ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: THE BARDO FOR ORCHESTRA

Cheon Wook Kim, Doctor of Music Arts, 2003

Dissertation directed by: Professor Lawrence Moss

Department of Music Art

The concept of this piece is derived from the inspiration of the Tibetan Book of the Dead. In the religious traditions of Tibet, death is said to provide a unique opportunity for spiritual growth. In fact, the ultimate aim of Tibetan religious practice is the transformation of death into an immortal state of benefit to others.

Tibetan Buddhism recognizes four stages in the life cycle of a sentient being: birth, the period between birth and death, death, and the period between death and the

next birth, or "bardo". By the bardo journey of the forty-ninth day the deceased is reborn into a worldly state influenced by Karma referred to the simple law of cause and effect.

The bardo state is recognized as an opportunity for change, a starting point of transformation. It consists of three steps: "Chikhai", "Chonyid", and "Sidpa". The Lama offers practical wisdom to the participants in the ritual drama through the recitation of the scripture within a ceremonial setting. The recitation assists the deceased, who is reminded of knowledge previously learned and experienced in life, while family members and friends receive spiritual improvement in their present lives. In this way, the bardo literature offers not only a method of guidance, but also a varied program for an array of performance styles, involving liturgy, ritual offering, prayer, and scripture recitation.

The first step of bardo "Chikhai", the moment of departure from real life represents the general concept of the dead in my music, with dark sonorities and ritual elements (recitation of the phrase). The next section, introduced by the tubular bell (the symbol of wisdom), transformed by the light of instruction. It consists of four musical elements, derived from the beginning state. Each musical element symbolizes the meaning of each element; the symbol of wisdom (Bell), the recitation of the C-C#-E-Eb-

F phrase (instruction from the Lama), the melody of the deceased (violin solo), and the consequent melody of the Karma state (cello solo). Those four musical elements are treated and elaborated in different timbres and sonorities in the orchestra during the course of the music.

THE BARDO FOR ORCHESTRA

by

Cheonwook Kim

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Advisory Committee:

Dr. Lawrence Moss, Chair

Dr. Mark E. Willson

Dr. Robert Gibson

Dr. Dora Hanninen

Dr. Alcine J. Wiltz

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INSTRUMENTATION

Woodwinds

3 Flutes (1. also Piccolo)
3 Oboes
3 Clarinets in Bb (3. also Bass Clarinet)
3 Bassoon (3. also Contrabassoon)

Brass

4 Horns in F 3 Trumpets in C 3 Trombones

Percussion (4 performers)

4 Timpani ("23"," 26-25", "29-28", "32-30")

> Glockenspiel Vibraphone Tubular Bells Marimba Tom-toms Bass Drum Gong Cymbal Snare Drum Crotales (C⁴)

> > Strings

The Bardo for Orchestra

Score in C (Piccolo sounds an octave higher, and contra bassoon and double basses sound an octave lower)







































