

TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI'S DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW JAZZ FUSION

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the life and work of Japanese jazz composer, pianist and band-leader Toshiko Akiyoshi (b. 1929), one of the most successful women in modern jazz. Over the course of her career, Akiyoshi performed and traveled extensively with musicians in Japan and in the United States, courting two audiences through and earning respect and success in both countries. Analysis of three pieces, from three albums representing different stages of her career, and a live performance from June 2010 are used to illustrate the maturation of Akiyoshi's work and how she combined American and Japanese musical traditions and styles, including bebop and Japanese Noh, to create her own style and a new type of jazz fusion.

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I. INTRODUCTION:

TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI'S DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW JAZZ FUSION

The integration of two disparate elements to create something new, known as fusion, can be construed as both positive and negative. In music, this paradox could not be truer. When this term is applied to jazz, scholars mostly define jazz fusion as jazz-rock fusion, a style of jazz that came of age in the 1970s. A few scholars have been labeling this music as jazz-rock fusion instead of jazz fusion; however the idea of fusion and jazz remains vague at best.¹ Historically speaking, jazz has embraced fusion since the very beginning. As a nation comprised of immigrants, America and its culture is indebted to fusion, resulting from contributions from its composite cultures. In many ways, the emergence of jazz as an American musical style exemplifies this process. Scholars of jazz, such as Gary Giddins, Len Kunstadt, Albert J. McCarthy, Max Harrison, and Ernest Borneman have identified various contributions to jazz: Afro-American, Yiddish, and Latino cultures are but a few that merged in the formation of this distinctive American musical practice. Despite the blending that characterizes jazz, attitudes towards fusion have not necessarily been positive. In an essay titled "Jazz and American Culture," Lawrence W. Levine states that the 1920s and 1930s critics responded negatively towards jazz musicians who incorporated into their music references to their personal ethnic backgrounds. He writes the following regarding early attempts at cultural jazz fusion:

¹ Julie Coryell and Laura Friedman's 2000 book *Jazz-Rock Fusion: The People, The Music* is an example of this shift away from jazz fusion to jazz-rock fusion as a descriptor.

In fact, jazz was often praised for possessing precisely those characteristics that made it anathema to those who condemned it: it was praised *and* criticized for being innovative and breaking with tradition. It was praised *and* criticized for being a form of culture expressing the id, the repressed or suppressed feelings of the individual, rather than submitting to the organized discipline of the superego which enforced the attitudes and values of the bourgeois culture.²

The need for personal expression in a group setting is essential to explain the origins of culture fusing with jazz, as a sense of pride in one's ethnic makeup can fuel a breakaway from the conformity of jazz groups.

In his 1999 book, *Tito Puente and the Making of Latin Music*, Steven Loza, discussing how Latin jazz brought people together, states that "Multiculturalism [in jazz] tended to unify and in the process provided much fodder for creativity."³ I agree with Loza's statement, as jazz musicians with varying backgrounds molded jazz from the start, and in many ways helped to bring jazz from a simple popular music form to the level of art music. However, it begs the question, just how much integration of another culture's music into jazz can a piece have for it to still be considered jazz, as so many had pushed the envelope of fusion.

² Lawrence W. Levine, "Jazz and American Culture," in *The Jazz Cadence of American Culture*, ed. Robert G. O'Meally (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 438.

³ Steven Loza, *Tito Puente and the Making of Latin Music* (Champaign, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 223.

Toshiko Akiyoshi's music fuses elements of her Japanese heritage and the jazz tradition, making her an excellent place to investigate multicultural fusion. Despite her lengthily and visible jazz career, Akiyoshi has been generally overlooked by scholars, as are other women in jazz. Gary Giddins does not include her in his influential overview *Visions of Jazz*, which was the foundation for Ken Burns' television documentary *Jazz* (2001). The exception to this is for singers and a few pianists, like Marian McPartland, author of *Marian McPartland's Jazz World: All in Good Time* (1987) and *Marian McPartland Piano Jazz* (1996). Her unique journey through American jazz education, to bebop practitioner, to band-leader and forerunner of Japanese-influenced jazz merits exploring to find answers to these questions about identity and jazz. While Akiyoshi's stylistic metamorphosis came at a much later time in the history of jazz music, it reflected a growing interest by the public in multicultural arts, which was evident in the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The establishment of government institutions whose mission was to highlight the emerging acceptance of an ethnically diverse United States, such as the National Endowment for the Arts, along with renewed interest in existing folk and ethnic performing arts organizations (most notably the National Folk Festival, hosted by the National Council for the Traditional Arts) was a sign of a major change, not only in the ethnic diversity of Americans, but an appreciation by the white majority of this newfound ethnic diversity. Toshiko Akiyoshi's success as a performing artist derives from her ability to fuse musical elements from Japanese and American jazz

styles while responding to cultural and social trends in the United States , including a tendency for American audiences to be more accepting of multicultural jazz fusions.

Methodology and Definitions

In order to demonstrate Akiyoshi's music, and fill a historical lacunae, this thesis begins with a substantial biography on Akiyoshi, explaining how her background led her to embrace this new fusion. Next, this document will explore her major collaborations with other prominent jazz artists. Then, in discussing her major performances and compositions, I will allow me to deduce more about her stylistic evolution, while charting her increased popularity. A discussion of the jazz climate, a term that will be defined in the following section, I will offer reasons as to how Akiyoshi's experience as a female musician, composer and bandleader were considerably different than the experiences of other women at the time. A musical analysis reveals Akiyoshi's progression into the new fusion. Finally, in the conclusion, I will reflect on these changes and confirm that Akiyoshi has indeed created a new jazz fusion.

Methodology

For this thesis, I will employ the following methodology to support my claims. My main analysis will be of selections from three of Akiyoshi's albums representing three important points in her career. The albums contain compositions by Akiyoshi, as well as arrangements she created of previously performed jazz pieces and works arranged

by her current husband, tenor saxophonist Lew Tabackin. They are *The Toshiko-Mariano Quartet*, *Kogun*, and *Carnegie Hall Concert*. Historical, cultural, and biographical research, will supplement this analysis, along with my reflections and analysis of her June 4, 2010 concert performance for the San Francisco Jazz Collective at Herbst Theater in downtown San Francisco.



Figure 1. Toshiko Akiyoshi and Lew Tabackin's stage setup for the San Francisco Jazz Collective performance at the Herbst Theater, June 4, 2010. Taken by the author.

The selections I chose to analyze for this thesis come from three different points in Akiyoshi's career. Each piece exemplifies the periods in which Akiyoshi initially performed and recorded them, and the timing coincides with significant periods of popularity with her American listening public.

The first selection comes from the 1961 release of *The Toshiko-Mariano Quartet*, “Toshiko’s Elegy.” Recorded with saxophonist Charlie Mariano (her husband at the time), the quartet features two of Ms. Akiyoshi’s most important early compositions – “Toshiko’s Elegy” and “Long Yellow Road,” a piece that represents her as a curiosity to her new American audience. All of the pieces on this album are in a straightforward bop form. On this album, Ms. Akiyoshi’s piano solos sound as if they might be extensions of Bud Powell’s style. For example, the second selection is the title piece from the 1974 album *Kogun*, which is the first album comprised entirely of Ms. Akiyoshi’s original compositions. This marks the second time Ms. Akiyoshi fronted her own big band, and the first time she incorporated Japanese musical elements. The third selection for analysis, “Children of the Universe,” comes from the 1992 release of *Carnegie Hall Concert*, where she again fronted her own big band, and tends towards a more progressive combination of a classic big band ballad with Japanese elements. All of the works on *Carnegie Hall Concert* except for “Your Beauty is the Song of Love” were composed and arranged by Ms. Akiyoshi.

My experiences watching Akiyoshi in concert inform my understanding of her fusion and style. A concert I attended on June 4, 2010 was titled “Pianism – Dynamic Duos,” and featured Renee Rosnes with her husband Bill Charlap, along with Toshiko Akiyoshi and her husband Lew Tabackin. In between songs, the couples provided some interesting information with regard to their life and the music they make. Since the concert was about piano music and couples, the conversations emphasized relationships.

The concert space and the makeup of the audience allowed me to infer a considerable amount of information regarding Akiyoshi's current fan base. Along with the information gathered from various interviews Akiyoshi has done over the past four decades, I will be able to extract aspects of her life that I can apply to social theories to provide context for the evolution of her music and acceptance by the American listening public.

Definitions

Definitions for this thesis are essential for the reader's understanding of Akiyoshi and her musical career. The first definition for this thesis will be fusion, as it is the general theme behind this thesis. The tradition definition for jazz fusion is jazz-rock fusion, as noted previously. For this thesis, fusion will be defined as a general melding of an ethnic music with jazz music. There will be references to Latin jazz as a type of fusion (with bossa nova and Brazilian jazz in America as a separate entity), and most prominently, Japanese jazz fusion.

I use the phrase jazz climate to encompass a discussion of the changes in the working and performing environment of jazz musicians. Although "context" is often used in historical discourses, it does not suggest the fluidity and interactivity between multiple performers on stage as well as that between any performer with any audience member. And while "context" can speak to broader patterns in society that affect these interactions in a performance, it is helpful to remember that these changes in society are in constant motion themselves. The word climate suggests multiple factors interacting constantly and

changing both subtly over time and radically in the moment, making it more apt than a more fixed term, like context. For this thesis, jazz climate will be defined as the social, cultural and economic environment surrounding jazz musicians and the jazz listening public in the United States.

II. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI

Born in Northern Manchuria on December 12, 1929, Toshiko Akiyoshi began playing piano at the young age of seven.⁴ In 1945, after the Japanese loss of WWII, the Akiyoshi family (consisting of Toshiko, her parents, and her three sisters) moved back to Japan, settling in Beppu, on the southern island of Kyushu. Soon after the family moved, while a teenager in 1945, Akiyoshi began to switch from performing classical music to performing jazz. In an interview for the Len Lyons book *The Great Jazz Pianists*, Akiyoshi detailed her start in jazz;

It was accidental. I got into the music business – in other words, playing for money. The war had ended, and my family lost everything in Manchuria, so we had to come back to Japan. I was fifteen at the time (1945). Money had to be made, and I loved playing the piano, so I found a job in an occupation dance hall. That's where the best jobs, and money, were. It was a small group: accordion, drums, violin, alto saxophone, and piano. The music was terrible.⁵

⁴ Some might question whether being born in Manchuria allows for Akiyoshi to truly be considered Japanese (aside from being a Japanese citizen). Akiyoshi considers herself Japanese, as it is important to note that she has never obtained full American citizenship. For example Lila Abu-Lughod, in her 1991 book *Writing Against Culture*, brings up the idea of 'halfie' Americans – meaning, those Americans who emigrated from other countries to the United States, but work towards finding a delicate balance between the culture they came from and the culture they have come into. In the case of Akiyoshi, finding this balance, in many ways, allowed her to connect to and broaden her listening audience in a way that had not been seen prior to that point.

