



Bard College Conservatory of Music

Bard Chinese Ensemble

Presented by the US-China Music Institute

Shutong Li, *conductor*

Sunday, December 3, 2023 at 2 pm
László Z. Bitó '60 Conservatory Building

The North-easterly Wind 《东北风》 Sui Lijun

Spring Blossoms on a Moonlit River 《春江花月夜》 Traditional
arr. Qin Pengzhang and Luo Zhongrong

Silk Road Fantasia Guanzi Concerto Mov. 2, 5 《丝绸之路幻想曲》 Zhao Jiping
Hui Man Chan, guanzi

Intermission

Drunk in Great Peace and Prosperity Guzheng Trio 《醉太平》 Liu Le

The Picture of Autumn Cattail and Hibiscus Guqin Concerto 《秋蒲蓉宾图》 Li Yuejin
Wenrui Shi, guqin

Ode to the Sun 《王丹红》 Wang Denhong
Mvt. 4: Transporting Goods to and from the Mountain 《挑山》
Mvt. 1: Stepping Across the River 《踏江》

All pieces in this program arranged or re-arranged by Shutong Li.

PROGRAM NOTES

Sui Lijun

***The North-easterly Wind* 《东北风》**

This composition uses the musical structure of "Er Ren Zhuan" (a traditional Chinese musical form for two performers) and "Piyingshi" (shadow play) as its source material. It unfolds with the fiery performance of the *suona* (a double-reed wind instrument), depicting the passionate, tough, and down-to-earth spirit of the people from Northeast China. In the middle section, plucked instruments and wind chimes portray a gentle breeze, followed by the sounds of the *guzheng* (a traditional Chinese zither), *sanxian* (a large three-stringed plucked instrument), and *banhu* (a bowed string instrument), which evoke the variations of traditional opera. The final section reintroduces the material from both musical forms, concluding the entire piece with a spirited and vigorous performance.

Traditional

arr. Qin Pengzhang and Luo Zhongrong

***Spring Blossoms on a Moonlit River* 《春江花月夜》**

This composition originally belonged to the traditional large-scale narrative music genre for the pipa, known by various names in different musical traditions such as "Sunset Xiao and Drum" or "Pipa of Xunyang". In 1925, for a performance at the Shanghai Datong Music Society by renowned musicians Zheng Qinwen and Liu Yaozhang, this ancient piece was arranged for a small-scale ensemble and given the name *Spring Blossoms on a Moonlit*. In 1983, Qin Pengzhang and Luo Zhongrong adapted it into a national orchestral piece with the pipa as the leading instrument, based on the Datong Music Society version. The composition unfolds like an ink wash painting, vividly depicting the enchanting scenery of a moonlit night by the spring river. It is divided into eight sections: Bell and Drum at the Riverside Pavilion, Moon Rising over the Eastern Mountain, Layered Shadows of Flowers, Deep Waters and Clouds, Fishing Boat Singing in the Evening, Turbulent Waves Hitting the Shore, Returning Boat, and Conclusion.

Zhao Jiping

***Silk Road Fantasia Guanzi Concerto, Movements 2, 5* 《丝绸之路幻想曲》**

This work was composed by Zhao in the 1980s as a tribute to his late father Zhao Wangyun (1906-1977), the founder of Chang'an Painting School. The piece is composed of five movements to narrate the experiences of his father painting along the Silk Road, starting from Chang'an and heading into the Qilian Mountains. Elements of the musical traditions of Qinqiang, Hua'er, Muqam and other ethnic minorities along the Silk Road were used as the composing materials, fusing western elements into the Chinese national music language in the form of a concerto. The five movements of the fantasia suite are: The Song of Baliu, The Lilt of the Ancient Roads, The Music of Liangzhou, The Dream of Loulan, and The Dance of Qiuci.

The composer's approach to depicting his father's paintings from life along the Silk Road demonstrates the inheritance of art between father and son through the bonds of body and soul.

Liu Le

***Drunk in Great Peace and Prosperity Guzheng Trio* 《醉太平》**

Commissioned by the Song Dynasty Cultural Heritage Project in Zhejiang Province, this work takes its name from the Song lyric and musical form "Zui Taiping" ("Drunken Peace"). The composition's melody is delicate, elegant, and exudes a tranquil beauty. It not only carries a rich traditional classical atmosphere, but also radiates the refined demeanor of Song Dynasty nobility, showcasing the rhythmic beauty of Song lyrics and the pure essence of Chinese music.

Yuejin Li

***The Picture of Autumn Cattail and Hibiscus Guqin Concerto* 《秋蒲蓉宾图》**

This work is inspired by an 11th century Chinese painting of the same name by Cui Bai. The composer left a note under the title on the score:

*Through cloud layers stretching thousands of miles,
Above myriad hills and evening snow,
To whom should this lonely shadow go?*

These lines are quoted from an ancient Chinese poem by Yuan Haowen, which describes how a wild goose, the classic symbol of fidelity to love in Chinese literature, remains alone until death after losing its lifelong mate. Through this piece, the composer praises faithful and undying love.

Wang Danhong

Ode to the Sun

Movement 4: Transporting Goods to and from the Mountain 《挑山》

Ode to the Sun is a four-movement Chinese orchestral piece that draws on indigenous folk elements of the Bayu area (Sichuan and Chongqing in southwestern China). The melody of its second movement, "Transporting Goods to and from the Mountain", is taken from the Chongqing folk song "The Boxwood Shoulder Pole". The lighthearted, mischievous tune depicts the lively scene of the fearless people "crossing the mountains with loads of rice on their shoulders, working hard to make a living", as they maneuver the rugged mountainous terrain.

