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Composition Recital - Song in Song, by Hyunjoo Lee, Composer-in-Residence

Abilene Christian University

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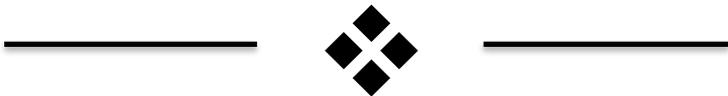
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THE ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
PRESENTS

Composition Recital
Song in Song

Hyunjoo Lee,
composer-in-residence



Tuesday, February 3, 2015

7:30 pm

Williams Performing Arts Center
Recital Hall
Program

“Sketches for Happy Thoughts” (2014)

Dr. Pauline Bjorem, piano

“As the Thirsty Deer Pants for the Water Brooks” (2014)

A Cappella Chorus
Jeff Goolsby, conductor

“On a Brilliant Spring Morning” (2010)

Permian Basin String Quartet
John Madura, violin
Alex Norris, violin
Melissa Madura, viola
Amy Huzjak, cello

“The Picture Books of My Heart” (2011/2014)

Dr. Karla Ordonez, flute
Kristin Ward, clarinet
Janelle Ott, bassoon
John Madura, violin
Amy Huzjak, cello

“Melodic Amusement” (2014)

Kristin Ward, bass clarinet
Permian Basin String Quartet

John Madura, violin
Alex Norris, violin
Melissa Madura, viola
Amy Huzjak, cello

Song in Song

For the past several years, I have used musical quotation throughout my compositions for purposes of communication, not only for hearing but also for responding and relating. I love the ways in which musical quotation functions for the following reasons:

First, I have been fascinated with the symbolic usage of musical quotation. The beauty of its symbolism lies in the synthetic power to have meanings in multiple dimensions, and to unite form and content on all levels, from the formal aspects to the details. The fragment and its association activate a role in the new musical context: ready-made songs address what they mean because of one's experiences related to the lyrics, the situations revealed by the songs, and the memories produced by the titles.

Second, the familiar songs in a new musical context call attention to the audience, including the composer, and provide different approaches to the comprehension of the songs while one perceives the different musical languages coming together.

Third, the familiar fragment and its interrelatedness to the new context create diverse musical situations, creating a structure for the piece as a whole, whether the fragments are submerged, distorted, or played as is. Even though the symbolic meanings and semantic associations of the fragments belong to the private realm of a composer, and the associations are subjective to the audience, both the audience and composer share their inner musical and structural thoughts of the piece in a rational and intellectual realm.

All pieces performed this evening, except for the piano solo piece, are characterized and shaped by usage of musical quotation.

Program Notes

“Sketches for Happy Thoughts” for Solo Piano

This work, composed of seven short pieces, is based on my delightful thoughts about Jesus Christ’s cheerful revolution against the authority and hypocrisy of religious leaders at the time before His death and resurrection: who He is, how He loved people, and His teaching in parables. It is written in light motions and mild colors.

1. Lord of the Sabbath Day
2. A Gate for the Sheep
3. The Good Samaritan
4. Temple Courts Cleared Out
5. The Vine and the Branches
6. Unless a Grain of Wheat Falls to the Ground and Dies...
7. Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord

“As the Thirsty Deer Pants for the Water Brooks” for mixed Choir

-Psalms 42, 130, & 131-

1. As the thirsty deer pants for the water brooks,
so my soul desperately pants for you, oh God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When can I go to Him? When can I meet with God? When can it be?

(Refrain)

Why are you down cast, O my soul?
Why are you disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God for I'll praise him yet
for the help of His presence, my Savior.

2. My soul waits for the Lord
more than watchmen wait for the morning.
Oh Israel, Put your hope in the Lord,
for unfailing Love is with the Lord.
He will redeem Israel from all their sins.

(Refrain)

3. Like a weaned child with its mother, is my soul within me.
I have composed and quieted my soul surely.
Oh Lord, my heart is not proud, oh Lord, my eyes are not haughty.
I don't concern myself with great matters too difficult for me.

(Refrain)

(Counterpart of verse 3 and the Refrain)

When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll,
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
"It is well, it is well with my soul."
It is well with my soul, it is well, it is well with my soul.

(Coda)

Oh Israel, Put your hope in the Lord,
for unfailing love is with the Lord.
He will redeem Israel from all their sins.
He will redeem Israel.
I'll praise your name with all my heart.
I'll sing your praise.
Amen

As a counterpart of verse 3, the hymn, "It is Well with My Soul" is quoted.

"On a Brilliant Spring Morning" for String Quartet

The title of this piece is derived from "Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen" of Schumann's *Dichterliebe* Op.48, based on the Heine's text. It is a song about someone who takes a walk on a sunny summer morning and communicates with the flowers. The German 6th chord functions as a pivot, while functioning as a dominant 7th when modulated to a different key, as the song tone-paints the reality and the fantasy goes forth as a pivot place.

