

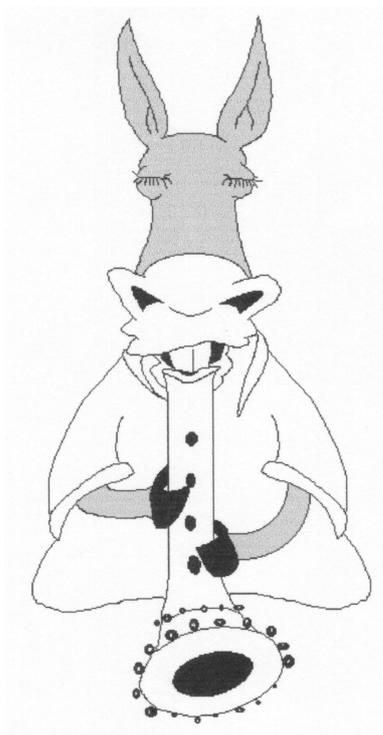
AUSTRALIAN SHAKUHACHI SOCIETY



GOSHU SHAKUHACHI KAI 豪州尺八会

Nr. 22 Nov 2005

ASS P.O Box 63 Woodford NSW 2770



Australian Shakuhachi Festival

Canberra Feb 10-13 2006

This is the seventh festival, and is the major event for the Australian Shakuhachi Society. The Festival will be as full as ever, we hope with more teachers and participants than before.

The accommodation at Univeristy House is hotel-like, and there are plenty of conference rooms for the workshops. The Festival Concert will be in the Great Hall, part of University House. With no travel time to this event, we will have an extra afternoon for workshops.

The Festival will cater for shakuhachi enthusiasts of all levels, from professional to total beginners.

As always, a highlight of the Festival will be the Festival Concert, this time held in the splendid Great Hall at University House.

SPECIAL "TOTAL BEGINNERS" PACKAGE:

For the first time ASF2006 will be offering total beginners a special package. Beginners can register for tuition only (four special "total beginners only" workshops, plus private lesson), and admission to the Festival Concert for only \$225. Instruments will be available and notation provided. For more details please email Patricia Lee

patricia@rileylee.net

MORE INFORMATION:

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

Greetings! This newsletter is later than I had planned due to the finalisation of the **ASF 2006**, details of which are on this page. The timetable and registration forms are at the back of the newsletter.

LATE NOTICE

There will be an **AGM at the ASF 2006** - see timetable in this newsletter or on the website www.shakuhachi.org.au

This edition contains an interesting article on Jin-nashi Ji-ari shakuhachis by Kiku Day. "Letters from Japan" have been received from Bronwyn Kirkpatrick and Lachlan Skipworth - both doing intensive shakuhachi studies. Also brief articles on two new Shakuhachi Instruction Books/CD's by Stan Richardson and Australia's own Andrew Macgregor and . Both are coming to **ASF 2006**.

**REGISTRATION FORM AT END OF NEWSLETTER
SO GET IN EARLY FOR EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT!**



JINASHI JIARI SHAKUHACHI

Kiku Day <http://www.kikuday.com>

In the old days there was only what we call ji-nashi shakuhachi. They were called in historical records by different names such as take (bamboo) and kyotaku. There are historical records from China mentioning the name 1.8, so that name seems old as well.

When Japan opened up to the rest of the world in 1868 music, among many other things was imported to that country (as well as exported). The new Meiji government only put Western music into the new school curriculum, which (in my opinion) drastically changed the Japanese people's perception of music and pitch and we simply do not know how shakuhachi music sounded like back then.

With the influence of especially Western music, ensembles were created. In the case of the shakuhachi it entered the already existing sankyoku ensemble and took over the position that kokyū (bowed string instrument) used to have, playing alongside with koto and shamisen. In an ensemble the shakuhachi needed to be tuned more precisely and have more volume and as Japan has very skilled craftsmen they created the ji-ari shakuhachi over the time. By cutting the bamboo in 2 attachable parts, they were able to control the length of the bamboo and therefore also the fundamental pitch (D in the standard shakuhachi). The older flutes just had the length of the bamboo between the nodes. Not only is ji added, the bore can

be shaved off in order to make space for ji. Ji is not only lacquer, it is lacquer mixed with ground stone.

