EXPLORING ASPECTS OF KOREAN TRADITIONAL MUSIC IN
YOUNG JO LEE’S PIANO HONZA NORI

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Since the 1960s, several gifted Korean composers, including perhaps most notably Young Jo Lee (b. 1943), have been internationally acclaimed for their work. In Western countries, however, there has been a scarcity of academic studies examining the artistry of the music of these Korean composers. Nonetheless, as one of today’s most recognized composers in Korea, Young Jo Lee has been invited to numerous international concerts, conferences, and festivals where his works have been played and discussed. A salient feature of his compositions is the fusion of Korean traditional music and the elements of Western compositions, such as in, for one distinctive example, his piano composition, *Piano Honza Nori*.

This musical study describes and analyzes how Lee integrates Korean traditional elements with Western musical ideas in *Piano Honza Nori*. Results of this study will contribute to the limited literature on the analysis of contemporary piano composition that integrates Korean traditional elements.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: KOREAN TRADITIONAL MUSIC AND THE INFLUENCE OF WESTERN MUSIC

Dating back to pre-historic times, traditional Korean music is known for its complexity and variety of its rhythms and melodies. In modern times, different musical genres combine traditional Korean styles with Western forms.\(^1\) Today, Korea generally has two musical cultures: one that embraces traditional music, referred to as kugak, and another that embraces Western music, referred to as yangak.

The traditional music of Korea, or kugak, has played a vital role in ancient Korean society and its central folk music, as well as in court and ritual music. A few common representative genres are changak, chamber music; nongak, farmer’s music; pansori, vocal music; pungmul (samul nori), percussion music; salpuri, dance for soul; sanjo, solo music for string or wind instrument; shinawi, the shamanistic music; aak, a ritual music; dangak, court music and hyangak, indigenous music. Music in these genres is usually accompanied by a variety of traditional Korean percussion, string, and wind instruments. Korea’s traditional music is in itself partly influenced and adapted from cultural exchanges with China and Japan throughout Korea’s early history.\(^2\)

Western music was first introduced into Korea through military band music adopted by the Korean government, as well as church music which came with the introduction of Christianity to Korea, specifically Protestantism in 1885. It immediately became popular among Koreans. Folk and children’s songs were then introduced, which further expanded the West’s

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reach into Korean society. Even Westernized Japanese songs, or *shoka*, formed a new music
genre called *changga*, which literally means to “sing a song.” These varied styles of music
dramatically altered Korean traditional music and have even replaced some of its elements. With
the creation and expansion of *yangak* as a new Korean musical culture, *kugak* was in deep
trouble: Koreans became more familiar with operas and string quartets from the West than with
traditional Korean folk music.³ Despite these seemingly negative effects on traditional Korean
music, Western music has enriched the Korean music movement in terms of the quality of sound,
especially in the late twentieth century.

Traditional Korean music combining with Western was what paved the way for the
arrival of score music, of writing for concert forms, of configuring for a full opera ensemble, and
of many more components now a part of modern Korean music.⁴ The introduction of such
elements into the musical culture led to the creation of a new Korean genre called *changjak
gugak*, which involves the use of traditional musical instruments and Korean voices, *pansori*,
within Western compositional structures. It took several decades for *changjak gugak* to reach a
large Korean audience. Beginning in the 1980s, musical artists mixed *changjak gugak* with
commercialized pop music culture in order to gain wider appreciation from the public.⁵

One of the leading pioneers of combining traditional Korean and contemporary Western
musical elements was Yeong Dong Kim (b. 1951) in the 1970s and the 1980s. He invented and
contributed new styles of composition and structure, such as the *gugak gayo*. In contrast with
Yeong Dong Kim’s rather commercialized approach to musical form, composer Su Cheol Kim
(b. 1957) gave higher priority to Korean traditional elements in his compositions. As a result,
group ensembles which performed on various musical instruments from both Korea and the West

³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid., 172.
⁵ Ibid., 181.
were formed in the 1980s. The most popular and successful Korean ensemble was *Seulgidoong* led by Korean composer Byeong Uk Yi (b. 1951), who was known for being a professional multi-instrumentalist.\(^6\) He utilized the traditional Korean instruments, the *daegeum*, the *gayageum*, the *haegeum*, and the *changgu*, as well as a Western guitar and a synthesizer in his ensemble’s performances of various Korean works.

