



COLLEGE OF MUSIC

University of North Texas College of Music

Ensemble Recital | Tuesday, March 26, 2024 | 7:30 pm | Recital Hall

UNT Chinese Ensemble • Yuxin Mei, director
with guest artist Liang Lingling, erhu virtuoso

Musings on the Theme of *Qin Qiang* (1958)..... Zhao Zhenxiao/Lu Rirong
(?)/(b. 1933)
Zhao Han, piano

Birdsong Whispers through the
Silent Mountains (1928)..... Liu Tianhua (1895–1932)

A Solitary Blossom.....Shandong Folk Song

The Reflection of the Moon
in the Erquan (1940s)Hua Yanjun (1893–1950)
arr. 1990 Huang Xiaofei

Fire - The Girl in Colorful robes (1997)..... Liu Wenjin (1937–2013)

Horse Racing (1964).....Huang Haihuai (b. 1941)
arr. 2017 Xiao Yun/Hua Xin

Six hundred seventy-seventh program of the 2023–2024 season
Photography and videography are prohibited

Musings on the Theme of Qin Qiang—The musical theme of this piece is derived from the music of Qin Qiang, which originated in Shaanxi, China, during the Qing Dynasty in 1807. Qin Qiang, a genre of theatre art in the Central Plains Mandarin of the Guanzhong dialect, is one of the oldest forms of Chinese theatre art.

Birdsong Whispers through the Silent Mountains—Composed in 1918 and not finalized for publication until 1928, the piece portrays the artistic conception of an "empty mountain where no people are seen, only the sound of birdsong is heard." The composition is notable for its unique playing techniques, especially the extensive use of rolling finger movements and glissandi to emulate the sounds of birds in nature.

A Solitary Blossom—Originally titled "Heroic Farewell," this piece was adapted from a Shandong folk melody, drawing upon the singing styles and musical motifs of Shandong Bangzi, a form of Shandong theatre art.

The Reflection of the Moon in the Erquan—It is one of the major erhu works in Chinese music. Hua Yanjun, also known as Ah-Bing, was a blind folk musician active in the Wuxi area. The Erquan is a beautiful natural scene in Wuxi town, known for its limpid springs. The beautiful moon is reflected in the spring, and the contrast between such natural beauty and Ah-Bing's struggling life fills this piece with a lament for life and a struggle against an unfair fate.

Fire - The Girl in Colorful Robes—"Fire—The Girl in Colorful Robes" is the third movement in Liu Wenjin's erhu suite The Dream of the Tathagata, which is influenced by Buddhist themes. The music paints a picture of the Girl in Colorful Robes in a secluded valley shrouded in darkness year-round, where she calls upon a multitude of birds carrying fire to ignite the light for a land that has been in slumber for a thousand years.

Horse Racing—Adapted from the "Red Flag Song," an Inner Mongolian folk song. This erhu solo piece has been a canonic work for the instrument since the 1960s.

UNT Chinese Ensemble

Pipa: Yuxin Mei

Sheng: Alexander Strader, Eddie Shjannon

Middle Ruan: Alexander Moreno, Joshua Landin, Qingping He

Yangqin: Jacob Bissell, Cam Dorchester

Zheng: Avery Wright, Anita Hu, Catherine Vanover

Erhu: Daniel Chenm Jianli Wang

Gehu: Sarah Hart

Percussion: Jacob Bissell, Cam Dorchester, Mae Gao

Piano: Xiao Yun

Special Thanks to the performers of the Dallas Huayun Chinese Music Orchestra

Daniel Chen, Mae Gao, Qingping He, Anita Hu, and Jianli Wang

Liang Lingling is a globally celebrated Erhu virtuoso and an Associate Professor at the China Conservatory of Music. Her significant contributions to the erhu performance art and academic field include her roles on the Council of the Erhu Institute of the Chinese Musicians Association and the Huqin Professional Committee of the China Nationalities Orchestra Society. Liang has also enriched the academic world as a Guest Professor at Qiqihar University's Department of Music and lent her expertise as a judge in the prestigious "2012 China Central Television Traditional Musical Instrument Competition."



Her musical journey began at the tender age of six under the guidance of her father, Liang Xinjian, in Xi'an. Liang's formal musical education commenced at the Affiliated School of Xi'an Conservatory of Music in 1986, later advancing to the China Conservatory of Music in 1992. There, she delved into the erhu, banhu, gaohu, and other Chinese bowed instruments under the mentorship of renowned professors An Ruli and Liu Mingyuan. In 1999, Liang earned her master's degree, becoming the inaugural Master of Arts in Erhu at the China Conservatory of Music and joining its esteemed faculty.

