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**LETTER FROM THE EDITOR**

Dear All,

Thank you to all of you that have submitted an article to this issue of the Australian Shakuhachi Society Newsletter. I understand that there are numerous other large, life changing events going on at this time and I appreciate that many of you are still putting time aside to add value to this great community that we have. To those that didn't quite get around to writing an article this time, there is always next time!

Many of our lives have been changed considerably by the coronavirus pandemic and are not sure of when things will return to normal, or whether they will return to the extent of how it was prior to the pandemic. But even with this change, I hope that this newsletter can be used as one of our mediums of communication and serve as an anchor in our increasingly turbulent lives.

All the best,  
Nicholas Hall

## **ZOOM SHAKUHACHI**

### **SHANE TREGILLIS**

I started playing the shakuhachi as an absolute beginner at the January 2018 Australian Shakuhachi Festival in Melbourne. I struggled to get any sound at all from my shakuhachi over the whole weekend. Nevertheless, I was inspired by both our teachers and fellow participants and resolved to play every day for the rest of that year until I could reliably do so.

The 2018 Australian Festival in Melbourne seems a lifetime ago given the unprecedented times we are now living through with COVID-19. Who could have imagined our national and state borders would be closed and that we and many other places in the world would be under compulsory lockdown orders for extended periods?

While disappointing for participants that our ability to get together in person for the 2020 Australian Shakuhachi Festival has had to be cancelled, the impact on the livelihoods of performers, venue operators and everyone involved in the arts and music scene has been devastating.

Another consequence of us all being locked down, is that we have all become "Zoomers". No doubt the term Zoom, and its variations will be officially recognised as new words in the Oxford Dictionary in 2021.

Along with seeing my new grandson for the first time on Zoom, catching up with my community orchestra and meeting up with family and friends by Zoom, my fortnightly shakuhachi lessons with Lindsay Dugan have also moved to Zoom. After a few teething problems with sound, slow internet connections, the occasional screen freeze and various other technical issues, these Zoom lessons now work reasonably smoothly. However, I feel they are still not a complete substitute for face-to-face lessons which, given recent developments in Melbourne, will still be some time away.

I have also been a Zoom participant in the recent series of the ASS Katsuya Yokoyama's Shugyōjō workshops. As someone still struggling with the basics of Hi Fu Mi, I must admit to feeling some trepidation before the first series of workshops with Furuya Teruo on *Tsuru no Sugumori* and Matama Kazushi on *Daha*.

I had figured that in about 10 years or so I might be ready to give these famous Honkyoku a try!

Despite these concerns and the usual challenges of adapting group workshop sessions to Zoom, I enjoyed the first three sessions and I am looking forward to the next ones. It was great to see other shakuhachi players from all around Australia and elsewhere, even if only on the small Zoom screen and sometimes with interesting screen angles.

What I took away from the first three workshops was less about feeling confident to play the two pieces we studied and more about gaining some general approaches and techniques to apply in my daily practice.

Some of these included Furuya's clear explanation and demonstrations of the three different ways to achieve meri notes, the technique of Koro Koro, the approach to learning the unusual fingering sequence in *Tsuru no Sugumori* and the way in which Furuya sang each phrase to help guide us in playing along.

Our third session commenced with some interval and breathing training techniques from Lindsay Dugan and practising meri notes with Matama before proceeding to work through *Daha*. Matama demonstrated how playing simple well-known folk tunes is one way to be able to improve hearing and playing meri and other intervals.

Singing a phrase before playing or using well known songs for interval

training are techniques I have come across in other musical contexts, but for some reason I had not thought to use when learning the shakuhachi. After the workshops, I will now try to apply these and the other techniques we learnt to my shakuhachi practice.

While Zoom is not a substitute for getting together in person at regular workshops and face-to-face lessons, it does provide us with a way in these difficult times to keep connected and continue getting the benefits of the experience and knowledge of our KSK guest teachers.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone again at our next few Zoom workshops in coming months. I am sure Lindsay would welcome even more Zoomers to sign up and come along.



