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UMI
Rice University

Infinite Rain

by

Stephen Shukin Yip

A Thesis Submitted
In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Doctoral of Musical Arts

Approved, Thesis Committee

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October, 2000
October 31, 2000

Abstract

Infinite Rain

by Stephen Yip

Infinite Rain is based on three different T’ang and Sung lyric poems. Lyric poetry refers to poems composed to certain tunes. These three lyric poems come from different Chinese dynasties, but they all depict rain in varying moods.

Musically, there are three sections, but without breaks between the sections; hence the title, Infinite Rain. The formal structure of the entire work is in arch form: there are two divisions in the first movement, the second movement is in ABA form, and there two divisions in the last. The basic materials of the in three sections are related, and are used throughout the work.

1. Ripples Shifting Sand was written by Li Yu (937-978), in the Southern T’ang of Five Dynasty, and expresses the sadness of the poet through a description of springtime’s everlasting rain.

2. A Fisherman’s Song, was written by Zhang Zhi-he (730-782), in the T’ang Dynasty. The fisherman of this poem is symbolic of man in harmony with nature. The fisherman was enjoying life, as he fished in a light rain. The solo cello is used to imitate the most characteristic Chinese of instrument, the Ch’in, a long fretted zither.

3. Bells Ringing in the Rain, was written by Liu Yong (987-1053) during the Sung Dynasty, and describes a sudden heavy shower on an autumn day. This is the most emotional and expressive poem of the three. The lyric depicts the sorrow of a pair of lovers bidding farewell before the pavilion at the city gate of the capitol.
Infinite Rain

1. Ripples Shifting Sand
2. A Fisherman’s Song
3. Bells Ringing in the Rain

for

Chamber Orchestra

Stephen YIP
Infinite Rain (2000)

Infinite Rain is based on three different T'ang and Sung lyric poems. Lyric poetry refers to poems composed to certain tunes. These three lyric poems came from different Chinese dynasties, but they all depict the varying moods of raining days.

Musically, there are three sections, but without breaks between the sections; hence the title, Infinite Rain. The formal structure of the entire work is in an arch form: there are two divisions in the first movement, the second movement is in ABA form, and there are two divisions in the last. The basic materials in three sections are related, and are used throughout the work.

1. **Ripples Shifting Sand** was written by Li Yu (937-978), in the Southern T'ang of Five Dynasty, and expresses the sadness of the poet through a description of springtime’s everlasting rain.

2. **A Fisherman’s Song**, was written by Zhang Zhi-he (730-782), in the T’ang Dynasty. The fisherman of this poem is symbolic of man in harmony with nature. The fisherman was enjoying life, as he fished in a light rain. The solo cello is used to imitate the most characteristic of Chinese instrument, the Ch'in, a long fretted zither.

3. **Bells Ringing in the Rain**, was written by Liu Yong (987-1053) during the Sung Dynasty, and describes a sudden heavy shower on an autumn day. This is the most emotional and expressive poem of the three. The lyric depicts the sorrow of a pair of lovers bidding farewell before the pavilion at the city gate of the capitol.


**Instrumentation**

Flute

Oboe

Bb Clarinet (d. Bass Clarinet)

Horn in F

Trumpet in C (Straight Mute and Cup Mute are needed)

Trombone (Straight Mute and Cup Mute are needed)

Percussion I: Marimba, Vibraphone, Glockenspiel, and Chimes

Percussion II: Three different sizes Woodblocks, Bass drum, One small Temple Block, and Glockenspiel

Harp

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Doublebass

Accidentals apply for the duration of a measure unless tied over into the next measure.

**SCORE IN C:** the notes sound where written except for Glockenspiel (sounding two octaves above) and Doublebass (sounding an octave below).
Poems

I. *Ripples Shifting Sand*  
Li Yu
The curtain cannot keep out the patter of rain,
Springtime is on the wane.
In the deep of the night my quilt is not cold-proof,
Still in my dream I seek for pleasures vain.

Don’t lean alone on the railings and
Yearn for the boundless land!
To bid farewell is easier than to meet again.
With flowers fallen on the waves spring’s gone amain,
So is the paradise of men.

II. *A Fisherman’s Song*  
Zhang Zhi-he
In front of western hills white egrets fly up and down,
In peach-mirrored stream mandarin fish are full grown.
In my blue bamboo hat
And green straw cloak, I’d fain.
Go fishing careless of slanting wind and fine rain.

III. *Bells Ringing in the Rain*  
Liu Yong
Cicadas chill
And drearily shrill,
We stand face to face at an evening hour
Before the pavilion, after a sudden shower.
Can I care for drinking before we part?
At the city gate
Where we’re lingering late,
But the boat is waiting for me to depart.
Hand in hand, we gaze at each other’s tearful eyes
And burst into sobs with words congealed on our lips.
I’ll go my way
Far, far away
On miles and miles of misty waves where sail the ships,
Evening clouds hang low in boundless Southern skies.

Parting lovers would grieve as of old.
How could I stand this clear autumn day so cold!
Where shall I be found at day’s early break
From wine awake?
Moored by a riverbank planted with willow trees
Beneath the waning moon and in the morning breeze.

(Translation by Xu Yuanzhong)
Infinite Rain

1. Ripples Shifting Sand

Stephen YTP

Moderato con animato

Flute

Oboe

Bass Clarinet

F Horn

C Trumpet

Trombone

Percussion I

Percussion II

Harp

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Bass
II. A Fisherman's Song

Andante e cantabile

Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Cor.
Tpt.
Tbn.
Perc. I
Perc. II
Harp
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
D.B.
III. Bells Ringing in the Rain

Allegretto e eccitato \( \text{s} = 120 \)

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Cor.

Tpt.

Trbn.

Perc. I

Glockenspiel

Perc. II

Temple Block (small)

Harp

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.