

SOUNDING BOARD

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Please keep sending your contributions to info@harpsichord.org.uk

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*** *A Happy New Year to you all* ***

I hope you will enjoy this Issue that gives us a glimpse into the Early Music scene on the other side of the world. Our curiosity was aroused when just as an earlier issue was going to press, we received an article from Japan. This prompted us to find out more about music making in distant parts and so we invited Naomi Okuda, the renowned Recorder player, to be our Guest Editor.

As she says in her introduction it is not always easy to find colleagues who have the time to write for us, and this is particularly so for those who are writing in what to them is a foreign language. We are therefore very grateful to all those who have contributed an article. In order to preserve some of the nuances of the original language, a decision was made not to alter what is sometimes unusual wording or word order unless it was thought necessary in order to clarify the meaning.

It is fascinating to learn how a nation with an established and ancient musical culture of its own, eventually embraced a very different style of music from Europe. It is even more intriguing to learn that it was only after the piano making industry was established in Japan that the first harpsichord was built in that country and that that was produced by a piano technician. So it was that in the East the harpsichord followed on from the piano! As the interest in Early Music spread, the number of harpsichord builders grew, and many fine historically correct instruments are now being built there.

Also in this issue we have a report from Pamela Nash about the very successful BHS Concert showcasing the winners of our Composition Competition. This was a truly international occasion with several winners as well as players coming from different parts of the globe. Do look out for the recording by Prima Facie Records of the winning pieces; this CD is due for release sometime in 2014.

Another intriguing article by Malcolm Messiter will be of special interest to those who need 'spare parts' for their instruments and find that they are no longer available. Despair not- Help is at hand!

Finally we end with 'Your Letters' followed by some lighthearted facts which you will find on the page headed '...on a Lighter Note'. Your letters and comments are always welcome- please continue to write to us about any harpsichord related matter.

Meanwhile we are looking forward to a feast of harpsichord music in the coming year with several important anniversaries falling in 2014; C.P.E. Bach, born in 1714, Fiocco who died that same year, Mattheson and Rameau who both died in 1764- 250 years ago. Do listen, play and enjoy. ❁

Edna Lewis- acting Coordinating Editor

Please send your comments and your contributions to info@harpsichord.org.uk

****From our Guest Editor, Naomi Okuda****

As a professional recorder player it was a big surprise to be asked to serve as Guest Editor of *Sounding Board!* And the suggested focus of this issue 'The harpsichord in Japan' brings certain difficulties too. Where to start in a country where there is no historical harpsichord tradition at all? And then there is a difficulty to translation of any Japanese contributions, something which I am very familiar in daily life, quite apart from my writing for other magazines like *Entrée* (Japanese early music magazine). Translation is not a simple matter when the whole style of expression typical for Japanese writing in our own language is completely different to that used in many western languages.

But the request to edit this issue came with encouragement to use all the freedom I wanted in approaching the subject and the result is hopefully a small viewpoint into the world of harpsichords in Japan, seen from very many different directions.

How did I come to be working in Early Music field at all? As child in Sakai City I played recorder before taking up the flute at secondary school. I continued with flute right up to my first degree at Osaka College of Music. Increasing interest in early music led me to try recorder again after college and in 1995 I had my first experience in UK at the Dartington International Summer School, playing recorder with Piers Adams. This set the direction of my musical career and following another visit to Dartington I enrolled at the Guildhall School of Music in 1997, studying recorder with Pamela Thorby and wider studies with Stephen Preston, Rachel Podger, Nancy Hadden and David Roblou. I also continued private study with Piers Adams.

On return to Japan I continued to study with Hirohiko Nakamura and Akimasa Mukae whilst I developed a busy career as a soloist, ensemble player and teacher. To this I added occasional concert, competition and study visits to Europe. I have always had a practical interest and throughout this time I developed not only musical connections but a number of good friendships with instrument makers – mainly recorder makers but also several harpsichord builders and technicians. So I have been familiar with instrument maker workshop for many years already.

So when I married with harpsichord maker Andrew Wooderson in 2010 and moved permanently to the UK I entered a not completely unfamiliar world!

Whilst I continue to build my professional playing and teaching career in the UK and still maintain a large amount of work in Japan I am spending increasing time in the 'harpsichord world'. Apart from working with Andrew in the workshop occasionally, I have even recently taken a formal role as co-Director of Bexley Harpsichords Ltd, our joint early keyboard hire and concert services business.

So it is from this quite broad and mixed position I have tried to bring this issue of *Sounding Board* together. Of course as most editors know it is not always easy to find a well balanced selection of high quality articles. Many interesting friends and colleagues are too shy or too busy to contribute. But I am very grateful indeed to those who have taken the time and trouble and I apologise in advance if editorial requirements have changed their contribution in any negative way.

Generally I have tried to make as little changes to contributions as possible and to respect the original content. Translation from Japanese, partly by author and in one case myself has tried to maintain the style of the original. So the result in some senses is similar to a typical traditional Japanese meal. Many fairly small, very varied and quite light but tasty dishes combining to form a very satisfying meal! Itadakimasu!

So thank you to all contributors and to Karen Chung, of the British Harpsichord Society who first invited me to undertake this Guest Editorship, also to the acting Coordinating Editor, Edna Lewis who has since given me a huge amount of patient help and encouragement. ❁

Naomi Okuda



Naomi Okuda is now living in London, where she is developing her career as a freelance recorder soloist and ensemble player. She teaches privately at all levels from beginner to advanced, teaching in both English and Japanese. In addition she has a regular teaching position at Wellington College and will be teaching the Advanced Recorder Course at the Benslow Music Trust this coming in February.

Naomi gives regular recitals with harpsichordist Tom Foster, together with a number of other musicians, the next of these takes place at St Pancras Church, London on Thursday 16th January at 1.15pm.

For further details of teaching, group coaching and forthcoming concerts, or to be added to Naomi's mailing list please contact: Naomi Okuda: 07772 436662 / 01322 525558 lgsm703@gmail.com

Benslow Music Trust

Tel: 01462 459446

<http://benslowmusic.org/>

Bexley Harpsichords Ltd

Tel: 01322 558326

<http://www.woodersonharpsichords.co.uk/>

*** NEWS ***



HORNIMAN Museum & Gardens,
100 London Road, Forest Hill,
London, SE23 3PQ

Photograph by Cliff Van Coevorden, reproduced with permission

The Horniman Musical Composition Competition Winners. Open to young musicians, the competition brief was to compose a solo harpsichord piece to celebrate the opening of the new permanent display in the music gallery (see below) Entries were received from all over the world, including Indonesia, Finland, Greece and Russia. The competition adjudicators, harpsichordist Jane Chapman and composers Alexander Goehr and Rhian Samuel, selected as joint winners of the Competition ADAM W. STAFFORD from Dukinfield, Cheshire and TIM WATTS from Ely, Cambridgeshire. Their pieces will be performed at the launch of the exhibition ‘At Home With Music’, on the newly restored Kirkman harpsichord.