⁵ Toshiko Akiyoshi, "Toshiko Akiyoshi, December 12, 1929-," in *The Great Jazz Pianists*, interviewed by Len Lyons (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1983), 252.

What started out as a golden opportunity to help out her family quickly turned into a passion for jazz performance. Akiyoshi spent most of her time in these early years listening to imported albums of American jazz musicians, such as Teddy Wilson, Bud Powell, and Miles Davis. After a few years doing performances in and around Beppu, Akiyoshi moved north to Tokyo to participate in the budding jazz scene in the capital.⁶

Akiyoshi spent several years in Tokyo, performing in various night clubs around town. In the early 1950s she formed a quartet with eighteen-year-old Sadao Watanabe, the alto and soprano saxophonist. Since this was the time of American occupation in post-war Japan and with Akiyoshi's growing reputation, several American servicemen (many of whom were professional musicians in their own right) would come to listen and sit in at the clubs where she played. In a 1998 interview on National Public Radio's jazz informational show *Jazz Profiles*, Akiyoshi recalled what it was like to perform with the various servicemen, comparing them to her level of performance and grasp of the jazz language at the time:

...the musicians' world is very small, so they would say 'Well, go to Toshiko's group and you can always [sit] in.' ...say, 1954 or five or so, everybody's always coming and sitting in...and of course when you're young, I was in my middle twenties, you're kind of cocky, and I got tired of everybody coming and sitting in, somebody who doesn't even play well but because they're American they think

⁶ This and other biographical information comes from multiple sources. See Works Cited.

they can play. Someone would say, 'Hey, can I sit in?' and I'd say, 'Sure,' and I'd play really fast, 'Fine and Dandy' or something like that...and if they can't make it I'd say, 'Come later.' Sure, that's what I used to do.⁷

Akiyoshi's improvement eventually would catch the ear of some of the biggest names in jazz as they would come over to play for the troops, and for the ever increasing number of native Japanese jazz fans, during the later years of American occupation.

In 1953, the late Canadian jazz pianist Oscar Peterson heard her perform for the first time. He was so impressed with her playing that he immediately brought her to legendary producer and creator of the *Jazz at the Philharmonic* series, Norman Granz. Akiyoshi recalls this experience: "Oscar told me to come to the hotel to meet Norman. When I got there, Oscar said some things to Norman, who told me 'If Oscar says so, I take his word for it. Let's set up a session.' Oscar even gave me his rhythm section for that record. It was [guitarist] Herb Ellis, [bassist] Ray Brown, and [drummer] J. C. Heard."⁸ The recording for Norman Granz was released in Japan, titled *Toshiko's Piano*, and it achieved marginal popularity. The support of Norman Granz allowed for Akiyoshi to further her career as a jazz pianist.

⁷ Toshiko Akiyoshi, interview by Nancy Wilson, *Jazz Profiles*, National Public Radio, June 7, 1998.

⁸ Akiyoshi, "Toshiko Akiyoshi, December 12, 1929-," 250.

Toshiko's Piano eventually found its way to the world-renowned Berklee College of Music in Boston later in 1953. The college, eager to add Akiyoshi to their student body, offered her a full scholarship.⁹ She enrolled at Berklee in 1956, after securing proper visas, and began studying with Margaret Chaloff and Herb Pomeroy. It was here at Berklee where she developed her own style of composition, after learning the Schillinger system of musical composition,¹⁰ the same system used by George Gershwin, Benny Goodman, and others. She began to perform in local clubs shortly after arriving in Boston, and while performing around town, she met alto saxophonist Charlie Mariano. The two wed in 1959, allowing for Akiyoshi to obtain American citizenship. During this time period, Akiyoshi released several albums, mostly on the New York-based Storyville label. She recorded and performed with smaller combos – typically trios and quartets, the ensemble type in which she first started her career and the format which was popular at the time. Akiyoshi and Mariano recorded their first album together in 1960, the aptly

⁹"Toshiko's Boston Breakout". *Berklee College of Music News*, 1997, <http://www.berklee.edu/news/9999/toshiko.html>.

¹⁰ Created by Joseph Schillinger (1895-1943) in the 1930s, The Schillinger System of composition incorporates theories of rhythm, melody, harmony, form, counterpoint, and most importantly, semantics. Schillinger developed this system to embrace innovations in technology and science into compositional techniques, specifically mathematics. The intention was to attempt to create a treatise on music and number. The system allowed for composers to compose pieces via graphs and tables, along with chordal analysis and voice leading techniques common in jazz. The Schillinger System was used at the Berklee College of Music, as the Schillinger House of Music (founded in Boston by one of Schillinger's students, Lawrence Berk) became the Berklee College of Music, until the 1960's. Taken from The Schillinger Society. (<http://www.schillingersociety.com/>)

named *Toshiko-Mariano Quartet*. In 1963, Akiyoshi gave birth to her only child, Monday Michiru, now a recognized jazz vocalist in her own right.

The couple spent quite a lot of time touring, but there was a halt in Akiyoshi's album production from 1965 until 1970, presumably due to the requirements of motherhood, but also due to the divorce proceedings with Mariano, which were completed in 1967. Akiyoshi married tenor saxophonist Lew Tabackin two years later in 1969. The couple chose to leave the east coast in favor of Los Angeles in 1972. The energetic scene of studio musicians, recording companies, and performance facilities were an instant draw for the couple. In their early days in Los Angeles, Akiyoshi focused her energy on composition and writing arrangements for her husband.

Eager to capitalize on the plethora of talent in the area, Akiyoshi put together her first big band with her husband. The Toshiko Akiyoshi – Lew Tabackin Big Band, started having rehearsals with local studio musicians late in 1973. In 1974, upon the realization that one of her major influences, Duke Ellington, was near death, Akiyoshi made the final push to record with the big band, releasing *Kogun* about a month before Ellington passed. Inspired by Ellington's early attempts at fusion on charts like "Caravan," coupled with the plethora of Japanese immigrants on the west coast, Akiyoshi used her big band to experiment with Japanese musical elements and Western jazz forms and instrumentation to create her own jazz fusion, which the earliest example of this, "Kogun," ended up on this first album. Like most of her previous albums, RCA released it in Japan before

bringing her music to American audiences. This was not unique to RCA, as the majority of the other labels representing Akiyoshi also released her albums in Japan prior to release in the United States, if at all. This was likely due to the audience Akiyoshi had amassed in Japan over the course of the previous two-and-a-half decades. *Kogun* was a success in both countries, earning the band a Grammy nomination for the 1979 year.¹¹

Akiyoshi spent the decade composing, touring, and recording with the Tabackin Big Band, and gained praise for both her compositions and performance during this time. Every album released by the band ended up being nominated for a jazz Grammy award, and garnered interviews from newspapers, *Downbeat*, and other major jazz publications.¹² This time period was instrumental in Akiyoshi's rise to fame in the jazz world. However, the couple decided to move to New York in 1982, and most of the band went with them. The band was renamed The Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra featuring Lew Tabackin, re-identifying Akiyoshi as the leader of the band, and Tabackin as the featured artist. In the new incarnation, the band stayed together – performing, recording, and touring – until 2003. Akiyoshi placed well in many of the *Downbeat* jazz critic and

¹¹ "The Envelop Awards Database," Los Angeles Times, Co., accessed July 23, 2010, <http://theenvelope.latimes.com/factsheets/awardsdb/env-awards-db-landing,0,3713019.htmlstory>.

¹² *Downbeat* Magazine regularly featured Akiyoshi as the top female band-leader and female pianist in the both the *Downbeat* readers poll and the *Downbeat* Critics Poll over the course of her career, which can be found on in the archives section of the *Downbeat* website. She also received multiple Grammy nominations for Best Jazz Instrumental Performance: Big Band, starting with 1976's *Long Yellow Road*, culminating with the 1994 album *Desert Lady/Fantasy*. She also received Grammy nominations for her compositions, obtaining nominations for Best Arrangement on an Instrumental in 1981, 1983, 1985, and 1994, as mentioned on her website. (<http://www.berkeleyagency.com/html/toshikobio.html>)

readers choice polls during that time period, specifically for Jazz Album of the Year (for the 1978 album *Insights*,) Big Band (for the band she led, not as an individual award,) Composer, and Arranger of the year multiple times in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The last poll Akiyoshi won from *Downbeat* was in 1996 for Arranger of the Year, being rewarded for actively composing for her big band throughout the three decades she ran the band. The last album released, titled *Last Live in Blue Note Tokyo*, was released by Warner Japan in early 2004.

As this album shows, Akiyoshi developed quite a following in Tokyo and other parts of Japan. Since Akiyoshi started her career in Japan, and made a name for herself as the first Japanese national to be accepted at the Berklee College of Music, she has constantly been courting two audiences. It is also pertinent to note that while there are significant signs that the popularity of jazz in America is diminishing, the popularity of jazz in Japan has increased, as has opening of jazz clubs in Japan over the last thirty years. Most notable of these establishments is the Blue Note Tokyo, the first branch of the legendary New York City performing venue, which will be mentioned later in this thesis.

Retirement from being a full-time band-leader and touring artist in 2003 did not stop Akiyoshi from other projects. In 2001, she composed a three-part suite for jazz orchestra called *Hiroshima: Rising from the Abyss*, as a tribute to those lost in the WWII atomic bombings in Hiroshima, Japan. She also recorded a single duet, titled “Hope” with

her daughter, Monday Michiru, in 2006. In 2008, her last album release, paid homage to Duke Ellington with a series of arranged duets for alto saxophone and piano with her husband. Titled *Vintage – Duke Ellington Songbook*, the album featured her arrangements of selected Ellington singles, such as “Take the A-Train,” “In a Sentimental Mood,” and “Sophisticated Lady.” She did a short American tour, hitting such cities as San Jose, San Francisco, and others with a combo ensemble in 2007.¹³ As of July 2010, Akiyoshi, at the age of 80, is still living and performing with her husband, Lew Tabackin, in New York City.

