

Minor Instrument (Traditional Japanese Instrument) I-1

## **MODULE HANDBOOK**

**Michiko Takita**

Term: Spring or Fall Semester

Numbering MME1121

Credits 1

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This handbook provides information about the module and its operation. Please study it carefully.

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## **1. Introduction / welcome**

This module is designed to introduce students, who are interested in traditional Japanese music but are not experienced in actual performance of its instruments, to a range of basic study of koto performance and to an extensive way of attaining the interpretations of different styles of koto repertoire. The focus is on giving a solid grounding in the traditional Japanese tonalities, as well as an understanding of the roles the koto plays in different situations in music education. It is not required that the students start the course having had experience and knowledge in this area. The module will allow those from various backgrounds to gain the core skills needed for university-level music studies. As students progress through their studies, they will have increasing freedom to respect specialized repertoire in different kinds of Japanese music and approaches to studying it. They can also choose to apply their koto studies in the field of teacher-training course.

## **2.0. Module Description**

### **2.1 Overall Module aims:**

The module aims to explain that its practical lessons will introduce students to basic issues involved in understanding the music for koto and to the variety of koto techniques. Alongside the lessons, a structured program of different styles of koto music will give students a conceptual perception of Japanese music history, together with realistic experience of a wide range of repertoire. By learning how to play koto, the students in teacher-training course can eliminate their image of koto as special but unfamiliar instrument, and by recognizing the differences and similarities between Japanese and Western music, the existence of Japanese instruments will be identified on the same daily ground as Western instruments.

### **2.2 Subject Specific Module aims:**

The course is designed to give students practical experience in learning basic koto performance techniques. The lessons will focus on building repertoire and learning aspects on the traditional interpretive methods. The historical subjects studied in this course should be of use for students hoping to work in various music scenes, including the realm of educational environment. Especially, the distinctive ways of conceiving beats will make students learn the differences with Western music, and also studying shoga will enable students to understand the importance of accompanying songs and chorus.

### **2.3 Skills and abilities**

The module informs students with various approaches to the study of koto. Beginning with topics in traditional Japanese music theory, different scales are practiced in order of difficulty. The lessons will introduce key issues of repertoire, from shoga to a traditional piece of Edo period. An appropriate

course plan and a performance piece, according to each student's technical and artistic capabilities, will be recommended. Students will learn to practice and prepare for actual performance.

## **2.4 Applied learning**

The students are introduced to a range of genres of traditional Japanese music history, together with issues involved in their study. Covering technical and analytical approaches, students will learn how to think about koto music in the context of evolving history. By learning the concept of *ma* from Japanese philosophy, students will be able to connect the knowledge to their studies of major Western instruments.

## **3.0. Learning outcomes**

### **3.1. Learning outcomes – overall**

On completion of this module, students should be able to:

- demonstrate and apply appropriate basic koto technique and interpretive knowledge to the performance of koto music
- comprehend, apply and critique key concepts in a range of different musical perspectives
- draw connections between each element of the module and with concurrent and previous studies

### **3.2. Learning Outcomes - Specific**

On completion of this module, students should be able to:

- prepare koto pieces for performance by the end of the semester
- recognize different approaches to the styles of koto repertoire

## **4.0 The module team**

The address for the Department within which your module is situated is:

Tokyo College of Music  
1-9-1 Kami-meguro,  
Meguro-ku, Tokyo, 153-8622

Staff involved in the organisation and delivery of this module are as follows:

*Michiko Takita*

*Module Leader*

*takita\_michiko@tokyo-ondai.ac.jp*

**Module Leader**

The Module tutor has the overall responsibility for organising, delivering and assessing a module. It is the Module Leader who you should see with any queries or problems related to a specific module, if the Course administrative officer cannot help.

*Music Liberal Arts*

*Course administrator*

*mla@tokyo-ondai.ac.jp*

### **Course administrator**

The Course Assistant has responsibility for providing a full and responsive administrative service in support of the processes and procedures associated with student and course administration.

## **5.0 Indicative Syllabus**

This course is made up of weekly koto lessons. Each lesson consists of explanation of specific techniques and pieces to be selected according to each student's musical training background. Koto repertoire of different styles is introduced for study and for preparation of performance. Students are expected to practice on their own prior to each lesson.

## **6.0. Delivery Information:**

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Title</b>  | <b>Synopsis</b>  |
|-------------|---|--|
| 1           | Orientation, goal setting (assessing instrumental experiences), yearly plan (according to the objectives) | Pre-set for koto beginners: How to handle the instrument, names of parts, tunings, basics about the instrument. Understanding shoga. |
| 2           | Right hand technique  | Shoga: notation and practice   |
| 3           | Right hand technique  | Shoga: notation, practice, application   |
| 4           | Right hand  | A summary (1)  |
| 5           | Left hand technique   | Shoga: notation and practice   |
| 6           | Left hand technique   | Shoga: notation, practice, application   |
| 7           | Left hand   | A summary (2)  |
| 8           | Rokudan no Shirabe (Yatsunashi Kengyo)  | Shoga in depth.<br>The first dan   |
| 9           | Rokudan no Shirabe (Yatsunashi Kengyo)  | Summing up of the first dan  |
| 10          | Rokudan no Shirabe (Yatsunashi Kengyo)  | The fourth dan   |
| 11          | Rokudan no Shirabe (Yatsunashi Kengyo)  | Summing up of the fourth dan   |
| 12          | Rokudan no Shirabe (Yatsunashi Kengyo)  | The second and third dan   |
| 13          | Rokudan no Shirabe (Yatsunashi Kengyo)  | The fifth and sixth dan  |

|    |   |                              |
|----|---|------------------------------|
| 14 | Rokudan no Shirabe (Yatsushashi Kengyo) | Complete work                |
| 15 | Rokudan no Shirabe (Yatsushashi Kengyo) | Summing up of the whole work |

## 7.0 Independent study – Preparation for lecture

Students are expected to spend about 1 hour outside of the class every day. Points of preview and review will be given at the end of each lesson. Students' progress in key module skills is monitored throughout the course. Following the performance at the end of the semester, the module leader will provide students with formative feedback on their comprehension and performance progress.

## 8.0 Assessment and practical tasks:

### **Assignment:**

Final evaluation will be based on completion of the following: Exam (Written test)-40%, Assignments-30%, Class participation-20%, Attendance-10%

| Module Grading Bands |        |  |
|----------------------|--------|--|
| S                    | 90% +  | <p>Excellent demonstration of scholarly application / critical understanding of subject area knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• well structured assignment that addresses the learning outcomes and specific criteria for the module</li> <li>• critical understanding/application is evident through systematic and relevant coverage of content</li> <li>• clearly communicated in a style appropriate to the assessment brief</li> <li>• accurate and predominately consistent use of a recognised referencing system</li> <li>• wide range of appropriate sources</li> </ul> |
| A                    | 80-89% | <p>Very good demonstration of scholarly application / critical understanding of subject area knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• well structured assignment that addresses the learning outcomes and specific criteria for the module</li> <li>• critical understanding/application is generally evident in the coverage of content</li> <li>• clearly communicated in a style appropriate to the assessment brief</li> <li>• predominantly consistent and generally accurate use of a recognised referencing system</li> <li>• good range of appropriate sources</li> </ul>      |

|            |        |  |
|------------|--------|--|
| B          | 70-79% | <p>Good demonstration of scholarly application / critical understanding of subject area knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fairly well structured assignment that addresses the learning outcomes and specific criteria for the module</li> <li>• some critical understanding/application is evident through coverage of content which is also descriptive</li> <li>• good communication in a style appropriate to the assessment brief</li> <li>• predominantly consistent and generally accurate use of a recognised referencing system</li> <li>• a range of appropriate sources</li> </ul>         |
| C          | 60-69% | <p>Adequate demonstration of scholarly application / critical understanding of subject area knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adequately structured assignment that addresses the learning outcomes and specific criteria for the module</li> <li>• largely descriptive with some critical understanding/application evident through coverage of content</li> <li>• communicates in a style appropriate to the assessment brief</li> <li>• attempts to use a recognised referencing system but may have occasional systematic errors</li> <li>• a limited selection of appropriate sources</li> </ul> |
| D+<br>Fail | 40-59% | <p>Limited demonstration of scholarly application / critical understanding of subject area knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• poorly structured assignment that does not completely address the module learning outcomes and specific criteria</li> <li>• work is descriptive in its coverage of the content</li> <li>• poor communication that does not use a style appropriate to the assessment brief</li> <li>• use of recognised referencing system is systematically inaccurate throughout the document</li> <li>• an insufficient range of appropriate sources</li> </ul>                       |
| D<br>Fail  | 10-39% | <p>Poor demonstration of scholarly application / critical understanding of subject area knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• poorly structured assignment that does not address the learning outcomes and specific criteria for the module</li> <li>• coverage of the content is inadequate or incomplete</li> </ul>   |

|        |      |   |
|--------|------|---|
|        |      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• poor communication that does not use a style appropriate to the assessment brief</li> <li>• recognised referencing system is not used</li> <li>• sources are very limited or absent, or over reliance on one or two sources</li> </ul> |
| D-Fail | 0-9% | Very poorly structured assignment that does not address any of the learning outcomes or the specific criteria for the module  |

## 9.0 Further Reading Sources

Takita, M. (2007). Wagakki kyohon koto [Japanese instruments textbook: koto]. IAG.

Further reading sources and scores will be distributed in class.