Liang's academic and competitive career is adorned with accolades, including a second-place finish at the Filitong International Chinese Musical Instrument Competition in 1995. Her scholarly work extends beyond performance; she has published extensively on erhu art and pedagogy, including pieces in English for a Swedish audience. Her discography boasts four solo albums, with compositions like "Musing after Autumn" receiving widespread acclaim and awards for creativity and performance.

Committed to education and international cultural exchange, Liang has produced instructional erhu films, held recitals and concerts, as well as delivered lectures across the world, including in the USA, Canada, Japan, Sweden, and Denmark, as well as various locations throughout China. Her international engagements have not only highlighted her exceptional performance but also promoted a cross-cultural dialogue in the arts. Liang Lingling stands as a key figure in bringing Chinese musical traditions to the world stage, fostering appreciation and understanding of this rich cultural heritage worldwide.

The **UNT Chinese Ensemble** is the first of its kind established at a Texas university. Directed by founding director Yuxin Mei, the ensemble plays in the traditional Jiangnan sizhu (Silk and Bamboo) style. They have played at many events on campus and throughout the DFW area, including the Society for Ethnomusicology Southern Plains 2020 Conference, the Celebration of Chinese New Year at the Crow Collection of Asian Art Museum in Dallas, and the AT&T Performance Center Volunteer Award Party. They also performed at the Denver Chinese New Year Celebration at the invitation of the Denver Confucius Institute in February 2018.



Yuxin Mei is a renowned pipa performer, educator, and the UNT Chinese Ensemble founding director. She is also a PhD candidate in ethnomusicology at UNT and winner of the Presser Graduate Music Award in 2018. Her paper, "Negotiating with Sound: The Living Sound Niche Created by the Chinese Immigrants in Dallas Area" received the 2016 Vida Chenoweth Student Paper Prize award from the Society for Ethnomusicology Southern Plains Chapter in 2016. She was a Texas Folklife Apprenticeship Program Artist Mentor in 2020

among other grants. Yuxin holds BA and MA degrees in pipa performance and education from the China Conservatory of Music in Beijing and the Xingai Conservatory of Music in Guangzhou, China. From 2006–2012, she was on faculty at the Xinghai Conservatory of Music and prior to this she was artistic director and soloist for the Zhuhai Chinese Music Chamber Orchestra. She has performed in China, Portugal, Norway, Singapore, France, Germany, and other countries. She has taught masterclasses at the Macau Art School and the Chong Hong Chinese Music Association in Macau. From 2012–2016, she was invited to Norway as part of the cultural exchange project "Spoor" hosted by The Cultural Rucksack in Akershus. In 1998, Mei released the album *Spring of Zhu Hai*.



Dr. Han Zhao began her piano studies at the age of five and entered the undergraduate piano department at the Shenyang Conservatory of Music in China at the age of 17, where she studied with Dr. Li Zhe. In 2015, Zhao entered the piano department at Temple University in Philadelphia on a full scholarship and studied with Dr. Clipper Erikson. 2017, Zhao was admitted by the piano department at the University of North Texas with a music scholarship and studied with Prof. Adam Wodnicki. As a pianist, Zhao won the first prize in the Sonata Division of the 5th Asian Youth Piano Open Competition in 2011; second prize in the Junior Division and first prize in the

Rachmaninoff Division of the 17th Hong Kong Asian Piano Open Competition in 2012; first prize in the Chopin Division of the Asia Pacific Youth Piano Competition in 2013; third prize in the final of the Hong Kong Asian Piano Open Competition in 2014; and Pi Kappa Lambda Piano Competition first prize. In addition, she has been invited to perform at Jilin University, Northeast Normal University, Harbin Normal University, and Pennsylvania University from 2011-2015, and was invited by pianist Mr. Lancing Weitzman to give a charity concert at Lulu Shrine Association in 2015. In 2016 she was invited by Dr. Joyce Lindorff to perform at Temple University in a harpsichord concert. Zhao's commitment to musical education is equally commendable. As a teacher, she has nurtured numerous talented students, many of whom have achieved remarkable success in competitions. Her dedication to pedagogy extends to her current role as an adjunct professor at Tarrant County College, where she continues to inspire and mentor aspiring musicians.