

Akira Nishimura



Samudra Manthan (2015)
(The Churning of the Ocean Milk)

Length: 20 minutes

World Premiere by ZOFO: April 27, 2017,
Embassy of Switzerland, Washington, DC
Presented by the Embassy Series of
Washington

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AUDIO SAMPLE (coming soon)

Notes from the composer about *Samudra Manthan*:

“The piece is inspired by a story of world creation by Hindu myths.”

Akira Nishimura

Mr. Nishimura was born in Osaka 1953. He studied composition and musical theory to post graduate level at Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music. In 1977 he won the first of his numerous later prize winnings at the Queen Elizabeth International Music Composition Competition with HETEROPHONY for string quartet (1975) and the Luigi Dallapiccola Composition Award with MUTAZIONI (1977). In 1980 KECAK (1979) was selected as the best work at the International Rostrum of Composers , and he won awards at the ISCM World Music Days with ODE for EKSTASIS (1981) in 1982, then in 1984, 1988 and 1990. The Otaka Prizes were awarded to him in 1988 for HETEROPHONY for two pianos and orchestra(1987), in 1992 for A RING OF LIGHTS, double concerto for violin, piano and orchestra, and in 1993 for INTO THE LIGHTS OF THE ETERNAL

CHAOS. In 2001, he was awarded the ExxonMobil Music Prize and in 2004, the Suntory Music Award. He was composer-in-residence of the Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa (1993-94) and of the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra (1994-97).

Nishimura principally employs heterophony, a characteristic device of Asian traditional music, thereby subtly transforming the intervals, rhythm and melody of his dense multi-layered textures. Though similar to 'micropolyphony' of Ligeti, an Asian perspective informs his technique. Some works are heterophonic melodically, such as HETEROPHONY (1975), and some rhythmically, as in KECAK; the superimposition of trills, tremolos and harmonics contributes to the more complex textures of his later works.

He has been commissioned from many overseas music festivals and ensembles such as ULTIMA Contemporary Music Festival Oslo, Octobre en Normandie, Arditti Quartet, Kronos Quartet, ELISION Ensemble, Hannover Society of Contemporary Music and so on.

He is currently a Professor at the Tokyo College of Music and the Musical Director of the Izumi Sinfonietta Osaka, KUSATSU International Music Festival.

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