

# Mp3 Adrian Freedman - Shakuhachi Music On The Edge Of Silence

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Exquisite solo shakuhachi flute. 7 MP3 Songs WORLD: Japanese traditional, WORLD: Japanese contemporary Show all album songs: Shakuhachi Music On The Edge Of Silence Songs Details: The sound of the shakuhachi comes from the edge of silence, crossing boundaries of time and culture to echo in the soul. The shakuhachi is a traditional bamboo flute from Japan with a history stretching back over a thousand years. It has a unique sound that cannot be imitated by any other instrument. When looked at, nothing could seem more simple: a hollowed out bamboo stalk with just five holes; yet despite its simple appearance it has a reputation as being one of the most difficult instruments to master, and is capable of producing a remarkably beautiful range of expressive tones. Originating in a spiritual practice known as suizen (blowing zen), the shakuhachi evolved as a meditation aid for the Komus Japanese Zen monks of nothingness. The Komus were itinerant monks of the Fuke school of Zen Buddhism. They were characterized by the wearing of a reed hat which obscured their face, symbolising detachment. They roamed the Japanese countryside, collecting alms and playing the shakuhachi, at times as a prayer for safe delivery outside a house where a child was being born, or for the safe passage of souls outside a house where someone had recently passed away. The traditional repertoire of the Komus was called honkyoku (original music). Some honkyoku pieces are serenely meditative and picturesque, others are more powerful and dynamic. All of the music is extremely expressive. Within the sound of the shakuhachi we can hear living nature the autumn wind playing with dry leaves in a bamboo grove.... the cry of a soaring bird... waves crashing on a distant shore... an empty bell ringing in a still morning - and all expressed with great depth and nuance of feeling. The ultimate goal of the Komus was to achieve enlightenment through practicing the shakuhachi. It was considered that development of kisoku (spirit breath) would lead to tettei on (absolute sound) in which a single tone could contain the entire universe. The honkyoku are still taught today, passed on in an unbroken transmission from teacher to student. I first heard the shakuhachi in 1987 played by Clive Bell at the London Musicians Collective, a centre for improvised and experimental music. Clive conjured up a bewitching array of magical flutterings and

penetrating tones unlike anything I'd ever heard before. I asked him if he would teach me, and so began my personal odyssey with this instrument. I purchased my first shakuhachi from Dan Mayers, president of the International Shakuhachi Society who lived in Kent with a huge collection of bamboo flutes. After studying for a while with Clive there came a turning point when I heard a recording of the celebrated Japanese master Yokoyama Katsuya playing Honkyoku, the ancient music of the Komus monks, and I was electrified. Although clearly coming from another time and space, the music seemed intimately familiar and echoed in my heart like a call from some unknown universal depths of knowing and longing. I knew I had to go to Japan and study with Yokoyama. Dan Mayers furnished me with the address of Yokoyama to whom I wrote a letter and had it translated into Japanese. Before long I received a reply.... A few months later I was living in a little wooden house on the edge of a cedar forest on the outskirts of the ancient city of Kyoto. For the next several years I practiced the shakuhachi for up to eight hours a day, and when possible I travelled into the mountains to spend a weekend learning all I could directly from Yokoyama sensei. I lived in Japan for seven years. While there I received a scholarship from the Japanese government to fund my studies, and for two years I was a Research Fellow at Kyoto University, where I composed and performed new music for the shakuhachi. Since then I have incorporated the shakuhachi into many projects in a wide variety of musical styles. I have played on soundtracks for dance and film, used it in my work as a musical director for theatre companies, and collaborated with jazz musicians, celtic musicians, traditional musicians from Rajasthan, Turkey, Brasil and in numerous education projects in schools and colleges.

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