Two Sonatas for Violin and Piano by Nobu Kōda: An Approach to Interpreting Works Without Performance Tradition

by

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MM, Florida State University, 2018

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BM, University of Minnesota, 2016

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Colorado in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

DMA

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2024

Two Sonatas for Violin and Piano by Nobu Kōda: An Approach to Interpreting Works Without Performance Tradition

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The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.
Abstract

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Two Sonatas for Violin and Piano by Nobu Kōda: An Approach to Interpreting Works Without Performance Tradition

Alex Gonzalez
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An accomplished pianist, violinist, vocalist, and composer of the Meiji Period (1868–1912), Nobu Kōda (1870–1946) was a prominent figure—one of several uncredited women musicians and educators—who led the expansion of Western classical music in Japan. Pioneering Western-style composition in the late 19th century, Kōda’s international training and career led her to produce some of Japan’s most renowned musicians. While an educator at the Tokyo Music School her composition and violin students included composers such as Rentaro Taki, Yamada Kousuke, and Shinichi Suzuki—a notable pedagogue. Despite a significant career and compositional output encompassing orchestral, vocal, piano, and chamber music, Kōda faced significant scrutiny, defamation, and erasure during her lifetime due to the supremacy of patriarchal social structures. After lying dormant for over a century, her two violin sonatas, composed both in Vienna and upon her return to Japan, narrate a national movement towards modernization initiated during Kōda’s lifetime.

This paper will be presented in four chapters: 1) a synopsis of the origins of Western music in Japan, 2) a summary of Kōda’s studies, life, and career, 3) an overview of Kōda’s compositional output, musical influences, common stylistic features, and themes, and 4) a summary of editorial markings made to the original manuscripts of Kōda’s violin sonatas drawn from historical, theoretical, and practical contexts. While this research aims to enhance the practicality of learning and performing Kōda’s violin sonatas, its overarching aspiration is to secure their enduring presence in the classical canon for future generations.
TWO SONATAS FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO BY NOBU KÔDA:
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B.M., University of Minnesota Twin Cities, 2016
M.M., Florida State University, 2018

A dissertation submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Colorado Boulder in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts
College of Music
2024

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Acknowledgments

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Alex Gonzalez, Fritz Gearhart, and Erika Eckert who made this project possible through their guidance and expertise. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Kazuyuki Memorial Archives of Modern Japanese Music at Meiji Gakuin University and my aunt Kinue Horikoshi, who retrieved the manuscripts from the archives and sent them all the way from Tokyo, Japan to Boulder, Colorado.

I owe a special note of gratitude to Alex Gonzalez, who stepped in as my advisor during the last year of my doctorate and supported me with the brilliance, kindness, and patience that I needed to complete this degree. Thank you, Alex.
Dedication

To my mother, father, and late grandmother.

Chieko Yamaguchi, 山口 千恵子 (1952-)
Kazuyoshi Yamaguchi, 山口 一義 (1947-)
Hisako Tanuma, 田沼 久子 (1924-2018)
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Chapter One: Emergence of Western Music

Introduction

Interpreting a musical work without an established performance tradition presents a unique challenge. While the absence of tradition offers an exciting opportunity for performers to engage in creative and investigative processes—drawing conclusions from historical context, personal knowledge, and practical instrumental and collaborative approaches—it can pose a barrier for the everyday performer due to time constraints and a lack of accessible resources. Nobu Kōda’s Two Sonatas for Violin and Piano, composed in late 19th-century Austria and Japan, have recently emerged into the violin repertoire after years of dormancy. Kōda’s Sonata No. 1 in E-flat Major for Violin and Piano, the first Western-style composition written by a person of Japanese origin in recorded history, was a student composition created under the guidance of Austrian composer Robert Fuchs (1847–1927). Consisting of an unfinished third movement which was started upon Kōda’s return to Japan, the sonata was recently completed by renowned composer Shin-Ichiro Ikebe and performed in concert in 2004. Similarly, Kōda’s Sonata No. 2 in D Minor for Violin and Piano, composed during her residence in Japan and consisting of a single movement, was performed at this same concert, with both works receiving much acclaim. However, despite this feat, Kōda and her compositions remain largely unknown both in Japan and internationally.

Upon my first reading of the sonatas, I was struck by the abundance of interpretive possibilities. Deciding between a Classical or Romantic-informed approach to the sonatas, and selecting bowings, articulations, tempi, and dynamics that would support these choices, called for a thorough understanding of Kōda’s unique educational background and compositional style. Utilizing historical, theoretical, and practical contexts to inform artistic choices, I realized the
necessity of creating a new edition with editorial markings to increase the accessibility of these works for students and performers.

This paper will be presented in seven sections: 1) a synopsis of the origins of Western music in Japan, 2) a summary of Kōda’s studies, life, and career, 3) an overview of Kōda’s compositional output, 4) a brief outline of musical influences, 5) an analysis of unique features of the manuscripts and formal features, 6) a summary of editorial markings made to the original sonatas, and 7) a brief overview of conclusions drawn from this project.

Despite Kōda’s contributions to the emergence of Western music in Japan, she faced significant scrutiny, defamation, and erasure during her lifetime, especially in her later years. As a consequence of the patriarchal social structures of Meiji Japan, Kōda and her compositions have been excluded for over a century despite their historical significance. While this research aims to enhance the practicality of learning and performing Kōda’s sonatas, its overarching aspiration is to secure their enduring presence in the classical canon for future generations.

Origins of Western Music in Japan

While the beginnings of Western music in Japan are typically marked by the opening of Japanese ports to international trade in 1853, Western instruments and music-making practices had long existed in silos across the country. Western music first entered Japan in the sixteenth century as Jesuit missionaries established schools and churches where they taught choral music and imported instruments such as pipe organ, drums, and the Dutch fife. As missionaries were expelled from Japan in 1613, all who remained were a small group of Dutch migrants who lived on the island of Deshima.¹ Nagasaki official Takashima Shuhan (1798–1866) was influenced by these

¹A small artificial island off the coast of Nagasaki, Japan that served as a trading post for the Portuguese (1570 - 1639) and the Dutch (1641 - 1854). Following the Shimabara rebellion (1637 - 1638), an uprising of mostly Catholic peasants pushing back against the strict prohibition of Christianity by the Tokugawa Shogunate, all Portuguese were expelled from Japan and the Dutch were moved to Deshima in 1641 where they were under strict religious and trade control.
migrants to use Western instruments—such as the drums and fife—at ceremonies and military training sites. Because of this, some Japanese musicians were already familiar with Western instruments and music when Commodore Matthew C. Perry’s “Black Ships” arrived from the harbors of Feudal Japan in 1853 and 1854, reopening the country to foreign trade after isolation from the outside world dating back to the Kamakura Period (1185–1333).

The first significant introductions of Western music arrived in Japan through means of patriotic songs, hymns, folk songs, and popular American tunes of the 1840s such as minstrel songs performed by singers and military bands on Commodore Perry’s ships. “Sailors learned songs through an oral tradition. Many of the songs cited in the journals of Perry’s expedition were the latest popular tunes in the United States: ‘Home Sweet Home,’ ‘Canadian Boat Song,’ ‘Lucy Long,’ ‘Old Dan Tucker,’ and ‘Jim Along Josey’” (Howe, 105). As Commodore Perry utilized music to boost morale on the ships, “the band music of the Black Ships was meant to impress the people of Naha (Okinawa) and mainland Japan with the precision marching of armed men, exact rhythms, and loud dynamics. The variety of instruments, including keyed flutes and valved brass, was spectacular. The music was intended to show Perry’s power to represent the United States and negotiate treaties” (Howe, 107).

Perhaps one of the first recorded instances of the violin in Japan was featured in a program for May 29, 1854 of a concert on the Powhatan ship at the Port of Hakōdate at Hokkaido, Japan. A program depicts “sketches of the musicians by Japanese artists show[ing] a line of nine seated instrumentalists playing the bones, guitar, banjo, tambourine, two violins, guitar, triangle, and tambourine along with two dancers” (Howe, 110). Similarly, a program for June 16, 1954 of a concert on the USS Powhatan at the Port of Shimoda at Honshu, cites a violin solo performed.

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2 On July 8, 1853, the U.S. Navy sent four warships operated under the direction of Commodore Matthew Perry into the bay at Edo and threatened to attack if Japan did not begin trade with the West.

3 The bones, also known as rhythm bones, were a folk instrument typical of minstrel shows.
alongside the minstrel songs of Stephen Foster (1826–1864) and Elias Howe’s (1820–1895) *Ethiopian Glee Book* (1848).4 The program was split into two parts—the American North and South—depicting a divided country soon to erupt into Civil War (Howe, 111).5 The songs from these performances are widely criticized today for their blatant racism and were performed by white men in blackface. Later, these songs became standard repertoire of music education textbooks during the Meiji Period (1868–1912).

**Meiji Modernization**

Emperor Meiji (1852–1912) rose to power at the young age of fourteen, overthrowing the Tokugawa Shogunate which had reigned from 1608 through the Edo Period (1603–1868), initiating a drastic effort to modernize the country. This period, known as the Meiji Restoration (1868–1889), marked a transformative era in Japanese history characterized by widespread political, economic, militaristic, and cultural reform.6 Aimed at propelling Japan into the ranks of modern industrialized nations, the rapid adaptation of new technological advancements from abroad laid a foundation for its emergence as a global power in subsequent decades. The pursuit of modernization manifested in the adaptation of new musical practices and educational reforms inspired by the West.

Portraying a movement towards a reformed Japan, the modernization of education systems was a major goal of the Meiji government. As the government focused on modeling Japanese education after Western education systems, a particular focus was placed on the American school system. The Iwakura Mission (1871–1873) was a government-sponsored voyage to the United States and Europe by forty-nine high-ranking scholars and statesmen of the Meiji

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4 The Ethiopian Song Book can be viewed [here](#).
5 View the program of this concert, titled “Ethiopian Concert” in Howe’s article, [Western Music on Commodore Perry’s “Black Ships” in Japan, 1853-1854](#).
6 While the Meiji Period spanned 1868 - 1912, the Meiji Restoration (1868 - 1889) represented a historical three years of modernizing Japan.
delegation, accompanied by their assistants and a select five young girls. The purpose of this mission was to establish treaties with foreign governments while examining and adapting new cultural ideologies. The five young girls on this mission included ten-year-old Nagai Shigeko (1861–1928), also known as Uriyu Shigeko, who later became one of Japan’s first piano teachers instructing young students including Nobu Kōda.

