

# EXAMINING TRADITIONAL JAPANESE FLUTE TECHNIQUES IN COMPOSITIONS BY POST-WORLD WAR II JAPANESE COMPOSERS

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## **ABSTRACT AND INTRODUCTION**

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In January 2019, I fulfilled a lifelong goal: I went to Japan for six months to study abroad. While this trip was filled with endless opportunities for learning about Japanese culture, I was specifically lucky in that I had a number of unique musical encounters. The school I was studying at had what was known as the “Instrument Club,” a student-run musical group consisting of several ensembles, including a concert band, a marching band, and a brass ensemble. Additionally, the school also offered a course on learning *koto*, a traditional Japanese thirteen-stringed zither. In the course, we played and sung traditional pieces in various arrangements, reading from the tablature traditionally used with the *koto*. My musical opportunities in Japan were not limited to school, however. Every Sunday with good weather, a *shamisen* player would sit in the nearby train station and busk. I would often buy myself a snack at the nearby convenience store and sit and listen. Finally, the most memorable musical experience I had involved pure chance—a friend and I were visiting the monthly Toji temple flea market, and I had remarked that one of the men in front of us appeared to be carrying an instrument case, and wouldn’t it be funny if he was going to the same place as us? To our surprise, not only was he going to the same place as us, he was meeting up with his friend, who was at the flea market selling handmade traditional flutes—*shinobue* and *shakuhachi*. A brief and somewhat stilted conversation about the various flutes he was selling led to an impromptu lesson on *shinobue*, which I will treasure as one of my favorite moments of music-crossing-language barriers for years to come. It was also this interaction that inspired me to begin thinking about the pieces I had been playing on my concert flute by composers such as Takemitsu Toru and Fukushima Kazuo, and how they had incorporated traditional techniques into their compositions. It also made me curious how I could go about writing my own pieces, incorporating Japanese traditional music with contemporary composing and Western instruments in a way that would represent my own experiences as a musician.

## **JAPANESE COMPOSERS FOR CONCERT FLUTE**

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There are several Japanese composers who have written for concert flute. As mentioned above, I have particular experience with Takemitsu Toru (1930–1996) and Fukushima Kazuo (b. 1930). As such, this essay will analyze some of their compositions—particularly, Fukushima’s *Mei* (1966) and Takemitsu’s *Toward the Sea III* (1989). Furthermore, I will also be analyzing two additional pieces, one by Toshio Hosokawa, *Lied* (2007), and one by Ichianagi Toshi, *Still Time IV – In Memory of Toru Takemitsu –* (1998). In addition to these scores, I will be leaning heavily on Miki Minoru’s book *Composing for Japanese Instruments*, as it details clearly many traditional—and non-traditional—techniques that Japanese instruments use. This analysis is done in the hopes of finding a stylistic guide that will allow me write a piece that expresses my own interactions with Japan’s musical traditions, as well as allow me to play the pieces with more cultural understanding.

## **JAPANESE MUSICAL TRADITION**

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Japanese culture has a long musical tradition. A story in the *Kojiki*—written in 714 CE and therefore one of Japan’s first native literary works, if not the first—describes the sun goddess Amaterasu being drawn

out of hiding by listening to the laughter resulting from the humorous and bawdy music and dancing that the goddess Ame no Uzume performed before the assembled gods.<sup>1</sup> Ame no Uzume's performance would later transform into what is now known as *kagura* (神楽, literally "god entertainment"), a music and dance performance genre closely associated with Shinto religious practices.<sup>2</sup> Later, in the thirteenth century, the legend would be reworked in *Uetsufumi* to include eight priestesses who accompany Ame no Uzume with music made with singing, conch shells, drums, struck sticks, *suzu* bells (a jingle bell-like instrument associated with Shinto rituals), *koto*, and most importantly to this project, flutes.<sup>3</sup> These flutes are one of the few types of instruments native to Japan, and are known as *kagurabue* (神楽笛, literally "god entertainment flute") or *yamatobue* (大和笛; 大和, *yamato*, referring to a particular region of Japan that is approximately similar to present-day Nara, in addition to referring to the first imperial family in Japanese history; 笛, *bue* meaning flute).<sup>4</sup> While this flute is fascinating, it closely resembles other Japanese flutes and has limited, if any, usage outside of *kagura*, and I will not discuss it in depth.