‘At Home With Music’ Opening at the end of January 2014, will focus on keyboards from the past five centuries that were brought into homes – from parlours to palaces – and bring together highlights of the keyboard instrument collections from the Horniman and the Victoria and Albert Museum This will also see the introduction of live musical performances as a regular feature in the Horniman’s Music Gallery through the restoration to playing condition of the 1772 Jacob Kirkman harpsichord. This instrument will also be used for future lecture demonstrations, master-classes and concert performances.

http://www.horniman.ac.uk/get_involved/news/at-home-with-music-at-the-horniman



*The Kirkman harpsichord of 1772,
photograph reproduced with permission*

‘Roots of Revival’ This conference running from 12-14 March 2014 will be a 3-day forum for presenting research on the lives and work of collectors, enthusiasts, craftsmen and musicians who had an impact on the course of the 20th century early music revival. Please note conference places are limited. To reserve a place please email rootsofrevival@horniman.ac.uk . An invoice for the Registration fee of £80 will be sent to you in due course. The fee covers attendance at all sessions, tours, light refreshments, final evening reception with wine and concert. Travel and accommodation costs are not included. <http://www.horniman.ac.uk/visit/events/roots-of-revival>

* * * * * NEWS * * * * *

**The Russell Collection and
CHRISTOPHE ROUSSET**

Thanks to a Website called 'Semibrevis', devoted to the Early Music Pioneers, you can see Christophe Rousset on Video talking about a selection of the instruments in the Russell Collection. This is an important and large part of the Edinburgh University's fine collection of early keyboard instruments.

Via a link you can also hear him in a programme of music by Purcell, Couperin, Rameau, and Froberger recorded by the BBC at the Edinburgh Festival for the Early Music Show.

*Go to the 'Semibrevis' website
<http://www.semibrevis.com/>*

**ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC
MASAOKI SUZUKI RECEIVES BACH PRIZE**

Awarded in 2012 by the Royal Academy of Music/Kohn Foundation, for his outstanding contribution to Bach performance over the last twenty years. Masaaki Suzuki the renowned harpsichordist, founder and director of the Bach Collegium Japan, recently completed his celebrated series of recordings of all J.S.Bach's vast output of Church Cantatas. The Bach prize was presented to him on November 10th at the Royal Academy of Music by Sir Ralph Kohn, after which he directed the Academy students, led by Margaret Faultless, in a fine performance of Bach's Cantatas BWV 5 and BWV 41. This concert being part of the Academy's own highly acclaimed Bach Cantata series, now in its fifth year.

<http://www.ram.ac.uk/bach-cantatas>

ZUZANA RŮŽIČKOVÁ, the world-renowned harpsichordist, became the first ever winner of the Garnet Star, a new award by the Bohemian Heritage Fund, for continuous enrichment of national culture. The award in the form of an ornate jewelled star with a Czech garnet at its centre is inscribed 'Ad Astra per Artis'. It was presented to Zuzana Růžičková by opera star Cecilia Bartoli following her concert in Prague on November 12th. *See in the last issue of 'Sounding Board' an article by Pamela Nash, celebrating the 85th birthday of Zuzana Růžičková.*

JMRO CALL FOR PAPERS

The Journal of Music Research Online (JMRO) is a freely accessible, peer-reviewed journal for the publication of scholarly research in music. It has a distinguished international editorial board, broad scope and only publishes research that is of the highest international standard.

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For further information contact **Jula Szuster**, jula.szuster@adelaide.edu.au

* * * * * NEWS * * * * *

*** HEAR THE 1789 KIRCKMAN IN THE TATTON PARK COLLECTION ***

See http://www.southampton.ac.uk/music/research/projects/at_home_with_music.page#media
To view four short films recently made for the National Trust about music making at Tatton Park in Cheshire. Penelope Cave, one of the BHS Committee members, appears in the films and plays music from the Egerton family collections on the historic instruments at Tatton Park. She project managed the whole enterprise under the direction of her PhD supervisor at the University of Southampton, Professor Jeanice Brooks. Although the focus of the films is on domestic performance, dancing and piano lessons in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Tatton Park Kirckman harpsichord of 1789, is also featured and will be of special interest to *Sounding Board* readers.

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS CELEBRATED WITH A HARPSICHORD RECITAL

To celebrate the 60th anniversary of the commencement of diplomatic relations between Sri Lanka and Germany, the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Germany recently organised a harpsichord recital, by the renowned Sri Lankan Bach specialist **Prof. Preethi De Silva**.

In his introductory speech, Prof. Dr. Reinhard Schäfertöns, Dean of the Faculty of Music of the University of Arts, Berlin, informed the audience about the life of Preethi de Silva and her work in the rediscovery of the music and the instruments of the Bach era. He reminded the audience of her years spent as a student at the then Hochschule für Musik, highlighting that Preethi de Silva was a brilliant example of the good relations Sri Lanka and Germany have enjoyed over the last 60 years.



A JUNIOR FELLOWSHIP IN HARPSICHORD/CONTINUO at the Royal College of Music.

Thanks to the generosity of Mrs Linda Hill a new Junior Fellowship is to be created. The duties will include accompanying historical performance classes, chamber music rehearsals/sessions, baroque orchestral projects, examinations, masterclasses etc and to liase with and give support to the Head of Historical Performance. Applicants must submit a portfolio with an audio/video recording and a letter detailing all aspects of their experience in harpsichord/continuo. For full details on how to apply, see <http://www.rcm.ac.uk/juniorfellowships/howtoapplyforajuniorfellowship/>

Closing date for applications for 2014/15 is **FRIDAY the 31st JANUARY 2014.**

The 2014 Meeting of 'The Historical Keyboard Society of North America' is to be hosted by 'The National Music Museum' on the Campus of the University of South Dakota. It will run from Wed. May 14th to Sat. May 17th. The theme of the conference will be **'Four Centuries of Masterpieces; Keyboards and Their Music.. and more!'**



The event will include a series of recitals using the C16th-C19th instruments from the Museum's fine collection- see <http://orgs.usd.edu/nmm/> Further presentations featuring the instruments in the NMM collection will include papers, lecture-recitals, mini-recitals, and an exhibition of publications and recordings as well as displays of the work of contemporary instrument makers. **CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

Proposals for presentations on any subject relating to historical keyboard instruments, their use and repertoire from the Middle Ages to the C21st are welcome. Please submit, via e-mail to the Programme Chair John.Koster@usd.edu by **January 15th, 2014** See <http://historicalkeyboardsociety.org/conference/> for full details



Harpsichord by José Calisto, Portugal, 1780 (NMM 6204, Rawlins fund, 1999). Reproduced with kind permission.

BRITISH HARPSICHORD SOCIETY'S

Competition Finals Concert; July 27th 2013

Pamela Nash reports on the very successful concert celebrating the BHS's tenth anniversary year. An event that proved to be a worthy Grande Finale to the Composition Competition.

On a humid Saturday afternoon in July at London's Foundling Museum, the British Harpsichord Society's Composition Competition reached its culmination as no less than eight harpsichordists assembled to showcase a programme of new works for the harpsichord to a capacity audience.

