



唯<sup>ゆい</sup>  
是<sup>ぜ</sup>  
震<sup>しん</sup>  
一<sup>いち</sup>  
竹<sup>こ</sup>  
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Japanese Screen by Ogata Korin (1661-1716) courtesy: Metropolitan Museum of Art

**G**ENJI\* had a lover whom he never saw, because he visited her only in the night when it was dark. One night the time flew so quickly that before they realized it the dawn was breaking. When he looked at his lover, he saw that she was very ugly. Genji left her, and she mourned for him, going to the top of a mountain to profess her love. When his other lovers became jealous because of his infidelity, they left him and he returned to the Ugly One, for she was the only one that would have him.

The Prince and the Ugly Maiden (*Suetsumubana*)\*\* was composed by Shinichi Yuize for a traditional Japanese dancer. It is a *theme and variations*, with melody originally sung by soprano, with koto improvisations. Later he set it down, dedicated to the ugly girl of the story.

## IMPERIAL COURT MUSIC

There is a man who stands on the beach watching the dancing waves; he listens to the music that comes from the sea and the wind that makes the waves dance. He meditates upon the many before him who have stood in this place and watched the same scene, thought his thoughts, how they have vanished and changed with the times, how the waves still sing, and will continue their song for an eternity. **CHI DORI** (*plover*) by Kengyo Yoshizawa was written at about the end of the 17th, perhaps the beginning of the 18th century.

Taken from the book of Genji the God\* is the story of another of Genji's lovers. She was very much in love with him, and when he turned away, brushing her aside, she died of a broken heart. As Genji was sitting with his new lover one evening, a wind entered the room and blew out all the lights. It was an evil wind, with an air of mystery about it, and when the lights were lit again, Genji found that his new lover was dead. **YU-GAO** (*gourd*) by Kengyo Yaezake, written in the early 17th century, is programmatic within its own flexible framework; the statement is made by voice in the song, then translated and elucidated pictorially on the instrument. The symbolism is plainly evident, and especially so in the case of the sound of the wind.

**ROKUDAN** (*six steps*) by Kengyo K-Yatsushashi, was written at some time in the early 16th century, and consists of a series of musical variations. The composition and its composer represent the first purely instrumental conversion of the koto and its music from its previous role as voice accompaniment.

## MODERN MUSIC by Shinichi Yuize

### Dance Suite\*\*:

1. *Shuttlecock* (HA NE TSUKI), or peach stone with feathers. This is a festival game for children at New Years, using solid wooden paddles, highly decorated; one side displays a beautiful portrait, possibly of *Kabuki* player, the other a watercolor style of a tree, etc.
2. *Lantern Parade* (CHO CHIN - GYO RETSU)
3. *Ainu Children's Dance* (AINU NO KONO O ODORI)

### Three Etudes\*\*:

1. *Woodpecker* (KI TSU TSU KI)
2. *Murmuring water* (NAGARE)
3. *Blacksmith* (KAJIYA)

\**Tales of Genji*, a very old book in the Japanese literature, is not folk and not religious. *Genji* was the name of a prince.

\*\*For his own music Shinichi Yuize changed tuning to include both pentatonic and Japanese modes.

Now and then an artist singularly gifted, an individualist, appears out of the void. Such a one is Shinichi Yuize, and his appearance on the musical horizon of the western hemisphere has struck an international note. The koto is the classic Japanese instrument for music in its purest form, and Shinichi Yuize, a native of Hokkaido, devoted his early years of study to the music of Japan and the koto.

Instruments vary somewhat in size; this one is over six feet long, strung with thirteen white silken strings, each made up of 130 tightly woven strands. The familiar tension adjustments for stringed instruments are not used; for the koto, tuning is accomplished by movable individual ivory bridges beneath each string. The string is then plucked to the right of the bridge. Infinitely fine variations of pitch may be produced by pressing down on the left hand side of the strings, changing their tensions individually. His vibrato is produced in the same manner. Unlike the five tone Chinese pentatonic mode, a change in the descending scale of the Japanese mode produces six different pitches.

A panorama of Yuize's life reveals illustrious names of the great in Japanese art and music linked closely with his own, reflects his artistic and creative achievements. His teachers were Michi Miyagi and Fumio Hayasaka, whose recent scores for the motion pictures *Rashomon*, *Ugetsu* and *Gate of Hell* have earned awards at the Venice film festivals and elsewhere.

