

# 豪州尺八会

## AUSTRALIAN SHAKUHACHI SOCIETY

Nr 34 OCTOBER 2008

ASS P.O Box 63 Woodford NSW 2778



Greetings!..this edition is dedicated to **WSF2008** with a selection of pictures and links to other pix. I had too many pix to put in so heres a semi random selection which I hope conveys the spirit of the Festival.

I must make a very special mention and THANK YOU to Riley Lee and John Holmes who did so much of the financial background work, submissions etc talking to various bodies, administrivia, which consumed an enormous amount of their time and energy and resources for many months before, during and after WSF2008. An event like this does not jst happen and not forgetting the volunteers and sundry partners who had to put up with all of this.

**DVD's of WSF are expected to be available in November.**

### ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT SYDNEY WORLD SHAKUHACHI FESTIVAL 2008

Over three hundred and seventy invited performers and Festival participants attended ten main concerts, twenty-six smaller concerts and over thirty-five workshops, seminar and lectures. WSF08 had a total of seventy-one events presented over four and a half days.

More than a dozen world premiers and about fifty Australian premiers were performed during WSF08. The Festival commissioned four new works.

Three of the concerts were at the exquisite City Recital Hall, Angel Place, with the rest of the events in the smaller but equally beautiful Sydney Conservatorium of Music venues: Verbrugghen Hall, Recital Halls East and West, the Music Workshop Hall, and the Choral Assembly Hall. Festival events were also held in numerous seminar rooms and classrooms within the Sydney Conservatorium of Music complex.

The concert halls were chosen for their acoustics and were ideal for shakuhachi music. Many of the concerts were videoed or audio recorded, so be on the lookout for the DVDs and CDs, to be released soon.

All Festival events were open to the general public. Total audience numbers for all events were approximately three thousand.

With the concerts, both the pieces programmed and the performances by the musicians were of an exceptionally high level of musicality. The workshops, seminars and lectures were equally outstanding in both content and presentation.

The superb musicianship heard in the performances was to be expected, since the premier shakuhachi players worldwide, including Japan's shakuhachi Living National Treasure, were in attendance. Accompanying these first-class performers were some of the best musicians in Australia, such as *TaikOz*, *karak* percussion, the *Grainger Quartet*, Marshall McGuire, Matthew Doyle, the *Sydney Children's Choir*, Michael Askill's *Trikaya* and advanced performance students from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

Including fees paid to accompanists from Japan (koto and shamisen players), WSF08 disbursed over \$34,000 in fees to accompanying musicians (not shakuhachi players), thus making the Festival a major employer of non-shakuhachi artists.

More importantly, this underscores the extent to which WSF08 'internationalised' the instrument. The Festival was another step towards the time when the shakuhachi becomes as well-known and valued as, for example the guitar or the violin.

Thus two Festival concerts were named "As Australian as the Shakuhachi". The shakuhachi may never be as Australian as the didjeridu, but it may eventually become as Australian (or as international) as the guitar.

WSF08 generated much publicity for the shakuhachi, with articles, photographs, video clips, live and recorded broadcasts and interviews, and website entries in such media outlets as the Sydney Morning Herald, Limelight Magazine, the 7.30 Report (ABC-TV), ABC Radio National and Classic FM, Reuters, TBS (Japan), and Spiegel On Line (Germany).

In addition to the numerous workshops during the Festival proper, a two and a half day shakuhachi 'camp' was held in conjunction with WSF08 at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, on the days before the Festival. This camp attracted over fifty shakuhachi students of all levels, with many being Absolute Beginners. Individual practice rooms were made available to all performers and participants, and

teachers were encouraged to give private lessons to anyone requesting them.

Internationally, WSF08 raised the level of awareness of the shakuhachi, the diversity and complexity of its repertoire, its history and its potential as a universal musical instrument to an incalculable degree. It helped to develop the skills of both the performers and the participants, the former by allowing a flow of knowledge and musicianship between the top shakuhachi practitioners in the world, who rarely if ever have the opportunity to meet and hear each other perform.

