

Yuji Takahashi - Finger Light (1996)

Written by bluesever

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1 *Sugagaki Kuzushi* (1993) 9:40 2 *Mimi No Ho* (1994) 10:29 3 *Kagehime No Michiyuki* (1994) 13:01 4 *Yubi-Tômyô* (1995) 20:26 Shamisen [Bass Shamisen: Hutozao] – Yumiko Tanaka Shamisen [Hosozao], Vocals – Ayumi Shimonoto, Kazuko Takada Sho – Ko Ishikawa Viola – Kishiko Suzumi Piano – Yuji Takahashi Composer, Producer – Yuji Takahashi

Finger Light is the first record of Takahashi's music released on an American label. The record features compositions for shamisen, double shamisen and sho (the Japanese mouth organ), in addition to piano. ---Jason Ankeny, AllMusic Review

A pianist with over 100 Japanese releases to his credit, Yuji Takahashi first attracted notice as an avant-garde composer in the early '60s while a member of the New Directions group along with Toshi Ichianagi and Kenji Kobayashi. After premiering Iannis Xenakis' *Herma*, a piano composition dedicated to him, Takahashi studied stochastic music under Xenakis between 1963 and 1966.

After leaving Xenakis' tutelage, Takahashi focused his energies largely on composing, working with a variety of forms including orchestral, operatic, improvisational, and even pop music. In 1978, he returned to performing, organizing the Suigyu Band to play Asian protest songs. He also recorded his own work in addition to compositions by John Cage, Earle Brown, Roger Reynolds, and Toru Takemitsu. For the Denon label, he released a number of recordings by Bach and Satie.

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Throughout his long career, Takahashi worked with a number of collaborators, including John Zorn, Ryuichi Sakamoto, Musica Elettronica Viva, Ned Rothenberg, and Carl Stone. Despite the breadth of his huge back catalog, none of his own music was released on an American label until the appearance of Finger Light in 1995. ---Jason Ankeny, allmusic.com

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