Stanford

# Katherine Whatley

Ph.D. Student in Japanese, admitted Autumn 2019

Curriculum Vitae available Online

## Research & Scholarship

### CURRENT RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY INTERESTS

My research examines the relationship between the written and the spoken word in Classical Japan. I take this relationship as the starting place and explore the role of music in Classical Japan through looking at words-as-song. From this vantage point, I argue that music was a primary mode of communication amongst people (especially women) and their surroundings—interpersonal, international, and inter-environmental. Through studying the koto—Japanese transverse harp—and Japanese pre-modern music more generally, I examine the intersection of gender and music in the Heian period, and the transcultural interactions between Japan and East Asia during the pre-modern era. My methodology is necessarily transdisciplinary: combining literary analysis, musicology, and the study of material culture in order to understand the function of music in the premodern era.

I am also a composer and koto (horizontal Japanese harp) performer working on a dissertation composition.Through my work as a musician and composer I seek to bring my personal affective response to the study of these songs and poems. Part of my dissertation will be a series of compositions for the koto (horizontal Japanese harp) which I will compose using Classical Japanese poems and songs—an intertemporal artistic project adding an affective and aesthetic dimension to the dissertation. This will allow me to create a series of work that depict and share new affective knowledge of Premodern Japanese poetry and song. Without this emotive, musical component, my findings would be necessarily incomplete, and lacking depiction of the musical and emotional quality of the relationship between women and literary works. Building on my work analyzing the symbolic affect of music on women writers in Classical Japan, I will reenvision my work as a performer of the koto to create a series of compositions for koto and found sound recordings of environmental sounds inspired by the affective response of the past.

## Publications

### PUBLICATIONS

- **Between Koenji and Brooklyn: Tokyo, New York, and the Circulations of Experimental Musics in a Global World** *POSITIONS-ASIA CRITIQUE*
  Whatley, K. G. T.
  2024; 32 (2): 259-285
- **Echoes of the Pure Land The Sonic Imaginary of Utsuho Monogatari** *JAPANESE JOURNAL OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES*
  Whatley, K. G. T.
  2024; 51 (1): 87-111