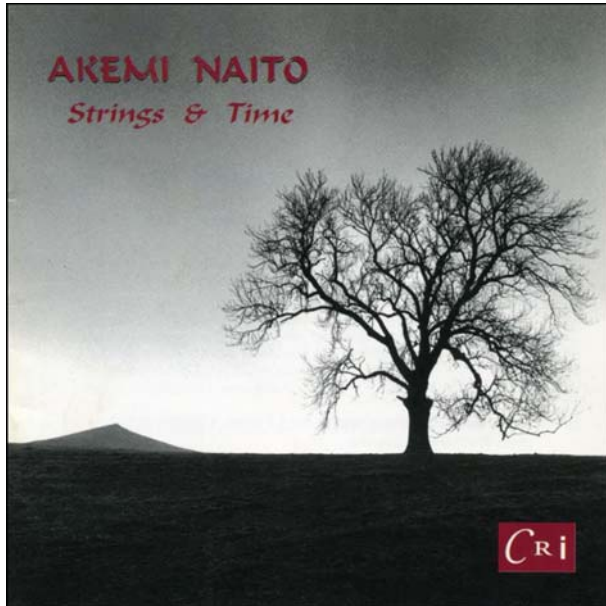


NWCR771

Akemi Naito

Strings & Time



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|--|-----------|
| <i>Winter Shadow</i> for Guitar Duo (1994) | (6:35) |
| 1. I | (3:33) |
| 2. II | (2:57) |
| William Anderson, guitar; Oren Fader, guitar | |
| <i>Rain, Calling Autumn</i> for Piano | (1991-94) |
| 3. I | (3:20) |

| | |
|---|---------|
| 4. II | (1:58) |
| 5. III | (2:55) |
| Martin Christ, piano | |
| 6. <i>Interlude</i> for Violoncello and Piano (1996) | (7:14) |
| John Whitfield, violoncello; Martin Christ, piano | |
| 7. <i>Solitude</i> for Alto Sax with Live Electronics (1992) | (9:47) |
| Ulrich Krieger, saxophone | |
| 8. <i>Electronic Landscape</i> for Tape (1995) | (5:26) |
| <i>Strings & Time</i> for 13 Strings (1992-96) | (10:50) |
| 9. I | (3:35) |
| 10. II | (2:18) |
| 11. III | (4:47) |
| Mis en Loge String Ensemble: Hisako Takahashi, Chiyoko Noguchi, Madoka Suzuki, Michio Isaji, Momoko Yamada, Shirabe Aoki, Horiko Matsuda, Ai Kikuchi, violins; Aiko Hosokawa, Miharu Yoshida, violas; Miho Nakamura, Ichiro Hasebe, violoncellos; Yusake Sugakata, contrabass; Yoichi Sugiyama, conductor | |
| 12. <i>Street Songs for Guitar</i> (1979) | (5:48) |
| Norio Sato, guitar | |

Total playing time: 55:10

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Notes

For me, composing is a profoundly poetic activity. However the world may change or technologies progress, composition remains an unchanging foundation, one that is always my starting point. Sound has its own energies, and my method is to weave them together. Sound breathes and shapes itself into a musical work. Form is the end result.

I discover the true significance of a work in those artistic expressions that reach the core of the universe in an instant. It is my hope to create music that is simple yet deep. To grasp one moment of certainty.

New York City, where I have lived since 1991, enables me to examine my own being. Here, the spirit of individual style fit me like a glove, and I felt I wanted to delve into myself as deeply as I could. Yet, as a Japanese woman here, it is necessary to nurture within myself a perspective, a structure that is different from the Western ideas of time. For me, time is malleable, and it can be sublimated from a melodious moment into a time-space of infinite continuity.

In this city where various cultures intersect, one is made aware of one's roots. Simultaneously, things that are pure and moving leap easily over barriers of language and ethnicity.

I am convinced that the most beautiful moments in history are when something is communicated. That is why I continue speaking through music.