For me as co-ordinator of the event, this marked the end of a long journey that began in March 2012 with the idea of a competition as part of the commemorations for the Society's tenth anniversary. An article about the competition itself can be read in the previous issue of *Sounding Board*, but by way of introduction to this short report, perhaps I should mention that the response to the brief –



From l. to r. Elaine Funaro, Goška Isphording, Maggie Cole, Pamela Nash. Mahan Esfahani, Penelope Cave, Christoph Kaufmann and Jane Chapman.

to write a solo acoustic piece no more than eight minutes in length – produced over ninety entries from around the world. Many composers succeeded in producing something original and exciting whilst creating the kind of idiomatic writing which would both engage and challenge the player, and, more importantly, prove to be vital contributions to the repertoire for the increasing number of harpsichordists who incorporate contemporary music into their programmes. I wanted the eleven shortlisted pieces to be distributed as widely as possible to several harpsichordists so as to maximise the level of participation, and I was extremely fortunate to find players whose joint enthusiasm and commitment to the project was a match for my own. In addition to this good fortune, the necessary funding for publicising and staging the concert was secured through an Arts Council grant, along with the venue which arose from the mutually-beneficial alliance between the BHS and the Foundling Museum.

Located in a secluded, leafy corner of the city, and exuding a reverent yet informal atmosphere, the Museum made a splendid venue, its Painting Gallery proving ideal as a harpsichord concert salon in both size and acoustic. I had practically taken up residence in

the museum for the three days prior to the event and found myself aided by a most professional and able team of staff along with Claire Hammett who oversaw the care and tuning of the terrific Greenhalgh-Ducornet harpsichord. I was finally able to hear the team as they rehearsed the competition pieces; it had been a year since their submission and it was a relief as well as a joy to hear them brought to life. Elaine Funaro arrived from North Carolina, Goška Ispording from Amsterdam and Christoph Kaufmann from Basel, joined by UK residents Mahan Esfahani, Maggie Cole, Jane Chapman and Penelope Cave. I myself was to join in the programme by playing, along with Penelope and Maggie, an Invention by the late composer Stephen Dodgson by way of tribute in light of his long and unrivalled association with the harpsichord and his friendship with the BHS. The Second Prize winner, Jung Sun Kang, also flew over from the US and was able to hear her piece in rehearsal, as was composer Gavin Wayte who had arranged to meet up with Elaine to discuss his theatrical piece for actor-harpsichordist. Composer Patrick John Jones had collaborated on his piece with Mahan, and others had also exchanged notes and questions via email during preparations. A sense of community and camaraderie formed during this time which lent an air of happy anticipation for the impending event, enhanced by the occasional interaction of museum visitors passing through the gallery, some engaging with the harpsichord for the first time, albeit via a somewhat unorthodox sound world. A tangible spirit of occasion certainly prevailed on the day; from the expectant buzz as the gallery filled up, to the warmth of the audience response throughout the programme, to the chatter at the post-concert reception where a mix of musical opinion flew in reaction to what had taken place. The harpsichord held up robustly in the heat and humidity, requiring just one mid-concert tune.

All the prizewinners were present except Alessandro Ponti (who was meeting a film score deadline!) His First Prize piece, "In Fuga da Verona", published in time for the concert, was on display thanks to the generosity of Dave Shepherd at Cadenza Music. Cadenza's complete harpsichord catalogue was also on view, attracting considerable interest and achieving a good number of sales.

I began the proceedings with a list of thanks to all the key figures, not least the composers themselves who had shaped the outcome of the competition and the final line-up. I hope I conveyed strongly enough my gratitude to all the performers whose pioneering spirits (and exemplary techniques!) I had so much depended on, and to the various benefactors who had enabled the competition to run. In addition to acknowledging Arts Council England for their specific sponsorship of the concert, a special mention was made of the BHS Secretary Edna Lewis whose indefatigable work benefits the Society so much. I then dedicated the concert to Stephen Dodgson whose recent passing was so keenly felt by many of us present. We were pleased to have his widow, Jane Clark, in our midst.

And so to the music. To write a full appraisal of the concert would be too detailed and personal for these purposes and so the following are merely "nutshell" references to give some indication of the range and diversity of the compositions.

"Santoor Suite" by the English composer Patrick John Jones opened the concert, performed by Mahan Esfahani. The piece explores the timbral similarities of the harpsichord and the santoor, which is the Indian equivalent of the hammered dulcimer, and its three movements hover between the structure of a Baroque dance suite and a classical Indian raga.

Next, the Polish harpsichordist Goška Ispording played one of the Joint-third Prize pieces. "Box Toccata" by the Welsh composer Aled Smith is a combination of the elaborate and virtuosic baroque keyboard form and several interval cycles, heard in canon. The 'box' part of the title refers to a proportional system for composition and as the piece progresses, the

boxes and cycles 'shatter', eventually re-forming into 'quasi-tonality'.

Elaine Funaro then played “Five Shapes” by American composer Thomas Donahue; a variation-style piece in which the notes of a melodic line are rearranged rhythmically in four different ways. It can also be seen as a canvas for working on articulation, rhythmic inflection and other elements of harpsichord technique and musicianship. Elaine then played “Summer in the World” by Serbian composer Ivan Božičević. Based on a haiku by the seventeenth-century Japanese master Matsui Bashô, it is a somewhat hypnotic and yet “jaunty” piece, unfolding over a constant semiquaver toccata-like pulse and with jazz inflections in the harmony betraying the composer's interest in the “cross-fertilisations” between genres.

Then followed “Improvisations sur les Ondes Chromatiques” by Korean composer Junghae Lee, performed by Christoph Kaufmann. This piece, a reference to the unmeasured prelude, dramatically polarises the two elements of rhythm and glissando, with the glissandi played by the palm of the hand and acting as the intersection between chromatics and diatonics. Non-keyboard sounds (vocal and percussive) extended the virtuosity of this direct and dramatic musical language.

I followed this by playing Stephen Dodgson's Invention No.1 from Set 3, before the return of Elaine Funaro, this time garishly-adorned as actor-harpsichordist for “Hot to Trot Love Bot” by English composer Gavin Wayte. This was harpsichord entertainment of the most capricious kind, the “bot” of the title referring to a hyper-active robot character serenading a would-be lover through 'sprechstimme' and an electrically charged harpsichord part in a performance which was literally electric at the climax with a reveal of flashing headgear.

Penelope Cave then performed “Schattenreise” (Shadow-Journey) by German composer and harpsichordist Enno Kastens. This piece is a substantial exploration of tonality through the flowing improvisatory lines of the unmeasured prelude. The composer states that it is a piece which wants to be heard “with the heart” - a music of sensuality. Penelope also played a Dodgson Invention: No. 6 from Set 2.

Next, Jane Chapman played three pieces, the first of which was the Second Prize piece, “Stick Boy and Match Girl in Love” by Jung Sun Kang, a Korean composer living in the US, whose first instrument is also the harpsichord. Inspired by Tim Burton's poem of the same name, the three short movements use the more brittle aspect of harpsichord character to wittily depict the disintegration of a love affair.

Next was “Prism” by Japanese composer Satoru Ikeda: a highly- atmospheric work made from a series of single tones covering the entire range of the harpsichord, with many colours arising from the development of chords and passages.

