



University of North Texas College of Music

Guest Artist | Friday, September 20, 2024 | 6:30 p.m.
Paul Voertman Concert Hall

Formosa Trio

Chen-Yu Huang, harp
Tze-Ying Wu, viola
Pei-San Chiu, flute

Trio in Four Movements..... Libby Larsen
(2005) (b. 1950)

- I. Slowly, extremely free
- II.
- III. Quietly throughout
- IV.

The Remnant Souls Yu-chun Hu
(2024, world premiere) (b. 1983)

- I. Russet Sparrow
- II. Harpist Brown Frog
- III. Leopard Cat
- IV. Squalidus Banarescui
- V. Mountain Hawk-Eagle

Hidden Grace Zhou Tian
(2023) (b. 1980)

And then I knew 'twas Wind Toru Takemitsu
(1992) (1930 – 1996)

Program twenty-four of the 2024–2025 season
Photography and videography are prohibited

Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp..... Claude Debussy
(1915) (1862 - 1918)

I. Pastorale

II. Interlude

III. Finale

Biography

Formosa Trio

Formed in 2012 at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, the Formosa Trio brings together three musicians who were born and raised in Taiwan: Tze-Ying Wu (viola), Chen-Yu Huang (harp), and Pei-San Chiu (flute). The name "Formosa," meaning "beautiful island," a synonym of Taiwan, reflects the ensemble's deep connection to their homeland. This dynamic trio has performed extensively throughout the United States, China, and Taiwan, captivating audiences with innovative programs and exceptional artistry.

Dedicated to expanding the repertoire for their unique instrumentation, the Formosa Trio is committed to promoting both classical and contemporary works. They have actively collaborated with composers, resulting in commissions such as *Hidden Grace* by Grammy-nominated composer Zhou Tian, *Time Flies* by Tsung Jen Hsieh, and *The Remnant Sounds* by Yuchun Hu. In addition to premiering new works, the ensemble also creates arrangements of classical pieces and Taiwanese folk songs, bringing a fresh perspective to these beloved melodies.

In 2018, the trio released their debut recording, "First Impression," which showcases their passion for blending traditional and modern elements. Through their performances and educational outreach, the Formosa Trio strives to contribute meaningfully to the music community.

The members of the Formosa Trio are distinguished educators and performers. Dr. Tze-Ying Wu is the Assistant Professor of Viola and String Education at the University of Kentucky. Dr. Pei-San Chiu is the Associate Professor of Flute at Tunghai University in Taiwan. Dr. Chen-Yu Huang is the Harp Specialist at Fort Bend Independent School District in Houston, Texas, and the former Assistant Professor of Harp at Michigan State University.

Program Notes

In *Trio in Four Movements*, I set about to use clarity of gesture and economy of texture to create an elegant vehicle for lyric expression. Each of the four movements explores this idea in its own way. In Movement I, I gave the flute long, fluid lines, free of metric intervention supported by the viola and harp. Further into the movement, the three instruments engage in a four-measure dialogue, and then return to the previous texture to complete the movement. Doily texture is my exploration in the brief (1 minute, 15 seconds) Movement II. Its agile, intertwined, filament-like musical effect is contrasted by Movement III. Pulse- Calm, quiet, flowing- lies at the heart of Movement III. Lyrical lines are presented in the instruments, sometimes solo, sometimes unison, sometimes in moments of imitation. Movement IV uses dart gestures, articulation, quicksilver, and air cadence to create its effect. - Libby Larsen

The Remnant Souls, commissioned by the Formosa Trio, draws inspiration from Camille Saint-Saens's *The Carnival of the Animals*. Rather than depicting animals through music, this composition aims to advocate for environmental conservation. It highlights five endangered species native to Taiwan, showcasing the unique aspects of my homeland. The suite comprises five movements, each dedicated to an endangered species: Russet Sparrow, Harpist Brown Frog, Leopard Cat, *Squalidus Banarescui*, and Mountain Hawk-Eagle.

My motivation for composing this suite is to convey a message of respect for life and the importance of preserving our natural world. - Yu-Chun Hu

Hidden Grace was inspired by a trip to Italy, where the beauty of architecture and its history left a long-lasting impression on me. Walking in the streets of Florence on a starry night, hidden beauty seemed to be everywhere- a dimmed back alley, an open window of a gallery, the reflection of the Arno...And one could almost hear the echoes of music from the Renaissance: Gabrieli, Gesualdo, and Monteverdi...

The piece attempts to capture those elusive memories in music, as if putting the listeners back to the streets of Italy with me. And I cannot think of a better instrumentation than the flute, viola, and harp to express the tenderness as well as the sumptuous colors in the music. The work turned out to be a unique exploration of a musical fusion of Chinese and Italian flavors from a composer who has lived in the US for more than 20 years. - Zhou Tian