

ously taught in a similar capacity at Bowling Green State University and Oklahoma State University and has given master classes at over one-hundred-and-fifty colleges and universities. He received degrees from the Manhattan School of Music, Yale University, and Stony Brook University where he was the winner of the school-wide concerto competitions at all three institutions. He is currently the Principal Flutist of the New Orchestra of Washington (D.C.). His teachers include Carol Wincenc, Ransom Wilson, Linda Chesis and Susan Hoepfner. Dr. Nelson is an artist for Powell Flutes.

Johanna Wienholts is a harpist and creative artist celebrated for her authentic, expressive sound and joyful stage presence. A passionate educator, she currently serves on the faculty at University of Wisconsin-Madison and previously taught at Lawrence University Conservatory of Music. Johanna is the principal harpist of the Madison Symphony Orchestra and performs regularly with the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra and the Madison Opera.

Johanna has been featured as a soloist on Wisconsin Public Radio and is a sought-after

chamber musician also. Festivals include the Green Lake Chamber Music Festival, Bach Dancing and Dynamite Society, and work with the Willy Street Chamber Players.

Her commitment to expanding the classical canon and performing new music is woven into all her projects. Recently, she recorded an album of Iranian folk songs with violinist Ava Shadmani and completed a transcription project with Angelica Hairston of Challenge the Stats, alongside Diné composer Connor Chee.

Before settling in Madison in 2017, Johanna was a freelance harpist in New York City and Toronto, performing with ensembles across the United States and Canada. Johanna holds degrees from University of Toronto and the Manhattan School of Music. In Toronto, she studied with the renowned harpist Judy Loman, one of the last pupils of Carlos Salzedo.

Itinerant

Conor Nelson, flute
Johanna Wienholts, harp



CRC 4126

	Tōru Takemitsu (1930-1996): Toward the Sea III for alto flute and harp (1981)	(11:21)
1	I The Night	3:31
2	II Moby Dick	3:57
3	III Cape Cod	3:46
4	Tōru Takemitsu : Itinerant –In Memory of Isamu Noguchi– (1989)	3:36
5	Chen Yi (b. 1953): Memory (2011)	4:01
6	Dai Fujikura (b. 1977): Poison Mushroom (2003)	9:38
7	Tōru Takemitsu : Air (1995)	5:48
8	Tōru Takemitsu : Voice pour flûte solo (1971)	5:37

Total Time: 40:14

Recorded 2021 – 2023 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Mead Witter School of Music, Mead Witter Foundation Hall, Madison, Wisconsin. Produced and engineered by Kris Saebo. Mastered by Charles Mueller, Tiny Panther Recording. Cover image: Isamu Noguchi, Ghost (Ghost Dancing), 1952. Seto stoneware. 12 5/8 x 9 3/8 x 3 1/8 in. (32.1 x 23.8 x 7.9 cm). The Noguchi Museum Archives, 00309. Photo: Kevin Noble. © The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York / Artists Rights Society [ARS]. Support for this project was provided by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison with funding from the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation. Special thank you to Professor Daniel Grabois and the Electro-Acoustic Research Space (EARS) at UW-Madison for use of their microphones.

Itinerant

Conor Nelson,
flute

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harp



The end of life is a defining aspect of all itinerant journeys. Death serves as a poignant throughline for the album, as each piece chronicles a magnificent, nostalgic, surreal, or horrific journey, leading to death in some way. The interrelationship between humankind and nature—or gross manipulation of it in the case of *Poison Mushroom*—creates an expressive arc and subtheme.

Tōru Takemitsu was largely self-taught, and is widely considered to be the most influential Japanese composer of the Western art music tradition. Though he is often given similar honorifics, he did not want to be known as a Japanese composer specifically, but simply as a composer. Via Ingenious blends of traditional musics from Japan with European traditions in myriad settings, he set the stage for countless composers from Asia (and all over the world) to follow with highly unique marriages of dispirit styles. Chen Yi and Dai Fujikura are exquisite examples of this legacy.

Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* was a primary inspiration for Takemitsu's *Toward the Sea III for alto flute and harp*, a book that presents layers of tragedy and death after an itinerant journey. *Toward the Sea* is a part of a large

group of works that draw upon water as inspiration, exploring humankind's relationship with nature. Takemitsu described the piece as an "homage to the sea which creates all things and a sketch for the sea of tonality." *Toward the Sea* was commissioned by Greenpeace for the *Save the Whales* campaign.

