, which William Shakespeare spelled out in his comedy, *Love's Labour's Lost*. Indeed, it is the only extant melody “composed” by the great playwright. In a sense, this makes Shakuhachi Quintet a shaku-Shakespeare mash-up.

***String Journey*, by James Nyoraku Schlefer.** Originally from China, the shamisen came to Japan in the 16th century and was often played by wandering minstrels and storytellers. *String Journey*, for shamisen and string quartet, was inspired by the dubiously verifiable story of an itinerant musician and his wanderings.

“The year 1850 was an eventful one for the samurai known as Satoshi Nagauta. Having deserted the army of Daimyo Hatohiro five years earlier¹, he changed his appearance and happily took up playing the shamisen, entertaining common folk on the streets and in Osaka's pleasure quarters. As his reputation grew, so did his presence and soon enough he was spotted by his former comrades in arms still loyal to the Daimyo. Satoshi fled to the port of Nagasaki and became a stowaway² on a ship ultimately bound for California. His hiding place was discovered³, but Satoshi soon won the hearts and minds of the sailors with his songs and storytelling thus gaining his freedom. The treacherous journey lasted one year but he arrived at last in the new world.

Satoshi was overwhelmed by the diversity of cultures that he encountered and figured, wisely, that his only hope for survival would be with his shamisen music; meeting and performing with other musicians. His musical adventures were astonishing – he encountered a bluegrass fiddler, a classical string quartet, military bands, and a barber shop quartet singing in something called harmony. These influences inspired him to new heights of artistry. He was most drawn to the sound of the blues (the guitar being most similar to his own instrument) and songs that spoke of loneliness and suffering.

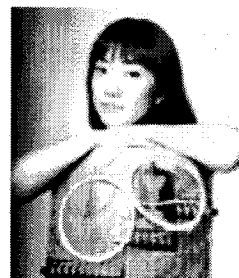
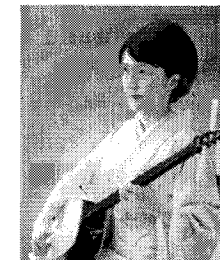
Several years passed for the itinerant musician, but eventually he yearned to see his homeland again. He particularly missed seeing the sakura in springtime. He recalled the words of his favorite song, “If the cherry blossom were not known to our world, perhaps our hearts would be peaceful at spring time.” It was time for him to return.

Following another treacherous crossing, and making landfall under cover of night⁴, Satoshi found himself once again wandering the streets of Osaka where he learned that Hatohiro had been assassinated by his long-time rival Hirohato, and his old comrades could welcome him back. Upon hearing Satoshi’s beautiful voice and unusual music, Hirohato elevated him to the highest musical post in the castle. He married and had five children, two of whom became famous musicians and carried forth his name and his musical style.”

1 Desertion was a capital offense. 2 Leaving Japan was a capital offense.
3 Stowing away was a capital offense. 4 Entering Japan was a capital offense.

KyoShin, by Somei Satoh. “My music is limited to certain elements of sound and there are many calm repetitions. There is also much prolongation of a single sound. I think silence and the prolongation of sound is the same thing in terms of space. The only difference is that there is either the presence or absence of sound. More important is whether the space is “living” or not. Our [Japanese] sense of time and space is different from that of the West. For example, in the Shinto religion, there is the term ‘imanaka’ which is not just the present moment which lies between the stretch of past eternity and future immortality, but also the manifestation of the moment of all time which is multi-layered and multi-dimensional...I would like it if the listener could abandon all previous conceptions of time and experience a new sense of time presented in this music as if eternal time can be lived in a single moment.

Nami Kineie, shamisen, was born in 1956 and graduated from Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, majoring in Japanese Music. She is active as a performer of nagauta shamisen music and has toured nine times in 14 countries as a member of the renowned ensemble Pro Musica Nipponia. She has also taken part in cultural exchange performances at theaters and has accompanied stage plays in the United States and Singapore. Kineie-san performs aggressively on the electric shamisen in live concerts on the stage, with bands, and in musicals. Currently, she is on faculty at Bunkyo University and heads her own school of Shamisen. Her first solo recording “RHAPSODY” was released last year. <http://www.kineienami.jp/english/profile.html>



Yumi Kurosawa, 20-string koto, was born and raised in Japan, and began studying the 13-stringed-Koto at the age of three with her parents, Kazuo and Chikako Kurosawa. At the age of 15, she began studying the 20-stringed-Koto with Nanae Yoshimura. Kurosawa received first prize at the National Japanese Koto Competition for students in 1989 and 1992, and a scholarship from The Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan in 1998. In addition to the koto, Ms. Kurosawa also studied computer music while attending Keio University. A member of Hougukuten Concert, Tokyo, her Master qualification is Seiha School (style). In addition to her extensive performances in Japan, including appearances at Suntory Hall, Tokyo, and on NHK Broadcast TV, Kurosawa has toured in Canada, Germany, Malaysia, Russia, and the US. She moved to New York in 2002, and has appeared at a wide variety of NYC venues and artistic settings including the Apollo Sound Stage, Joe’s Pub, the Japan Society, Roulette, The Juilliard School, WNYC Radio, and Weill Recital Hall. www.yumikuro.com

