

奏端

*Atsuya Okuda
played Jinashi nobe Shakuhachi*



UNAMAS

Sawaguchi
Ongaku Kobo

HQ
192-24

奏譚 — SO-ZEN

1. 古伝巢鶴 Koten suzuru (6:07)
2. 本手之調 Honte no Shirabe (3:19)
3. 練薩慈 (ネリサジ) Nerisaji (8:53)
4. 虚鈴 Kyorei (8:57)
5. 降り葉「変(替)手・かえで」 Kudariha-kaede (2:46)
6. 息観 Sokkan (5:08)
7. 三谷 Sanya (6:37)
8. 別伝・鹿の遠音 Betsuden Shika no Tohne (11:02)
9. 深夜 Shinya (7:43)

Content notes:

1. Kōten Suzuru Being also named "Godan Suzuru", referring to the episode in Sukago Innenkyō about cranes cutting their body for the sake for growing their babies, this piece was said to express the behavior of self-sacrificing parents.
2. Hōte no Shirabe Tune to practice for long period of time. It reminds the players of the challenging subject of breathing. Other similar equivalents include the traditional piece in Fudaiji Temple of Mt. Rintaku in Hamamatsu and the piece in Meianji Temple of Mt. Kyōrei in Kyoto.
3. Nerisaji Legendarily this set of tunes was originally composed by Shinichi Maki who was a samurai of Kuroda domain and belonged to Hakata Ichōken school in Kyūshū. Three pieces survived to date that are "Bousaji", "Yurisaji" and "Nerisaji". Saji means the Mercy of Bodhisattva that represents the spirit of Mahayana. Among "Shin", "Gyō" and "Sou" in Saji, "Sou" is the most extraordinary and complex composition through repeated tempering and polishing ("neri"), and that is why it is called Nerisaji.
4. Kyōrei The title means imagery [=kyō] bell [=rei] and is sometimes referred as imagery spirit. The most classical piece among the works of Fūkeshu Buddhism sect.
5. Kudariha-Kaede Traditionally inherited in Kyūshū area with two versions of Hōte and Kaede. This recording is the piece for Kaede.
6. Sokkan The wind blows toward decaying bamboos in thicket. The sense of this desolation overlaps to the state of the spirit with this tune. We overview the world through the breath, the wind, and the bamboo.
7. Sanya One of theories explains that this term originally meant mendicancy.
8. Betsuden, Shika no Tōne ... The tune extends itself as inspired by the sound of deer that reside in distant mountains and by their behavior of running around. A challenging piece of music to play with the register as wide as 4 octaves.
9. Shinya Prevailing quietness in the midnight transitions to bright enlightenment in the dawn.

On the Production of "So-Zen" Album

One finds something essential with Japanese traditional instruments, and it is "sawari". "Sawari" is the intimacy to the nature as compared to the voices of cicadas in the sense that their tunes are heavily complex almost like a noise but they blend well with variety of natural sounds. Other tunes of "sawari" are, for example, a clear click of a wind-bell or a profound bell of temples that brings us the sense of beauty and emptiness of life as well.

The fascinating character of "Hocchiku" instrument, Jinashi-nobe Shakuhachi by definition, used in this recording is its deep softness featuring "sawari". Two-piece, Jiari Shakuhachi that is most commonly popular today is the result of pursuing the sound pitch and volume suited for ensembles at the sacrifice of tones.

The natural form of Hocchiku is rich with "sawari" bringing the tone of distance that we Japanese continued to be particular with. The slower rise of notes and extremely fine, subtle sounds are interestingly quite audible. Inverse proportional to the sound volume, the taste and profoundness of its tones are even more vivid.



Atsuya Okuda

Born in 1945, Atsuya Okuda was active as jazz trumpet player for 20 years since 1965, and thereafter has he studied "hocchiku", an authentic Japanese bamboo flute, with the inspiration of its infinite potential in forming his original world of music.

In 1985, he set up Zen-Sabo in Kokubunji, Tokyo as the foundation of teaching "hocchiku" as well as focal training of himself, and started workshop activities and tours to such countries as Switzerland, Austria, England, Canada, USA and Finland since 2003. He has received many foreign country students who aspire to master hocchiku at Zen-Sabo.

The instrument is plainly natural like a bare bone bamboo tree, and in order to play it, not only the high level of skills but also the spirit to resonate only with essentials among excesses are required, similar to Zen's spirit. Okuda is the single only player of Hocchiku inheriting the spirituality of Watazumi Doso who died in 1992. His CD album "Sound of Zen" released in 2002 was a participating work in Japan Arts Festival by Agency for Cultural Affairs.

Okuda had ceased his recordings because the sound quality did not meet his expectations, but the concept of "Surround Scape" promoted by Mick Sawaguchi convinced him with its totally new aspect of presentation as well as its sound quality. Hence, this collaboration resulted.

Comment from Atsuya Okuda

As attributed as the most natural form of instrument, Hocchiku is gifted with the tone of distance that we Japanese continued to be traditionally particular with. Interestingly, the slower rise of notes and extremely fine, subtle sounds are rather powerful to be heard.

I was fully delighted and astonished to have triggered mutual stimulations and realized the "tone of distance" in collaborating my Hocchiku with Mick Sawaguchi who works for Producer & engineer on it promotes as the new technological format of artistic expression.



HQ
192-24

192kHz/24bit Recording

Mick Sawaguchi, UNAMAS HUG

In this recording, we captured "Hocchiku" in surround with 192kHz/24 bit .Finally it was mix down with surround scape as 96kHz-24bit resolution as release format. This instrument is the original form of Shakuhachi, defined as Jinashi-nobekan, with no additional treatment of inner pipe surface for fine pitch-tuning. The sound that Atsuya Okuda generates at some times was almost indicational, and the dynamic range of its air burst was hugely broad particularly when he concealed his breath, therefore the subject was a tough challenge for the recording engineer. The highest priority was focused to realize the ultimate environment for playing in the studio room, and we asked Nittobo prepare a modified version of AGS the day before that managed to equalize the wave motion. The rest was the equipment as usual, and the following microphones of Microtech and Royer's ribbon were chosen for the main, and CO-100K for surround that went in to Pyramix DAW. Please see the line-up below for your reference.

Microphone	Microtech Gefell UM-900 Royer R-122, Sanken CO-100K
Mic Pre-amp	SSL 9000j
Audio Interface	RME Fireface UC
DAW	PYRAMIX Native+MacBook Pro
Power-supply Isolation	Soundrite
Studio Acoustic Treatment	Nittobo AGS Sound Diffusing Absorber



Recording: 24 April, 2011 at 1st Studio, Onkio Haus
Mixing/Mastering: Mick Sound Lab
Producer/Engineer: Mick Sawaguchi, Sawaguchi Ongaku Kobo Ltd.



Produced by
Sawaguchi Ongaku Kobo Mick Sawaguchi

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