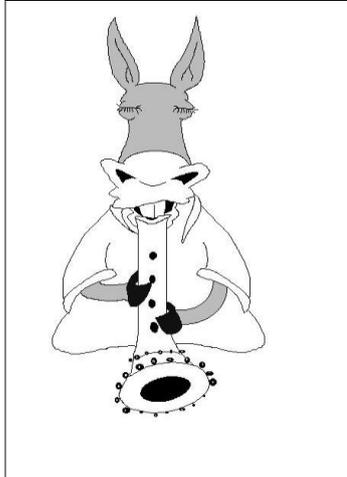


豪州尺八会

AUSTRALIAN SHAKUHACHI SOCIETY

Nr. 49 Spring 2014

ASS: 11 Sherman Avenue Katoomba NSW 2780



NEW NEWS

Riley Lee has completely revamped his website. One section, called 'Members', is password-protected. Obtaining the password typically requires a one-off payment of A\$22.

Paid-up members of the Australian Shakuhachi Society automatically receive the password as part of their membership. The password will be changed periodically, with paid-up Society members receiving the new password when this happens.

Material will continue to be added to the 'members' area.

Also, Riley plans to add to this 'members' area, all links to blogs, websites, etc., of any current ASS member who want him to do so. This lists of links will be in addition to the general 'links' page elsewhere on his site.

For more information:

<http://rileylee.net/about-the-members-area/>

If you have not joined the Society or if your membership is not current, this is yet another reason to make sure you are a member. For more information:<http://shakuhachi.org.au/>

FROM YOUR NEW PRESIDENT

Hi Everyone, My name is David Jobst and I am your new humble A.S.S president. We have a revitalized A.S.S committee with new committee positions taken and a new committee member. Please check out your committee members listed in this newsletter. We have an enthusiastic committee with committed and experienced people.

I wish to give many thanks to outgoing newsletter editor Graham Ranft for his outstanding & longstanding contribution as newsletter editor.

I also want to thank the performers who volunteered their time to play at the recent ASS Fundraising Concert on 31st October in Sydney which raised money to help with next years A.S.S Festival to be held in Brisbane. The performers included Riley Lee, Bronwyn Kirkpatrick, David Jobst, David Dixon and Nicholas Hall. The concert was very successful with great feedback from the audience (many of whom were new to shakuhachi). Some audience members brought CDs and also enjoyed playing Yuu shakuhachi which were made available to buy. Many signed up to an emailing list for future events as well as some wanting to join the A.S.S.

Members should keep an eye out in the next year for A.S.S events like Music Workshops. Music Workshops are events where A.S.S members gather together and have the opportunity to perform for each other and receive helpful feedback from each other.

The Music Workshops will be either free or low cost depending on venue and could be open to the interested general public to attend. It's a good way to keep connected with other members in your own area and help each others practice.

Most committee members live in Sydney. For this

reason I encourage members to consider having A.S.S Music Workshops (and Concerts) in their own area.

Please contact me with any ideas you have for the A.S.S in your local area. The committee will help with organization and also advertise events through the A.S.S Website, Newsletter and A.S.S members list. You may be surprised by the number of members in your area. We have members all around Australia from Hobart to Mullumbimby and beyond!

Remember we have our 2015 Festival in Brisbane held in October next year with visiting teachers from Japan. So we all have plenty of reason to do more practice.

AUSTRALIAN SHAKUHACHI FESTIVAL 2015

For the first time in almost a decade, the Australian Shakuhachi Society is set to organise and present a residential Australian Shakuhachi Festival in October 2015, with teachers and participants coming from Australia and overseas. ASF15 will be held at the Redlands Arts Centre, a new complex located just south of Brisbane QLD. The RAC and the City of Redlands are one of our sponsors.

Here is a link to the RAC:

www.rpac.com.au/venues/Pages/Venues.aspx

We are hoping to invite the following teachers from overseas: Teruo Furuya, Katsushi Matama, Kaoru Kakizakai from the International Shakuhachi Training Centre, and Christopher Yohmei Blasdel (studied with the late Living National Treasure Goro Yamaguchi).

