

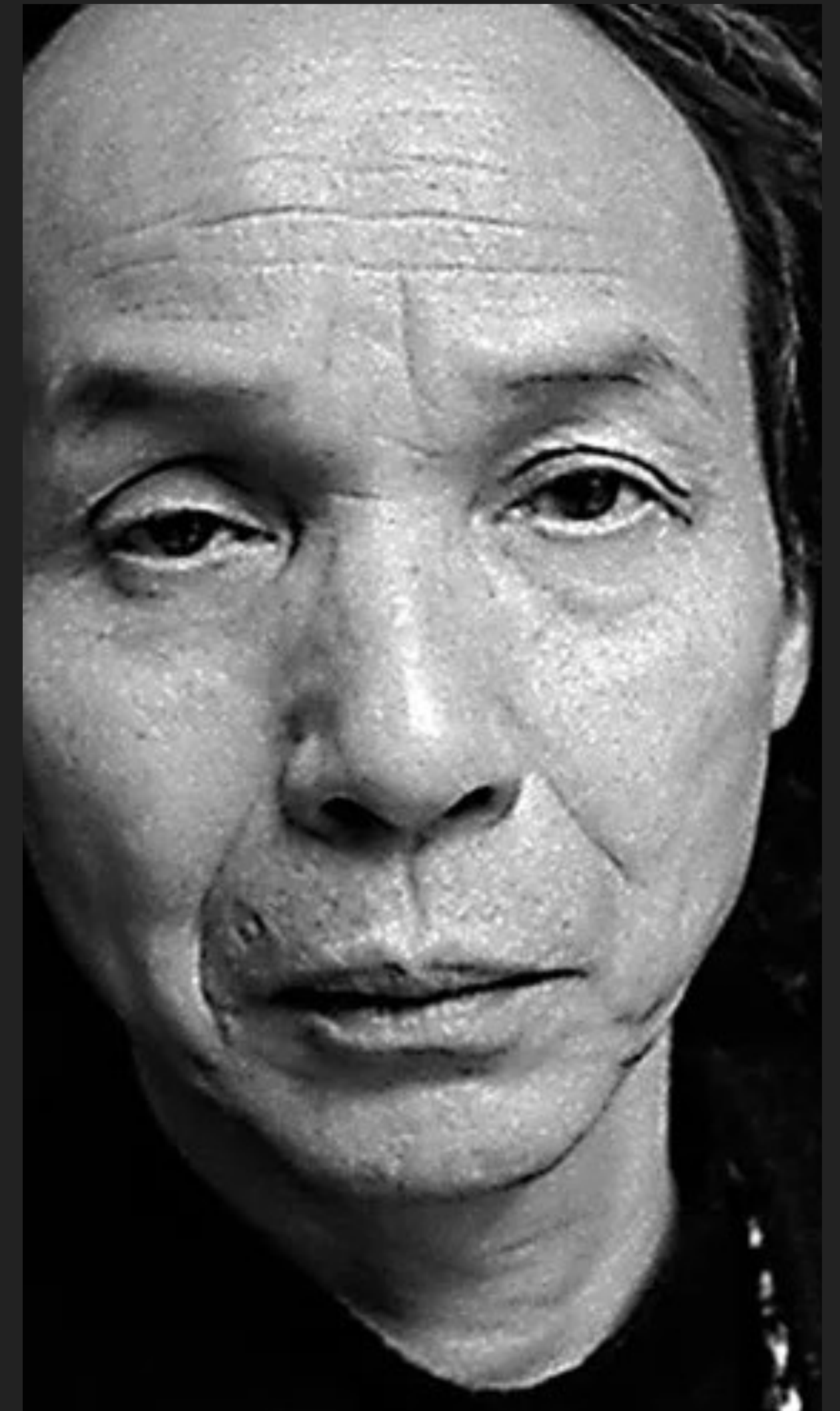


PRESENTED BY RIE SUZUKI • 11 JULY 2025 • ICA CLARINETFEST 2025

JAPANESE CLARINET COMPOSITIONS FROM THE POSTWAR PERIOD TO THE 21ST CENTURY: TRANSCENDING CULTURES, GENRES, AND TRADITIONS

POSTWAR CONTEXT AND JIKKEN KOBO

- ▶ Jikken Kobo [Experimental Workshop] (1951-1957)
- ▶ Interdisciplinary collective of 14 members: visual artists, composers, pianist, poet-critic, photographer, lighting-designer, and engineer
- ▶ Composers: Joji Yuasa (1927-2024); Keiji Sato (1927-2009); Toru Takemitsu (1930-1996); Kazuo Fukushima (1930-1996); and Hiroyoshi Suzuki (1931-2006)



POSTWAR CLARINET WRITING

- ▶ **Toru Takemitsu**, *Quatrain II* (1977): Impressionistic textures, subtle color, and integration of Japanese aesthetic concepts.
- ▶ **Joji Yuasa**, *Solitude* (1980): Silence as a structural tool, echoing Japanese aesthetic concepts like *ma* (silence).
- ▶ **Akira Miyoshi**, *Perspective en spirale for clarinet and piano* (1989): Serial technique with lyrical phrasing, offering more emotionally resonant voice.



CULTURAL HYBRIDITY IN THE LATE 20TH CENTURY

- ▶ Clarinet music by the 1980s and 1990s
- ▶ Reflecting broader cultural hybridity
- ▶ **Keiko Fujiie (b. 1963)**, *Three Pieces for Solo Clarinet* (1985)
 - Uses extended techniques: quarter-tone; whistle-tone; multiphonics; son fendu; etc.
 - Premiered in Tokyo in 1985 by Yasuaki Itakura.
 - Reflecting Japanese concept of timing, ma (silence) and Jo-ha-kyu (developmental pacing).



THE 21ST CENTURY — GLOBAL VOICES

- ▶ Clarinet music in the 21st century
 - Pluralistic
 - Internationally engaged
- ▶ Representative composers:
 - **Akira Nishimura** (1953-2023) – values timbre; spiritual and environmental (e.g., *Jurei I*; *Jurei II*; *Jurei III*).
 - **Karen Tanaka** (b. 1961) – blending electronics and environmental soundscapes. (*Always in my heart for clarinet & piano*)
 - **Motoharu Kawashima** (b. 1972) – integrates theatrical effects and wit (*Dialogue with My Shadow for clarinet and bass clarinet*)



PERFORMER'S ROLE & PERSPECTIVES

▶ Role:

- Executing fluency of extended techniques and abstract forms.
- Answering for the demand of sensitivity to cultural nuance, and sound color.
- Integrating technologies and multimedia to the live performance (for later works).

▶ Perspectives:

- **Postwar works** – mastery of extended techniques and nontraditional notation
- **21st century works** – sensitivity to timbre, pacing, and integration of electronics

CONCLUSION & PERFORMANCE

- ▶ From **western imitation** to **global innovation**, from **collective experimentation** to **individual expression**, Japanese clarinet works trace a journey of transformation of integration of cultures, genres, and traditions.
- ▶ Keiko Fujiie's *Three Pieces for Solo Clarinet* – a piece that beautifully embodies the transitions and traditions we have discussed.

Thank you - Arigato.

KEIKO FUJIE 藤家溪子 (B. 1963)

Three Pieces for Clarinet in B-flat

[クラリネットのための 三つの小品] (1985)

I. QN=36

II. QN=1 second

III. QN=52

Photo: score excerpt - Zen On Music Company

