



Jinashi Making Workshop

Some advice concerning bamboo and tools.

1. Who is going to teach?

The sessions will be taught by ChikuZa Kodama with the assistance of Jose Vargas-Zuniga.

Please see the following links:

<http://www.shakuhachisummer-soas.com/profiles.html#ChikuZa>

<http://www.shakuhachisummer-soas.com/Assets/Documents/Jinashi%20Shakuhachi%20Making%20Workshop.pdf>

You can watch Chiku Za and his flutes here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SdBJhPN8HFY&feature=channel>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4arVnh1TkEU&feature=related>

2. Is it necessary to have any previous experience in flute making?

No, it is not necessary to have any knowledge of flute making but some basic skill in shakuhachi playing is required.

3. Which kind of bamboo is best?

Traditionally, in Japan shakuhachi is made of `madake` although other types of bamboo can also be used. The bamboo we are providing for the workshop, either from Japan or China, is `madake`, which is the best bamboo for shakuhachi flutes.

Chinese `madake` usually has a lower density than that of Japan and the colour is also lighter but it is possible to make very good flutes from it. The main difference is that Japanese `madake` is harvested personally by professional makers who know



which pieces would work well for shakuhachi and Japanese bamboo is generally regarded as being the more beautiful.

The traditional node placement in the bamboo is very important, with the 1st and 2nd holes being between the 3rd and 4th nodes, and the 3rd, 4th and 5th holes between the 2nd and 3rd nodes. Consequently, it is very difficult to find the right bamboo, especially for long flutes and such bamboo will inevitably be more expensive whether it is from Japan or from China.

4. Should I try to make a flute for the first time using expensive or cheaper bamboo?

It is really up to the individual and both ways have worked well but generally it is recommended to try the best bamboo possible at the workshop where you can obtain advice and help in making a good flute, and then get some cheaper bamboo for practicing making at home by yourself.

5. What length of flute should I try to make?

The most common lengths are 1.6 (E pitch), 1.8 (D) and 2.4 which usually is A pitch in a jiaru flute. Other lengths are 1.9 (C#), 2.0 (C) and 2.1 to 2.2 (B). Very long length bamboo is very difficult to find and consequently is very expensive. Deciding on the length is very personal but, from my point of view, it is easy: the longer, the better! So why not try a 3.0 or at least a 2.7, if your reach is long enough.

If you want the flute for playing honkyoku, or for meditation, the issue is length rather than being concerned about western pitch. If you want to play western music, then you should remember that jinashi flutes are wider than jiaru ones, and usually are therefore shorter for an intended pitch. Usually, jinashi 2.4 are Ab, so if you want A pitch, you should use a 2.3 or 2.35 length of bamboo. Jinashi 1.8 are more often Db rather than D, and so on. So, if you are concerned about making a flute to conform to western pitch, please let us know so that we can advise you and try to find something to suit your needs.

6. What tools do I need to buy?



If you are just having a look at flute making and are not sure whether you are going to be interested in making more flutes, buy the minimum possible, which means just a kuri knife. Kuri knives have a very sharp edge but also a very thin point that can break easily, but they are inexpensive and will be available at the Summer School for about €20.

Each participant will also need their own small flute workbench which you can easily make by yourself, or buy one when you arrive at SOAS for around €25. There will be some extra workbenches available for those who have flight baggage restrictions, so please let us know. All other necessary tools and equipment will be provided.

If you are seriously interested in making and are sure that you will try to continue making more flutes, it would be useful if you bought some other tools and bring them with you to the workshop. We have a list of the usual tools if anyone is interested.

7. Is there anything else I should take to the workshop?

Please bring some used clothes or an apron, a notebook and a pencil. A calculator can also be useful. Further, an old cloth rag for protecting your bamboo from the workbench and as the work will take place on the floor, Japanese style, please bring a zabuton or a cushion or a very low folding stool if you think that you will need it.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Jose, who will be assisting in the workshop, at:

josevarz@gmail.com

Thank you very much.