## **RETURNING TO PRACTICE**

### **BEN DIXON**

A bit of context. I've been playing shakuhachi for a while. I started back in the late 1990's after a 3 month long road trip in the USA, during which time I happened to pass through Boulder, Colorado in 1998. Unknown to me, the world shakuhachi festival was on at the time. I didn't see any of it, but I was in the public library checking my email (mobile phones didn't do email in the '90's) and I heard someone playing the flute. The library had an outside foyer that had great acoustics, and someone was making full use of them to play some shakuhachi. I listened until they finished, then asked what the instrument was. I resolved then that when I got back to Australia, I'd try and get one and learn to play. And so it began. It was always the Honkyoku that I wanted to play, right from the beginning. Jim Franklin was my first teacher, and when he moved overseas, I studied with Bronwyn Kirkpatrick. She convinced me (it wasn't hard) that I should go to Japan. My first trip there was in 2005, and I was the very first resident in Kakizakai Kaoru's now famous Trailer House. I stayed for three months, studying, practicing, taking three lessons a week with Kakizakai, and riding the fold up bike I bought from Cainz Home (like Bunnings) for 10,000 yen, all over the country. I met many great people during that trip, some who would become friends. Lindsay Dugan, Bronwyn & Lachlan Skipworth were my fellow students. I became good friends with Tom Deaver, after staying with him for a few days in Matsukawa. At the time I had one of his 1.8 flutes and was looking for a 2.4, and bought one from him that has since become my main instrument. Since then I've been back to Japan many times, usually for a few months at a time, living in Chichibu and studying with Kakizakai.

In 2014, I decided on a radical change of career, went back to university and studied architecture. I had been keeping up weekly lessons in Australia with Kakizakai via skype, but architecture is an intense and demanding course, and for the next few years I barely touched the shakuhachi. After graduating, I went to work as an

architect, and this is where I am now. A few times over the past few years I have pulled out my flutes and played, and each time rediscovered the love of the instrument and vowed to start regular practice again. But things were busy, and I never seemed to be able to be able to make it stick. At least until relatively recently. During the middle of last year, I had been trying to find somewhere I might be able to practice during my work lunch hour, and discovered an underground carpark with great acoustics near my work. I began taking the 2.4 to work with me and playing in the carpark every day. It felt like I was getting a practice routine back on my feet again, when the Covid pandemic hit and I started working from home, and that regular routine was disrupted. But I'd had enough of a taste again to want to keep trying to find a way back to it. Fast forward a few months, and I heard about the workshops Lindsay was doing with the KSK teachers via zoom. This gave me motivation again, and I signed up for the Daha workshop with Matama Kazushi. Daha is one of my favourite pieces, and one I could still play from memory, even after a seven year break. So I began practicing again in the evenings after work. Perhaps not *\*every\** evening, but most. I found that after a long break, I was hearing different things in the honkyoku. That even though I had lost muscle tone and stamina, my perception and feeling of the pieces had deepened. That in some ways I had not stopped progressing in my shakuhachi journey at all, and in particular, my love of the instrument and the honkyoku has only become deeper. Even half an hour of evening practice after work felt restorative rather than tiring. I'm waking up and remembering why I do this thing.

The Shugyōjō workshop delivered an additional surprise also. I'd mostly given up playing the 1.8, with the 2.4 being my go-to instrument, and the 2.7 (legacy of another visit to Tom) being my other favourite. But the workshop was being given on 1.8. I have two 1.8 flutes, both from Tom. One is a pretty standard jiari instrument. Strong, bright tones, easy to play. The other is more unusual. Tom made a small number of flutes, not under his usual Beishu name, but under the name Gonshu. These flutes are unusual jinashi flutes. The one I have is a 1.8 jinashi, single-piece flute, cut

from already fallen bamboo (rather than the usual live-harvested bamboo). It is incredibly lightweight, with a much larger, rougher bore than you would usually find in a 1.8 jiaru shakuhachi. The sound it produces has a complex, breathy, 'open' sound that is a marked contrast to the bright, strong tone of a jiaru flute. But it has good pitch, and a surprisingly strong sound for a jinashi. The workshop being taught in 1.8 has meant I've spent time rediscovering just how special this instrument is, and while the 2.4 is still my favourite, I won't be putting this 1.8 away any time soon.