Jane's third performance, “The Ascent of K517” by German composer Jürgen Kraus was the other Joint-third prizewinner. Despite the composer's coy reference to the Himalayan mountain of the same denomination, Scarlatti's Sonata in d minor was the inspiration and model for a piece punctuated by bursts of Scarlattian passagework and one that requires unswerving rhythmic nerve.



Elaine Funaro with Gavin Wayte, the composer, after her performance of 'Hot to Trot Love Bot'

The First Prize piece was saved for last. After playing Dodgson's Invention No.2 from Set 5, Maggie Cole performed Italian composer Alessandro Pontì's "In Fuga da Verona", described as a "thriller in music set in medieval Italy". Certainly, the composer's media and film score background served as a catalyst for the chase element of the story and the use of frenetic scales and darker harpsichord resonances infused the piece with a sense of theatre, tension and suspense.



Composers and the players line up at the end of this unique and very inspiring concert. From left to right; Gavin Wayte, Penelope Cave, Jane Chapman, Elaine Funaro, Patrick John Jones, Mahan Esfahani, Jürgen Kraus, Maggie Cole, Aled Smith, Pamela Nash, Jung Sun Kang, Goška Isphording & Christoph Kaufmann

An adventure was over, but more is yet to come, and there have already been several outcomes through further performances in festivals and on concert tours in Britain and abroad. Plans are now underway for the recording with Prima Facie Records, due for release in 2014. ✨

Pamela Nash

Photographs by Claire Hammett, with permission

Peter Bavington, the Clavichord maker, contacted us after the concert saying, "I thought I should send a report of Saturday's event to the Harpsichord e-mail list". After a detailed review of the concert he ended his report saying....."This whole event - and the organisation of the composition competition - owes a great deal to the energy and bold thinking of the harpsichordist Pamela Nash. As a result of her leadership, the whole event was impeccably organised and proceeded with dispatch. This is not to deny the contribution of many other helpers, too many to list in a post like this."

On behalf of the BHS Committee and all our members, I would like to endorse the above and to record our grateful thanks to Pamela, for making this celebration possible. Ed.

Musical instruments in a hostile climate

Akio Obuchi describes the extreme conditions under which period instrument makers work and the devastating effect of natural disasters that all too often occur in Japan.

Is it very hot and humid in crowded Tokyo, the capital of Japan, particularly in summer? The author assumed this might be a common question among the western period music performers, makers and managements. I would like to discuss some climate conditions in Tokyo, comparing the data in other major cities in Europe and US, which represent wide varieties of weather zones in the northern hemisphere. The data used for the discussions were taken from <http://www.weatherbase.com/>.

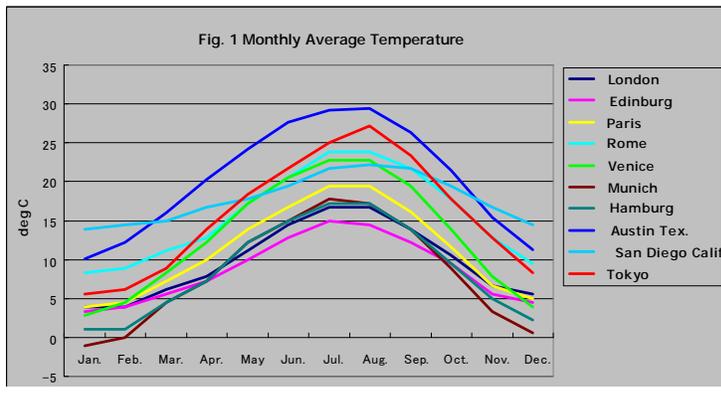


Fig.1 Monthly Average Temperature. Note, in all three diagrams Tokyo is shown in Red and London in Navy Blue

All of the data used in the discussion here are monthly averaged values. The highest and lowest temperatures in Tokyo in the last few years are about 36 deg. C and 0 deg. C respectively. However, monthly averaged values are much milder than these one day records show. The dataset indicates the monthly averaged highest temperature in Tokyo goes up to 27 deg C in August, while the lowest monthly average

temperature is recorded at 5.5 deg C in January. Looking at Fig. 2, humidity data of Tokyo does not seem to be very high comparing with the data for other cities.

Instead, it can be pointed out that Tokyo is extremely dry in winter. In European countries, the maximum humidity data are recorded in winter, while in Tokyo, the maximum humidity is measured in summer. This implies the absolute humidity in Tokyo is very high in summer and low in winter. Relative humidity can be converted into absolute humidity if the temperature is given.

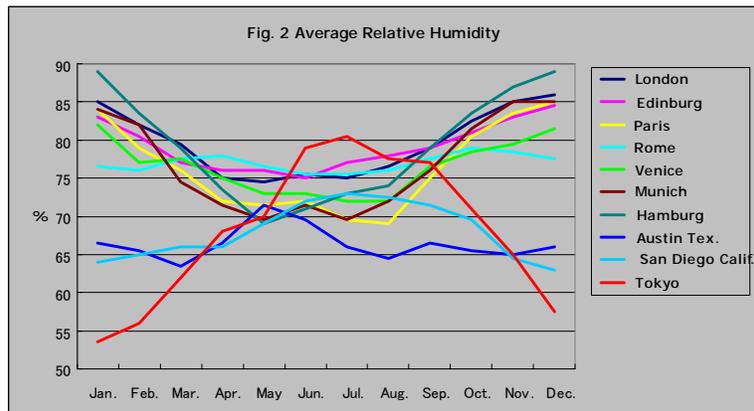


Fig.2 Average Relative Humidity

As seen in the Fig. 3, Tokyo is the record holder for both highest and lowest absolute humidity within a year. Seasonal variation of absolute humidity is one of the major parameters we should worry about in order to maintain musical instruments in a stable condition.

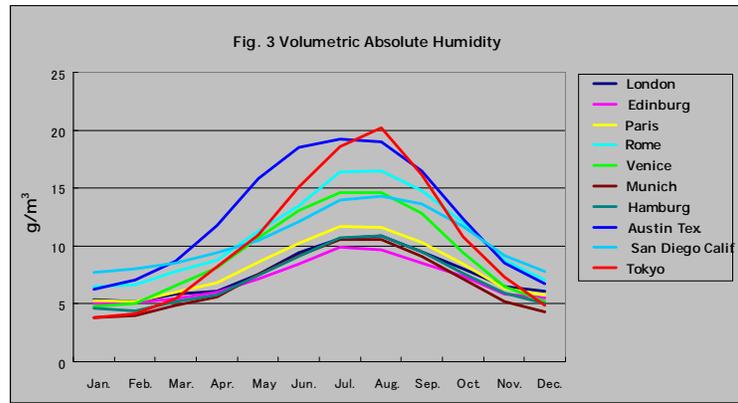


Fig. 3 Volumetric Absolute Humidity

Fig. 4 shows absolute humidity range in a year. As seen, seasonal change of the absolute humidity in Tokyo is 2 to 3 times larger than those in European cities. So, it is necessary to heavily use air conditioners in Tokyo.