The Meiji Reconstruction marked a pivotal time during which there was a growing emphasis on women's rights. Kuroda Kiyotada (1840–1900), the second prime minister of Japan “visited the United States in 1871 and was ‘deeply impressed with the happy condition of the American women’” (Howe, 1993). While most women of the Edo Period would only study traditional music through singing, dancing, and the performance of traditional instruments, such as the koto, shakuhachi, shamisen, and drums if they trained to entertain men as geisha, in the Meiji Period women began to have opportunities to pursue a general education that would prepare them for careers as teachers7 (Howe, 1995). Through their role as educators, women would assist the nation in teaching children and spreading cultural influence. Additionally, the private study of traditional instruments was encouraged for young girls before they entered the Music Institute. Arinori Mori (1847–1889), Japan’s first director of education, emphasized the importance of Japanese women's education, which Emperor Meiji also addressed in 1871 before the departure of the Iwakura Mission (Howe, 1993). As women entered school, their education would include a blend of instruction on both Japanese and Western instruments. Credited to the presence and influence of Western advisors in Japan, women began to have new opportunities through the study of music (Howe, 1995).

7 Geisha are traditional Japanese women entertainers trained in various traditional arts and music.
Emerging Musical Genres

During the Meiji period, several distinct musical genres emerged. While music of the Meiji Restoration is typically portrayed as a dichotomy between two genres—traditional Japanese and Western music—in actuality, the Meiji Restoration produced three types of music making. These genres included the following: 1) *gagaku*, or court music traditional of the Edo Period, 2) *shōka* and *gunka*, school and military songs created in Japan, and 3) Western music, which entered Japan through newly opened borders (Tsukahara, 2013). Serving three distinct functions, *gagaku* represented a form of original musical expression distinct to the cultural identity of Japan, *shōka* and *gunka* promoted the unification of Japanese people through collective music making, and Western music allowed for international interactions through shared language, in particular with Western countries (Tsukahara, 2013).

*Gagaku*, one of the oldest genres of Japanese traditional music, was the only form of traditional music performed at state ceremonies for high-ranking officials and is representative of what is most commonly associated with traditional Japanese music today. In direct contrast to the aesthetics, style, and function of high Romantic European music—the predominant form of Western-style music entering Japan featuring public audiences and virtuoso soloists—*gagaku* exhibited distinct timbres and tone qualities, composer anonymity, fluidity in timing and tempos, and the utilization of “ma,” a zen philosophy defined by Toru Takemitsu as the silence after a sound or “a bridge between two worlds, the space between, a vessel into which a spirit enters” (Larson, 2017).

*Shōka* and *gunka* were school and military songs that were informed by both Western and *gagaku* influences. They were both involved in promoting the unification of communities through the act of collective music-making. *Shōka* was a genre of Japanese song commonly

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8 *Gagaku* was clearly distinguished from *zokugaku* (common or vulgar music) in Meiji Japan.
taught in public schools during the Meiji Period. *Shōka* composers wrote *gagaku*-inspired melodies, utilizing *ritsu* scales, also known as anhemitonic (whole tone) pentatonic scales specific to the *gagaku* genre. Composers would then utilize Western notation to write out these melodies that would accompany a sung Japanese text.

*Gunka* were military songs that emerged during the Meiji Restoration in response to the integration of Western customs. They were utilized to encourage patriotism and boost morale but did not serve as battlefield music. *Gunka* called for the use of Western instruments such as brass, woodwind, and drums, was composed in a major key, and similar to *shōka* music, utilized Western notation and Japanese text.

**Western Music**

As depicted in art, Western-style music recitals featuring imported instruments such as the violin and piano became prominent in Meiji Japan. Artist Toyohara Chikanobu (1838–1912), known by contemporaries as Ōshū Chikanobu, portrays a scene of Japanese instrumentalists performing a recital in his woodblock print, *Concert of European Music or Ōshū kangengaku gassō no zu* (1889). In this work, a group of musicians consisting of a pianist, bassist, three violinists, and a flutist dressed in corseted dresses and Western-style suits performs in the Rokumeikan (Foxwell and Bailey, 2023). While the title implies the performance of Western music, the sheet music depicted in front of the pianist is a Japanese song written in Western

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9 This print can be viewed on the Metropolitan Art Museum's website [here](https://www.metmuseum.org) and is currently on display at the Japan Art Society of America in New York City, New York.

10 The Rokumeikan, also known as the Deer Cry Pavillion or Banquet house, was a Western-style building opened in Tokyo in 1883 and designed by British architect, Josiah Conder (1852–1920). It was utilized to house foreign guests upon their visit to Japan. This building was deemed controversial by the Japanese people as it was viewed as a cultural symbol that glorified Western cultural. The building purposely did not feature any Japanese architectural elements. While Japanese people understood the necessity for Westernization, they did not accept West as morally and spiritually superior. In fact, many Japanese viewed Western powers as disrespectful and barbaric, and as a result, were humiliated by the building of this hall and questioned its diplomatic use.

11 It is noted that Kōda performed piano at a ball held at the Rokumeikan as substitute for her mentor Nagai (or Uriyu) Shigeko on one occasion.
notation from a volume of the *Meiji shōka*, the Meiji Songbook. The song performed is “Iwama no Shimizu,” translating to “Clear Water Among the Rocks” and composed by Owada Takeki (1857–1910) with lyrics by Oku Yoshiisa (1858–1933). An example of *kaika-e*, or enlightenment pictures which were popular during the Meiji Period, this artwork depicts the early beginnings of the expansion of Western Music across Japan and a distinct fusion of traditional and Western-derived techniques and practices emerging during this period.

**History of Western Music in Meiji Japan**

Informed by the Iwakura Mission, the Meiji government cultivated a study of Western Music across the nation. They hired musicians from Germany, France, England, and the United States to reside in Japan for several years and serve as foreign advisors. Through their roles, they taught, performed, and led Western-style ensembles while, in collaboration with Japanese officials, building a new education system informed by their backgrounds in Western classical music. The government also called for *gagaku* performers to master Western instruments, study with foreign advisors, and perform together in an orchestra. These performers became the first students of the Music Investigation Center, becoming teachers during their studies based on their previous expertise with traditional instruments. As a result, the Meiji government imported Western instruments, and established military bands, the Music Investigation Center, and graded national music textbooks and curricula.

Isawa Shūji (1851–1917) was a prominent figure leading the expansion of music education in Japan.\(^{12}\) Sent abroad by the Japanese government in 1875 to receive teacher training at the State Normal School at Bridgewater, Massachusetts, Isawa led the development of national curricula, textbooks, and Western-style music schools across Japan.\(^{13}\) In 1879 Isawa established

\(^{12}\) There are several documentations showing that Isawa spelled his name with an “s” instead of a “z,” which would be common practice today as Izawa.

\(^{13}\) State Normal School at Bridgewater, Massachusetts is now called Bridgewater State University.
the Music Investigation Committee, or the *Ongaku torishirabe gakari*, a predecessor of the Tokyo University of Arts, recruiting acclaimed musicians and educators from abroad to teach and serve as advisors. Isawa's goal, through the incorporation of Western music in Japanese schools, was to create a democratic study of both forms of music-making. While he was initially interested in the use of music education to promote psychological and physical development, he later promoted music education as a means of developing character and morality. However, Western music became the dominant form at this time.

Among the esteemed educators brought by Isawa to Japan to assist in the development of music education systems was Whiting Luther Mason (1818–1896). Mason was an American music educator—a teacher in Boston public schools—who Isawa met during his time abroad in Massachusetts. He served as a foreign advisor from 1880–1882, incorporating Western classical music and *shōka* into Japanese music education textbooks. Mason taught students at four schools: 1) the Tokyo Normal School, 2) the Tokyo Women’s Normal School, 3) the Peers’ School or *Gakushuiin* which served the children of nobles, and 4) the Music Institute (Howe, 1995).¹⁴ Mason’s *National Music Course*, in addition to American music textbooks featuring songs by composers such as Stephen Foster, helped Mason and Isawa create the *Shōgaku-shōka-shū*, the Primary Song School books, utilized in Japanese public schools.¹⁵ These books were the first graded music textbooks in Japan.¹⁶ Mason taught piano, organ, singing, violin, music theory, and music history at the Music Institute and was accompanied by Japanese men and women teaching assistants and translators. Mason's significant contributions to music education in Japan, facilitated by Isawa's initiatives, not only integrated Western classical music into Japanese

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¹⁴ Refer to Figure 2 in the appendix for an overview of the school's name changes.
¹⁵ A copy of the original the first volume of *Shōgaku-shōka-shū* is available in the Mason Collection at the University of Maryland. View a songlist in Japanese [here](#).
¹⁶ *Shōgaku-shōka-shū* contained major scales with Mason’s step diagram, notes and numbers on the staff, and a musical ladder with scale degrees. It also featured 91 songs which were mostly Western melodies derived from Mason’s *National Music Course*. In volume 1, most of the 33 songs are in C major, later introducing G, F and D major, and feature duple and triple meter. (Howe, 1997).
curricula but also laid the groundwork for a national music education system. His lasting impact on Japan's musical landscape is still evident today.
Chapter Two: Biography of Nobu Kōda

Nobu Kōda (1870–1946) and her sister, violinist Kō Ando (1878–1963), were prominent figures in Japan’s evolving music scene leading the expansion of Western classical music. Composing Japan’s first Western classical style piece, Nobu Kōda held an international education with studies abroad in the United States at the New England Conservatory and in Austria at the Vienna Musikverein Conservatory. Returning to Japan with an international knowledge of classical music, Kōda informed the expansion of Western music through her role as an educator, performer, and composer. This chapter will provide an overview of Kōda’s life, international studies, and her career. Drawing from her diary entitled “Reflections on my life” or Watashi no hansei, which was written in 1931 at the age of 61, this chapter provides insight into her musical influences and the greater context of her music training.17

Nobu Kōda’s Beginnings

A prominent family belonging to a social class called shizoku, the Kōda family is most widely known throughout Japan for producing Rohan Kōda (1867–1947), a renowned novelist, author, and the older brother of Nobu Kōda and Kō Ando.18 Shigetada Gunji (1860–1924), an explorer, Shigetomo Kōda (1873–1954), a scholar, and Nobu and Ando’s grandfather Kōda Ritei, a samurai official serving the local daimyō before the Meiji Restoration, also belonged to this esteemed family lineage.19 However, often excluded from conversations regarding the renowned Kōda family are Nobu Kōda and Kō Ando, both accomplished women musicians. Kō Ando, Nobu’s younger sister, was a disciple of renowned violinist Joseph Joachim and held a career as a violin

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17 As all translations are from an older style of Japanese, they are all approximate and have been adjusted to fit the constraints of the English language.
18 Shizoku was one of three social classes after the Meiji Restoration (1868-1889) composed of former Samurai. The other two classes were Kazoku, feudal lords and court nobles and Heimen, commoners.
19 Daimyō were Japanese magnates and feudal lords who ruled most of Japan from the 10th to mid-19th century.
soloist, while Nobu Kōda was a multi-instrumentalist and composer who primarily worked as an educator. Nobu Kōda cites the early influence of her mother and familial discipline on her musical beginnings in her diary. She writes:

“My musical interests are inspired by my mother, Yufu - I received them from her. My mother was practicing nagauta. My grandfather was a strict educator, someone that wanted things to be done thoroughly, and my mother was the head of the house. My father entered my mother's family. My mother was taught by my grandfather so she inherited his mentality [...] I started singing Nagauta when I was very young. That was when I could barely speak. From that time on, even when my mother was sewing, she would keep me by her side and teach me how to play the shamisen. That's why when I played Sarahi, I imitated my girlfriend's mother's shamisen, which made her laugh. My taste in music grew from my mother's passion” (Kōda, 1931)

Kōda refers to the influence of her mother's music-making, as well as her family's strict mentality on her musical development. In addition, her social stature as shizoku and her family's dedication to education allowed Kōda to pursue international musical training, which was inaccessible and deemed unimportant to most girls at the time. Kōda's musical study is also representative of the greater shift occurring throughout Japan at this time regarding women's education, as summarized in the previous chapter.

