**"Recording at SHIKIORI"**

Upon arriving at a seaside lodge in Scarborough, South Africa, after passing through Ethiopia, I received an unexpectedly joyful message from Sinne Eeg.

It was the spring of 2024, and that message became the catalyst for this project.

After studying with Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen in Copenhagen,

I spent years performing and living in Cape Town, far from Japan.

It was Hein van de Geyn, who lived in Scarborough and had once lent me a double bass, whose words led me to return to Japan—and that return gave birth to SHIKIORI.

SHIKIORI is my grandmother’s house, standing for over 150 years. Nestled in the Japanese countryside, it is surrounded by rice fields, where deer and wild boars far outnumber humans. When I returned from South Africa in 2009,

the house was almost abandoned, but it held too many memories to let go.

I decided to preserve it, inspired by Hein’s house in the nature-rich Scarborough.

After renovations, I placed my grandmother’s cherished upright piano alongside my double bass. Next to the **kamidana**—a small household Shinto shrine—I hung a photo of Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen. Alongside the countless deities from Japanese folklore, who love hot springs and inhabit the world of anime, **“The Great Dane” watches over this space.**

Over time, friends from all over the world began to visit, and naturally, music began to emerge. From time to time, we started holding concerts.

Sinne and Jacob, along with Morten Lund and Morten Ramsbøl , first visited SHIKIORI in 2013. Some of the songs on this album, such as *Soba* and *Hebi*, are named after experiences they had here in Japan, at SHIKIORI.

In Japan, there is a tradition of returning to one’s grandparents’ home during the summer. Reuniting with family, sharing meals, fireworks, and Bon Odori dances— these summer memories never fade, becoming a part of one’s soul, a **timeless landscape within.**

In September 2024, the sweltering heat of the Japanese Summer,

We recorded this project in this old house with an Audience present.

Rather than a conventional relationship between accompanist and vocalist, it was a special ensemble of piano and voice-two voices resonating as one.

Their sound seeped into the walls and aged wood of the 150-years-old house, and into the hearts of those who listened.

This music became a reflection of a timeless landscape of the soul-both the Danish and the Japanese.

Now, I sit in the **doma of SHIKIORI**, writing this text where they once recorded. The music born in this place has traveled, **connecting Japan and Scandinavia**— through Stockholm, Copenhagen, and beyond—before finally returning home.

The name **SHIKIORI** carries the meaning of **"a place where hearts return."** People who were born here, and those who, like them, had to leave their hometowns as life pulled them elsewhere -people whose lives have been shaped by changing times— this place is **a home for their thoughts to return to.**

From the timeless brilliance of jazz standards, infused with new life by Sinne Eeg, to her own compositions brimming with songwriting artistry, from Jacob Christoffersen’s tender yet soulful piano— I feel that their music carries **a** message essential for people worldwide, especially in this era of deepening division.

A **timeless landscape of the soul**, their music has created a new sanctuary— **a place where hearts return.**

Seigo Matsunaga

CD: back side:

1. **LOSING YOU**  (Sinne Eeg/Søren Sko) 5:27
2. **HEBI** (Sinne Eeg) 3:57
3. **SOBA FLOWER**  (Jacob Christoffersen / REMI) 3:43
4. **LUSH LIFE**  (Billy Strayhorn) 5:33
5. **BETTER THAN ANYTHING**  (David Wheat / Bill Loughorough) 6:47
6. **MARIA**  (Leonard Bernstein / Stephen Sondheim) 4:49
7. **COLD**  (Annie Lennox) 4:42
8. **A SECOND CHANCE AT LOVE** (Jacob Christoffersen / Lisa Freeman) 4:53
9. **BUT NOT FOR ME**  (George & Ira Gershwin) 5:05
10. **DON’T BE SO BLUE**  (Sinne Eeg) 4:47
11. **SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY**  (Jacob Christoffersen / Helle Hansen)
12. **SOBA**  (Jacob Christoffersen)

LP: back side:

Side A:

1. **LOSING YOU**  (Sinne Eeg/Søren Sko) 5:27
2. **HEBI** (Sinne Eeg) 3:57
3. **SOBA FLOWER**  (Jacob Christoffersen / REMI) 3:43
4. **LUSH LIFE**  (Billy Strayhorn) 5:33
5. **BETTER THAN ANYTHING**  (David Wheat / Bill Loughorough) 6:47

Side B:
6. **MARIA**  (Leonard Bernstein / Stephen Sondheim) 4:49
7. **COLD**  (Annie Lennox) 4:42
8. **A SECOND CHANCE AT LOVE** (Jacob Christoffersen / Lisa Freeman) 4:53
9. **BUT NOT FOR ME**  (George & Ira Gershwin) 5:05
10. **DON’T BE SO BLUE**  (Sinne Eeg) 4:47

Sinne Eeg: Vocal, additional vocals

Jacob Christoffersen: Piano, Fender Rhodes, additional vocals

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