The 1990s marked a new age for contemporary Korean music as new styles and methods for making work together traditional Korean and Western music were introduced by several Korean composers and ensembles. Il Won (b. 1967), of the ensemble *Seulgidoong*, became a popular composer and pioneer of the fusion *changjak gugak* movement, as well as a leading composer of Korean film music scores.

Early in the 1990s, Won was successful in developing his very own style of blending Korean and Western musical elements, which is apparent in one of his most famous compositions, *Sin Paennorae* (New fishing songs), which is frequently performed by numerous Korean ensembles and orchestras. His current ensemble, *Puri*, focuses on percussion-based performances.

By the late 1990s, more and more composers and ensembles embraced *changjak gugak* in its new-age, fusion form, generally making use of the traditional Korean instruments, the *gaygeum*, the *haegeum*, and the *sogeum*, as well as drums, piano, contrabass, and electric guitars, to convey the Korean music genre’s emotional basis in a modern musical perspective. Some of the well-known Korean composers are Il Won and Jun Ho Yi (b. 1960), as well as pop music artist Byeong-Jun Kwon (b. 1971).

Today, *changjak gugak* has so far not only been put with various Western musical elements and forms but also with African, East Asian, Indian, Russian, and South American

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\(^6\) Ibid., 182.
music in order to globalize Korean music and establish the country’s music as a leading fusion of styles.\(^7\)

The evolution of classical Korean music can be traced through three generations of Korean composers. The First Generation of composers in the early twentieth century pushed for the advancement of Korean music through placing its characteristics in with basic elements of western music: harmony, melody, rhythm, and homophony.\(^8\) The most notable pioneers of this movement were Nan Pa Hong (1898-1941), who wrote *Bongseonhwa* (1920), and Un Young Na (1922-1993).

The Second Generation of composers were leading endorsers of internationalization, and heavily embraced Western music in their compositions. They generally “used not only avant-garde styles of composing, such as serial, atonal, and electronic idioms, but also experimented in extreme avant-garde styles such as highly chromatic harmonic progressions, computer or synthesized music, and wide leaps of pitch.”\(^9\) This generation of Korean music is best represented by two composers, Suk Hee Gang (b. 1934) and Byung Dong Baek (b. 1936).

The work of both the First and Second Generations gave rise to what is now the Third Generation of Korean contemporary composers. These composers were able to successfully blend traditional Korean music and Western music elements in order to further develop Korea’s contemporary music and in so doing, to showcase it to the world, especially in the West. Representative composers of this generation include Man Bang Lee (b. 1945), Gun Yong Lee (b. 1947), Gyu Young Jin (b. 1948), Byung Eun Yu (b. 1952), and Sung Ho Hwang (b. 1955). Included in this group is Young Jo Lee (b. 1943).

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\(^7\) Ibid.

\(^8\) Kun Woo Kim, “Korean Dance Suite for Piano by Young Jo Lee: an Analysis” (PhD diss., Ball State University, 2008), 21.

\(^9\) Ibid., 22.
The distinctive compositional style of Young Jo Lee is inspired by “Korean compositional techniques, traditional Korean instruments and their characteristics.”\textsuperscript{10} Aside from obtaining his unique compositional concepts from a variety of Korean music genres, Lee is also keen on synthesizing Western compositional techniques, including the chromaticism and twelve-tone technique, with his “knowledge of Korean traditional music and its techniques to create various works in a unique and distinctive fashion.”\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{10} Yeon Jin Kim, “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” (DMA, diss., University of Arizona, 2010), 11.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 12.
CHAPTER II

YOUNG JO LEE: HIS ROOTS AND MUSICAL JOURNEY

1. Biographical Sketch of Young Jo Lee

Young Jo Lee is one of today’s leading Korean composers. He has not only made a name for himself in his country but also globally, winning several prestigious international competitions, and his music has been performed in various music festivals and concerts around the world. A member of the Third Generation of Korean contemporary composers, he is known for his unique style and dramatic sound, combining traditional Korean elements with Western influences.12

Lee was born on April 17, 1943, in Seoul, eight years before the historic division of Korea. He grew up in a household of prominent musicians: his father being the famous composer Heung Yeol Lee (1909-1981); his two brothers, Young Uk Lee (1934-2010) and Young Soo Lee (b. 1951), also becoming known composers; and his sister, Young Hee Lee (b. 1946), being a well-known pianist.13 After studying classical music with his father, the young Lee also was able to learn different methods of composition and harmony from his father’s closest friend, composer Dong Jin Kim (1913-2009).14 In addition to learning piano, Lee developed an interest in traditional Korean instruments from a young age. He furthered his knowledge of music at Yonsei University in Seoul, acquiring both a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in Composition,15 and at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago, Illinois, he earned a doctorate in