¹³ “Artsopolis.com – MUSIC | 20th Annual Sunday Jazz Series – Toshiko Akiyoshi | San Jose Jazz | Improv Comedy Club,” Artsopolis, accessed July 23, 2010, <http://www.artsopolis.com/event/detail/27639>.

III. COLLABORATIONS

Collaborations have been at the heart of jazz since the beginning. The very concept of post-war jazz groups revolved around the exchange of musical ideas between musicians – creating new solo and compositional styles for individual musicians, who in turn brought those back to their groups. Collaborations create their own types of fusion, albeit more subtle than the fusion of genres.

Throughout her career, Akiyoshi collaborated with many artists, typical for jazz musicians. However, since she spent most of her career writing her own charts and leading her own groups, only a few recordings exist of her performing with other jazz musicians. That said, she still performed live with plenty of other musicians, creating fusion with each collaboration. Akiyoshi is quite talented as an accompanist to soloists, complementing their performance styles while still maintaining her own musical integrity. This level of proficiency of tailoring accompaniments to soloists, one can say, is the ultimate demonstration of fusion in jazz.

Her best-known collaboration was with Charles Mingus on a set of recordings made at the legendary Birdland club in New York, the appropriately named *Charles Mingus at Birdland: The Complete Collection*¹⁴. Dating from this recording, Akiyoshi

¹⁴ Charles Mingus & The Jazz Workshop All-Stars, *Charles Mingus at Birdland: The Complete Collection*, Fantasy Records.

ended up working with Mingus for most of 1965 in small combos. She noted that this experience was unique in that,

Mingus wasn't so capable of writing down his music anyway. For the larger orchestral works he hired an arranger. In the small groups, when I was with him, he taught us by ear...Mingus was unique in that he wrote a lot of music that bordered on being corny. At least if anyone else did it, it would sound corny. Because he did it, it came out great.¹⁵

Presumably, Akiyoshi also gained some knowledge about working with small combos from her time with Mingus as well. When asked whether she had picked up anything about leading a band, she said "I hope I have. I don't think I can say specifically what it is. I felt something happened in my heart, and I like to think I use all my experiences. Influence is a spiritual thing. I hope my music is a reflection of my thoughts and experiences. Mingus was extraordinary, though, and he had very warm feelings toward me, which made it easier to be influenced by him personally."¹⁶ Similar to the way Akiyoshi ended up later as a band-leader, Mingus was (and is) hard to define – his ever changing ideas about jazz solidified this particular problem. Akiyoshi took great

¹⁵ Toshiko Akiyoshi, "Toshiko Akiyoshi, December 12, 1929," 254.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

pride in her collaboration with Mingus, and it is her best-known collaboration with another musician, other than the forty years with her husband.

Few details are available regarding Akiyoshi's other collaborations with other big name jazz artists of the late 1950s and early 1960s, but she worked with some of the best. In talking about her experience of coming to the United States to study and perform, Akiyoshi noted how playing with certain giants of the business influenced her style. "So many people influenced my ideas just by working with them – Oscar Pettiford, Roy Hanes, Max Roach, Sonny Rollins, Miles Davis, Charles Mingus, and a few others I was lucky enough to play with."¹⁷ Due to the flurry of musical activity on the east coast during this time, it is not surprising that she ended up being influenced by those famous players. As Akiyoshi's interviews suggest, an audible influence from these performers can be heard in her compositions and solos.

Akiyoshi spent a significant amount of her career collaborating with her two husbands, the late Charlie Mariano and her current husband, Lew Tabackin. The first album that will be examined for this thesis, *The Toshiko-Mariano Quartet*, demonstrates a complementary atmosphere between the Akiyoshi and her first husband. Stemming from years of performing together, largely in the Boston area, before the 1960 release, the call-and-response solo sections show a mutual influence. Further analysis of the piece "Toshiko's Elegy" is present in section five, *Analysis of Three Recorded Compositions*.

¹⁷ Ibid, 253.

Akiyoshi has spent the last four decades married to Lew Tabackin, and his influence and support for her growth as a composer and as a performer has been beneficial. Tabackin's own work was greatly influenced by his collaborations with bebop guitarist and band-leader Tal Farlow. Aspects of Farlow's style, such as very clean, hard articulations and solos which encapsulate the entire range of the instrument, can be heard in the performance of both Tabackin and Akiyoshi. Early on in Tabackin's career and shortly before meeting and marrying Akiyoshi, some of Farlow's stylistic elements rubbed off on Tabackin, and consequently Akiyoshi.

IV. COMPOSITIONS AND PERFORMANCES

Throughout her career, Akiyoshi has been a prolific composer and performer. Five decades of writing charts and arrangements have allowed for significant changes in her composition style. In this section, I will discuss a few compositions and performances that are crucial to the understanding of the development of Akiyoshi's career and her version of jazz fusion. The selections are widely acknowledged as some of the best known.¹⁸

Compositions

One of Akiyoshi's best-known pieces is the bebop inspired "Long Yellow Road". Despite the possibility of a reference to both *The Wizard of Oz* and the struggles of the working poor in China, this is a straight up hard bop tune. This can be viewed as a fusion of her two worlds at the time of this composition – a classic jazz form combined with a title reminiscent of her home in the Orient. Originally written for her 1960 album *The Toshiko-Mariano Quartet*, she revised it several times for other albums (not uncommon for jazz composers/performers) – most notably as a shorter arrangement for her Grammy nominated recording for the Akiyoshi-Tabackin Big Band and follow up to *Kogun*, the 1974 album *Long Yellow Road*. In both of these arrangements, the structure is relatively

¹⁸ In doing current (as of July 2010) searches over the internet, utilizing music publishing websites and popular download websites such as iTunes, the two pieces that will be featured in this section ("Long Yellow Road" and "Hiroshima: Rising from the Abyss") are the most widely purchased and published. Also of note was how often the pieces were arranged and performed by other ensembles.

similar: a traditional intro-head-solo-head set up. The head is structured in an AABA form and is performed by a saxophonist, Charlie Mariano on *The Toshiko-Mariano Quartet* and Lew Tabackin on *Long Yellow Road*. In the arrangement for the Akiyoshi-Tabackin Big Band, the B section of the head is taken over by the rest of the ensemble, before being handed back to Tabackin.¹⁹

Akiyoshi considers “Long Yellow Road” to be her “A-Train,” referring to the signature opening piece of Duke Ellington. She uses it to open every concert.²⁰ To this day, “Long Yellow Road” is one of Akiyoshi’s most commonly rearranged compositions, as it is popular for more advanced high school and collegiate jazz bands,²¹ due to the complexity and level of musicianship required for the intricacies of a five part harmonic structure to speak in a live performance. More recently, “Long Yellow Road” was recorded by the Armenian Jazz Band on their 2008 album, *Masisamba*, utilizing their own arrangement of Akiyoshi’s work.²²

¹⁹ Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin Big Band, *Long Yellow Road*, RCA Victor Records RCV RCA-6296.

²⁰ Toshiko Akiyoshi and Lew Tabackin, “Pianism – Dynamic Duos” (concert, Herbst Theater, San Francisco, CA, June 4, 2010). Akiyoshi, to this day, does not perform by herself.

²¹ The arrangement ordering website ejazzlines.com has rankings and level rankings for arrangements of jazz band charts for the appropriate skill level of a group. Akiyoshi’s arrangements tend to be of a higher level for advanced high school and collegiate groups. “Long Yellow Road” remains as the best selling Akiyoshi chart, while the twelve arrangements available (all from Kendor Archive Editions) are all labeled as ADVANCED or DIFFICULT in rating.

²² “Masisamba by Armenian Jazz Band,” iTunes, accessed July 23, 2010, <http://itunes.apple.com/us/album/masisamba/id292559326>.

Another one of her better known arrangements is the three movement jazz suite titled "Hiroshima – Rising from the Abyss." Written in 2001 as a result of a request from a Buddhist priest from Hiroshima for a memorial for the devastation left by the atomic bomb left on the city on August 6, 1945, the jazz suite was premiered in Hiroshima on August 6, 2001, prior to its release on True Life Entertainment records in October, 2001. The album, a live recording from the Hiroshima premier, was by the Toshiko Akiyoshi Big Band featuring Lew Tabackin. The first movement, titled "Futility-Tragedy," is just under sixteen minutes in length, notably ending with the metaphorical bombing itself. The second movement, titled "Survivor Tales," the longest movement at just over twenty-one minutes, recreates the accounts described to her by the Buddhist priest who showed her photographs of the bombing and told her the stories of what he witnessed as a survivor. Lastly, the third movement, titled "Hope", is just under seven minutes in length, and rounds out the work with an optimistic, yet solemn look towards the future. The editor at Allmusic.com, Uncle Dave Lewis, had this to say about "Hiroshima – Rising from the Abyss":

The piece features readings given in Japanese by Ryoko Shigemori and drawn from the "Mother's Diaries" held at the Hiroshima Memorial Museum. The Akiyoshi big band is in full force here, with soloists Lew Tabackin on tenor saxophone, Dave Pietro on alto, Jim Rotondi on trumpet, and George Kawaguchi on drums. All the solos are finely executed, but Tabackin's is the standout; he has some really soulful things to say here. This is one of the most straightforward and

conservative of Akiyoshi's big band suites -- the only sections that are "out" occur during the inevitable "explosion" passage (which follows a lengthy drum solo) and toward the end of the movement marked "Futility-Tragedy," where there is a busy engagement of the front-line soloists in a group improvisation.²³

Lewis, like other critics, recognized how starkly different "Hiroshima – Rising from the Abyss" is compared to Akiyoshi's other pieces. In recent years, Akiyoshi has closed all of her performances with a short snippet of the main melody "Hope" from the third movement of "Hiroshima." She does this to remind her audience of "the atrocities that occur on a regular basis around the world, so that we may all hope and wish for peace."²⁴ This, as one might imagine, goes over well with her audiences, leaving them with a true sense of where she has come as a composer and arranger, not only musically, but with her social consciousness as well.

Performances

While Akiyoshi has had a prolific compositional career, quite a few of her performances have been groundbreaking as well. A few such performances occurred at Carnegie Hall and the Blue Note Tokyo. While Akiyoshi may not have been the first

²³ Uncle Dave Lewis, "Hiroshima: Rising from the Abyss > Overview," Accessed July 23, 2010, <http://www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=10:84rv282l05ja>.

²⁴ "Pianism – Dynamic Duos."

Japanese woman to perform at these legendary performance spaces, the mere fact that she was featured as an instrumentalist and band-leader warrants mention.

