

China  
NOW

MUSIC FESTIVAL  
纽约中国当代音乐节

CELEBRATING FIVE YEARS  
2018-2022

# EAST WEST

October 7-22, 2022

Bard College • Hudson Hall • Lincoln Center

CHINA NOW MUSIC FESTIVAL

# EAST *of* WEST

October 7-22, 2022

The US-China Music Institute (USCMI) was born out of a very simple idea: to create a world-class performance and educational platform for Chinese music in the West. Established by Bob Martin, founding director of the Bard College Conservatory of Music, and myself, an orchestra conductor with a long career in both the US and in China, we are now proudly celebrating our fifth anniversary. USCMI was fortunate to receive the strong support of Bard College President Leon Botstein, whose vision of inclusiveness in music and the liberal arts has shaped our college for nearly 50 years, and of Central Conservatory of Music President Yu Feng, who signed a five-year agreement to work together with USCMI to create our signature programs. These include the first degree programs in Chinese instrument performance in a Western conservatory, and this, the China Now Music Festival.

The China Now Music Festival is dedicated to promoting an understanding and appreciation of music from contemporary China through an annual series of concerts, academic activities, and musical exchanges between the US and China. We are celebrating our fifth anniversary with this unprecedented program featuring three uniquely curated concerts that trace how generations of artists from China and the West have influenced and inspired each other through musical expression. Our theme, “East of West,” seeks to reveal differences in culture and tradition that have historically divided East from West—only to break them down and, through our artistic experience, create something new that belongs to both East and West.

Our program is honored to feature The Orchestra Now; the Orchestra of New Asia CMS; the Bard Chinese Ensemble; and a wonderful group of guest artists. We are presenting the US premieres of selections from Guo Wenjing’s critically acclaimed opera *Rickshaw Boy*; Ye Xiaogang’s second symphony *The Great Wall*; a new production of Hao Weiya’s chamber opera *Painted Skin*; and symphonic works by Jiang Wenye and Huang Anlun. Also featured are compositions by Aaron Avshalomov and Alexander Tcherepnin, two Western composers who lived in China in the early 20th century.

We want to thank you all for coming, and to offer special appreciation to our loyal and dedicated supporters for making this festival possible. I trust that you will find these programs entertaining and enjoyable. And I deeply hope that you will be enlightened, informed, and inspired as you learn about the dynamic musical interchange between China and the West that has endured through centuries of ups and downs, and which now so greatly enriches our 21st century musical culture. Please continue to join us as we build more musical bridges between the US and China in the years to come.

Jindong Cai 蔡金冬

Director, US-China Music Institute, Bard College Conservatory of Music

Professor of Music and Arts, Bard College

October 2022



US-CHINA MUSIC INSTITUTE  
Bard College Conservatory of Music  
巴德美中音乐研习院

中华人民共和国总领事馆  
Consulate General of the People's Republic of China  
520 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, New York, NY 10036

October 1, 2022

Dear friends,

I would like to extend my warmest greetings to everyone attending the 5th China Now Musical Festival, presented by Bard Conservatory's US-China Music Institute (USCMI).

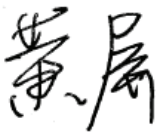
The China Now Music Festival is an annual series of concerts that help to foster a better understanding between the peoples of China and the United States.

This year's festival will not only celebrate its fifth anniversary with a program of three unique concerts with the theme of East of West, it will also celebrate the first five years of collaboration between USCMI and the Central Conservatory of Music of China.

I am glad to witness the serial joint projects and academic accomplishment made by USCMI and its Chinese counterpart over the past five years. I highly appreciate USCMI's dedication to sharing Chinese music with local communities and its commitment to cultural exchanges between China and the United States. Cultural exchanges and cooperation always play an important role in maintaining a healthy and steady bilateral relationship. I look forward to more person-to-person exchanges and substantial cultural cooperation between our two countries and hope we work together for a better future.

I send my best wishes for the China Now Musical Festival and I hope you all enjoy the performances!

