



About the Artist

Shawn Renzoh Head is at the forefront of Japanese traditional music and its expansion into the western world. At age 18, he became the youngest non-Japanese Shakuhachi Shihan (master) in history. In 2019, Shawn received the distinct honor of becoming an OSS 大將軍 Tai Shogun, given to him for his work in traditional Japanese music by Ronald Watt 9th Dan Shotokan Karate and Order of the Rising Sun (Japan's top civilian award). Head earned a bachelor's degree in composition from the Cleveland Institute of Music, and is currently based in Houston, Texas.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

Center for Buddhist
Studies



GUEST ARTIST SERIES

Shawn Renzoh Head

THE SHAKUHACHI FLUTE



Monday, October 28, 2019
Holsclaw Hall
7:00 p.m.



THE UNIVERSITY
OF ARIZONA

COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS
Fred Fox School of Music



Shawn Renzoh Head

The Shakuhachi Flute

*Presented in collaboration by the
University of Arizona American Culture and Ideas Initiative
at the Fred Fox School of Music and the
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PROGRAM

Murasaki Reiho

This piece has traditionally been attributed to the Muromachi Period Zen priest Ikkyu (1394-1481.) In addition to his composition for shakuhachi, though never substantiated, he wrote many poems about the instruments as well. It is thought that this work is in reference to Murasakino (purple field) which is where Ikkyu was the forty-seventh chief priest of Daitoku-ji (Zen Temple).

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Air – Takemitsu

Takemitsu's last composition, Air for solo flute (1995), was dedicated to the great Swiss flutist Aurèle Nicolet. It highlights his highly individual voice which is a strong mix between French impressionist and Japanese traditional music.

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Nezasa Ha Shirabe to Sagariha

From the repertoire of Nezasa-school, this is one of the representative pieces of the school. A special effect called komibuki, which depicts a north wind blowing through a bamboo grove, is the characteristic of Nezasa-school. This school no longer exists today.

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Kumoi Jishi

This is an Edo Period (1603-1867) piece that originated at Itchoken, a temple Kyushu. The second word, "Jishi" ("lion") in the title means that this work will be played in a quick manner. "Kumo" of "kumoi" is the character for "cloud(s)". It is played almost completely in the upper register lending this song played to be played at joyous celebrations. It is more upbeat and auspicious than other works.

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Two Folk Songs

These are two popular folk songs that highlight different scales and styles that are popular in Japan.

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Song Of Autumn – Hsin-Jung Tsai

Commissioned by Shawn Renzoh Head, Song of Autumn was composed in both traditional and graphic notations. The idea of this piece was inspired by a calligraphy work from my violin teacher Jia-Zhen Chang. The poetry in the calligraphy says: "Everyone has the Buddha-nature. It is just temporarily obscured by delusion, attachment, and discrimination." (Quote from "The Avatamsaka Sutra). There are improvisational phrases based on the graphic notation and the shape of calligraphy. The performer needs to create his musical shape and visual image according to the indications and tries to fit in the idea of the piece.

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