These workshops are a wonderful way to get back into playing and practicing if you have been away from the shakuhachi for a while. The level is pitched that someone who has not formally studied the piece will get a great introduction, but those who have will pick up aspects and tips they might not have run across. Doing it as a group on zoom even brings something of the feel of lessons in Japan, where lessons are often gatherings of students taking turns to perform and be critiqued by the teachers and their fellow students. I'm very much looking forward to the next one.



**TOM DEAVER (GONSHU 1.8) - PHOTO BY BEN DIXON**



**INSIDE THE MUSICIAN: MY FASCINATION WITH THE SHAKUHACHI****RILEY LEE (EDITED BY RICHARD LETTS)**

Please note that this following article was first published on the 2nd of February 2017 in the online e-magazine called Loudmouth, edited by Richard Letts.

This is the second article by Riley Lee from the online series. In the first, which you can find here: <https://musictrust.com.au/loudmouth/inside-the-musician-riley-lee-my-instrument/>, he wrote about his instrument. In this article, he writes about making the music.

[www.musictrust.com.au/loudmouth](http://www.musictrust.com.au/loudmouth)  
[www.musicinaustralia.org.au/](http://www.musicinaustralia.org.au/)

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I first heard the shakuhachi in Hawai'i in the late 1960s, when my older brother brought home an LP called *Music for Zen Meditation*. It featured jazz clarinetist Tony Scott improvising with koto player Shiichi Yuize and shakuhachi player Hozan Yamamoto. The album is considered, at least by Wikipedia and myself, as the first 'new age' recording.

Of course, neither I nor anyone else had ever heard of 'new age' music back then. It is unfortunate that over the next half century, so much disagreeable music has been, and continues to be, made and marketed under this label, giving it a negative connotation to some.

The shortest track on Tony Scott's recording is two and a half minutes long. Called "A Quivering Leaf, Ask the Winds," it is Yamamoto's only shakuhachi solo on the LP. The piece captivated me. I nearly wore out that track on my brother's LP, and our turntable needle, looping it the only way I could back then, by manually raising and lowering the arm of the turntable every 150 seconds.

Three or four years later, I began studying the shakuhachi in Japan. I had never planned to learn to play the shakuhachi, and initially I went to Japan for entirely different reasons, but that is another story. During

the ensuing decades, I met Yamamoto numerous times. Katsuya Yokoyama, my teacher, was a good friend and frequent collaborator of his. Yamamoto eventually became one of Japan's Living National Treasures. I went on to make a number of my own recordings, some of which were also marketed, for better or worse, as 'new age music'.



**RILEY LEE**

I think that I promptly fell in love with the shakuhachi initially because of the quality of its sound. The sound of the shakuhachi is unique. It is unforgettable. Or rather, *they* are unforgettable, because the shakuhachi makes innumerable sounds, tone colours and textures.

Shakuhachi sounds can be clean, clear and bell-like. Other times, the sounds have the textures of a reedy flute or a flute-like clarinet or oboe. The shakuhachi's voice is often dark, rough or breathy. It can sound light, airy and playful, or it can be the stark expression of intense grief and pain.

Multiphonics, microtones, and non-pitched sounds are common, especially in the traditional repertoire. In my opinion, the shakuhachi can be as expressive and nuanced as the human voice. It feels to me as if its sound has the ability to transcend the human condition entirely.