We also hope to have a full contingent of Australian shakuhachi teachers as well, of which there are quite a few now.

The dates for ASF15 are 2-5 October 2015 (a long weekend). Please put this in your calendar!

We need ASF15 volunteers to help with tasks both before and during the Festival. Please let us know if you are willing to help. Participant/volunteers are the most important people in our shakuhachi community!

AUSTRALIAN SHAKUHACHI FESTIVAL 2-5 October 2015

SHAKUHACHI IN THE SACRED MUSIC FESTIVAL

It is no surprise that the shakuhachi featured heavily in this year's Sydney Sacred Music Festival. Bronwyn Kirkpatrick performed in "Sacred Journeys", which according to the SSFM website,

... is a series of intimate performances that will bring music to the heart of the Royal North Shore, Nepean and Blacktown and Mount Druitt Hospitals. The program will include lyrical voices, instrumentals and dance from musical traditions around the world that will lift you out of your daily routine and take you on a journey of renewal.

Sacred Journeys is a Sydney Sacred Music Festival event curated and supported by the Health and Arts Research Centre in partnership with Royal North Shore Hospital, Nepean Hospital, the Blacktown Mount Druitt Hospital Expansion Project and Blacktown Arts Centre.

Riley Lee also performed in multiple events. The first was "Journey to Stillness" at the Mosman Art Gallery on 7 September. From the SSMF website:

This concert features original expressions of sacred music for the shakuhachi. The sounds of Riley's solo shakuhachi are enhanced by equally subtle and beautiful sounds created electronically by John Cleworth.

The pieces in this concert are based on works on a new album that was completed this year and will be released on the Sounds True label (USA) in 2015.

Then he performed in a programme called "Mujing", at the Campbelltown Arts Centre on 14 September, which received five stars in an SMH review (see below).

Finally, on 21 September, the last day of the Sydney Sacred Music Festival, Riley participated in an event called "Sharing Spirituality Through Dialogue", at the SGK auditorium in Sydney Olympic Park. The other performer/speakers were Sandy Evans (sax), Armondo Hurley (voice) and Alister Spence (piano).

Again from the SSMF website:

This unique event features a musical improvisational dialogue between three masterful musicians. Following this performance the audience is treated to a facilitated dialogue between the artists including a question and answer session. This rare opportunity to hear the music and dialogue between artists who live their life through the beautiful expression of music is not to be missed.

The four of had never performed together, and some of them only met for the first time on the day of the performance. They played a long improvisation, then spoke of and further discussed music/linguistic dialogues, also receiving comments and questions from the audience.

Improvisation (how it's done), music performance in general and what makes dialogues work were some of the topics that intrigued the audience. In all cases, the following qualities were repeatedly mentioned and unanimously valued.

**The ability to listen
Trust (in yourself and in the others
within the dialogue)
Commitment and practice**

How true!

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## **AUSTRALIAN SHAKUHACHI FESTIVAL**

**2-5 October 2015**

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FIRST EVER KAUAI SHAKUHACHI WORKSHOP

The inaugural Kauai Shakuhachi Workshop (15-17 August 2014) was organised by Kauai residents Kyle Chew and Ray Nitta. It was held on the beautiful grounds of the Waimea Plantation Cottages. The tutors were Robert Herr and Steve Casano from Honolulu and Riley Lee. Just under 20 participants played shakuhachi from dawn to dusk near the beach on the southern shores of Kauai, near Waimea Canyon.

A public concert was held in the historic Old Stone Church in Waimea on 15 August. The concert featured the three teachers, Kyle, and Honolulu based koto player Darin Miyashiro.

