

MEDIA RELEASE 24/04/2006

**OKEANOS PLUS Tour
Contemporary / Traditional:
New Music for Western and Japanese Instruments**

07 June LONDON: Spitalfields Festival
08 June YORK: York Late Music Festival
13 June MANCHESTER: RNCM

spnm – promoting new music and Asian Music Circuit present a UK tour of Western and Japanese sounds, combining contemporary and traditional repertoire. The collaboration is part of spnm's **Hindsight** series, curated by **Rolf Hind**.

Soloists **Etsuko Takezawa** (koto/bass koto/shamisen) and **Clive Bell** (shakuhachi) join leading contemporary music ensemble **Okeanos** (koto, sho/shamisen, harp, viola, clarinet/percussion, oboe/oboe d'amore) to perform a programme of traditional music and new works exploring the possibilities in the union of western and Japanese instruments.

The programme features traditional Japanese music alongside key contemporary works by **Toshio Hosokawa** and **Dai Fujikura**, plus new works written especially for the tour by four of the UK's best up-and-coming composers from the spnm shortlist: **Nadja Gabriela Plein**, **Christian Mason**, **Duncan MacLeod** and **Basil Athenasiadis**.

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Okeanos ensemble was brought together in 2001 with the aim of creating opportunities for young composers to write for western and Japanese instruments, initiating pioneering performance events, and often collaborating with other art forms. Following their recent successful debut at Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Okeanos was resident at the 2005 Vale of Glamorgan Festival and performed at the BMIC Cutting Edge Series 2005. A recent METIER CD release includes world premiere recordings of chamber music by Nicola Lefanu and Elizabeth Maconchy.

Etsuko Takezawa has formed several ensembles in Japan and performed at venues worldwide. She performs traditional Japanese music as well as new works by composers including John Cage, Lou Harrison, Kevin Volans and Moondog. In Japan she lectures at Fukushima University and the music department of Joetsu Education University.

Clive Bell studied the shakuhachi (Japanese flute) in Tokyo, and the khene (Lao mouthorgan) in Laos and Thailand. Recently he has worked with Jah Wobble, Complicite Theatre (*The Elephant Vanishes* and *Measure For Measure*), the BBC Singers (Spitalfields Festival, June 2004), and the BBC Symphony Orchestra (Prom, August 04). He has played on Jah Wobble's last 16 albums, plus records by Frank Chickens, Paul Schutze, Jeff Beck and Bill Laswell.

Nadja Gabriela Plein (b.1978) is an spnm-shortlisted composer currently working towards a DMus in composition at the Royal College of Music, London, having previously completed a BA at the University of Durham and an MA at the University of York. Her *sun sleeping on river-waves (awake at the waterfall)* is inspired by the poetic image of an ever-changing stream of colours.

Christian Mason (b.1984) is an spnm shortlisted composer studying for a BA in Music at the University of York. His work *under heaven: sometimes...* explores the idea that there is a time for many (often contradictory) occurrences, states of being and relationships – an idea found in both western and eastern philosophies.

Duncan MacLeod (b.1978) is an spnm-shortlisted composer currently studying with Michael Finnissy. His work *Graffiti* draws upon a number of influences that stem from Gagaku (traditional Japanese court music) through to the physical attributes and combinations of instruments.

Basil Athanasiadis (b.1970) is an spnm shortlisted composer. He was born in Greece and studied composition at the National Conservatory of Athens, Trinity College of Music, and Royal Academy of Music. His PhD research has focused on tracing the influences of the music of Japan and China on the contemporary composition. His work *Ithaka* is a journey from West to East, taking in elements of Japanese, Chinese, Greek and European musical cultures.

Listings information:

Okeanos Plus

Etsuko Takezawa *koto, bass koto, shamisen*
Clive Bell *shakuhachi*
Melissa Holding *koto*
Robin Thompson *sho, shamisen*
Sally Pryce *harp*
Bridget Carey *viola*
Kate Romano *clarinets, percussion*
Jinny Shaw *oboe, oboe d'amore*

Dai Fujikura

Okeanos Breeze

Nadja Gabriela Plein

Sun Sleeping on River-Waves (awake at the waterfall)

Traditional arr Fujinaga Kengyo & Masajima Kengyo

Yachiyojishi

Christian Mason

under heaven: sometimes...

Toshio Hosokawa

Fragmente 1

Duncan MacLeod

Graffiti

Etsuko Takezawa

Ichie

Traditional

Shakuhachi solo

Basil Athanasiadis

Ithaka

Tour dates:

Wednesday 7 June, 7.30pm

Spitalfields Festival: Wilton's Music Hall, Grace's Alley, London E1 8JB

Tickets: £10/£5

020 7377 1362

www.spitalfieldsfestival.org.uk

Thursday 8 June, 7.30pm

York Late Music Festival: National Centre for Early Music, York

Tickets: £10, concessions £8, students £3.50

01904 658338

www.ncem.co.uk

Tuesday 13 June, 7.30pm

RNCM, 124 Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9RD

Tickets: £10

0161 907 5555

www.rncm.ac.uk

ENDS

Notes to editors:

spnm – promoting new music is a unique meeting point for composers, performers and audiences of new music. The organisation discovers and promotes new music by emerging composers in the UK, with a nationwide programme of events, professional development schemes, an education programme and information services. To find out more, and to become a member, visit www.spnm.org.uk.

The Asian Music Circuit (AMC) is the UK's leading promoter for music from the Asian continent, famous for presenting a diverse range of innovative and eclectic Asian music tours, concerts, workshops, lectures and events in the UK. In 2006 the AMC will be opening the Asian Music Centre – a unique education resource centre for Asian music and culture. The centre will hold educational events and will host pioneering multi-media facilities. See www.amc.org.uk.