### **Honkyoku – The Original Pieces**

I now know that Yamamoto's little solo improvisation is nothing special for accomplished shakuhachi players. It is a simple, idiomatic melody based on two variations of the most common mode in traditional shakuhachi music. Probably any decent shakuhachi player could make up something similar, with minimal effort.

If Yamamoto's short improvisation is straightforward shakuhachi music, why was I so attracted to it? I think it was because it manifested many of the characteristics of the oldest, most revered category of shakuhachi music, to which I was instinctively drawn.

Yamamoto's piece was inspired by and incorporated much from a genre of shakuhachi music called *honkyoku* (本曲; literally "main pieces" or "original pieces"). My shakuhachi teachers spent nearly all their time with me attempting to teach me these 'original' pieces. Playing *honkyoku* continues to take up most of my own practice. I emphasise these venerated pieces more than any others when teaching my own students.

Shakuhachi *honkyoku* are meditative and meditations. Over the last four or five centuries, they have been created, transmitted and performed largely in the context of Zen Buddhism. Strictly speaking, the overwhelming majority of shakuhachi players today are not Zen Buddhist practitioners. Still, studying, learning, practicing and performing one of the two hundred or so extant *honkyoku* are considered by many to be as much spiritual practice as music making. Ideally, both meditation and music making are happening at the same time.

The shakuhachi *honkyoku* is not the only music that is meditative or meditation. It is however, unique in its centuries-old association with Zen Buddhism in which the act of meditation is the heart of one's practice and whose name literally means 'meditation' (禪, zen).

### **The Breath**

Breath is paramount in playing the shakuhachi. An understanding of how I breathe while playing *honkyoku*, and why I do so, helps to illustrate the interrelation between music and meditation. It also points to differences between *honkyoku* and other types of music.



The single most important component of any *honkyoku* is the phrase. Most phrases are considered, and sound like independent units, mini-pieces, complete in themselves. This is accomplished musically by such things as modalities, tension and resolution, and timbral changes, but in particular by using the breath.

Nearly all phrases are played in one breath. A single breath is thought of as having four distinct parts: 1) inhalation, 2) transition, 3) exhalation, and 4) transition. One breath is like a single 24-hour cycle: daytime—dusk—night time—dawn, complete in itself yet part of

larger units of time, like a week, year or decade.

Many people probably do not consider the 'no-sound' segments, the pause, as a major part of the music. In music played on non-wind instruments, these pauses do not exist at all. Even players of wind instruments often think of these pauses as necessary evils, unavoidable but to be obscured as much as possible. The opposite is true when playing *honkyoku*.

In *honkyoku*, the player's inhalations are not subservient to 'the music.' I was taught to put as much deliberation and awareness into the quality and timing of my inhalation, as well as my 'transitions,' as I might into my exhalation. The exhalation usually gets all the attention, because that is where almost all of the sound occurs. When we speak of 'breath control,' we usually think about controlling the exhalation.

Yet one could almost say that the inhalation is the important part. My inhalations may need to be fast and full, or slow and deliberate, or just easy, shallow top-ups, but I have to be aware of how I'm doing each one of them and why. They determine the quality of the music to follow.

In *honkyoku*, rhythm is not delineated or determined by beats or meter. The length and timing of the 'no-sound' pauses, and everything else, vary according to the context. Correct timing is dependent on my total awareness of the context.

I try to make each inhalation as deliberately and as consciously as I do with my very first breath of the piece. I try also to be particularly aware of that final transition in the piece, which occurs after the very last note has become inaudible, but before the piece has truly ended.

It may help to view the myriad of sounds that we usually think of as 'the music' merely as aids to inhaling properly. The notes and phrases exist in order to create the condition most likely to encourage the player to take the next inhalation 'perfectly'. The listener may

or may not be aware of my inhalations as much as my exhalations. Theoretically, if I am playing *honkyoku* well, my performance should be able to engage a deaf person concentrating on watching my breathing as much as a person with normal hearing.

