

*Vanishing* (2005)

Naomi Sekiya

“Berlin, 1960: little Jutta always loved nature. Instead of playing with dolls, she enjoyed looking at plants for hours and hours. She could hear trees and flowers talking to each other. She knew they had emotions, just like humans. Sometimes they were happy and joyful. Sometimes they were sad and lonely. And even sweet, little flowers on a beautiful field sometimes became very furious and got into fights!

However, she noticed that she was losing her ability to talk to them after she enrolled in school. Her secret garden was gradually vanishing. Many years passed by. When I first heard her childhood memories, I was very fascinated and interested in her way of communicating with flowers, and decided to compose a piece about talking plants in her vanishing garden.

Jutta moved to the United States and became a florist. Jutta’s Flowers is located at 3078 Claremont Avenue, Berkeley, California.”

—Naomi Sekiya

The world premiere of *Vanishing* was on June 13, 2007 in the Verdehr Trio Summer Chamber Music Concert Series at the Wharton Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.

Naomi Sekiya was born and raised in Tochigi, Japan, and moved to the United States when she was eighteen. She holds Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees from the University of California, Los Angeles, as well as the Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from the University of Southern California. Her principal teachers were Ian Krouse, Donald Crockett, and James Hopkins.

Sekiya was the Berkeley Symphony’s first Composer-in-Residence in 2003-2004. During her residency, she worked as the principal composer of *Manzanar: An American Story* (Kent Nagano, artistic director). This fifty-five-minute oratorio is written for orchestra with soprano, children’s chorus, jazz trio, and actors. It was performed at various venues, such as UCLA’s Royce Hall in June, 2005.

Sekiya’s other orchestral works and performances include *Dance in the Wilderness* (1997, revised in 2002) Orchestra della Toscana, Italy; *Blue Echoes* (1999) Orchestra of Colouras, Greece; *Deluge* (2000) Los Angeles Philharmonic, Sir Simon Rattle, conductor; *Sinfonia delle Ombre* (2001) Warsaw Philharmonic; *Undulation* (2002) Estonian National Symphony Orchestra, Olari Elts, conductor; *Concerto for Two Guitars and Orchestra* (2003) Berkeley Symphony, Kent Nagano, conductor; *Fragments of Memories* (2005) Orchestre de Bretagne, France, Bernhard Gueller, conductor; *Winds of Summer Fields* (2014), commissioned and premiered by the Chamber Sounds in Singapore; and *Reflections* (2006) premiered by Tokyo Symphony, Kazufumi Yamashita, conductor.

Numerous ensembles and individuals have performed her chamber compositions: the Quartetto D’Archi di Torino, the Minneapolis Guitar Quartet, Torio Cadenza Guitares (Belgium), Los Angeles Chamber Singers, Thornton Contemporary Music Ensemble, Chicago Symphony principal tubist Gene Pokorny, and guitarists Frederic Zigante and Shinichi Fukuda.

In 2005, Sekiya became the recipient of the prestigious Nakasone Yasuhiro Award in Japan. She has won other international competitions including the Witold Lutoslawski Competition for Composers (2001), an Ojai Music Festival Award (2000), the Dimitris Mitropoulos Composition Competition (1999), and the Michele Pittaluga Composition Competition for Classical Guitar (both 1998 and 1999), and the Lupa Sumera Composition Competition. She received the John Beck Composition Prize at the Eastman School of Music, The Philadelphia Orchestra’s Centennial

Composition Prize, and the Inter-American Music Award from Sigma Alpha Iota. Her works have been published by Berben.

Additional information is available at [www.naomisekiya.com](http://www.naomisekiya.com).