

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Music Department
香港中文大學音樂系



12:30-2:00 pm, Tuesday, 7 November 2006
G03 Hui Yeung Shing Building

Colloquium

“The Issue of Time in *Quatrain II* by Toru Takemitsu”

(in English)

A talk by Dr. Ada Lai
M.Mus, M.Phil (CUHK), PhD (Melbourne)

Abstract:

This study focuses on the projection of time in *Quatrain II* (1977), written for clarinet, violin, cello and piano by Japanese composer Tōru Takemitsu (1930-1996). It involves the examination of a variety of concepts rooted in the traditional notion of time in Japan, such as the unique spatial-temporal concept of *ma*, and the more linear perception of time in the West. This East-West approach in observing the essence of time in *Quatrain II* is based on Takemitsu's exposure to both Japanese and Western cultures, which played a major role in the development of his musical language and aesthetic. By tracing the links between the temporality in *Quatrain II* and the notions of time in traditional Japanese and Western cultures, this study positions *Quatrain II* as a defining moment among Takemitsu's oeuvre in the investigation of time in his music.

All are welcome

ADA LAI

Ada Lai completed her MMus (Composition) and MPhil (Music Theory) at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She was then awarded a scholarship to study in Australia, and graduated with a PhD in Composition from the University of Melbourne in 2003. Upon completion of her studies she immediately returned to Hong Kong to take up her positions as part-time lecturer at the music departments of the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the University of Hong Kong. From 2004 she has been Membership Secretary of the Hong Kong Composers' Guild.

Her master's thesis and doctoral dissertation are on the music of Messiaen and Toru Takemitsu respectively. She has presented papers at the annual conferences of the Musicological Society of Australia (2001, 2002), at the Symposium of the International Musicological Society (2004) and at the "Art and Time" symposium organized by the Australian National University and the National Institute of the Humanities and Creative Arts, Australia in 2005.

Works by Lai have been performed at the ISCM World Music Days Hong Kong 2002, in USA at the annual concert of the International Alliance for Women in Music, and at Asian Composers' League music festivals held in Taiwan, Melbourne, Seoul, and Tokyo. In 2005, she was commissioned by The Composers and Authors Society of Hong Kong to write a chamber piece "The Stars Are Not Wanted Now" for Musicarama, a major new music festival in Hong Kong. Performers of her works have included the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, the Hong Kong Pure Strings, artists from the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, the International Alliance for Women in Music, Taiwan, and Ensemble Contrasts (Melbourne, Australia).