UMD School of Music Presents:

THE 43RD ANNUAL SPRING KOTO RECITAL

UMD JAPANESE KOTO ENSEMBLE
AND WASHINGTON TOHO KOTO SOCIETY
Kyoko Okamoto, director

Saturday, May 2, 2015 . 2PM
Elsie & Marvin Dekelboum Concert Hall
INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME  
Professor Lawrence Witzleben, Chair, Ethnomusicology Department

GREETINGS FROM THE EMBASSY OF JAPAN  
Mr. Masato Ohtaka, Minister for Public Affairs, Embassy of Japan

ANNOUNCER  
Stefanie Davis, Washington Toho Koto Society

I. HENSOH KYOKU SAKURA SAKURA (VARIATION ON CHERRY BLOSSOMS)  
composer, unknown, Kikushiro Maasaki, Arr., 1961  
This old song is called Koto Uta. It first appeared in a textbook of the Tokyo Music School in 1888, written like this, “Cherry Blossoms in the March sky as far as eyes can see. They are like the mist or floating clouds so bright and shining. Let us go to see the cherry blossoms!”

Koto solo: Mizuki Hamada, Leina Maeda

1st Koto: Maiko Daizen, Stefanie Davis, Tetsuko Harris, Jackie Lee, Lombar Martinez, Midori Matsumoto, Mary Metzger, Sachi Nishio, Sachiko Smith, Frederique Thompson*, Tiffany White


3rd Koto: Yoshiko Capps, Keiko O’Rourke, Yoshiko Tucker

4th Koto: Christina Bounxouysana*, Kevin Brady*, Harrison Mestel*, Saira Mirza*, Lauren Peng*, Shangyi Xi*

Bass Koto: Colin Khem

Flute: Mary Josie Blanchard

Vocal: Noriko Hunter

II. SEOTO (THE SOUND OF RAPIDS)  
Miyagi Michio, Comp., 1923  
The composer has captured the changing sound of a living river, which originates in a mountain valley, becomes a rapid mountain stream and finally turns into a mighty river.

Koto: Midori Matsumoto

Bass Koto: Yuriko Gandolfo

* Indicates that the player is a UMD student.
III. **HARU NO HIKARI (RADIANCE OF SPRING)**
Hisamoto Genchi, Comp., 1944

*The first signs of spring are welcomed. UMD students play in high and low registers as a duet.*

**High Register:** Kaleb Bordner,* Rebecca Jimenez,* Christopher Liu,* Frederique Thompson,* Kane Wade,* Grace Wang*

**Low Register:** Kyoko Okamoto

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IV. **HIMAWARI (SUNFLOWER)**
Chikushi Katsuko, Comp., 1968

*The sunflower, an epitome of the summer season showing its vibrant face toward the sunlight, always gives the people courage and gives revitalizing energy to those who view them, while the flowers constantly bloom upward toward the sky. With hope of eternal happiness and vitality.*

Played by the Virginia Beach Group in duet style.

**1st Koto:** Mary Metzger, Tiffany White

**2nd Koto:** Kumiko Gale, Mizuki Hamada

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- **INTERMISSION**-

V. **GOJOGEN (HISTORIC BATTLE SITE IN ANCIENT CHINA)**
Nomura Seiho, Comp., 1969

*The lyrics express the emotions of a famous Chinese general and his men as they prepare for their last battle. The original Chinese texts were translated into Japanese by the poet Doi Bansui. This piece first appears in Sangokushi, written by Chin Ju (232-297 AD).*

**1st Koto:** Stefanie Davis, Midori Matsumoto, Kyoko Okamoto, Sachiko Smith, Yoshiko Tucker

**Piano:** Sarah Hess

**2nd Koto:** Yoshiko Capps, Maiko Daizen, Leina Maeda, Sachi Nishio, Keiko O’Rourke

**Drum:** Tom Oeste, Izumi Tamanaha

**Contrabass:** Donnie Scally

**Bass Koto:** Colin Khem

**Vocal (female):** Noriko Hunter

**Flute (shakuhachi part):** Yuriko Gandolfo

**Vocal (male):** Nick Nishio

**Flute:** Mary Josie Blanchard
VI. **OGAWA NO HOTORI NITE** (ON THE BANKS OF A STREAM)
Morioka Akira, Comp., 1965

As one gazes into the clear running water of a stream, many happy memories are recalled.

