

concert music

Tsukimi
for Eight Voices

peter gilbert

Tsukimi (“Moon Viewing”)

for Eight Voices

& optional percussion

[tam-tam, marimba, shaker, timpani or bass drum, triangle, large cymbal and bow]

Notes to the Performers:

- I strongly encourage some kind of dignified design for movement throughout the piece (between songs, perhaps? during songs?). I would also suggest that the piece could work well having different placements of singers throughout the performance space to heighten aspects of solo, ensemble, dynamics and so on, including doing some parts from off-stage or the sides and rear of the hall. I leave the parameters of such an endeavor entirely up to you.
- Solos should be done with lots of passion and flare and each solo should be at or near the fore throughout each poem. Each solo has a dramatic pathos to be extrovertly explored.
- The countless glissandi throughout are slides that always start immediately when given. Portamento can be used throughout.
- If anything, exaggerate everything gesturally, especially dynamic gestures. Notes or passages that end with a decrescendo should typically fade out smoothly to silence. Extra swells and dynamic affectations are encouraged.
- The piece is done with little to no vibrato throughout, except as an occasional dramatic inflection.
- This piece uses both the standard quarter-tone notations for $1/4$ flat (\flat), $1/4$ sharp (\sharp), and $3/4$ sharp ($\sharp\sharp$), as well as inflected accidentals ($\flat\flat$ $\sharp\sharp$ $\sharp\sharp\sharp$) for pitches that are only slightly altered—approximately an $1/8$ th of a tone from tempered pitches.
- In cases where only a single vowel is given, the vowel should match the parallel vowel in the solo line.
- The “no-time” time signature (circle with a vertical line) gives that voice freedom to move within the provided space. These parts should feel “out-of-time” but stay relatively close to the given score position with regards to the other parts, loosely coordinated. Accidentals carry through.
- The poems “Akikaze ni” and “Wata no hara” both make use of material out of the Torino Manuscript from 15th century Cyprus (“Si doucement me fait Amours doloir” and “Si doucement mon coeur je sens souspris” respectively).
- The opening of the solo in “Hototogisu” is a fairly direct quotation of a Japanese Cuckoo, the *Cuculus poliocephalus*.

Tsukimi (“Moon Viewing”) for Eight Voices

with optional percussion

Commissioned by Lorelei Ensemble

Tsukimi is a traditional Japanese celebration of the full moon (translated as “Moon Viewing”) which dates back to the Heian period (roughly 800-1200 AD). The Heian era was a great era for Japanese literature and saw the revival of native waka poetry. The waka became more concise at this point, bearing only five lines: three of 5-7-5 syllable lengths (which would eventually stand alone as the *hokku*) and two final lines of 7 syllables each.

A famous anthology of the time, the Ogura Hyakunin Isshu, brings together 100 great poems of the time by different poets. Powerful and condensed, they leverage the broad-reaching contemplations of Buddhism to create moments of simultaneous descriptive, intellectual and spiritual beauty.

The moon is one of Buddhism’s great symbols. Itself a surface of reflection, it makes a wonderful mirror for the concept of the illusion of the senses. This sense of the illusory nature of our experience of life is summarized by a single word in Japanese: *ukiyo*, which translates as “floating world” but really implies the world of the senses hovering all around us. The Ogura Hyakunin Isshu is full of such remarkably dense imagery.

For me, reading them in a foreign language, the poems themselves are especially like the moon’s light: reflections beyond my grasp that illuminate the world about me in magically ethereal hues—emotional, ephemeral, slipping back into invisibility.