The church, built in the early 1800s, has thick stone walls that were purposely constructed to spread slightly outwards from the front of the sanctuary to the back, creating natural speaker-like acoustics. It was a pleasure to perform there. More about the Kauai Shakuhachi Workshop:

<http://finesketch.com/kauai-shakuhachi-workshop-2014/>

The Kauai Shakuhachi Workshop culminated at this year's Lawai Pilgrimage of Compassion, held annually at the Lawai International Center for

Peace. All participants and teachers played a beautifully inspired 'ro-buki', while Riley Lee led the 'pilgrims' up the cliff face with 88 miniature shrines representing the temples along the famous Pilgrimage on Shikoku Japan. This event is so special and moving that it is difficult to describe. Here is a link to the Lawai Peace Center's website:

www.lawaicenter.org/pages/pilgrimage2014.html



Honolulu rainbow



Riley and maker Miura Ryuho



Location of Workshop

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**THE 2014 YOKOYAMA MEMORIAL  
SHAKUHACHI FESTIVAL,  
BISEI JAPAN.**



During the weekend of 29-31 August, I was honoured to participate as a tutor/performer at the Yokoyama Memorial Shakuhachi Festival. The

Festival celebrated Yokoyama sensei, in particular his creating the first ever World Shakuhachi Festival, exactly twenty years ago (August 1994).

Both the first World Festival and this latest Memorial Festival were held at the International Shakuhachi Centre, in the small town of Bisei deep in the mountains of Okayama. “Bisei” literally means *beautiful stars*, which is an indication of the remoteness, and beauty, of the area.

The first event of the Festival was a performance competition. The only requirement was that Yokoyama had taught the pieces chosen. Sixteen shakuhachi players had entered the competition. Three contestants qualified to enter the special ‘seniors’ category (75 years or older).

All sixteen contestants performed on stage while the seven judges, including me, critiqued them and gave them a number (30 – best; 0 – worse). The contestants could play the piece of their choice in its entirety.

Fortunately only two people chose the very long piece, *Reibo*. Unfortunately, quite a few chose pieces almost as long! The competition performance lasted over two hours, with no breaks.

The prize? The three highest scoring players, plus the highest scoring ‘senior’ were able to perform their piece with the ‘masters’, in the Main Concert on Saturday night.

Approximately 65 people attended the Yokoyama Memorial Festival, including teaching staff, volunteers, and paying participants. Besides me, there were three other non-Japanese attending, all of whom could also speak Japanese.

Almost everyone stayed at the Japanese-style conference centre, with approximately 24 people sleeping on futons in each large tatami room. The teachers and presenters got special dispensation; there were only 17 in our room.

Thankfully, the days were long and the nights were, for some, awash with sake and beer, so getting to sleep and staying asleep did not seem to be a problem for anyone, though trying to function the next morning often was.

Group sessions including all of the usual elements required to play one’s shakuhachi well – ro-buki, meri and kari, upper and lower octave, dynamics, breathing, tone quality (nothing changes!). Other sessions mainly focused on pieces that were being played en masse in one of the two public performances, some Honkyoku and some modern pieces.

Afternoon sessions included a talk by the shakuhachi scholar Satoshi Simura, on ji-nashi flutes and the nature of Honkyoku. His main thesis, which (pardon the pun) resonated well with everyone, was that Honkyoku-playing was inspired by, created amongst, and tried to evoke the other sounds heard in temples; those of bells, gongs, singing bowls, woodblocks and drums. All of these instruments share the quality of complex sound, multi-phonics, and notes that all, slowly and imperceptibly fade away, from audible to inaudible.

Dr Simura played a number of very long flutes to demonstrate his ideas, including one that was six shaku in length. That’s right; over three times the length of the standard instrument. He would, of course, not have been able to reach finger holes if placed in their standard relative position.

The flute had only two finger holes, opened and shut by one hand. Though he could not play a ‘proper’ Honkyoku or a melody, the myriad of octaves, harmonics and multiphonics that he could make on the huge flute was spell-binding, and when he did play the lowest note – wow!

Flute-maker Miura Ryuho talked about flute-making gave an interesting slide presentation/lecture on historical references in pictures of the shakuhachi dating from the 8<sup>th</sup> century, a acoustic physicist, lectured on the acoustic properties of the instrument. I gave a breathing workshop.

Many of the participants and all of the teachers had attended the 1<sup>st</sup> World Shakuhachi Festival in 1994, and Sydney’s World Shakuhachi Festival in 2008. Many are now planning to attend the next residential Australian Shakuhachi Festival in October 2015 (more on that elsewhere in this newsletter).