One of Akiyoshi's prestigious performances occurred on June 25, 1983, when she performed with her big band at Carnegie Hall in New York City for the first time as part of the Kool Jazz Festival. Arguably the most famous performance space on the East Coast of the United States, Carnegie Hall has been the site of some of the music's important premieres and performances. According to a New York Times arts writer John S. Wilson, this early performance with the big band "did not give Miss Akiyoshi, who does all the arranging and most of the composing as well as playing piano and conducting, an adequate opportunity to show off her work."²⁵ While this may not have been the favorable review that Akiyoshi had initially wanted, the numerous performances at Carnegie Hall over the next two decades (not only given by the big band, but in smaller combos as well) is a testament to her popularity and appreciation by the New York jazz public. Eventually, she and her big band recorded the 1992 live album *Carnegie Hall Concert*, to be analyzed later in this document. While Akiyoshi no longer records live albums or leads the big band anymore, she still performs at Carnegie Hall. As of this writing, her most recent scheduled appearance was as the featured artist (with her

²⁵John S. Wilson, "'NEW' BAND IN DEBUT AT CARNEGIE," *New York Times*, June 27, 1983, accessed July 23, 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com/1983/06/27/arts/new-band-in-debut-at-carnegie.html>.

husband on saxophone/flute, along with Paul Gill on bass and Mark Taylor on drums) at the legendary Carnegie Hall on April 6, 2011, as part of the JAPANYC series.²⁶

While Akiyoshi may live in New York City on a permanent basis with her husband, the majority of her successes has come from appreciative audiences in her native Japan. Although her formal training came from American teachers, she has been keen on not forgetting about her Japanese fans, hence most of her albums had their initial releases in Japan or are exclusively for the Japanese market. In order for Akiyoshi to keep building on this fan base, she regularly flies to and performs in Japan. Her last major concert there occurred on November 29, 2003, the last major performance by her big band before it disbanded.²⁷ This performance, and the live album that was released shortly thereafter, was titled “Last Live at the Blue Note Tokyo.” The first satellite branch of the famous New York City jazz club of the same name, the Blue Note Tokyo opened its doors in 1988. Over the last two decades, many jazz musicians from around the world have performed there, including her early mentor Oscar Peterson. Akiyoshi performed at the Blue Note Tokyo several times, prior to and after the “Last Live” performance.²⁸ This particular performance marked an important change in Akiyoshi’s

²⁶ “Toshiko Akiyoshi,” Carnegie Hall, accessed July 23, 2010, http://www.carnegiehall.org/article/box_office/events/evt_13996.html.

²⁷ “NEA Jazz Masters: Toshiko Akiyoshi, Bandleader,” National Endowment for the Arts, accessed July 23, 2010, http://www.nea.gov/national/jazz/jmCMS/master.php?id=2007_01

²⁸ “Blue Note Tokyo,” Blue Note Tokyo, accessed July 23, 2010, <http://www.bluenote.co.jp/> (in Japanese).

career – moving her performing focus back towards small combos and away from not only the big band setting, but the intense usage of Japanese elements in her music.

Akiyoshi still maintains an active performance schedule, though not as vigorous as in the days of the big band. On average, she performs in the United States ten to twelve times per year, with intermittent trips to Japan to perform there.²⁹ The majority of her recent American performances are in small combos, either as a duet with her husband, or in trios and quartets adding a combination of bass and drums to piano and saxophone. It is unclear if she is currently composing or arranging, however, her husband Tabackin still composes and arranges for small ensembles. At her most recent American concert at the time of this writing in July 2010, Akiyoshi did not premiere any new pieces, opting instead to perform arrangements of her older works. The newest work that she performed was a shortened melodic section from her 2001 composition, “Hope,” from *Hiroshima: Rising from the Abyss*.³⁰

²⁹ “The Berkeley Agency/Toshiko Akiyoshi,” Toshiko Akiyoshi, accessed July 23, 2010, <http://www.berkeleyagency.com/html/toshiko.html>.

³⁰ “Pianism – Dynamic Duos.”

V. THE CHANGING JAZZ CLIMATE

This section will focus on two distinct elements of the jazz climate in America from roughly the early 1960s to the early 1980s, coinciding with rise of Akiyoshi's career. Understanding the climate surrounding Akiyoshi creates parallels between the growing popularity of her music and the increase in appreciation by the jazz community. The changes that occurred provided the perfect breeding ground for her creation of a new jazz fusion. Firstly, I will focus on gender issues within the American jazz community, utilizing sociological theories to enhance the reader's level of understanding. Then, I will examine issues of ethnicity (not solely African-American identity, as it has been a long standing struggle since the inception of jazz), discussing the impact of a newfound interest by the Caucasian majority American public from the mid-1960s onward. In each section, I will provide information on Akiyoshi's experiences during this time period, as it coincides with this shift in her music.

Gender and the American Jazz Community

Women have been a part of jazz since its earliest days. The tolerance of, and respect for, early female jazz pianists such as Mary Lou Williams and Lillian Hardin-Armstrong likely created some space for females among the closed, male only world of jazz in the early 20th century. Even then, women were performing, soloing, and composing, albeit in far smaller numbers compared to women in jazz today. As jazz

evolved and grew in popularity in America, women largely took a back seat to male musicians, as the struggle with race issues (addressed in the next section) took over. Women as band-leaders and arrangers did not come into real precedence until the early 1970s, more than half a century after the arrivals of Williams and Hardin-Armstrong.

It is widely known that during the Second World War, many professional musicians in the Big Band era were called up for service in the American Armed Forces. While many American women were pressed into service of another sort – working in factories and the like, supporting the war effort – a handful of all-women jazz bands began forming to fill the increasing void in musical options for those on the home front, ensuring entertainment for those not directly involved in combat. Most of these bands were led by men, though there were a few who were led by women – Ina Ray Hutton and her Melodears (1934-1939) being the most notable. These women became fairly successful during war time, but had a hard time achieving success after the war ended and the male musicians returned home. Sherrie Tucker's book *Swing Shift* thoroughly examined the all girl bands of the 1940s, but less has been written about female band-leaders since that era. Alex Stewart's 2007 book, *Making the Scene: Contemporary New York City Big Band Jazz*, writes:

...the shift of the 'jazz classroom' from the 'gin joint' to the public school and university has helped to swell the ranks of female jazz musicians who make improvisation central to their playing. (trombonist Deborah) Weisz says,

“Because of the way the music scene is now, there are more players that are women coming up through college.”³¹

When Akiyoshi first arrived in the United States in 1956, simply being at Berklee and starting off in the slightly more tolerant and musically diverse Boston gave her opportunities that she may not have had elsewhere. Playing in the academic bands at Berklee allowed her to meet fellow musicians and to form groups to perform with around the Boston area. And, as so often happens in the realm of professional musicianship, opportunities to sit in for gigs came up. Of course, it certainly helped that she began a relationship with well-known saxophonist Charlie Mariano within the first few years in Boston, and his respect for her likely was beneficial for obtaining gigs. This was not uncommon for women in jazz – a majority of the women who gained popularity in this time period were married to other musicians.

Akiyoshi gave her first performance in New York City in the middle of August, 1957 at the Hickory House on West 53rd Street as a solo musician at a major jazz club. A staff reviewer for *Time* magazine did a write up on her first week of performances for their August 26th issue.

Toshiko Akiyoshi demonstrates that she need not rely on costume for her success. Her own songs—Between Me and Myself, Kyo-Shu (Nostalgia),

³¹ Alex Stewart. *Making the Scene: Contemporary New York City Big Band Jazz* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007,) 268.

Blues for Toshiko—come out with a wide, swinging, masculine beat...; the rhythmic ideas spin out loose-linked and limber, hazed with a nostalgic mist as delicate as watered silk. It is clearly some of the best jazz piano around... In Manhattan she is pushing the wall with the best in town.³²

There is one controversial comment in this review – the mention of her “masculine” playing. The reviewer is insinuating that Akiyoshi is not the ‘novelty’ female performer stereotyped by men in the war years. Aside from the masculinity comment and a slight mention of her femininity (a comment about her wearing cocktail dresses when she performs during the week), the performance review was just that. This performance helped Akiyoshi gain a following in New York, which she would draw upon later when she would move up there. She gained a significant amount of respect by her fellow musicians, recognized for her talent and tenacity on piano. The current jazz climate provides far more opportunities for women than in the past, a change likely attributed to the numbers of women obtaining jazz educations. However, comments about her ethnic background will be mentioned in the following section.

Akiyoshi’s experience as a female composer and band-leader were considerably different than other women jazz musicians of her time. From her beginnings in bands where she was likely the only woman, she was able to develop a proper attitude and playing style that commanded instant respect from her male counterparts. Unlike other

³² Unsigned review of *Toshiko Akiyoshi at the Hickory House* by Toshiko Akiyoshi, *Time Magazine*, August 26, 1957, accessed July 23, 2010, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,862713,00.html>.

women of the time who spent a good portion of their early years playing in all-girl or girl-heavy big bands, Akiyoshi's formative years gave her an edge to grab the interest of not only fellow musicians, but of critics and booking agents as well.

Embracing Ethnicity in Jazz, 1960-1980

Jazz has had a complicated relationship with ethnicity and ethnic issues since its beginnings. This relationship occurs alongside the struggle for civil rights in the African-American community all over the United States (1955-1968). From its roots in the ethnically diverse and culturally accepting city of New Orleans, the early years of jazz (up through the end of the Second World War in 1945) dealt with ethnic divides between whites and blacks. The audiences these bands courted fell along racial divides in many parts of the country. While there were small combos that were racially mixed (e.g., Benny Goodman's small combos in the late 1930s), diverse bands were not readily accepted until the late 1940s. Even then, the bands were mostly white with a black performer, or vice versa, and these bands could not perform in the Jim Crow South. Some of the growing willingness to accept ethnically diverse bands came from the roots of bebop. The after-hours clubs in Harlem and along 52nd Street (where Akiyoshi would play a decade or so later) became a haven for fans and jazz musicians of all colors to come together to play and enjoy. The musicians, in particular, were free to explore their instruments outside of the limitations of their "day jobs" as members of the dance bands

that dotted clubs all over town, thus becoming a breeding ground for the bebop movement in New York.