WSF08 was extremely well received, as were the many individual events of the Festival. Though only one Festival review, of the Official Opening Concert, appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald, the review was glowing in its enthusiasm of the event.

All emails and letters received by the Festival Committee after the event have been extremely positive. Survey forms were distributed to Festival participants at the end of the Festival. Though there were, of course, suggestions and minor criticisms and complaints, the overwhelming opinion expressed in the returned surveys were very favourable.



## **Reviews of WSF 2008**

### **Anne Norman**

There were several highlights for me at the festival. The standout moment for me was Elizabeth Brown's performance of her work "Mirage" with string quartet. An exquisite composition performed absolutely beautifully. The orchestration of her work also shone in the concert with other works for shakuhachi and string quartet.

Another highlight was the duo performance by Martha Fabrique and Veronique Piron of Synchrony by Yoshihisa Taira. Their playful alternation of flute and shakuhachi and physical use of the space was wonderful to witness. I hope they perform together more often, a fabulous combination of talent and musicianship.

Lachlan Skipworth's untitled piece depicting an underwater scene performed by mixed ensemble with Bronwyn Kirkpatrick on shakuhachi was a beautifully crafted composition which also stood out in the Contemporary Creations series. I feel this performance by Bronwyn really showed her expressive craft.

An amazing performance on 3.3 shaku was given by Satoshi Zenpo Simura. His RH fingering technique to reach those distant holes and his pitch accurate dai-meri notes were mind blowing on such a long instrument. With a most profound performance of Takiochi no Kyoku.

I also thoroughly enjoyed Justin Williams' playful and joyful rendition of the oft perfunctorily performed Tsuru no sugomori.

It was lovely to pop in to hear Satsuki Odamura's koto performance as well, for a break from endless shakuhachi.

There were many other wonderful moments in the festival, not least of them being the opportunity to catch up with friends and to make new ones. Performing Tamuke 'on mass' was pretty special also. The above performances are what remain most strongly with me one month after the festival.

A large thank you to Riley and his team for putting on such a mega event. Thank you also to the composers Sato Yoko and Marty Regan for asking me to premier and perform their works, and to Fujikawa Izumi and Philip Flavin for performing with me.

Anne Norman

### **Kevin Falconer**

Everyone has their own reasons to attend one of these Festivals. Being my first exposure in four years of self-tuition in blowing and making, all I could presume was that I would learn aspects regarding the Shakuhachi that I had not previously gleaned from internet perusals. That became an understatement!

For me it began with the "Rockies Down Under" Camp. Arriving at 7.30 am for an hour or so of Ro Buki, then into a wonderful series of workshops on 'meri', 'strong blowing', 'Tenmoku', 'voicing notes', 'abdominal breathing', the day was filled with more than the brain could absorb.

What an excellent introduction to a brilliant Festival.

I don't have a memory for the names of the tutors and performers, but I do have praise for the high quality of their contributions. There was a dedication to Shakuhachi that infused the halls and corridors of the Conservatorium. I didn't want to be anywhere else!

The Young Performers Competition was an example of this dedication. As each of the eleven contestants came out and performed it became evident that the primary question on everyone's mind was "what criteria am I using to make my decision?" It seemed to me that it was a difficult choice as the pieces were all different. Perhaps it was the 'delivery' that took precedence. I know

Joel and Justin were on my short list, they were on the short list for many, but the winner was also on my list though seemed to be quietly over-looked by many other debaters. I wonder just how the judges made their decisions. A very tough call.

'TaikOz', performed an array of audio textures in "Breath To Breath" in the sold-out Saturday Concert. Scintillating cymbals moved into Marimba, Tibetan bowls, Taiko drums and a bamboo fan whose insect like crackle bounced off the theatre walls. And there in the finale, Riley Lee was letting loose in a sweating pulse of heart thumping rhythms. He is a wonderful example of calm, clear energy.

The Japanese Living Treasures were simply precious. displaying humour and mastery. Their delicate control of sound admirable and inspiring.

There were so many moments of sheer delight. In particular was Sensei Tadasha, He played an exquisite version of Tamuke that lifted me right up into his soul. His humility in performance drew joyful tears.