**Studies in Japan**

In 1880, twelve-year-old Nobu Kōda entered Tokyo Shihan Gakko Elementary School where she learned how to play the koto and sang shōka, a genre of Japanese song commonly taught in public schools during the Meiji Period. As she states: “My first step towards Western music was when I entered an elementary school affiliated with Ochanomizu's instructors, where I also learned to play the koto. The teacher was Shun Yamase, who was a lecturer at the Music Investigation Center, the predecessor of the current music school. I used to stop by this place on my way home from school and study there. I was just thirteen years old” (Kōda, 1931). In addition

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20 Nagauta is a classical style of Japanese music which traditionally accompanies Kabuki Theater.
to her private lessons on the koto, Kōda also began her study of Western music through academic classes utilizing the graded music textbooks and curriculum created by Mason and Isawa.

Studying music theory with Luther Whiting Mason at the music school, Mason took early notice of Kōda’s musical talents. As Mason was due to depart Japan in 1898 and return to the United States, he urged her to continue musical instruction. In her diary, she states the following regarding her musical aptitude: “For me, having played nagauta and koto since I was a child, the practice of having Mr. Mason play a single note and ask, ‘what note is this?’ and the practice of singing scales was of no use to me. It wasn’t difficult. Mr. Mason took great care of me and said, ‘This child has a musical talent, so I would like to teach her privately.’ My father and mother both agreed with the teacher, so every Saturday afternoon after school my mother would take me to the Music Investigation Center that was then located in Morikawa-cho, Hongo” (Kōda, 1931).

Mason recommended Kōda for independent study with his teaching assistant and translator, Ms. Sen Nakamura. Kōda described Nakamura as a “sophisticated and polite” woman who was fluent in English. She was also Kōda’s neighbor and had previously invited her to listen to her play the koto on numerous occasions (Kōda, 1931).

Music educators at this time were trained in the basics of piano, organ, or the violin at the music school. Kōda states that her first time seeing a piano was at the Music Investigation Center as pianos were largely inaccessible outside of school. Kōda would utilize the koto or shamisen to practice singing at home but was unable to practice piano due to the lack of access. She also started her violin study under Mr. Takumo at this time, stating: “At first I was planning to focus on the piano, but then I was told to play violin, so I started learning violin as well” (Kōda, 1931). Due to the size and ease of transporting the violin, as well as the difference in cost compared to a piano

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21 Mason would use the violin and piano to teach ear training, with an inclination towards the violin. Many Japanese teachers were inclined to use the violin due to accessibility of the instrument.
or organ, Kōda’s violin studies enabled her to practice on Western instruments outside of lessons. She also recalls copying sheet music by hand for her personal use which she reflects on in this excerpt: “I went to the Music Investigation Center and started studying, but I could not get sheet music for things like the piano. So, I did my best to copy the score onto music paper. This is something I’m not used to, so it took me a lot of time. It's hard to imagine back then when you could not easily get the sheet music you needed like today” (Kōda, 1931).

In 1882, at the age of fourteen, Kōda entered the Music Institute, later known as the Tokyo Music School, or the Tokyo ongaku gakkou. At the Music Institute, Kōda studied piano and violin with Nagai Shigeko, who had previously studied abroad through the Iwakura Mission at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York. In 1883 Kōda became a trainee and received a scholarship to study violin with Franz Eckert, a German composer and musician similarly brought to Japan as a foreign advisor. In 1884 Kōda achieved an 80 percent on a violin exam performing Kreutzer’s Etude No. 42 (Mehl, 2007). She was part of the first graduating class of the Music Institute alongside two other women musicians–Ichikawa Michiko and Tōyama Kōko–and performed Chopin’s Polonaise, Weber’s Invitation to the Dance and The Last Rose of Summer on the piano in their graduation concert (Howe, 1995). In 1885 Kōda became an assistant teacher and later studied violin with Rudolf Dittrich, a pupil of Joseph Hellmesberger, at church in 1888. A renowned Austrian musician serving as a foreign advisor, he was a vital figure in the development of Kōda’s skills as a violinist.

Studies Abroad

Dittrich recommended Kōda study abroad at the New England Conservatory in 1889, where she remained for one year. Sponsored by the Japanese government. Kōda was the first person from Japan sent to study music abroad (Uriyu Shigeko was a pianist but was not sent abroad to specifically study music) (Hagiya, 2023). At this time, Boston was an emerging center
for music education and opportunities for women (Mehl, 2012). At New England Conservatory, Kōda studied violin with Emile Mahr, a student of Joseph Joachim, and piano with Karl Felten.

Afterwards, Kōda pursued musical study in Europe at the Vienna Conservatory. Entering the conservatory in 1891, she studied violin with Joseph Hermesberger, piano with Freiedeck Singer, and composition and music theory with Robert Fuchs. Under the direction of Fuchs, Kōda began her work on her Sonata No. 1 in E-flat Major for Violin and Piano as a student composition. In her diary, she states: “I learned a lot from Fuchs. During my five years in Vienna, I studied a lot. I practiced violin and piano every day. My classes in harmony at school were not enough, so I studied composition and counterpoint with Fuchs privately” (Kōda, 1931)

Despite her proficiency in the violin and piano, Kōda turned to teaching the piano for several reasons. As stated in her diary: “First, she could not stand to practice five hours a day on the violin, it would ruin her health as they always require the students on the violin to stand while they practice. But if she practices the violin three hours a day and the piano two, the piano would be a rest for her.' Secondly, the piano would oblige us to know all the notes in the bass and treble clefs and all that are used in singing, for men and women and children” (Mehl, 2007).

Return to Japan

Upon Kōda’s return to Japan, she was appointed as an assistant professor at Tokyo Music School where she had initially begun her studies in western classical music. She replaced Dittrich who had returned to Austria during the previous year. At the Tokyo Music School, Kōda taught piano and composition (Nishikawa et. al, 2002). She premiered Sonata No. 1 in E-flat Major for Violin and Piano along with a performance of works by German composers at an alumni concert on June 5, 1897. Kōda performed on the piano while her sister Kō Ando and violin student Fukuko Suzuki, performed individual movements (Hagiya, 2023). As stated in Kōda’s diary: “After living in Vienna for five stimulating years, I returned to Japan. Immediately after my return, I started
teaching violin at the music school. Our return performance was held at the auditorium of a music school in Ueno. Mr. Tachibana Itoe accompanied me on the first movement of Mendelssohn’s *Violin Concerto E Minor, Op. 64*. I didn’t want to just include works for the violin so I sang Brahms’s *Die Mainacht* and Schuberts *Der Tod und das Mädchen*. Additionally, Mr. Toyama performed Beethoven’s *Moonlight Sonata* as a soloist (Kōda, 1931). In this concert, she also performed a Haydn quartet with faculty members, performed Mozart with a clarinetist (as a pianist), and led a violin ensemble performance of her arrangement of a Bach fugue (Mehl, 2007). Upon Kōda’s return to Japan, she was far more focused on the violin than any other instrument. As a violinist, she was responsible for two noteworthy feats—she gave the first performance of Bach’s *Chaconne* from the *D Minor Partita* and the first performance of a string quartet in Japan (she played Beethoven *String Quartet No. 4 in C Minor, Op. 18, No. 4*).

In the early 1900s, Kōda became one of the highest-paid women in Japan (Mehl, 2007). However, amidst the rise of her career, she faced a downfall after public allegations arose against her and other women faculty members. In 1907 Kōda’s name was scandalized in a local newspaper, alongside other women staff at the school. Press insinuated that Kōda was involved in an affair with a foreign teacher, August Junker (1868–1944). Ultimately, this allegation led to her forced retirement from the Tokyo Music School. Her sister Kō faced a similar fate—one day she arrived at the music school to teach and found out that she had been discreetly fired from her position. Her name had been erased from all schedules and replaced by a male teacher’s name (Mehl 2007).

Upon her forced retirement, Nobu Kōda returned to Europe. The diary of her second trip to Europe, entitled *Kōda Nobu saiko e no kiun*, outlines her stay in Germany where she furthered

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22 Kōda is referring to Tokyo School of Music when she writes “music school.”

23 The lieder Kōda sang were Brahms’ *Die Mainacht* from his 4 Lieder, Op 13 No 2 and Schubert’s *Der Tod und das Mädchen*, translating to Death and the Maiden, D 531 Op 7, No 3.
her musical studies, reunited with her teacher Dittrich, and attended orchestral and chamber concerts almost daily. In her diary, she notes listening to performances of Beethoven's Symphonies and chamber and vocal works by Schumann, Schubert, and Brahms with abundant criticism regarding the level of performance. During her stay, she also learned choral singing, something she had not previously engaged with, and performed in the choir of Beethoven Symphony No. 9. Throughout the diary, she wrote about her prolonged serious study of Western classical music through daily practice and frequent attendance of performances.

**Kōda's Final Return to Japan**

Upon Kōda’s return to Japan in 1910, she faced exclusion from the circles she had once occupied. She opened a private piano studio in 1911 and wrote new compositions for voice. In these works, she set several of the emperor’s poems to Western-style songs in 1915, and wrote school songs for the Kanagawa Prefecture in 1916. In 1918 she sponsored the creation of a private concert hall named “The Western Music Hall,” with walls painted white and gold and equipped with Steinway and Pleyel grand pianos. This hall hosted renowned international soloists such as Jascha Heifetz and Misha Elman during their tours in Japan (Mehl, 2007).

In 1937 Kōda was the first woman invited to join the Japan Art Academy or the Nihon Geijutsu-in which honors artists who have made outstanding achievements in music, art, literature, and drama. However, as World War II began in 1941, she was unable to engage in public activities and fled Tokyo for Karuizawa in the Nagano Prefecture due to air raids. During this time, she grew ill with a heart condition and ultimately died in 1964 at the age of 76 surrounded by her family members. Due to the bombings during World War II, all that remained of the belongings from her Tokyo house was a bust of Ludwig van Beethoven.