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14 Ibid., 26.
Composition, at which time he became Professor of Composition and also the dean of the School of Music at the Korean National University of the Arts.\textsuperscript{16}

2. Background in Korean Traditional Music

What Lee took a deep interest in, and what became his foundation throughout his career as a composer was what he learned from his father: the basics of Korean traditional music. The very first Korean instrument he learned to play was the hyangpiri, a small wooden flute. As Lee grew up, his interest in Korean instruments, their rhythms and sounds, increased. He went on to learn danso, a wind instrument with five holes similar to the flute, and piri, a wind instrument with eight holes similar to an oboe.\textsuperscript{17}

He then learned different Korean compositional techniques and harmonization from composer Dong Jin Kim and assimilated the use of Korean literature in his compositions in the manner of Doo Jin Park (1916-1998).\textsuperscript{18} Lee’s father was known for creating Korean art songs, such as his 1934 composition, Baugogae, upon which his son later composed a set of variations.\textsuperscript{19} In addition to folk music, Lee has since incorporated elements from a variety of Korean-composed musical traditions such as court music, harvest music, zither music, pansori, and samul nori.

3. Western Musical Influences

Young Jo Lee has not only been highly influenced by his Korean roots and musical heritage but also by the knowledge and education he acquired in Europe. Lee went on to pursue

\textsuperscript{16} Sung, “Contemporary Piano Solo Works,” 32.
\textsuperscript{17} Yeon Jin Kim, “The Musical Style,” 67.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 14.
\textsuperscript{19} Sung, “Contemporary Piano Solo Works,” 32.
Western music studies in Munich, Germany, where for three years he studied with Carl Orff (1895-1982) and Wilhelm Killmayer (b. 1927). During his stay in Munich (1977-1980), he created his first composition, “Sound for Clarinet No.3,” as well as several others that successfully incorporated Western elements.

In his quest to fill the gap between Korean traditional music and Western music, while living abroad Lee studied Western form, harmony, melody, rhythm, and texture, as well as twelve-tone technique and chromaticism.20 The inclusion of these Western elements in his compositions led the way for a new type of contemporary Korean music.

4. Major Piano Compositions

As previously mentioned, Young Jo Lee is known for his distinct musical style and fusion of traditional Korean music and Western music. He often experiments with various Korean musical genres and applies to them Western compositional techniques. Additionally, he sometimes makes use of traditional Korean musical instruments. His most notable piano works are Korean Dance Suite (1998) and Variations on the Theme of Baugogae (1983), which have been much performed both in and outside of Korea.

In Korean Dance Suite, Lee utilized the characteristics of Korean folk and dance music. These distinctive elements are “constantly repeated rhythms, syncopated patterns, and placement of irregular patterns of beats.”21 Aside from the above, the distinct sounds and rhythms of different Korean instruments can be heard in many of his works. Korean Dance Suite consists of five movements: Buddhist Dance, Children Dance, Heaven Dance, Lover’s Dance, and Peasant’s Dance. In Korean Dance Suite, Lee imitated several percussion instruments such as changgu, an

hourglass-shaped instrument,\textsuperscript{22} as well as \textit{buk}, \textit{jing}, and \textit{kwenggari}. He also imitated zither-like Korean instruments, specifically the six-stringed \textit{geomungo} and the twelve-stringed \textit{gayakeum} in this work.\textsuperscript{23}

In the \textit{Variations on the Theme of Baugogae}, Lee used traditional Korean folk idioms and Western compositional style. In addition, Lee composed this piece based on the alphabetical arrangements of a variety of Western composers such as Bach, Bartok, Beethoven, Chopin, Debussy, Messiaen, and Webern, to aid music students by providing them with a better understanding of some of the fundamental Western music styles.\textsuperscript{24} In this work, Lee exerted an effort to amalgamate traditional Korean music and Western music into a single work of art and, consequently, form his own musical language.\textsuperscript{25}

