THE MUSICAL STYLE AND COMPOSITIONAL TECHNIQUE OF YOUNG-JO LEE,
AS REFLECTED IN HIS VIOLIN COMPOSITIONS “HONZA NORI” FOR SOLO VIOLIN
AND “DOORI NORI” FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO

by

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SIGNED: YeonJin Kim
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DEDICATION

For God and my lovely family.
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to create a performance guide for Young-Jo Lee’s violin works, *Honza Nori* for solo violin and *Doori Nori* for violin and piano, and to introduce his work to a wider audience. This study contains a biography of the composer and a compositional analysis that shows how Lee includes the concepts and techniques of Korean traditional music in his violin pieces. In this analysis, I will identify the composer’s characteristic style, inspired by Korean compositional techniques, traditional Korean instruments and their characteristics. Additionally, the incorporation of Asian philosophy, and Taoism in particular, into Lee’s music will be examined and cited throughout, demonstrating how Lee employs these ideas to create compositional techniques that differ from other twentieth century Asian composers. Lee is one of the most significant Korean composers living today and is known for combining Eastern and Western musical styles. He utilizes the core of Korean traditional music and performance practice and applies this to his compositions in a distinctive style that amalgamates both Western and Eastern (particularly Korean) musical traditions. Lee creates a balance between his native heritage and his knowledge of Western traditions, and he extracts his
distinctive compositional ideas from various genres of Korean music, such as court royal music, traditional folk music, harvest music, *Pansori*, *Samul nori*, and Korean zither music. Lee is also interested in Western compositional techniques such as twelve-tone technique and chromaticism, which he combines with his knowledge of Korean traditional music and its techniques to create various works in a unique and distinctive fashion.
I. INTRODUCTION

Asian music has emerged as an influence of growing significance in the
development of Western music. A movement toward an integration of Western and non-
Western musical concepts and techniques has become particularly evident in recent years.
Many foreign composers, including Korean composers, integrate traditional musical
elements into Western-influenced compositions. Sutton mentions the influence of Korean
music in particular as follows:

In the last twenty years, musicians specializing in the performance of
Korean traditional music (Kugak) have been drawn in increasing numbers
to participate in hybrid musical combinations of Korean instruments, vocal
styles, and repertory with music originating in other parts of the world -
primarily, but not exclusively, the West.\(^1\)

East Asian composers, such as the Japanese composer, Toru Takemitsu (1930-
1996), the Chinese composer, Tan Dun (b. 1957), and the Korean composer, Isang Yun
(1917-1995), are the most well-known Asian composers whose works are based on
Western musical style but have an Eastern sound attained by incorporating traditional

\(^1\) Anderson Sutton R. “What’s that sound? Korean Fusion Music and the Ascendancy of the
compositional techniques and instruments. For example, Takemitsu, a Japanese composer recognized for his instrumental and orchestral timbre, drew from jazz, popular music, and traditional Japanese music. After attending a performance of the *Bunraku* puppet theatre\(^2\) and feeling inspired by the tone quality and the timbre of the traditional Japanese music, Takemitsu was remorseful that he had never before captured his native music. As a result, he studied traditional Japanese music and learned traditional instruments such as the *Biwa*.\(^3\) Takemitsu helped bring these elements of traditional Japanese music to Western audiences when he received a commission from the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and wrote *November Steps* for *Biwa, Shakuhachi*, and orchestra, which premiered in 1967 under the direction of Seiji Ozawa.

Young-Jo Lee (b. 1943) was born into a family that provided a musical environment, and he studied composition and piano with many well-known composers and pianists. He was interested in learning many instruments from both Western and Korean traditions, and his deep interest in Korean music prompted him to compose unique and eminent music. Lee studied composition in Germany and the United States,

\(^2\) The *Bunraku* is a form of traditional Japanese puppet theatre that founded in Osaka in 1684.

\(^3\) The *Biwa* is a Japanese fretted lute and used in narrative storytelling. There are more than seven types of *Biwa*, characterized by number of strings and their use.
where he learned how to create a balance between his native heritage and his knowledge of Western traditions. Today, Lee strongly emphasizes that the unique tone color of Korean music should be introduced to Western audiences because of its potential to create a new form of music that bridges the divide between the two cultures. Accordingly, Lee’s music has been well received by both Eastern and Western audiences, and he has become an established musician, giving numerous recitals and performances and teaching composition at prestigious universities in the United States and Korea.

In order to practice and perform contemporary Korean solo violin music as a Western-trained violinist, an understanding of traditional musical style and philosophy is crucial. This work will investigate the principal elements of Korean compositional techniques such as *nonghyun* and *sigimsae* as well as Korean traditional instruments and their characteristics. Likewise, Korean philosophies such as *yin* and *yang*, exorcism, and Buddhism will be examined and cited throughout to show how Lee created compositional techniques by using these materials. I will analyze Lee’s compositional techniques based on the theory above with several musical examples.

Lee is a global composer for his native country and has written many instrumental pieces, concertos, songs, and operas that utilize Korean musical elements
that are entirely independent of the structure, melody, harmony, and rhythm found in Western music. Lee’s compositions reflect his strong understanding of Korean rhythms and harmonies as well as the emotions that they invoke.

Unlike many other composers, he is interested in Korean traditional instruments such as the piri (a Korean traditional wind instrument that is similar to oboe), the janggo (a traditional drum with two sides), and the danso (a traditional wind instrument that is similar to flute) and he plays these instruments in concerts. Particularly in his later works, Lee applies his knowledge of Korean music and its instruments in a unique and distinctive fashion.

Although many scholars have studied his other compositions, no detailed theoretical analysis of his violin compositions, Honza Nori for solo violin and Doori Nori for violin and piano, has been published to date. I plan to study this work, concentrating on Lee’s compositional theory in the context of Korean traditional music and philosophy, and presenting the results of my analysis to performers who wish to explore his music. Because there is not currently a detailed theoretical analysis of these compositions,

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4 Young-Jo Lee, Résumé on the Music Note (Seoul: Jagunwoori, 2002), 75.
it is hoped that this document will contribute to a better understanding of Korean music and culture. Through the study of this unique repertoire, one can explore both the wide variety of contemporary compositional styles and the interesting melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic qualities characteristic of this music.