From myself, here and now, towards the infinite.

—Akemi Naito

Winter Shadow for two guitars consists of two movements; a melodious first, and a technically free second.

In the first movement, I attempted to effectively portray the beauty of harmonics. I was made aware of the melodic nature of my music when I came to New York City in the fall of 1991. Currently, my interest lies in composing melodies that are simple, and yet of depth. Composing becomes a profoundly poetic act from pondering the trace of a note, and exerting myself to grasp that moment of certainty and extend it. The second movement incorporates graphic notation in order to form a sound-space unobtainable through fixed notation. Many valuable suggestions from William Anderson helped to realize this piece.

I began working on this piece in December 1993, commissioned by Music From Japan. It is composed for and dedicated to both William Anderson and Oren Fader.

Written for solo piano, *Rain, Calling Autumn* consists of three pieces. The title is taken from a poem by Chuya Nakahara. Each of the three pieces develops an acoustical idea as an important compositional concept. This idea in effect defines the direction of each piece. The first piece uses no special sound effects and relies on traditional piano performance. Confronted with a piano as an instrument, one of my challenges was how to express the self in a language of one who lives in this modern era.

In the second piece, the combination of the use of the sostenuto pedal and the silent depression of tone clusters in

the low register brings out a deeply sonorous reverberation. I wanted to draw effectively with this sound world in hand as the main subject.

In the third piece, the gong-like sound, which is achieved by inserting a dime between the C-sharp strings inside the piano, permeates the whole. There is no direct correlation to the title poem itself, but the beauty of the title and the feeling of my inner world overlap with the poet's world and lead to the quotation of the title to this music.

The first piece was completed in August 1991, the second in August 1992, and the third in October 1994. It is dedicated to Aki Takahasi.

Interlude:

The first piece was completed in August 1991, the second in August 1992, and the third in October 1994. It is dedicated to Aki Takahasi. Trying to let my imagination flow with the orthodox instrumentation of cello and piano was a difficult task. Since I am always interested in fresh approaches to an instrument's capacities, I almost felt a sense of constraint hindering me from the very beginning in writing for a duo of these two instruments. It was as though tradition were weighing heavily on the possibilities for new approaches.

After much trial and error, I had a desire to compose a work which would resonate deep within the spirit. I hoped to make the essence of my music surface spontaneously. Thus, the title *Interlude* is intended to imply that this composition is an intimate sketch of my spirit.

It was composed for pianist Tomomi Ohru and cellist Yohei Asaoka for their recital at the Carnegie Weill Hall. Prior to this recital, I returned to Japan to attend the Japanese premiere of *Rain, Calling Autumn*, performed by Aki Takahashi in Yokohama. On that same day I learned of Toru Takemitsu's passing. It was when I was inspired deeply by his work *The Dorian Horizon* in my late teens, that I was convinced to make composition my life work, and ever since, this has always been a source, a point of origin, for me. In deep sorrow, I completed the final segment of this piece there in Tokyo.

This work is dedicated to the memory of Takemitsu's spirit.

Solitude:

By processing the saxophone electronically, the breath sound and key click can be effectively utilized. This is one of the attractions of the instrument.

The tones achieved from playing softly, too, expand with unexpected beauty. I wanted to compose a piece that would maximize the effect of these elements. In recording, two Lexicons were used to create two different kinds of reverberation. From the sensitive tones of soft notes to dynamic breath sound, it was thrilling for me to observe the expansion of such richly changing tones.

I am grateful for the deep understanding that Ulrich Krieger, for whom this was written, has shown this piece.

It was composed between the fall of 1991 through winter of 1992. This was my first composition after moving to New York City.

Electronic Landscape is my first composition for electronics using old analog synthesis.

Currently, with much interest in the world toward electronic music, I felt it only natural that in order to better my understanding toward the digital, it was necessary to be disciplined in analog as well.