It was around this time in the early 1940s where this acceptance of interracial groups turned into an exploration of mixing other ethnic music with jazz. Latinos from Puerto Rico, Mexico, Cuba, Venezuela, Colombia and Brazil migrated to the U.S. and moved into parts of Harlem and the north side of Manhattan, bringing with them their culture and their music to the area. At the same time, American big bands toured extensively to places around the Caribbean and Latin America. Duke Ellington, the composer, pianist and band leader, heard these “new” rhythms and instruments and incorporated them into the 1937 song “Caravan” (composed by Ellington’s trombonist Juan Tizol, a Puerto Rican), the best known of the early examples of Latin music mixing with jazz. Cuba was still open to American tourists, and they exposed Cuban dance band musicians to jazz in the early years, enabling them to mix traditional Cuban rhythms with jazz. In New York Latinos joined the improvisational after-hours sessions in the cities jazz clubs, imparting their own imprint on the newly formed bebop. The Afro-Cuban and Latin jazz movements started shortly after, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, with mainstream jazz practitioners such as Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker, who worked with and recorded albums with *conguero* Mongo Santamaría and *timbalero* Tito Puente.³³

³³ *Conguero* and *timbalero* are the Spanish words for conga player and timbales player.

Caucasian jazz musicians were also involved in the advancement of early types of jazz fusion. Stan Kenton, while not as famous of a band leader as Glen Miller or Benny Goodman, experimented with fusion in his bands in the 1940s on through the 1960s. Kenton worked almost exclusively with young musicians, many of whom would obtain their own level of success after leaving. This allowed for him to put more money towards composing new works. While Kenton tinkered with all sorts of musical combinations with jazz, his most notable experimental band was his Innovations in Modern Music Orchestra, which he formed in 1950. He spent a considerable amount of time, as he was based in Los Angeles, working with Latin music and Latino musicians, among them Chico O'Farrill Charlie Mariano spent time with Kenton during his swing period in the mid-1950s, which in turn likely influenced Akiyoshi during their marriage.

In a more mainstream vein, Stan Getz, after coming back from a European trip and consulting with his guitarist Charlie Byrd, decided to inch into the realm of Brazilian music with his 1962 album *Jazz Samba*. Bossa nova, as this music eventually would be called, slowly started from New York based jazz musicians who had toured down in Brazil, and Getz spent the next couple of years working with Brazilian composer Antonio Carlos Jobim, eventually releasing the legendary bossa nova album *Getz/Gilberto*, which *Rolling Stone* magazine considers as the 454th best album of all time.³⁴ The leading single

³⁴“Greatest Albums of All Time,” *Rolling Stone Magazine*, accessed July 23, 2010, <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/lists/6862/35223>.

from *Getz/Gilberto*, “Girl from Ipanema,” won the Grammy Record of the Year for 1965.³⁵

The climate for multi-cultural music received an additional boost from rise of the new folk movement in the 1960s, the counter-culture associated with the growth of rock and roll, and even the formation of new government agencies that broadly supported a full range of American musical genres, including folk and ethnic musics. The National Arts and Cultural Development Act of 1964 led Congress to form of the NEA which began its works in 1965 and the eventual founding of the National Endowment for the Arts-Folk Arts Program in 1978. A full discussion of the growth of American interest in ethnic and folk music is beyond the scope of this thesis, Nonetheless, while jazz artists like Stan Getz gained popularity among mainstream listeners with their attempts at jazz fusion, the non-jazz audience in this 1960s and 70s were opening up to ethnic musics alongside new fusions with rock and popular music.

Earlier examples of the incorporation of ethnic music into jazz, especially the early works by Duke Ellington, likely provided inspiration for Akiyoshi to pursue the new jazz fusion that she established with her big band in the 1970s. As it was with the race struggles that plagued African-Americans in the early days of jazz, certain discrimination existed against Akiyoshi in her early days of performing. In the article mentioned earlier from the August 1957 edition of *Time Magazine*, the author noted that:

³⁵ “Grammy Awards Record of the Year Winners,” About.com, accessed July 23, 2010, <http://top40.about.com/od/awards/ig/Grammy-Record-of-the-Year/getz1965.htm>.

When she opened in Manhattan last week, a press agent told Toshiko that she should wear a kimono all the time because she was, after all, the only female jazz pianist from Japan. As a concession, she wears a kimono on Saturday nights (the obi is apt to be too tight for really freewheeling playing, she complains), but the rest of the time she performs in Western cocktail dresses.³⁶

This demonstrates that Akiyoshi was seen as a curiosity, not only for being female, but being Japanese. Her response strikes a careful line between being polite to the press agent and asserting an obvious dissatisfaction with portraying her as a stereotyped gimmick to gain audiences. Since this particular article (and the subsequent performance) was from the days prior to the Civil Rights Act and the federal codes that came with the reversal of ethnic discrimination, it is not surprising to read that comment.

While there were not many Asians working as jazz musicians full time in the United States, there were plenty that came over for collaborations and to enhance their potential. Besides Akiyoshi, the best known of the Japanese jazz musicians is the saxophonist Sadao Watanabe (b. 1933). Watanabe got his start with Akiyoshi in one of her Tokyo-based combos as soon as he turned 18. He eventually followed her lead, leaving Japan to study jazz at Berklee a few years after Akiyoshi. However, Watanabe chose to return to Japan and help with the growth of talent there, instead of chasing fame and success in America. His decision to not stay in the United States did not inhibit any

³⁶ *Time Magazine*, "Toshiko at the Hickory House"

sort of collaborations with American jazz musicians, as he spent time recording and performing all over the world with famed musicians Chico Hamilton and Gary McFarland.³⁷

Although many Japanese musicians came over to study at Berklee and other jazz schools, it has only been in the recent decades that they decided to stay and pursue careers in the United States. Even though Akiyoshi spends a good portion of her time performing in Japan, as she has for many years, the fact that her permanent residence is in New York, to this day, is seen as an abnormality.³⁸ However, the fact that she has never obtained complete American citizenship, as mentioned earlier, puts her alongside the other Japanese musicians who may have left due to a refusal to completely assimilate into American life, despite the passion for an American musical form.

Eventually, the combination of jazz and other forms of ethnic music would become relatively commonplace in the 1990s and onward, even amidst the conservative trends brought about by the revitalization of classical jazz forms by Wynton Marsalis and others. While the term “jazz fusion” to this day conjures the images of jazz-rock and jazz-rap fusion (brought into the mainstream by Miles Davis), the notion of combining jazz

³⁷ “Biography – Sadao Watanabe English Web Site,” Sadao Watanabe, accessed July 23, 2010, <http://www.sadao.com/en/biography/index.html>.

³⁸ In her 2004 book *Speak it Louder: Asian Americans Making Music*, Deborah Wong notes that many Japanese Americans, no matter what *sei* (generation) they might be, go back to Japan to re-embrace their roots. They do this to bring some of their culture back to their music - much like Akiyoshi did in the 1970s, but not with the amount of mixture that she is noted for.

with other music and labeling them as a form of “jazz fusion” does not quite do those specific subgenres justice. There is a good reason for this, as subgenres that are not necessarily associated with ethnic music, such as Third Stream, are unjustly represented under the “jazz fusion” title.

Though it is not common to see Akiyoshi’s music considered as such, Asian-American jazz became defined around the time of the release of *Kogun*. Starting with studio musicians on the West Coast in the early 1970s, these Asian-Americans (specifically saxophonist and *shakuhachi* player Gerald Oshita; bassist, *shō* and *sheng* player Mark Izu; and the band Hiroshima) began a movement to mix Asian instrumentation into Western bands, creating this new genre.³⁹ The popularity among the Asian communities in California and in New York prompted the creation of support groups for these musicians. Currently, the most prominent support group and record label for Asian-American jazz artists is Asian Improv aRts.⁴⁰ Although many of these artists have moved towards Asian-American pop or Asian-American new-age (especially in the case of Hiroshima, arguably the best known of the Asian-American ensembles), the fan base on the West Coast is still very strong, and education for younger generations of

³⁹ “Space – New Music for Woodwinds and Voice – Thomas Buckner,” Mutable Music, accessed July 23, 2010, <http://www.mutablemusic.com/bucknerinfo.htm>.

⁴⁰ “Asian Improv aRts,” Asian Improv aRts, accessed July 23, 2010, <http://www.asianimprov.org>.

Asian-American musicians continues to grow in those areas, as noted by the Asian Improv aRts organization.⁴¹

⁴¹ Ibid.

VI. ANALYSIS OF THREE RECORDED COMPOSITIONS

This analysis section, as mentioned in the introduction, will comprise of three songs representing three different periods in Akiyoshi's career. I chose these pieces for the following reasons. These albums all contain different performance personnel, are from different decades, were recorded in different places, and incorporate different musical elements from one another. These pieces (and in essence, these albums) provide an accurate sense of where Akiyoshi's career progressed to. It is also important to note that these albums are among Akiyoshi's easiest to obtain by American consumers, as many of her albums have either been discontinued, never released onto CD, or are still exclusively available in Japan, rendering them as imports to the American market. These albums also garnered considerable success in Japan, further identifying them as worthy of analysis.

The analysis uses charts that will label various time points throughout each individual song. I also compare the three pieces based on specific criteria found throughout the pieces. Since this particular thesis does not require an in-depth theoretical analysis for proof, I will not add one. It is much more important that this analysis section focus on orchestration and overall form of pieces, which is where my criteria has been derived. I later compare these charts to time-line analyses that I created for each of the three pieces. These charts supply me with data regarding how Akiyoshi evolved as both a composer and a performer.

The following introduction chart to the three pieces that I will be analyzing, based on objective elements in each of the pieces I will be reviewing, gives an overview of what to expect from each piece. This is strictly based on the pieces as a whole, not as individual timed places.

Table 1: Objective Elements of Three Akiyoshi Pieces

Objective element	“Toshiko’s Elegy” (1961)	“Kogun” (1974)	“Children of the Universe” (1992)
Style	Hard bop	Big Band fusion, bop	Big Band fusion, ballad
Presence and use of vocals	None	<i>Noh</i> (classical Japanese drama) style male vocals throughout	<i>Noh</i> (classical Japanese drama) style male vocals throughout
Presence of chart head	At beginning and end of the piece	About a half a minute in.	Hard to discern, possibly a few minutes in.
Use of non-traditional chords/scales	Fairly standard substitutions	Very few, if any. Still standard jazz chords in band segments.	Use of octatonic, pentatonic
Instrumentation	Quartet: alto sax, piano, bass, drums	Big band: alto sax, tenor sax, baritone sax, trumpet, trombone, piano, bass, drums.	Big band: alto sax, tenor sax, baritone sax, trumpet, trombone, piano, bass, drums
Tempo	Allegretto	Allegro, after initial section of Japanese elements.	Variable, mostly a moderato ballad
Japanese instrumentation	None	<i>Noh</i> style vocals, inclusion of traditional Japanese instruments: <i>hyōshigi</i> (wood clap,) <i>makugyo</i> (multi-pitched wood block)	<i>Noh</i> style vocals, inclusion of traditional Japanese instruments: <i>hyōshigi</i> (wood clap,) <i>makugyo</i> (multi-pitched wood block)

Afterwards, I will provide personal commentary on the analysis, comparing the pieces to others in not only Akiyoshi's repertoire, but to pieces from other composers in the particular genre.