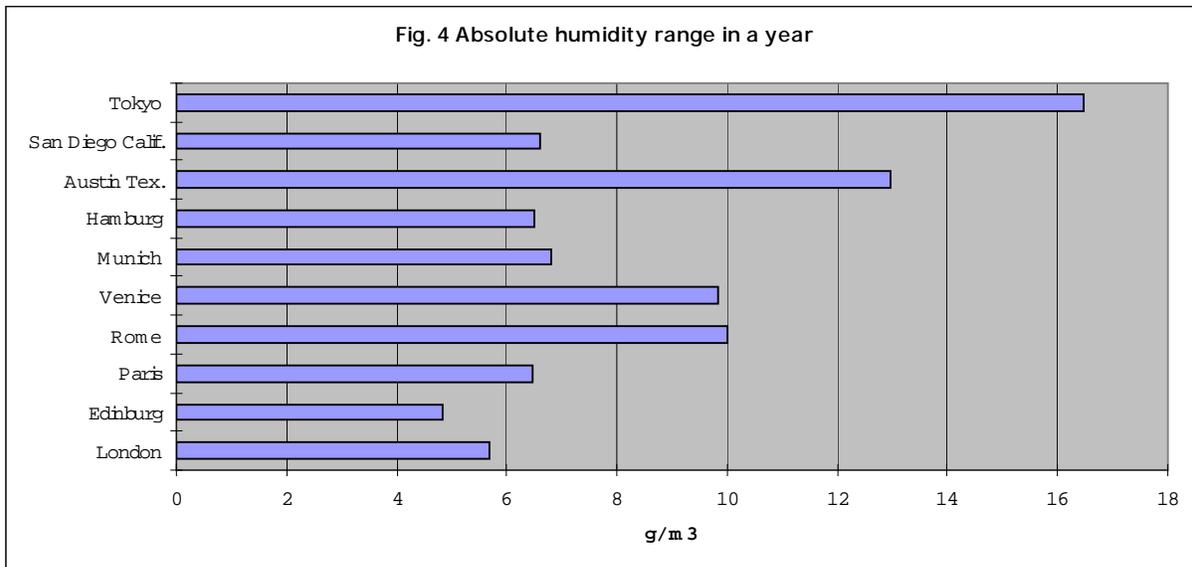


Fig. 4 Absolute humidity range in a year

In Tokyo, there is a concert service provider who owns 13 period keyboard instruments, such as harpsichords, fortepianos and positive organs for concerts and rental purposes. For instruments, which are frequently used on the concert stages, he keeps them in a 24 hour air conditioned room. He also uses humidifiers and dehumidifiers. His studio has sealed windows and the air inside is completely isolated from outside environment. In a well controlled environment, the instruments are kept in a quite stable condition. Tunings can be stable for as long as a month. Thanks to the sealed windows, electricity consumption for the air conditioners is minimal. After the collapsing of the nuclear power plant, we were to save the electricity power in the high consumption season of summer. In his studio all the incandescent light bulbs were replaced with LED bulbs to prevent temperature raise. This could also contribute to reduce the power consumption with not only the heat emission from light bulbs but also reduced operation of the air conditioners.

The Tohoku earthquake was a too severe natural disaster to be simply called a climate matter. However, taking this opportunity, I would like to provide a short report on the two harpsichord makers, who lived in the stricken areas.

Yuichi Sato <http://www001.upp.so-net.ne.jp/harpshichord/> has been working on making and restoring harpsichords, pianofortes and clavichords in an old wooden workshop located in Hokota city, Ibaragi prefecture. Hokota is about 350Km away from the epicenter, but probably because of the soft sediment, they recorded a tremor with an intensity of 6 on the Japanese seven-stage seismic scale. Though his workshop was not fully collapsed, all the floors were crumbled and his two harpsichords, under construction, were severely damaged. In the photograph of his workshop, a circular saw and a plainer are barely visible under the fallen wood. Many houses nearby his shop were completely destroyed. He had to abandon to continue working in this place and purchased a piece of land in a new location. He has to build a new house and workshop there. At the moment, he temporally stores some of his tools and materials in an apartment house for victims and waits for his restart in the new location. Unlike prefectures in Tohoku district located near the epicenter, the official subsidies



for damaged houses is minimal in Ibaragi and he had to pay by himself even for disposal of his destroyed shop and house. More over, his new shop and house must be built with his own funds.

Yuki Hayashi <http://www.h2.dion.ne.jp/~h-cemb/> works in Sendai for harpsichord making, renting and providing concert services, after two years apprenticeship at Akira Kubota's workshop. Sendai is a capital of Miyagi prefecture which is located in a Pacific side of Tohoku district and facing directly to the epicenter. His two-storied wooden house was completely destroyed. His five years old workshop was not fully collapsed but severely damaged. Foundations of the house and workshop are still there, but the land was partially subsided and it would be difficult to repair the damaged workshop. Fortunately, damage incurred on his 3 harpsichords for rental services and one new harpsichord under construction was recoverable. He and his family are temporarily living in an apartment house. Though he is expecting to restart harpsichord making before the end of the year, there is no sign of hope. Although he will be able to receive some official subsidies and insurance, still he needs substantial amount of money to fully recover his house and workshop to be functional.

Akio Obuchi

If any of you, the readers of this article wish to send some messages to Yuichi Sato and/or Yuki Hayashi and have difficulty to do so within their Japanese website, please address your messages to akio.obuchi@nifty.com. Then, I will forward it to them. A.O. ❁

Akio Obuchi started harpsichord building in 1969. Since 2004, after a career in electro-acoustics, he now works full time on research projects and on the making of historical keyboard instruments.

Eastern promise - Touring with Melvyn Tan

Simon Neal recounts his travels in Japan with a Fortepiano and the ups and downs he encountered on that tour. Similar experiences no doubt took place in earlier years when the growing interest in Early Music in Japan demanded the use of historically correct harpsichords that were not always readily available locally.

Naomi invited me to write about my experiences with Japanese harpsichords. Alas I have virtually no experience so instead I have written down a few mostly happy memories about my only trip to that country to date.

This was back in 1990. Melvyn Tan was asked to give a number of solo fortepiano concerts. Early Music in Japan was at that time still in its infancy and the fortepiano especially was little known. There was at that time no big enough instrument in the country and for this reason Melvyn was asked to bring his own fortepiano, and as his technician I was also included in the deal.

The challenge of taking a six octave fortepiano to the other side of the world was not one that I had encountered before - I think the most exotic place we had visited before was Edinburgh! It was only with the help of associates such as Derek Adlam (who had built the instrument), Malcolm Fiske and Don Mackinnon that I was able to face the logistics. The biggest obstacle was to build a packing case strong enough for airfreight. Derek and Malcolm produced a box that was so heavy the fortepiano seemed very light in comparison. Anyway somehow we got it into the crate and by taking out the front seat of the van just managed to squeeze the whole thing in and get it to the freight clearance depot at Heathrow, This had to happen at least ten days before the tour started in order to clear customs and be shipped out as cargo.



Simon Neal, Melvyn Tan and the Fortepiano, together with two members of the touring agency team.