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

James Nyoraku Schlefer, shakuhachi and composer, is a Grand Master of the shakuhachi and one of only a handful of non-Japanese artists to have achieved this rank. He received the Dai-Shi-Han (Grand Master) certificate in 2001, and his second Shi-Han certificate in 2008, from the Mujuan Dojo in Kyoto. Schlefer has performed at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, Tanglewood and BAM, as well as multiple venues across the country and in Japan, Indonesia, Brazil and Europe. As a composer, he has written multiple chamber and orchestral works combining Japanese and Western instruments as well as numerous pieces solely for traditional Japanese instruments. Mr. Schlefer is the Artistic Director of Kyo-Shin-An Arts and the curator for the Japanese music series at the Tenri Cultural Institute in NYC. He teaches shakuhachi at Columbia University, a broad spectrum of Western and World music courses at New York City Technical College (CUNY), and performs and lectures at colleges and universities throughout the United States. www.nyoraku.com



“The gifted **Voxare String Quartet**” (The New York Times), members Emily Ondracek-Peterson, violin; Galina Zhdanova, violin; Erik Peterson, viola; and Adrian Daurov, cello, was formed in 2008, and has received extensive critical praise for its inventive programming, technical prowess, and passionate performances. Comfortable with breaking boundaries, the quartet creates and performs its own transcriptions of popular and rock music and often performs in alternative concert venues. In 2010, Voxare was Quartet-in-Residence at the International Computer Music Conference, and presented a three day Mostly Riley Festival to celebrate the 75th birthday of Terry Riley at Bargemusic, where it is a frequent performer. Voxare has also been featured live on WNYC’s Soundcheck, broadcast on WQXR, and can be heard on the soundtracks of several films shown at festivals such as Sundance and Tribeca. In 2010, Voxare’s unique performing activities earned the quartet Chamber Music America’s ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming. Voxare has studied with the Juilliard String Quartet at its String Quartet Seminar and with the Kronos Quartet through Carnegie Hall. Their debut recording project, for the Naxos label, will feature works of Daron Hagen.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Kyo-Shin-An Arts was founded in 2008, to create and promote new music integrating Japanese instruments – specifically koto, shakuhachi and shamisen – into Western classical music. With an initial purpose of commissioning established composers, KSA immediately began forming partnerships with ensembles interested in performing the music. The goals are to bring forth the outstanding beauty of these instruments within the context of chamber ensembles and orchestras, and build and promote a body of contemporary repertoire that will do justice to the greatness and exactitude of these two classical traditions. www.kyoshinan.org

A native of Wisconsin, composer **Daron Hagen** has a large catalog of compositions. In addition to four symphonies, 12 concerti, more than 150 art songs and cycles and 40 chamber works, Hagen has written four highly-acclaimed full-length operas: *Shining Brow*, *Bandanna*, *New York Stories* and *Amelia* as well as two one-act operas: *Vera of Las Vegas* and *The Antient Concert*. Recent commissions include *Philharmonia*, commissioned for the 150th anniversary of The New York Philharmonic; *Much Ado*, commissioned for the 75th anniversary of the Curtis Institute of Music; *The Waking Father*.

Winner of the 2004 Pulitzer Prize in Music, composer **Paul Moravec**, has written over 100 works for orchestra, opera, chamber ensembles, chorus, and film. His first opera, *The Letter*, commissioned by Santa Fe Opera, premiered in the 2009 season. Other recent premieres include *Danse Russe*, a one-act comic opera for the 2011 Philadelphia International Festival of the Arts; *The Blizzard Voices*, an evening-length oratorio for Opera Omaha; *Brandenburg Gate*, for Orpheus Chamber Orchestra at Carnegie Hall; *Piano Quintet*, for Jeremy Denk and the Lark Quartet; *Anniversary Dances*, for the Ying Quartet; *Cornopean Airs*, for the American Brass Quintet; and *The Time Gallery* with eighth blackbird at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Somei Satoh is a composer of the post-war generation, whose hauntingly evocative musical language is a curious fusion of Japanese timbral sensibilities, 19th century Romanticism and electronic technology. Born in Sendai, Japan in 1947, Satoh currently lives in Tokyo. Largely self-taught as a composer he came to musical creation through the spiritual exercises of both Shintoism and Zen Buddhism. In the early 1970s, after attending the Nihon University of Art, Satoh joined the Tone Field performance group, an experimental inter-arts ensemble which performed his earliest composition. Over the course of the 1970s, his instrumental palette diversified and his music took on a greater melodiousness. By the 1980s, his music became more sensual after the model of the Romantic tradition.