*Premiered on Saturday, November 23, 2013
by Lorelei Ensemble, Beth Willer, conductor
Boston University Marsh Chapel Boston, MA*

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Poems from the *Ogura Hyakunin Isshu*

#7 Abe no Nakamaro

Ama no hara
Furisake mireba
Kasuga naru
Mikasa no yama ni
Ideshi tsuki kamo

#76 Fujiwara no Tadamichi

Wata no hara
Kogi idete mireba
Hisakata no
Kumoi ni mayoo
Okitsu shiranami

#79 Fujiwara no Akisuke

Akikaze ni
Tanabiku kumo no
Taema yori
More izuru tsuki no
Kage no sayakesa

#68 Sanjo In

Kokoro ni mo
Arade ukiyo ni
Nagaraeba
Koishikaru beki
Yowa no tsuki kana

#23 Oe no Chisato

Tsuki mireba
Chiji ni mono koso
Kanashi kere
Waga mi hitotsu no
Aki ni wa aranedo

#81 Fujiwara no Sanesada

Hototogisu
Nakitsuru kata o
Nagamureba
Tada ariake no
Tsuki zo nokoreru

#86 Saigyo Hoshi

Nageke tote
Tsuki ya wa mono o
Omowasuru
Kakochi gao naru
Waga namida kana

#36 Kiyohara no Fukayabu

Natsu no yo wa
Mada yoi nagara
Akenuru o
Kumo no izuko ni
Tsuki yadoruramu

Poems from the *Ogura Hyakunin Isshu*

#7 Abe no Nakamaro

When to heaven's plain
I look up with wide-stretched gaze
Over Kasuga
And over Mount Mikasa
Is the rising moon the same?

#76 Fujiwara no Tadamichi

On the sea's wide fields
I sail out and around me
Clouds and sky appear—
In the distant white waves
Is a shining sky of white

#79 Fujiwara no Akisuke

In the autumn wind
Are lingering, hanging clouds
In whose trailing rifts
Comes shining through the moon's own
Reflected light—clear and bright.

#68 Sanjo In

If my heart, my will,
Battered in this floating world
Are to remain here
I will yearn to remember
This midnight and this moonrise.

#23 Oe no Chisato

As I view the moon,
Many things come into mind,
And become sadness
Yet it's not for me alone,
That the autumn time has come.

#81 Fujiwara no Sanesada

Cuckoo called me and
I turned in his direction
But as I stared there
The only thing I found
Was the moon of early dawn.

#86 Saigyō Hoshi

Is this grief bidden
By the moon for me to bear
In contemplation?
How my troubled face becomes
My cries and tears—oh, the tears!

#36 Kiyohara no Fukayabu

In the summer night
The evening still seems present,
But the dawn is here.
To what region of the clouds
Has the wand'ring moon come home?

*Translations by Peter Gilbert based on work of
Clay MacCauley and Frank Watson and with
gracious help from Lorie Brau.*

Tsukimi

[#7] Ama no hara

Ama no hara When to heaven's plain
 Furisake mireba I look up with wide-stretched gaze
 Kasuga naru Over Kasuga
 Mikasa no yama ni And over Mount Mikasa
 Ideshi tsuki kamo Is the rising moon the same?...

Surging ($\text{♩} = 120$)

V1 *p* enter with Voice 6's "ra"
Mmm_____

V2 *p* enter with Voice 6's "ra"
Mmm_____

V3 *mp* *freely*
A - ma _____ no _____ ha - - -

V4 *mp* *freely*
A - ma _____ no _____ ha - - -

V5 *mp* *echo* [after Voice 6] *freely* *mf*
A - ma _____ no _____ ha - - - - - - - - - - ra _____

V6 *Solo* *f* *bold* *mp* *freely* *f* *f* *mp* *f*
A - ma _____ no _____ ha - - - - - - - - - - ra _____ (gliss.)

V7 *mp* *echo* [after Voice 5] *freely*
A - ma _____ no _____ ha - - - - - - - - - -

V8 *mp* *echo* [after Voice 7] *freely*
A - ma _____ no _____ ha - - - - - - - - - -

Tam (opt.) *ppp* *lv.*

Tsukimi

[#79] Akikaze ni

Akikaze ni	In the autumn wind
Tanabiku kumo no	Are lingering, hanging clouds
Taema yori	In whose trailing rifts
More izuru tsuki no	Comes shining through the moon's own
Kage no sayakesa	Reflected light—clear and bright.

