



DARON HAGEN

Heike Quinto

Duo YUMENO



Daron Aric
HAGEN
(b. 1961)

Heike Quinto
(平家組曲) (2015–22)

	No. 1 ‘Appassionato’ (2015)	11:50
1	I. Before	3:34
3	II. During	4:08
3	III. After	4:08
	No. 2 ‘Cantabile’ (2016)	10:36
4	I. Without	3:36
5	II. Cavatina	3:44
6	III. Within	3:16
	No. 3 ‘Misterioso’ (2017)	11:29
7	I. Kogō and Takafusa	2:36
8	II. Kogō Alone	3:29
9	III. Kogō and Nakakuni	5:24
	No. 4 ‘Grandioso’ (2018)	13:03
10	I. Lady Tomoe	5:19
11	II. Horse Whispering	2:33
12	III. Grandioso	5:11
13	No. 5 ‘Apotheosis’ (2022)	6:08

Daron Aric Hagen (b. 1961)

Creative polymath Daron Hagen's commitment to sharing the creative dividends of living an examined life, combined with his work's impeccable craftsmanship, social conscience, and emotional accessibility, inspired *Opera News* to declare, "Daron is music." He is also a stage and auteur film director, librettist, conductor, collaborative pianist, and the author of the critically acclaimed memoir, *Duet with the Past*. A composer whose works are performed worldwide, his catalogue spans over four decades and includes 14 operas and 2 internationally laureled composer-directed opera films, 6 symphonies (major works for ASCAP's 75th Anniversary, the New York Philharmonic's 150th, the Curtis Institute's 75th, Yaddo's 100th, and the Seattle Opera, The Philadelphia Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Albany Symphony, and Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, among others), 14 concertos, over 50 chamber works, dozens of choral works, and over 350 widely performed art songs. A lifetime member of the Corporation of Yaddo, he has been a panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), Copland House, CRI, Joy in Singing, National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), Douglas Moore Fund, Opera America, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts (VCCA) and ASCAP, received two awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Friedheim Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, two Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Residencies, and the Barlow Endowment, Bearns, and ASCAP-Nissim Prizes. A graduate of Curtis and Juilliard, he has helmed music festivals and non-profit foundations and served on the composition faculties of schools from Bard to Curtis, the Chicago College of Performing Arts to the Princeton Atelier. His music is widely recorded and published by Peermusic Classical. Represented by Encompass Arts, he lives in Rhinebeck, NY with his wife Gilda Lyons and their sons.

Heike Quinto (2015–22)

In my concerto for koto, I essayed the classic Japanese story, *The Tale of Genji*. For this duo, I have embraced *The Tale of the Heike*, an epic medieval chronicle, which was compiled in the 13th century from oral stories chanted by traveling monks to the accompaniment of biwa, an instrument similar to the lute. In the duo, the koto player chants "Hei," an alternate reading of the first character of the Taira clan.

The core theme of the story is the Buddhist law of impermanence. In the story, the arrogance and pride of power lead to the Taira family's destruction. The epic begins with the following statement: "The proud do not endure, they are like a dream on a spring evening; the mighty fall at last. They are as dust before the wind."

The *Heike Quinto* tells a story through the eyes of three female protagonists – Taira no Tokushi (I and II), daughter of Kiyomori and later empress; Kogō (III), a beautiful and gifted koto musician, and Tomoe Gozen (IV), a noble and brave female warrior who fought against the Heike. All three once lived in a world of opulence and glory but through the cruel forces of fate, ended their lives living in seclusion as nuns.

The work is humbly dedicated to Duo YUMENO, for whom it was composed in gratitude for having led me in this journey through Japanese history and literature, and for so beautifully championing the works that have resulted.

