

**Music From Japan Festival 2021 New York**  
**46<sup>th</sup> Season**

March 6-7

Streaming Live from Scandinavia House  
58 Park Avenue  
New York, NY

The Works of Tomoko Hojo

Saturday, March 6

7pm The Works of Tomoko Hojo

*Hover Over Man and Woman* (2020) \* for 2 cassette players, amplifier, mixer, portable speakers, objects

*Distance* (2020) \*\* 2 violins, viola, and cello

*Touch* (2021) \*\* video score for amplified paper, electronics, and cello

*I am Listening to You* (2018) \* composer solo performance with 4 channel speaker system

Sunday, March 7

5:30pm The Works of Kazuya Ishigami

*Hossin no Kizashi* (2009/2021) \* for electronics and objects

*Shuffling Improvization* (2021) \*\* for bass clarinet and electroacoustics

*True Sound - From just one sound* (2021) \*\* for shakuhachi and electronics

*TEIKAN - Let go of attachments* (2021) \*\* for alto saxophone and electronics

*Depiction of sounds - pray to buddha and gods* (2016/2021)\* for electronics

\*\* world premiere, MFJ commission

\*US premiere

PROGRAM NOTES

**The Works of Tomoko Hojo**

*Hover Over Man and Woman*

The world's first audio recording of a Japanese woman was made in Berlin in 1901. It was the voice of the former geisha and actress Kawakami Sadayakko, who travelled to Europe and the United States three times, starting in 1899, as a member of Theater Kawakami Otojiro. Sadayakko, who was abruptly placed in the role of actress at a time when women were prohibited from taking the stage in Japan, attracted a large number of spectators – including artists and composers such as Picasso, Rodin and Debussy – who

were entranced with her beauty, and shaped the image of Japanese femininity in the West. While investigating at the Berlin Phonograms-Archive I discovered both the original voice of Sadayakko and two recordings of voices erroneously listed as those of men. Based on these materials, I sought to convey the contrast between the constant remarks made on her physical and visual beauty with her voice, which people recognized at the time as 'merely a sound', and silence.

### *Distance*

Measure a distance through listening and playing.

Each performer stands at each corner of a space.

Close eyes and play long-tone with an A pitch at the loudest volume possible.

Slowly move around the space and try to make a perfect square with a distance of each performer's both sides are 6ft away.

### *touch*

The work touch is based on the theme of physical contact during the pandemic.

How can we counter the current situation in which physical contact is restricted, both between people and between people and objects, and the sensations of touch and smell are being substituted by visual information? Thinking of new ways to "touch" without direct contact might allow for interaction with objects that are not only separated geographically and physically, but also separated in time. In the archives of the New York Public Library, Yoko Ono's ephemera were not allowed to be seen or touched due to the restrictions of covid-19. By video-recording the physical interventions with the photocopies provided as the substitute for the ephemera, and using these recordings as a video score for further physical and acoustic interventions, this work attempts to twist the distance that cannot be crossed (closed) between us and the object.

### *I am Listening To You*

This work departs from an oral history interview with John Lennon and Yoko Ono made on 6 December 1980, two days before Lennon's death. Whereas John had been without interruption, Yoko was often muted and mostly accompanied his speech by laughing with high soft small voice. In Japanese society, people insert 'aizuchi' – a sort of backchannel such as 'huh' or 'yeah' – quite often during the conversation, to let the other speaker know that they are actively listening. Although Yoko seems to inhabit this specific behavior, there is equally an absence, a meandering in a different time and place. Listening becomes the act of imagining unspoken words, and gradually shifts into a fluidity between listening and speaking.

## **The Works of Kazuya Ishigami**

### *Hossin no Kizashi*

"Hossin no Kizashi" is a work based on the theme of "Prayer," a word of inspiration provided to me by the head priest of Senkoji temple (at Hirano, Osaka City). To find a catalyst for the composition, I decided to participate (for just 7 days) in the walking pilgrimage of Shikoku. I felt the first signs of the Bodaishin.

<About the term>

Hosshin:

Hosshin is an abbreviation of Bodaishin—to decide to seek enlightenment. "Hosshin no Kizashi" means one step before Hosshin—that there is still a hesitation.

Part 1: "Bon'noh : Ton-Jin-Chi-Man-Gi-Akken":

"Bon'noh" is the Japanese word for kleshas or evil passions (in Buddhism). Ton-Jin-Chi-Man-Gi-Akken are the six foundational passions. "Ton" – desire or greed. "Jin" – anger. "Chi" – foolishness. "Man" – pride. "Gi" – doubt. "Akken" – prejudice or false view.

\*Only part 1 will be performed.

Length: 8'21"

Production year: 2009

*True Sound* - From just one sound -  
for shakuhachi and electroacoustics

This work was influenced by "一音成仏" *Itton Jobutsu* (One Sound Enlightenment).  
Sound is vibration, and vibration is the universe itself. All sound can be said to be one sound.

Length: 8'03

Production year: 2021

*Shuffling Improvisation*  
for bass clarinet and electroacoustics

This piece has 50 musical phrases played in shuffle mode, against which the bass clarinetist will improvise. Shuffle playback is a simple and classic track playing process, but I believe it is a reliable way for players to improvise sessions at a distance. If you play 50 tracks in a shuffle, you will have a near infinite number of combinations. (Even with 10 tracks, there are 3,628,800 possible combinations.) We can say that it is almost improvisational.

Length: 7'08

Production year: 2021

*TEIKAN* - Let go of attachments -  
for alto saxophone and electroacoustics

Part 1 "Something that accumulates"

According to the official World Health Organization (WHO) announcement, the world's first case of covid-19 was recorded on December 8, 2019. The first case in Japan was reported on January 16, 2020, and the first case of in the United States was reported on January 19, 2020.

Every Sunday morning, I record the sounds outside, from my window. This "Sunday Morning Field Recording" has been going on since November 12, 2017 and continue to the present.

Part 1 is a mix of 56 weeks of "Sunday Morning Field Recording" from December 8, 2019 to December

27, 2020.

It is an objective sonic record of the accumulation of "something" (let's call this something a sign of covid-19) that is supposed to be recorded in sound.

Part 2 "Vibration of the mind"

The year 2020 was a year in which the threat of covid-19 itself was, of course, a threat, but more than that, it was a year in which the state of the human mind was shaken.

The "vibration of the mind" that started quietly at one point rapidly became more intense.

Part 3 "nostalgias"

I think that perhaps closed-off situations can lead people to nostalgia.

Nostalgia is both an emotional support and an obsession/attachment.

Part 4 "watch peacefully"

Our mission is to overlook and approve the flood-like vibrations of the mind.

It is to have a peaceful mind and pass it on to the next generation.

Length: 14'05

Production year: 2021

*Depiction of sounds* - pray to buddha and gods –

At the end of the year, I hear the bells ring, to wash away all the unpleasant things of the year. And so that next year will be a good year, I clear out my heart. In the New Year, I offer prayers at the shrine. I pray sincerely that this year will be a good year. Time goes by so quickly—a year is a blink of the eye.

Length: 10'51

Production years : 2016