I feel that water and sound are similar. We know water only in its transitory forms – rains, a lake, a river, or the sea. Music is like a river or sea. As many different currents create those oceans, so does music deepen our lives with constantly changing awareness.

–Tōru Takemitsu

In his iconic work for solo flute: *Itinerant –In Memory of Isamu Noguchi–*, Takemitsu depicts his "perceptions in life" of an important artistic collaborator and friend. The piece draws attention to Noguchi's itinerant life, having worked in a staggering number and variety of locations, especially considering the timeline of his career and travels parallel to world events and views. Takemitsu and Noguchi reportedly had many philosophical conversations about the relationship and struggle between humankind and nature. Simply put, they believed that this interplay could be

better grasped via their respective art forms. Takemitsu also noted that the piece searches for Noguchi's "individual identity between European and Japanese traditions," an additional theme of compositional cross-pollination that binds the album. Some rumor that the last note of the piece reflects Noguchi's soul leaving his body.

Contrasting Takemitsu's approach to memorialization, Chen Yi wrote a plaintive, memorial work *Memory* in tribute to the passing of her teacher, Professor Lin Yaoji. In the program notes, the composer speaks to her mentor: "I wish you could hear the tune in my Memory, which sounds like my painful cry out of your name in our Cantonese dialect. I expressed my deep sorrow in the music, to remember your fatherly mentorship." Originally for solo violin, Chen Yi created this version for solo flute in collaboration with flutist Mary Holzhausen.

Dai Fujikura's piece, *Poison Mushroom*, depicts the aftermath of the bombing of Hiroshima. He says of his piece:

On the 6th of August, we all sat in the big sports hall at school, absolutely boiling, bathed in sweat. This is the day atomic bomb

was dropped in Hiroshima in my grandparent's time. So, we would mark the anniversary by attending school, watching the films about the war/atomic bomb, also looking at the photos of the people who had suffered, and were still suffering the aftereffects of the atomic bomb. Some of the photos were so strong and violent that even as a small child, I remember them well.

One year I remember this talk: a survivor told us that everyone was jumping into the river after the bomb was dropped. Because of the searing heat, everybody wanted to be doused. They didn't know the water in the river was boiling.

When I was writing this piece, all the visions which I have seen about Hiroshima/Nagasaki/atomic bomb related materials were in my head.

It is our duty to remember.

Accordingly, the cover art is a photo of Isamu Noguchi's sculpture, "Ghost/Ghost Dancing" a work that memorializes the atomic dead. Special thanks to The Noguchi Museum for their permission of its use.

Air for solo flute was Takemitsu's last piece. The piece belongs to a collection of works that are inspired by wind/air/breath, etc. Echoing the instrumentation of *Toward the Sea*, the piece was originally conceived as a concerto for flute, harp, and orchestra, inspired by another sculptor, Joan Miró. Here, Takemitsu explores his last forays into nature before his own passing.

Voice for solo flute was inspired by the *Handmade Proverbs* by the surrealist poet, Shuzo Takiguchi. Like his relationship with Noguchi, Takemitsu and Takiguchi were friends and collaborators that often explored the relationship between humankind and nature.

With the author's permission, Takemitsu selected the following lines from the poem, which are spoken by the flutist in English and French, and interspersed throughout the music:

QUI VA LA? QUI QUE TU SOIS, PARLE, TRANSPARENCE! WHO GOES THERE ? SPEAK, TRANSPARENCE WHOEVER YOU ARE!

Preceding these lines, Takiguchi also makes a poignant reference to the end of life:

One fine day a little bird threw itself into a mirror and killed itself. It had believed in a world beyond here on earth.

Conor Nelson gave his New York recital debut at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall and has appeared frequently as soloist and recitalist throughout the United States and abroad. Solo engagements include concerti with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and numerous others. He made a number of recordings. He has appeared at numerous chamber music festivals including the OK Mozart, Banff, Bennington, Skaneateles, Yellow Barn, Cooperstown, Salt Bay, Look and Listen (NYC), Norfolk (Yale), Green Mountain, Chesapeake, and the Chamber Music Quad Cities series.

Conor is currently the Professor of Flute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He previ-