I studied under Arthur Krieger at Columbia University from the fall of 1994 to the spring of 1995, and this is, so to speak, my end of term thesis. Following this term, the analog studio at Columbia was dismantled and is now no longer available. Those were the final, precious hours at the closing of an era.

I used mainly the Buchla Synthesizer on this piece. Laying down the sounds I made onto tape, then cutting them up and reconfiguring them to create my work, this was a process unique to analog and enabled me to experience the textures of these sounds fully. *Electronic Landscape* consists of four movements.

Strings & Time is finally complete with the addition of the third movement, and this recording is the premiere performance of the work in full. It first was commissioned by the string ensemble, Mis en Loge. However, in the process of composing it, after finishing the first piece, I felt the need for a second, and finishing the second, I again felt the need for a third. There is a certain soothing quality that is characteristic of strings, and thus it fills me with a sense of possibility, to express the eternity from the distant past into the unknown future. A query from myself, here and now, to an infinite something.

Secret Song is one of my early compositions. At the time I composed this, I was very much influenced by the guitar playing of Derek Bailey. Overlapping the sonority of the guitar with my own inner being, I wanted to search for all the possible means of expression with that instrument. Guitarist Norio Sato made this possible for me. Many years have passed since this work was first premiered, but the same approach still seems to be my basic working rhythm in composition. This work first was featured in Norio Sato's album "Ko-Tha" released by Alm records in 1990. The performance in this CD is a new recording.

—Akemi Naito

Akemi Naito is a native of Japan, born in Tokyo on January 24, 1956. Her early musical training on piano took place at the Toho Music School. In her late teens, she encountered Toru Takemitsu's *The Dorian Horizon*, which left a strong impact on her and became the starting point of her life as a composer. Ms. Naito was awarded the Takei prize in 1982 and her works have been performed at the Music Today Composition Awards, produced by Takemitsu (1982 and 1988). In September 1991, the Asian Cultural Council Grant brought her to New York City where she presently resides.

In addition to performances abroad, her music has been heard in venues such as Roulette, Weill Recital Hall, the Asia Society, Concordia College, the Manhattan School of Music, and the Ethical Culture Society.

Ms. Naito's works are available on recordings "Hyper Music from Lennon & McCartney" by Aki Takahashi on EMI and Norio Sato's "Ko-Tha" on Alm Records. She earned her bachelor and master's degrees from the University Division at the Toho Gakuen School of Music, where she also served as faculty member from 1980-1991.

William Anderson, guitar, has been soloist for the Bang on a Can Festival, the Theater Chamber Players of the Kennedy Center, the Brooklyn Philharmonia, and the New Music Consort. Anderson's first solo recital in New York City in 1990 was presented by the League of Composers/ISCM at Weill Hall. In 1994 he was presented in a joint recital with Japanese guitarist Mikio Hoshido by Music from Japan. He has given solo recital tours in the United States, Mexico, Poland, and Holland playing contemporary music including works of his own. He now is co-director of the Cygnus Ensemble which he founded in 1985. Cygnus is devoted to contemporary music.

Oren Fader, guitar, is active as a performer of classical guitar repertoire both old and new. He has performed in London, Tokyo, Munich, Amsterdam, Montreal, Mexico, and throughout the United States, and has been a featured soloist with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the North Country Chamber Players, and the Manchester Music Festival

Chamber Symphony. Other performances include Music from Japan, Da Camera Houston, Parnassus, and the Aspen Music Festival. Fader performed in the world premiere of Tod Machover's *Bud-Mudra*, using MIDI "hyper-instruments." As a member of the New Music Ensemble, Cygnus, he has premiered many new chamber works with guitar.

Martin Christ, piano, currently teaches a concert class at Zurich Conservatory. He has studied piano in Basel with Jürg Wyttenbach, in Paris with Yvonne Lefébure, in Vienna with Dieter Weber and Bruno Seidlhofer, and with Russian pianist Stanislas Neuhaus. He is well known from his active exploration and promotion of contemporary music, but is equally well-connected to his traditional roots. For this reason, his repertoire includes music in many different styles ranging from the Baroque period to the present. As a skilled improviser, he also enjoys playing silent movie music and music in the modern style.