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24 The Japan Art Academy or the Nihon Geijutsu-in is the highest ranking artistic organization in Japan. It was founded in 1907 by a sect of the Ministry of Education called the Fine Arts Reviewing Committee or Bijutsu Shinsa Inkkai with the mission of providing venues and arts standards in the Meiji Period.
Considerations

Nobu Kōda and her sister Kō Ando were most commonly described as serious in character. Ando studied violin with Kōda at the Tokyo Music School upon her return to Japan. It is noted that while Ando and Kōda were sisters, these lessons were incredibly formal, exhibiting a typical student-teacher relationship dynamic (Mehl, 2007). This seriousness was also shown in their familial upbringing, through the strong dedication to education and training held by their parents. Upon reading both of Nobu Kōda’s diaries, it is evident that her career as a musician and dedication to Western classical music defined every aspect of her life. Kōda never married or had kids, while Ando had six children who became professional and amateur musicians. During their lifetimes, despite their talents and accomplishments, neither sister became famous and was never acknowledged for their contributions to the expansion of Western music. Additionally, both sisters never accepted payment for performance, which echoes a social implication that accepting money for performance as women during this time would equate the sisters to the image of a geisha. While no recordings of either sister exist to this day, through the study of Kōda’s training and career within the greater context of the Meiji Reconstruction, conclusions can be inferred regarding her composition and performance style.
Chapter Three: Overview of Compositions

Kōda’s compositions represent a culmination of her musical environment, direct influences, and individual compositional style. Her sonatas reflect both her international training and narrate a greater national movement toward modernization. As the Kōda residence in Tokyo was destroyed during the bombings of World War II, her full compositional output remains undetermined. Based on details drawn from her diary and additional sources, it is evident that Kōda assumed the role of an educator and performer for much more of her lifetime than that of a composer. However, it is indisputable that she was the top classical musician in Japan in the 1900s, exhibiting a mastery of violin, piano, vocal music, composition, and music theory (Hagiya, 2023). Today, all that remains of her works are twelve pieces written in a distinctly Western style. These works are now housed in the Toyama Kazuyuki Memorial Archives of Modern Japanese Music at Meiji Gakuin University. While several works have now been adapted as scores, several pieces are still in their original form as manuscripts.

Orchestral Work

Kōda’s Music in Celebration of His Majesty’s Enthronement or Tairei hōshuku-kyoku, kantāta aruiwa konsei shibugashō-tsuki kangengakkyoku is a grand orchestral and choral work in four movements. Published in 1915, there is yet to be a recorded performance.

- 大礼奉祝曲、カンタータあるいは混声四部合唱つき管弦楽曲
- Tairei hōshuku-kyoku, kantāta aruiwa konsei shibugashō-tsuki kangengakkyoku
- Music in Celebration of His Majesty’s Enthronement - Orchestral Work with a Four-Part Mixed Chorus
Piano Works

Kōda’s compositional output includes two piano pieces: Allegro duet for 4 hands in C major or 4-Te no tame no rendan shōkyoku Allegro ha chōchō, and Small Variations in C Major or Ko hensōkyoku ha-chō, consisting of a moderato theme, five variations, and a coda section. Based on the content, style, and length of the piano works, they may have been used as an educational tool for teaching piano to younger students.

- 4手のための連弾小曲 Allegro ハ長調
- 4-Te no tame no rendan shōkyoku Allegro ha chōchō
- Allegro Duet for 4 Hands in C major

- 小変奏曲 ハ長調（主題 Moderato と5つの変奏とコーダ）
- Ko hensōkyoku ha-chō
- Small Variations in C Major

Vocal Works

Kōda’s vocal works encompass shōka, school anthems, celebratory songs, and the setting of lyrics by Emperor Meiji to music. Most compositions feature a short, single line that is sung either a capella or accompanied by piano. All compositions include Western-style melodies and harmonies accompanying Japanese lyrics. Listed below are Kōda’s seven remaining vocal works.

- 今は学校後に見て (1901)
- Ima wa gakkō-go ni mite
- Now I’m Watching it After School
● 藤のゆかり
● Fuji no yukari
● Fuji's Connection

● 神奈川県立高等女学校・女子師範学校校歌 (1916)
● Kanagawa kenritsu kōtō jogakkō joshi shihan gakkō kōka
● Kanagawa Prefectural Girls' High School/Women's Normal School Song

● 常若の花 (三月六日奉祝の歌) (1929)
● Tsune wakanohana
● Everlasting Flower

● 蘆間舟 (1931)
● Ashima fune für Alto Solo und dreistimmigen Frauenchor mit Begleitung des Pianoforte
● Boat of Ashima for Solo Alto, Women's choir, and Piano

● 天 (1931)
● Ten
● Heaven

● 今日の幸
● Kifu no Sachi\(^{25}\)
● Today's Happiness

\(^{25}\) Kōda indicates kifu through her use of hiragana in the manuscript. If this kanji is to be translated using modern Japanese, it would translate to kyo, meaning today.
Perhaps the most unique vocal work from Kōda’s output is *Ashima fune für Alto Solo und dreistimmigen Frauenchor mit Begleitung des Pianoforte*. *Ashima Fune*, which is in three movements, is written for alto solo, women’s choir, and piano. *Ashima* refers to an island off the coast of Nagasaki called Hashima or Gunkanjima and *fune* translates directly to *boat*. The first movement features an alto solo with piano accompaniment, the second movement showcases a soprano, two altos, and piano, and the third movement features a four-part a capella women’s choir. This work sets two of the Meiji Emperor’s poems to music with a title reflecting a hybridity of German and Japanese influence.

*Figure 1:*

*Two Poems from the Meiji Emperor in Ashima Fune*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>あさみどり澄みわたしる大空の広きをおのが心ともがな</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asa midori sumiawataritari özora no hiroki o ono ga kokoro-tomo ga na.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The green morning sky makes my heart feel refreshed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>とる棹のこゝろ長くこぎよせむ蘆間の小舟さらりありとも</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toru sao no ko ro nagaku mo kogi yose mu ashi-kan no kobune sa hari ari-tomo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a small boat in Ashima that is rowed for a long time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Composed in 1931 at the age of 61, nine years before the start of World War II, *Ashima Fune* is indicative of an evolution in Kōda’s compositional style. Similar to the two sonatas, in her

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26 Hashima or Gunkanjima is now abandoned and is a point of controversy in Japan. It is a representation of the rapid industrialization of Japan during the Meiji era, and is still unacknowledged as a site of forced labor of Korean civilians and Chinese prisoners of war.
first compositions, she is greatly influenced by Schubert’s use of harmony and tonality. In particular, this piece is reminiscent of the harmonic language of Schubert’s lieder, *Gretchen am Spinnrade*, Op. 2, D 118 (1814). As seen below in Figures 2 and 3, the first movement opens in a minor key featuring a spinning sixteenth note accompaniment in the piano much like Schubert’s lieder. Kōda frequently utilizes modal interchange, in which she rapidly shifts between major and minor tonalities to create a sense of tension—another indication of the influence of Schubert’s compositional style.

**Figure 2:**

*Ashima Fune (mm. 1–2)*

![Figure 2](image)

**Figure 3:**

*Schubert Gretchen am Spinnrade, Op. 2, D 118 (mm. 1–2)*

![Figure 3](image)
Similarly, while Kōda's first violin sonata features significant use of modal mixture and chromaticism which drives melodic, thematic, and motivic materials, *Ashima Fune* is far more harmonically stable than her previous compositions. In this work, she establishes tonal areas before preparing to modulate to a new key (in contrast with her sonatas which were constantly and immediately obscuring home keys upon arrival). While she still features elements of chromaticism and modal mixture throughout the piece, these components reflect and drive forward the expressive contents of the text. This piece reflects a development in her compositional style which strives to adhere even closer to the works of Schubert and other German composers.
**Chapter Four: Overview of Influences in the Sonatas**

Studying with composer Robert Fuchs (1847–1827), a professor at the Vienna Conservatory and teacher of notable composers such as Mahler, Sibelius, and Enescu, Kōda was heavily entrenched in the music of defining High German composers such as Beethoven, Schubert, and Schumann as well as peers Jean Sibelius and George Enescu. This section will highlight the influences of these composers on the compositional style of Kōda’s first and second sonatas.

**Robert Fuchs**

Kōda’s *Sonata No. 1 in E-flat Major for Violin and Piano* was composed while she was a student at the Vienna Conservatory. Kōda wrote the first two movements of the sonata under the direction of Robert Fuchs as a student composition and began the last movement upon her return to Japan. Fuchs was a celebrated composer and teacher during his lifetime. He was particularly known for his string chamber compositions but is less known today because he maintained a low profile during his lifetime and refused to promote his compositions through public concerts. Fuchs’s compositions were strongly praised by his friend, Johannes Brahms, for their immaculate construction.

As a composer, Fuchs closely adhered to the traditions of the Romantic era, with his compositions reflecting the lush harmonies, expressive melodies, and formal structures characteristic of music by Schubert. As stated, “Fuchs wrote much solo and duet piano music, including three solo sonatas, many short characteristic pieces, waltzes and fugues; he wrote for the instrument most of his life chiefly in the years up to 1890. The First Piano Sonata Op. 19 is thoroughly Schubertian in its themes, developments, and textures. The influence is strongest in
the two outer movements and in the Scherzo which, apart from a few details, could almost be by Schubert himself” (Pascall, 1977).

Before Kōda’s study with Fuchs, he composed two violin and piano sonatas: *Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano*, Op. 20 (1878) and *Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano*, Op. 33 (1883). Both sonatas, comprised of three movements, feature a mastery of the thematic development, counterpoint, and sonata form. These elements are reflected in the construction of Kōda’s sonatas. Similarly, Fuchs’s utilization of frequent modulation is reflected in Kōda’s sonatas. “A primary characteristic of Fuchs’s style is his proclivity for, and facility in, modulation. Mayr wrote: ‘For Fuchs’s restless spirit it is very characteristic that he did not remain in a key for long, and compositions with little modulation soon bored him’” (Pascall, 1977).

Lastly, Fuchs’s diverse compositional output—encompassing both public and domestic music—may have influenced the types of compositions Kōda produced. Fuchs was influenced by the compositional style of Schumann and Schubert. As stated regarding the influence of Schumann on Fuchs: “From Schumann came the impulse towards smaller programmatic pieces, such as Ländliche Szenen Op. 8, and easy pieces for the young, such as Jungend-Album Op 47; his work in these fields is a substantial contribution to the repertory of domestic music” (Pascall, 1977). As a dedicated educator in her later years, Kōda’s piano works embody short character pieces reflective of domestic music written as an educational tool.