Crucially, my music improves by paying attention to my inhalations and the transitions, the 'no-sound' bit of each breath cycle. This in turn, is paramount. Improving my music improves my meditation. *Honkyoku* is always music, and it can also be meditation. Play the music badly and both the meditation and the listener suffer.

Most phrases in *honkyoku* end with a soft landing, like the end of a sigh or the gentle exhalation of someone asleep. Ideally, the final sound of the piece goes from audible to nearly inaudible...until finally, "Oh! When did the piece end?".

The cessation of each phrase, and especially the end of each piece is often the moment when both the player's and listener's concentration or awareness is most acute. I often think of playing *honkyoku* as a metaphor to living one's life. With luck, my own life will end like a good *honkyoku*, with a soft landing and a fair amount of awareness.



**WANTED: 2.0 SHAKUHACHI**

**VIA: RILEY LEE**

A professional shakuhachi player / friend of mine in the USA has asked me if I knew of anyone who has for sale, a high-quality shakuhachi 2.0 (fundamental of C). The flute must have exceptional pitch tuning, tone colour etc. Selling price will be commensurate with the quality of the instrument.

If you can help please contact Riley at [riley \(at\) rileylee.net](mailto:riley@rileylee.net)



**TSUKI KINKO NOTATION PACK****BRONWYN KIRKPATRICK**

Dear shakuhachi community.

Are you looking for new pieces to play? My Tsuki Notation Pack + CD contains 10 original compositions for beginner to intermediate shakuhachi players. The pieces are melodious and fun to play but will still help you to work on those tricky meri notes, breath control and phrasing. You can listen to Tsuki here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GaypYhiSRBg>. The notation pack and CD can be purchased from my website: [http://bronwynkirkpatrick.com/?page\\_id=774](http://bronwynkirkpatrick.com/?page_id=774).

## 月 TSUKI

Ten compositions for beginner & intermediate shakuhachi players

Composed by Bronwyn Kirkpatrick

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 Dusk  
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 Drifting  
 Exile  
 Lament  
 Yearning  
 Journey  
 Lullaby



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## SHAKUHACHI: A BRILLIANT TOOL FOR MEDITATION

YUKI TANAKA

### My Childhood and Shakuhachi

In 1949, four years after the Asia-Pacific War, I was born in a small country town in Echizen (Fukui Prefecture), not far from the large Zen temple, Eiheiji. Eiheiji is one of two head temples of Sōtō Zen, which was founded by Zen Master Dōgen in 1244. In my childhood during the 1950s it was quite normal to see small groups of trainee monks from the temple walking and begging for alms in the town. In winter, it was painful for a child like me to observe those monks walking on the cold snow with bare feet, wearing only a pair of *zōri*, straw sandals. Their toes were agonizingly red.

Apart from those trainee monks, we also saw the occasional *Komusō* (mendicant priests of the Zen Fuke sect), standing in front of our homes playing shakuhachi. Up until the early 1960s, this was a common sight in many places in Japan. Unlike in earlier centuries, by this time the *Komusō* were always alone, never in a group. At the time, I didn't think of them as Zen monks, rather as strange and somewhat scary (because of the straw hood) music entertainers. This was partly because, unlike trainee monks, they always received money, not food, as alms. Never did I imagine that I would learn to play classic (*koten honkyoku*) shakuhachi music that the *Komusō* played, although I always liked both Japanese and Western music. As a child, *koten shakuhachi honkyoku* seemed so remote and alien to my taste in music. Yet, I liked listening to *taiko* and *fue* (Japanese drum and flute), in particular as part of festival music. In fact, together with other children, I played *taiko* at local traditional festivals, and loved it.

### My Profession and Music

By a quirk of fate, I came to Australia in 1979, and became a historian, specializing in war history and war crimes, in particular war

atrocities committed by the Japanese and American military forces. People often ask me “What do you hope to achieve by revealing the painful and horrifying events like war crimes of the past?” My answer is “to master the past.” My father and his three brothers were all Japanese Imperial Army officers during the war, who were stationed in China. Fortunately all survived the war. I wanted to understand the wartime behavior of my father’s generation. This does not mean simply to comprehend the atrocities committed by the men of my father’s generation intellectually but also to exercise *moral imagination*. Moral imagination requires us to take responsibility for past wrongdoings and, at the same time, stimulates us to project our thoughts towards a more humane future through the creative examination of our past. This is what I mean by “master the past.”

I have been conducting research on this topic for almost 40 years. During those forty years I conducted numerous case studies on cannibalism; the slaughter and starvation of prisoners of war; the rape, enforced prostitution, and murder of noncombatants; biological warfare experiments; and indiscriminate bombing. I often had nightmares, in particular when I was writing a book and thinking intently about particular crime cases.

When I was young, I managed to recover from such psychological trauma relatively easily simply by listening to my favorite classical music like that of J.S. Bach and Mozart. I also found that listening to shakuhachi music, in particular *koten honkyoku* offered healing. In the early 1990s, I also took shakuhachi lessons from Andrew MacGregor for a while, but it did not last long as I was busy teaching and conducting research. This also helped. However, as I grew older, it became harder to cope with the recurring nightmares.

When I was writing a book on military sexual violence against women in the late 1990s, I had nightmares almost every night. Each time it was basically the same frightening dream, where I found myself in a public place like a cafeteria, a train, or a lecture theatre, surrounded by people. I would suddenly realize that I was totally naked and had

to run away and hide, being frightfully ashamed. I felt that I was in a psychologically vulnerable state. Fortunately, when I completed the book, the nightmares ceased.

### **Learning Shakuhachi for Joy**

In 2002 I moved to Hiroshima as I was offered a research professorship at the Hiroshima Peace Institute. There I started working on the next book on the history of indiscriminate aerial bombing. This time, I thought I should do something to preserve my mental stability before commencing the new book project. I joined a beginners' shakuhachi class taking group lessons in Hiroshima. I enjoyed the lessons immensely and was determined that this time I would not give up learning this marvelous instrument. I met the Grand Master Mende Ryūzan, who lives and teaches *koten honkyoku* in Hiroshima and started taking lessons. He had a number of senior students who were roughly my age, so I felt comfortable in their company. Grand Master Mende was one of many students of the legendary Grand Master Yokoyama Katsuya; through Mende, I became familiar with the work of Yokoyama and his students, Grand Masters such as Furuya, Matama and Kakizakai.

I retired from the Hiroshima Peace Institute in 2015 and returned to Melbourne. I now work as a freelance historian and continue to write and conduct lectures on war and war crimes. Here in Melbourne, Lindsay Dugan is my teacher, and I enjoy his lessons greatly. He has a vast knowledge of the shakuhachi and is an excellent teacher. Thanks to all these people of the Yokoyama School, I am free from psychological problems, and rarely have nightmares any longer. I am still not a good player, but I really enjoy the deep *neiro* tone of the shakuhachi, which works for me as meditation without sitting with eyes closed for a long time.



**JO-HA-KYU 序破急****LINDSAY DUGAN**

## Jo-ha-kyū 序破急

Originating in *gagaku*, the concept *jo-ha-kyū* was also adapted for and further developed in various art forms such as *Noh* theatre, *kadō* (ikebana flower arrangement), and *sadō* (tea ceremony), among others. Over time, it came to have various meanings and interpretations, depending on the context and era. The common thread is the division of a process or event into three sections, generally changing state from standard to non-standard, slow to fast, simple to complex, and so on.

Briefly, the etymology of the characters for *jo-ha-kyū* is as follows:

**序** Jo means beginning, initial stage, or order. It is composed of the characters for 'building', and 'already/in advance'. In other words, 'laying the foundations'.

