

Jin Hi Kim's One Sky II For Orchestra To Premiere At Wesleyan



Jin Hi Kim's One Sky II for Orchestra, dedicated to the unification of the Koreas, will have its world premiere with Wesleyan University Orchestra at the university April 16. (Courtesy Jin Hi Kim)

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Korean composer and instrumentalist Jin Hi Kim is known for introducing Western classical audiences to the komungo, a traditional fretted zither. She has worked with American avant-gardists and improvisers like Henry Kaiser, Bill Frisell and Eugene Chadbourne.

There's an ancient tradition of court music and solo virtuosity associated with the komungo. Kim has expanded the instrument's associations by playing an electric amplified version of the zither, writing pieces for large multi-instrumental ensembles and cross-cultural collaborations. The komungo's frets allow for dramatic and expressive bends, creating a ghostly sound, and Kim is a meditative master of the difficult instrument. Students of instruments like the oud, the Japanese koto and the Indian vina might be eager to learn more about the komungo.

Kim works within a musical philosophy that views every note and every individual articulation as alive, with glissando, attack, shape and tone as a unique and living embodiment of the music/life essence. Kim is a visiting professor at Wesleyan University, and the Wesleyan University Orchestra will premiere her piece "One Sky II" as a part of a two-day mini-conference featuring music, film, discussions and more.

"One Sky II" premieres at Crowell Concert Hall, in the Wesleyan Center for the Arts, in Middletown on Monday, April 16, at 7 p.m. Free. wesleyan.edu/cfa