In the movie *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, a girl discovers a wardrobe, while playing hide-and-seek, and enters a wintry fantasy world called Narnia. As the familiar wardrobe is the route to the unfamiliar world, familiar things or places can make us feel strange when they are placed in unusual contexts. I, as an audience member, wanted to experience strange interception, break, and continuity in the parallel process of common musical idioms and familiar songs. The songs are Saint-Saëns' "Danse Macabre," the troubadour's song, Raimbaut de Vaqueiras' "Kalenda Maya," and a children's song, "Butterfly."

"The Picture Books of My Heart" for Flute, Clarinet, Bassoon, Violin, and Cello

When I read storybooks to my children, I am amazed by the afterimage from the stories. As an adult, I am able to comprehend the stories on a new level. This piece is based on some of my favorite stories: story structures, rhymes, and sound images received from the characters.

The first movement is based on the *Adventure of Triangle, Rectangle, and Circle*, by Eugene Chang. They are competitive, boasting each of their own strengths and arguing about why they should be called best. They are driven out of the town by an angel who wants them to harmonize with a mission in defeating a goblin. They finally realize they need each other for the mission and join forces to accomplish it.

The Nightingale, a literary fairy tale by Hans Christian Anderson, inspired me to write the second movement. This story is about an emperor who prefers the tinkling of a bejeweled mechanical bird to the song of a real nightingale. When the Emperor is near death, the nightingale's song restores his health.

The third movement is based on Oscar Wilde's *The Selfish Giant*, who has a beautiful garden and does not let children play there. For several years, no season would come but winter. Spring suddenly returns when the children slip into a hole in the wall and play in the trees. In the corner of the garden is a little boy too small to climb into the tree, where winter still remained. The giant's heart melts at the sight and he helps the child into the tree. He then tears down the wall, and enjoys playing with the children, but never sees the boy he first helped. One day, when he had grown old, he again sees the little boy, who appears with wounds in His hands and feet. He has come to escort the giant to his garden, which is paradise. The Christian Passion hymn, "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded" is quoted.

"Melodic Amusement" for Bass Clarinet and String Quartet

There are two different interplays of ready-made tunes throughout the piece: one goes with the theme of Bach's "Musical Offering" and a Korean traditional folk song, "Arirang." Originally based on the pentatonic scale, Arirang has been embellished with the blues scale in this piece. The other is with the tune of a Korean traditional song, "My Mom, My Sister," along with "My Favorite Things" by Rodgers and Hammerstein.

Both pieces are pitch related: the first interplay is based on the intervallic contrast. Sharing notes from the C minor chord, there is a contrast between B and Bb, resulting in major and minor intervals upon every other note. As the timeline continues to progress forward, the tunes are intermingled and appear more and more ornamented upon the

completion of each loop of repeated melodies in additive rhythmic structure. The tunes of the second interplay, “My Mom, My Sister” and “My Favorite Things,” are inverted with each other, as a few linear intervals are altered to keep it in the tonic key area when the answer of fugue occurs in a tonal way. The tunes broken into the short fragments come out contrapuntally textured.

Arirang(Korean Traditional Song)



Musical Offering



My Favorite Things



My Mom, My Sister



Biography

Hyunjoo Lee

- Professor of Music at Korea Christian University since 2002
- Visiting Research Scholar at the department of Music, ACU in 2014.
- Pieces chosen and performed in ISCM '99, Pan Music Festival in Seoul, Contemporary Series in Tokyo, Composers Conference in Massachusetts, Festival Nova Musica in Paris, St. Petersburg Musical Spring International Festival, etc.
- DMA in Composition from Columbia University (Mellon Fellowship), Master of Music and Bachelor of Music in composition from Seoul National University.

A Cappella Chorus

Jared Agee

Joram Alford

Enrique Barrera

Matthew Boles

Mikalia Bradberry

Julie Brinkman

Reuben Byrd

Matthew Connel

Katherine Cotten

Ellen Donaldson

Theodore Douglas

Chad Fontenot

Christian Fugar

Emalie Garner

Khamisie Green

Marc Gutierrez

Tyler Harris

Jacob Hemsath

Benjamin Hinkie

Jaclyn Hurt

Phillip Jackson

Brian Kay

Christopher Kirklin

Megan Lewis

Jennifer Magill

Alexi Mendez

Caitlin Norquist

Megan O'Neil

De'jha Payne

Clinton Perdue

Em Reader

Oliver Rodriguez

Austin Smith

Bekah Smith

Daniel Smith

Samuel Snyder

D. J. Solomon

Aaron Steward

Ashley Stucker

Victoria Sun

Kaleigh Sutula

Gabrielle Thompson

Briana Toplin

Emanuel Tucker

Shane Tucker

Claire Tyrrell

Aaron Vaught

Cameron Walter

Jasmine Washington

Naomi Worley

Rebecca Hutton, accompanist