**Beethoven**

Kōda greatly admired the works of Beethoven. She participated as a member of the choir in his Ninth Symphony upon her brief return to Europe and decorated her home in Japan with a bust of the composer—one of the only items in her home that survived World War II. Kōda’s great admiration of Beethoven is evident in her two sonatas through her use of heroic themes shaped
by motive and motivic development, expansion of musical form and structure, and enhanced interactions and dialogue between the violin and piano.

The first movement of her first sonata is characterized by heroism portrayed through her utilization of motives. In the first measure, Motive 0 (Figure 4), which is defined by the interval of an octave throughout the movement, appears for the first time encompassing a two-octave jump in the violin and an octave jump in the piano. This motive immediately establishes a sense of heroism in the main theme. This motive, in addition to motives 1 and 2 (Figures 5, 6, and 7), appears throughout the movement in different forms and is characterized by their rhythmic intensity.

**Figure 4:**

*Motive 0*

![Motive 0](image)

**Figure 5:**

*Motive 1 (mm. 6–7)*

![Motive 1](image)

**Figure 6:**

*Motive 1 (m. 10)*

![Motive 1](image)
The construction of the main theme of Kōda’s first sonata, first movement, is reminiscent of the first movement of Beethoven’s Sonata for Piano and Violin No. 1, Op. 12, No. 1. There is a distinct sense in both sonatas of the main thematic material acting as a short introduction to the movement. As seen below in Figure 8, measures 1–9 of Kōda’s first sonata act as a brief introduction, with the movement commencing energetically in measure 10. Similarly, as seen in Figure 9, in Beethoven’s first sonata, measures 1–5 carry a similar function, with the movement achieving a sense of commencing in measure 5.

Figure 8:
Kōda Sonata No. 1 in E-flat Major for Violin and Piano, Movement 1 (mm. 1–11)
Figure 9:

Beethoven Sonata for Piano and Violin No. 1, Op. 12, No. 1, Movement 1 (mm. 1–7)
Lastly, Kōda employs an equal dialogue between the two instruments which is reminiscent of Beethoven’s sonatas. Unlike earlier sonatas by Mozart or Boccherini in which the piano serves as an accompaniment instrument, Beethoven’s sonatas call for equal partnership. Kōda is influenced by this partnership, with each instrument introducing themes, and motives, and contributing to musical dialogue in a democratic manner.

**Schubert**

Kōda’s harmonic language was greatly influenced by the music of Schubert through her teacher, Fuchs, and her surroundings. As Brahms was a key figure in the revival of Schubert’s works in late 19th century Vienna’s concert scene, it can be ascertained that Kōda listened to much of his music while abroad. Above other composers, Schubert's music had also become an important part of the Western music curriculum in Japan due to the presence of European music advisors after the opening of Tokyo Music School in 1887.

Kōda’s use of modal interchange, chromaticism, modal mixture, pedal tones, and direct modulations to distantly related keys is reminiscent of the harmonic language in Schubert’s songs, while her melodically driven and lyrical thematic writing is reminiscent of his sonatinas. More specifically, her lyrical and thematic writing in the second movement of Sonata No. 1 is reminiscent of the Sturm und Drang of Schubert's *Erlkönig Op. 1, D. 328* (1815). This is exhibited in the stormy triplets of the piano in the development of the second movement, the expressive intensity of the melody evocative of a vocalist throughout the movement, and the dramatic contrast in character between the A and B sections. Similarly, Kōda’s lieder–inspired writing style in the second movement is depicted through the unequal relationship between the piano and violin. As the piano takes on an accompaniment role, the violin directs musical dialogue and expression, similar to that of a lieder. Overall, the influence of Schubert on Kōda’s use of harmony
and theme is apparent throughout both of her sonatas, with particular emphasis on the second movement.

**Figure 10:**

*Sonata No. 1, Movement 2 (mm. 33–34)*

![Sonata No. 1, Movement 2 (mm. 33–34)](image1)

**Figure 11:**

*Erlkönig Op. 1, D. 328 (mm. 1–3)*

![Erlkönig Op. 1, D. 328 (mm. 1–3)](image2)

**Schumann**

Similar to Schubert, Kōda was influenced by the works of Schumann by way of her teacher, Fuchs. Kōda was likely similarly influenced by Schumann’s works to Schubert—through their integration into the Japanese music curriculum and through the influence of European teachers residing in Japan. Schumann’s influence on Kōda can be noted in her use of distinct characters for each movement of her sonatas, reminiscent of Schubert’s character pieces. Works
such as *Kinderszenen (Scenes from Childhood)*, Op. 15 (1838), *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 12 (1837), and *Carnaval*, Op. 9 (1834–35), convey a specific mood, scene, or character much like Kōda’s sonatas. As each movement portrays a particular narrative quality, the first sonata represents a culmination of three individual musical scenes brought together.

**Peers at Vienna Conservatory: Sibelius**

As a student in Vienna, Kōda studied alongside composers such as George Enescu (1881–1955) and Jean Sibelius (1865–1957). Sibelius studied with Robert Fuchs in Vienna from 1890–1891 and later wrote *Finlandia* in 1899, revising it in 1900 (Pascall, 1977). As Kōda arrived in Vienna in 1890 and commenced her studies with Fuchs in 1891 at the Vienna Conservatory, it is likely that Sibelius and Kōda met, and is possible that they drew inspiration from each other’s work.

The second theme of the first sonata is introduced in the piano in m. 27 and the violin in m. 35, is reminiscent of the hymn from Sibelius’s *Finlandia*. The second theme, which begins in the same key and a manner intervallically similar to the Finlandia hymn, is similarly defined by long, expansive melodic lines.

**Figure 12:**

*Sibelius Finlandia: Hymn (mm. 156–160)*

![Sibelius Finlandia: Hymn (mm. 156–160)](image-url)
While it is impossible to track the interactions between the two composers during their time in Vienna, the similarities between the two themes are apparent and may be an indication of musical influence.
Chapter Five: The Sonatas

After many years of obscurity, Sonata No. 1 in E-flat Major for Violin and Piano and Sonata No. 2 in D Minor for Violin and Piano were completed and published in 2006 by composer Shin-Ichiro Ikebe. The sonatas were performed in 2004 on Ikebe’s concert series entitled “A History of Japan Traced by Songs” by violinist Keiko Urushihara and pianist Keita Kosaka. The completed sonatas received much acclaim upon their first performance after over a century of dormancy.

Sonata No. 1 in E-flat Major for Violin and Piano is in three movements following a standard fast-slow-fast three-movement structure reminiscent of the compositions of Romantic composers. The first two movements of Sonata No. 1 were composed under the direction of Fuchs while Kōda was a student at the Vienna Conservatory in 1985, and the third movement was written upon her return to Japan. Sonata No. 2 was composed in the years following Sonata No. 1 and features one movement with several incomplete sections. There is only evidence of the first sonata being performed Kōda during her lifetime in 1897, while the premiere and release of second sonata may not have been until 2004.

- Sonata for Violin and Piano in E-flat Major (composed in 1895, released in 1897)
  1. Allegro (addition by Ikebe)
  2. Adagio in G major
  3. Finale. Allegro (Rondo) in E-flat major (existing up to m. 128)

- Sonata fur Violin und Piano (as written in the manuscript)
- Sonata in D Minor for Violin and Piano (published in 2006)
  1. Moderato (unfinished)
**Notable Features of the Violin Sonata Manuscripts**

There are several notable features of the violin sonata manuscripts. While the manuscript of the first sonata has very few artistic markings other than a few bowings, the second sonata is extremely detailed in direction with dynamics, articulation, fingerings, bowings, and phrase markings. It may be the case that what remains of the first sonata manuscript is a first draft while the second sonata is a later draft. It also remains undetermined whether the markings in the second sonata belonged to Nobu or her sister. Nevertheless, these manuscripts present a unique insight into Kōda’s compositional process and present evidence regarding speculations of the lost or unfinished status of her sonatas.

Upon initial viewing of the manuscripts, I began to question the true name of the sonatas. While the sonatas are commonly referred to as Violin Sonata No. 1 in E-flat Major and Violin Sonata No. 2 in D Minor, the manuscripts show no indication of Kōda naming these works as such. In fact, the manuscript of the E-flat Major Sonata lacks both a title page and a movement tempo marking, while the second sonata manuscript contains a cover page reading *Sonata fur Violin und Piano von Nobu Koda* or *Sonata for Violin and Piano by Nobu Kōda*. These observations are backed by two additional considerations. First, Kōda was heavily influenced by Beethoven and Fuchs, both of whom featured violin and piano in the title of their sonatas. Second, since Kōda performed the piano part alongside her sister on the violin, it would make sense she would think of the instruments in equal regard. I believe the proper name for these sonatas would contain both the violin and piano instead of simply stating that they are violin sonatas.

While it is commonly speculated that the third movement of the first sonata is unfinished, as seen in Figure 14, the third movement abruptly cuts off in the middle of a phrase. This leads
me to question whether the sonata was truly unfinished or if the end of the third movement was lost.

Figure 14:

*Reproduction of Abrupt Ending in Sonata No. 1 in E-flat Major, Movement 3 (mm. 122–128)*

![Music notation image]

Another indication that the remainder of the movement is lost can be attributed to the record of Kōda’s performance of the first sonata in concert upon her return to Japan in 1897. It would be illogical for Kōda to have performed an incomplete movement in concert. However, as it is known that Kōda wrote the first two movements of her sonata in Vienna, confirmed by her signature at the end of the second movement reading “Wien 95,” the sonatas may have remained unfinished as her performance and teaching career launched immediately upon her return and it is possible that the concert only featured the first two movements of the first sonata. While it cannot be determined if the end of the sonata is unfinished or lost in time due to a lack of existing programs and recordings, regardless, the influence of these sonatas on the emergence of Western-style composition in Japan remains pertinent today.

As stated previously, the second sonata features plentiful markings in Western notation. As seen in Figure 15, she includes a bowing at the beginning of the phrase, slurs, articulation markings, and dynamics. Based on these details, her expressive notation gives some guidance as
to her musical interpretation. For my edits, I utilized this sonata to inform markings in Kōda’s first sonata.

**Figure 15:**

*Reproduction of Excerpt from Sonata No. 2 in D Minor Manuscript (mm. 12–17)*

The manuscripts present a unique insight into her compositional process. Two examples included below exhibit notes crossed out, erased, or unfinished. In Figure 16 below, Kōda indicates a crossed-out E-flat which would produce a pitch one octave higher than what was decided upon (and in unison with the piano). If Kōda had opted to utilize this crossed-out note instead of the alternative which spans two octaves, the musical effect of the first measure would have been very different.