As in many cultures' musical practices, Japanese culture has focused on the idea of "natural" music, and as a result, there is a heavy emphasis on reflecting nature in music.<sup>5</sup> This can be heard distinctly in the *hichiriki*, a double-reeded instrument whose drone is not dissimilar to that of the Japanese summer cicadas. To the Western ear, the *hichiriki*'s buzz can sound quite grating, but it is considered a courtly instrument and is an important part of imperial music. Additionally, this focus on "natural" sounds is noticeable in the timbres and pitches that are considered most pleasing. Miki notes that Japanese architecture is a major influence in this aspect, as buildings are often open to the outside, and constructed of natural, sound-dampening materials like *tatami*, or woven straw mats, and *fusuma*, or paper and cloth sliding doors. Therefore, he says, "In traditional Japanese music, bright sounds rich in harmonics were considered undesirable."<sup>6</sup> In fact, this preference for specific timbres is such a fixation that instruments were rarely changed to become louder or easier to play, because the necessary changes would almost always distort the timbre of the instrument.<sup>7</sup>

Additionally, this timbral preference has influenced both the instruments that have remained part of Japanese traditional music and the techniques that have been developed to play them. It is important to note that there are few very low instruments, as low instruments tend to easily produce harmonics. These harmonics tend to destroy subtle pitch inflections, which were also preferable.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, Japan has only one traditional bowed string instrument, the *kokyū*, and it is not native, having come to Japan through China and the Ryūkyū kingdom,<sup>9</sup> which is now modern Okinawa, but was an independent country for most of Japanese history. Miki notes that this is this bowed instrument's scarcity is probably due to the lack of resonance that exists within Japanese architecture, which does not allow the harmonics associated with bowing to resonate, but also possibly because of a cultural dislike for "the sound of a bow scraping over a string."<sup>10</sup>

The result of these preferences and dislikes, in addition to the architecture and respect for nature, is that "sounds containing percussive elements became important."<sup>11</sup> These percussive elements can be seen in the multitude of percussion instruments that have developed in Japan, but also in many of the flute techniques that developed, as well. Many Japanese flutes require the player to use their air percussively and as musically, as Japanese flutes do not traditionally tongue the attack of a note, and their simple design allows a lot of air to escape noisily. Players may also be required to use their fingers percussively on the flute's holes.

The Japanese aesthetic, both musical and otherwise, also emphasized the ideas of *wabi-sabi* and *ma*. *Wabi-sabi* is the idea that impermanence and imperfection is beautiful, and *ma* is the space between two things. These ideas are additionally influenced by Japanese Zen Buddhism. Zen Buddhism emphasizes the value in the attack of the note, as well as the space between one note and the next.<sup>12</sup> This is reflected in Japanese music by its tempo, rhythms, timbres, ornamentations, and specific playing techniques, such as the imperfect pitches of the *nōkan*, the space between two notes on a *koto*, or a lack of time signatures and steady tempo. Traditional Japanese music "does not reflect the lively, explosive side of human nature."<sup>13</sup> Instead, Miki believes that it reflects the "Japanese natural environment."<sup>14</sup> The exception to this preference is folk music, which is often characterized by liveliness and brightness, and

necessitates high energy. This includes genres like festival *taiko* (太鼓, literally “drum”), which is characteristically noisy and energetic, and often requires extreme feats of endurance from the players.<sup>15</sup>

### JAPANESE FLUTES

Flutes are also used within these genres, in addition to their places in more austere genres like *noh* (能, literally, “talent” or “gift,” but also referring specifically to masked musical drama performances), *kabuki* (歌舞伎, 歌 meaning sing, 舞 meaning dance, and 伎 meaning skill; a type of highly stylized dramatic theater that requires the performers to sing), and *gagaku* (雅楽, literally meaning “elegant music;” referring to a number of types of Japanese court music). Japanese flutes cross genres, being used in modern Western classical works in addition to their traditional places in courtly ensembles and monks’ meditations.