"Toshiko's Elegy"

Akiyoshi's 1961 album *The Toshiko-Mariano Quartet* was originally released on the Candid label in June, 1961 (it was re-released as a compact disc under the King label in 1988, then re-released as a digitally re-mastered compact disc by Candid in 2001). Originally recorded in New York City in December 1960, Akiyoshi held the role as the leader of the quartet, which consisted of then-husband Charlie Mariano on alto saxophone, bassist Gene Cherico, and drummer Eddie Marshall (who played with Stan Getz, Dexter Gordon, and Kenny Burrell as well.) The third song from the album, "Toshiko's Elegy," is one of two pieces composed by Akiyoshi, the other being her well-known "Long Yellow Road." The rest of the three pieces on the album were composed by Mariano.

Table 2: Analysis for “Toshiko’s Elegy” (1961)

0:00	Intro. Staccato, repetitive single bar unison from alto and piano as a call and response to a changing piano riff that is in a hard bop style and feels improvisatory, but likely is not. Piano riff accompanied by drums. No distinct bass playing as of yet, until the two bar break before the head, where the bassist has a distinct lead-in solo.
0:21	Head, in AABA form. A section. Alto melody with a standard piano, bass and drum background. Akiyoshi’s piano accompaniment is varied, as accents are rather obvious. Second half of A section has a Latin feel – drummer changes to an Afro-Cuban beat for four bars before returning to the hard bop style.
0:53	Head, B section. The change in key indicates that this is B.
1:05	Head, return of A section.
1:18	Solo section. Charlie Mariano improvises on alto.
3:19	Solo. Akiyoshi improvises on piano. She strikes the keys rather lightly, which in turn makes the notes she accents very strong to the ear.
5:12	Short unison interlude.
5:22	Solo. Bass solo with drums. No piano or alto hits.
6:20	Call and response between alto melody and drums for about a minute. Showcases the drummer as an interjected solo section.
7:17	Head returns for the first time.
8:00	A single playing of the A section from the head is played, leading into the outro.
8:14	<i>Outtro</i> as a modified version of the introduction. Piece ends at 8:30, however, the recording keeps going until 8:42.

As was the case with the other pieces on this album, “Toshiko’s Elegy” is a standard hard bop piece in a quartet. Since this particular album was recorded early into her career, there is not much that identifies it as being experimental or the like. While it was common for the trio and quartet to be the focus of experimental jazz forms during this time period, one might suspect that Akiyoshi utilized the quartet to simply get her name out as a serious bop artist. There is a slight nod towards the jazz-Latin fusion that was prominent at the time, noted in the head at 0:21. It is probable that this early experimentation with fusion led towards her evolution as a composer/arranger later in her career, even though this particular example is only four bars. It is also probable that Mariano may have had a hand in the addition of those four bars, as he did spend considerable time with Stan Kenton’s band in the 1950s.

It is probably no surprise that Akiyoshi feeds off of Mariano and vice versa during the solo sections in the piece, but there are distinctive elements of Akiyoshi’s playing that are worth elaborating on. The way she attacks the keys while performing her solo, noted at 3:19, is very gentle for most of the runs, but the accents bring out a bold American feel. Mariano’s solo style is heavily accentuated, which could have resulted in Akiyoshi’s moments of hard accentuations. “Toshiko’s Elegy” is a prime example of Akiyoshi’s roots as a jazz musician and composer – firmly rooted in the bop and hard bop traditions.

“*Kogun*”

Akiyoshi’s first album with her big band (then known as the Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin Big Band,) *Kogun*, was released by Victor in Japan and RCA in the United States, both in 1974. Originally recorded in Los Angeles at the Sage & Sand Studio in Hollywood, the session took two days, on April 3-4, 1974. Akiyoshi produced the album, along with Hiroshi Isaka. The band used for this session was Toshiko Akiyoshi on piano, Lew Tabackin and Tom Peterson on tenor saxophone, Dick Spencer and Gary Foster on alto saxophone, Bill Perkins on baritone saxophone, Bobby Shew, John Madrid, Don Rader, and Mike Price on trumpet, Charles Loper, Jim Sawyer, and Britt Woodman on tenor trombone, Phil Teele on bass trombone, Gene Cherico returning on bass, and Peter Donald on drums.⁴² The album featured five pieces, all by Akiyoshi, along with an arrangement of “Long Yellow Road.” The album has been re-released quite a few times, mostly on BMG and BMG Japan. “Kogun,” the third piece on the album, ended up being arranged for another compilation album with extended solo time, the 2007 album released on Hänssler Verlag titled *Let Freedom Swing*. The version used for analysis is from *Let Freedom Swing*. It is pertinent to note that “Kogun” is the only piece on both *Kogun* and *Let Freedom Swing* in which Japanese musical elements are used.

⁴² There is no mention of who performed the Japanese musical elements (*Noh*, *mokugyo*, or *hyōshigi*) on either *Kogun* or *Let Freedom Swing*. It is possible that the elements came from within the group, likely the set drummer, as he was not playing at the moments where the accentuations occurred.

Table 3: Analysis for “Kogun” (1974)

0:00	<i>Noh</i> style male vocals (limited in both range and volume on an open syllable).
0:04	<i>Hyōshigi</i> (wood clap) announces the entrance of Lew Tabackin on flute, performing an initial melodic line before the band comes in with the head. <i>Mokugyo</i> (multi-pitch wood block) accents the end of continued <i>Noh</i> vocals.
0:34	Repetition of flute melody, perhaps as a secondary introduction, initially with the rest of the band, being handed off to just flute and trombone soloist. <i>Noh</i> vocals are still present, along with <i>hyōshigi</i> and <i>mokugyo</i> hits throughout.
1:07	Band parts become more prominent, start to blend in and out of the melody and the backgrounds. Band parts become more intricate in texture.
1:35	Secondary head appears. Structure of head is difficult to discern. Band beings a standard bop rhythm and structure. Lead trombone, trumpet, and flute have the melodic line. Standard bop backgrounds from the rest of the band. Band retards into the next section.
2:03	Opening melody returns, this time with flute, trombone and trumpet, with cymbal hits in the background. Eventually grows to a full harmonic structure beneath the melodic line. Accelerates into the next section. Elements of pitch bending among the wind players. Sounds similar to the pitch bending associated with <i>shakuhachi</i> (eight hole bamboo flute tuned to the minor pentatonic) performance.
2:32	Short, six bar transitioning phrase descending into the following solo section. Sounds vaguely reminiscent of a traditional big band shout chorus, but is too short to be a true shout chorus.
2:42	Akiyoshi solo section on piano. Begins with a harkening back to the repetitive, percussive elements earlier in the piece. Assertive striking of the piano. A complementary mix of intense accents and lighter scalar patterns.
4:06	Full band interlude. Repetitive figure from both early in the introduction and Akiyoshi’s solo comes back in the full band.
4:35	Second short “shout chorus” like section, this time exclusively in the brass. Only lasts a couple of bars.
4:42	Saxophone and flute soli, passed onto the brass. Reminiscent of big band soli sections, but with the musicians lipping up (using the lips to raise a note sharp) the ends of phrases to invoke <i>shakuhachi</i> .

5:10	<i>Ritardando</i> into Tabackin's solo section.
5:23	Tabackin solo on flute. Sustained chords from the band punctuate throughout, returning to solo flute. Mixture of jazz flute and mimicking of shakuhachi present in the solo. Roughly the same length as Akiyoshi's piano solo from earlier, but with fewer references to other parts of the piece.
6:55	Secondary head returns to entire band, signaling the end of Tabackin's solo and beginning of the end of the piece. Retards into the next section.
7:22	Initial flute/whole band melody from 0:34 returns.
7:58	Solo flute returns with same melody as the beginning. <i>Noh</i> vocals return. Piece ends with <i>Noh</i> vocal and final hit from <i>hyōshigi</i> . Piece ends at 8:13.

Though “Kogun” and the album that is synonymous with it represents Akiyoshi's first foray into this new fusion of Big Band jazz and traditional Japanese musical elements, it is evident to the ear that this combination took quite a while to figure out. In the compositional form, Akiyoshi is, in essence, playing it safe – a head is still easy to identify, and the Japanese instrumentation and vocal parts are not integrated into the places in the piece where the band is performing the “jazz” parts. The integration sounds a little bit choppy, as the Japanese-style flute playing (*shakuhachi* style) attempts to waiver between jazz and *shakuhachi* throughout the solo section at 5:23. The “lipping up” of the end of phrases (to sound like the end of *shakuhachi* phrases) by the band at 4:42 is sloppy. The members of the big band likely had limited experience with this particular style of playing. While manipulating your lips to raise or lower a pitch as needed for intonation is not something new to instrumental musicians, this extreme usage

was probably a new experience for them. The inconsistencies with the ends of phrases seemed to be a control issue.

Problems aside, this piece uniquely incorporates two distinct musical forms – the jazz head and a structure more akin to what Western listeners might hear as a sonata form, but which Japanese listeners would recognize as akin to the *jo-ha-kyū* form essential to Japanese traditional music.⁴³ This unique mixture, form-wise, works quite well for aficionados of both jazz and traditional Japanese music. The use of *jo-ha-kyū* in a jazz chart makes even more sense if you think about the economic implications on the other side of the Pacific. Although Akiyoshi had been releasing her albums in Japan from the start of her career with some success, it is safe to say that *Kogun* was partly directed at her Japanese audience to bring more of them over to jazz. This, of course, worked out quite well, as her big band would make several trips over to her home country for performances over the next three decades.