**Figure 16:**

*Reproduction of Kōda’s Editing Process in Sonata No. 1 in E-flat Major Manuscript, Movement 1 (mm. 1–7)*
As depicted in Figure 17 below, the bracketed area (mm. 4-9) is erased and written over. The notation written in red represents what has been erased on the score. Originally, she transferred the eighth-note figure (measure 1 piano, right hand) to the violin part (measures 7, 8, and 9), but in the final version, she utilized half notes in the treble clef leading into the cadenza. Kōda marks the beginning of the cadenza with fortissimo, after remaining in piano since measure 163, which is indicated in the piano. While either version of this section can move forward into the cadenza utilizing a crescendo, the erased eighth-note figure implies a greater movement into this cadenza which may call for a louder dynamic than what is printed in Ikebe’s version (mf).

**Figure 17:**

*Reproduction of Kōda’s Editing Process in Sonata No. 2 in D Minor (mm. 168–177)*

Lastly, Kōda’s second sonata manuscript presents insights into the role of performer choice in her works. As seen in Figure 18, Kōda notates octaves. She suggests using the 2nd and 4th fingers on the higher octave, which could either be interpreted as an indication to only play the top line or a suggestion to perform fingered octaves (1-3, 2-4).
Her use of choice is also evident towards the end of the second sonata. Below in Figure 19, Kōda offers the performer two options for the cadenza, indicated by the word “or.” Ikebe’s rendition employs the second option which leads into the coda section.

Initially, I considered that Kōda may have been undecided during this phase of her compositional process, prompting her to draft alternative fingerings and cadenzas. However, taking into account various factors, such as her practice of crossing out notes in the first sonata that she no longer wished to include, the degree of completion evident in the second sonata, and her serious personal character, I am inclined to believe that she was providing alternative options,
whether solely for her consideration or for anyone she envisioned performing these works in the future.

**Formal and Harmonic Features of the Sonatas**

The evolution of Kōda’s compositional style between the two sonatas is evident through an analysis of formal and harmonic elements. Sonata No. 1 is characterized by the use of modal mixture, chromaticism, pedal tones, and frequent, abrupt changes between distantly related keys. On the other hand, Sonata No. 2 exhibits an evolution in Kōda’s use of harmony. Her more detailed score and maturing composition technique may infer that she preferred the second sonata, although undetermined. In this sonata, Kōda employs similar harmonic elements, but with less frequency. Instead, harmony is deliberately utilized to support thematic and melodic content, contributing to greater harmonic stability. While Sonata No. 1 is guided by the evolution of thematic and melodic content and utilizes harmony to create a sense of tension and instability, Sonata No. 2 utilizes harmony to support thematic and melodic content. Both works feature balanced formal structures and a mastery of sonata form, which Kōda likely learned from her teacher, Fuchs while his student in Vienna.

Through my own harmonic and formal analysis of both sonatas, I have identified elements unique to her compositional style. Generally, Kōda utilizes the following elements throughout her sonatas: 1) use of modal mixture and frequent, direct modulations 2) constant use of dominant seventh chords and pedal tones, 4) cadence evasion and phrase expansion, and 5) metric displacement. The effect of these harmonic and formal elements is to create tension, dissonance, and a sense of instability longing for a tonic resolution that drives forward the thematic materials. Below, I will briefly discuss a few harmonic moments unique to Kōda’s sonatas.
**Sonata No. 1 in E-flat for Violin and Piano**

While the first movement of Kōda’s first sonata is driven by a sense of conflict between motivic and thematic materials—later discussed in the edits section of the paper—the second movement features passages of unexpected movement to secondary tonal areas. While the primary key area is G Major, Kōda travels to the distantly related key of E-flat Major in measure 33 (while what may be traditionally expected is travel to the dominant or relative minor). As depicted in Figure 20, between measures 37–41 there is harmonic movement towards the primary tonal area of G Major, alluding to the return of the A section. However, in measure 42, the G Major chord on beat one is obscured by the use of a B-flat Dominant 4/3 chord which leads us back to E-flat Major. This reestablishes E-flat Major as the main tonal area of the piece, which prolongs this section through a sense of harmonic arrival. In measures 43–44, the climax of the movement, Kōda outlines an E-flat Major chord in the piano to strongly establish this key area.

**Figure 20:**

*Movement 2 (mm. 37–44)*
Harmonic tension between the G Major and E-flat Major is also highlighted in the recapitulation (m. 73) leading into the coda (m. 76), as seen in Figure 21. In this example, the tonal area is obscured (mm. 73–74) until a very short perfect authentic cadence (leading into measure 76). While the perfect authentic cadence is brief, it reestablishes G Major as the primary tonal area for the remainder of the piece. Throughout the entire coda section, Kōda utilizes a G pedal tone (mm. 76–88), which establishes a return to the key of G Major.
In the third movement of the first sonata, Kōda utilizes modal mixture and frequent, direct modulations to support the movement’s structure. This movement is in an unfinished rondo form, where each section portrays a new character supported by movement to new tonal areas. As seen below in Figure 22, the main theme of the A section starts in E-flat Major and travels to G minor in measure 7, quickly re-establishing itself in E-flat Major in measure 8 during the transfer of the main theme to the piano. However, this tonal area is obscured frequently until it arrives in B-flat Major at the entrance of the B section. The B and C sections are far more harmonically stable compared to the A sections. Instead, the harmonic instability of the A sections drives the
tension and instability of the movement and sustains a necessity to reestablish E-flat Major as the main tonal area.

**Figure 22:**

*Movement 3 (mm. 1–8)*

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**Sonata No. 2 in D Minor for Violin and Piano**

Sonata No. 2 in D Minor employs a similar harmonic language to Sonata no. 1 but on a smaller scale. While Sonata no. 1 utilizes frequent modulations to distantly related keys, modal mixture, chromaticism, and pedal tones and relies heavily on theme, motive, and melody, Sonata No. 2 spends longer periods in tonal areas to establish home keys. This may be a result of how thematic materials are dispersed between the violin and piano. While the first movement of the first sonata often uses two or more motivic materials at once, in the second sonata this is not the
case. Themes flow more gradually between the instruments, and as a theme is transferred to another voice, the other instrument typically takes on an accompaniment role or countermelody. Similar to the first sonata, Kōda frequently uses dominant seventh chords, pedal tones, and modal interchange, where she shifts rapidly between major and minor. These elements drive tension throughout the movement in a similar fashion to Schubert’s harmonic language. The sonata begins in D Minor and travels to the closely related key of F Major in the second theme.

An interesting harmonic moment occurs in measure 73 as the exposition is closing. As depicted below in Figure 23, after establishing F Major as the tonal area in measure 60, Kōda oscillates between F Major and C dominant 7th chords for 5 beats before landing on a mystery chord. This chord is composed of two different chords vertically stacked together: a G# fully diminished 7th chord and a b minor chord. This chord is quickly followed by a reiteration of a cadence utilizing a C dominant 7th chord and F Major chord in the piano which supports the reiteration of a triplet motive in the violin line. The triplet motive presents an opportunity for the exposition to close, and provides material to expand upon in the development section, eventually taking on the role of accompaniment in measure 82.

This section in the sonata is unique to her compositional style. Kōda’s use of harmony and motive creates a character that is humorous and unpredictable, which contrasts with the dark and romantic mood of the remainder of the piece. From an interpretive standpoint, it presents a brief moment of respite from the melancholic character of the piece before launching back into the dark and romantic mood.
Conclusions About Kōda’s Compositional Style

Kōda’s Sonata No. 1 and No. 2 represent a culmination of her early study in Japan during the integration of Western music into Japanese education systems and her musical environment and study of composition in Vienna. The sonatas exhibit a purely Western-style approach to composition, devoid of any characteristics of Japanese traditional music. Her compositional style is also an indication of social stature and the new opportunities presented to women to become music educators. Influenced by Fuchs, Beethoven, Schubert, and Schumann, Kōda’s sonatas stand as a testament to, and defining factor of, the evolving musical landscape of Meiji Japan.
Chapter Six: Overview of Edits

In this chapter, I explain revisions made to the first and second sonatas which reflect both Kōda’s artistic vision and serve practical considerations regarding collaboration and violin technique. Given my background as a violinist, most edits will pertain to approaches on the violin including bowings, fingerings, and articulation markings that support the style and character of the sonatas, in addition to dynamics, rubato, color, and collaborative approaches that pertain to both the violin and piano. My edits are influenced by the following factors: 1) a study of Kōda’s life and presumed personal markings in the second sonata, 2) musical influences regarding sound, character, structure, and style drawn from composers including Schumann, Schubert, Fuchs, and Beethoven, 3) harmonic and formal analysis of both sonatas, and 4) practical considerations regarding violin technique and collaboration with the piano. Overall, my edits are primarily aimed at rendering the sonatas more immediately accessible and approachable.

A majority of the discussion to follow will pertain to the first sonata due to its skeletal form which contains very few artistic markings. As the second sonata features detailed artistic markings, most of the revisions in this sonata will address the practical aspects of performance on the violin and collaboration with the piano. My romantic approach to both sonatas—informed by Kōda’s direct influences and the context of music-making during her lifetime—will be reflected in the edits summarized in this chapter.

Upon studying and playing both sonatas, it is evident that each movement is a unique manifestation of Kōda’s direct influences. In the first sonata, the opening movement is driven by motivic tension, mixed harmonies, and a formal structure reminiscent of Beethoven’s compositions. The second movement of the sonata is melodically driven and informed by the vocal sound world of Schubert while the third movement, an unfinished rondo form, draws from operatic characters. The second sonata is representative of Kōda’s evolution through her use of
thematic materials and narrative sectional writing similar to that of Schubert. This chapter will start with a discussion of edits made to the first violin sonata.

**Sonata No. 1 in E-flat Major for Violin and Piano**

*First Movement*

Edits made to the first movement enhance the clarity of structure, sound, and delivery of motivic and thematic materials. In the introduction and main theme (until m. 27) a series of defining events occur. In the first two measures, the violin and piano perform in unison, calling for uniformity in articulation between both voices. Adding consecutive down-bows in the first measure allows for ease of collaboration between both voices and establishes a stately, held, and heroic character (Figure 24). As this movement is evocative of the style and character of Beethoven, the consecutive downbows at the beginning of the movement are reminiscent of the opening of *Beethoven Sonata No. 1 in F Minor for Piano and Violin, Op. 12, No. 1, Movement 1* and *Beethoven Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, op. 55 “Eroica,” Movement I*, as illustrated in Figures 25 and 26.

**Figure 24:**

Kōda *Sonata No. 1 First Movement Opening (mm. 1–3)*
Figure 25:

*Beethoven Sonata No. 1 in F Minor, Op. 12, No. 1 for Piano and Violin, Movement 1 (mm. 1–3)*

![Figure 25: Beethoven Sonata No. 1 in F Minor, Op. 12, No. 1 for Piano and Violin, Movement 1 (mm. 1–3)](image)

Figure 26:

*Beethoven Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, Op. 55, Movement I (mm. 1–2)*

![Figure 26: Beethoven Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, Op. 55, Movement I (mm. 1–2)](image)

As illustrated below in Figure 27, the half-note octave figure, referred to as Motive 0, is a recurring motivic statement that initiates the first theme throughout the piece.