All Japanese flutes have some similarities – they are all made of bamboo, one of Japan’s most abundant natural resources, and none of them traditionally use any kind of tonguing technique. Instead, pitches are initiated using airspeed and breath.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, most traditional Japanese flutes have between five and seven finger holes, with seven holes being the most common. *Shakuhachi* flutes tending to have the least number of holes, sometimes only one finger hole. Miki notes that, because all Japanese flutes are made of bamboo and the wind chamber is usually left with the natural bamboo shape, it is often difficult to predict the pitch of an instrument while making it. Instead, the pitch and intonation must be adjusted after the instrument has been completely constructed.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, as is the case with most instruments with limited mechanics, all Japanese traditional flutes have limited ranges due to their simple construction and lack of any mechanical features. This means that often, a player must have instruments in multiple pitches in order to increase the range they are able to play. Finally, it is normal performance practice on most Japanese flutes to extend the finger joints over the holes of the instrument, as this allows for greater pitch control and shading.<sup>18</sup>

One of the most versatile traditional Japanese flutes is the *shinobue* (篠笛, literally “bamboo flute”). It is a transverse flute, and as the name suggests, it is made of bamboo. It is primarily constructed with seven holes, though there are sixed-holed versions that are used in specific folk music genres. Surprisingly, the scale played by simply covering one hole at a time on the *shinobue* is nearly diatonic, though traditionally and stereotypically, the melodies it plays are pentatonic,<sup>19</sup> making it one of the most consistently accurately pitched wind instruments in the Japanese tradition.<sup>20</sup> The effective range of any given *shinobue* is limited; the lowest notes of the instrument are unstable and weak, and therefore hard or impossible to play at any dynamic louder than a *piano*. The highest notes on the instrument are piercing and loud, and impossible to play with any dynamic nuance. A *shinobue*’s middle register is where it shines – dynamics are controllable and melodic passages sound pleasing.<sup>21</sup>

Because of its melodic versatility, dynamic capability, strength of sound, and accuracy of pitch, *shinobue* is used in a variety of ensembles, both Japanese in origin and not. *Shinobue* is unique in its ability to cut through the cacophony created by *taiko* ensembles and still be dynamic and delicate enough to be used in the musical ensemble accompanying *kabuki* theater singers. Additionally, because the *shinobue*’s scale is near-diatonic and can be manipulated by skilled performers to be truly diatonic, it has occasionally been adopted as a concert instrument used with western ensembles.<sup>22</sup>

The *shinobue* has a number of traditional techniques, which help give it a characteristic sound. As noted earlier, note attacks are not tongued, traditionally. Vibrato is created by moving the mouth against mouthpiece of the instrument.<sup>23</sup> However, the techniques that truly give the *shinobue* its distinctive sound is the use of nuanced pitch variation and movement between pitches. *Shinobue* have a great number of microtones available to them because of their lack of mechanical parts, and therefore can easily find pitches between the traditional twelve of the Western scale. This creates a natural advantage over concert flutes when playing *portamento* and *glissandi*. Finally, in traditional *shinobue* music, the player is often just given a melody and expected to add ornamentation themselves.<sup>24</sup>

While *shinobue* might be the most versatile of the Japanese flutes, *shakuhachi* is probably more widely known and easily recognizable by people outside of Japan. *Shakuhachi* has been employed in a number of movie soundtracks, particularly those meant to invoke a Japanese aesthetic, including *Memoirs of a Geisha* (2005) by John Williams (b. 1932), *The Last Samurai* (2003) by Hans Zimmer (b. 1957), and *Karate Kid* (1984) by Bill Conti (b. 1942). It is the most common Japanese flute,<sup>25</sup> and nowadays there are a number of well-known *shakuhachi* masters who are not of Japanese descent. However, despite its deep association with Japanese culture, the *shakuhachi* is not natively Japanese – in fact, as with many Japanese instruments, it was imported from China. The *shakuhachi* was actually imported to Japan twice: once during the T'ang Dynasty (618–907 CE) and again later, in the thirteenth century, by the Zen Buddhist priest Kakushin. This became *Fuke* sect of *shakuhachi* playing. After the *Fuke* sect was abolished, *shakuhachi* began to be incorporated into ensembles including *koto* and *shamisen* (a three-stringed plucked lute).<sup>26</sup>