Melvyn and I then flew out to join it. I remember the flight for a number of reasons, not just because of the length. Melvyn was treated as the star he was and travelled in business class, whereas I was only in tourist. Soon into the flight Melvyn, bless him, came down to see how I was doing and bought with him a glass of champagne for me. A little later when the flight attendant, complete in her regulation kimono, came to clear the tables, she was extremely put out to find a 'real' glass in steerage – the domain of the plastic cup. That was a difficult one to explain away! After that I could see her keeping an eye on me, especially when I had to spy on my neighbours to see how to eat the confusing array of food

on the dinner tray – what to dip into what! We eventually arrived at Narita airport and I remember the long night-time drive into Tokyo wasn't helped by a bad case of jetlag and the regular sudden braking of the car to dodge the speed cameras on the motorway. My first impressions of the country weren't the best!

After a sound sleep brought about a recovery I was directed to where the piano crate was being stored. This was in a shop called 'Guitarra' which turned out to be the early music shop of Tokyo. Finding it was my first Japanese challenge as it became clear that no streets had any names shown on them (I suppose I couldn't have read them anyway) and no houses had any numbers. This gave me my first chance to interact with the general public – I was impressed by their willingness to talk and 'help' a stranger, even if we had no words in common and the person hadn't the faintest idea where the place I was looking for was. It was quite a relief to get there and also to see the crate had arrived and was looking intact. In fact it seemed to have had a rather better journey than I, for when we eventually got it out and onto its legs, the piano was still very much in tune – I couldn't believe it! At this point I also met our team of roadies who were going to be responsible for driving the instrument around Japan. They were led by the wonderful Mr Sato and were full of smiles but not a word of English, so I had to give a few lessons in fortepiano assembly and transport with the aid of wild body gestures and an awesome repertoire of grunts. During our two weeks in Japan I shared a lot of journeys with these guys and our communication rose to a slightly higher level as we swapped technical terms for pianos and more importantly for life in general. It was a good job they all had huge senses of humour – we laughed a lot, even if I wasn't sure why all the time!

Our tour was actually limited to the main Island of Honshu so most of my travel was by road, although I was fortunate enough to be treated to some bullet train journeys after the roadies had gained enough experience to take care of the fortepiano without me. Even in the early 90's the array of state of the art concert halls we visited was amazing. A bit less impressive however was the understanding of some of the technical staff of the halls to the needs of our rather delicate instrument. I soon learnt that the slightly less enthusiastic than normal reactions of 'hi, hi' ('yes, yes') with a slightly slower nodding of the head than usual, to my requests for less heat and less light, actually meant 'no, this is not the way we do things', but of course there is no word for 'no' in Japan. So I would get them to turn the lights down from the symphony orchestra setting to something a little more user friendly, only to find that come to the concert everything was back up on the incinerate level! Poor old Melvyn had to suffer some pretty ropey tuning by the end of some of the concerts.

This tour will always stick in my mind because Melvyn and I were so well looked after and of course things were very different to being on an orchestral tour with 50 or 60 people, where you have to fend for yourself all the time. We made firm friends with the promoter Kazuhiko Ogawa of Allegro Music and his assistant Hiroyuki and contact was kept up for a long time afterwards. We were treated to many different experiences of hospitality whilst there from very formal literally sit down on floor dinners, to men-only drinking sessions where our hosts showed off their prowess at drinking whisky, and anything else placed in front of them! Eating was generally an exploratory exercise on my

part and 99% of the time a truly rewarding one. There was only one time that I had to refuse what was offered – at breakfast in a small Japanese style hotel, when the food really didn't have the visual appeal one had grown used to! Melvyn and I were left to our own devices at some meal times, with some amusing consequences. Some of the restaurants we visited had no menus in western script so we had to point at the food we wanted on pictures or displayed in the restaurant window. As Melvyn has an eastern appearance (he is from Singapore) we would be surrounded by waitresses gushing in Japanese, for them only to be greeted by Melvyn replying in his best English. This would resort in fits of embarrassed giggles. Giggling is something that the Japanese do rather well and there never seemed to be a shortage of groups of schoolgirls mobbing Melvyn for autographs after concerts, brought out in fits of giggles by Melvyn's beaming smiles.

The schedule was such that there was some time to relax on days off. On some days I ventured out by myself on public transport. I got up really early one day to get to the fish market in Tokyo, with seemingly more alive produce than dead, crawling around for as far as the eye could see. I only once had to give up on a journey on the Tokyo metro by the lack of western station signs. Very frustrating, but I'm sure things have changed since. I did manage to get the train to as near Mount Fuji as I could, and then a bus to the lake beside it, although I had no idea where the bus was going. I just followed a few people and kept fingers firmly crossed. It was such a shame the weather turned on arrival and it was impossible to see the mountain. Perhaps I got the wrong bus after all! I think that the temples and deer park in Kyoto and the massive statue of Buddha there made the biggest impression.

All in all it was a very successful tour, musically, gastronomically, socially and culturally. This was all slightly marred by the very last episode in the tale – the return of the fortepiano. As soon as it was delivered we noticed a big crack in the crate and on opening it the action of the piano literally fell out – the hammers had been jolted from their kapsels¹ by some large physical shock. Luckily the fortepiano casework was all in one piece but it took days to put the action to rights and weeks for it to return to regulation. Of course no-one takes responsibility for damages such as this in transit– the airline and the handler blame each other, and both blame the customs staff. This was in such contrast to the smooth passage out to Japan.

'As soon as it was delivered we noticed a big crack in the crate and on opening it the action literally fell out!'

Since that visit and thanks to the huge interest in early music in Japan, there has been an increase in instrument building and maintenance. I have never had an opportunity to return, but I live in the hope that I can manage one more musical journey to that fascinating land before I retire. ❀

Simon Neal

Simon Neal is a specialist technician based in Oxford working with all types of early keyboard instruments. His services include hiring, tuning, transporting and giving advice on the best ways to look after harpsichords, spinets, virginals and fortepianos.

<http://www.simonneal.org.uk/>

¹ Kapsel (German) a small brass fork (sometimes of wood) which acts as a pivot or suspension point for each hammer

The experiences of a Harpsichord player in Japan

Mitzi Meyerson speaks of the difficulties she encountered trying to judge the reaction of audiences in a country where outwards signs of emotion are thought best suppressed.