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{22} Kun Woo Kim, “Korean Dance Suite: An Analysis,” 9.
  \item \textsuperscript{23} Sung, “Contemporary Piano Solo Works,” 49.
  \item \textsuperscript{24} Sung Bok Gu-Jang. “Young Jo Lee: An analysis of stylistic features of the “Variations for Piano on the Theme Baugogae.” (DMA, diss.,University of Kentucky, 2006).
  \item \textsuperscript{25} Suk-Rahn Kwon, “Young-Jo Lee’s Variations on the theme of Baugogae: In search of his own language, a lecture recital, together with three recitals of selected works of J. Haydn, S. Rachmaninoff, R. Schumann, O. Messiaen, and F. Liszt.” (DMA, diss., University of North Texas, 2000), 5.
\end{itemize}

\vspace{1cm}
1. Background of Piano Honza Nori

One of Young Jo Lee’s most recent works is Piano Honza Nori, composed in 2010. This is a single movement virtuosic work. The work has two versions: one for violin solo and one for piano solo. Honza refers to “alone” or “single” while Nori refers to the “act of playing or a performance.”

Piano Honza Nori was commissioned for and performed at the prestigious 7th Seoul International Music Competition Semi-Finals in 2011. According to Lee himself, his piece “reveals the function of instruments and skill of a performer through its free and impromptu element, not constrained by any specific form and structure.” Despite its supposed “scattered” structure, as Lee put it, Piano Honza Nori consists of a series of imitations of complicated harmonies, rhythms, as well as imitations of several Korean traditional musical instruments. The work emphasizes samul-nori, a traditional Korean music genre which involves the playing of percussion instruments such as the glass drum and the hand gong, and several Korean bamboo musical instruments including the danso, a short flute; the daegeum, a long flute; and the piri, a Korean oboe. Imitations of the sounds of these instruments give Piano Honza Nori a genuine ambiance of Korean folk and dance music. Aside from showcasing traditional Korean music elements, Lee uses the chromatic scale, hemiola, complex texture, and polytonality, which are frequent in Western music but not at all common in Korean contemporary music.

26 Young Jo Lee, Piano Honza Nori (The 7th Seoul International Music Competition 2010).
28 Lee, Piano Honza Nori.
2. Examining Korean Traditional Music in *Piano Honza Nori*

The form of *Piano Honza Nori* is through-composed. The work is divided into several discrete sections, with the A section reappearing before the codetta in a modified version. The form of *Piano Honza Nori* is shown below in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Meter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1-13</td>
<td>M.M.=58</td>
<td>6/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>14-23</td>
<td>M.M.=80</td>
<td>3/4, 4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>24-74</td>
<td>M.M.=120</td>
<td>3/4, 6/8, 4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>75-96</td>
<td>M.M.=58</td>
<td>6/4, 5/4, 3/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A’</td>
<td>97-103</td>
<td>M.M.=80</td>
<td>3/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codetta</td>
<td>104-107</td>
<td>M.M.=120</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sections are distinctive illustrations of Korean traditional folk tunes, dances, and instruments (see Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illustration</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
<th>Meter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gong</td>
<td>1-8</td>
<td>M.M.=58, 80</td>
<td>6/4, 4/4, 5/4, 4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>9-13</td>
<td>M.M.=80</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass Drum</td>
<td>15-23</td>
<td>M.M.=80, 120</td>
<td>3/4, 4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk Tune</td>
<td>24-29</td>
<td>M.M.=120</td>
<td>3/4, 4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer’s Dance</td>
<td>30-54</td>
<td>M.M.=120</td>
<td>6/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bamboo Instruments</td>
<td>77-93</td>
<td>M.M.=58</td>
<td>5/4, 6/4, 4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass Drum</td>
<td>98-103</td>
<td>M.M.=80</td>
<td>3/4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, in evoking Korea’s traditional music, Lee makes use of traditional rhythmic modes called *jangdan* (see Table 3), a major feature of Korean traditional music.
Table 3 Korean Traditional Rhythmic Modes (*jangdan*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of <em>Jangdan</em></th>
<th>Rhythm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Kutkori</em></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Kutkori Rhythm" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Joongmori</em></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Joongmori Rhythm" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Danmori</em></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Danmori Rhythm" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Joongjoongmori</em></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Joongjoongmori Rhythm" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Hwimori</em></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Hwimori Rhythm" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Jajinmori</em></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Jajinmori Rhythm" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Semachi</em></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Semachi Rhythm" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Jangdans* are played by a Korean traditional drum called *changgu* (see Figure 1).

