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

Dissertation submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts 2003

Advisory Committee:

Dr. Lawrence Moss, Chair
Dr. Mark E. Willson
Dr. Robert Gibson
Dr. Dora Hanninen
Dr. Alcine J. Wiltz
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INSTRUMENTS  ----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------- i
THE BARDO FOR ORCHESTRA --------------------------------------------------------------- ii
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

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

Strings
The Bardo
for Orchestra

Ombroso

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

CheonWook Kim, 2003