

## Jin Hi Kim

### *Dong Dong Touching the Moons*

Began studies of traditional Korean music at South Korea's first national high school for Korean traditional music in 1973, at the age of 16. There, she learned both court and folk styles of singing, drumming, and bamboo flutes and selected the *komungo*, an ancient fretted bass zither with six silk strings that are plucked with a thin bamboo stick, as her major instrument. Her selection of the instrument was audacious; dating to the fourth century, the *komungo* had been favoured particularly by male Confucian scholars, and was generally not played by women. She continued her studies with National Living Treasures from the National Center for Korean Traditional Performing arts in Seoul, as well as with Korea's leading ethnomusicologists, eventually earning a B.A. degree in Korean traditional music from Seoul National University in 1980. Interested in learning more about the music of other cultures but aware that this would not be possible in Korea, she emigrated in August 1980 to the United States, where she immersed herself in many different world music styles. She attended the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, the San Francisco Music and Art Institute and Mills College in Oakland, California, where she received an MFA in electronic music and composition in 1985.

Jin Hi Kim is highly acclaimed as both an innovative *komungo* virtuoso and for her cross-cultural compositions. Kim has introduced the Korean indigenous *komungo* for the first time into Western contemporary music scene with her wide array of pioneering compositions for chamber ensemble, orchestra, avant-garde jazz improvisations and multicultural ensembles. She has co-designed the world's only *electric komungo*.

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