The Yokoyama Memorial Festival also featured two public concerts in Bisei's small concert hall, a short walk from the Shakuhachi Centre. I always appreciate hearing quality shakuhachi being performed live. It is a still humbling and learning experience for me, even more so, performing before my 'senior' fellow Yokoyama students, even after nearly 45 years of playing.



Location at Bisei



Late nights and early mornings ....



Morning workshop



Breakaway class with Matama Sensei

**Riley Lee**

## ASSORTED HAPPENINGS

By Ken McArthur

### **Shakuhachi performance review**

I recently saw this performance of "The fourth perfection" by Jazz & shakuhachi musician Adam Simmons at the N.G.V. Chinese art display about Poetry, Calligraphy & Painting.

Adam suggested that the 4<sup>th</sup> perfection, is music & how it's connected because of Shakuhachi music's connection with Buddhism in Japan & how playing shakuhachi is a type of musical painting, with the music passing on information by aurally instead of by painting or calligraphy.

Apparently the shakuhachi was introduced into Japan via China in around the 8<sup>th</sup> century.

I thought that the performance was very very good, with the music seemed to in a style of Honkyoku (Buddhist shakuhachi music) & also improvisational or free jazz.

The 7 track cd is available as a digital download from this website :-

<http://fatrain.bandcamp.com/album/the-fourth-perfection>

Or [www.adamsimmons.com](http://www.adamsimmons.com) about ordering a cd of this music.

Release of some various shakuhachi tracks by Anne Norman on the digital download Band camp website. <http://annemnorman.bandcamp.com/album/various-tracks>

### **Anne Norman - Afternoon premonition**

Anne Norman- shakuhachi & Deborah Kaiser-soprano with Indonesian /Australian singer Ria Soemardjo

**Adrift** -this track was previously released on the CD [On the Wings of a Butterfly](#)

See: [www.move.com.au/artist/ria-soemardjo](http://www.move.com.au/artist/ria-soemardjo)

## Almost shakuhachi & bamboo flute related

Korean horizontal Tageum flute musician Hye Lim Kim has recently released a 7 track cd, Nim The track "wind" includes a duo with fellow S.O.A.S. student Shihan Kiku Day on shakuhachi. For more information please see the links-

[www.hyelimkim.com/taegum/](http://www.hyelimkim.com/taegum/)

<http://londonkoreanlinks.net/2014/01/03/hyelim-kim-reviewed-in-songlines-magazine/>

## European Shakuhachi Soc.

European shakuhachi society newsletter October 2011, pages 13-14

<http://files.shakuhachisociety.eu/publications/new-sletters/Issue%2019%20ESS%20Newsletter%2011%2010sm.pdf>

Latest ESS newsletter:-

<http://files.shakuhachisociety.eu/publications/new-sletters/ESS%20NEWSLETTER%202014%20vol2.pdf>

## **CD Release 'Such a sky' by Imogen Manins & Tony Gould.**

Includes live recordings of performances at the Melbourne recital centre. Includes 3 tracks with shakuhachi daishihan Riley Lee.

Please see the website for more information-

<http://www.move.com.au/disc/such-a-sky>

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Interview from the January issue of Dumbo Feather magazine with shakuhachi dai shihan Riley Lee, can now be read from this website-

<http://www.dumbofeather.com/conversation/riley-lee-is-a-grand-master/>

## **From James Nyoraku Schlefer**

I am happy to announce Kyo-Shin-An's newseason of concerts at the Tenri Cultural Institute. This will be our sixth season of presenting wonderful, unique concerts that feature Japanese and Western instruments in one of New York's great chamber music spaces. We have a total of five concerts, seven NY premieres, four world premieres and three new KSA commissioned pieces.

I hope you can join us for some or all of the performances. There is a link to buy tickets following each concert description.

