



University of North Texas College of Music

Ensemble Recital | Thursday, November 30, 2023 | 6:30 pm | Recital Hall

UNT Chinese Ensemble's 2023 Fall Concert: "Rhythmic Resonance: Night of Chinese Percussion" Yuxin Mei, director

The Menacing Tiger/Tiger
Grinding its Teeth (1992) An Zhishun (1932–2022)
arr. 2018 Yuxin Mei

Longing for the Spring Breeze
& Farewell (1933/1905–1910) Teng Yu-Hsien/Lee Lin-Chiu
& John Ordway/Li Shutong
(1906–1944)/(1909–1979)/
(1824–1880)/(1880–1942)
arr. 2023 Xiao Yun/Yuxin Mei/
Alexander Strader/Alexander Moreno

Tajik (1985) Wang Huiran (1935–2023)
arr. 2019 Yuxin Mei

Wu Ge is Herding His Flocks Shanxi Folk Song
arr. 2002 Li Fubin (b. 1962)

Quarreling Ducks (1982) An Zhishun
arr. 2018 Yuxin Mei

Dancing Golden Snake (1934) Nie Er (1912–1935)
arr. 2023 Yuxin Mei

*Three hundred sixty-first program of the 2023–2024 season
Photography and videography are prohibited*

The Menacing Tiger/Tiger Grinding its Teeth—Adapted from Wei Bei folk percussion music in Shanxi Province, composer An Zhishun features a variety of techniques on the wooden pot drum, cymbals, *muyu* (wooden slit drums) and clappers to mimic a hunting tiger.

Longing for the Spring Breeze & Farewell—One of the representative works of Taiwanese Hokkien song, it was released by Columbia Records in 1933 and originally sung by female singers. "Farewell" is a musical piece widely popular among Chinese communities, featuring Chinese lyrics penned by Li Shutong. These lyrics were adapted from American composer John Ordway's work "Dreaming of Home and Mother." The composition eloquently conveys the deep sense of longing and remembrance associated with the departure of loved ones.

Tajik—Tajik is one of the ethnic minority groups living in the Xinjiang region of northwest China. This music was adapted from the music of Eagle Dance, a Tajik folk-dance genre, and vividly depicts a jubilant festival scene. This new arrangement features a sheng solo.

Wu Ge is Herding His Flocks—This folk song is one of the representatives of Da Zuo Qiang, a Shanxi folk-song genre, featuring a solo singer and a small group of accompanying instruments. This song conveys the story of a young girl who expresses her concern and attachment to a young man named Wu Ge.

Quarreling Ducks—This piece was originally played as the introduction of a Xi'an drum ensemble suite. It employs unique techniques, particularly on cymbals, creating diverse timbres meant to represent a flock of quarreling ducks.

Dancing Golden Snake—Nie Er was a Chinese composer best known for "March of the Volunteers," the national anthem of the People's Republic of China. Nie composed this piece in 1934 based on the folk melody, "Dao Ba Ban" (Reverse Eight Beats). As one of the country's classic works, this piece has been widely performed at various Chinese festivals, celebrations, and concerts. In this revised version, Yuxin Mei has integrated the percussive cadenza from the renowned percussion piece "Dragon Soars, Tiger Leaps," rejuvenating a work that has been performed for nearly a century with new vitality.

UNT Chinese Ensemble

Pipa: Yuxin Mei • Dizi: Heather Pryse

Sheng: Alexander Strader, Zhuofan Zhang

Middle Ruan: Alexander Moreno, Joshua Landin

Yangqin: Jacob Bissell, Luke Gibson • Zheng: Avery Wright

Erhu and Gehu: Sara Hart • Percussion: Jacob Bissell,

Joshua Landin, Luke Gibson, Cam Dorchester • Piano: Xiao Yun

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*.

Alexander Strader is an alumnus of UNT. Seeking to combine musical aspects of the East and West, Strader is committed to bringing a fresh view to the world of clarinet music. He was a member of the North Texas Wind Symphony and has performed with the UNT Concert Orchestra. In addition to his endeavors in traditional Western music performance, he is also a founding member and sheng (bamboo mouth organ) player of the UNT Chinese Ensemble as well as the Confucius Institute Huayun Orchestra. Strader has appeared as a young artist playing clarinet and bass clarinet in the Music in the Mountains and Cactus Pear music festivals as well as performances in England.

Xiao Yun holds the PhD in music theory with a related field in composition. Born in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia in China, Xiao Yun studied electric organ for seven years since the age of six. He wrote his first piece at 16 and took composition lessons with Professor Tieying Ma and Fengchun Cui in China. After finishing his BA in English, he came to the United States to continue his music studies in 2011. Yun received a second BA degree in music in 2015 and the MA in music theory in 2018 from UNT. Yun composes and arranges popular and film music as well.



Chinese Ensemble (left to right): Alexander Strader, Zhuofan Zhang, Heather Pryse, Marjing Mayanglambam, Sara Hart, Luke Gibson, Yuxin Mei, Jacob Bissell, Cam Dorchester, Joshua Landin, and Alexander Moreno. Not in picture: Avery Wright and Xiao Yun.