19 Floating (♩ = 80)

bright and penetrating

Solo *mp* *f* *p*

5 *gliss.*

mp *n p*

V1 A - ki - ka - ze ni Ta - na - bi - ku

V2 ni

V3 *sfz p* *sfz p* *sfz p*
gliss. *gliss.* *gliss.*
 ku - um → mm ku - um → mm ku - um → mm

V4 *sfz p* *sfz p*
 ku - um → mm mo ku - um

V5 *sfz p* *sfz p* *sfz p* *sfz p*
gliss. *gliss.* *gliss.* *gl.*
 ku - um → mm ku - um → mm ku - um → mm ku - um

V6 *sfz p* *sfz p* *sfz p* *sfz p*
gliss. *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.*
 ku - um → mm ku - um → mm ku - um → mm ku - um → mm

V7 *sfz p* *sfz p* *sfz p* *sfz p*
gliss. *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.*
 ku - um → mm ku - um → mm ku - um → mm ku - um → mm

V8 *sfz p* *sfz p* *sfz p*
gliss. *gliss.* *gliss.*
 ku - um → mm ku - um → mm ku - um → mm

Marimba

Mar. (opt.) *mp*

Tsukimi

[#23] Tsuki mireba

Tsuki mireba As I view the moon,
 Chiji ni mono koso Many things come into mind,
 Kanashi kere And become sadness
 Waga mi hitotsu no Yet it's not for me alone,
 Aki ni wa aranedo That the autumn time has come.

38 Punctuated ♩ = 72

The musical score consists of nine staves. Staves V1, V2, V3, and V8 are vocal parts with lyrics written below the notes. V1 and V2 have lyrics 'ts' repeated. V3 has 'ts' repeated. V4 is a solo part with lyrics 'Ts - u - - - - ki' and 'Mi - re ba'. V5 has 'i' and 'a'. V6 has 'Tsu' and 'Mi - re ba'. V7 is a vocal part without lyrics. V8 has 'Tsu - - - - ki' and 'Mi - re - ba'. The Shaker part (opt.) is at the bottom, marked with a series of slanted lines. Dynamic markings include *pp* (pianissimo), *p* (piano), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *Solo p insistent*. The time signature is 3/4.

Tsukimi

[#86] Nageke tote

Nageke tote	Is this grief bidden
Tsuki ya wa mono o	By the moon for me to bear
Omowasuru	In contemplation?
Kakochi gao naru	How my troubled face becomes
Waga namida kana	My cries and tears—oh, the tears!

70 Sobbing ♩ = 52

V1 *glassy* *p* wa - su - ru †

V2 *glassy* *p* wa - su - ru

V3 Solo *mp* *intensely emotional* Na - ge - ke - to - te *mp* tsu - ki

V4-6 § *pp sempre* a - e - o - e u - i

V7-8 *pp unisono* (stagger breathing throughout)

mm

§ Voices 4, 5 & 6 trail the solo voice. They should be like a shadow, following just behind or with but not ahead of the soloist. There should be a muted but intense nasal quality to the sound—more like an instrument than a voice. This could even be achieved, for instance by placing your hands over the mouth and/or slightly depressing the nose.

† Here the microtones are exactly half-way in between the minor third of the previous two notes. More critical in performance though is maintaining the tuning of the perfect 4th between the voices. The notes for Voice 2 are the 12th-10th-11th partials of the F#/Gb two octaves below Voices 7 & 8.

Tsukimi

[#76] Wata no hara

Wata no hara	On the sea's wide fields
Kogī idete mireba	I sail out and around me
Hisakata no	Clouds and sky appear–
Kumoi ni mayoo	In the distant white waves
Okitsu shiranami	Is a shining sky of white

NOTES FOR ALL VOICES: Each voice is independent in time and all parts are done with great liberty. Each vocalist should respond to what goes on around them, but only move from note to note as they feel necessary. The basic temporal relationships between notes are indicated with proportional spacing. After the solo voice has completed its part, the other voices should fade out slowly together, gradually disappearing. In all, the whole poem should last around 90-120 seconds. Voices 1-7 need not get through all the notes but if you do finish the written part, simply repeat and continue.

