WATER PLAY
FOR CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

A THESIS IN
Music Composition

Presented to the Faculty of University of Missouri-Kansas City in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MUSIC

by
MENGYUAN WANG

B.M., WUHAN Conservatory of Music, 2021

Kansas City, Missouri
2024
WATER PLAY

FOR CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

Mengyuan Wang, Candidate for the Master of Music Degree

University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2024

ABSTRACT

*Water Play* is a musical piece that integrates traditional Chinese elements, drawing inspiration from ancient Chinese culture's praise and depiction of water. It aims to present the rich imagery of water in Chinese culture. In Chinese culture, water symbolizes life, flow, and change, regarded as the source and foundation of all things, as it nourishes life and promotes growth. The continuous flow of water symbolizes the passage of time and the ever-changing nature of life, reflecting the continuity and cyclical nature of life. Through the medium of music, the piece portrays various forms and characteristics of water, such as melting ice, flowing streams, and surging waves. In *Water Play*, music is not merely a combination of sounds but also a tribute to and expression of the natural element of water. Through the emotional expression conveyed by the music, listeners feel as though they are placed beside a clear stream or standing at the tumultuous shore of the river, experiencing the power of water and the flow of life. The piece begins with an image of melting ice; the sound of pizzicatos symbolizes the breaking up of the ice, and then the water drops gradually converge into a trickle of water, symbolized by a long melody. Notes splash, like water dancing between the sky and the ground. Water frolics in the stream, resembling a group of joyful children, sometimes jumping, sometimes swirling, emitting crisp laughter. They chase after each other, intertwine, and perform a vibrant dance. At the end of the piece, everything returns to peace, symbolizing the cyclical nature of water.
The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the UMKC Conservatory have examined a thesis titled Water Play, presented by Mengyuan Wang, candidate for the Master of Music degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

Supervisory Committee

Chen Yi, DMA, Committee Chair
University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory

Paul Rudy, DMA
University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory

Yotam Haber, DMA
University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory
CONTENTS

ABSTRACT--------------------------------------------------------iii
SCORE------------------------------------------------------------1
VITA-------------------------------------------------------------41
Water Play
For Chamber Ensemble

Mengyuan WANG

Kansas City
2024
Water Play is a musical piece that integrates traditional Chinese elements, drawing inspiration from ancient Chinese culture's praise and depiction of water. It aims to present the rich imagery of water in Chinese culture. In Chinese culture, water symbolizes life, flow, and change, regarded as the source and foundation of all things, as it nourishes life and promotes growth. The continuous flow of water symbolizes the passage of time and the ever-changing nature of life, reflecting the continuity and cyclical nature of life. Through the medium of music, the piece portrays various forms and characteristics of water, such as melting ice, flowing streams, and surging waves. In Water Play, music is not merely a combination of sounds but also a tribute to and expression of the natural element of water. Through the emotional expression conveyed by the music, listeners feel as though they are placed beside a clear stream or standing at the tumultuous shore of the river, experiencing the power of water and the flow of life.

This piece can be divided into three sections with coda. The first section depicts the melting of the ice; the sound of pizzicatos symbolizes the breaking up of the ice, and then the water drops gradually converge into a trickle of water, symbolized by a long melody. In second section, notes splash like water dancing between the sky and the ground. The third section is the golden section of the piece, water frolics in the stream, resembling a group of joyful children, sometimes jumping, sometimes swirling, emitting crisp laughter. They chase after each other, intertwine, and perform a vibrant dance. At the end of the piece, everything returns to peace, symbolizing the cyclical nature of water.
INSTRUMENTATION

Flute/Piccolo
Percussion I: Marimba
Percussion II: Vibraphone
Violin
Viola
Double Bass
PERFORMANCE NOTES

•: throw the bow col legno while left hand muffles the strings to make a un-pitched percussive sound.

Ø: use the left hand to strike the strings then hold them to dampen, creating a percussive sound.
WATER PLAY
for chamber ensemble

Mengyuan Wang (2024)
Water drops converge into a trickle of water.
throw the bow col legno while left hand muffles the strings to make a un-pitched percussive sound.
B Water splashes

53

Fl.

Mar.

Vib.

Vln.

Vla.

Cb.

Hard mallet

Hard mallet

pizz.

pizz.

pizz.

pizz.

14

56

Fl.

Mar.

Vib.

Vln.

Vla.

Cb.

pizz.

pizz.

pizz.

pizz.

arfco

arfco

arfco

arfco
Water jumping, chasing, and swirling

Hard mallet
use the left hand to strike the strings then hold them to dampen, creating a percussive sound.
Mar.
Vln.
Vla.
Cb.

150

153

Fl.
Mar.
Vib.
Vln.
Vla.
Cb.

{ }
much air

ordinary air
\( \text{\textcopyright 60 Return to peace} \)

\begin{align*}
\text{Fl.} & : \quad \text{p}
\text{Mar.} & : \\
\text{Vib.} & : \quad \text{Soft mallet}
\text{Vln.} & : \\
\text{Vla.} & : \quad \text{f}
\text{Cb.} & : \quad \text{f}
\end{align*}
Mengyuan WANG is a composer and performer born and raised in China. She crafts compositions for soloists, chamber ensembles, orchestras, and the realm of electronic music, each piece a testament to her dedication to meticulous logic and sonic innovation. Her work, steeped in a rich tapestry of styles and genres, reimagines traditional Chinese music for the contemporary era, accentuating the delicate intricacies of tone and the lively interplay of rhythms. Predominantly performed in China and the United States, her music transcends cultural boundaries, offering audiences a unique fusion of the tradition and the avant-garde.

WANG is currently completing her studies as a scholarship recipient, working towards her Master of Music in Composition at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory, where she is under the tutelage of distinguished professors including Chen Yi, Zhou Long, Paul Rudy, and Yotam Haber. With a foundation in Chinese dulcimer and piano from childhood, Wang was admitted to the Affiliated High School of Wuhan Conservatory of Music in 2010. There, she honed her skills in piano and composition, guided by Professors Wang Jian and Wu Shuang. In 2016, she furthered her education at the same conservatory specializing in Composition and Composition Technology Theory under the mentorship of Professor Zhang Qiong and received a Bachelor of Arts degree.

Throughout her undergraduate journey, WANG distinguished herself by securing several awards at professional competitions. Notably, she clinched the first prize in the chamber music category at the 29th International Composition for Young Musicians in Italy. Her academic excellence and innovative prowess were recognized in 2020 when she was selected for the top tier of the Wuhan Conservatory of Music’s Cultivation Program for Top Innovative Talents, a testament to her exceptional talent and potential in the field of music composition.