For many years it was my good fortune to have an annual tour in Japan. I was partly resident in Bali and from there it was merely a short hop to get to Osaka. My delightful colleagues Kenji Sano and Mamiko Hirai hosted me with every possible consideration, including coaching me for the tea ceremony and dressing me up in a silk vice. I had always thought that the geishas were carrying around a little silk backpack all the time, but it turned out that this was just an elaborate decoration. I was required to sit on the floor demurely with my knees tucked under me, thinking the whole time that it would perhaps be better to die than suffer that pain another minute. I loved the tea ceremony, but I did everything wrong. I thought one should walk around on the tatami¹ in order to arrive at the shrine in the far corner, when in fact I was supposed to walk across the centre of the room in my cute little white socks, bought especially for the occasion. I had read that one must admire the tea container very much, and so when it was presented towards me for this purpose, I took it in my hands, turning it every which way, exclaiming about its many and various beauties. This was a serious faux pas. A visitor is not allowed to even touch this container, let alone turn it upside-down, thereby essentially mauling it. The container of the tea ceremony is ancient and hallowed, and certainly



enormously expensive. The tea master must have been quivering with horror as I did it, but she naturally did not show me this and behaved with perfect smiling grace. I loved that she kept folding the serviette over and over again, each time with its edges not quite aligned. She would fold it

*It made me think,
"This is what practising
is...we do it again, and
again, and again.
Each time there is
something new which
isn't quite right, and so
we do it again!"*

slightly imperfectly, and then do it once more. It made me think, "This is what practising is. We try a passage, it isn't quite right; we do it again, and again, and again. Each time there is something new which isn't quite right, and so we do it again. Ah!" I was told that I had to perform the ceremonial rituals of taking three sips of a paint-thick substance saying each time to the assembled company things like, "Please forgive me for drinking before you" and "This tea is delicious!" when I was secretly wondering how to avoid ingesting it. I was next offered what to my western eyes looked like a green blob but was in fact a very special sort

of teacake. After each person had received the "paint" and the "blob", it was necessary to get up and exit the room, one by one. I of course was not able to get up. My legs no longer had any feeling whatsoever, and I had been folded into a shape from which it would never be possible to move again. My hosts had to pick me up and carry me out, while I tottered painfully on my two-toed socks.

¹ A *tatami* is a type of mat, traditionally made of rice straw, used as a flooring material in traditional Japanese-style rooms.

I found Japanese audiences to be very attentive, but completely undemonstrative. Perhaps this was from a sense of politeness, that it would be rude to show emotions. One time I was playing “Medee” by Jacques Duphly. This is the most horrible piece imaginable, where you can hear the crazed Medee, plotting what would be the most terrible thing she could do to her cheating bastard of a husband. One can hear all her rage and fury, and then she actually kills their two children, screaming her head off.

“Drink deep of this wine, for precious were the grapes that pressed it”, she yells, after killing the children and presenting him with a cup of their blood to drink. (Eeeuuww.) I think there are two ways to play music.

One way is to observe carefully what emotions look like and then copy this appearance. The other way is to actually feel all the emotions oneself. This method is extremely tiring, but I think the results are truer, and this is what I do when I play. So I played this piece at the end of my solo concert, exhausted, in tears of rage and sorrow.

The people just sat there. They did not applaud, they did not move. They sat, and I sat, then finally I got up and faced them. They still sat, unmoving. At last I had to just slink away while the audience sat there in silence. Maybe they were appalled. I will never know, and I also will never play “Medee” again, alone or in concert. When I had to record it, I played it once through, burst into tears, and that is what is on the CD. I could not go through that ordeal again.



Facsimile of the last part of Medee by Jacques Duphly c 1756

Once I played a solo concert at a beautiful museum in Tokyo. After this I was invited to a formal dinner in my honour that was attended by many important men. No one spoke a word to me. I was all alone at a table with a dozen men who could speak English, but would not say anything to me. It was extremely embarrassing and I felt very awkward. “They completely ignored me!” I complained to my host. He answered, “Of course they could not speak to you. They probably thought you were a god.” That shut me up! Another time when I finished a solo concert, there was merely a splatter of polite applause. I thought the audience must have hated it because there was so little reaction. I asked a Japanese friend if this were true, and he said, “Oh no! They did crap” I think that was meant to be a success, but it was so hard to tell.

“Of course they could not speak to you. They probably thought you were a god.”

That reminds me of another delightful occasion, when taking off for Osaka. The Japanese captain of the flight made a welcoming announcement to the passengers, saying all the usual things about the flight duration, weather conditions, and beautiful places we would fly over but not see. At the end of this litany, he told us “and now, just sit back and enjoy your fright!” I thought, “Well...that just about covers my philosophy of life.”* **Mitzi Meyerson**

American harpsichordist Mitzi Meyerson, now based in Berlin, divides her time between her research, a busy teaching schedule, and concert performances throughout the world. She is also a certified Doula.

<http://www.mitzi-meyerson.de/>

We hope that these reminiscences will be read in the knowledge that Mitzi Meyerson loves Japan and the Japanese people and that this is an affectionate and light-hearted account of her early encounters with that very different culture. Ed.

Looking for a Harpsichord from afar

On a recent visit to her native Japan, Masumi Yamamoto was encouraged to find an ever-growing interest in early music and the harpsichord.

When Naomi asked me to write an article for this edition of Sounding Board, I felt I wanted to contribute, but did not have any idea about how to go about doing this. 22 years have passed since I lived in Japan, and my visits since then have been infrequent and often fleeting in nature. But since my parents' return to the country a few years ago, I have become more interested in the early music scene in Japan, and can share my limited experience with the readers.

When I give concerts in the UK, audience members often come up to me afterwards and say, "There can't be many Japanese harpsichordists around!" It is true that, compared with the number of people who play the piano in Japan, the number of Japanese harpsichordists is small. At the same time, considering that an early music competition in Japan attracted more than 30 entries for the last two times that the competition was held (36 entries in 2012, 32 in 2009) compared with entries in the Broadwood Harpsichord Competition in the UK (7 in 2011, 15 in 2009, 11 in 2007 - although a straight comparison might not give a fair result as there is an age limit for the Broadwood Competition), there appears to be a loyal following for the instrument in Japan. Speaking on a personal level, the harpsichord physically suits me much better than the piano since I do not have a comfortable octave span on the piano and this may also be true for many Japanese keyboard players. An octave on the harpsichord is only slightly narrower than the piano, but it is enough for the players like myself to feel the difference, and feel much more comfortable and in control.

The last few times I have visited Japan, I had been en route to Australia where I was giving recitals and concerto performances, and practising during my stay in Japan was essential. I did not know of any colleague with a harpsichord at the time so using the Internet I set out to look for a potential practice instrument. To my surprise, it only took a quick search before I was able to locate a few practice studios with harpsichords, particularly in the Tokyo area. Some of these studios even have more than one harpsichord, which enables harpsichord duos to rehearse. I proceeded to emailing the studio to introduce myself and to ask if I could book a slot (all done from my PC in the UK), and I was amazed how easily this could be achieved. When I eventually arrived at the studio a few weeks later, I was again pleasantly surprised at how trusting they were to let me, who they had never met before and had no background information on, practise after just getting me to fill in my details on their customer information form. The studios are equipped with harpsichords of very good quality, often with two manuals and a full compass, which I believe are tuned on a daily basis. The rooms are invariably air-conditioned, and pleasantly decorated suitable as a working space. This excellent service certainly helped to make my intensive last-minute practice less stressful, and I only had to pay what seemed a reasonable hire rate.

Although Japan is geographically a long way away from Europe where the harpsichord was invented and developed, there now seems to be a small but enthusiastic interest in the harpsichord in Japan today.