Survey of Literature

A search on the ProQuest dissertation database provides ten dissertations and theses about Lee’s works that have been published at academic institutions in the United States. Thirteen articles have been published in Korea and are limited to recital reviews of Lee’s instrumental and chorale works. None of them mention either Lee’s musical style or his compositional techniques. Most dissertations and theses on Lee’s works are dedicated to his large-scale works, such as his symphonies and operas. Only a few papers focus on Lee’s smaller works, and those are limited to the study of pieces for cello, organ, piano, and chorus. There are no academic publications specifically addressing Lee’s violin works so far. For this reason, I plan to study Lee’s violin works, concentrating on his compositional theory, which integrates Korean traditional music and philosophy with Western music. This study will be the first academic source on Lee’s violin works.
Of the work that has been published on Lee’s works to date, the majority have served primarily either as a musical analysis or as a comparison of composers, including Lee, with only a few discussing Lee’s compositional techniques specifically, especially his use of Eastern and Western elements. For this reason, I will discuss only the works that are related to my topic in this section. I will begin by briefly outlining the works that compare Lee’s work with other Korean composers, and then proceed to works focusing primarily on Lee’s work itself.

Hyunsoo Wee’s doctoral dissertation, *A Recording Project on Contemporary Cello Music by Selected Korean Composers*, discusses five cello works by contemporary Korean composers and compares how each has tried to preserve a national identity in their music while writing for a Western instrument. Wee chooses Lee’s work, *Dodri for Cello and Janggo*, and explains the nature of the Korean traditional instrument, the *janggo* (an hourglass-shaped percussion instrument). Wee explains that Lee uses the *janggo* as a supportive instrument for the cello and discusses how *janggo* players must understand the traditional rhythmic patterns such as *huimori jangdan*. He also mentions that Lee imitates traditional Korean instruments such as the *geomungo* (a six-string zither) and *gayakeum* (a twelve-string zither) by using conventional cello techniques such
as glissando, pizzicato, and *sul ponticello*. My work will build on this by pointing out that the Korean traditional vibrato techniques are called *yosung* for voice and wind instruments and *nonghyun* for string instruments, and Lee frequently applies this technique in his compositions. *Nonghyun* is a left-hand technique for Korean zither instruments and is used to create a wide vibration. The special characteristics of this vibrated sound are complicated by many variations, such as descending and ascending glissandi (Example 3 in Methodology section).

Another comparison of Korean composers occurs in Sun-min Kim’s dissertation, *Korean Organ Music: Fusion of East and West*. Kim selected five organ works by five Korean composers, including Lee’s *Sori Nr. 8 für Orgel*, one of the *Sori* series in Lee’s composition including flute, marimba, clarinet, *daego* (drum), horn, oboe, organ, cello, alto saxophone, and double bass. (Lee does not include violin in his *Sori* series.) Kim focuses on organ performance techniques such as registration, stops, and dynamic markings in the score. Similar to my analysis of Lee’s violin works, Kim declares that the Korean organ compositions analyzed consist of two parts, one representing the East and the other representing the West. The first part symbolizes the East, showing a free and relaxed flow without any frame. In contrast, the second part develops its formal structure
in fugal style. This organ piece shows a single tone that represents a calm and meditative
Oriental tune and develops with ornamentation to imitate traditional singing. Although
Lee’s violin works do not have a significant single tone or fugal style, Kim’s discussion
of the representation of East and West are similar to my own look at the use of yin and
yang philosophy in Lee’s works.

Young Ju Choi’s dissertation, *Survey of Choral Music by Selected Twentieth-
Century Korean Composers*, compiles the choral works of seven Korean composers and
compares Lee’s compositions with other composers. Choi introduces Lee’s male choral
work, *Kyung*, and summarizes its structure and other instruments, which are played with
a choir. Choi also briefly discusses the *nonghyun* technique, one of the noteworthy slide
methods in Korean music. Choi’s discussion of this technique is similar to my own, but
his definitions and explanations do not provide enough specificity for a full
understanding of this technique, nor does his analysis provide musical examples. This
study will explain the nature of the *nonghyun* technique and ornamentation in detail as
well as give specific examples from both traditional Korean music score and Lee’s
compositions.

Another theoretical analysis based on Korean compositional technique can be
found in Kyungsook Kim’s *Traditional Music and Contemporary Piano Music of Korea.*

Her analysis shows that Lee’s piano composition *Tschum* (the Korean word for “dance”) uses pentatonic scale and whole-tone scale as well as French six chords. Pentatonic scale is based on the Korean mode *oeumgae* (five notes, ‘궁(宮), 상(商), 각(角), 치(徵), 우(羽)’) and appears in many of Lee’s violin works, including *Honza Nori* and *Doori Nori,* the two works which will be the focus of my study.

Michael C. Caputo, the only non-Korean scholar to compare Lee’s work with other Korean composers, makes an effort to reveal influences of contemporary Western compositional techniques on traditional musical gestures in *Contemporary Korean Solo Clarinet Music: Analysis with Performance Recommendations of Three Compositions.*

Chapter IV of his work, “Harmony of the Single Bamboo Reed: *Sori* No. 3 by Young-Jo Lee,” mentions that Lee’s notation of the music is diagrammed in both traditional Western notation and original graphic symbols without meter signature, similar to that used in traditional Korean composition. This analysis highlights two main features that predominate graphic notation and free improvisation, both of which make Lee’s work unique compared to other works. In a later chapter, Caputo also notes that Lee’s multiphonic ornamental tone elements are related to the tone color compositions of French
impressionist composers such as Claude Debussy. Caputo’s emphasis that Lee is greatly influenced by European musical traditions by way of his own studies in Europe corresponds with my own discussion of Lee’s other European influences, including the twelve-tone technique, which is a popular compositional technique developed by serialism composer Arnold Schoenberg. However, my analysis will go a step further in describing how Lee’s twelve-tone technique is different from that of the traditional method through his use of unordered or omitted tone rows.