1st Koto: Kaleb Bordner*, Melanie Brose, Maiko Daizen, Kumikp Gale, Tetsuko Harris, Colin Khem, Jackie Lee, Leina Maeda, Yoshiko Tucker

2nd Koto: Yoshiko Capps, Stefanie Davis, Sachi Nishio, Kyoko Okamoto, Keiko O’Rourke, Sachiko Smith, Izumi Tamanaha, Tiffany White

VII. **ROKUDAN NO SHIRABE WITH KUMOI ROKUDAN ACCOMPANIMENT AND SANGEN** (SIX VARIATIONS)
Yatsuhashi Kengyo, Comp. (1614–1685)

This classical masterpiece is the most famous piece in the koto repertoire. First introduced in 1644, it combines 17 right-hand techniques and eight left-hand techniques, which are skillfully woven into an etude of six musical variations.

**Koto:** Kyoko Okamoto

**Kumoi Accompaniment:** Izumi Tamanaha

**Sangen:** Sachiko Smith, Mary Metzger

VIII. **HANA WA SAKU** (MAY FLOWERS BLOOM IN YOUR HEART)
Kanno Yoko, Comp., 2012; Maruta Miki, Arr., 2013

Lyrics: Iwai Shunji

The NHK (Nippon Hoso Kyokai) broadcasting company hoped to encourage and build public support for the recovery efforts after the disaster on March 11, 2011 in Fukushima, Japan. This theme song titled “Tomorrow” was dedicated to the region affected by the disaster.

1st Koto: Yuriko Gandolfo, Mizuki Hamada, Colin Khem, Leina Maeda, Izumi Tamandaha

2nd Koto: Midori Matsumoto, Mary Metzger, Sachiko Smith

Bass Koto: Kyoko Okamoto
The performers are students from the UMD Japanese Koto Ensemble classes (MUSC129K/129L), from the School of Music and other departments of the University of Maryland.

Performers are directed by Kyoko Okamoto, a native of Japan, who graduated from the University of Foreign Studies and is a certified teacher of the Ikuta School of Koto. She has studied with Kazue Ebara of Ashiya, Japan. She has been teaching koto at UMD since 1973.

Okamoto Sensei’s lecture/concerts have delighted universities and community audiences nationwide. She has recorded for film productions by the Smithsonian Institution and performed for the film The Art of the Hyogushi. Okamoto Sensei also played for the educational film Pacific Bridge in 1977. In the same year, she appeared on public television as part of the music series “Music in Harmony” produced by the National Symphony Orchestra. In addition, Okamoto Sensei has played for Prime Minister Nakasone and the present Emperor of Japan at the Japanese Embassy in 1987 in Washington DC.

About the Artists

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Special Appreciation to the Following Artists:

Dr. Noriko Hunter (vocal) is a bilingual medical doctor practicing in Northern Virginia. She is also a trained soprano vocalist, who performs at The Kennedy Center and other national and international events, including the National Cherry Blossom Festivals.

Rev. Nick Naoki Nishio (vocal) is a pastor of the First Baptist Church in Rockville. He served as a worship/music pastor at the Japanese International Baptist Church in Portland, Oregon, for 15 years. He and his wife, Sachi, moved to Maryland in 2010 and started a new church. He is a member of the Japanese Choral Society of Washington.

Mary Josie Blanchard (flute) was selected by the Texas All-State Orchestra. She studied flute with Byron Hester, first chair flute of the Houston Symphony, and performed as a soloist in the Stephens College Orchestra. Blanchard has been teaching the flute for many years. Her students have won many awards including the National Symphony Orchestra fellowship, Texas All State Band and other state and regional solo and ensemble honors.

Yuriko Gandolfo (flute - shakuhachi part) has studied koto since 1988 with Kyoko Okamoto and has performed for the Koto Society ever since. She is also an accomplished flute player.

Donnie Scally (contrabass) has more than 15 years of experience as a jazz bassist, with performances in the U.S. and Japan. He completed a BM in jazz studies and bass performance at Temple University in Philadelphia and is currently working toward an MA in ethnomusicology at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Sarah Hess (piano) is a graduate student at the University of Maryland, School of Music with a BM in piano performance. As a student of Larissa Dedova, Hess performs throughout the DC metropolitan area. She has also appeared on stage as a koto player with the UMD Japanese Koto Ensemble and the Washington Toho Koto Society.