John Whitfield, cello, has had his performances portrayed by critics as everything from "powerful" and "gut wrenching" to "virtuosic" and "airborne." His growing reputation is earning him appearances as recitalist and chamber musician across the United States and abroad. He has appeared as soloist with the Monterey Symphony, and the Bowdoin Festival Chamber Orchestra, as well as with Musician's Accord, the New York Guild of Composers, Composers Concordance, and Columbia Composers. He currently is cellist of the Cygnus Ensemble and Newband, and has made guest chamber appearances in concerts presented by the Bang on a Can Festival, the New York Music Ensemble, and Merkin Hall's Music Today Ensemble, among others.

Ulrich Krieger, saxophone, has played in numerous concerts and for radio and television broadcasts as performer, composer, and soloist with his own ensembles, and various chamber music groups and orchestras (including the Ensemble Modern and the Berlin Philharmonic) in Europe,

the U.S., Canada, Korea, and Australia.

Norio Sato, guitar, is a native of Japan, but was born in Jilin, China 1951. He studied under Yasumasa Obara, and won first prize in the 1971 Guitar Competition (presently named Tokyo International Guitar Competition). Sato regularly concertizes and takes part in chamber music performances, recording, conducting, and directing. He is considered one of the leading artists in Japan today. In 1993, he received the Special Award in performance from the Music Competition of Japan Awards, the Nakajima Kenzo Award in 1994, and the Asahi Contemporary Music Award in 1996.

Yoichi Sugiyama, conductor, was born in 1969 in Tokyo, and studied composition under Akira Miyoshi, Franco Donatoni, Sandro Gorli, and conducting under Morihiko Okabe. Since 1992, Sugiyama has participated in the planning and organization of Music Festival Theater Winter in which he has performed his own works as well as works commissioned from Japanese and international composers. From 1992, he also has been the leader of Mis en Loge, which continues to ambitiously premiere new compositions. He has been in Italy since 1995 as an exchange student under scholarship from the Italian government. He currently studies composition at the Conservatorio "Giuseppe Verdi" di Milano under Sandro Gorli.

Mis en Loge String Ensemble was formed in 1992 by a group of eleven promising young string players and composer Yoichi Sugiyama. Focusing on works written for contemporary string orchestra, they commission works by new composers, and their ambitious activities have won them high acclaim. The ensemble has been invited by the Japan Society for Contemporary Music to perform a contemporary music concert series for two consecutive years, as well as by the Toru Takemitsu Memorial Yatsugatake Music Festival. "Mis en Loge," which means to take part in the realization of art, was christened by composer Akira Miyoshi.

Production Notes

Produced by Akemi Naito with Jonathan Schultz

Winter Shadow recorded June 21, 1996 at Master Sound Astoria, Jonathan Schultz and David Merrill, engineers.

Rain, Calling Autumn recorded April 18, 1996 at Whitman Hall, Brooklyn College. Skip Bruner, engineer.

Interlude recorded April 20, 1996 at Sear Sound. Fred Kevorkian, engineer.

Solitude recorded July 18, 1996 at Master Sound Astoria, Jonathan Schultz and David Merrill engineers.

Electronic Landscape composed at Electronic Music Center at Columbia University.

Strings & Time recorded February 4, 1997 at Mitaka Art Culture Center in Tokyo. Yukio Kojima and Takako Yanagisawa, engineers.

Secret Song recorded February 14, 1997 at Master Sound Astoria, Jonathan Schultz and David Merrill engineers.

Winter Shadow, Solitude, Strings & Time, and Secret Song edited by Jonathan Schultz.

Rain, Calling Autumn and Interlude edited by Kenn Babb. Re-editing by Jonathan Schultz.

Publishing: composer (ASCAP)