The result of shaving and adding ji is a perfect shape bore with no resistance for the airflow and also, the ji makes the bamboo absorb less of the sound and therefore it has a larger volume. It loses some of the complexity of the sound of ji-nashi shakuhachi because of the smooth bore and the fundamental pitch is heard more than the overtones. All this is a process that certainly was going on in the later half of the 19th century but there are examples of even earlier shakuhachi with a little ji added. Also the shape of the mouthpiece seem to have changed over the time and the ji-ari shakuhachi of today have a deeper cut, which makes the player have a more pinched embouchure. The old Edo shakuhachi have a shallower mouthpiece, which requires a more relaxed embouchure. The mouthpiece also a big reason for the difference of the tone quality, I think.

Ji added does NOT change the fact that shakuhachi has different volume on some notes. This is a characteristic of shakuhachi whether ji-nashi or ji-ari. In a well-made and well-balanced ji-nashi shakuhachi all the kari notes have the same larger volume - just as in ji-ari shakuhachi. The meri notes are lower in volume due to the half holing and the embouchure change. That is no different on either of the types. In a badly balanced ji-ari you can, for example, have a RO with slightly less volume... just as in a ji-nashi that is not well-made.

Then there is the whole discussion about when a shakuhachi is qualified as ji-nashi. There are NO rules! That is the first and most important thing to remember, and whether just a little ji added or the size makes it a hocchiku or ji-nashi is pure speculation! First of all: Hocchiku is a Watazumi expression. There is no historical record of that name being used, at least as far as I know.

Now I do start hearing that there are historical records of this name, but it was just Watazumi that made that name well-known in modern times. I am yet to see these historical mentioning of hocchiku. If others have found earlier records of this name, I would like to know. Watazumi called some pieces by other names and apparently also his shakuhachi. Hocchiku is written with the kanji for law and bamboo, so the law of the bamboo... sounds great, especially if we still dream about ancient Japan and monks playing shakuhachi in temples or walking around Japan.

Anyway, it is a great name but nothing more than a contemporary expression. It has since then, because of the Watazumi connection being used for shakuhachi made by big fat bamboo, but that is just guessing again. Watazumi never said hocchiku had to be made of fat bamboo (he spoke more of the different philosophy lying behind the 2 types of shakuhachi... well, according to him). In fact, if you have recordings of Betsuden Shika no Tone, played by Watazumi, the LP cover says it is played on 2.8 but it fits my not so fat 2.3 in pitch... so it must have been a damn thin bamboo in order to more or less have the pitch A with the length 2.8. And... of course Watazumi called that flute hocchiku as well! I think it is a very personal thing whether a small amount of ji is acceptable in your own hocchiku/ji-nashi shakuachi/kyotaku or what ever you choose to call yours. Some do not like lacquer added as protection, some are ok with lacquer added to the ji-nashi shakuhachi. Do always remember that lacquer or urushi here is not the same as ji as urushi is the natural sap of a plant while ji is the sap mixed with stone powder, made into a paste.

Of course, also Japanese people have begun to try to define the differentiation between hocchiku and ji-nashi and kyotaku, but again it is the same guessing. Watazumi played fat flutes.. is hocchiku then fat flutes? But as the above Shika noTone examples shows.. it is not a rule.

Okuda Atsuya, my teacher and probably the most important teacher and player of ji-nashi shakuhachi today after the death of Nishimura Koku in Kyushu, used to call his flutes kyotaku or ji-nashi shakuhachi.

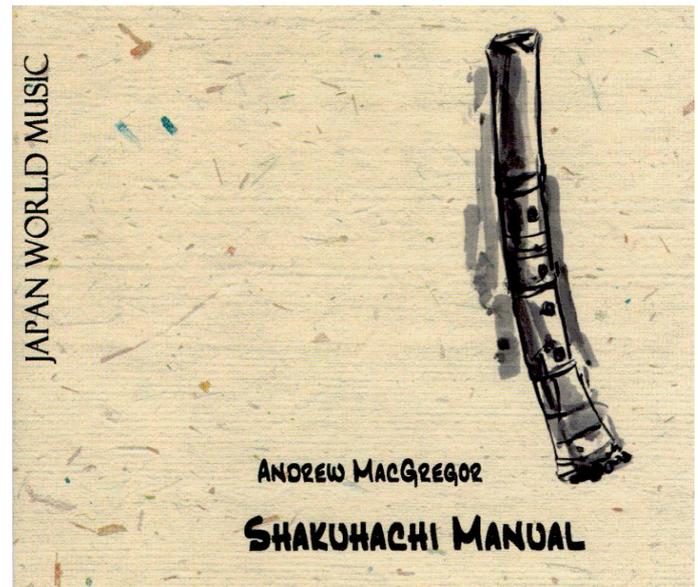
After Alvin Ramos from Canada came to study with him for some month and always called the flutes hocchiku, both Okuda and Kodama (an Okuda student and shakuhachi maker) now use the term hocchiku... especially because non-Japanese players like that term. I think an important characteristic of shakuhachi is that not many things are written in stone. Here, I just wanted to rule out some of the stuff, which, if repeated often enough, becomes a rule or the truth. I am not out to state that my opinions are the only truth. We just need to be careful of what we repeat as truth... and I tell you being Japanese or a national living treasure does not stop people from repeating myths. I am half Japanese but have no more insight in the shakuhachi truth than anybody else.

