



Lincoln Center stage

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts/March 1988

Alice Tully Hall

Home of the Chamber Music Society
Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts

MUSIC FROM JAPAN

NAOYUKI MIURA, *Artistic Director*

Wednesday Evening, March 9, 1988, at 8:00

featuring:

PRO MUSICA NIPPONIA

MINORU MIKI, *Director*

TAKUO TAMURA, *Conductor*

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

MICHAEL W. UDOW, *Director*

THE BROOKLYN PHILHARMONIC CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

LUKAS FOSS, *Conductor*

"ORCHESTRAL ENCOUNTERS"

(Traditional piece arr. by PMN) "Shin-Yachiyo-Jishi"
Pro Musica Nipponia

KAORU WADA "Rakuichi-Nanaza"* 1988
Commissioned and performed by the University of Michigan Percussion Ensemble with soloists, Makoto Takei (shinobue), Hiromitsu Katada and Noboru Kurosaka (percussionists) from Pro Musica Nipponia.

MINORU MIKI "Jo-no-Kyoku"* 1969 Prelude for Shakuhachi, Koto, Shamisen and Strings
Seizan Sakata, (shakuhachi), Reiko Kimura (koto), Toshiko Sakai (shamisen), and the Brooklyn Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra conducted by Lukas Foss.

Intermission

KATSUTOSHI NAGASAWA "Otsu-e Fantasy"* 1981
Pro Musica Nipponia with Takuo Tamura, conductor.

MAKI ISHII "Marimba-Stück"* 1969
The University of Michigan Percussion Ensemble with soloist Fernando A. Meza (marimba)

(program continued)

In consideration of the performing artists and members of the audience, those who must leave before the end of the performance are asked to do so between numbers, not during the performance.
The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not allowed in this building.

TAKASHI YOSHIMATSU

"The Miroku Effect"* 1987

Pro Musica Nipponia and the Brooklyn
Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra with Lukas Foss,
conductor.

Commissioned by Music From Japan

**New York Premiere*

Presented by the Japan Federation of Composers

MUSIC FROM JAPAN, INC.

Board of Directors

Naoyuki Miura, *President*

Kenji Mochizuki

Mari Ono

Honorary Advisors

Yasushi Akutagawa Toshiro Mayuzumi

Hideo Edo Akio Morita

Donald Keene Keizo Saji

Kyoichi Tamura

Consultants

Beate Gordon Teruaki Kurata

Takashi Funayama Keiji Okuda

Akira Ueno

Music From Japan Staff

Naoyuki Miura, *Artistic Director*

Mari Ono, *Associate Artistic Director*

Karen Kelley, *Assistant to the Artistic Director*

Arthur Soybel, *Legal Advisor*

Representative in Japan, SAN Musical Instrument, Inc.

Public Relations Representative, Jay K. Hoffman & Associates

Music From Japan, Inc. is a non-profit organization. Tax deductible contributions may be sent to:
7 East 20th Street, New York, N.Y. 10003

Notes on the Program

Shin-Yachiyo-Jishi

The classical koto piece *Yachiyo-Jishi* is usually performed by an ensemble of voice, koto, shamisen and shakuhachi. In this new version, the congratulatory piece has been set as a purely instrumental ensemble number. The members of PMN have added elements of the folk hayashi (flute and drum group) music *Shishi*, which has to do with the mythical lion-like beast of the same name. Additionally, the biwa, kokyū, and bass koto are used in heterophonic style in the PMN's arrangement. This piece is often played by PMN as a kind of ceremony to bring the musicians on-stage, in which case the introductory percussion passage is prolonged by 3-5 minutes. Time: 14 min.



Born in 1962 in Yamaguchi, Japan, **Kaoru Wada** started studying composition at seventeen. In 1985, Mr. Wada graduated with a degree in composition from the Tokyo College of Music. There he studied composition under Akira Ifukube and conducting under Yasuhiko Shiozawa.

In 1986 the world premiere of Kaoru Wada's "Three Fragments for orchestra" was performed by Noordelijk Philharmonic Or-

chestra in Groningen of the Netherlands and in 1987 by the Amsterdam Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1988 "Folkloric Dance Suite for Orchestra" was world premiered by Malmö Symphonic Orchestra in Sweden and performed by Uppsala Symphony Orchestra and also by Groningen's orchestra. The world premiere of his new work *Rakuichi-Nanaza* was performed by the University of Michigan Percussion Ensemble and Pro Musica Nipponia on March third of this year in Michigan.

