

# Korean Country Report

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November 27, 2011 at International Conference Room in NTCH

There was a big change in ACL-Korea last weekend. Last Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> of November, 2011, the annual general assembly took place at Seoul National University and Ms. Young-Eun Paik who is a current treasurer of ACL, was elected as a new president of ACL-Korea serving a 3 year-term. New board members will be assigned as soon as possible.

This report focuses on the activities of ACL-Korea as well as notable contemporary music events held in Korea.

**2011 ACL-Korea International Conference and Festival** is one of main events that ACL-Korea organized. In 2011 we had 4 concerts and 3 seminar sessions. Pianist Noel McRobbie and Atzuko Suzuki, Karos Percussion Ensemble, Contemporary Music Ensemble Sori, and Multimedia Ensemble Sinkro from Spain were participated for the concerts and performed nearly 30 pieces. For the seminar, Isabel Mundry, an active German woman composer, was a guest speaker for the one of the seminar sessions. She shared her philosophy and perspective on music with Korean composers and students, and two of her works were performed during the festival. Other two seminars was on the music of Chung-Gil Kim, Korean senior composer, which was delivered by music theorist, Min-Chung Son, and on the special use of numbers in Korean traditional court music, presented by Korean traditional music composer, Young-Dong Kim.

Another concert that ACL-Korea focuses on this year is **2011 ACL-Korea New Music Concert**. This one is especially for newly emerging composers. Since there are not so many performance opportunities for them, we decided to organize the concert that can promote the younger generation's compositional activities. We are fortunate to have a fund from the city of Seoul to make this concert possible. Seven Korean composers who are about to start their career as a professional composer were selected for this event.

There was a project called "**Meet the Children's Song of Asia with Sounds**" which was commissioned by Guro Cultural Foundation and was executed by ACL-Korea. The aim of this project is to collect children's songs from almost every Asian country and to make a music score. For there are issues on multicultural society in Korea these days, it is meaningful to do this project to understand more the people who come from different regions of Asia.

**Korean Composers Association** is actually the association of composer's groups, not the association of composers. In 2011 it has been organizing 10 concerts under the title of "**Korean Chamber Music Expo**" sponsored by Art Council Korea and Seoul Arts Center. The concert series has taken place in regular basis, every second Wednesday of months except July and August. The expo has been for about 5 years and from this year KCA has tried to collaborate with the Society of Western Music. For each concert one musicologist or theorist is assigned and he/she makes a presentation on the music of designated program before the concert. It serves not only as a understanding tool for new music but also as a bridge between practice and theory.

One of the interesting concerts was in last October. Young five composers including Seung-Lim Kim, Byung-Moo Lee, Nara Shin, Chung-Hoon Kim, and Ji-Hyang Kim, gathered to present five **little music dramas**. They showed the different approaches to the concept of music drama. They adopted the actor's language as a medium to connect music and drama as well as non-verbal acting of actor or performer and a resulting all the sonorities. The project definitely provided a interesting way of defining music drama in contemporary Korean music scene where the listeners are able to perceive, recognize, and interpret all the events happened on the stage by integrating aural and visual stimulation.

One of the long-term projects that KCA has planed is to build a comprehensive **database on Korean composers**. They started to collect scores, recordings, biographies, and other information related with Korean composers. It is a difficult job to organize and to implement, for it is a never-ending project. Nevertheless, KCA displays their strong will to make this business possible because it helps not only understand who we were and who we are but also reach out to the rest of world easily. Now it is in the early stage and will be quite interesting to see how it grows.

From March 24 to 27, **Korean Society of Women Composers**, which has about 150 members, had international contemporary music festival celebrating their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. They invited contemporary music ensemble Reconcil from Austria, E-mex from Germany, and Beta Collide from USA. The last concert was collaborating performance with all 3 invited ensembles and World Vision Children's Choir that is world-class choir in Korea. The concert was about the Korean folk tale and 13 women composers took their own part to compose. It was quite a grand finale for the festival. During the festival, a music journalist and a producer from Germany reported the events and all the concerts were broadcasted through German radio station later. It reconfirmed the power of women in Korean culture and their value.

**KEAMS (Korean Electro-Acoustic Music Society)** hosted 18<sup>th</sup> Seoul International Computer Music Festival including 6 concerts and conferences. GRAME, a French computer

music research center, and Sond'Ar-te, electric ensemble from Portugal, were invited for the event. Total of 40 pieces were performed during the festival. There were 78 submissions from abroad and 14 works were selected from the call for score. Aside from that, 14 pieces from Korean members and 12 pieces from the ensembles were presented. For the conference 11 papers from around the world were introduced at Seoul National University.

Dr. Seung Jae Chung, Secretary-General

ACL-Korea

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