

## Mp3 Phil Nyokai James - Dreaming Of Waking Up



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Meditative solo music for shakuhachi, the traditional japanese shakuhachi flute. 9 MP3 Songs WORLD: Asian- East, AVANT GARDE: Free Improvisation Details: Notes on this CD: The shakuhachi is an end-blown bamboo flute from Japan. Six of the pieces on this album are Phil Nyokai James' interpretation of traditional Japanese music and three are completely original compositions (the three "dreams of the ancient wanderer"). The purely Japanese pieces are all from the honkyoku tradition, meaning that they are inspired by Zen Buddhism and have been passed down by komuso, the wandering "priests of nothingness" who for hundreds of years used the shakuhachi as a spiritual discipline. The three modern pieces attempt to stay within this tradition as well. Track list: 1. first dream of the ancient wanderer 4:10 2. finding center (kyo choshi) 6:10 3. mountain in the sea (horai) 5:40 4. second dream of the ancient wanderer 3:25 5. finding center differently (shirabe) 4:10 6. empty sky (koku) 9:30 7. third dream of the ancient wanderer 4:01 8. wind in the pine trees (matsukaze) 7:55 9. remembering the monk's bell (reibo) 8:55 Biography: Phil Nyokai James has been composing and performing his music for over thirty years. Though classically trained, he has appeared most often as a free improviser on keyboards, electronics and flute, and he has collaborated extensively with dancers and other performance artists. James began studying shakuhachi formally with Ronnie Nyogetsu Seldin in 1978 and has been given the rank of Shihan (master) in the Ki Sui An school, along with the professional name Nyokai. He has also studied extensively with Yoshio Kurahashi, and the Nyokai-an dojo is a branch of Kurahashi-sensei's Mujuan school. Throughout his career James has been interested in electronic technology, and besides composing many pieces for electronic instruments he is known as a skilled audio engineer. He has recorded many classical and popular ensembles, and his record label, Sparkling Beatnik Records, was at the forefront in introducing traditional Japanese as well as recent improvisational music to new audiences.

Artists appearing on Sparkling Beatnik included Elliott Sharp, Taku Sugimoto, Pauline Oliveros, Yoshi Kurahashi, Brett Lerner, Stuart Dempster, Wu Man, and Kazue Sawai. Some press comments on James' previous CDs: "Phil James in First Places performs a beautiful and profound set ranging from the earliest known shakuhachi pieces to an homage to John Coltrane while, at the same time, honoring the natural soundscape. First Places provides the listener with spiritual nourishment bordering on the sacred." Stuart Dempster "With the carefully placed pauses and the way his breath moves the sound through the shakuhachi, one can sense upon first hearing that Phil James' relationship to music and his surroundings are nothing less than spiritually profound. Whether he is remembering the presence of John Coltrane, the historical significance of his instrument, or simply celebrating the landscape (frogs included), his playing and compositions are always deeply communicative and highly sensual." NewMusicBox The music is very reflexive, with drones, soothing flute melodies coming across plaintive harmonium flooring and voices heard in the distance. Even the third variation, almost entirely played on turntables, achieves a strange organic state... Phil James succeeds in giving a breath of life to this rich and surprising music.

Francois Couture, All Music Guide This is an interesting combo of genres: ethnic, trance, minimalism and noise. James plays shakuhachi, harmonium, pedal steel guitar, flute, electronics and more... The flute keeps it from the trance bag, the jangly guitars keep it from being new age, the unpredictable and sparse deep bass (which might be drum) keep the trance from being mindless. That's only the first Variation. The second is a repeating ratchet and thump which sounds like a cross between a mill and stylus stuck in the leadout lockgroove. Variation Three rumbles turntables scratching like the subway with little voices coming out. All feature Native American flute, giving a subversive sweetness to the general noise textures. More than the sum of its parts. Fans of musics ranging from Randy Grief to Niblock and Glenn Branca, Douglas Spotted Eagle and musique concrète might be inclined to dig this one. Steve Koenig, La Folia Phil James has created sombre ambient music out of the Japanese shakuhachi, harmonium, pedal steel guitar, Native American flute, turntables, electronics and discreet percussion. Instead of bearing titles all six tracks are simply numbered "Variations", although each and everyone of them has its own very distinct character, sharing in common huffing and puffing low drones and adding tastefully overlaid flute, subtle turntablism and in one case, a piano tune which in its context is almost jarringly fanciful. The sparse liner notes state that the third variation features a flute melody credited to Geronimo from the turn of the last century. James displays a patient hand in allowing each track to unfold with grace and dignity

and the overall result is a worthy monument to both undying friendship and musical imagination. Stephen Fruitman, Motion "...haunting examples of soundscapes that make you think of the sea, dark nights, fog rolling in from the ocean, far-off lands and then more eerie stuff, chilling, rumbling, echoing and then entering a new dimension where few have dared tread." Andy Garibaldi, CD Services People who are interested in Riley Lee should consider this download.

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