One of the important performance guides for Lee’s work is Jeong hoon Kim’s dissertation, A Study of the Korean Opera Whangjinie: Use of Korean Traditional Text and Material. In this guide, Kim compares the shijo chang, a Korean original vocal music style with the aria of Western opera and lists Korean traditional instruments and rhythms that are basic features of this particular opera. Although he explains every detail of the individual instruments, rhythms, and modes, there is no theoretical musical analysis regarding how these elements have been used in Lee’s opera. In contrast, I will demonstrate how Lee incorporates these complicated practices into his compositional theory by using musical examples from his violin works.
II. BIOGRAPHY OF YOUNG-JO LEE

In Korea

Young-Jo Lee was born in Seoul, Korea, on April 17, 1943. His father, Heung-Yeol Lee (1909-1980), was a prominent art song composer, and Lee studied music theory and piano with him when he was young. Among Lee’s three brothers and three sisters, two brothers became music composers, and two of his sisters are professional pianists.

The Korean War started in June 25, 1950, when Lee was seven years old, causing him to halt his piano study for several years. After the war settled down, Lee resumed his studies of harmonics and compositional techniques with Dong-Jin Kim (b. 1913), a well-known composer and his father’s best friend, and he also moved on to learn clarinet and horn when he was fourteen years old. Lee also showed interest in Korean traditional music and its instruments and began to learn how to play Korean instruments such as hyangpiri, a Korean traditional small wood flute, from Jaekook Jung. These musical skills helped him to pursue his two doctoral degrees in both horn performance and composition at the American Conservatory of Music. Lee’s important influence in literature was Doo-Jin Park (1816-1998), who taught and helped him make lyrics in his cantatas and oratorios.
In 1962, Lee continued studying compositions with his professor, Un-Young Na (1922-1993) who devoted his life to the cause of the Korean musical language, at Yonsei University. Na greatly influenced Lee with traditional Korean melodic line and the usage of Korean instruments.

Lee’s musical environment helped him to learn and motivated him during his residency in the military. In 1964, Lee served in the Korean army as a KATUSA (Korean Augmentation To the United States Army) for three years. During that time, he accessed libraries and listened to classical music to improve his understanding of Western music. He also introduced Korean music to American generals by bringing them to the Center for National Music (국악원) in Seoul. Lee was interested in studying Korean instruments in depth and started to learn *piri* (an eight-hole Korean traditional wind instrument that is similar to oboe) and *danso* (a five-hole Korean traditional wind instrument that is similar to a flute). While pursuing his bachelor’s degree, he traveled to Japan with the Yonsei Concert Choir, with whom he performed *piri*. These experiences encouraged his further use of traditional Korean sources in his compositions.

Lee decided to continue his study in composition through the applied graduate program at Yonsei University. His first grand piece was *Kyoung* (경, 경) for Percussion...
and Male Choir. This piece was successful and made Lee an influential composer among the young students. Throughout his entire graduate program, Lee sought to recreate Korean music into twentieth-century music for better understanding by Western listeners.

In Germany

In 1975, Lee decided to go to Europe to study composition and sent more than twenty compositional works to the German composer Carl Orff (1895-1982). Orff chose the piece *Kyoung* because of the uniqueness of the sound and accepted Lee as his student. However, one year later, Orff could not continue his teaching due to health problems, and he introduced Lee to a new composer named Wilhelm Killmayer. Killmayer was born in Munich on August 21, 1927, and from 1952-1953, he had private lessons with Carl Orff and attended Orff’s master class at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in Munich. He simultaneously studied musicology with Rudolf von Ficker and Walter Riezler. Killmayer taught theory and counterpoint at the Trapp Conservatory from 1955 to 1958 and worked as a ballet conductor at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich between 1961 and 1964. In 1972, he became a full member of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts and has been a member of the Berlin Academy of Arts since 1980.
Under the direction of Killmayer, Lee composed the first composition, *Sound for Clarinet No.3* in Munich, which was published by *Noetzel* Publisher in Wilhelmshaven, Germany. This piece was composed with a Korean traditional sound that is commonly found in old court music. The compositional elements found in this work are very similar to the glissandos, appoggiaturas, and slow vibratos in Western compositions.

In 1980, Lee returned to Korea and became a professor at Yonsei University in Seoul. During his residency, he composed many works, such as *Five Korean Dances* for piano (1984), and a recording was issued by AVS records in England; *Seorabul for Percussion and Three Flutes* (1983); *Muni for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano* (1982); and *Isang’s Poem for Percussion Ensemble No. 6* (1984). He also composed several songs for the male choir, such as *Seungmu* (1980), *Walljungmung* (1983), *Nongmu* (1985), and *Three songs for Easter* (1986). These works are characterized by a strong oriental flavor mixed with German theoretical influences resulting from his studies abroad.⁵

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In the United States

In June 1985, the Korean National Opera Company asked Lee to compose an opera. By the time he got an offer from the opera company, Lee had begun his sabbatical year from Yonsei University, and he was planning to go to the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago for his doctoral degree under the professor Jack Good, a student of Arnold Schoenberg. Lee taught two music classes as well as individual composition lessons, and the opera Choyong successfully met his compositional requirement for his DMA degree. Choyong was then performed in 1987 in Seoul, Korea, directed by Ei-Hyun Baek with librettist Ei-Kyoung Kim. The opera utilized Korean traditional musical components combined with Western musical language. After Lee graduated, he was appointed professor of the theory and composition department at the American Conservatory of Music, a position he held from 1989-1994. In 1992, Lee was asked to compose another opera, Whangjinie, a young and beautiful female poet as well as a famous courtesan who lived during the Chosun Dynasty in Korea during the sixteenth century. The original libretto was written by Sang Koo and premiered on April 15, 1999, after seven years of preparation and six rectifications. Whangjinie has since been
performed in other countries, including China in 2000, Japan in 2001, the United States in 2002, and Vietnam in 2004.

