

Mp3 Michael Chikuzen Gould - Shakuhachi: Floating Clouds



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The sound of Zen: Traditional Japanese meditation music 9 MP3 Songs in this album (62:35) ! Related styles: WORLD: Japanese traditional, NEW AGE: Meditation Details: This compact disc consists of 9 Honkyoku songs recorded by Michael Gould in 1997. Honkyoku are the songs which were created by mendicant Zen monks during the middle ages. These monks wandered the Japanese countryside playing the shakuhachi during their pilgrimages, wishing to be delivered from earthly desires. Many titles of the songs created by the Zen monks bear natural titles: Three mountains, Three Valleys, Floating Clouds, A Mountain Waterfall, Crane Calls, The Distant Cry of the Deer, and so forth. The shakuhachi came to Japan in the seventh century from China, and was a six-holed flute used in imperial court music. Later, in the middle ages, it evolved into the five-holed flute played today. The capacity of the shakuhachi is huge, not only as a musical instrument due to its variety of colors and special sounds, but even more so as a link or bridge between the essential nature (soul) of human beings and the essential nature (spirit) of the cosmos. The ability of the shakuhachi to reach into people and touch something deep inside, to stir up something in a place that is not often used, is evidenced by the large number of people attracted to it who express such an experience. The three songs, Bosatsu, Ukigumo, and Tamuke are a tonal trilogy used to view the metaphysical landscape of life on Earth, then the freedom from worldly greed and desire, and, finally, the compassion born of such freedom. Daha: The full title is Daha no Kyoku, or "Pounding Wave Piece". The title conveys the incessant striving involved in spiritual practice. Sokkan: The performer here must lose him/herself in contemplation of breath or soul until it appears in the mind's eye. Nezasa Shirabe: The breathing technique employed here imitates the sound of the wind blowing across the leaves a bamboo grove. San Ya: Three Valleys. One of many songs of similar titles coming from different

areas and different schools of shakuhachi. Honshirabe: Basic Melody. This piece actually contains most of the basic elements of all honkyoku. It is said that this song was the only one practiced during the entire lives of some of the Zen monks. San An: Prayer for a Safe Birth. Long ago, when one's wife went into labor for childbirth, the husband would let grains of rice flow through the shakuhachi, then, while cooking the rice he would play this song as a prayer for safe birth, and then give the cooked rice to his wife after she bore the child. Michael Chikuzen Gould lived in Japan from 1980 to 1997 and studied shakuhachi under renowned masters Taniguchi Yoshinobu and Yokoyama Katsuya. Gould earned a Shihan (Master of Shakuhachi) in 1987 and was given the name Chikuzen. In 1994, he became one of only a handful of non-Japanese to hold the title of Dai Shihan (Grand Master of Shakuhachi). After returning to the U.S., Chikuzen taught Zen Buddhism and Shakuhachi at the University of Michigan, Oberlin College, and Wittenberg University. One of the most prolific performers outside of Japan, Chikuzen has presented over 500 solo concerts and has also played with traditional Japanese music ensembles, Taiko drumming groups, Chinese harp and pipe organ. He appeared in the world premiere of the opera Madame Butterfly using Japanese instruments, performed Karl Jenkins Requiem with the Metropolitan Detroit Chorale, and provided the music for the prestigious Dance Company of Ann Arbor at the University of Michigan in a presentation of the works of Mary Cassatte. Chikuzen is also a shakuhachi instructor at the annual Shakuhachi Camp of the Rockies in Loveland, Colorado.

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