The *shakuhachi* (尺八) is named for its length, with 尺 (*shaku*) being equivalent to about 30.3 cm and 八 (*hachi*) meaning eight, referencing the number of *sun*, another unit of measurement, which is about 3.03 centimeters. Altogether, this makes the length of a standard *shakuhachi* is approximately 54.5 centimeters.<sup>27</sup> The range of a single *shakuhachi* of this length is limited, but like the *shinobue*, *shakuhachi* can be exchanged for key changes and to extend range. Though *shakuhachi* cannot modulate well, because it has not keys, it can simulate Western scales.<sup>28</sup> However, it is not the *shakuhachi*'s range that is its appeal. Instead, it is the instrument's extreme tone-color flexibility and timbre range that makes it an appealing instrument. Most of the instrument's range is quite versatile; it is only the highest part of the *shakuhachi*'s range that is piercing and dynamically uncontrollable. Additionally, Miki notes that *shakuhachi* has extreme dynamic capabilities, possibly even more so than any Western flute.<sup>29</sup>

The *ryūteki* (竜笛, literally “dragon flute”) is traditionally part of the Japanese *gagaku* ensemble and is therefore closely associated with the Japanese imperial court and royal family. The *ryūteki* was initially inspired by the *ōteki* (横笛, literally “transverse flute”), a Chinese instrument that was imported to Japan during the Nara period (710-794). Later, the instrument was changed to imitate Tibetan flutes. Like all Japanese flutes, it is primarily made of bamboo; however, the *ryūteki* is wrapped in cherry or rattan bark and covered in lacquer. The end near the mouthpiece is covered in brocade, and the space between the mouthpiece and the top end of the flute is plugged with wax. A lead weight is added to balance the instrument.<sup>30</sup> The mouthpiece itself is slightly larger than that of the *shinobue*, making the *ryūteki* require more air from the player.<sup>31</sup> Miki identifies the *ryūteki*'s fundamental, or lowest, pitch, as generally being around C2 or C-sharp 2. However, this fundamental pitch is notably not a “tonic,” as is often the case in Western folk flutes or in the *shinobue*. Miki notes that, if the fundamental pitch of a *ryūteki* is used as a tonic, the scale produced by uncovering the holes one at a time is irregular and unstable.<sup>32</sup>

The *shinobue* and the *ryūteki* share many similar fingering techniques due to their similar construction. Like *shinobue*, the *ryūteki*'s lowest notes are weak and unstable, the highest notes are piercing and can only be played at *forte*, and the most dexterous part of its range is the middle. However, as the *ryūteki* has larger finger holes, it is easier to produce semitones. Additionally, the inherent instability of the *ryūteki*'s scale encourages performers to constantly develop new fingerings. As the *ryūteki*'s mouthpiece is larger and requires a greater amount of air than a *shinobue*, the *ryūteki* does not traditionally use vibrato. However, it does employ a number of other breath techniques, including techniques that create accents and pitch changes. Some of these pitch shifts are done to intentionally emulate vocal genres such as *saibara* (催馬楽, a type of folk-inspired court music from the Heian period [794–1185 CE]) and *rōei* (朗詠, literally “recitation [of Chinese or Japanese poems]”).<sup>33</sup>