Return to Korea

While Lee was teaching at the American Conservatory, he received an offer to become professor of composition at the Korea National University of Arts (KNUA) School of Music, which was a newly established school specializing solely in the arts. Until the early 1980s, there was no specialized university in Korea that devoted its entire curriculum to various artistic endeavors. Therefore, many budding artists who wanted to continue their artistic development through professional training went abroad. The announcement of the foundation of the National University of Arts in 1993 was thus the revelation and initial manifestation of artistic prosperity in Korea. In the history of arts education in Korea, as well as in Asia as a whole, KNUA occupies a special place. It is the only national university in Asia dedicated exclusively to preparing talented young artists for the professions of all artistic genres.

In 1997, Lee served as dean of the School of Music at KNUA and dedicated the following compositions to all the faculty members within the School of Music: *Dodri for*
Cello and Janggo, Amusement for Solo Violin, Amusement for Violin and Piano, Sori No. 11 for Contrabass, Song of Songs for Viola, Bongsunhwa for Piano, Amusement for Percussion, and Bacarole for Cello and Orchestra. In 2001, Lee served as a director of the Korean Symphony Orchestra and composed a sacred oratorio, Sadosinkyung (the Apostles' Creed), and Requiem for Strings in 2002. In 2002, Lee was appointed as music director at the Musica Anima, which was a special vocal ensemble group for performing music of J.S. Bach. He also composed the cantata, Isaiah, for Musica Anima’s sixth concert in 2002.

Lee has received numerous awards, including the Chae Dongsun Composition Award for his opera Choyong in 1988, The Best Musician of the Year from the Music Critics Association in 1988, the Chicago New Music award for his symphony in 1993, and The Best Compositional Award from the Korean Composer’s Association for his opera Whangjinie in 2001. Lee also worked in Budapest, Amsterdam, and Wurzburg as a guest composer for the New Music Festival of the International Society of Contemporary Music from 1985-1987. In 1995, the Budapest Radio Chorus performed Lee’s biblical oratorio, Stabat Mater, during the fiftieth anniversary of the Homage a Bartok, and his Concerto for Piri and Orchestra was performed at the Moscow Conservatory in 1999.
Lee also organized a ‘Korean-Latin Concert’ sponsored by the Argentine Embassy in Chicago, as well as the ‘Three Day of New Music Festival’ under the sponsorship of the Goethe Institute in the German Cultural Center.
III. KOREAN TRADITIONAL MUSIC

The Origin of Korean Music

Traditional Korean music includes both the folk and court music of the Korean people. Traditional court music maintains large ensembles of professional musicians and dancers and is played for special groups of people with high social status. Korean court music refers to the music developed in the Chosun Dynasty (1392-1905). There are three kinds of Korean court music: A-ak, (an imported form of Chinese ritual music), hyang-ak, (a pure Korean court music), and dang-ak (combination of Chinese and Korean style music). A-ak was brought to Korea in 1116 from the Chinese Song Dynasty. This style, with more than 456 melodies, was popular for a time and is still played, although rarely, at concerts such as the Munmyo jereak (Confucian shrine music) in Seoul, Korea. A-ak is performed as a ritual in a royal courtyard with many ensemble musicians. Hyang-ak is a traditional form of Korean court music and is often accompanied by the traditional folk dances of Korea. Dang-ak was adapted from the Chinese Dang Dynasty during the unified Silla period. In contrast to A-ak, performers of dang-ak and hyang-ak were selected from the lower classes. These traditional Korean court music genres are the
foundation of much contemporary Korean music composition. Caputo points out the
characteristics of the Korean royal music:

In the Three Kingdom period (BC 37) to the end of the Yi Dynasty (1910), the royal era began to show strong cultural ties with China and the development of three competitive dynasties, *Koguryo, Paekche, and Silla*. Koreans adapted, invented, and developed musical instruments, enhancing traditional characteristic sound and nuances, such as *vibrato* and ornaments. These nuances are similar to those employed by contemporary composers who incorporate traditional music into their works. The arts of the simultaneously existing three kingdoms exhibited strong regional characteristics reflected by their different artistic levels.⁶

Korean traditional folk music may include *mu-ak* (shamanic music), *pansori* (dramatic song), and *pungmul* (percussion music), and it is based on indigenous shamanic beliefs and practices that have been influenced by Buddhism and Taoism. These shamanic activities and performances are the main factor in and the basis of many musical nuances in early traditional music. In particular, a *mudang* (an intercessor between a god and human) acts during the service to fulfill clients’ needs for their families and their successors. Such services are also held to conduct the spirit of a deceased person to heaven through a series of repeating rhythmic patterns. The *mudang*

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maintains a set of rhythms called jangdan, and its tempo changes frequently, depending on the type of service.

Another important genre of Korean folk music is pansori. This consists of vocal and percussion music performed by a singer (kwangdae) and a drummer (gosu). The term pansori is derived from pan (a place where many people gather), and sori (sound), and this genre features satires and love stories and is usually two or three hours long. A kwangdae mixes certain alterations of descriptive speech (aniri) and songs (chang) alternately, because it is too tiring to sing continuously in the vocalized mode only. In addition to the singer’s (kwangdae) performance, a drummer (gosu) creates rhythmic beats and verbal sounds (chuimsae), which can be simple, meaningless vowels and short words of encouragement. The chuimsae is often inserted intermittently throughout the pansori both to save the singer’s voice and to make the story more exciting. The song is built on the fixed rhythmic cycles of the jangdan, and it varies depending the origins of the individual works.

