

BENEFIT CONCERT FOR JAPAN

Sounds of the Spirit



Evocative sounds of the Japanese *Koto* harp & *Shakuhachi* flute,
together with the African *Kora* harp

Melissa Holding - Koto
Adrian Freedman - Shakuhachi
Ravi - Kora



Sunday 10th April 7.30pm

Quaker Meeting House, 43 St Giles, OX13LW

£8 (£6 concession)

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www.peace-winds.org

Melissa Holding trained at the Royal College of Music and City University in London. She studied traditional music at Kyoto Arts University, playing the koto and the shamisen (Japanese 3-string banjo). She has given concerts with members of both the Philharmonia and the BBC Symphony Orchestra and is currently playing with the contemporary music ensemble *Okeanos*.

The **koto** is the traditional 13-stringed zither of Japan. During its 1200 year-long history it has been played by the Japanese Emperor at the imperial court, been incorporated into rituals at Shinto shrines and more recently developed into a highly stylised artistic tradition. Being made from paulownia wood (the empress tree), its shape has been likened to that of a crouching dragon.

Adrian Freedman was born in Leeds in 1962. He studied music at Manchester University and Guildhall School of Music, and then studied the shakuhachi in Japan for seven years with master Yokoyama Katsuya. He has performed and collaborated with musicians of many genres around the world.

Originating in a spiritual practice known as *suizen* (blowing zen), the **shakuhachi** evolved as a meditation aid for *Komusô* Japanese Zen monks. The *Komusô* 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 of a child, or for the safe passage of souls.

Ravi performs with kora, guitar and throat singing. Ravi has released over 15 CDs, has performed with luminaries such as Baaba Maal, Nigel Kennedy & Dr John and has created pioneering projects such as The Overtone Choir and "Neuneneu" with Brazilian legend Marlui Miranda - bringing Amazonian Indians to Europe.

The **kora** is a harp from West Africa made from a gourd, skin, fishing line and wood. The instrument has been played for many hundreds of years by hereditary troubadour musicians from the Mandinka tribe, playing a repertoire of traditional pieces. The last twenty years has seen this instrument brought from its traditional musical setting into new fusion projects by traditional kora players such as Toumani Djabaté and Fode Masa Suso.