

*I Sommarluft (för Mamoru)* is dedicated to the Japanese composer Mamoru Fujieda. After discovering his music in my teens, it has remained a constant source of inspiration.

After listening to Fujieda's album for clavichord solo, *Kuravikōdo no shokubutsu monyō*, performed by Satoru Sahara, one might be surprised to discover that none of the pieces are written specifically for the clavichord, but rather for (any) unspecified keyboard instrument - a practice noticeably unmodern but reminiscent of European baroque music. Furthermore, the score completely lacks information about tuning. This archaic move is less surprising as such practice still to this day is employed in the tradition of Western art music, but is unusual to find in the music by Fujieda, who has become known for his use of Just Intonation. When I asked Fujieda why this was the case, he replied that it simply was because he never knew a piano tuner who could retune keyboards for him, so he focused instead his work in Just Intonation on instruments that he could easily retune, such as the koto.

In this piece, I have not followed Fujieda in these old practices, but have written a piece especially for the clavichord that has to be tuned to the specific tuning in Just Intonation called *Kirnberger-Svensson*. There is, however, a trace of Baroque music in the organization of these pieces into a suite, and the treatment of the tuning as if it was a late-Baroque temperament by modulating between different keys, exploring their different 'affects.'

The clavichord is like the European sister to the gǔqín; despite originating in very different cultures, they share a similar pathos. They have a light, quiet and intimate sound that invites to a detailed listening to its timbre, but that also effortlessly mingles with the surrounding smells, sights, and sounds. But whereas the gǔqín has a beautiful repertoire that emphasizes these unique characteristics, the clavichord lacks this and is mainly confined to playing music that usually was intended for organs and harpsichords; the role of the clavichord being that of a 'practice instrument'. The gǔqín was also not a concert instrument but was used for a different kind of 'practice', a kind of 'meditation' or 'contemplation' enjoyed by the Chinese literati class.

In Southern Song paintings, a common motif is a Chinese scholar playing his gǔqín in nature, letting the sounds of his instrument mingle with the sounds of nature. (Actually, the most common depiction showed the scholar strolling, on the way to the right spot to play, with his attendants carrying the instrument at polite distance). In reality, however, such a setting is at best idealistic since the quiet sound of the gǔqín almost requires an indoors-setting, even when playing just for oneself. For a painted ideal, I look instead to the art of Toshio Arimoto. As an artist, he had many similarities with Fujieda; he created archaic, timeless pieces equally influenced by Western European and Japanese traditions, reminiscent of Russian icons by Andrei Rublev, Tibetan thangkas by Situ Panchen or Chinese Buddhist mural paintings. He frequently depicted people playing clavichords or virginals in areas on the threshold between indoors and outdoors, such as in front of an open window in a house, or on terraces perhaps evocative of the *nokishita* (under the eaves) location that was so important in classical Japanese architecture as a transition zone between inside and outside. In one such painting, a virginalist with her back to us viewers plays music in front of an opening in a wall that reveals a vast landscape of hilltops (or possibly sand dunes). Flower petals are seen floating through the room, and according to the name of the painting, she is playing an ancient song, *ko kyoku*, harmonizing the past with the present.

In this suite, ancient music is evoked in two of the movements. *Miyama ni wa* is based on, or rather is a liberal 'transcription' of, the *wagon* pattern that accompanies mi-kagura chanting used in court Shinto rituals. During the time I studied for Fujieda in Fukuoka 2015-16, Fujieda organized a concert at the Nō theater at Sumiyoshi Shrine of his piece of 'Contemporary Kagura' *Kame no Otanashi*. I was very moved by this piece which includes elements of ancient Japanese music, his own compositions, 'contemporary' improvisation and abstract electronic sounds (which were actually not 'abstract' but the sound of amplified fermenting shochu). At one point, an *ajime-saho* section of mi-kagura was performed with this pattern in the wagon.

A couple of years prior to coming to Fukuoka, I had lived in Bandung and studied Sundanese karawitan for a year and I brought my kecapi with me to Japan which I used as my primary experimental tool for Just Intonation. I discovered that Fujieda himself was deeply into Sundanese music; he had written pieces for Sundanese gamelan and invited lecturers every year to teach the *degung* group he had helped organize in Fukuoka. As a homage to this shared passion, the fifth movement is written in the old European convention of a *Quodlibet*; a theme from Sundanese *tarawangsa* and one of Fujieda's melodies from *Pattern of Plants* are combined as seamlessly as I could.

The second movement, *in Nomine* is also based on old material, but not as far back to be called 'ancient'. It is in the style of English Renaissance consort music based upon the popular cantus firmus by John Taverner which gave birth to the 'in Nomine genre'. A love for early European music can perhaps already be sensed in Fujieda's music, but it was made very clear during my time in Fukuoka. I remember for example a beautiful event that he curated at a local art gallery. Renaissance music by, if I remember correctly, John Bull was paired with Fujieda's own compositions for clavichord, and a sound installation (this time the sounds came from amplified plankton). Just as with *Kame no Otanashi*, these seemingly eclectic sources blended into a singular poetic vision.

When I composed this suite for clavichord, I imagined a kind of informal, domestic, solitary, middle-of-the-day setting as the starting point and the music's ideal setting; can I write a piece of music that could be played without any audience at all, just for the solitary musician's contemplation or meditation? Can I write a piece of music that mingles unobtrusively with the ordinariness of everyday life? Can I write a piece of music fit for the woman in Arimoto's painting *ko kyoku* or the scholar in Mǎ Yuan's *Viewing plum blossoms by moonlight* about to play gǔqín? Can I avoid having the music create a virtual space on its own for the listeners' immersion and escape, but rather reach a state where the sounds from the instruments are like the aroma produced by burning incense, mingling effortlessly with the air and light, and then lightly carried away by the wind. This aspiration is evoked in the title for this suite as well as the last movement: *I Sommarluft* (in summer air).