One of the most popular types of instrumental folk music is pungmul or nong-ak. This category of music, known as farmer’s music, is a form of percussion that includes drumming and dancing. Pungmul is rooted in the farming culture and is played as part of
farm work and shamanic rituals. It is essential at the celebration of social and religious events such as the New Year and the Korean Thanksgiving Day, which are held in an open area with a variety of music, dance, acrobatics, and songs. In this type of music, the original form of the rhythmic pattern is in 12/8 time, although this pattern only appears at the beginning of a section. It then develops freely, with hemiola (6/4 time) sometimes being introduced as well as heterometer (cyclic compound meter) in some segments. The main instruments are the kkwaenggwari (small handheld gong), janggo (hourglass drum), buk (barrel drum), and jing (gong). Often, the folk songs and chants are included in the pungmul, and audience members excitedly sing and dance along with the percussionists. Most folk songs are set to drum beats in one of a few jangdan that are common to pansori and other traditional Korean musical genres. These styles have, in recent years, been transformed to a concert hall style and have received warm recognition from audiences as well as financial support from the Korean government as a means of popularizing Korean traditional music to the public. Unlike traditional pungmul, this new genre, named samulnori (playing with four objects), is performed in a seated position facing the audience and demonstrates a variety of rhythms with great flexibility. Over

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time, *samulnori* has eventually come to denote an entire genre as training institutes and ensembles have been established throughout South Korea and Japan.\(^8\)

**Traditional Korean String Instruments**

The classification of traditional instruments is limited in the works analyzed in this study. Although Lee frequently imitates the sounds of the Korean wind instruments *daegum* (bamboo flute) and *piri* (Korean flute) in his other works, the emphasis in this study will be given to string instruments and the performance techniques related to Lee’s violin works.

Korean string instruments can be plucked, bowed, and struck, and most use silk strings. Zithers are the most common type of these instruments, with many different types of zithers being used. The *geomungo* (거문고, 玄琴), for example, is a fretted bass zither with six strings that is plucked with a bamboo stick and gives the broadest sound among all traditional Korean instruments. The front board, made from the paulownia tree, is attached to a back board made of chestnut. Six strings of twisted silk threads are placed on the case to complete a *geomungo*. The *gayageum* (가야금, 伽倻琴) is made of the

\(^8\) Nathan Hesselink, “*Samul nori* as Traditional: Preservation and Innovation in a South Korean Contemporary Percussion Genre,” *Ethnomusicology* (Society for Ethnomusicology) 48 (2004): 408.
same materials as the *geomungo* but generally has twelve strings. However, modern versions may have 13, 17, 18, 21, 22, or 25 strings. This instrument is played by pressing the strings with the left hand and plucking the strings with the right hand. Both the *geomungo* and the *gayageum* are used to accompany the *kagok* in performing *sanjo*. The *ajaeng* (아쟁, 牙箏) is a seven-string zither that creates the lowest sound range of Korean string instruments. The *seul* (슬, 瑟) is a long zither with 25 strings placed on its sounding case that is used only in *Mumnyo jereak* (Confucian ritual music). The *geum* (금, 琴) is a seven stringed zither derived from the Chinese *guqin* and also called *chilheyongeum*. The absence of support ridges on this instrument serves to loosen the strings, thereby weakening the sound. The *cheolhyeongeum* (철현금, 鐵絃琴) is a steel-stringed zither developed in the twentieth century, which is plucked with a stick and played with a slide in the manner of a slide guitar. Most recently, there is the *ongnyugeum* (옥류금, 玉流琴), a large modernized box zither with 33 nylon-wrapped metal strings that was developed in North Korea in 1973.

Another type of instrument, the *gonghu*, is an instrument similar to the Western harp that can be divided into four subtypes according to the frame shape. *Sogonghu* (소공후, 小箜篌) is a small harp with angled sound box, 13 strings, and a peg that is
tucked into the player's belt. *Sugonghu* (수공후, 豎箜篌) is a vertical harp without sound box and 21 strings. *Wagonghu* (와공후, 臥箜篌) is an arched harp with a large internal sound box and 13 strings. *Daegonghu* (대공후, 大箜篌) is a large vertical harp with 23-strings.

String instruments other than zithers and harps include the *yang-geum* and the *hae-geum*. The *yang-geum* is the only metal string instrument, which is struck by a light bamboo stick to make a sound similar to that of a dulcimer. The *hae-geum*, a two-stringed fiddle, is used as a supplement in court and folk music wind ensemble. A bow inserted between the two strings produces a rich expression that enables diverse playing techniques.

**Eastern Philosophies**

Lee makes use of the philosophical concepts of Korean and other East Asian schools of thoughts. Especially, the philosophy of Taoism plays a significant role for Lee’s compositional practice. Thus, an understanding of music influenced by Korean tradition necessitates an understanding of the Korean philosophies resulting from Taoism. Taoism and Confucianism were introduced to Korea during the Three Kingdom Period.
(B.C 57 – A.D 668) and mixed with other traditional religions. Tao (도, 道) literally means “way” or “path,” and Taoism emphasizes compassion, moderation, and humility. Taoism is considered by Western scholars to be a Chinese philosophy rather than a religion. Thomas Cleary explains the Tao as such: “It may point to a path, a way, a principal, a method, a doctrine, a system of order; and it also may indicate the matrix, structure, and reality of the universe itself.”

One of the most important premises of Taoism is the attainment of universal harmony. Lee uses the concepts of yin (陰) and yang (陽), which are the basic elements of Korean court music. The Chinese divide objects into two the different elements, with yin signifying femininity and yang signifying masculinity. This philosophy builds on the many dualities in nature, such as dark and bright, low and high, cold and hot, slow and fast, and weak and strong. In this philosophy, when each side reaches its climax, it will naturally start to change into its opposite, much like the full moon becomes the new moon. Yin and yang do not merely replace each other but actually

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become each other through the constant flow of the universe. In Lee’s music, this concept of contrasts is very evident, with opposite elements taking the form of high and low, long and short, loud and soft, activity and stillness, major and minor, and harmony and dissonance. Lee’s music, then, follows the supreme goal of Taoist art—to make balance (harmony) between energies that move with yin and yang elements.