**Sunday, October 19, 2014, 4:00PM**

### **KURAHASHI BAMBOO**

The remarkable Kurahashi Yodo II in a rare New York concert of honkyoku - solo shakuhachi Zen meditation music - plus *Okayasu-Ginuta*, an Edo-period chamber music gem performed with Yoko Reikano Kimura, koto. Special guest artist Christopher Yohmei Blasdel joins the program for a solo Kinko-school honkyoku and the concert features the premiere of James Nyoraku Schlefer's trio for three shakuhachi, *Trois Bambou*.

**TICKETS Sunday, November 23, 2014, 4:00PM**

### **KAMMERRAKU ALOHA**

The Cassatt String Quartet with Yoko Reikano Kimura, koto and shamisen, and James Nyoraku Schlefer, shakuhachi. This performance brings Hawaii to NYC with the NY premieres of three sextets that were composed for the KSA/Cassatt performers by University of Hawaii composers Takuma Itoh, Thomas Osborne, and Donald Womack and premiered last April in the Aloha State! Plus the NY premiere of Samuel Adler's "String Quartet No. 10."

**TICKETS Saturday, January 17, 2015, 7:30PM**

### **JAMU**

The innovative ensemble Classical Jam with Yumi Kurosawa, koto and James Nyoraku Schlefer, shakuhachi, performing an eclectic array of commissions, improvisations and new music combining koto, shakuhachi, flute, violin, viola,

cello and percussion. Featuring the world premieres of KSA commissions by William Healey and James Nyoraku Schlefer.  
**TICKETS Sunday, March 15, 2015, 4:00PM**

### **SPRING CHRYSANTHEMUMS**

Celebrate the Ides of March with the annual return of Yoko Reikano Kimura, koto, shamisen and voice. Kimura's deep devotion to the classical chamber music tradition of the Edo period will be the focus of her performances on both koto and shamisen and feature her remarkable singing. Hikaru Tamaki, cello and James Nyoraku Schlefer, shakuhachi will join Ms. Kimura for contemporary and traditional music by Japanese and Western composers.

**TICKETS Sunday, May 17, 2015, 4:00PM**

### **KAMMERRAKU BLOSSOMS**

The return of the dynamic Voxare String Quartet with James Nyoraku Schlefer, shakuhachi and the world premiere of a new Kyo-Shin-An Arts commission – a shakuhachi quintet by Mark Nowakowski.



James Nyoraku Schlefer  
ジェイムス 如楽 シュレファー  
(718) 832-5435  
44 Prospect Park West  
Brooklyn, NY 11215  
www.nyoraku.com  
www.kyoshinan.org (虚心庵)

## From Margaret Catchpole WA

I have been lucky to travel to Japan 3 times in the past 4 years.

In 2009 I was invited to join a delegation from The Belmont Sister City Group on its 25th anniversary of its Sistercity-ship with Adachi (Tokyo).

It was an amazing trip during which I was able to have 2 lessons with Kakizakai Kaoru sensei along with soaking up the culture of Japan and making many wonderful friends.

After returning to Perth I kept in contact with several friends in Japan.

One of my friends in Zushi had done some research and discovered that there was a group of 6 shakuhachi players in her home town who regularly play together and who perform at annual concert. She contacted the group to find out more and they were very interested to find there was a lady in Perth who played shakuhachi. They invited me to spend some time with them when I visited Japan again.

Prior to my next trip in 2011 the group sent me some music charts so I could practice them so we could play together when I arrived.

I had a wonderful time and the group were very generous with their time and encouragement. We spent 3 hours rehearsing on both Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning followed by an afternoon of ensemble playing with several koto and shamisen players. I was very humbled by their generosity.

As I was leaving for the next part of my trip the group invited me to perform with them at their annual concert next time I was in Japan. I felt very honoured to be asked while at the same time I felt very nervous.

My third trip was in January, 2013. I was sent a piece of music to practice and also was asked to play a solo. My first reaction was "terror" but then I convinced myself it was something I should do

to try to banish my usual nerves especially performing solo.

Once in Japan I met with the group for the first rehearsal on the Saturday.

This went well. The ensemble piece was no problem then I played my solo "Murasaki Reiho". I surprised myself with my lack of nervousness and felt great relief that it also went well.