Figure 27:

*Motive 0: Octave*

![Figure 27: Motive 0: Octave](image)

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27 Sonata bowings are from David Oistrakh’s annotations published by International Music Company.
Kōda utilizes this motive as an expressive tool throughout the movement, and it is consistently articulated in a manner that draws attention. As seen above in Figure 24, in measure 2 I added detache markings to the eighth notes in the violin line which allows for uniformity in articulation between both voices. The addition of a crescendo in both voices, growing towards the first B-flat in measure 3, establishes melodic direction.

As seen below in Figure 28, this section also features the first iteration of Motive 1, a quarter note–half note figure, which is repeated and developed throughout the movement.

**Figure 28:**

*Motive 1 (mm. 6–7)*

Motive 1 is an example of Kōda’s utilization of metric displacement to create a sense of instability within the movement. As this motive repeats throughout the movement, utilizing a unanimous bowing—consisting of one upbow on the downbeat followed by a downbow on the second beat—allows the listener to identify the motive upon its recurrence. Employing this bowing allows the upbow to feel like an upbeat, best illustrating the rhythmic displacement occurring and allowing the performer to reinforce the joyful and held character of this motive (Figure 28 above). This same bowing can be seen in *Beethoven Sonata No. 1 in F Minor, Op. 2, No. 1: Movement 3* below (Figure 29), in which Oistrakh suggests two consecutive up bows, displacing the downbeat of measure 10 by which he portrays a similar jovial character.
Figure 29:

*Beethoven Sonata No. 1, 3rd Movement (mm. 8–12)*

As illustrated below in Figure 30, in measure 10 I added a *Tempo I* to establish a structure for the first theme. As mentioned in a previous chapter, the opening 10 measures function as an introductory section which exhibit a sense of tension and relaxation. Measure 10 is marked by a sense of initiation and forward motion which is defined by three factors: the reiteration of Motive 1 in the violin, the introduction of Motive 2 (Figure 31) in the piano, and a new running sixteenth note passage in the piano.

Figure 30:

*Tempo 1 (mm. 10–11)*

Figure 31:

*Motive 2*
As Motive 2 first appears in the piano part in measure 10, and later in the violin in measure 14, the violin bowing should match the articulation of the piano. The piano has a naturally vertical articulation due to its use of hammers, a sound best imitated on the violin by using two consecutive up bows in the lower half of the bow. As depicted below in Figure 32, the placement of the eighth notes in the bow allows the stroke to come off the string in order to match the articulation of the piano. This articulation also establishes a sense of drive forward which matches the character of this section.

Figure 32:

Motive 2 (mm. 16–17)

As the first section winds down, I added slurs to the reiteration of Motive 2 as seen below in Figure 33. This addition supports a character shift from an upbeat and driven first theme to a lyrical and expressive second theme which is introduced in the piano in measure 27. As illustrated below, the accompanying sixteenth-note figure in the piano from the first section has ceased and is winding down utilizing Motive 2. The addition of slurs to this motive allows the violin to assist in this effect.
Figure 33:

*Motive 2 Developed (mm. 22–27)*

This marking is guided by Kōda's indication of a slur in m. 22 of the manuscript (Figure 34). While slurs are not present in measures 23 and 24 (3rd and 4th measures of the manuscript below), I believe these slurs are implied for the later iterations of the motive.

Figure 34:

*Motive 2 Original Manuscript Bowing (mm. 22–24)*

The second theme of the violin sonata is introduced in the piano (measure 27) and transfers to the violin (measure 35). This theme is notated without slurs in the manuscript. As I
wanted to capture a sense of longing in the music, I chose to add slurs spanning each measure which is depicted below in Figure 35. The addition of slurs to this theme is reminiscent of the second theme from the first movement of Beethoven’s Sonata No. 3 (Figure 36) and the first movement Beethoven’s Sonata No. 7 (Figure 37)—both evocative of a similar character and featuring a sense of expansion in the violin line and motion in the piano.

**Figure 35:**

*Second Theme (mm. 35–38)*

![Figure 35: Second Theme (mm. 35–38)](image1)

**Figure 36:**

*Beethoven: Sonata No. 3, First Movement (mm. 97–103)*

![Figure 36: Beethoven: Sonata No. 3, First Movement (mm. 97–103)](image2)

**Figure 37:**

*Beethoven: Sonata No. 7, First Movement (mm. 76–80)*

![Figure 37: Beethoven: Sonata No. 7, First Movement (mm. 76–80)](image3)
Below in Figure 38, as a truncated version of the second theme is introduced in measure 53, I maintained the same bowing, spanning three notes in a bow. Maintaining the same bowing between the original iteration of the second theme and its developed version allows the listener to identify the recurrence of the same material from Figure 35.

Figure 38:
Second Theme (mm. 53–56)

As seen in Figure 39, at this point in the sonata there is a gradual return of Motives 1 and 2 in the piano. The contrast of the second theme alongside these materials, with the eventual return of Motive 1 in the violin in measure 61, is heightened with the use of contrasting articulations (slurs in the second theme contrasting with the more vertical articulation of Motive 1 and 2). This adds to the percolating tension within this section, which leads to a reiteration of the opening thematic materials in the closing statement of the exposition (Figure 40).

Figure 39:
Second Theme (mm. 53-56)
As depicted below in Figure 40, the closing statement of measures 65–72 features two iterations of the opening two measures of the movement, followed by four, gradually truncated repetitions of Motive 0. The bowings, fingerings, dynamic, and articulation markings in measures 65–68 echo those from the opening theme (Figure 24). From measure 69, a rising sequence commences utilizing the repetition and development of Motive 0. Adding tenuto markings to the half notes in m. 69 calls for the performer to utilize a detache stroke in which there is space between each iteration of the octave. In measure 72 I have added consecutive downbows to allow the performers to place the first and second beat. This creates a sense of tension and unknowing leading into the rest driven by thematic materials that are constantly striving to resolve but cannot.

**Figure 40:**

*Closing Theme (mm. 65–72)*
This passage is reminiscent of Beethoven’s Sonata No. 7 in C minor, Op. 30, No. 2 - Movement 1 depicted below in Figure 41, in which there is a similar dialogue occurring between both instruments leading into a suspenseful pause. This moment occurs in mm. 69–72 of the Köda excerpt above and mm. 72–74 of the Beethoven excerpt below, where the violin articulates a chord on the downbeat and piano plays on the off beat.

**Figure 41:**

*Beethoven: Sonata No. 7 in C Minor, Opus 30, No. 2 - Movement 1 (mm. 68–74)*
At the beginning of the development Kōda overlaps Motives 1 and 2 between both instruments, as depicted below in Figure 42. The piano and violin pass motivic materials back and forth over a running 16th note pattern reminiscent of Tempo 1 in measure 10.

**Figure 42:**

*Beginning of Development (mm. 74–77)*

As this material was presented earlier in the movement, I have utilized similar bowings for practical purposes as illustrated below in Figure 43. In order for the violinist to travel closer to the lower half of the bow, two consecutive eighth-note up-bows in measure 75 are utilized to prepare for the half note on beat two of measure 76.
Figure 43:

*Beginning of Development (mm. 74–77)*

[Sheet music image]

Measures 84-86, shown below in Figure 44, feature significant chromaticism in both the violin and piano. This chromatic excerpt sounds dissonant and less convincing if performed without dynamics. I have included a hairpin with a peak on the C natural in measure 85 which creates a more intentional approach when performing dissonant harmonies. This dynamic marking also prepares the listener for the reintroduction of the fragmented second theme, and leaves room to grow dynamically into measure 91.

Figure 44:

*Added dynamics (mm. 84–86)*

[Sheet music image]
The density of the piano part from measure 91 onward, as illustrated in Figure 45, encompasses six notes played simultaneously in the piano voice, in contrast to one note in the violin line. To enhance the prominence of the violin line amidst the piano texture, I've divided the bowings in measures 91 and 93. This contrasts with Ikebe's suggestion to perform these measures in one bow. Upon arrival in measure 95, where the violin is in a lower range than the piano, I perform Motive 1 at the frog with alternating up and down bows. Once again, this allows the violin to cut through the texture of the piano. The subito forte in measure 97 allows for growth and motion into the recapitulation, and a strong emphasis on the return of the main theme.

Figure 45:

*First Movement Climax (mm. 91–98)*
In the recapitulation I employ similar bowings, articulations, and dynamics to that of the exposition. In the closing theme which is depicted below in Figure 46, I have added an accelerando leading into the end of the movement. This achieves both a sense of drive and supports the melodic contour of the phrase leading to the final cadenza of the movement. As this eighth-note pattern tumbles forward, finally this octave theme is allowed to achieve completion with a perfect authentic cadence in the last measure.

**Figure 46:**

*Closing Theme (mm. 165-168)*
Second Movement

The second movement is defined by vocal influences reminiscent of Schubert and Schumann. In particular, the structure, harmonies, and form featured in this movement are reminiscent of Schubert’s Piano Trio No. 1 in B Flat Major. The A section of the sonata calls for fingering, string, and bowing choices that support long singing phrases, and that enable a shift in character from one that is introverted and lonesome to open and embracing. This movement is also characterized by intervallic relationships with a particular emphasis on half steps.

As depicted below in Figure 47, in measures 1–8 I employ a fingering that calls for the performer to crawl up the G string in order to achieve an introverted character. This fingering, accompanied by movement forward to the third measure and a pulling back in motion and dynamics into measure 5, supports the phrasing in this section. I have also added slurs to section which enable the achievement of long phrases.

Figure 47:
Second Movement (mm. 1–8)

![Musical notation image]

The next phrase, demonstrated below in Figure 48, is recitative-like character. I added slurs to this phrase to create a long, continuous line similar to that of the opening.
Moving through the exposition, in Figure 49 below, two phrases are accompanied by a shift in character to embracing a lightness and openness. As depicted in Figure 49 below, I utilize a fingering in the first phrase that requires the performer to ascend the D string. Likewise, in the second phrase, I employ a similar fingering that ascends the A string. This gradual progression enables the sound to unfold in a subdued manner.
In contrast with Figure 49, in mm. 25–32 (Figure 50) we are presented with a much more introspective character. I inserted a piano on the downbeat of measure 25 and fingerings that travel up and down the A string to achieve this character through string color. Later, I insert a crescendo and decrescendo with a high point in measure 31 to support the melodic contour of the phrase. Arrival on the downbeat of measure 31 (B natural) is supported harmonically in the piano by a G Major chord from a German augmented sixth chord. The G Major chord leads into a perfect authentic cadence which achieves a sense of arrival within the key. This moment feels particularly special after a period of harmonic obscurity.

In measures 30–31, I suggest moving to the E string on the pickup to 31. This choice, in which the violinist travels from the A to the E string reflects this special harmonic moment and closing of the A section.