Tom Oeste (percussion) is a graduate engineering student at the University of Maryland, College Park. While Oeste has appeared on stage as a koto player with the Japanese Koto Ensemble and the Washington Toho Koto Society, today he will be performing on auxiliary percussion in “Gojogen.”

Mizuki Hamada (koto) is a native of Japan and lives in the city of Virginia Beach. She is an adjunct faculty member of Old Dominion University Community Music Division and Tidewater Community College. She has been actively involved in many sister cities exchange programs between the
U.S. and Japan throughout the Hampton Roads area in Virginia.

Sachiko Smith (shamisen/koto) received the art name of Kitagawa Yukiji for shamisen from the Kitagawa School in Tokyo, Japan in 1998. She also obtained her teacher’s certificate for shamisen in 2001. She has studied koto since 1985 with Kyoko Okamoto and has performed with the Washington Toho Koto Society since then.

The Washington Toho Koto Society was organized by Kyoko Okamoto in 1971 to promote the enjoyment of Japanese koto music. The Society has been widely acclaimed and has participated in many national events, including the presidential inaugurations and Japanese Embassy events.

In December 2014, the Koto Society received the Marshall Green Award from the Japan America Society for significant contributions to strengthening the understanding between American and Japanese people for more than five decades.

About the Artists (Continued)

Program Coordinators and Helpers

Director: Kyoko Okamoto

Stage Crew: Donald Romberger, Matthew Davis, Grace Kaji, Margaret Kaii-Ziegler, Emily Kaii-Ziegler, Zainab Abdul-Rahim, Keiko Miller, Soichiro Conner, Macklin O’Rourke, Rhoda Sumner

Kimono Dressers: Fumiko Baxter, Yoshiko Capps, Yoko King, Eriko Murray, Keiko O’Rourke, Misae Soto, Yoshiko Waeldner, Takeko Wahlstrom

Stage Calligraphy: Yoshiko Capps

Mekuri Greeter: Kayla O’Rourke

Photographer: Howard Kreiner

Videographer: Yuri Maeda

Program and Technical Assistance: Yuriko Gandolfo, Paul Okamoto, Yoshie Yagerline

Washington Toho Koto Society

President: Kyoko Okamoto

Vice President: Sachiko Smith

Treasurer: Izumi Tamanaha

Recording Secretary: Colin Khem

Corresponding Secretary: Yuri Maeda

The Washington Toho Koto Society is a 501(c) nonprofit cultural and educational organization incorporated in Maryland to promote goodwill and enjoyment of koto music.

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E-mail: kotosociety@gmail.com
Website: www.kotosociety.org
UMD Japanese Koto Ensemble — in the UMD Libraries

The following items and materials related to this performance are available in the collections of the University of Maryland Libraries. For materials held in the International Piano Archives at Maryland (IPAM) and the Paged Collections Room, please ask at the circulation desk.

Washington Toho Koto Society

Location: Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library — Paged Collections
Call Number: MCD 9371
Founded by UMD professor Kyoko Okamoto in 1971, the Washington Toho Koto Society performs traditional and contemporary Japanese koto music for audiences around the Washington DC metro area and the nation. This recording, produced at the University of Maryland’s Baltimore campus, celebrates the 25th anniversary of the organization and features student and professional musicians performing an array of works dating from the middle of the 17th century through the mid-1980s.

The Koto: A Traditional Instrument in Contemporary Japan — Henry Mabley Johnson

Location: Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library — Stacks
Call Number: ML1015.K68J64 2004 (Book)
Explore the history of the koto as it evolved alongside Japanese society throughout the centuries. Johnson’s study of this ancient instrument delves into the various instrument types and terminology as well as the performance tradition associated with this majestic instrument. An understanding of the koto’s long history provides context for its modern usage and performance conventions.

Japanese Shamisen Chamber Music with Koto and Shakuhachi — Ikuta School

Location: Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library — Paged Collections
Call Number: M1812. J26 (LP recording)
The ambience created by the stringed koto and shamisen and the end-blown Japanese bamboo flute, the shakuhachi, invokes a tranquil and unearthly ambience, far removed from the modern world. Become transported to a state of pure relaxation by this recording, which features Japanese chamber music performed on traditional instruments.

For more information on these UMD Library materials and other resources relating to the performers, pieces, composers and themes of this program, please visit us at www.lib.umd.edu/mspal/mspal-previews.