Sunday morning was the full 2 hour program run through followed by the concert at 2pm. It was a great experience and a great honour for me to be invited to take part. I came home with confidence I never thought I would have.

I am planning my next trip in January 2015.



Ishii san introducing the concert 2013



Concert

## MASTERS DEGREE

I'm pleased to announce that I successfully graduated with a Masters Degree in Traditional Music Performance from Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku last academic year. I entered Geidai in 2010 as a research student, and continued on to the masters program after two years.

Kinko ryu studies were taken with Jumei Tokumaru, who was a student of Goro Yamaguchi sensei. The grace and refinement in his playing is deceptively elusive, and after nearly five years of lessons with him, I was just barely scratching the surface of his playing, let alone trying to absorb it to develop my own playing. Dozan Fujiwara was teaching Tozan in the final year I was there. I used to look forward to any opportunity, be it a lesson, rehearsal, or concert, just to hear his musicality. The music he performs is just the surface of his shakuhachi practice, and his knowledge, sedulity, and ability is staggering.

Gaikyoku study also fed into the mix. For several years the essence of gaikyoku thoroughly eluded me, and all I could do was read the notation and play the notes. As a research student, I took two private lessons a week with Tokumaru sensei, and another lesson at university with Sensei Shoji Aoki sensei. I was constantly attending lessons, practicing, listening to recordings, attending concerts, and memorising pieces, yet I could not quite grasp gaikyoku, which was very frustrating. A shift came when playing a Michio Miyagi piece for an exam. The piece, *Haru no Yo* (for koto, shamisen and shakuhachi, 1913) is a modern composition, but it uses a form and motifs that stem from sokyoku. Playing that piece was like peeping through a modern lens to view older music, and it narrowed a temporal and aesthetic gap.

Regular concerts with other departments including gagaku, nohgaku, and nagauta also broadened my view of the hougaku landscape.

Altogether, at any one time there were about 150 students in the traditional music department, and on average, about sixteen students in the shakuhachi department. Some of them could



After the concert.



Margaret with the shakuhachi group after rehearsal 2011.

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really blow a note; no doubt we will be hearing from a few of these players in future.

There were many opportunities to perform as well, including at The National Theatre in 2010, on live tv in 2013. In March this year, I had a rare chance to perform in Akiko Fujii sensei's concert, playing *Onoe no Matsu*.

My masters thesis was a comparative analysis of the intonation of Goro Yamaguchi sensei and Katsuya Yokoyama sensei. An abstract and the thesis can be downloaded from here (thesis in Japanese only):

<http://sopakusha.wordpress.com/>

[A translation might be a very worthwhile project-Ed]

Of course, while all of this was going on, I continued lessons with Kakizakai sensei, and Yokoyama's honkyoku is still what moves me most.

For now, onward with practice. I'm looking forward to being more involved in the Australian Shakuhachi Society!

By Lindsay Dugan



Group photo



Performing Michio Miyagi's *Etenraku*



Performing *Kanae*



Performing *Onoe no Matsu* with Akiko Fujii (shamisen and voice) and Yoko Hihara (koto and voice)



With Fujii sensei after the concert



Warming up for a chikuwa solo

A LONG FLUTE FOR SALE

I am selling my Shugetsu Yamaguchi semi-jinashi 2.85 flute as my hands can no longer cope with it any more.

The 2.85 is one of Shugetsu's very early 'jinashi' flutes. It has 3 or 4 'blobs' of epoxy in the bore for 'spot tuning'. Has crack top of flute which Shugetsu himself repaired during its making - it is stable.

It is a very 'interesting' flute – wide bore and thick walled. The high register tend to be a bit sharp – probably due to the wide bore - some altered fingerings needed. The basic pitch is between F and F# below middle C. Offset holes.

I am considering \$Aud 1800 ono.

ranftg@iinet.net.au.



CODA

This will be my last ASS NEWS LETTER. I hope you have enjoyed reading it over the last 50 issues or so and many thanks to those who have contributed so much over the years.

Handwritten signature: Riley Lee

YOUR NEWCOMMITTEE

Riley Lee: - Founding Grandfather
riley@rileylee.net

~ ~ ~

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