The 'Master Classes' which happened each morning from 10 till 12, were fascinating and varied. One on the seven hole Shakuhachi, 'Qigong' and Shakuhachi, each detailing a wide range of subjects that displayed how the organizers had brought together so many facets of the Shakuhachi phenomena.

Every day presented both workshops and concerts and I would alternate between them, but there was much more happening than anyone could take in.

Fortunately some of them were repeated so if you missed a particular class, you could catch up later. I was so engrossed in what was available each day it was not until my evening walk home that I would make time to eat my lunch. Sydney never went to bed, and I found myself streaming in this twilight zone. I didn't care, I would sleep some time, later, when I return home.... maybe.

I took three of my own flutes with me to get some feedback. Amidst the raucous central multi-level foyer I was found by a young Chinese player, Ting, who was also one of the Young Competitors. He saw my flutes and asked if they were for sale, I had not considered that but as he played them I was blown away that my flutes could get that sound. We fumbled around for a price then eventually traded my 'black' 1.8 for his 'purple' Xiao, a handsomly crafted and etched three piece suite. I was well pleased with this trade but even more so that my self-taught flute making was on the right track.

I met many wonderful people who were willing to share their experiences and advice. As the days clicked over, seven in all, there developed an air that was more than 'A day at the office'. Japanese and English over-lapped in reams of tsu-re-chi swimming in green tea. Occasionally I thought of my friends back

home who did not get here and thought of what an opportunity they had missed.

I applaud the Festival totally, I can't remember all the moments of wonder, I can remember coming to the edge of exhaustion as once again I made my mid-night meander back through Hyde Park to my hotel room and a hot bath.

Silent in my joy at having spent eight months putting together my savings, organizing my passport, my air tickets, my suitcase. I am so happy that all this effort was so richly rewarded. This was a feast that will be nourished for the rest of my life.

Kelvin Falconer NZ

### **Margaret Catchpole**

July 2, 2008 had finally arrived. It had seemed like such a long time since I had that first email from Riley with the tentative dates and some advance information about WSF08. There was also the possibility that the Rockies Summer Camp may be held immediately prior to the WSF.

I could hardly believe that I was actually there, heading towards the Sydney Conservatorium of Music at 7.30am for the first activity of the 10th Shakuhachi Summer Camp of the Rockies Down Under. We met in the lobby of "The Con" after which we walked out into the Botanic Gardens on a beautiful sunny morning to start the day playing Ro-buki followed by Tamuke and Hon Shirabe.

The rest of the day's activities consisted of everyone attending a daily update and ro-buki (with variations) and instruction on shakuhachi techniques by the many wonderful teachers who made up the faculty for the camp.

Following this we then broke away into the different levels of group lessons which consisted of Absolute beginner, Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced. During the 2 1/2 day camp we also had the opportunity to have a private lesson with one of the teachers. After

a break for dinner, the day ended with a panel discussion from 7.30pm till late.

Day 2 and 3 were the same format except that we finished on day 3 at 12 noon.

The afternoon of July 4 was the beginning of WSF08 when we, approximately 250 participants, registered for the Festival. WSF08 officially commenced with the Opening Concert at City Recital Hall. What a wonderful way to start an amazing 4 days of workshops, master classes, performances and Public Concerts.

It was such a great opportunity to be in the company of so many wonderful performers and to hear such a wide variety of performances from the very traditional to contemporary compositions, from solo shakuhachi to many varied ensembles with a wide range of different instruments.

I feel very privileged to have had the opportunity to attend such a wonderful event and would like to express my appreciation (as I am sure everyone who attended would agree) to everyone involved in the planning and ultimately the day to day running of such an amazing festival.

I came home to Perth, WA with a wealth of information, inspiration and memories that will be with me forever.

Margaret Catchpole (participant)

### **Broadcast details of WSF 2008** **ABC Radio National**

The broadcast dates are as follows:

**Sat Oct 18<sup>th</sup> at 5.05pm** and repeated on **Fri 24<sup>th</sup> 3.05pm** - Into the Music feature titled The Empty Bell – Blowing Zen.