Having lived abroad for all of my adult life, I am yet to make a recital debut in Japan, but when the time comes, I know I'll have top-notch facilities to use! ❁

Masumi Yamamoto

Harpsichordist Masumi Yamamoto is based in the UK and regularly performs across the UK and abroad both as a soloist and as a continuo player. <http://www.masumiyamamoto.com/>

Vermeer and Music;

Realised dream of a music iconographer

A business trip to London, which quite by chance coincided with the National Gallery's special exhibition, gave Shigeyuki Koide a chance to see that exhibition; an event that proved to be the highlight of his stay in the UK

Several years ago I became interested in music iconography. The opportunity came when I found a painting titled "A Young Woman (Lady) Seated at a Virginal" by Johannes Vermeer (1632-1675). I can't remember exactly where, but I saw it either on the cover picture of a music record, such as "Das Arte Werk - Musik Und Iher Zeit", "L'oiseau-Lyre" or on a volume of "Early Music" magazine issued by OUP. Looking at the painting, I found a picture of a serene citizen's life in 17th century Netherlands and also recognised the outstanding craftsmanship in the precise drawing of the decoration of the virginal.

I believe that every harpsichord lover focuses on the historical decoration of the instruments. Since this first encounter with Vermeer's artwork, it has been an added pleasure looking for fine paintings depicting musical instruments in the 17-18th centuries. The decorations of these instruments painted in these pictures with bright colours and distinct feel for the materials used, gives us a much better understanding of what they were actually like than those we see on the "original" instruments found today, often in a sorry state, in museums today.

My friend Mr. Yoshio Watanabe, a harpsichordist in Japan, studied with Gustav Leonhardt in Amsterdam in the 1980's. He kindly introduced me to some suitable paintings in this field and told me that Vermeer's collection is a treasure box for seeing how Ruckers harpsichords and virginals looked when they were first built. As the time went by, I felt a growing desire to appreciate Vermeer's paintings not only on their own as a display of original harpsichords but together with actual music performances featuring these instruments. Perhaps this is a common dream of all harpsichord enthusiasts throughout the world.

It was July 2013, when I was staying in London to report on science communication trials in the UK, that my music friend told me about a special exhibition "Vermeer and Music" at the National Gallery, in London. We soon afterwards went to see this exhibition, "Vermeer and Music: The Art of Love and Leisure" which ran from 26 June - 8 September 2013", it was a dream come true for me. There were five famous paintings by Vermeer: "A Young Woman (Lady) Seated at a Virginal" and "A Young Woman standing at a Virginal" (The National Gallery), "The Music Lesson" (The Royal Collection), "Young Woman seated at a Virginal" (private collection), and "The Guitar Player" (Kenwood House). In addition, contemporary Dutch paintings of music and musical instrument motifs were collected in the exhibition in the Sainsbury Wing. The exhibition occupied four rooms, in which several original instruments were also displayed to complement the paintings. These included a Ruckers harpsichord, a virginals (muselar), a clavichord, a guitar decorated with ivory and ebony in Venice, an English viola da gamba, a violin, a

lute and music books. Furthermore, there were live concerts with contemporary instruments three days a week during the exhibition. I attended an afternoon concert, when Reiko Ichise (viola da gamba) and Julian Perkins (harpsichord) performed Dutch baroque music. As it was a rather small space for a concert, the audience number was limited to around 30. However, many more visitors were able to enjoy the music through the open door of the exhibition space. Visiting this exhibition was the highlight of my stay in London that summer.

This exhibition “Vermeer and Music” was curated by Dr. Betsy Wieseaman of the National Gallery. Some criticised this exhibition for including so many Vermeer paintings, which were either already part of the collection of this Gallery or were easy to view within the UK. However, the concept of the exhibition that brought together the paintings, music instruments and music performance to be appreciated at the same time in the same place, must be highly credited as a challenge to develop interdisciplinary arts.

The harpsichord played at the concert was not a Ruckers type of instrument but an Italian style harpsichord newly built by Andrew Wooderson in Kent. Despite the fact that it was not the expected instrument, I enjoyed the bright and vivid sound of this Italian harpsichord which was suitable for an ensemble performance.



Julian Perkins of the 'Academy of Ancient Music', surrounded by paintings by Vermeer, playing in a concert during the recent National Gallery exhibition, 'Vermeer and Music.'

I hope we will find the next “Vermeer and Music” exhibition includes the famous Vermeer painting “The Concert”, which was stolen in 1990 from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, USA and is still missing. ❁

Shigeyuki Koide

Shigeyuki Koide, is a freelance science journalist, and is the President of the Japanese Association of Science and Technology Journalists.

Miracle in the Far East

Harpsichordist Moxam Kayano muses on the events that led to the growing popularity of early music in modern day Japan so far in distance and time from its origins in Europe

In Japan, a concert on period instruments is held somewhere every night. And the Japanese early music players play an active part in all parts of the world. Such situation is a thing by the efforts of the individual musician. However, it is not as well known that there is a much bigger miracle in the background. I want to introduce some miracles that early music became popular in this way in Far East Japan 10,000 kilometers away from Europe, the stronghold of the early music.

The first miracle is that Japan became the huge market country of the piano. The current European music education is difficult without a keyboard instrument. And central one of the keyboard instruments is the modern piano. In Japan, the way of the huge market country of piano was opened for the passion of a certain young man who is founder Torakusu Yamaha of Yamaha. He started reed organ production after experience of a repair of a broken reed organ, made in the United States in 1887 originally. In Japan, it was still the times when European music was not known. And, with his pupil Koichi Kawai, he produced a domestic piano in 1900 and opened the way of the piano production of Japan. The piano of Yamaha and Kawai becomes the world's best amount of production before long. It is by such a piano production that has got a Japanese close to European music.

The second miracle is postwar economic growth. Before and during WW II, really from 1927, Japan got hard economically. The piano factory turned into a military factory in the policy of the country too. And after defeat in 1945 the economy of Japan collapsed, and it was in a situation that it could not afford to do music. However, in Japan, miracles called the revival of the economy happen. There are many complicated elements in this background. Above all, it was restriction of the military industry by United States occupy forces that acted on economic revitalization fruitfully in postwar Japan. And, by the emergency demand of the civil war of Korea a neighboring country, the economy of Japan improved. The activity of music cannot grow without stable economic conditions. Japan revived in this way to the environment where there was music.

The third miracle is birth of the people of harpsichord builders. When early music players began activity in Japan in the 1970s, the biggest miracle (in my sight) to support present early music world began. It is that builders producing harpsichords in Japan. The amateur with the technique of a piano tuner, art and the woodwork has begun to produce a historic harpsichord. There are now more than ten persons of professional harpsichord production in Japan. They produce also clavichord and the forte piano and support Japanese early music. The existence of a musical instrument builder supporting it is important for the music as well as a musician. In Japan which is located in the Far East, it may be said that it is miraculous continuation that early music is prosperous.

We must thank for some such miracles. Current Japan faces a crisis again. Since the 3.11 earthquakes and tsunami, there is again a problem for most, even including the radioactivity. However, I think that it is the thanks that we can recover and by builders continued cooperation with musicians, to get over this crisis. We are supported in the love of the world early music players and instrument builders and believe it when we can cause a miracle again in the Far East.✿

Moxam Kayano

Moxam Kayano is a performer, a harpsichord builder and a technician working in Japan