Akiyoshi's solo work here is a more bold approach than what was present in "Toshiko's Elegy." The same differentiation in accents occurs, but to a much more intense effect. She is not playing off of someone else here – the solo is uniquely her own, harkening, at times, back to the initial percussive themes at the very beginning of the

⁴³ On page 163 of the chapter titled "East Asia/Japan" in Jeff Tilton's book on world music, *Worlds of Music: An Introduction to the Music of the World's Peoples*, Linda Fujie explains *jo-ha-kyū* as "The most common musical form in Japanese music...based on rhythmic rather than melodic changes. *Jo* means 'introduction' and is the slow beginning section: *ha* is literally 'breaking apart' and here the tempo builds; finally, *kyū*, or 'rushing,' finds the tempo reaching its peak, only to slow before the piece ends."

piece (being her own work, of course.) There is still a strong hard bop feel behind her playing and the piece as a whole, never really losing the idea that this is Toshiko Akiyoshi (as she was known prior to 1974) and this is a hard bop big band.

“Children of the Universe”

After Akiyoshi’s move back to New York in 1982 and the reformation of her jazz band into The Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra, she toured on a fairly regular basis. Only two live concert events during the time she had either big band were recorded, and the 1992 album *Carnegie Hall Concert* was the latter of the two. Akiyoshi’s ensemble had not released anything since 1986, so this release was highly anticipated both in the United States and in Japan. Released on compact disc by Columbia Records, the actual concert took place on September 20, 1991. The band featured Toshiko Akiyoshi on piano and as band-leader, Lew Tabackin on tenor saxophone and flute, Frank Wess on alto saxophone and flute, Jim Snidero on alto saxophone, soprano saxophone, flute, clarinet and piccolo, Walt Weiskopf on tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone, flute and clarinet, Scott Robinson on baritone saxophone and bass clarinet, the legendary Freddie Hubbard⁴⁴, Mike Ponella, John Eckert, Greg Gisbert, and Joe Magnarelli on trumpet, Herb Besson, Conrad Herwig, and Larry Ferrel on tenor trombone, Matt Finders on bass trombone,

⁴⁴ Hubbard was not present in the performance of “Children of the Universe.” He only performed on “I Know Who Loves You,” the following song on the album. It is also pertinent to note that there was no mention of the performers of the Japanese elements – *Noh*, *makugyo*, or *hyōshigi*. I hypothesize the same theory as in footnote 39 for “Kogun,” that the set drummer performed the requisite notes throughout the piece.

Peter Washington on bass, and Terry Clarke on drums. Akiyoshi composed and arranged every piece on the concert, except for “Your Beauty is a Song of Love,” arranged by Frank Wess. “Children of the Universe,” at 16:42 total with applause, is the second longest piece on the album.

Table 4: Analysis for “Children of the Universe” (1992)

0:00	Flute melody in a <i>shakuhachi</i> style, rather intense <i>Noh</i> vocals, and interjections by the <i>makugyo</i> , <i>hyōshigi</i> .
1:32	Melodic sequence repeats, but with the addition of the big band sustaining long chords.
2:26	Key change in melodic line. Sequence continues, chords in the band change along with the key.
2:45	Movement in the accompanying chords from the band intensifies.
2:55	Phrase from the bass leads into the next section, followed with a single extended <i>Noh</i> note, accentuated by <i>makugyo</i> hits.
3:09	Saxophone soli of chords leads the full band into a ballad, which is the first switch into any sort of traditional jazz form. Slower, relaxed tempo.
3:25	Head begins with saxophone melody. A section.
3:59	Tenor saxophone solo with bass backgrounds, moving to the saxophone section. Does not have a true improvisatory feel, likely a written solo as a section of the head, so I will call this the B section.
4:25	C section.
4:45	Modified A section, to transition into the next section.
5:10	Tenor saxophone solo. First time Akiyoshi is audible in the piece, playing backgrounds for the soloist. Bass and drums also accompany the soloist. Standard swing beat is present.
6:56	Solo ends into a full band shout chorus, lasting for eight bars or so.
7:10	Saxophone soli continues from the shout chorus.

7:23	Return of a short brass soli. A double-time acceleration occurs from 7:30 to 7:36, the start of the next soli section.
7:36	Saxophone and flute soli with retard.
8:16	Trombone soli, return to the relaxed ballad.
8:49	Full band returns with the head. Retards into next section.
9:27	Flute returns with solo section. No accompaniment. Pentatonic in nature, with <i>shakuhachi</i> -like pitch bending. Intense playing by soloist.
12:22	Japanese percussion (<i>makugyo</i> and <i>hyōshigi</i>) return to accompany the flute soloist. No other chord structure is going on underneath the soloist.
12:50	Tempo increases. Flute and Japanese percussion are the only performers at this point.
13:24	Tempo decreases briefly before returning to the faster pace prior to this point.
14:03	<i>Noh</i> vocal signals the reentrance of the band, playing their original entrance from 1:32.
14:27	Full band head returns.
15:08	Flute and <i>Noh</i> vocal return with the initial theme from 0:00. Japanese percussion enters again, a few bars in.
16:16	<i>Noh</i> vocal rises, makes a screeching, intense sustained pitch to signal the end of the piece.
16:20	Piece ends with <i>makugyo</i> hit. Applause ensues.

After nearly twenty years of experimentation with her big band and native Japanese musical elements, Akiyoshi (and subsequently, her ensemble) have a better grip on the “foreign” aspects of her works. Even though this particular recording is of a live jazz performance, it feels very thoroughly rehearsed. Yet, at the same time, it almost needs to be, considering the nature of piece. The nearly seven and a half minute long flute solo at 9:27 feels very calculated, and fits very close to the *jo-ha-kyū* model. In essence,

this flute solo is a *jo-ha-kyū* form inside of a *jo-ha-kyū* form, though the solo is far more traditional.

This piece, more so than in “Kogun,” is a smart mergence of musical ideas. Akiyoshi adds stark contrasts in tempos throughout, keeping the listener interested in a very long piece. She incorporates the Japanese musical elements in far greater detail than in her earlier works. For example, the *Noh* style vocals are much more pertinent throughout the entire piece, as there are more interjections of the Japanese elements. The Japanese percussion and *Noh* style vocals were heavily present during the flute solo, providing a driving force underneath the increasingly intense solo. The piece itself, although it can technically be called a ballad, gradually increases tempo over the course of the piece, before decreasing back to slower tempos from the end of the solo at 14:27 on to the end of the number. This allows for the listener to have a resting period of sorts before the next piece.

It is important to note that Akiyoshi does not perform a solo in this piece. Her piano playing does not even become present until the tenor saxophone solo at 5:10, where she is playing backgrounds. By this point in her career, she has shifted focus to being a band-leader and an arranger, dutifully taking a secondary in the ensemble. This is also evident in the name change of the ensemble from The Toshiko Akiyoshi – Lew Tabackin Big Band to The Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra featuring Lew Tabackin. The shift was

moved towards her husband's performance on tenor instead of on her playing – her compositions and the individual talents of the band are the stars in her way of thinking.

“Pianism – Dynamic Duos” – A Concert

As noted previously in this thesis, Akiyoshi and Tabackin still perform around the country on a fairly regular basis – almost monthly, despite their ages. These concerts generally consist of single night appearances at various jazz festivals, and their performance on June 4, 2010 for the San Francisco Jazz Collective's Spring 2010 season was no different. Paired up with pianists Renee Rosnes and Bill Charlap, Akiyoshi and Tabackin made up the second half of the concert, for about an hour of music. The concert, titled *Dynamic Duos*, featured the two couples at the Herbst Theater in downtown San Francisco. The San Francisco Jazz Collective, founded in 2004, brings affordable jazz concerts to patrons in the Bay Area. The tickets for the “Pianism – Dynamic Duos” concert were \$50, \$35, and \$25, respectively. The Herbst Theater, inside the San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center, seats 916 people in an orchestral setting (which was the setup for this particular concert), with box and balcony seating.⁴⁵ Attendance for this performance was near capacity, though no official numbers are released by SF Jazz. The setting was appropriate for a big name like Akiyoshi, yet despite the size of the theater and audience, the setup of the theater provided an intimate performance experience.

⁴⁵ “SFWMPAC: Herbst Theater,” San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center, accessed July 24, 2010, http://sfwmpac.org/herbst/ht_renthall.html.

Akiyoshi and Tabackin took the stage after the fifteen minute intermission. After readjusting the piano bench (it was a bit too tall for her), they went straight into “Long Yellow Road,” with Tabackin playing tenor. Afterwards, Akiyoshi gave proper introductions to the audience. She then jokingly explained how “Long Yellow Road” was her “A-Train,” and mentioned that it had morphed through the years through her various ensembles. Her English was very good, as is to be expected from someone who had been in the United States for just over a half century. Her accent was still a bit heavy, but seemed to be appreciated by the audience, who hung onto her every word. Tabackin switched over to flute for a few pieces (a couple of ballads, as this was a show about duos) and took over the talking duties from Akiyoshi, who admittedly was a bit under the weather from her recent return from Tokyo the prior evening. The pieces performed while Tabackin was on flute were mostly Akiyoshi’s, but there were a few Ellington and Tabackin arrangements as well.

When Tabackin returned onto tenor for the remainder of the session, a bit more than three quarters of the way through, he noticeably had a bit of a problem adjusting his neck strap. At this point, he turned to Akiyoshi and said, “*chotto matte, kudasai*,” which in Japanese means “wait a second, please.” She waited briefly as he fixed his strap, then they proceeded into their next piece.

The concert ended, but not before a long applause session and a short encore. As mentioned earlier, Akiyoshi ends all of her concerts (since 2001) with the melody from

the “Hope” movement of “Hiroshima: Rising from the Abyss.” Akiyoshi stated that she (and Tabackin) choose to end their concerts this way as a way to remind all of her audience members to pray for peace around the world, so that weapons such as the atomic bomb will never have to be used again. When she spoke about this before playing, her facial expressions turned warm, almost with a sense of relief. The couple played the last bits, and then took bows before a grateful standing ovation which lasted several minutes.

Akiyoshi’s performance style during her solos at this concert was similar in aural quality to how she played on *The Toshiko-Mariano Quartet* fifty years prior. In being able to see her perform, it was surprising at how reserved her facial expressions were while she attacked the keys for rather rousing solos. Tabackin, on the other hand, moved considerably across the stage, stomping his feet at various places in his solos. While you could certainly place the lack of visible emotion on the limitations of the piano, one could suspect that her Japanese upbringing had something to do with it. In my dealings with Japanese born musicians growing up in California, the level of concentration, even in jazz and marching bands, was considerable and noticeable, so Akiyoshi’s solid expression was not unusual to me, but it is understandable if another jazz patron not of an Asian background might consider that abnormal.

