

Seung-Won Oh is an internationally acclaimed composer whose work articulates a distinctive sonic language in which ritual, resonance, spatial imagination, and contemporary musical thought converge. Her music unfolds as an experiential field—immersive and, at times, participatory—revealing the human presence embedded in sound-making itself. Rather than positioning culture as a binary or geography as a boundary, her work engages music as a global acoustic phenomenon shaped by movement, memory, and collective attention.

Her music has been commissioned and performed widely across Europe, Asia, and the United States by leading orchestras, ensembles, and festivals, including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Asko|Schönberg, Musicus Soloists Hong Kong, New European Ensemble, November Music Festival, the Amsterdam Cello Biennale, and the Tongyeong International Music Festival, and support from organizations such as the Barlow Endowment, the Ernst von Siemens Musikstiftung and the Fonds Podiumkunsten. First recognized as “a name to remember” (de Volkskrant, 2003) following her debut professional commission, *DaDeRimGill* for percussion sextet, Oh has since developed a body of work noted for its vivid physicality, ritual intensity, and refined sonic transparency.

Large-scale works such as the theatrical requiem *YeonDo* (2020) [연도: purgatory prayer], *Umbra* for cello, ondes Martenot, and string orchestra, and the orchestral *Spiri* trilogy exemplify her artistic approach. In *YeonDo*, performers are spatially dispersed—soloist, choir, percussion quartet, and orchestra occupying distinct locations before gradually converging—while the audience is invited into the ritual through direct sonic participation. Percussion, a hallmark of her compositional voice, often assumes a structural and symbolic function, shaping time, movement, and collective focus. These spatial and theatrical dimensions are not ornamental but integral to the musical form, frequently requiring unconventional staging to fully realize a work's intent.

At the core of Oh's music lies a sustained meditation on nature, cosmology, and the fragility of human existence within vast temporal cycles. Her works are interconnected through recurring materials, self-referential echoes, and transformative motifs, forming an evolving continuum in which beginnings and endings dissolve into one another. Each composition is both autonomous and part of a larger inquiry into sound as ritual, space, and shared experience.

Oh has received numerous international honors, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Goddard Lieberson Fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Witold Lutosławski Award, the Toonzetters Prize, and the Kees van Baaren Prize for outstanding orchestral and music-theatrical work. She has held residencies at Yaddo, MacDowell, Bellagio Center of the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Instituto Sacatar, and has received continuous support from Fonds Podiumkunsten.

Her artistic trajectory spans multiple educational and professional contexts. She earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Ewha Womans University in Seoul, completed a Ph.D. at Brandeis University, and later studied with Louis Andriessen at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague. She has taught at Brandeis University, MIT, the University of Florida, Oberlin Conservatory, DePaul University, and the Royal Conservatory of The Hague. Since 2021, she has devoted herself fully to composition, continuing to expand a practice that situates contemporary music within a globally resonant and deeply human acoustic ecology.