Addendum: brief article by Tom Deaver
 "Hochiku vs Shakuhachi":

http://communication.ucsd.edu/shaku/hochiku_shaku.html

“Shakuhachi Manual”

by Andrew MacGregor



Twenty-two graded pieces, including duets, for beginners to intermediate. Students can play along with the CD. Accompanying comprehensive and liberally illustrated 24 page manual covers history, schools, genres of shakuhachi music, caring for a bamboo shakuhachi, basics of making a sound, breath, tips for improved sound quality, comparison of notation systems, various techniques (tonguing, meri-kari, vibrato), fingering charts for five and seven hole shakuhachi

Price: \$39.95 (Aud) - (manual and CD)

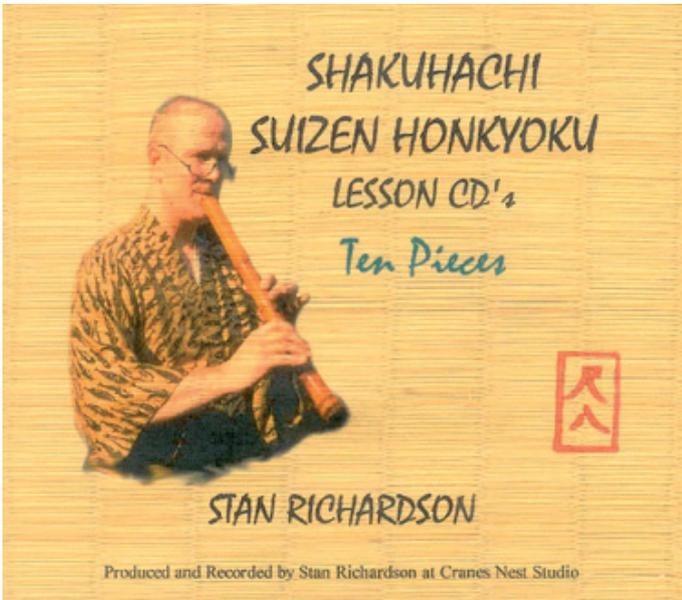
<http://www.japanworldmusic.com/cdmanual.htm>



**Have you paid your
 ASS subscriptions?**

If not DO IT NOW!

**Send them to:
 ASS P.O Box 63 Woodford
 NSW 2770**



This series of lesson CDs is intended to introduce the shakuhachi player to some of the oldest Zen meditation pieces. Although they cannot replace face to face transmission, they are intended as a guide to practitioners who may live far from the nearest master. These lessons will take the student phrase by phrase through the notation paying careful attention to technique with interesting background information and suizen blowing tips. Handwritten notation is included with each lesson CD.

The lessons are available individually at \$30 per CD plus shipping or as a complete ten CD set at \$250. [USD]

Lesson CD Pieces

1. Kyorei (Fudaiji Temple)
2. Iyo Renbo
3. Choshi (Fudaiji Temple)
4. Banshiki (Itcho-ken)
5. Hachigaeshi (Ichigetsuji-den)
6. Choshi (Yamato)
7. Sashi (Itcho-ken)
8. Hachigaeshi (Shinpo-Ryu)
9. Murasaki Reiho (Kyoto Meianji)
10. Daiwa Gaku (Jin Nyodo Shokyoku)

http://www.stanrichardson.com/dojo_lessons.html

*Stan's new CD Moon on the Water is available at
Adyars Bookshop Sydney*



Letters from Japan

Dear shakuhachi friends,

Konnichiwa from autumnal Chichibu!