The lack of Akiyoshi’s brand of jazz fusion in this duet performance was slightly surprising. It reinforced the fact that Akiyoshi’s medium for experimentation was

undoubtedly the big band. However, this cannot solely be determined by the instrumentation she chooses – Tabackin could have utilized the flute to incorporate *shakuhachi* style playing, but for none of the pieces selected for that performance would flute have been appropriate. The audience did not seem to care or notice, and were quite pleased with the selection of songs. This could be due to the fact that Akiyoshi has only performed one of her big band pieces as a reduction for smaller ensemble – “Hiroshima – Return from the Abyss.” Once again, Akiyoshi was playing well-picked strengths of hers to suit her ever-changing audience.

VII. FINAL THOUGHTS

Toshiko Akiyoshi's maturation as a musician coincided with a concern for using her "new fusion" to advance social awareness and promote peace, a move confirmed by her composition "Hiroshima: Rising from the Abyss." Akiyoshi saw quite a bit of change in America (and, subsequently her native Japan) in her five decades as a composer and musician, only to increasingly incorporate what she saw around her into her music. Akiyoshi's performance and composition style is representative of a woman who belonged to a generation witnessed the dramatic shift from a localized to a globalized world. The fact that she worked almost equally in two very different countries personifies this new global philosophy. The passion Akiyoshi clearly felt for the Japanese, her people, but also for the struggles that people around the world has grown stronger with age. Certainly, her passion has touched other musicians. It would be interesting to investigate if the at the sizeable number of Japanese nationals enrolled at Berklee can be attributed to her influence.

It is human nature to want to leave a proper, positive mark on others without having to compromise one's own personal integrity. Akiyoshi's growth over her career is a perfect example of this. As a band leader and as a composer, her ability to garner control over her ensemble while allowing individual members to learn and shine on their own is a skill only obtained by those who nurture effectively. Her compositions allowed her to express herself as a Japanese woman, but were so competently written that the fact

that they were jazz pieces was never lost on the band members or her audiences on two continents.

Musically, she stayed true to her vision and kept herself in her compositions, with both style and instrumentation. Her fusion work feels like Akiyoshi – frequently referring back to her bop roots and the players whom she idolized in her younger years. Yet, at the same time, her music reflects her own life experiences, melding the dual life she has led since moving from China to mainland Japan, and then to the United States. In a way, I can see parallels between the maturation of Akiyoshi's fusion and the compositional development of the Hungarian classical composer Béla Bartók whose compositions matured from overt references to folkloric music to more abstract integration of fundamental aesthetic principals drawn from folkloric and traditional music. For Akiyoshi, exact quotations from existing jazz and traditional Japanese pieces did not matter – what was important was her effort to blend her experience in music. Her success with audiences indicates that she beat the odds against Americans accepting a Japanese woman as a jazz composer and band leader and against Japanese resisting American jazz. Even more impressive, she won her place by creating music that fused Japanese and American aesthetics to create new approach in the world of jazz, the music that she fell in love before she arrived on American soil.

Some of the ideas that were not used for this particular thesis revolve around examining Akiyoshi from the Japanese point of view. Since so much of her albums and

interviews were geared towards the Japanese market, seeing her perform in Japan in person could provide much-needed insight to her life and work. Obtaining additional information regarding her audiences in Japan could be beneficial as well. A reading knowledge of the Japanese language would be essential to embark upon this kind of work, as would extensive interview time with her and Sadao Watanabe. This present study should be the first one completed, as it will enrich the existing America-based literature on her career.

For future research, I propose additional study of Akiyoshi's musical relationship with both Charlie Mariano and Lew Tabackin. The fact that she spent more than half of her life linked romantically and professionally to these saxophonists would make for a fascinating topic. Her professional relationship with her daughter Monday Michiru, looked at as a comparative analysis of a parent-child musical dynamic, would also further the literature on Akiyoshi. The possibility of looking at Akiyoshi's professional relationships with all three could be very useful for those studying behavioral patterns and jazz.

I also propose research that compares Akiyoshi to jazz women from other countries and their success in America and in their home countries. Since Akiyoshi spent just as much, if not more, time building a fan base in Japan, it would be beneficial to examine bi-national support bolstering careers for others.

Akiyoshi's development of a new "jazz fusion" in the 1970s exhibited a calculated level of restraint and respect for both musical genres that can be studied and admired. It can be extremely difficult to effectively meld different traditions into one cohesive piece, yet Akiyoshi's perseverance on such a difficult task combined with her reverence for both the American and emerging Japanese jazz traditions earned her respect and support from audiences and musicians in Japan and the United States. The ability to strike this balance may not be unique to Akiyoshi. However, her ability to transcend barriers of gender, race, and nationality to create a viable fusion of aesthetics and convince others to collaborate and share her goals makes her a model for women and all musicians in a multiethnic musical world of contemporary jazz.

APPENDIX

COMPLETE DISCOGRAPHY

A. As Leader or Co-Leader

- Toshiko's Piano* (1954); MGN-22; Norgran.
Toshiko at Mocambo (1955); MPF-1029; Rockwell/Polydor.
The Toshiko Trio (George Wein Presents Toshiko) (1956); STLP-912; Storyville.
Her Trio, Her Quartet (1956); STLP-918; Storyville.
Toshiko and Leon Sash at Newport (1957); MGV-8326; Verve.
The Many Sides of Toshiko (1957); MGV-8273; Verve.
United Notions with Toshiko and her International Jazz Sextet (1958); E-1001; Metrojazz.
Toshiko Mariano (1960); 9105; Candid.
The Toshiko-Mariano Quartet (1961); CS-9012/CM-8012; Candid.
Long Yellow Road (Toshiko Akiyoshi Trio) (1961); TAM YX-4056; Asahi Sonorama.
Toshiko Meets Her Old Pals (1961); SKC-3; King.
Live at Birdland (1961); FSCD-1021; Fresh Sound.
Toshiko-Mariano Quartet (1963); NS-1001; Takt (Nippon Columbia).
East and West (1963); BCVJ-7420; Victor.
The Country and Western Sound of Jazz Pianos (1963); DS-6308; Dauntless.
Miwaku no Jazz (1963); JV-5084; Victor Japan.
Toshiko Mariano and her Big Band (1964); VJR-2025; Vee Jay.
Lullabies for You (1965); SW-7056; Nippon Columbia.
Toshiko at Top of the Gate (1968); XMS-10008CT; Nippon Columbia.
Toshiko Akiyoshi in Japan (1970); LPC-8049; Toshiba.
Jazz, The Personal Dimension (1971); SPX-2; Victor.
Meditation (1971); VC-7513; Tokuma/Dan.
Sumie (1971); CD4B-5007; Victor.
Solo Piano (1971); RVC-RCA-6270; RCA Victor.
Dedications (1976); DSP-5001; Discomate.
Dedications II (1977); DSP-5006; Discomate.
Toshiko Plays Billy Strayhorn (1978); DSP-5011; Discomate.
Finesse (1978); CCD-4069; Concord.
Notorious Tourist from the East (1978); DSP-5014; Discomate.
Just Be Bop (1980); DSP-8102; Discomate.
Tuttie Flutie (1980); DSP-8107; Discomate.
Toshiko Akiyoshi Trio (1983); EWJ-90022; Toshiba East World.
Time Stream (1984); EWJ-90034; Toshiba East World.

Interlude (1987); CCD-4324; Concord.
Four Seasons (1990); CRCJ-91002; Nippon Crown.
Remembering Bud: Cleopatra's Dream (1990); CRCJ-91003; Nippon Crown.
Chic Lady (1991); CRCJ-91004; Nippon Crown.
Dig (1993); CRCJ-91005; Nippon Crown.
Toshiko Akiyoshi at Maybeck (1994); CCD-4635; Concord Jazz.
Night and Dream (1994); CRCJ-91006; Nippon Crown.
Yes, I Have No 4 Beat Today (1995); CRCJ-91007; Nippon Crown.
Time Stream: Toshiko Plays Toshiko (1996); CRCJ-91008; Nippon Crown.
Toshiko Akiyoshi Trio Live at Blue Note Tokyo '97 (1997); CRCJ-9154; Nippon Crown.
Sketches of Japan (1999); CRCJ-91001; Nippon Crown.
Toshiko Akiyoshi Solo Live at The Kennedy Center (2000); CRCJ-9153; Nippon Crown.
New York Sketch Book (2004); CRCJ-9159; Nippon Crown.
Hope (2005); CRCJ-9160; Nippon Crown.
50th Anniversary Concert in Japan (2006); TTOC-0006; T-toc.
Let Freedom Swing (2008); CD 93.203; Hänssler Verlag.
Vintage – Duke Ellington Songbook (2008); TTOC-0014; T-toc.

B. As Part of the Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin Big Band

Kogun (1974); RVC RCA-6246; RCA Victor.
Long Yellow Road (1975); RVC RCA-6296; RCA Victor.
Tales of a Courtesan (Oirantan) (1976); RVC RCP-6004; RCA Victor.
Road Time (1976); RVC RCA-9115/6; RCA Victor.
Insights (1976); RVC RCP-6106; RCA Victor.
March of the Tadpoles (1977); RVC RCP-6178; RCA Victor.
Live at Newport '77 (1977); RVC RVJ-6005; RCA Victor (Japan).
Live at Newport II (1977); RVC RVJ-6088; RCA Victor (Japan).
Salted Ginko Nuts (1978); RVC RVJ-6031; RCA Victor (Japan).
Sumi-e (1979); 6061; Insights.
Farewell (1980); RVC RVJ-6078; RCA Victor (Japan).
From Toshiko with Love (1981); RVC RVL-8016; RCA Victor (Japan).
European Memoirs (1982); RVC RVL-8036; RCA Victor (Japan).

C. As Part of the Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra

Ten Gallon Shuffle (1984); RVC RVL-8098; RCA Victor (Japan).
Wishing Peace (1986); 27Ken-001; Ken.
Carnegie Hall Concert (1992); CK-48805; Columbia.
Desert Lady/Fantasy (1994); CK-57856; Columbia.
Four Seasons of Morita Village (1996); BVCJ-638; BMG Victor/Novus J.
Monopoly Game (1998); BVCJ-31003; BMG Victor/Novus J.

Tribute to Duke Ellington (1999); BVCJ-34005; BMG Victor/Novus J.
Hiroshima – Rising from the Abyss (2001); VACM-1189; Videoarts Music.
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