

BINALIG.

Traditional, reconceived and realized by KIOKU.

Kulintang (or kolintang) refers to an instrument consisting of eight small gongs in graduated sizes and the overall ensemble which can include larger gongs (gandingan, agung, babandil) and a drum (dabakan). This musical tradition developed on the Filipino island of Mindanao in two adjacent provinces: the Maranao (people of the lake) and Magindanao (people of the flood plain). Used as a means of social interaction, entertainment, and a necessary component within healing ceremonies, kulintang represents a rich social and musical tradition. Since the 1960s, kulintang has been introduced to a wider audience by such scholars and performers as José Maceda, Robert Garfias, Danongan Kalanduyan, and Usopay Cadar. The title “Binalig” refers to an improvised and rhythmically-complex piece, but is also related to “balig” with implications of informality and foreign-ness. The present arrangement consists of four overlapping movements and was developed by KIOKU.

THE DRUM THING.

John Coltrane with Jimmy Garrison and Elvin Jones, realized by KIOKU.

Aside from his innovations in timbre, phrasing, solo development, and composition, the saxophonist John Coltrane embodied the connection between music, the self, and spirituality. His musical explorations of “African-ness” as an African-American served as an important example to others in search of musical “roots.” While *Crescent* (1964) is usually not discussed in this context (perhaps due to its close chronological proximity to the hugely-influential *A Love Supreme*), the album contains a remarkable improvisational feature for drummer Elvin Jones entitled “The Drum Thing.” As realized by KIOKU, this musical meditation retains the haunting melody and redistributes the bass pulse and drum set phrases to laptop, taiko, and cymbals.

MIYAKE.

Traditional, arranged by Kondo Katsuji and Tomida Kazuaki of KODO, reconceived by Wynn Yamami, realized by KIOKU.

On the remote volcanic island of Miyake-jima off the eastern coast of Japan, a drumming style developed that, to some, mirrored the strenuous physical movement of fishermen reeling in their nets. This distinctive rhythm and performance style (crouching low to the ground) was made famous through an arrangement by Kondo Katsuji and Tomida Kazuaki of the drumming group KODO. In most performances, KODO precedes “Miyake” with a fisherman’s song (“Okiage”) from Hokkaido. The present arrangement replaces the angular arm movements with a flowing style, adds an allusion to the rhythms of Hachijo-jima, and introduces a second folk song lamenting the decline of fish off the coast of Esashi, Hokkaido (“Esashi Oiwake”).

PINARI.

Traditional, arranged by SAMULNORI, reconceived by Wynn Yamami, realized by KIOKU.

This Korean prayer song was once performed by shamans to invoke blessings from various deities and ancestral spirits. The drumming group SAMULNORI adapted this prayer and combined it with rhythms derived from rural music traditions (nong-ak, also referred to as pungmul, poongmul, poongmul-nori). Formed in 1978 by Kim Duk Soo, SAMULNORI takes its name from the “four instruments” to be played: the kwaenggwari (small hand-held gong), jing (larger gong), janggu (hourglass-shaped drum), and buk (barrel drum). The present arrangement begins with Pinari (transferred from the voice to the alto saxophone) and includes rhythms and melodies from the Chungbu, Honam, and Youngnam regions.

PROTOPHONICS

Christopher Ariza, Ali Sakkal

This piece explores a dynamic mixture of foreground and background, with each merging into the other. Contrasting rhythms, genres, and textures provide a linear progression.

YATAI BAYASHI

Traditional, reconceived by Wynn Yamami, realized by KIOKU.

In Shinto practice, kami (gods) take on many different forms and can be found inhabiting natural objects, public or private shrines, and other locales. During special festivals, kami are transferred into mikoshi (portable shrines) and carried throughout the neighborhood in order to spread good fortune. The music is provided by the hayashi (musical ensemble), often performing directly on the yatai (festival cart or float). Because each town and city has its own unique kami and traditions, there is a wide range of festival music in Japan. The present arrangement begins with an allusion to the music of Kanda Bayashi in downtown Tokyo and concludes with Chichibu Yatai Bayashi from the neighboring Saitama prefecture. Between these two bustling, festival scenes is a moment of solitude for the odaiko player.

SPIRITS #16

Keith Jarrett, reconceived by Wynn Yamami, realized by KIOKU.

After years of musical innovation and exploration, Keith Jarrett returned to the basics of jazz in the early 1980s (revitalizing jazz “standards” with Gary Peacock and Jack DeJohnette) and the basics of music and sound with his solo recording *Spirits* (1985). These musical miniatures were explorations in spontaneity and emergence rather than composition or group improvisation, utilizing instruments in his home studio (flutes, recorders, piano, percussion, and the voice). The present arrangement replicates his technique of multi-tracking with a rendition of the melody through the laptop along with heterophonic doubling by the saxophone.