NORI [놀이] (PLAY!) 
FOR ORCHESTRA 
(2015)

BY

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NoRi [놀이] (PLAY!)  
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Score  

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NoRi  [놀이] (PLAY!)  

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Duration: 10 minutes

Program Notes:

Nori [놀이], the Korean word for ‘play’, has a variety of meanings, including musical play, amusement, recreation, and games. In all its forms, Nori has been of interest to me since my childhood. Whenever I was engaged in any kind of Nori, I enjoyed trying to bring out the relationship between Nori and music. This became the starting point for composing NoRi (PLAY!) for Orchestra.

Among the various types of Nori, my work is particularly influenced by Samulnori, the Korean traditional musical form performed by four Korean percussion instruments: two metallic gongs (Kkwaenggwari and Jing, representing thunder and wind) and two leather drums (Janggu and Buk, representing rain and clouds). Though derived from traditional Korean farmers’ music, Samulnori is highly creative, exhilarating, energetic and joyful music now being performed on stages throughout the world.

My composition titled NoRi is primarily influenced by the Samulnori and the interaction of its four traditional percussion instruments. Using the full orchestra and a larger collection of percussion, I wanted to explore other characteristics of Samulnori, including virtuosity, improvisation, an energetic spirit, and a sense of conversation. Communication between different groups of instruments in the orchestra is especially significant throughout the work.

The piece consists of a prologue and four continuous sections. The prologue introduces a lyrical melody, first played as a cello solo, then continued as a viola solo. This melody forms the backbone for much of the piece, appearing in a variety of forms throughout. It focuses on the pitch ‘D’ with an ornamental murmuring of grace notes in a very free rhythm. This solo cello melody comes across as a narration that begins as a monologue and becomes a conversation.

While not programmatic in a narrative sense, each of the four main sections reflects one of the four weather conditions represented in Samulnori. In the first section after the prologue, a listener might hear the alternating tremolos of the two vibraphones and the low string harmonic glissandos as the excited rustling of a curious breeze. These sounds gradually develop towards an improvisatory moment, illustrating the unpredictable and sometimes furious gusts of wind. The.piccolo leads into the second section, playing melodic ideas from earlier in the piece in a lively manner. The melody spreads through the woodwinds, brass, and string instruments, much like rain starts with drizzles and moves into droplets and currents. These figures become a cascading avalanche of sound characterized by downward gestures. Eventually, the horn moves the listener’s attention in a new direction with a variation of the main melody.

Representing thunder, the third section of the piece begins with frantic, running 16th notes in the strings, rumbling crashes from assorted metallic and wood percussion instruments, and the sound of scraping strings inside the piano. Irregular accents and erratic rhythms in the woodwinds and brass portray jarring booms and cracks, while the running gestures in the strings become frenzied scales thickening the chaotic texture. Finally, the whole orchestra reaches a thunderous climax. The final section starts with two chimes alternating on slowly moving scales, depicting the gentle movement of clouds and creating a hazy atmosphere. A variation of the main melody is heard one final time in the strings, and the piece ends with twinkling sounds suggesting light emerging from the clouds.
Instrumentation:

2 Flutes
Piccolo
2 Oboes (2nd doubling English Horn)
2 Bb Clarinets
Bb Bass Clarinet
2 Bassoons
Contrabassoon

4 Horns in F (mutes)
3 Trumpets in C (straight, harmon, cup)
2 Tenor Trombones (straight, harmon, cup)
Bass Trombone (straight, harmon)
Tuba (straight)

Timpani (Two 32-30 in., One 29-28 in., One 26-25 in.) / Cymbal (Large to place on the timpani)

3 Percussion:
1: Vibraphone, Xylophone, 3 Wood Blocks, Bongos, Chimes
2: Glockenspiel, Suspended Cymbal (Medium), Splash Cymbal (Medium), Chinese Cymbal (Medium), Triangle (Small), Bamboo Wind Chimes, Glass Wind Chimes
3: Vibraphone, Marimba (4 octave), Tam-tam (Large), Chimes, Crotales (Low octave)

Harp
Piano / Celesta

Strings

[Score in C]

Notes:
• Piccolo, contrabassoon, contrabass, celesta, crotales and glockenspiel are written with the usual octave transpositions.
• The two sets of chimes should be placed antiphonally on opposite sides of the orchestra.
\[ \text{\textbf{V. F.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. A.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. B.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. C.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. D.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. E.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. F.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. G.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. H.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. I.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. J.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. K.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. L.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. M.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. N.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. O.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. P.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. Q.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. R.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. S.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. T.}} \]

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\[ \text{\textbf{V. Z.}} \]

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\[ \text{\textbf{V. C.}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{V. D.}} \]

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[Music notation page]
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\[ \text{B. Cl.} \]
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\[ \text{Vln. I} \]
\[ \text{Fl. 1} \]
\[ \text{Fl. 2} \]
\[ \text{Pno.} \]
\[ \text{Hp.} \]
\[ \text{Ob. 2} \]
\[ \text{Cb.} \]
\[ \text{Picc.} \]
\[ \text{Tbn. 1} \]
\[ \text{Tbn. 2} \]
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\[ \text{Tbn. 4} \]
\[ \text{C. Bn.} \]
\[ \text{Vln. II} \]
\[ \text{B. Tbn.} \]
\[ \text{C. Cl.} \]

\[ \text{Temp.} \]
\[ \text{Pos. 1} \]
\[ \text{Pos. 2} \]
\[ \text{Pos. 3} \]

\[ \text{Hip} \]

\[ \text{Pno. / Cln.} \]
\[ \text{Page 32} \]