**破** Ha means to 'break' or 'pull apart'. Composed of the characters for 'rock' and 'skin'. The reference to 'skin' may have contributed to an additional meaning of 'tearing'. The definition of 'break' leads to the idea of a development in complexity.

**急** Kyū means hurry, or sudden. Composed of the characters for 'reach' and 'heart', this character indicated the feelings of someone trying to reach something.

Some other descriptions given of *jo-ha-kyū* include:

- Sprouting, flowering, ripening
- Inception, development, culminating spurt
- Introduction, change, impact
- Introduction, development, finale
- Introduction, scattering, rushing

In gagaku, jo-ha-kyū refers to specific movements within a piece. *Jobyōshi* ('jo rhythm') is a wide, enveloping pace, with a grand or majestic aesthetic sense. Ha rhythm, or *nobebyōshi* ('stretch rhythm'), implies an aesthetic sense of grace, daintiness, and refinement. Kyū section rhythm, *hayabyōshi* ('fast rhythm'), is casual, jaunty, light, or nimble. There is only one gagaku piece that contains jo, ha and kyū sections. Other pieces have only jo and ha, or only ha and kyū. Furthermore, sections of pieces can be abbreviated to only one movement, or recombined with yet other sections or pieces to create a set.

Zeami Motokiyo (c. 1363 – c. 1443) further developed jo-ha-kyū for Noh, broadening its meaning to include the full course of a play. While the concept still refers to rhythm, Zeami's interpretation refers more to the emotional or spiritual effect that is associated with each section, rather than the timing. Jo is the opening of a play, which is typically an even, smooth section. Ha, which contains the main body of the play's theme, is technical, polished, and refined. Kyū is short and lively, and is the finale of the play, the final impression. Items for each of the three stages are chosen to cater to the frame of mind of the audience, and to create a sense of progression through the day's performance.

Strictly speaking, the concept of jo-ha-kyū in Noh is different to that which originated in gagaku. Zeami wrote a number of works discussing practical and theoretical aspects of Noh; most significant among these are *Fūshikaden*, *Kakyō*, and *Shikadō*.

In my own experience, in lessons taken in Japanese spanning a number of genres, I have never heard jo-ha-kyū referenced, and I question whether it actually has much or indeed any significance for us as shakuhachi players. In *The Ashgate Research Companion to Japanese Music*, Alison Tokita says that jo-ha-kyū 'is a simple concept hardly unique to Japanese performing arts, and indeed hardly applicable to some of them'. Tokita also writes that, along with the concept of *ma* ('interval'), there is 'a need to debunk the mystique

that has developed around such concepts'. There are enough mysteries in honkyoku without adding in more than are necessary.

Nonetheless, such contrivances sometimes have their place and utility, and I have at times found jo-ha-kyū to be useful for grasping rhythm and flow in honkyoku. Just as an example, let me focus on a section that includes lines 8, 9, and 10 from Daha. Line 8 is the beginning of what looks like a *takane*, with a repeated high-pitched *hi-i* that contrasts strongly with the ending of the previous section (jo). Line 9, *e-ru*-note or *chi-chi-ru* pattern, increases in speed and complexity (ha). Line 10 then resolves to the core note *re*, and marks the end of the section before the next section begins (kyū, in the sense of sudden, as in sudden resolution to *re*). I'd consider this a meso-level breakdown. I could conceivably apply it in the same way at the micro-level in line 9 only, or at a macro-level across the whole piece (lines 1-4 as jo, 5-16 as ha, and finally 17-19 as kyū).

Once the idea of jo-ha-kyū enabled me to reach a certain level of understanding of the rhythm of a phrase, section, or piece, I forgot about it, and perhaps that's as far it goes. Is it useful as a concept? Personally, yes, to some degree. Is it directly relevant to shakuhachi and honkyoku? Probably not. Equally useful to me, perhaps even more useful, is *tatamikomi* ('convoluted timing'. See notes included with KSK scores).