Voices 1-7 may begin together (during the *attacca* from "Nageke tote") or separately (ad lib.). Generally the dynamic of Voices 1-7 should be quite soft and hidden (using an *Mmm* syllable) but can occasionally (as the spirit moves) bloom in volume, changing to an *Ah* or *Oh* syllable. Breathe as needed. Notated breath-marks indicate a melodic cadence. Having Voices 1-7 face away from the audience helps maintain a far-off, quiet sound.

The *molto portamento* indication should be taken quite broadly, up to and including slow glissandi between notes.

Voice 1

Slow, Freely rhapsodic

molto portamento

ppp–p (with occasional swells)

Mmm(ah/oh)

Voice 2

Slow, Freely rhapsodic

molto portamento

ppp–p (with occasional swells)

Mmm(ah/oh)

Voice 3

Slow, Freely rhapsodic

molto portamento

ppp–p (with occasional swells)

Mmm(ah/oh)

Tsukimi

[#68] Kokoro ni mo

Kokoro ni mo	If my heart, my will,
Arade ukiyo ni	Battered in this floating world
Nagaraeba	Are to remain here
Koishikaru beki	I will yearn to remember
Yowa no tsuki kana	This midnight and this moonrise.

96 Pulling $\text{♩} = 84$

V1 *pp* u
V3 *pp* u
V4 *pp* Ko (connect with Voice 6)
V5 *Solo languishing p* Ko-ko-ro ni mo *mp* a - ra - de *f* u - ki - yo
V6 *pp* (emerging out of Voice 4) o
V7 *p* Ko-ko-ro - ni mo
V8 *p* Ko-ko-ro - ni mo

Tsukimi

[#81] Hototogisu

Hototogisu	Cuckoo called me and
Nakitsuru kata o	I turned in his direction
Nagamureba	But as I stared there
Tada ariake no	The only thing I found
Tsuki zo nokoreru	Was the moon of early dawn.

116 Pushing ahead ♩ = 112

Solo
light and flute-like

V1

V2
mf
Ho - to - to - gi - su - -
Na - kit su - ru
ka - ta o -

V3

V5
pp
Ho - to - to - to - to - to - to - to - to - gi - su - - Ho - to - to - gi - su

V6
pp *mp* *pp*
Ho - to - to - to - gi - su Ho - to - to - gi - su - -

V7
pp
Ho - to - to - gi - su - - Ho - to -

Triangle (opt.)
light and distant
pp

Tsukimi

[#36] Natsu no yo wa

Natsu no yo wa In the summer night
Mada yoi nagara The evening still seems present,
Akenuru o But the dawn is here.
Kumo no izuko ni To what region of the clouds
Tsuki yadoruramu Has the wand'ring moon come home?

142 Serene $\text{♩} = 48$

The musical score is arranged in eight staves (V1-V8) and a Large Cymbal part. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/2. The tempo is marked 'Serene' with a quarter note equal to 48 beats. The score begins with a 3/2 measure, followed by a 3/4 measure, and then a 2/2 measure. The vocal parts (V1-V5) are marked *p* and feature a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures and a slur over the last two measures. The lyrics 'u' and 'a' are written below the notes. The Solo parts (V6, V7, V8) are marked *pp* and feature a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Solo part V7 is marked *mp* and features a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures and a slur over the last two measures. The lyrics 'Na - tsu' and 'no yo wa' are written below the notes. The Large Cymbal part (opt.) is marked *p* and *mf* and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

V1 *p* u a

V2 *p* u a

V3 *p* u a

V4 *p* u a

V5 *p* u a

V6 *pp* u u u u u u u u u u u u u u u u

Solo
misty and ethereal

V7 *mp* Na - tsu no yo wa

V8 *pp* u u u u u u u u

Large Cymbal (opt.) *p* *mf* *p* *mf*