

Ssu-Yu Huang

Enchanted Island

for eight guitars

(2013)

Yu Music Edition

Program Note

Enchanted Island is an octet for eight guitars. The piece was inspired by the Yami tribe on Orchid Island off the coast of Taiwan, especially by their aboriginal legends and rites. Because of the boundless fantasy enlivened by the island's mythological formation and the Yami's ancestral fables, this piece is named Enchanted Island. The music consists of the following five sections to depict Yami's legendary inception on the island, worship of the ocean, and ceremonial rituals.

1. Overture: the Mythological Origin. The uninhabited island is tranquil, mysterious, and abysmal. The ocean waves are sometimes calm and sometimes fierce. As uneasiness fills the air, a sealed wooden box drifts from the sea and runs ashore. A god-created man comes out of a wooden box and becomes the ancestor of the Yami people.
2. Song of the South Island: The music depicts a sunny afternoon right after a rain storm. Fishing boats sporadically dock by the shore, forming a beautiful picture. Tribal people beat and sun-dry fishing nets, and hum a melody that resonates through the air. The harmonics and augmentations lay out the background for contrasting a simple melody line of a recitative style, which further develops with free-style counterpoint.
3. The Call of the Sea: The servants of the sea sing and worship the ocean. This section is a transition and variation from the previous section.
4. The Voyage: Yami people set sails for the sea at night. They light up thatch torches to lure the flying fish into the net. This section represents the wavy sea with a form of stubborn notes, the appearance of the flying fish with an intermittent melody, and the lighted torches with a free flow of repetitive single notes. The music sketches out the scene of the night fishing with torches.
5. Flying Fish Festival: The Flying Fish Festival is one of the important festivals of the Yami. The flying fish is regarded as a gift from the gods. In this annual ritual they pray for peace, good harvest, and prosperity. This section is full of passion and dynamics. The pulsing but asymmetric meters leads the progression of the ritual. A climax is reached in the end with uniformly executed rasgueado, symbolizing the fulfillment of good harvest.

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Score

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♩ = 42

sim.

Guitar 1: *ff*, *ff*, *ff*, *f*, *ff*

Guitar 2: *ff*, *ff*

Guitar 3: *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *f*, *ff*

Guitar 4: *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *f*, *ff*

Guitar 5: -

Guitar 6: *mf*, *f*, *mf*, *f*, *ff*

Guitar 7: *f*, *mf*, *f*, *ff*

Guitar 8: -

Plectrum



Gtr. 1: *fp*, *pp*, *ad lib.*, *mf*

Gtr. 2: *fp*, *mp*, *mf*

Gtr. 3: *p*, *fp*, *pp*

Gtr. 4: *p*, *fp*, *pp*

Gtr. 5: *f*, *ff*

Gtr. 6: *fp*, *pp*

Gtr. 7: *f*, *sfz*

Gtr. 8: *sfz*