Finally, the *nōkan* (能管, literally “*nō* tube,” 能 means “talent,” but is more often associated with the Japanese theater genre *nō*, or *Noh*, and 管 meaning tube) is the most complexly built any Japanese traditional flute – it is made by splitting open a bamboo tube, turning it inside out, and wrapping it back up with bark and hardening it with lacquer.<sup>34</sup> The process of wrapping and lacquering the flute give it an appearance deceptively similar to the *ryūteki*, but the two flutes are quite different from each other in

shrillness of timbre, performance usage, and technical flexibility. In addition, some instruments will have a round pipe added between the mouthpiece and the first finger hole in order to make the flute's sound even sharper.<sup>35</sup> The unique construction of the *nōkan* means that the pitch of any given instrument is hard to predict, and harder to control – this also makes it hard to notate, and most notation, especially Western notation, that is intended for *nōkan* is understood to be approximate.<sup>36</sup> The piercing timbre and imprecise pitch, Miki believes, is intended to express human instincts and feelings, especially as the flute was specifically developed for use in *nō* theater. While the instrument is imprecise, skilled players can use a combination of embouchure manipulation and fingerings to match the pitch of other instruments.<sup>37</sup>

As with the rest of the transverse Japanese flutes, the lowest notes of a *nōkan* are weak in volume and have a soft timbre. The *nōkan*'s middle register is piercing and loud, but skilled players can create dynamic range. Unlike on the other flutes, the *nōkan*'s highest pitches are frequently used. When the three highest pitches on the instrument are played together, they create a specific motif, known as the *hishigi*. This high-pitched, piercing motif is played using a particularly forceful breath, and is used to heighten the tension of a scene, particularly when a ghost or spirit makes an appearance.<sup>38</sup> This connection to ghosts and spirits supports Miki's claim that the *nōkan* is a representation of human feelings. The last note of the *hishigi* motif, when used on its own, is known as the *kata-hishigi*.

In general, the *nōkan* player accents a phrase with a strong breath attack and by striking the fingers against the finger holes<sup>39</sup> – the sound of the breath is considered to be part of the music.<sup>40</sup> Additionally, the player can use a gradual sliding of a finger while shifting the angle of their lips to create a vibrato-like effect called *netori*.<sup>41</sup> In the flute's lowest register, this effect is used to represent a ghost, similarly to the *hishigi* effect above, though this technique is employed in the off-stage *kabuki* theater music, and not in *nō* theater at all.<sup>42</sup>

## JAPANESE SONIC IDENTITY AND WESTERN INFLUENCES AFTER WORLD WAR II

These flutes are all unique, but all help to create a sonic identity for Japan. While their basic materials and techniques are similar, the techniques that are unique to each instrument help create a sound that definitively Japanese. This sound has deeply influenced Japanese composers, especially after World War II, but so too did the Western musical movements of the time. For many Japanese composers, especially Ichiyanagi and Takemitsu, their first exposure to Western music was not until after WWII, as before that Western music was outlawed in Japan. Western composers such as John Cage (1912–1992), Claude Debussy (1862–1918), and Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992) are noted as being particularly influential to the composers I discuss in this essay, though I will not be discussing their influences.

Fukushima's *Mei* (冥, an archaic kanji meaning dark, pale, or intangible<sup>43</sup>) is contemplative and flowing, combining slow portamento with fast flourishes and piercing high notes. In measures four through six and thirteen through sixteen, Fukushima calls for the flutist to slowly close the keys, which slowly shifts the pitch from E to E flat.<sup>44</sup> This shift closely resembles the *shakuhachi*'s *suri* technique, which is a portamento produced by slowly uncovering a hole.<sup>45</sup> This also resembles the *nōkan* technique *netori*, which also uses the fingers and embouchure to shift smoothly between pitches.<sup>46</sup> Measures twenty through twenty-three have a number of small ornaments, which seem to be influenced by a type of ornamentation commonly used in *shakuhachi* playing called a *kobushi* (小節, literally "small melody").<sup>47</sup> Miki identifies *kobushi* as "a characteristic ornament of Japanese music," and notes that it is used frequently in both popular *enka* music and folk music.<sup>48</sup> Miki notes that this ornamentation type is often used in pieces.<sup>49</sup>