No. 1 'Appassionato'

The title was suggested by Duo YUMENO, and inspired me to juxtapose overtly emotional musical gestures and static, otherworldly gestures. Rather than seeking to craft an extra-musical narrative for the duo, I chose a single dramatic situation near the end of the story that I felt manifested most vividly the work's intertwined themes. I created three movements that addressed the empress's moment of truth: in the first movement, she remembers the glories of the Taira family. In the second, she describes a dream in which she saw her father, asking her to pray for the family's salvation. In the final movement, she separates from this world, invokes Amida's name, and is welcomed by Amida Buddha to the Pure Land.

No. 2 'Cantabile'

Cantabile takes a broader look at the life of Taira no Tokushi as a woman and a human being. I have created three movements that address Tokushi's three states of existence. *Without* is a portrait of her as, in turn, daughter, consort, and mother of an emperor. *Cavatina* is a portrait of her years as a recluse and Buddhist nun. The final movement, *Within*, is a setting of the following poem, which is said to been written by her servant, who worked for the great lady in her twilight:

*Many years ago, at the Imperial palace
Her majesty glowed like a moon above the clouds
How sad it is that she is now living
In such wilderness in the mountains.*

No. 3 ‘Misterioso’

Misterioso tells the story of Kogō (portrayed by the koto), Takafusa, an aristocrat and subject of the emperor, and Emperor Takakura’s faithful man, Nakakuni (both portrayed by the cello). After fleeing the imperial palace, Kogō hides in a humble cottage near the village of Saga. Nakakuni is searching for her with the following poem on his mind:

*Here in the mountains
Near the village of Saga,
The fawns are crying.
A man is full of sorrow
In autumn, when night has come.*

(English translation: Daron Hagen)

In the distance, he hears her playing the melody of *Sōfuren*, which tells of a wife longing for her husband. Nakakuni draws his flute from his sash and plays with her. Arrested, she is forced, at age 23, to become a nun, her beauty imprisoned by a black robe. Later in life, Kogō remembers the words associated with Taira no Tokushi (‘Many years ago, at the Imperial palace...’) as she thinks of their shared destinies as nuns. At the end, she is alone, praying.

No. 4 ‘Grandioso’

In this work, I found inspiration in Tomoe Gozen, a female warrior known for her nobility, bravery and great beauty. In movement one, she prepares herself spiritually for the Battle of Awazu on 21 February 1184. The movement concludes with a song selected by the duo, which is based on the following text from the Noh play *Tomoe*.

*The evanescence of this world is like a falling flower.
Flowing water has no heart.
It becomes clear as it flows with a perfectly pure heart.*

In movement two, she tames an “unbroken horse” through tenderness and strength. In movement three, Tomoe, in old age, having become a nun, recalls how her husband Yoshinaka, who led a rebellion against the Heike (as related in *The Tale of the Heike*), sent her out as his “first captain,” clad in armor and bearing an oversized sword and bow. Although she fought bravely and honorably, the battle was lost and she was forced to flee. Years of spiritual searching and service have led her to the quiet grandeur known only to the most spiritually evolved. The composition ends with Tomoe in the final moments of her life, contemplating eternity.

No. 5 ‘Apotheosis’

Apotheosis pairs live performance with music pre-recorded by the duo, which includes electro-acoustic sound effects. I envisioned the characters of the epic, who have entered the celestial realm, looking at this world as they reflect on the earthly affairs that they were once part of. The spirits finally achieve peace as they ascend to the eternal state.

Daron Hagen
Edited by Duo YUMENO

⑥ Within

仰ぎ見し昔の雲の上の月
かかる深山の影ぞ悲しき

建礼門院右京大夫 (1157?-1233?)

⑦ 小督と隆房

思ひかね心は空にみちのくの...

藤原隆房 (1143-1209)

⑨ 小督と仲国

仰ぎ見し昔の雲の上の月
かかる深山の影ぞ悲しき

建礼門院右京大夫

山里はものの寂しき事こそあれ
世の憂きよりは住みよかりけり

読み人知らず、古今和歌集 (10世紀初頭)

⑩ 巴御前

落花空しきを知る
流水心無うしておのづから
すめる心はたらちねの

謡曲「巴」より (年代不詳)

⑥ Within

Many years ago, at the Imperial palace
Her majesty glowed like a moon above the clouds
How sad it is that she is now living
In such wilderness in the mountains.