![Korean Traditional Drum, Changgu](image)

*Figure 1. Korean Traditional Drum, *changgu*\(^\text{30}\)

*Changgu* is a double-headed drum with a narrow waist in the middle. Players use two different wooden sticks for the two heads. The head on the left is played with a thick stick, and the one on the right is played with a thin stick. Table 4 provides an explanation of *changgu* technique in Western notation.

Table 4 The Instruction of Four Basic Strokes on *changgu*\(^\text{31}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western notation</th>
<th>Performance technique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="R L" /></td>
<td>Both heads are struck at the same time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="L" /></td>
<td>Only left head is struck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="R" /></td>
<td>Only right head is struck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="R L" /></td>
<td>Double stroke on right head (short stroke followed by main beat)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2.1. **Jajinmori**

In *Piano Honza Nori*, Lee uses three out of the seven Korean traditional rhythmic modes: *jajinmori*, *semachi*, and *hwimori*. *Jajinmori* is the most frequent used *jangdan* in the piece.

*Jajinmori* has three sub modes (see Figure 2), all of which strongly emphasize quadruple meter.

![Figure 2. Three Sub Modes of jajinmori](image)

Lee uses the second type of *jajinmori* in the *Dance Rhythm* section in mm. 9, 37 and 38.

(See example 1).

**Example 1. The Second Type of Jajinmori**
Lee also uses a modification of the second type of jajinmori in mm. 26 and 27. (See example 2).

Example 2. The Variant of the Second Type of Jajinmori

The third type of jajinmori is straight quadruple meter as seen in mm. 22 (see example 3).

Example 3. The Third Type of Jajinmori

2.2. Semachi

The second most frequently used rhythmic mode in Piano Honza Nori is triple meter semachi, which also has three sub modes (see Figure 3).
The first two types of *semachi* are characterized by energetic syncopation in terms of the first type on the first and third beat and second type on the third beat. Lee uses the *semachi* by featuring them as folk tune melodies in mm. 24 and 25 and in mm. 28 and 29. (See example 4).

Example 4. The First and Second Types of *semachi*
The third type of semachi is presented in m. 99-101 against the sounds imitating the glass drum ostinato. Here, the tones in the semachi rhythm are played in a lower register to project the weighty feeling in contrast with the light sound of the glass drum (See example 5).

Example 5. The Third Type of semachi

3. Hwimori

Hwimori (see Figure 4) represents the joyful and playful excitement of the dance rhythm.

This rhythm is comprised of a repeated rhythmic pattern of quarter and eighth notes and is associated with traditional farmer’s dances.
Figure 4. Hwimori

Hwimori appears in mm. 41 and 42—the middle of the Farmer's Festival, the fastest section in this piece. (See example 6).

Example 6. Hwimori Jangdan

4. Traditional Folk Tunes

In Piano Honza Nori, not only does Young Jo Lee use Korean traditional rhythmic jangdan modes, but he also adapts tunes from two Korean traditional folk songs, Milyang Arirang (See example 7) and Arirang (See example 8), both composed anonymously.
Example 7. *Milyang Arirang* \(^{32}\)

![Milyang Arirang Sheet Music]

Example 8. *Arirang* \(^{33}\)

![Arirang Sheet Music]

*Arirang* is Korea’s most popular folk song, and it reflects Korean culture and identity. It is Korea’s unofficial national anthem when Japan colonized Korea from 1910 to 1945 and has

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\(^{33}\) Ibid., 336.
been handed down from generation to generation through hundreds of years of oral tradition. Literally, it means “mountain pass.” *Arirang* was originally a song about the grief and pain caused by the loss of a lover. It then went on to refer to the loss of a country when Japan colonized Korea.\(^{34}\) But in spite of the feelings of sorrow and grief, *Arirang* in part brings joy and hope amidst challenges and sadness. The text references the hardships and challenges one faces when travelling through a mountain pass. There are actual places in the region that are named “Arirang Pass,” especially in the provinces. Due to its popularity and importance in Korean society, quite a number of versions of *Arirang* have been produced and performed. In fact, Korean’s *Arirang* gained international attention and popularity in the late 1880s after a visit to the region by an American missionary, Dr. Homer B. Hulbert, who witnessed the singing of this folk song.

