



COLLEGE OF MUSIC

# University of North Texas College of Music

Doctoral Lecture Recital | Wednesday, October 5, 2022 | 6:30 pm | Recital Hall

## **Dongmin Chen, piano**

### **THE SELECTED PIANO WORK INFLUENCED BY PEKING OPERA *PI HUANG* BY ZHAO ZHANG: A PEDAGOGICAL ANALYSIS**

Peking Opera has been recognized as the most representative music-drama in China for more than 200 years. The notable composer Zhao Zhang employed the elements of Peking Opera (e.g., Yuan ban, Dao ban, San ban, etc.) with Chinese pentatonic modes in his piano work *Pi Huang*. However, due to the highly stylized performance practice of Peking Opera, e.g., "Singing", "Reciting", "Dancing", "Acrobatics", it is difficult for learners, no matter if they are from China or abroad, to comprehend the art and extend to piano performance without guidance and exploration. Some problems with improper interpretations of the selected work have always existed, such as inexact rhythmic feelings or wrong pedal changes. In this dissertation, I will examine the implication of Peking Opera drama on *Pi Huang*, as well as analyze related performance challenges and uncover solutions by focusing on the two pieces of musical images, genres, tone colors, phrase shaping, musical breaths, balance, pedaling, finger techniques, etc. These two pieces will also be examined in terms of music structures, harmonies, rhythmic feelings, etc.

Pianist Zhao Zhang is one of China's leading composers who specializes in Chinese traditional music. Using the piano as the primary instrument for presenting the essence of Peking Opera, Zhang fully exploited its capabilities by adopting the tone and register of piano to imitate the voice and accompaniment of Peking Opera, creating superb sound effects. *Pi Huang* contains two main schools and vocal styles in Peking Opera. The teaching of the work in Peking Opera style is always a challenge in terms of performance styles, character of excerpts, expressive force, and rhythm. No current references provide expressive and technical instruction of *Pi Huang* for piano pedagogy. It is therefore important to analyze and instruct learners of the work in order to add to the understanding of Peking Opera, its related piano performances, and their cultural evolution. From this dissertation, performers, teachers and students will gain a better understanding of Peking Opera and piano performance of *Pi Huang*.

Pi Huang (1995) ..... Zhao Zhang (b. 1964)

**Seventy-fourth program of the 2022–2023 season  
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