Measures forty-eight through fifty feature a unique moment in the piece. The player is asked to move between a C and C# using only their embouchure.<sup>50</sup> The resulting musical moment is very similar to *shakuhachi*'s *nayashi* technique, which uses the fingers, chin, and lips to lower or raise a sustained note. This can be done multiple times in succession.<sup>51</sup> Additionally, this moment resembles another *shakuhachi* technique, *furi-kiri*, which calls for the player to drop their chin in order to lower the pitch, then immediately returning to it.<sup>52</sup> Measure thirty-five has the player emphasize the attack of the notes by slapping the keys closed at the same time as the player initiates a fairly breathy attack.<sup>53</sup> This is notably

similar to the *nōkan*'s general note-attack pattern discussed earlier. Additionally, this resembles the *shakuhachi* technique *muraiki*, which emphasizes the player's breath with an aggressive breath attack.<sup>54</sup> Finally, in a homage to the *shakuhachi*'s dynamic capabilities, the piece features a large range of dynamics, including *fff*<sup>55</sup> and *pppp*.<sup>56</sup>

Takemitsu's *Towards the Sea III* is a piece with three movements originally written for alto flute and guitar and later re-written for alto flute and ensemble, and alto flute and harp—I will be examining the flute and harp version of the piece. The instrumentation alludes to the common ensemble consisting of a *shakuhachi* and *koto*. The alto flute, in particular, leans into the *shakuhachi* sound, as it has a warmer, more hollow tone. Additionally, it lends itself well to small timbral changes and has distinctly different tone colors throughout its range, similarly to a *shakuhachi*. Throughout the piece, Takemitsu takes advantage of the *shakuhachi*-esque sound of the alto flute and relies heavily on *shakuhachi* techniques in the piece. This results in a piece that does not work as hard to sound Japanese, and so the techniques used within it are less obvious.

The first movement, "The Night," begins with the flute alternating between a hollow tone and a normal tone,<sup>57</sup> then a few moments later does it again.<sup>58</sup> Takemitsu calls for the flutist to alternate between alternative fingerings for the hollow tone and the normal fingerings for the normal tone, similar to how *shakuhachi* player might adjust their tone color.<sup>59</sup> The hollow tones return towards the end of the movement, effectively book-ending it.<sup>60</sup> In addition to the hollow tones, Takemitsu calls for a number of color trills, not just in the first movement, but throughout the whole piece.<sup>61</sup> Takemitsu is very specific about these trills, providing the player with fingerings. These trills have a timbral resemble to the *shakuhachi*'s *kara-kara* technique, which is a trill executed by rapidly tapping specific holes on the *shakuhachi*.<sup>62</sup> This creates a timbral change rather than a complete note change, which gives has a similar effect to the color trills to those in the piece. Takemitsu also uses flutter tonguing throughout the piece, particularly in the third movement, "Cape Cod."<sup>63</sup> On *shakuhachi*, this is called *tamane* or *tabane*, depending on how the fluttering is produced.<sup>64</sup> Finally, like in *Mei*, Takemitsu uses a wide range of dynamics to further emulate the *shakuhachi* sound.<sup>65</sup>

*Still Time IV – In Memory of Toru Takemitsu* – by Ichiyanagi Toshi is, as the title suggests, written in memoriam for Takemitsu. Ichiyanagi tends to lean on the vibrato and timbral changing techniques, as well as quarter tones and breath emphasis, in order to achieve a Japanese sound. As I discussed earlier, Japanese Zen Buddhism emphasizes the space between notes – *Still Time* seems to be a reference to that moment between notes, and the piece itself is in free meter, with no bar lines to influence the flow of time within the piece.

In addition to the time aspect of the piece, *Still Time* has a number of breath and timbral techniques in it. One of the most obvious is the fourth system, where Ichiyanagi gives the performer a visual of the vibrato he intends for them to play.<sup>66</sup> This vibrato variation is commonly used in *shakuhachi* *mawashi-yuri* (回し揺り; 回す, *mawasu*, meaning "to rotate," and 揺り, *yuri* meaning vibration), which uses circular head movements to create vibrato. It is a combination of two other types of vibrato: *yoko-yuri* (横, *yoko* meaning "horizontal"), which uses horizontal head movement, and *tate-yuri* (縦, *tate* meaning "vertical"), which utilizes vertical head movement. What is important about *mawashi-yuri* is that it usually begins slowly, builds in intensity and width, and then returns to a non-vibrato state,<sup>67</sup> exactly what Ichiyanagi calls for the flutist to do in this piece. *Still Time* also leans into the *ryūteki* composition styles, including a run that is similar to what Miki identifies as common melodic patterns used in *ryūteki*.<sup>68</sup> Additionally, while not a traditional technique, multiphonics have become a distinguishable part of *shakuhachi* technique,<sup>69</sup> and in *Sill Time*, Ichiyanagi uses multiphonics<sup>70</sup> very similar to the ones presented by Miki as being commonly used in compositions for *shakuhachi*.<sup>71</sup> As in the last two pieces, the composer uses an extreme range of dynamics, from *pp* to *ff*.<sup>72</sup>

The last piece I am analyzing is Hosokawa Toshio's *Lied* for flute and piano uses dynamic shifts, pitch shifts, and large, slow vibrato to evoke a Japanese flute aesthetic. The piece is slow and still at the beginning, but soon builds up in volume and melodic complexity, and gains momentum and tension, before ending quietly and softly. It is the most recently composed of the four pieces I am examining in this essay.

The slow figures at the beginning of the piece are once again a reference to the *shakuhachi*'s dynamic capabilities, particularly when considering both the extreme range of the dynamics presented and that it is written in the lowest part of the concert flute's range – Hosokawa has the performer to play the lowest E-flat on the instrument, then move that note from *pppp* dynamic to a *forte*, then back to a *ppp* that dies out under a fermata.<sup>73</sup> Both the extreme dynamics and the dying out happens throughout the piece, mimicking how a *shakuhachi* might approach a similar line. In addition, the dynamic markings are used to imitate a few different techniques, including the *ryūteki* technique *fukikomi* (吹き込み, literally “blowing in”), which is a forceful breathe that creates a glissando-like effect between the attack and the note, as well as the *shakuhachi* techniques *muraiki* and *sorane*, which are both types of breath emphasis.<sup>74</sup> Hosokawa has mimicked this by indicating *f* and *ff* underneath grace notes.<sup>75</sup> In *Lied*, Hosokawa rather uniquely uses ornamentation that is reminiscent of *shinobue* ornaments. Miki specifies that trained *shinobue* players would naturally add these ornaments to longer phrases,<sup>76</sup> but Hosokawa adds these ornaments in some of his phrases, especially in measures 24 and 42.<sup>77</sup> Like in *Mei*, measures 10 through 11 and 21 of *Lied* also resemble *nayashi* and *furi-kiri* techniques (Figures 23 and 24).<sup>78</sup> Finally, like in *Still Time*, Hosokawa utilizes vibrato variations, though in *Lied*, the vibrato is simply slow and wide, more like *iki-yuri*, which more resembles Western flute vibrato, than *mawashi-yuri*, *yoko-yuri*, or *tate-yuri*.<sup>79</sup>

## CONCLUSION

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While *Mei*, *Towards the Sea*, *Still Time*, and *Lied* all utilize a variety of traditional techniques in diverse ways and contexts, there are a few similarities throughout all four pieces. Most importantly is the use of extreme dynamic ranges, particularly at the beginning and ends of the pieces, which are often extremely quiet, if there is any sound at all. In all of these contemporary pieces, there is also a noticeable favoring of *shakuhachi* techniques. I believe this is because, in the post-World War II world, the *shakuhachi* has become the most visible and easily recognizable of all of the Japanese traditional flutes, being used in film, video games, and other contemporary multimedia. Although that bias exists, the composers still usually draw from more than just *shakuhachi* canon to add variety and reflect different aspects of Japanese musical traditions. Additionally, every piece explores timbral changes, from color trills to hollow tone fingerings. As described in Miki's book, the natural timbre of instruments is its most important aspect of their sound.<sup>80</sup> Finally, many of the pieces also include quarter tones and pitch shifting, which is reflective of the harmonic flexibility these keyless flutes have.

Identifying the techniques in these pieces will help me both play these pieces better and compose my own piece as a reflection of my own time learning about and living in Japan. I have learned that the most influential flute is *shakuhachi*, with everything from its dynamic range to its vibrato styles heavily influencing post-World War II composers. However, despite the obvious bias towards *shakuhachi* techniques, these composers also pulled from other, less well-known Japanese flute traditions, including *ryūteki*, *shinobue*, and *nōkan*. In my own composition, I will follow the other composer's lead and lean heavily into the *shakuhachi*, but I also plan to incorporate *shinobue* techniques into my composition, as *shinobue* is the flute I have the most experience playing. In the end, however I may implement these techniques, whether that be just as a more conscientious player or as a composer looking to bridge two cultures, this research and analysis has helped to enrich me as a musician, and I look forward to putting into practice the techniques and musical aesthetics associated with traditional Japanese flutes.

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<sup>1</sup> William P. Malm, *Japanese Music and Musical Instruments* (Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1959), 25.

<sup>2</sup> Terence Lancashire, "From Spirit Possession to Ritual Theatre: A Potential Scenario for the Development of Japanese Kagura," *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 36 (2004): 90-108. Kanji and translations presented as available. All translations are my own unless otherwise cited.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Miki Minoru, *Composing for Japanese Instruments*, ed. Philip Flavin, trans. Marty Regan (Rochester, NY: Rochester University Press, 2008), 6.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 1-2.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 116.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 6-54.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 6-7.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 10-11.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 15-16.

- 25 Ibid., 35.  
 26 Ibid.  
 27 Ibid.  
 28 Ibid., 43.  
 29 Ibid., 43.  
 30 Ibid., 15-17.  
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 40 Donald Paul Berger, "The Nohkan: Its Construction and Music," *Ethnomusicology* 9, no. 3 (1965): 221-39, accessed 10 December 2019, doi:10.2307/850235.  
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 42 Ibid.  
 43 Fukushima Kazuo, *Mei* (Milan: Edizioni Suvini Zerboni, 1966).  
 44 Fukushima, m. 4-6, 13-16.  
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 46 Ibid., 31.  
 47 Fukushima, m. 20-24.  
 48 Miki, 51.  
 49 Ibid.  
 50 Fukushima, m. 48-50.  
 51 Miki, 51.  
 52 Ibid., 45.  
 53 Fukushima, m. 34-45.  
 54 Miki, 43.  
 55 Fukushima, m. 37-38.  
 56 Ibid., m 63-66.  
 57 Takemitsu Toru, *Toward the Sea III* (Tokyo: Schott, 1989), 1:1. Pieces without measures will be referenced by [page number]:[line number]. For example, a reference from page 4, line 2, will be written as 4:2.  
 58 Ibid., line 3.  
 59 Miki, 42.  
 60 Takemitsu, 6:1.  
 61 Ibid., 5:1, 6:3, 1:2.  
 62 Miki, 49.  
 63 Takemitsu, 14:3.  
 64 Miki, 44.  
 65 Takemitsu, 1:1, 1:3, 6:3.  
 66 Ichinyagi Toshi, *Still Time IV – In Memory of Toru Takemitsu –* (Tokyo: Schott, 1998), 1:4.  
 67 Miki, 44.  
 68 Ibid., 18; Ichiyagi, 4:7.  
 69 Miki, 54.  
 70 Ichiyagi, 4:7, 5:1.  
 71 Miki, 54.

<sup>72</sup> Ichiyanagi, 4:7.

<sup>73</sup> Hosokawa Toshio, *Lied* (Tokyo: Schott, 2007), flute m. 1-4.

<sup>74</sup> Miki, 43-44.

<sup>75</sup> Hosokawa, flute m. 38-40, 41-44, 47-58.

<sup>76</sup> Miki, 15.

<sup>77</sup> Hosokawa, flute m. 41-44, 10-11.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, flute m. 10-11, 20-22.

<sup>79</sup> Miki, 44.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.