I'm halfway through my third three month intensive in Japan. There are five of us here in Chichibu now, Lindsay, Ben, Lachlan from Australia and Rodrigo from Majorca. We keep Kakizakai sensei on his toes!

A regular week of shakuhachi looks like this:-

Monday - lesson day with Kakizakai sensei in Chichibu. This takes all afternoon as we all observe and learn from each other's lessons. Wednesday - lesson day with Kakizakai sensei in Chichibu. Saturday - lesson day with Kakizakai sensei in Tokyo. Early Saturday morning we all pile into Kakizakai sensei's car for the trip to Tokyo, where we observe a full day of lessons.

This trip involves the obligatory stop at seven eleven to buy lunch, where the "mystery triangle" for that week is selected. The "mystery triangle" is rice wrapped in seaweed with a filling inside. That's the mysterious part as none of us has sufficiently developed Japanese language skills to decipher what

the packaging says! Sure enough the mystery is solved (most times) by biting into the triangle, when a mental note is made to never buy the green one again (octopus eyes) or to remember the pink one for next time!

Once a month Kakizakai sensei, myself and Lindsay go to Yokoyama sensei's place for a lesson (still a mildly terrifying experience). I also see Furuya sensei once a month, an excellent shinobue teacher once a fortnight and I rehearse shakuhachi and koto repertoire with Megumi sensei once a week.

When not doing these things we have the mandatory Ro blowing sessions, CD swapping sessions, comparing notes about life in Japan sessions and practise, practise, practise. It's like one big, long shakuhachi camp!

The highlight for me so far on this trip has been performing Shika no Tone (Distant Cry of Deer) with Anne Norman on Miyajima island, near Hiroshima. Miyajima is recognised as being one of Japan's three most beautiful spots. Wild deer roam this beautiful island, rich in ancient temples and shrines.

We performed Shika no Tone at the Itsukushima shrine, after a special blessing from a shinto priest. The Itsukushima shrine was built in the 6th century and is most famous for its vermillion coloured O-Torii gate, which stands in the sea 200 metres in front of the main shrine. A spectacular sight!

One of our companions tried to coax a sound out of the wild deer while we were there but alas, they are very silent creatures. We left the island no wiser as to what a real deer sounds like!

I am returning to Hiroshima next week to perform on shakuhachi (and didgeridoo!) in a concert with Megumi sensei and Kubota san. Hiroshima is a beautiful but sobering city, with reminders of the A-bomb everywhere. It is the 60th anniversary this year...

On this trip I did the NHK audition. NHK is the national broadcaster in Japan and if you pass the audition, your performance can be broadcast. This audition was particularly tough, with only two out of a worthy field of thirty entrants passing. I was not selected but it was a good experience and I can try again next time. Most traditional instruments were represented; shinobue, biwa, shakuhachi, shamisen and koto. It was particularly good hearing the stand-

ard of the other performers and the repertoire that they played.

One final thing, I'd like to acknowledge the generous assistance from the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and the Australia Council for the Arts, for enabling me to undertake this study in Japan.

See you in Canberra in February for shak fest '06.

Bronwyn Kirkpatrick



Bronwyn and Anne

A letter from Ben Dixon was received too late for publication - saved for next issue in Dec-Jan.

A letter from Lacklan Skipworth follows on page 6

As people from Perth know, Australia is a very big continent. In the pursuit of my shakuhachi studies, I was undoubtedly living on the wrong side. So, if my practice become more serious, the need arose for relocation. Of course the existence of a great master (the founder of our society) in Sydney seemed to make this a logical place to go but it didn't happen.

Throughout history, time and time again, a few precise words in the right place have caused numerous revolutions. My revolution, though not on a global scale, came in the form of the three words: 'Push the Underlip' On first hearing these words, I couldn't conceive the true meaning, but I felt the weight of their importance. So, being both young and impressionable, I began to think that Japan is not really so far away after all...

And now I find myself living in Chichibu and learning from Kakizakai-sensei. The first 6 months for me have been, of course, an intense work on sound, meri-technique, and 'Ma' (or flow and space). One secret that I can divulge is that these three things are interrelated in some way, but of course I am yet to find the answer. This one thing, perhaps, is the solution to all problems!

Unfortunately, my idea is still proving to be true: that the better you get the harder it becomes, as there is no limit to the number of things we must consider, and to how deeply we must consider them. But we must remember, that this is why we love shakuhachi and what makes us pick it up again after we quit each week. The opportunity even to just scratch the surface of something bigger than we can conceive will always be more satisfying to know completely rather than mundanely.