Figure 50:

Expressive Fingerings and String Choices (mm. 25–32)
Upon arrival in the development, or B section of the movement, a new character is introduced. As seen in Figure 51 below, I have marked the B section with a *piu mosso* due to the musical instability of the passage.

**Figure 51:**

*Piu Mosso Marking Added (mm. 33)*

![Piu Mosso Marking Added](image)

In this section, musical instability is characterized by a turbulent, impassioned, and driven character which encapsulates the theme. As seen below in Figure 52, I chose to keep the bowing as it comes, allowing for swells in and out of the downbeat. This supports the insistent character of Motive 2 and supports this sense of instability arising in this passage.

**Figure 52:**

*Bowing (mm. 33–35)*

![Bowing (mm. 33–35)](image)
As illustrated below in Figure 53, in measure 37 I employ a hooked bowing (two up bows) drawn from the first movement. This bowing is not only practical, as it allows the performer ease of motion, but also creates a long line driven by agitated movement forward.

**Figure 53:**

_Hooked Bowing (mm. 37–38)_

As seen below in Figure 54, I utilize this same bowing until measure 41. Additionally depicted below, I added a rubato marking in measure 37, an accelerando which starts in measure 38 and a ritard in measure 42. The addition of the rubato captures the playful character of the 32nd notes, which later repeats in the piano line in measure 46, and the addition of the accelerando and ritard allow for a push and pull leading into measure 42. These adjustments to tempo allow for a stronger arrival in climax of the movement in measure 42.

**Figure 54:**

_B Section (mm. 33-42)_
At the return of the A section, I have indicated an A Tempo marking which calls for a return to the same intimate character as the beginning of the movement. Upon arrival in the A section, there’s a sense of nostalgia, relaxation, and return “home.” I suggest aiming for a sul tasto sound in this section to differ the character slightly from the original A section. Below in Figure 55, I utilize a rubato leading into the downbeat of measure 74. This not only creates a sense of drama, but allows the performer time to confidently execute higher register notes.
Third Movement

The third movement of the sonata, marked Allegro (Rondo), is an unfinished rondo which discontinues suddenly in measure 128. The movement is reminiscent of Schubert’s Piano Trio No. 2 in E-flat Major, D. 929: IV Allegro Moderato which is reflected in similarities between tonal areas, meter, and character. The A theme is reminiscent of jovial Renaissance music, with altering B and C sections defined by characters reminiscent of opera buffa. Satirical, loving, dramatic, tormented, and maternal, these characters are achieved through the addition of articulation, bowings, and dynamics. As this movement is repetitious due to its form, decisions were made regarding the recurrence of the A theme. To create interest in a repetitive rondo form, I chose to vary the dynamic markings to further characterize the return of the A theme.

Beginning this movement, I found difficulty in establishing a tempo that would allow the A theme (Figure 56 below) to be performed in a light and joyful character. The stroke for this theme is best performed in the middle of the bow and on the string with slight releases between notes to match the articulation of the piano’s rendition of the A theme in measures 9–16. Performing the dotted quarter notes in a long and sustained manner allows for a connection between shifts.
occurring in these measures and adds to the singing quality of this phrase. As the theme is transferred to the piano in measures 9–16, the violin supports an off-the-string accompanimental figure best performed in the lower half of the bow.

**Figure 56:**

*Third Movement Theme (mm. 1–16)*
In measures 17–30, illustrated below in Figure 57, I added contrasting dynamic markings to exaggerate the characters portrayed. Measures 17–18 are forte while measures 19–20 are in piano with the same back and forth occurring in measures 21–22.

**Figure 57:**

*Dynamic Contrast (mm. 17–24)*

As seen below in Figure 58, the arrival of the B section is marked with an aria-like theme in the violin and an accompanimental figure in the piano. In this section, I added slurs for both practical reasons and to achieve a contrast in character with the A theme. The addition of lifts between sections also allows for clarity in phrase structure.
Figure 58:

B theme (mm. 32–43)

Below in Figure 59, I added accents in measures 48, 50, and 52 for clarity in repetition. I suggest utilizing rubato to expand the phrase leading into measure 56, which enables time for the violinist to make the octave shift and adds to the drama of the passage.

Figure 59:

Accents (mm. 48–56)

In Figure 60, I add a ritard to allow for a character of uncertainty to emerge prior to the reintroduction of the A section as the piano and violin pass the phrase back and forth.
Figure 60:

*Added Ritard (mm. 60–61)*

![Figure 60: Added Ritard](image)

Sonata No. 2 in D Minor for Violin and Piano

There were few changes I made to the second sonata due to the detail already present in the manuscript. However, as previously mentioned in the paper, it remains uncertain whether these markings were executed by Kōda or her sister Kō. It also remains uncertain whether this sonata was performed during Kōda’s lifetime as there is no record remaining. Due to the state of the manuscripts, most edits made to this sonata are guided by practical considerations and interpretive choices.

Similar to the first movement of the first sonata, the second sonata is defined by octave relationships that are emotive in quality. Examples can be found on a micro-scale below in Figure 61 (pickup into m. 13 and downbeat of m. 14; pickup into m. 15 and downbeat of m. 16), and larger scale in phrases (pickup into m. 27, third beat of m. 28; pickup into m. 29, third of m. 30). Since this interval is important to Kōda, utilizing fingerings that emphasize the expressiveness of this interval is necessary.
Later in the movement, Kōda makes use of octave double stops. As illustrated in Figure 62, I have included octave fingerings on the top line of the excerpt below and Kōda’s original fingerings below the staff. As indicated in the earlier chapter on Kōda’s manuscripts, I believe Kōda believed in the importance of presenting the performer with accessible options.

Towards the end of the movement, I found that successfully coming out of the cadenza with the pianist was a point of great difficulty when performing from the manuscript. In order to alleviate this difficulty, I added a \textit{Tempo I} marking, as depicted in Figure 63 below. Without the \textit{Tempo I} marking, there was a significant level of uncertainty around form and musical direction between both parties. The addition of this marking allowed for smoother arrival in measure 179.
Lastly, as I believe choice is an important attribute of the second sonata, it is important to include both of Kōda’s cadenzas in the score as an option for the performer. As seen below in Figures 64 and 65, in both versions of the short violin cadenza the piano part remains the same. Additionally, a fortissimo is indicated on the downbeat of measure 177 in Kōda’s manuscript, while Ikebe opts for a mezzoforte. I chose to include Kōda’s original dynamic choice in my version in an effort to stay true to Kōda’s intention with this section.
As Kōda was meticulous with her artistic markings in the second sonata, the small number of changes applied allowed for stronger collaboration between the performers and increased expressivity. Overall, the second sonata is a testament to Kōda’s evolution as a composer and an indication of her mastery of Western style music.
Chapter Seven: Conclusion

Growing up studying the Suzuki Method, my mother was very involved in my early beginnings as a violinist. After studying violin for several months, I recall moving from *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* to *Lightly Row* from Suzuki Book 1 with great excitement. Upon reading the first few bars of *Lightly Row*, my mother exclaimed, “Oh, that’s a Japanese song called *chō-chō*!” She sang along with the lyrics as I continued to read through the piece: “*chō-chō chō-chō na no ha ni tomare*.” From that point, I always regarded *chō-chō*, or *butterfly*, as a Japanese folk song. However, while my mother had learned this song in music class as an elementary student in mid-20th century Japan, *Lightly Row* had its origins in Germany as *Hänschen Klein* and was one of many songs brought to Japan from the United States by Mason and Isawa. My mother had learned a version of *Lightly Row* that fused Japanese text with Western music as *shōka*, or school songs—a consequence of the expansion of Western music during the Meiji Restoration pioneered by Japanese women musicians including Nobu Kōda.

While the goal of this paper was to provide an overview of Nobu Kōda's life, studies, and career to inform the process of editing her two violin sonatas, I have found this research to be of personal significance. I have reflected on the influence of Kōda’s legacy as an educator, performer, and advocate of Western music on my studies growing up in the United States, and redefined my preconceived notions of Japanese music making and education existing in a dichotomy that separates West from East. I have reflected on the importance of the memorialization and preservation of untold narratives between generations through writing, education, artistic expression, and in this case, through the creation of a new musical score. As a Japanese-American violinist, it has been of great importance to me to contribute to a research discourse in the United States that exhibits a noticeable absence of perspectives from researchers of Japanese descent. Through the exploration of Nobu Kōda’s life and work, this
research has not only informed the editing process of her violin sonatas, but has also profoundly impacted my understanding of Japanese music, education, and my cultural heritage.
References


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Kōda, N. 藤のゆかり [Fuji’s Connection]. Toyama Kazuyuki Memorial Archives of Modern Japanese Music, Meiji Gakuin University.


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## Appendix

### Figure 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline of Important Events&lt;sup&gt;28&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 1870, March 19th, born in Tokyo</td>
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<tr>
<td>○ Mom taught her songs nagauta as a child</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 1880, Tokyo Shihan Gakko Elementary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>○ Studied singing “shōka”</td>
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<tr>
<td>○ Luther Whiting Mason came to Japan</td>
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<tr>
<td>○ Mason recommended Kōda studies piano with Sen Nakamura (his TA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 1882, Entered Japanese music school (now Tokyo Music School)</td>
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<tr>
<td>○ Studied piano and violin with Uriyu Shigeko</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 1883, she becomes a trainee and receives a scholarship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Studied violin with Franz Eckert</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 1885, First graduating class of the school, became an assistant teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 1888, studied violin with Rudolf Dietrich at church</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 1889, chosen to study overseas at NEC, sponsored by Japanese government</td>
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<tr>
<td>○ Studied violin with Emile Mahr</td>
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<tr>
<td>○ Studied piano with Karl Felten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 1890, arrived in Vienna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 1891, entered Vienna Conservatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>○ Studied violin with Joseph Hermesberger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<sup>28</sup> This timeline is drawn from Kōda nobu no taio’nikki - Nobu kōda’s europe diary by Takii, K.
○ Studied piano with Freiedeck Singer
○ Studied composition and music theory with Robert Fuchs

● 1893, Traveled and lived in Italy
● 1895, Graduated from Vienna and became faculty at Tokyo Music School
● 1896, First concert in Ueno upon return
● 1897, Premiere of Sonata No. 1
● 1907, Criticism of Kōda leading to forced leave; Return to Europe
● 1910, Returned to Japan
● 1911, Open her own piano studio
● 1915, Set emperor poems to songs in new compositions
● 1946, Died in Tokyo

Figure 2

Evolution of Music School Names Changes

● 1879, the Music Institute is established by the Music Investigation Committee or Ongaku Torishirabegakari
● 1887, the Music Institute becomes Tokyo Music School or Tokyo Ongaku Gakko
● 1949, Tokyo University of the Arts or Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku