

**THE ASIA SOCIETY**  
in association with  
**THE JAPAN FEDERATION OF COMPOSERS**  
presents



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**WOODWIND REPERTOIRE**

*Masabito Tanaka, bassoon*

*Yasuaki Itakura, clarinet*

*Karen Becker, piano*

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Saturday, January 11, 1992 at 5 PM

**Lila Acheson Wallace Auditorium**

The Asia Society  
725 Park Avenue  
New York City

## MUSIC FROM JAPAN

Naoyuki Miura, Artistic Director  
17th Season

### WOODWIND REPERTOIRE (concert)

Saturday, January 11, 1992 at 5 PM  
The Asia Society  
New York City

#### Performers

*Masabito Tanaka*, bassoon  
*Yasuaki Itakura*, clarinet  
*Karen Becker*, piano

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### PROGRAM

Composer	Title	Year
<i>Keiko Fujiie</i>	<b>"Three Pieces"</b> for clarinet solo	1985*
<i>Atsuki Sumi</i>	<b>"Sabbath"</b> for bassoon solo	1986/91**
<i>Toru Tamura</i>	<b>"Toshusai Sharaku"</b> for clarinet and bassoon	1968*
— INTERMISSION —		
<i>Choji Kaneta</i>	<b>"Irradiation"</b> for bassoon and piano commissioned by Masahito Tanaka	1991***
<i>Akira Miyoshi</i>	<b>"Perspective en Spirale"</b> for clarinet and piano	1989*
<i>Akio Yasuraoka</i>	<b>"Capriccio"</b> for clarinet, bassoon and piano	1985/91**

\*U.S. Premiere

\*\*World Premiere of revised version

\*\*\*World Premiere

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### NOTE FROM NAOYUKI MIURA, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

The clarinet and particularly the bassoon are rather unusual instruments to be featured in recitals. Both Yasuaki Itakura and Masahito Tanaka have established themselves as leading soloists for classical and especially contemporary literature of their respective instruments. Many Japanese composers have worked closely with them to create new works for these instruments. This evening, I am most excited to present these two extraordinary artists and new repertory from Japan.

Air transportation for Mr. Itakura and Mr. Tanaka, courtesy of All Nippon Airways.

Piano courtesy of Yamaha Corporation of America.

## ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

### *Masahito Tanaka* (bassoon)

Masahito Tanaka was born in Tokyo in 1951. He studied with Muneo Tozawa at the Toho Gakuen School of Music, from which he graduated with honors in 1974. He continued his studies at the New England Conservatory under the tutelage of Sherman Walt, and earned his Masters of Music in 1976. From there, he furthered his education at Boston University and with John Mostard at Amsterdam's Sweelinck Conservatorium.

Mr. Tanaka has performed as principal bassoonist worldwide, with orchestras such as The Hague Philharmony (Netherlands), Sinfonieorchester des Sudwestfunks (Germany) and Orchestre Symphonique l'Opera National (Belgium). For many years he has also held the Solo Bassoonist title of the New Japan Philharmonic in Tokyo.

Established as one of today's most virtuosic bassoon soloists in the U.S., Japan, and Europe, Mr. Tanaka's reputation has drawn many contemporary music composers to write works specifically for him. His highly praised recordings include the CDs "The Golden Age of the Bassoon," "The Song of the Bassoon," "Trio CALAMUS" (flute, bassoon and piano), "Musique de Chambre Française" (oboe, bassoon and piano), "L'Histoire du Soldat," and "The Contemporary Bassoon Wave from Japan," all produced by Pavano, Asoria, Thorofon.

Mr. Tanaka has given Master Classes for bassoon and chamber music and taught the new technique of reed making at music schools and festivals in Amsterdam, Oslo, and Tokyo. He is also a distinguished member of Ensemble Lami and Trio Calamus.



### *Yasuaki Itakura* (clarinet)

Born in Tokyo, 1960, Yasuaki Itakura studied the clarinet under Katsusuke Mishima at the Tokyo University of Fine Arts & Music, where his other teachers were Takaoki Hosono, Ryohei Nakagawa and Henriette Puig Roget for chamber music. When he was a 21-year-old student, in 1981, a governmental grant provided him the opportunity to continue his studies in Paris, with scholarships at the Conservatoire Municipal du XIIème Arrondissement and the Conservatoire National Supérieure de Musique. There his teachers were Guy Deplus for clarinet and Maurice Bourgue for chamber music. During his stay, he also concertized as a soloist in recitals and chamber music concerts. He participated in premiere performances of many contemporary works through Radio France and his 1982 performance with the Ensemble Instrumental de Caen in Paris was greeted with high critical acclaim.

Since his return to Japan in 1984, Mr. Itakura has been an increasingly sought-after performer, both as soloist and as a chamber and orchestral member, for contemporary works. A partial list of his performances include the Interlink Festival, Music Today, the Contemporary Music Exhibit, and premieres of works by Akira Nishimura, Toshiro Nakagawa, Keiko Fujiie, Matsatake Matsuo and Fedolos Cavalaris.

He is currently a lecturer at the Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music and the Shotoku Gakuen Junior College.

### UPCOMING EVENTS FOR THE SEASON

**MASTERS OF TRADITION, Japanese & American** — concert  
**Thursday, March 19** The Kennedy Center, Washington, DC  
**Saturday, March 21** The Asia Society, New York, NY  
**Wednesday, March 25** Japanese American Cultural and  
Community Center, Los Angeles, CA

#### *Lecture/Demonstration*

**Wednesday, March 18** The Kennedy Center, Washington, DC

**TRADITION & INNOVATION FROM JAPAN & AMERICA** — symposium  
**Sunday, March 22** The Asia Society, New York, NY

*Karen Becker* (piano)

A native of Madison, Wisconsin, Karen Becker holds degrees from both the Juilliard School, where she studied with Margo Garrett and the Eastman School of Music, where she studied with Robert Spillman.

Ms. Becker was recently heard performing Charles Koechlin's "Les Heures Persanes" op. 65, Alberto Savinio's "Album 1914" and "Les chants de la mi mort" (1914) and John Cage's arrangement for two pianos of Eric Satie's "Socrate" on the Summergarden concert series at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. She also appeared with the Philip Glass Ensemble in performances of *Hydrogen Jukebox* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

Her many successful performances in the New York City area include concerts of Darius Milhaud's "Turangalila" conducted by Paul Zukofsky, David Diamond's "Symphony #4" conducted by Gerard Schwarz and Stravinsky's "Symphony of Psalms" with the Juilliard Symphony and Orchestra in Alice Tully Hall and Avery Fisher Hall. As a member of the Juilliard Contemporary Ensemble she performed Stephen Albert's "Treestone" and Bruce MacCombie's "Parkside Music" conducted by Christopher Kendall.

During the fall of 1991 Ms. Becker was responsible for musical preparation and served as rehearsal pianist for the Juilliard Opera Center's revival of Samuel Barber's *Vanessa*. In July of 1991 she prepared and played a synthesizer orchestration of Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci* presented by Opera Mobile under the auspices of the New York City Department of Parks. During the 1989-90 Season she held the position of Assistant Director of the Brooklyn College Opera Theater.

## COMPOSERS' BIOGRAPHIES AND NOTES

### *Keiko Fujiie*

Keiko Fujiie was born in Tokyo on July 22, 1963. She studied at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music and completed the postgraduate course.

She has won several awards for composition and prizes, such as "Anerkennungen" of the International Competition for Composition; Hambacher Preis (1985), the First prize of the 55th Japan Music Competition (1986); Muramatsu Prize (1990), The Asian Composers League (ACL); Young Composer's Award (1990) among others.

"Love Song" op. 10, commissioned by Arion Music Foundation was premiered at the 3rd Tokyo Summer Festival (1987). "Three Pieces" for clarinet solo was selected as one of the competition pieces of the 1st International Clarinet Competition (1988) in Tokyo. Her other works, which include two "Pas de deux," op. 9 and 14 for piano solo and "String Trio," op. 11, have not only been performed in Japan, but have also received concert performances all over the world at Gaudeamus Musicweek and Stuttgarter Sommerkurse. Also, in 1991, several serial performances were held in Hong Kong and Amsterdam.

### "Three Pieces" by Keiko Fujiie

These three succeeding pieces are closely interrelated. The first piece suggests an inner struggle without

any apparent signs of it coming to the surface, yet suggesting what is to come in the second and the third.

The second is a dialogue by a clarinet taking two parts. During the dialogue it becomes more and more aware of itself and at last, in one final stretch, finds release from its own suppression.

The third is a song of a tense, but emancipated clarinet playing unrestrainedly in praise of itself.

### *Atsuki Sumi*

Born in 1948, Atsuki Sumi studied composition with Toru Tamura at the Musashino College of Music and graduated in 1978.

His works have been performed at various concerts organized by the composer's group affiliated with the Musashino College of Music.

"Dancing Clown" for 2 trumpets and tuba (1984) and "Sunlit Garden," written for Junko Tahara Contemporary Biwa Recital as a special presentation of the composers' group "Kirin" in 1985, established his direction as a composer. "Birds Banquet I" for piano and "Birds Banquet II" for violin and "Oblation" for organ written in 1986 are among his major works.

### "Sabbath" by Atsuki Sumi

Inside, the sanctuary was filled with deep darkness which exudes from the stone walls and floor. Toward this darkness, the light came running through the enormous stained-glass windows, as tiny colored fragments, making sharp contrast against the darkness inside. I wondered why this artificially produced, unreal space moved my heart so vividly. I stood without words in this seemingly, meaningless expanse. Winter in Brussels, thinking of Sabbath days.

"Sabbath" was composed for bassoonist Masahito Tanaka in 1988. When I visited Brussels during the previous winter, the first idea for the piece was conceived. It is a very difficult piece which demands harsh technical performance. The piece starts with up and down scales of tongue pizzicato then suddenly changes to the natural tones of an intricately fingered chromatic scale in presto. Special techniques such as micro-tone trilling and double notes are incorporated during this time and then the piece returns to tongue pizzicato at the end.

### *Toru Tamura*

Toru Tamura was born on January 15, 1938. He graduated from the Department of Composition at the Musashino College of Music in 1962. In 1964, he was awarded a special prize at a TBS competition. He was also awarded the third prize at the Mainichi Music Competition in 1965 for "Trio for Flute, Clarinet, and Bassoon."

His major works include: "The Songs by Bokusui Wakayama" from 1968-1970, "Tuba Quartet" in 1971, "Piano Sonata" in 1973, "Cho-cho-san Songs for Children" from 1979-81, "Concerto for piano" in 1980 and "The Whispering Stars for six hands" in 1982.

Currently he is an associate professor at the Bunkyo College and is a lecturer at the Musashino College of Music.

### "Toshusai Sharaku" by Toru Tamura

Toshusai Sharaku was a Japanese ukiyoe (woodblock print) artist. Though only active for less than a year during 1794–1795, he made many prints of actors and sumo wrestlers. Other details about Sharaku are unknown. This piece was conceived from the impression of Sharaku's prints.

His prints skillfully depict human expressions with concise lines. I transposed these lines with two melodies on two instruments. This composition is a collection of six short pieces titled as follows:

1. Sharaku prologue
2. Two actors in bad characters
3. Prostitute's head
4. A-un
5. Manzai-shosae
6. Epilogue

The work was composed in 1968.

### Choji Kaneta

Choji Kaneta was born in Hokkaido in 1948 and completed his postgraduate studies in 1975 at the Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music, where he studied with Tomojiro Ikenouchi and Akio Yashiro. He has been an active member of various composers' groups such as "Ba" and "Shin-shin-kai."

His major works include: "Adoration II" (1979) for 2 violins, premiered over the radio by Byron Broadcast, "Tenkei I (Revelation)" (1981) for orchestra, "Trance II" for solo timpani, and "Ambivalence IV" which was composed in 1986 for Masahito Tanaka and premiered the same year.

He is currently an associate professor at the Tokyo Gakugei University.

### "Irradiation" by Choji Kaneta

This piece, commissioned by Masahito Tanaka, was composed in November 1991. His wonderful musicality, and incomparable bassoon technique, especially for the contemporary works, inspired me to compose a solo bassoon piece in 1986. This time with the addition of piano, I am looking forward to still newer possibilities.

"Shosha" (Irradiation in Japanese) could mean 1) the sun ray shines on . . . 2) to apply light or radiation. I used the first meaning here, expecting the bassoon and the piano to shine on each other and then to glow in unity.

### Akira Miyoshi

Akira Miyoshi was born in Tokyo in 1933. In 1960, he graduated from Tokyo University, Faculty of French Literature. At the same time in Tokyo, he studied composition under Tomojiro Ikenouchi and Raymond Gallois Montbrun. From 1955 to 1957, Mr. Miyoshi studied in Paris under Henri Challan and Raymond Gallois Montbrun at the Conservatoire National de Musique et de Déclamation.

In 1953, Mr. Miyoshi won the first prize in the Mainichi Concours for his "Sonata" for clarinet, bassoon, and piano. His notable works include "Violin Sonata" and "Symphonic Mutation" (1958), the lyric drama *Ondine* (1959), "String Quartet No. 1" (1962), "Piano Concerto" (1962), as well as "Festival Overture" (1970) and "Kyomon" for children's choir and orchestra (1984), which were performed in Music From Japan's

orchestral concerts at Carnegie Hall to critical acclaim. Mr. Miyoshi also served as a guest speaker and panelist for Music From Japan's first symposium in 1985. The world premiere of his "Ombre Scintillante" was given by harpist Ayako Shinojaki at Music From Japan's Asia Society concert on February 25, 1989. Mr. Miyoshi's "Litany Fuji" (1988) was performed by the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra for the United Nations Day concert in New York and at various other locations during the orchestra's East Coast tour in October, 1991.

He has an impressive record of awards and numerous Japan Art Festival prizes. His is an author of *Empo Yori Mue* (From Distance Toward Nothingness). He now serves as President of Toho Gakuen School of Music, where he is also a professor.

### "Perspective en Spirale" by Akira Miyoshi

This piece was composed for the Japanese clarinetist, Koichi Hamanaka, in 1989 and premiered on June 22 of that year by Mr. Hamanaka and pianist Kaori Kimura. It consists of five sections for clarinet solo which alternate more or less slow, fast, slow, fast and slow. The title of the piece reflects the fact that the structure of the five sections as a whole, and the internal structure of each section, together create multi-layered spirals. The piano placed in the rear of the stage closes these spirals as it softly plays in chorale style behind the clarinet's last cadenza.

### Akio Yasuraoka

Akio Yasuraoka was born in Tokyo on January 13, 1958. He studied with Teruyuki Noda and Akira Miyoshi and completed his postgraduate studies at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music in 1984. He currently serves as lecturer for Toho Gakuen Music School.

Among his major works are: "Dansho" (1981) for harp and string quartet, "The Symphony" (1982), "Three Songs by the Poem of Hakushu" (1983), "Violin Concerto" (1984) and "Projection for Violin and Piano" (1984). He was accorded the first prize at the 49th Japan Music Competition in 1980 and the Japan Symphonic Works Foundation's Fifth Composition Award in 1982.

### "Capriccio" by Akio Yasuraoka

The original piece for clarinet, cello and piano was composed for the school concert at the Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music in the summer of 1980 and revised in the following year. The first public performance was given by Seiji Yokokawa (clarinet), Mahoko Watanabe (cello) and Henriette Puig-Roget (piano), at the Gen-on Autumn Music Exhibit '83 at Daiichi Seimei Hall on December 12th.

The combination of these three instruments, because of their tone textures, reminds me of Brahms's late work, Opus 114. Around 1979, I decided to give this instrumentation with wide musical capabilities a contemporary breath and to express the original appeal of the trio, three individuals challenging each other at times to the limit.

This one-movement piece consists of intense trio sections and improvisatory sections for clarinet and cello, or entwining piano, alternately placed. The version for clarinet, bassoon and piano was written especially for this concert.

## **ABOUT MUSIC FROM JAPAN**

Music From Japan was founded by Naoyuki Miura in 1975. From the first, its concerts at the Japan Society, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and The Asia Society (all in New York) attracted singular attention. It became known as a presenter of Japanese works in performance by American as well as Japanese musicians. In the course of staging concerts throughout the U.S., Music From Japan has, to date, introduced over 200 works of 87 Japanese composers, including over 100 world or American premieres.

Many of the composers first heard in America via Music From Japan concerts later attained world recognition, their works having been performed before new audiences by Tashi, the Kronos Quartet, The Brooklyn Philharmonic, and The American and Baltimore Symphony Orchestras, among others. Music From Japan has always been alert to the key role that electronic music has now gained in the composer's realm. The organization's series of forward-looking symposia and concerts have consistently delved into barely explored reaches of contemporary thought and research in the field under the title "Advanced Technology and Music Today"; one result has been a host of new pieces commissioned for electronics in combination with traditional and acoustic instruments.

Music From Japan's 17th season spans the U.S. with performances at The Asia Society, in New York, Washington, D.C.'s Kennedy Center, and Los Angeles's Japanese American Cultural & Community Center. Appropriately, these events coincide with the long-planned-for opening of The Music From Japan Resource Center in New York. There, scholars, performers, and music lovers from around the world will have access to a variety and depth of materials and information not previously available in this country.

The first Music From Japan label CD featuring Yuji Takahashi's "Tree" and "Iki to Ishi," and David Behrman's "Navigation and Astronomy" will be released early 1992. A partial funding for this Music From Japan, Vol. I on Classic Masters (CMCD-1027) has been provided by the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust.

Music From Japan's many citations include the prestigious Ongaku-no-tomo-sha Award. In 1985, Mr. Miura's direction earned him the Japanese Foreign Minister's Award and an award as Japan's "Best Producer of the Year."

Through its activities and widening influence, Music From Japan will continue to enlarge the cultural common ground shared by the U.S. and Japan.

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For more information about Music From Japan's activities, please write to: Naoyuki Miura, Artistic Director, Music From Japan, 7 East 20th Street, Suite 9R, New York, NY 10003-1106, or call (212) 674-4587.

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