Kenreimon-in Ukyō no Daibu (1157?-1233?)

⑦ Kogō and Takafusa

When I think of you,
My heart is filled with sorrow
As boundless as the sky...

Fujiwara no Takafusa (1143-1209)

⑨ Kogō and Nakakuni

Many years ago, at the Imperial palace
Her majesty glowed like a moon above the clouds
How sad it is that she is now living
In such wilderness in the mountains.

Kenreimon-in Ukyō no Daibu

Life in the mountains is lonely indeed
But living quietly in solitude is more pleasant
Than being bothered by
The problems of the everyday world.

Anon. from Kokin Wakashū (early 10th century)

⑩ Lady Tomoe

The evanescence of this world is like a falling flower.
Flowing water has no heart.
It becomes clear as it flows with a perfectly pure heart.

Anon. from Tomoe (Noh play) (Date unknown)

English translations: Duo YUMENO

Duo YUMENO



Photos: Kasia Idzkowska

The New York-based Duo YUMENO creates a singular fusion of sound, inspired by tradition but retaining a contemporary sensibility. A proponent of new music, the duo has commissioned works that explore the dialogue between classical Japanese and Western music, and has received the Chamber Music America Classical Commissioning Program grant and the Aoyama Music Award. The duo actively presents its cross-cultural programs throughout the world, and has performed at venues such as Carnegie Hall, the John F. Kennedy Center, the University of Cambridge and World Heritage sites including the Ryōan-ji temple. Its activities have been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Japan Times* and *Chamber Music Magazine*.

Koto/shamisen player and singer Yoko Reikano Kimura was awarded First Prize at the prestigious tenth Kenjun Memorial National Koto Competition. As a soloist, she has performed with numerous string quartets, chamber ensembles and chamber orchestras.

Hikaru Tamaki was a prizewinner in the Viva Hall Cello Competition and served as principal cellist of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic. He is currently a member of the Berkshire Opera Festival Orchestra and the Albany Symphony.

www.duoyumeno.com

www.yokoreikanokimura.com | www.hikarucello.com



Daron Aric
HAGEN
(b. 1961)

Heike Quinto

(平家組曲) (2015–22)

(Text: Traditional Japanese)

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WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING

Duo YUMENO (デュオ夢乃)

Yoko Reikano Kimura (木村伶香能),

Voice 1–4 6 7 9–12, Koto

Hikaru Tamaki (玉木光), Voice 6 7 9–12, Cello

Daron Aric Hagen, Electro-acoustics 13

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.
The Japanese sung texts and English translations are
included in the booklet, and may also be accessed at
www.naxos.com/libretti/559914.htm

Extended English and Japanese booklet notes
can be found online at www.naxos.com/notes/559914.htm

Recorded: 27–28 June 2022 at the Saitama Arts Theater, Japan

Producers: Reona Ito, Daron Hagen

Engineer and editor: Takehiko Kaneso

Technical assistant, electro-acoustics: Tyler Ono 13

Booklet notes: Daron Aric Hagen

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Cover photomontage by Kasia Idzkowska



AMERICAN CLASSICS

Daron Hagen is a multi-award-winning creative polymath whose work is internationally acclaimed for its impeccable craftsmanship, social conscience and emotional accessibility. Embracing the Japanese medieval text *The Tale of the Heike*, Hagen has brought his musical vision as an opera composer to create in *Heike Quinto* a work that is as grand and emotionally complex as the original on which it is based. Themed around the Buddhist law of impermanence, the story is told through its female protagonists. The unique combination of cello and Japanese koto is layered with a wide variety of vocal textures and effects alongside pre-recorded material helping to create a compelling and expressive narrative.

www.naxos.com

Playing
Time:
54:08