Rakuichi-Nanaza (1988)

Three hundred years ago Japan's feudal age prevailed. Samurai's abounded. Only the *Rakuichi* was exciting and free. All else was controlled. Today, not unlike the feudal age of the past, music and composition are also "bound". Thus, in this new work, I have tried to find the "original soul" of music. *Nanaza* means free position for seven players.

It is my wish that audiences will discover the Japanese soul in this work as "New Japanese Tradition."

Rakuichi-Nanaza was written for The University of Michigan Percussion Ensemble and Pro Musica Nipponia and was commissioned by the School of Music of the University of Michigan. It is dedicated to my dear friend Michael W. Udow.



Minoru Miki was born in 1930 in Tokushima Japan and graduated from the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music in 1955. His first work, *Trinita Sinfornica*, received a prize from NHK and was first performed by the NHK Symphony Orchestra in 1953. In 1964 he founded

the Nihon Ongaku Shudan (Pro Musica Nipponia) with 13 other musicians, dedicated to the creation of a new music for the Japanese traditional instruments. The four-record set "The Music of Minoru Miki" performed by the Shudan, won the Grand Prix in the 1970s National Arts Festival, and in succeeding years the Shudan has played Miki's works in well over 160 concerts in Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, USSR, China, and Southeast Asia. In 1975, he composed his first opera *Shunkinsho* and was awarded the Wienerwald Opera Prize. His next opera *An Actor's Revenge*, commissioned by the English Music Theatre, had its world premiere in London in 1979, and its American Premier in 1981 at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Miki cooperated with Keiko Nosaka for 20-string koto since its creation in 1969, and the four-record set "Minoru Miki—Keiko Nosaka/Music for 20-string koto" which received the Excellence Prize in the 1979's National Arts Festival. In 1981, *Kyu-no-Kyoku* (Symphony for Two Worlds), commissioned by the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra for their bicentennial celebration and was given its world premiere at their new hall by the Gewandhaus Orchestra and the Pro Musica Nipponia. In 1983 in Peking, Miki brought about the first joint performance by Japanese and Chinese Traditional orchestras with the *Prelude for Saiko*. His newest opera, *Joruri*, commissioned by the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis for their tenth anniversary season, had its world premiere in 1985.

In 1986, he founded a musical-opera theatre *Ulayomi-Za* dedicated to the new development of Japanese music theatre world.

Jo-No-Kyoku—Prelude for Shakuhachi, Koto, Shamisen and Strings

This is the first piece of Miki's Eurasian Trilogy, composed for Japanese instruments and occidental orchestra. Here, Japanese music and instruments are delicately balanced with those of the West, as embodied in the string orchestra. The contrast of styles and aesthetics results in a richly evocative piece that is expressive of the pathos and longing of youth. A longer-than-

usual shakuhachi, a twenty-string koto, and a thick-neck shamisen are the principal instruments. Miki completed *Eurasian Trilogy* with *Ha no kyoku*, a concerto for koto and orchestra (1974), and *Kyu no Kyoku*, Symphony for Two Worlds (1981).



Born in 1923, **Katsutoshi Nagasawa** entered the art department of Nihon University in 1943, however with the onslaught of WWII, he, like many others, had to cut their academic careers short and comply with the draft. As a prisoner of war in Jaron, Singapore, Mr. Nagasawa created an ensemble with fellow POW's called "Joron Ensemble."

In 1947, with the war behind him, Mr. Nagasawa returned to his homeland of Japan and around 1951 began studying composition with Yasuji Kiyose. He wrote music for Japanese plays, movies as well as choral works. Around 1960, he discovered the richness of Japanese traditional instruments and in 1964 he co-founded Pro Musica Nipponia, where he has remained as one of its leading forces.

Mr. Nagasawa's works are closely based on the Japanese traditional harmonic structures and give one a real feeling of familiarity.

Ohtsu-e Fantasy

- I. Demon's Invocation
- II. Fujimusume—Miss Wisteria
(A girl wearing kimono patterned with wisteria flowers and putting a wisteria vine on her shoulder.)
- III. Hyotan-namazu
(A man trying to catch "namazu", a catfish, with "hyotan", a bottle gourd. It is a common expression meaning "slippery".)
- IV. Benkei with a Halbert
(“Benkei” is a historical hero in Japan.)
- V. The God of Thunder and Drums

"Ohtsu-e" is a popular painting which was sold for souvenir in Ohtsu of Ohmi Province, Ohtsu city of Shinga Prefecture of today, in the Edo era. People's joy and sorrow and the satire on the social phenomenon of the time were freely drawn with a humorous touch of dis-temper in this painting which became popular throughout the country. Selecting five works of Ohtsu-e out of many, the composer tried to depict by the Japanese instruments unaffected nature, wisdom and placidity hidden in the bottoms of people's minds.