Every region and province in Korea has its own distinct version of *Arirang*. In fact, *Arirang* has multiple versions comprised of different melodies and texts. The *Gangwon* province performs *Jeongseon Arirang*, the South *Gyeongsang* Province performs *Miryang Arirang*, and the South *Jeolla* Province performs *Jindo Arirang*. The simple yet beautiful song consists of the refrain “*Arirang, arirang, arariyo*” and two other lines easy to remember. Due to its exquisite sound and cultural importance in Korea, *Arirang* was recently selected as an intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO.\(^{35}\)

The first melody borrowed by Lee in *Piano Honza Nori* is from *Milyang Arirang*. Lee inscribes “folk tune,” above the melody that starts in mm. 24 and 28-29 (See Example 9.)

\(^{34}\) Sung, “Contemporary Piano Solo Works,” 53.
\(^{35}\) Travel Daily News Asia
Example 9. Borrowed Melody from *Milyang Arirang*

The second borrowed melody is the first phrase, mm. 1 and 2, of *Arirang*, featured in the tenor voice in the left hand in mm. 99-102 (See Example 10).
5. Farmer’s Dance

Lee’s inspiration from the Korean farmer’s dances and Korean instruments is illustrated in the section Farmer’s Festival. The traditional farmer’s dance involves singing referred to as pangut, dancing, drumming, and traditional folk band music called nong ak, which is fast-paced.
and has varied rhythms that can be described as passionate and unique. Farmers usually play several types of Korean percussion instruments such as the *buk*, or snare drum; the *changgu*, hourglass-drum; the *jing*, simple gong; the *kkwaenggwari*, small gong; and the *sogo*, barrel drum. The *samul nori*, Korea’s most popular Korean music genre, is also sometimes featured in *nong ak* with its basic use of four instruments. Another musical instrument employed is the *tapyongso*, a Korean conical-shaped oboe. The farmer’s dances also involve various performance formations.

The *Nong ak*, at its essence, is “the most primitive and exciting of all Korean dances. During harvest, seed planting, and other festivities, male farmers of a village gather together in a square under a flag, accompanied by rousing sounds of various drums and brass instruments, the farmers, clad in brightly striped costumes, whirl about madly beating a small drum grasped in each dancer’s hands.

The main motion of a farmer’s dance involves the rhythmic motif of a circle. As the costumed dancers step in rapidity in circles, swirling around and around in place, each dancer’s head sports a role in communicating the circle theme, as well. Each dancers dons a special hat that possesses a ten-foot-long pliable strip of a ribbon attached to it that flies up and arcs a broad mimic of a circle continuously, as each dancer rotates his head nonstop, to make the lightweight band flutter in ever repeating circles (see Figure 5).

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37 Ibid., 111.
38 Ibid., 109.
The swirling downward motion is represented in Piano Honza Nori by an ostinato figure moving between high F and low F three octaves below in mm.37-40 (See example 11), and this motion continues between G and E flat until the section of the Farmer’s Festival finishes.

Example 11. Depiction of Circling Motion

The instrumentation of nong ak at farmer’s festival consists of various Korean traditional percussion and brass instruments, such as small hand-drums producing quick and constant beats,

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and conical oboes playing fast melodic lines. Lee depicts these two kinds of instruments in mm.30-36 (See examples 12 and 13, respectively).

Example 12. Depiction of the Sound of a Small Hand-Drum

Example 13. Depiction of the Sound of a Conical Oboes
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Over the years, Young Jo Lee developed a unique style of composition. From major influential figures such as his father, Heung Yeol Lee, and other composers, Lee absorbed Korean traditional music and then further expanded this style to fit the Western influences. Piano Honza Nori draws on several distinct Korean sources: folk music, farmer’s dance, traditional rhythmic modes, jangdan, and the use of traditional instruments.

In Piano Honza Nori, Lee used three types of rhythmic modes: jajinmori, semachi, and hwimori when the sections of distinctive Korean character appear in the piece such as farmer’s dance, folk tune, or glass drum. In addition to using the jangdan, Lee borrowed melodies from two Korean traditional and very popular folk songs called Milyang Arirang and Arirang, and depicted the motion of a farmer’s dance and the sounds of Korean traditional instruments.

Thus, by presenting the distinctive Korean traditional elements of Piano Honza Nori, this study should help teachers, students, and performers, especially the Western ones, in exploring modern Korean music and in achieving an authentic feeling in a performance of this work.
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