For more articles, visit my website! [www.lindsaydugan.com](http://www.lindsaydugan.com)



## THE KATSUYA YOKOYAMA SHUGYŌJYŌ

### LINDSAY DUGAN

The Katsuya Yokoyama Shugyōjō (Training Notes) Online Workshop Series is now halfway through, and is progressing rather successfully. We've been lucky enough to have all teachers attending most of the workshops!

This series of six workshops is based on a chapter from Katsuya Yokoyama's book *Take to Ikiru* ('Life of Bamboo'). In this chapter, Katsuya Shugyōjō ('Katsuya's Training Notes'), Yokoyama shares his thoughts on nine themes:

- Key to Improvement
- Accurate Pitch
- Images of Honkyoku, and Rhythm
- A Shortcut to Improvement
- The Subject of Ma
- How to Breathe
- Freedom with your Fingers
- Yuri (vibrato)
- Meri Notes – The Easy Method

Each month, several of these themes are selected and discussed, and the teachers draw on their knowledge and experience both as professional players, and students of Yokoyama.

For July, Kazushi Matama will be taking us through some long tone practice methods, breath, and dynamics, related to *The Subject of Ma*, which will be put to practical use in *Tamuke*. Lindsay Dugan will be going through some practice exercises, and discussing *Freedom with your Fingers*.

Kaori Kakizakai will take the final two workshops of the series in August and September, teaching *Sanya* (MV version). *Sanya* was one of Yokoyama's favourite honkyoku, and is an excellent piece with

which to conclude the Training Notes.

Upon conclusion of the workshops, all participants will receive a translation of three chapters from Yokoyama's book, including the Training Notes, and his teachers, Fukuda Rando and Watazumi. These three chapters are likely the only ones in the book written by Yokoyama himself, and will only be available here!



The poster features the Australian Shakuhachi Society logo at the top left, consisting of a circular arrangement of orange dots. To the right, the text reads: "Workshop Series Katsuya Yokoyama's Shugyōjō (Training Notes)" in large white font. Below this, it says "April-September 2020" and "With Teruo Furuya, Kazushi Matama, Kaoru Kakizakai, and Lindeay Dugan". At the bottom, there are four small photographs of men playing shakuhachi flutes.

To register, and for full information and schedule times, visit [www.shakuhachi.org.au](http://www.shakuhachi.org.au)

## **THE AUSTRALIAN SHAKUHACHI SOCIETY**

The purpose of the Society is to promote the shakuhachi and its music, and to assist others who are doing the same, by:

Organising workshops and other activities for people to practice or perform together, and share experiences related to the shakuhachi

Publishing a newsletter four times a year to publicise upcoming events, provide a forum for articles on the shakuhachi, list resources, review shakuhachi CDs, and offer flutes and other shakuhachi related items for sale.

Coordinating the Australia Shakuhachi Festival, which includes guest teachers and performers from Japan and elsewhere

If you want to get in contact, you can email us at:

info (at) shakuhachi.org.au

## **AUSTRALIAN SHAKUHACHI SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP**

Membership to the Australian Shakuhachi Society costs \$30 per year. Subscription funds are used to organise the Australian Shakuhachi Festival and other shakuhachi related activities. Your membership is valued!

Joining the Society also offers benefits, such as:

Discounts to the Australian Shakuhachi Festival

Discounts to workshops

To join, please visit the webpage below:

<http://www.shakuhachi.org.au/membership.html>

## **ASS COMMITTEE 2020**

### **President**

Lindsay Dugan

### **Vice president**

Rupert Summerson

### **Secretary**

Adrian Sherriff

### **Treasurer**

Richard Chenhall

### **Newsletter editor**

Nicholas Hall

### **Publicity and media**

Vacant

Contact the ASS: [info \[at\] shakuhachi.org.au](mailto:info@shakuhachi.org.au)

ASS Committee positions are delegated at an AGM that generally coincides with the Australian Shakuhachi Festival.