In October 1981 this fantasy was premiered at Pro Musica Nipponia's 67th subscription concert for which it was composed.



Born in Tokyo in 1936, **Maki Ishii** studied violin, piano, conducting, and composition in Japan. In 1958 he studied with Boris Blacher and Josef Rufer at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin. From 1959 to 1961 he participated in many German contemporary music festivals where

his early works were premiered. He returned to Japan in 1962 and remained there until 1969. His new works were performed at every major contemporary music festival and his electronic works were produced there.

In 1969 he was invited to West Germany by Berlin Künstlerprogramme, and has been active as a composer, conductor, and organizer of contemporary music festivals in that country and in Japan. His orchestral works have been performed by such leading orchestras at the Berlin Philharmonic, Orchestre de Paris, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Boston Symphony, among others. As part of the "Composer Portrait" series, a Maki Ishii Concert was held at Festival d'automne in Paris (1978), at NieuweMuziek in Middleberg, Holland (1979), and at Berliner Festwochen (1981).

From 1973 to 1981 Mr. Ishii toured Europe, North and South America, and Southeast Asia as leader of the Japanese contemporary music group Tokk Ensemble. In 1981 he participated in the planning of "Japan in Berlin," held as part of the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra in the performance of Japanese works. Currently, in addition to composing and conducting, Mr. Ishii is an organizer of Pan Musik Festival in Tokyo and Inselmusik Berlin Festival.

Marimba-Stück

Marimba-Stück composed by Maki Ishii in 1969 is, in its purest sense, a trio for marimba, the featured solo instrument, with two additional percussionists performing on traditional Japanese instruments (or close approximation thereof) made of wood, metal or skin. This work, as is also the case in Mr. Ishii's more recent percussion works such as *Hiten Seido II* and *Thirteen Drums*, utilizes rapidly fleeting gestures which implores the listener not to forget that which is gone in an instant. Another level of energy and tension comes into play with the precision demanded of the performers to achieve unisons of vertical attack points within these phrased gestures based on the breath. The resultant combinations of sounds producing unison timbre structures gives and image of what was conceived as a trio, at times, becomes a solo for three.

—Michael Udow



Born in Tokyo in 1953, **Takashi Yoshimatsu** left the technology department of Keio University before graduating to study composition privately with Teizo Matsumura. In high school he played the classical bassoon as well as jazz and rock. Although he had no systematic training

in composition, an early work *Yuganda shinju no bokka* (Pastorale for a misshapen pearl) (1975) was selected in the 44th Music Concours. His name as a composer became more and more widely known with the pieces *Dorian* (1979), awarded the second composition prize by the Society for Promotion of Symphonic Music and *Threnody to Toki* (1980).

1985 seems to be the turning point with regard to recognition of his works. That year, his Guitar Concerto *Pegasus Effect* was awarded the prize of encouragement of creative work in the stage arts by the Agency for Cultural Affairs. Encouraged so he was, that the following pieces *Tender*, *Toys*, *The Age for Birds*, and again the *Pegasus Effect* were to go on to win such illustrious awards as the Takei Prize, the Japan Philharmony Series and the Japan Record Academy Prize (respectively).

In 1987, his first book was published, titled, "The Thesis of the Music of Pisces." Recently, with the collaboration of Akira Nishimura, he has established the Research Center for Finde-Siecle Music.

The Miroku Effect

"It gently watches and smiles over us all and things that form, and then disintegrates. In the same way, my sounds have been formed and will die before the gentle smile of such a Miroku." As described by its composer Yoshimatsu Takashi, this piece, commissioned by and in turn dedicated to Music From Japan, was written in three movements for traditional instruments and a string ensemble.

- I *Kaza Kiri* (Wind Cutter)
- II *Hana Emi* (Flower Smiler)
- III *Mai Udo* (Slow Dancer)

Miroku is the name given to a deity said to be that of a second Buddha, who is expected to return 5.67 billion years after the Shakamuni Buddha's death. Miroku is believed to offer compassion to the world, and is, in fact, also known as "Maitreya"—that which is born of compassion.

(continued on page 45)