Among the traditional religions in Korea, shamanism is widespread, and these indigenous beliefs influenced Korean philosophies for centuries. Other influential religions include Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity, but Korean shamanism has existed as an ancient religion since Korea was established. Buddhism was widespread and prospered from BC 668-936, during which time the intellectual class considered Buddhism as a philosophical system of thought, while everyday people connected Buddhism to shamanism. A shaman is known as mudang, and performs as an intercessor between gods and humans in order to forge a spiritual connection. A shaman


also employs dances and songs called gut, which can invoke spirits to bring fortune or disaster to people. The gods are considered to be eclectic figures who rule different quarters of heaven, as opposed to the devotion to a single god found in monotheistic religions. The gut is recognized as an important source for traditional Korean dances and songs, as well as for the theater arts. The gut contains valuable cultural properties that many believe should be conserved for all the performing arts.
IV. COMPOSITIONAL TECHNIQUES OF EASTERN MUSIC

Jangdan (Korean Traditional Rhythm)

The *jangdan* (장단, 長短) is a musical indication that sets the tempo and rhythm in traditional Korean music. It also can be used as the name of a musical movement indicating the type of rhythm of that movement. A basic rhythm is fixed, but the performer improvises variation on the rhythmic patterns.

The most popular instrument for the *jangdan* rhythm is the *janggo*, a drum-like wooden instrument with an hourglass shape. Each side is covered with leather, and one side being thicker in order to produce a lower sound. The left side of the instrument is struck with the left palm, and the right side is struck with a slim bamboo stick called a *chae*. The performer of *janggo* usually sits on the floor with other instrumentalists and wears a traditional costume. The following table illustrates the performance technique for the *janggo*. 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sign</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>Notation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deong</td>
<td>Strike both sides with both hands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kung</td>
<td>Strike left side with left palm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deock</td>
<td>Strike rim of right side with wood stick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gideock</td>
<td>Double strike right side with wood stick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Duh-ruh-ruh-ruh</td>
<td>Roll on right side with wood stick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Musical Figure 1. *Janggo* Performance Technique

There are approximately ten rhythmic patterns that are used in various Korean music genres, although the following six patterns are the most popular in performance and are also used in twentieth-century music compositions.
Musical Figure 2. Goodgury jangdan

Musical Figure 3. Saemachi jangdan

Musical Figure 4. Jungmori jangdan

Musical Figure 5. Joong-joongmori jangdan
An *Oeumgae* is a musical scale with five pitches per octave (in contrast to a heptatonic seven-note scale). *Oeumgae* scale is very similar to Western pentatonic scales and is found in music all over the world, including American, Celtic, and Hungarian folk music, African-American spirituals, jazz, traditional Greek music, and the works of Western classical composers such as French composer Claude Debussy. Korean traditional music was written in one octave with five basic notes: ‘Gung (宮), Sang (商), Gak (角), Chi (徵), and Woo (羽). Figure 8 illustrates five consecutive pitches from the
circle of fifths: C, G, D, A, and E. Transposing the pitches to fit into one octave rearranges the pitches into the major pentatonic scale: C, D, E, G, A, and C. Example 1 shows that the Oeumgae is used frequently in Lee’s music, along with other chromatic scales.

Musical Figure 8. Oeumgae

Musical Example 1. Excerpt from Doori Nori, mm 169-172
The scale is Chinese in origin, but this system was recreated within the Korean scale system. It is comparable to Do, Re, Mi, Sol, La in Western music by the principle that historically gives the Pythagorean diatonic and chromatic scales, stacking perfect fifths with 3:2 frequency proportions. Because the intervals between the notes are major second and minor third, the relationships in five notes are only created in perfect, minor, and major, and not in augmented or diminished. Most Korean music scales, such as *gyemyeonjo* and *pyungjo*, belong to this scale system. The five-scale system also can be categorized as the *gung* scale, *sang* scale, *gak* scale, *chi* scale, and *woo* scale, depending on the root of the each scale. The most popular scale is the *sang* scale (Re-Mi-Sol-La-Do), which includes the *pyung-jo* scale.

**Nonghyun Technique (String Technique)**

The unique feature of Lee’s work is the reproduction of Eastern sounds. Lee adapts and applies Korean instrumental performance techniques from Korean traditional music to European instruments by using several different methods. His techniques include ornamentations, vibrations, and micro-tonal shading (appoggiatura and glissando). These performance techniques are radically different from Western techniques and are
adjusted and improved through the practice of combining those two traditions. In Korean traditional music, most embellishments are regarded to be an important factor in music performance and are mainly dependent upon the performer’s improvisational skills. One of the notable zither techniques, nonghyun (농현, 弄絃), is used for traditional string instruments and vocal music. The term literally means ‘play with strings’ and is used for the embellishment or ornamentation of a melodic line. Particularly, this technique is a left-hand practice for Korean zither instruments such as gayageum and geomungo.

Nonghyun is used for shaking strings, pushing down strings and plucking strings and can be categorized as follows:

1. Ornamentation: pre-appoggiatura, mid-appoggiatura, and post-appoggiatura
2. Vibration: wide vibrato, narrow vibrato, fast vibrato, and slow vibrato
3. Micro-tonal shading (portamento or appoggiatura): sliding down, sliding up, and consecutive sliding down and up

The Korean nonghyun technique is as important as harmony in Western music because it gives life to a simple monophonic melody line. There are two kinds of nonghyun techniques, each of which depends on the characteristics of the music: shaking
*nonghyun* is a wave-like light vibration and used in traditional court music; pushing *nonghyun* is a fast move from the high notes to the low notes with a wider vibration and is used in both court music and folk music. The vibrato in traditional Korean music is broader than Western vibrato and includes portamenti and glissandi as well. The *nonghyun* technique is also used in vocal music, where it is called *sigimsae* and can be divided into three different methods: *yosung* (vibrating sound), *toesung* (declining sound), and *chuseong* (pushing up sound).
V. SELECTED ANALYSIS OF HONZA NORI AND DOORI NORI

In studying Lee’s violin compositions, Honza Nori for solo violin and Doori Nori for violin and piano, it is possible to see the strong influences of Korean traditional music, which are becoming more apparent in modern compositions of Korean composers. Therefore, it is helpful to discuss the general stylistic aspects of traditional Korean music before analyzing these pieces individually.