Movement 1: Stepping Across the River 《踏江》

"Stepping Across the River", the first movement of *Ode to the Sun*, is inspired by the lives of boatmen and porters of the turbulent upper reaches of the Yangtze River. It showcases the bold spirit of the laboring people, who are unyielding in the face of the harsh natural environment.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Shutong Li, conductor

Shutong Li joined USCMCI in 2021 as the assistant conductor of Bard Chinese Ensemble, Bard East/West Ensemble, and the annual NY China Now Festival. From 2017-2019, he was the founder and music director of Musicians For Musicians in New Mexico, where he organized and conducted 19 projects with 38 public concerts and hosted over 50 young opera singers and instrumental soloists. At that time, he also served as chief conductor of the Symphony of Albuquerque and UNM Health Sciences Centers Orchestra. Shutong has also worked with orchestras such as Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra, The Orchestra Now, State Opera Stara Zagora, Chinese Music Ensemble of New York, Orchestra of the New Asia CMS, Dolce Suono Choir, China National Chorus, and the Bard Philharmonic Orchestra.

Hiu Man Chan CMC '25, suona and guanzi

Freelance musician of the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, **Hiu Man Chan** is in his first-year studying *suona* and *guanzi* performance in the Master of Arts in Chinese Music and Culture program at the Bard Conservatory under the tutelage of Master Yazhi Guo. Chan graduated with honors with a Bachelor of Music degree at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, where he pursued dual specializations in suona and guanzi. Throughout his studies, Chan received guidance from various mentors, including the founding dean of the American Academy of World Music, international wind instruments master Guo Yazhi, suona master Liu Ying, Cantonese music master Yu Qi-wei, and renowned composer Tsang Yip-fat. Chan has extensive experience in performing both locally and internationally. At the end of 2018, he performed in Singapore with the Hong Kong Youth Chinese Orchestra. In 2019, he traveled to Toronto with the Hong Kong Youth Chinese Orchestra and performed as soloist for the suona concerto "Watching Yangge". Chan is actively involved in contemporary music and the performance of new works.

Wenrui Shi CMC '24, guqin

Wenrui Shi is one of the first candidates in the Master of Arts in Chinese Music and Culture program at the Bard College Conservatory of Music. At 15, she fell in love with the guqin and received guidance from Professor Zhao Jiazhen. She studied guqin with Xiao Xiao at East China Jiaotong University. In 2018, She won silver prize in the professional group of the first China-Canada Arts Festival and International Invitation Competition, gold prize in the Jiangxi Region of the Second Hongqin Cup, and first prize in the professional group of the first Folk Instrumental Music Art Exhibition in Jiangxi Province. In the 2019 Second Hongqin Cup, she won the gold prize for the Youth A Group. In 2022, she was awarded Outstanding Instructor of the Third Hongqin Cup. For The 4th Singapore Guqin Arts Festival "Nan Feng Bei" International Guqin Competition, she was awarded Outstanding Instructor. In addition, many of her students have won gold or silver medals.

BARD CHINESE ENSEMBLE

Shutong Li, conductor and arranger

Flute

Elizabeth Bennett

Liliána Sokol

Guzheng

Yixin Wang

Sunnie Ling

Lucina Yue (guzheng trio)

Violin

Noa Doucette

Yida An

Mingyue Xia

Clarinet

Jalen Mims

Timpani

Jaelyn Quilizapa

Viola

Chloe Slane

Bassoon

Chloe Brill

Katriel Kirk

Chinese Percussion

Yining Zhu

Bryan Wang

Wenrui Shi

Danni Chen

Logan Rishard

Cello

Abby Wolf

Suona/ Guanzi

Hiu Man Chan

Bass

Njya Lubang

Pipa

Xi Lu

Jinou Dong

Xiaoyan Luo

Wenjun Lu

Erhu

Beitong Liu

Konghou

Kexilin Ke

Jiayi Sun

Piano

Neo Neo Chen

Guqin (soloist)

Wenrui Shi

Zhongruan

Yuling Nan

ABOUT THE BARD CHINESE ENSEMBLE

The Bard Chinese Ensemble is one of the key components of the Chinese instrument major at the Bard Conservatory, offering numerous public performance opportunities for students of Chinese instruments. Students of Western instruments are also encouraged to participate, as well as non-majors with interest in Chinese music. The Ensemble performs at least two major concerts on campus every semester to showcase the varied styles of both modern and traditional Chinese instrumental music.

ABOUT THE US-CHINA MUSIC INSTITUTE

The US-China Music Institute was founded in 2017 by conductor Jindong Cai and Robert Martin, founding director of the Bard College Conservatory of Music, with the mission to promote the study, performance, and appreciation of music from contemporary China and to support musical exchange between the United States and China. In partnership with the prestigious Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, the Institute has embarked on several groundbreaking projects including the first degree-granting programs in Chinese instrument performance in a U.S. conservatory, the annual China Now Music Festival focusing on music from contemporary China, annual scholarly conferences, and public Chinese music education programs.

barduschinamusic.org

Jindong Cai, Director

Kathryn Wright, Managing Director

Hsiao-Fang Lin, Director of Music Programming

Shutong Li, Assistant Conductor and Chamber Music Coordinator

Weiber Consulting: Wei Zhou and Yu Cao, PR and Marketing

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COMING UP FROM THE US-CHINA MUSIC INSTITUTE

THE SOUND OF SPRING

A Chinese New Year Concert with The Orchestra Now

Saturday, February 10 at Fisher Center

Sunday, February 11 at Jazz at Lincoln Center

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US-CHINA MUSIC INSTITUTE

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