Music Deli on **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> at 8.05pm** and repeated on **Sunday Oct 26<sup>th</sup> at 4.05pm** – A

selection from The Master's concert from the Recital Hall .

### **A selection of pictures from WSF2008**



Living National treasure Aoki Reibo



A rare pix of ASS committee all together at one time



Volunteers who made it all happen...



Komuso



Boozy trio - Jazz Café



R-L Aoki, Kawase, Aoki's son.



Crooner Kimuta Masami – Jazz Café



Chinese Melodies – Jazz Cafe



'The man' blowing up a riff – jazz cafe



Kakizakai with John Holme's glass shak



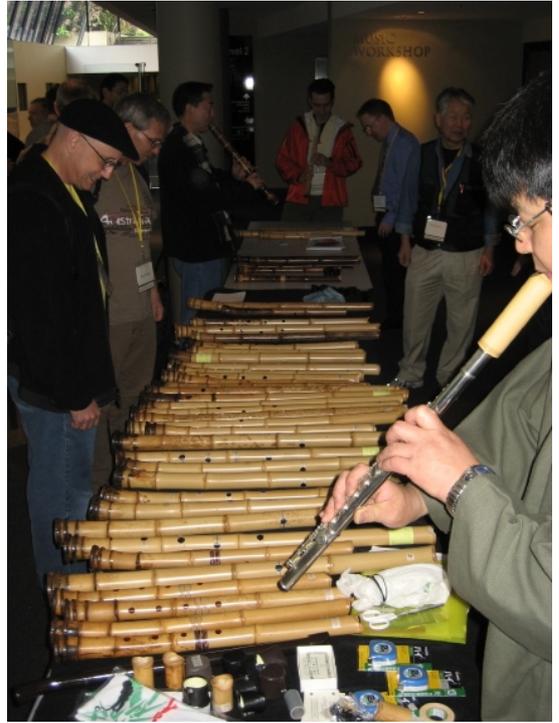
Mr Jazz – Jazz Cafe



Matama playing a glass shak



Contingent from Western Australia – John, Ian Ewan Margaret



Shaks and shakulute



Opening of Main Concert with Shakuhachis, Komuso and Didgeridoo



Organised chaos...



Raging along – Jazz Cafe



East meets west meets ....

## The beginning of the end ...



From Elliot Kallen

Here are a few pages of shots from the Camp and the Festival:

<http://www.tweakshop.com/Shakucamp08.html>

<http://www.tweakshop.com/WSF081.html>

<http://www.tweakshop.com/WSF082.html>

<http://www.tweakshop.com/WSF083.html>

<http://www.tweakshop.com/WSF084.html>

<http://www.tweakshop.com/WSF085.html>



## Sundry bits and pieces from WSF2008

### CDs

1. Kakizakai - This CD was thought to have been sold out at WSF08 but 10 were discovered while packing up. There are now only 4 left - \$25 plus postage.
2. Chris Blasdel - 'Visionary Tones' 6x left \$35 plus postage
3. Shiku Yano - 'Paula' 8x left \$15 includes postage
4. Shiku Yano - 'Silent Moon' 7x left \$15 includes postage
5. Shiku Yano - 'Sounds of Pleasure' 7x left \$15 includes postage

### Books

1. Chris Blasdel - 'The Single Tone' 3x left \$25 plus postage



**John Holmes** has leather (Utaguchi) covers for sale, but sold out before the festival. Many people were disappointed, but the good news is that he is expecting another 20 on 17th July.

Contact: [johnholmes@ozemail.com.au](mailto:johnholmes@ozemail.com.au)

2.1 Kinko Shakuhachi for sale. Excellent condition and good clear tone. Originally purchased from Mejiro, Tokyo 3 years ago.

### Price

£750.00. For further details and photo please contact David Bowdler

email [dave@dbmu.freemove.co.uk](mailto:dave@dbmu.freemove.co.uk)

**Phil Nyokai James** has just released a new CD of solo shakuhachi music, "dreaming of waking up." It includes six honkyoku and three original pieces. You can learn more at: <http://nyokai.com>



## Your committee

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