Preference for compound meters is an important characteristic of Korean traditional music. Both Korean court music and folk music are noted for large, compound, symmetrical metric structures, with most pieces in historical notations having the 3+2+3 rhythmic structure. The majority of Lee’s pieces are written in 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8, and they display considerably more metrical variety. In general, Korean music is composed in 6/8 meter, and as a result, Koreans may have difficulties singing in 4/4. Non-court music is remarkable for the large amount of compound triple meter used, which is quite rare in both China and Japan. Yet, compound triple meter is a characteristic of Korean traditional music.

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Lee also uses a mixture of time signatures to represent the five gods that prevent misfortune from five directions: East, West, South, North, and firmament. In Example 2, Measure 1 through 9, the first tempos change in sequence 1/4, 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 5/4, and immediately retrograde to 5/4, 4/4, 3/4, 2/4, and 1/4. This sequence is used in the performance of a fast tempo religious dance in which an exorcist attempts to dispel evil. In Example 3, the resolution dance begins from measure 49 with an allegro tempo marked in 6/8 meter up to measure 120.

Musical Example 2. Excerpt from *Honzanori*, mm 1-12
Lee uses several kinds of rhythmic inflection in the 8th note triplet pattern and expands them to encompass a specific movement in his music that features repetition with limited or minimal material, much like the composition of minimalist music.

Rhythmic patterns are indicated by jangdan, which literally means ‘long and short’ and refers to specific short recurring rhythmic phrases. One of the most popular Korean instrumental performances is called samul nori, a work that uses repetitive rhythmic patterns and comes from jangdan. Samul nori is traditional percussion music, literally meaning ‘four objects.’ The four traditional Korean musical instruments are
kkwaenggwari (a small gong), jing (a large gong), janggo (a small drum), and buk (a barrel drum). *Samul nori* has its roots in *nong-ak* (farmer’s music) and was performed in rice farming villages to celebrate abundant harvests. The rhythmic pattern of *nong-ak* is derived from shaman rhythms originating in several South Korean provinces. The principal characteristic of *samul nori* is the alteration of tension and relaxation. While improving rhythms based on several rhythmic patterns, the performers seek to achieve a perfect integration of the four percussion instruments. In Example 3, a rhythmic pattern occurs based on the *huimori jangdan*, one of the most popular patterns of *jangdan*.

Dotted eighth and sixteenth notes in every fourth measure in each system represent the *huimori* rhythm within the allegro tempo for eighteen times, which lasts seventy-two measures. Measures 49 through 80 are centered in D minor, and the dominant area extends from measure 81 through 120 with A major and a minor chords.

Lee makes uses of the East Asian philosophical elements of *yin* (음, 隱) and *yang* (양, 陽) in his compositions. In Taoism, it is believed that when *yin* (female, moon, night, earth, negative, passive, weak) and *yang* (male, sun, day, heaven, positive, active, strong) are properly balanced, universal harmony is attained. The idea of *yin* and *yang* is reflected in these instruments: the *buk* and *janggo* (leather) represent the sound of the
earth, while the *jing* and *kwaenggwari* (metal) represent sound of the heaven. Lee uses symmetrical structure in his music that represents *yin* and *yang* in the same way that an ocean reflects and changes its color of the firmament. Example 4 illustrates ten measures from measure 13 through 22, with Example 5 showing an inversion at measures 138 through 147.

Musical Example 4. Excerpt from *Honza Nori*, mm 13-22

Musical Example 5. Excerpt from *Honza Nori*, mm 138-147

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Another example of *yin* and *yang* can be found in *Doori Nori* for violin and piano. Two different characters share their active and passive natures between violin and piano equally. In Example 6, from measure 42 through 49, the violin moves slowly, contrasting with the rapid movement in the piano. Later, the violin takes over the active nature and the piano part slows down, as seen in measure 69 in Example 7.

![Musical Example 6](Image)

Musical Example 6. Excerpt from *Doori Nori*, mm 42-49
Musical Example 7. Excerpt from *Doori Nori*, mm 68-75

Traditional Korean music emphasizes significant curvature such as slides and vibrato. The slide technique is used for note changes between notes or for an ending note.

The vibrato technique has two names; the technique for voice and wind instruments is called *yosung*, and the technique for string instruments is *nonghyun*. The special characteristics of this vibrated sound are complicated by variations, such as descending and ascending glissandi. Lee imitates traditional Korean instruments, such as the *geomungo, gayagum, and haegum*, thereby creating a unique Korean sound with conventional violin techniques such as glissando and pizzicato.\(^{16}\) Measures 107 through 118, which are shown in Example 8, demonstrate how Lee uses glissando in the

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\(^{16}\) Hyunsoo Wee, 19.
violin part in intervals of either major or minor seconds. The sound is reminiscent of the Korean zither, gayagum, and conveys the emotional depth of the piece.
Ornamentations are regarded as an important factor in most Korean music performance, and Lee treats ornamentations as a necessary element for keeping his music alive. Most embellishments are dependent upon the trained performer’s improvisational skills and interpretation, as long as it does not entirely change the basic melody. These ornamentations are related to one of the main characteristics of Korean music—its flexibility—which permits personal deviation, variation, and improvisation in the process of performance.17

In Example 9, we find ornamentations used extensively. The first four

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ornamented notes are in minor thirds, but the next two are in perfect fourths, which then return to minor thirds for the remaining three. This is different from the usual range of the appoggiaturas, which varies from major second to major third.

Musical Example 9. Excerpt from *Honza Nori*, mm 23-39

Modified twelve-tone technique

In the excerpt shown in Example 10, Lee gradually adds new notes in the context of the twelve-tone technique. The new pitches are C in measure 1, G# and D# in measure 2, D in measure 3, F# and E in measure 4, F in measure 5, C# in measure 6, and
G in measure 7. Only A, A#, and B are missing for a complete chromatic twelve-tone scale. Lee changes the order of the notes and repeats or omits certain notes in a phrase. His different approach to the twelve-tone technique is rooted in Taoism and Korean traditional court music in the way that he lets the music flow freely beyond the restrictions of the matrix.

