

I was at the premiere of *Song-Poem of the Eastern Clouds*. At the time, Marty Regan was certainly drawn to the breath rhythm of the shakuhachi and Japanese transverse flutes. It has been nearly 10 years since then, but I am delighted to see that he is still composing with fondness for Japan in his heart. Currently, he is living outside of Japan and I have heard that his academic interest in traditional Japanese culture is not as strong as before, but he has continued his studies and created works that express Japanese sensibilities without undo force. At the same time, his music would not be out of place in Western film. This makes me wonder if the core essence of the East and West is somehow the same thing...? I have come think how shallow it is when Japanese go out of their way to artificially brand “Japan,” and market it for popular consumption as if it were latest rage.

–Akiko Ota

Without knowing, if you listen to the first track, *Song-Poem of the Eastern Clouds*, you couldn't imagine that this piece was composed by an American. Music based on a single melodic line that follows that natural patterns of the performer's breath while gently undulating is a characteristic of Japanese music. From the second track, the use of syncopation and minimalistic elements, as well as the command of functional harmony and addition of Western orchestral instruments, makes the composer's identity clear. The melody that the violoncello plays based on breath rhythm like the shakuhachi is beautiful. I'd like to hear what these pieces would sound like if the performers were American.

–Midori Tanaka

Westerners who perform on Japanese traditional instruments are no longer rare. However, when Westerners compose for these instruments there have been cases when the result feels quite awkward. On the other hand, as I listen to this recording, I honestly forgot about the composer and wholeheartedly immersed myself in the sound. Naturally, this music is different from superficial Japanese music. The true essence of this composer is how he entwines the shakuhachi within a piano trio and combines the shakuhachi and violoncello in such a way that the listener does not feel any sense of conflict. This recording is proof that Japanese music is not only realm of the Japanese.

–Yukitoshi Morishige

In the first movement of *Evanescent Yearning...*, there was a moment where I felt a fusion and correspondence between the Japanese and American concepts of “song.” I had this experience many times when listening to this CD of Selected Works by Marty Regan, who is enchanted with traditional Japanese music and has continued to compose. This should also be my experience with music for traditional Japanese instruments written by Japanese composers, but in Marty's works this characteristic is irresistibly fascinating. As I listened with excitement, I was simultaneously embarrassed that I did not previously know of this composer and his works.

–Shinya Watanabe

**Translated by Marty Regan**