He has appeared as guest artist on radio and television networks, and in the program *Omnibus* performed with the *Kabuki Theater Group* as koto virtuoso. Through these mediums Shinichi Yuize has presented a new dimension of musical awareness in the western culture.

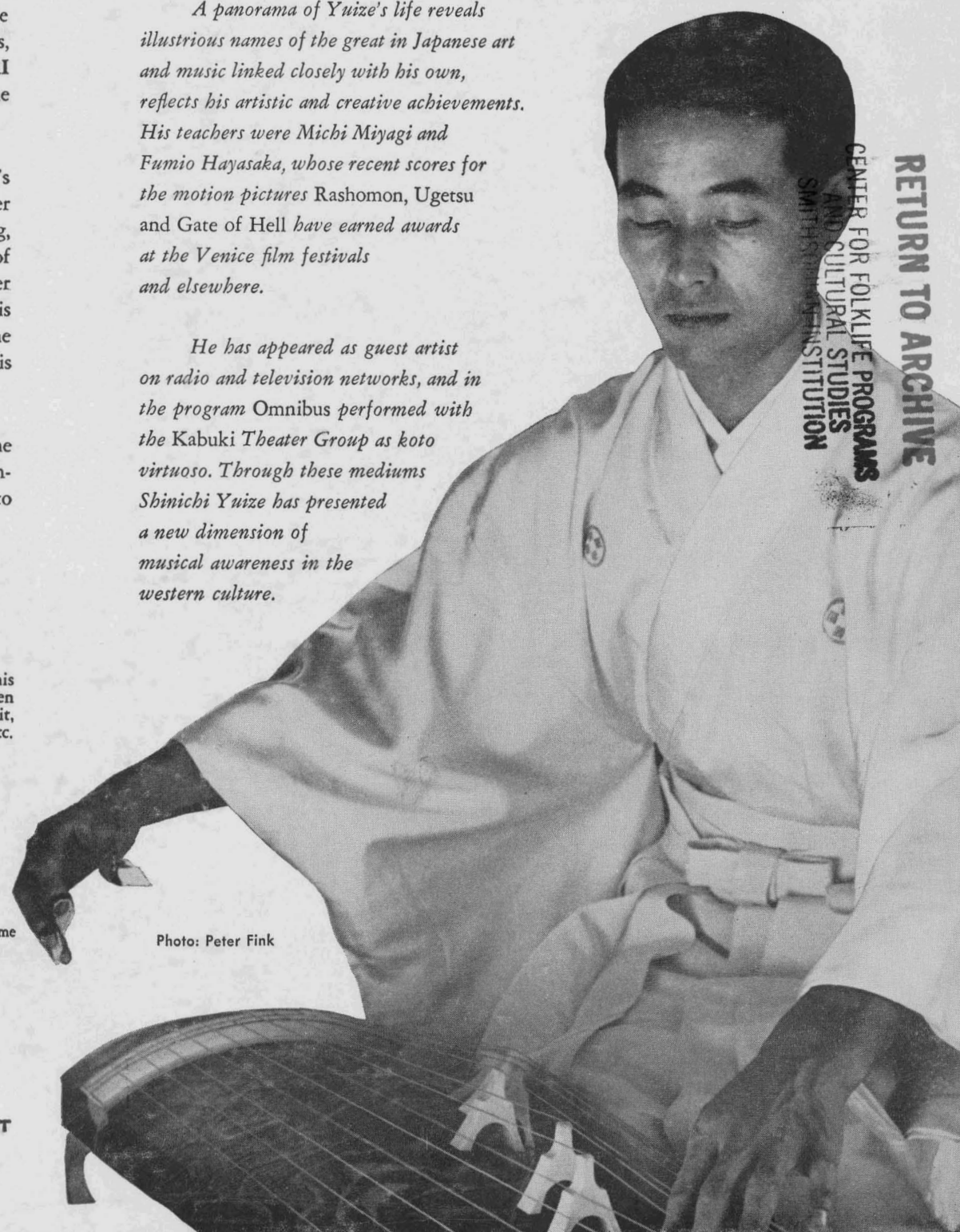


Photo: Peter Fink

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