Of course life in Japan has its fair share of quirks. Every day strange things happen, from gardeners using leaf blowers in full business suits, to the party of 15 young Japanese students who had taken it upon themselves to devour 200 cheeseburgers.

Perhaps my fondest and most triumphant memory so far was taking my \$40 shopping bike on the train for the 2 hour journey to Chichibu wrapped in a pair of curtains and some sticky tape. Ingenious I say. Please ask Bronwyn for confirmation, as our paths met halfway into my truly inspirational journey.

As they say in the classics, my trip so far has encompassed everything 'from the ridiculous to the sublime'

and due to my slightly clumsy nature, it will continue to be this way. If my cooking accidents remain limited to spilt food, forgetting to cook my rice before I eat it, and the odd broken glass, I hope to see you all again when I know the truth about shakuhachi.

Gambatte ne! Lachlan Skipworth

(Ed Lachlan has sent more pictures which will be in the next ASS newsletter)



Websites worth visiting:

<http://www.shakuhachi.com/>

<http://www.komuso.com/>

and a newly found site:

<http://www.torstenlafsson.com/>

<http://www.shakuhachiyuu.com/>

<http://japanshakuhachi.com/>

http://www.fuke-shakuhachi.com/en_index.htm

<http://www.japanworldmusic.com/>

Australian Shakuhachi Festival page 1

Friday 10 - Monday 13 February 2006 University House, ANU, Canberra ACT

Registration Form Date

Please print your details clearly and circle info where required:

Name..... M F

Address.....Town/city.....

State..... Postcode..... Phone..... Fax.....

Email..... ASS membership current? Y N *

Player level - Absolute beginner Beginner Intermediate Advanced

Lineage - Chikuho Kinko Tozan

For early-bird rates - payment must be postmarked on or before 10 January 2006	Early-bird till 10/01/05	Payment After 10/01/06	Totals \$
Full Accommodation: 3 nights twin share accom.3b/fasts, 2 lunches, 3 dinners, tea breaks (Farewell Dinner included)	\$380	\$440	
Single room supplement per night	\$50	\$60	
Accompanying person- non participant (full board, concerts)	\$350	\$400	
Full Tuition (with full board only): (eight 90' workshops and one 55' lesson), student concert, Festival Concert in The Great Hall, International House ANU (admission for general public: \$30, conc.\$25).	\$390	\$445	
Total Beginner Tuition: (four special workshops, student and Festival Concerts, 55 minute private lesson)	\$225	\$225	
Day rates - tuition plus accommodation			
Friday afternoon to Sunday afternoon	\$710	\$820	
Saturday morning (arrive after breakfast) through Monday morning (with breakfast; includes Farewell dinner)	\$660	\$760	
Saturday morning (arrive after breakfast) through Sunday night (includes Farewell Dinner)	\$600	\$695	
Sunday morning (arrive after breakfast) through Monday morning (with breakfast; includes Farewell Dinner)	\$330	\$380	

ASF2006 FULL SCHEDULE (subject to change)

	FRI 10 FEBRUARY	SAT 11 FEBRUARY	SUN 12 FEBRUARY	MON 13 FEBRUARY	
0800 - 0830		BREAKFAST TIME	BREAKFAST TIME	BREAKFAST TIME	0800 - 0830
0830 - 0900		BIG BLOW	BIG BLOW	ASS AGM	0830 - 0900
0900 - 1030		SESSION 2	SESSION 6	0800-1000	0900 - 1030
1030 - 1100		AM BREAK	AM BREAK	CHECK OUT 1000	1030 - 1100
1100 - 1230		SESSION 3	SESSION 7		1100 - 1230
1230 - 1330		LUNCH BREAK	LUNCH BREAK		1230 - 1330
1330 - 1500		SESSION 4	SESSION 8		1330 - 1500
1500 - 1530		PM BREAK			1500 - 1530
1530 - 1700	REGISTRATION	SESSION 5	STUDENT CONCERT		1530 - 1700
1700 - 1930	HAPPY HOUR and DINNER BREAK	HAPPY HOUR and DINNER BREAK			1700 - 1930
1930 - 2200	BIG BLOW AND SESSION 1	UNIVERSITY HOUSE CONCERT	FAREWELL DINNER from 1830		1930 - 2200