Musical Example 10. Excerpt from Honza Nori, mm 1-8

Chromaticism

During the last half of the nineteenth century, with new combinations of chords, keys, and harmonies being introduced, the chromatic scale and chromaticism became more widely used. Lee adapts and uses nineteenth-century chromaticism in his compositions, including several different kinds of chromatic scales, such as the octatonic scale, the whole-tone scale and the hexachord scale. Example 11 shows one of the
chromatic scales in his violin work.

Musical Example 11. Excerpt from *Doori Nori*, mm 157-160
VI. CONCLUSION

In 1962, Young-Jo Lee’s compositional techniques began to change direction when he studied with Un-Young Na, professor of composition at the Yonsei University. Un-Young Na focused on the Korean traditional music and created a new music genre. Lee also followed Na’s direction and started to build his own ‘Korean compositional technique.’ He composed the Western-style music with other Korean musical methods such as oeumgae and sigimsae, as well as the Eastern philosophical concepts, yin (陰) and yang (陽).

Lee’s main goals of composition are not just to imitate or mimic Korean traditional music, but to experiment and find a new timbre of the sound by using those conventional elements. Lee is also interested in twentieth-century European compositional techniques, such as the twelve-tone technique and chromaticism used by many other composers including Arnold Schoenberg and Debussy. Lee alters the conventional twelve-tone technique, however, in that he adds the Korean five notes, oeumgae, into the twelve-tone row. He never forgets his native music in his contemporary compositions; he pays close attention to non-Western elements in ways that integrate both cultures.
Compositions that create an entirely new sound system are generally not welcomed by audiences. However, Lee’s compositions are warmly received and in high demand by the public because his music satisfies both Western and Eastern ears. His mixture of two different musical traditions is not just one in which elements from the two musical philosophies are put together, but rather, one that highly sublimates the two established traditions. Based on the perception of yin and yang, Lee treats Western and Eastern equally, creating a perfect balance in his music. His violin compositions, Honza Nori for solo violin and Doori Nori for violin and piano, are examples of Lee’s amalgamation of Korean traditional music and Western music. Through the essence of his new compositional techniques, Lee succeeds in conveying the value of combining Eastern and Western compositional techniques.
APPENDIX A.

LIST OF WORKS BY YOUNG-JO LEE

Unaccompanied Solo Music

*Sori* No. 1 for Flute Solo (1978)
*Sori* No. 2 for Marimba Solo (1979)
*Sori* No. 3 for Clarinet Solo (1979)
*Sori* No. 4 for Bass Drum (1980)
*Sori* No. 5 for French horn Solo (1981)
*Sori* No. 6 for Oboe Solo (1982)
*Sori* No. 7 for Organ Solo (1983)
*Sori* No. 8 for Cello Solo (1984)
*Sori* No. 9 for Alto Saxophone (1999)
*Sori* No.10 for Double Bass (2001)

Piano Music

Five Korean Legends (1998)
   Dream
   Once Upon a Time
   Children Playing
   Memories
   Hide and Seek
Dance Suite (1998)
   Heaven Dance
   Children Dance
   Lovers Dance
   Buddhist Dance
   Peasant Dance
Variations “3B” (1983)
Variations Based on Song *Baugoge* (1983)
Organ Music

Cosmos-I for Organ (1983)
Sirius for Organ and Brass Quintet (1980)
Zhen for Organ (1997)

Chamber Music

Nori for Percussion (2003)
Duo for Cello and Daekeum (2002)
Nori for Clarinet Solo (2001)
Five Fanfares (2000)
Barcarolle for Cello and Orchestra (1999)
Nori for 3 Percussion Players (1998)
Piano Quartet (1998)
Ryu for Keumoongo Solo (1998)
Ahga for Viola and Piano (1996)
Doorri Nori for Violin and Piano (1995)
Dodri for Cello and Janggo (1995)
String Quartet No.1 (1995)
Eroica for Horn Quartet (1995)
String Quartet No. 2 “Haneulcheon” (1995)
Honza Nori for Violin (1994)
Ogamdo for 13 Players (1997)
Monologue and Dialogue for Cello and Piano (1987)
Seorabul for 3 Flutes, Piccolo, and Percussion (1983)
Poet No. 6 for Percussion Ensemble (1983)
Breathing for Unlimited Players and Bottles (1981)
Cosmos-II for Organ and Tape (1980)
Orchestral Works

*Muni* for Orchestra (2003)
*Requiem* for String Orchestra (2002)

Opera *Whangjinie* Suite (2002)
Concerto for *Piri* and Orchestra (1998)
*Sori* for Symphonic Band (1997)
Goblin Dance for Orchestra (1996)

Electronic Music

*Calvary* (1997)
Torn Curtain (1997)

Opera

*Mok Wha* (2003)
*Whangjinie* (1994-98)
*Tschu Yong* (1986-87)

Songs

40 Arts and Sacred Songs

Chorus Music

Songs of Stars (2004)
Four Songs for Death (2004)
Sound of Springs (2002)
*Jung Bang* Fall (2002)
Song for Four Seasons (2002)
Three Songs for Love (2001)
Dong Dong (1994)
Three Easter Songs (1986)
Stabat Mater (1986)
Farmers Dance (1985)
Full Moon (1983)
Soyoyu (1983)
A Cliff (1981)
Buddhist Dance (1980)
Chorus of Monk (1975)

Cantatas

Song of Prophet (2004)
Prelude to His Coming (2004)
Credo (2001)
From Bethlehem to Calvary (1997)
Wharang (1995)
Cross in the Desert (1985)
Jerusalem for Baritone Solo and Chorus (1985)
APPENDIX B.

LETTER OF PERMISSION

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LETTER OF PERMISSION

Sept. 14, 2010

To Whom it may Concern:

I certify that this letter of permission grant Ms. Yeonjin Kim (major in Violin), for doctoral dissertation topic "THE MUSICAL STYLE AND COMPOSITION TECHNIQUE OF YOUNG-JO LEE, AS REFLECTED ON HIS VIOLIN COMPOSITIONS "HONZA NORI" FOR SOLO VIOLIN AND "DOORI NORI " FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO".

She may use musical excerpts and list of works of Young Jo Lee for her paper.

Young Jo Lee, D.M.A.
Professor of Composition
Director
REFERENCES


