

# Yoon-Ji Lee, composer

## Biography



Korean-born, New York/Boston-based composer **YOON-JI LEE** creates unconventional, non-linear music. The unique features of her compositions focus on rapidly transforming gestures, textures, harmonies, and tone colors, all weaved intricately into both acoustic and electroacoustic mediums.

Lee's recent commissioned projects include: Opera **Sunday Supper** ([National Sawdust](#)), **Migration** ([Hinge Ensemble](#)), **Angels Broken** ([MusicUnitesUs](#)), **Accents** ([Dinosaur Annex Music Ensemble](#)), **INTRA II** ([ensemble mise-en](#)), an investigation of the sonic and semantic elements of language, identity, and culture scored for viola and electronics; 짜리릿 / **Zi-ri-rit** ([Washington Square Contemporary Music Society](#)), an electrification of personal images, emotions, and memories written for chamber ensemble; and

**Contact Place** ([ensemble mise-en](#), cond. David Bloom), an electric guitar concerto composed after the choreography of Pina Bausch (soloist JP McShane). Other recent works by Lee include **In the Time of Blue Ball** ([Dither Quartet](#)), for electric guitar quartet, based on a novel by Manuela Draeger; and **About Face**, a setting of poetry by Caroline Bergvall, scored for soprano and double string quartet ([JACK](#) and [Mivos](#) Quartets with soprano Elizabeth Farnum).

Improvisation is an important aspect to Lee's creative work and research. In addition to her fully-composed works, Lee utilizes contextual improvisation, in which she curates specific materials and frameworks for performers to improvise within. Her work, **Wind & Stone II**, written for Korean piri and senghwang, percussion, and electronics, was premiered by Satoshi Takeishi and Gamin H. Kang and was broadcasted by Gugak Broadcasting Foundation in Korea.

Yoon-Ji Lee's works have been performed in Korea and in the U.S. by [Argento Ensemble](#), [Momenta Quartet](#), [JACK Quartet](#), [Mivos Quartet](#), [ensemble mise-en](#), [International Contemporary Ensemble \(ICE\)](#), [Kammerensemble Neue Musik Berlin](#), [Either/Or Ensemble](#), [Talea Ensemble](#), [NODUS ensemble](#), Musique à la Mode, and TimeTable Percussion Trio, among many others.

Lee received the Artist Fellowship from the [Mass Cultural Council](#), the Jane Geuting Camp Fellowship from the [Virginia Center for the Creative Arts](#), and the Patsy Lu Award from [International Alliance of Women in Music](#). Lee has had artist residencies at [National Sawdust](#), [Virginia Center for the Creative Arts](#), [Brush Creek Foundation for the Arts](#), and [Atlantic Center for the Arts](#). At ACA, she worked closely with [Elliott Sharp](#), whose work, **Then go** (for P'ansori and 16 Intonarumori), is the subject of her Ph.D. dissertation.

As a child, Lee primarily studied piano, as well as violin, voice, organ, and the traditional Korean P'ansori drum. After earning her Bachelor's Degree at [Ewha Woman's University](#) in Seoul, she moved to the U.S. to study with [Robert Cogan](#) at [New England Conservatory](#) in Boston. Lee was the first Korean student to enter [New York University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences](#) composition Ph.D. program, for which she

received the Henry M. MacCracken Fellowship. At NYU, she studied with [Elizabeth Hoffman](#) and has previously worked with [Louis Karchin](#). Lee has worked in masterclass settings with [Kaija Saariaho](#), [Younghi Pagh-Paan](#), [Maria de Alvear](#), [Helmut Lachenmann](#), [Chaya Chernowin](#), and [Matthias Pintscher](#). In 2015, she earned her Ph.D. in composition and theory at NYU under the guidance of Elizabeth Hoffman and did her Masters and Graduate Diploma with Robert Cogan at New England Conservatory. Lee is currently Assistant Professor at Berklee College of Music and also taught at NYU from 2009 to 2017.