

Christopher Yohmei Blasdel, Shakuhachi Workshop

Tenri Cultural Center, Sept. 22-24th, 2022

90 Euros, Reservations required

For inquiries or reservations, please contact:

Tenri Japanisch-Deutsche Kulturwerkstatt e. V.

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Öffnungszeiten: Di.- Sa. 13:00 - 19:00 Uhr

Content: This three-day workshop/lecture series will consist of demonstrations and group lessons that on techniques, tone production, body posture and relaxation exercises necessary for improved shakuhachi playing. At the end of the workshop there will be an opportunity for each participant to undertake an evaluated performance for the group. The style of shakuhachi playing taught will be Kinko-ryū Chikumei-sha style, as transmitted to Blasdel through his teacher, Yamaguchi Goro. However, all styles of players are welcome. Basic Kinko style notation and materials will be uploaded and made available for the participants.

Participants (Min. 10, Max 20): This workshop is aimed at the following levels:

1. Beginners—those who can already get a sound and have basic abilities on the shakuhachi.
2. Intermediates—those who can read music and play simple songs
3. Advanced—those who are comfortable with playing basic *honkyoku* and other traditional pieces (i.e. *sankyoku*)

The beginning hour of the workshop will consist of a group lecture/demonstration focusing on general but vital topics like breath control, body relaxation exercises and tips on how to improve tone production. The rest of the day's workshop will focus on group lessons divided into beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. Each level will focus on one or two pieces that will be performed on the final day.

Daily schedule

1st day (Sept. 22, 2022)

1600-1650: How to breathe, blow and be body aware

1700-1750: Group lesson for beginners, "Simple songs to improve reading and sound-production techniques"

1800-1850: Group lesson for intermediates, "Melodies easy to play on the shakuhachi" (including simple honkyoku like *Chōshi* and *Kyorei*)

1900-1950: Group lesson for advanced, "Learning Japanese music through *Rokudan no Shirabe*"

2nd day (Sept. 23, 2022)

1300-1350: Continued—How to breathe, blow and be body aware

1400-1450: Continued—Group lesson for beginners, “Simple songs to improve reading and sound-production techniques”

1500-1550: Continued—Group lesson for intermediates, “Melodies easy to play on the shakuhachi” (including simple honkyoku like *Chōshi* and *Kyorei*)

1600-1650: Continued—Group lesson for advanced, “Learning Japanese music through *Rokudan no Shirabe*”

3rd day (Sept. 24, 2022)

1000-1030: Final demonstration, Q&A

10:30-1130: individual participant performances

1130-1200: Wrap up and review

2000: Shakuhachi solo performance by Christopher Yohmei Blasdel

Christopher Yohmei Blasdel Profile:

Shakuhachi Performer, Writer, Lecturer on Japanese/Asian Music

www.yohmei.com

Christopher Blasdel came from the US to Japan as an undergraduate student and began studies of Japanese music with Japan’s Living National Treasure Goro Yamaguchi in 1972. He continued with the master until his death in 1999. In 1982, Blasdel received his MFA in ethnomusicology from Tokyo University of Fine Arts. In 1984 he received a teaching license and was conferred a professional name (Yohmei) from Yamaguchi—one of only two non-Japanese to be recognized by Yamaguchi.

Blasdel performs around the world and has taught or lectured at Earlham College (USA), Chulalongkorn University (Bangkok, Thailand), Texas A&M University (College Station, Texas), University of Washington (Seattle), Charles University (Prague), Cal Arts, International Christian University (Tokyo), Temple University (Tokyo) and many others.

His discography includes *Striking Light, Striking Dark*, a collaboration with vocalist Sasha Bogdanowitsch. He also collaborated on the CD *Navarasa* with San Francisco jazz bassist Mark Izu, (*Navarasa*), and the Seattle-based composer Byron Au Yong (*Breath Play*). *Zen Reveries* is a collaboration with the famed Japanese electronic musician Uehara Kazuo, and *Night of the Garuda* includes duets with the *ryūteki* (Shiba Sukeyasu), *shō* (Miyata Mayumi), *shamisen* (Hirai Sumiko) and *oud* (Hamsa el Din). All of the above CDs are available on Spotify, Amazon, Apple Music, etc. Blasdel has also composed and performed music for NHK documentaries and various films.

Blasdel authored *The Shakuhachi, A Manual for Learning* (originally published in 1986 and re-published in 2008 by Printed Matter Press), the foremost English language book on the shakuhachi and *The Single Tone—A Personal Journey through Shakuhachi Music* (available on Amazon Kindle), which details his experiences learning and playing the shakuhachi in Japan and around the world. His essays, both published and unpublished, can be seen at his website: www.yohmei.com/writings.

Blasdel co-organized the World Shakuhachi Festival ’98 (Boulder, Colorado) and was a member of the executive committee for the World Shakuhachi Festival, Sydney, 2008 and advised the World Shakuhachi Festival in Kyoto in

2012. He was also Senior Advisor to the annual Prague Shakuhachi Festival from 2006 to 2016. Presently, he is an adjunct lecturer at the University of Hawai'i, Mānoa. Blasdel holds a 5th degree black belt in Aikido.