Sincerely,



Ping Huang  
Consul-General of China in New York

EAST OF WEST

## TALES FROM BEIJING 北京故事

Friday, October 7 at 8:00 pm  
Sosnoff Theater,  
Fisher Center at Bard College  
and  
Sunday, October 9 at 3:00 pm  
Rose Theater at Jazz at Lincoln Center's  
Frederick P. Rose Hall

### The Orchestra Now

Jindong Cai, *conductor*

#### Aaron Avshalomov (1894-1965)

*Peiping Hutongs* Symphonic Poem ("Hutongs of Peking") (1933)

Guo Wenjing 郭文景 (b. 1956)  
Libretto by Xu Ying 徐瑛  
Adapted from the novel  
by Lao She 老舍 (1937)

Selections from the Opera *Rickshaw Boy*—Xiangzi and Huniu (2014)  
歌剧《骆驼祥子》选曲：祥子与虎妞  
(US Premiere)

- i. Look at My Rickshaw 瞧这车
- ii. Getting Married 结婚
- iii. The Death of Huniu 虎妞之死
- iv. Sinking 沉沦

Manli Deng, *Huniu*

Yi Li, *Xiangzi*

Yazhi Guo, *suona*

Intermission

Ye Xiaogang 叶小纲 (b. 1955)  
Lyrics by Zou Hang 邹航

Symphony No. 2, *The Great Wall* (2002)  
第二交响曲“长城”  
(US Premiere)

- i. Prelude 序
- ii. The Smoke and Flames of Battle 长城硝烟
- iii. The Glamor of the Han and Tang 汉唐风采
- iv. The Glimpse of Central Plains 中原一瞥
- v. Jiayuguan Pass 嘉峪关
- vi. Brave Man 长城好汉
- vii. Lonely Hero 寂寞英雄
- viii. Legendary Rivers and Mountains 笑傲江山
- ix. The Splendid Great Wall 壮哉长城

Manli Deng, *soprano*

Yi Li, *tenor*

Xiaofu Ju, *piano*

Feifei Yang, *erhu*

Yazhi Guo, *dizi and xun*

Xi Lu, *pipa*

Urtnasan Gantulga, *matouqin*



Entrance to the Imperial City, Heinz von Perckhammer, *Peking*, Albertus Verlag, 1928, Berlin



EAST OF WEST

# PAINTED SKIN—A CHAMBER OPERA 歌剧《画皮》

(US Premiere)

Thursday, October 13 at 7:00 pm

Hudson Hall at the historic Hudson Opera House

and

Saturday, October 15 at 7:30 pm

Rose Theater at Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall

**Hao Weiya 郝维亚 (b. 1971)**

**Wang Yuanfei 王爱飞, libretto**

**Adapted from the story**

**by Pu Songling 蒲松龄 (1740)**

Scene I: Lending the Umbrella 借伞

Scene II: Returning the Umbrella 还伞

Interlude I: Painted Skin 画皮

Scene III: Playing the Umbrella 玩伞

Interlude II: Moonlight 月光

Scene IV: Breaking the Umbrella 破伞

Kristin Gornstein, *Professor Wang*

Qian Yi, *Demon Gui-yan (妲己)*

Holly Flack, *Chen (Wang's Wife)*

## **Bard Chinese Ensemble**

Jindong Cai, *conductor*

Michael Hofmann, *director*

Tricia Reed, *producer*

Hsiao-Fang Lin, *stage manager*

Anshuman Bhatia, *lighting designer*

Sage Carter, *video/projection designer*

Suki Violet Su, *motion graphics*

Ian Striedter, *sound engineer*

Jie Yi, *Chinese diction coach*

Marlene Marshall, *wardrobe*

Austin Channell, *video operator*

Liz Connel, *lighting operator*

Shutong Li, *supertitle operator/assistant conductor*

Skillman Music, *live stream at Hudson Hall*

EAST OF WEST

# JOURNEY TO THE EAST 东行乐记

Saturday, October 22 at 7:30 pm  
Starr Theater, Alice Tully Hall at  
Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts

## Orchestra of New Asia CMS

Jindong Cai, conductor

**Abing 阿炳 (1893-1950)**  
arr. **Wu Zuqiang 吴祖强**

*The Moon Reflected on Erquan Pond* (1949/1979)  
二泉映月

**Alexander Tcherepnin (1899-1977)**  
**Siao Yu, libretto**

*The Nymph and the Farmer*, a chamber opera (1952)

Lucy Fitz Gibbon, *the Nymph*  
Yi Li, *the Farmer*

Intermission

**Jiang Wenye 江文也 (1910-1983)**

*Taiwan Dance* (1934)  
台湾舞曲

Piano Concerto *Xu Beihong's Color-And-Ink Paintings* (1964)  
钢琴协奏曲“徐悲鸿的彩墨画”

(World Premiere)

Mvt III. Rooster Crowing in the Rain—Recalling  
Past Valor

第三乐章: 风雨鸡鸣—壮烈的回忆

Xu Fangfang 徐芳芳, *piano*

**Huang Anlun 黄安伦 (b. 1949)**

*Capriccio Xu Beihong* (2022)

徐悲鸿随想曲

(World Premiere, commissioned by the China Now Music  
Festival and Xu Fangfang)

### Thank you to our cosponsors for tonight's concert:

New Asia CMS

Xu Beihong Arts Foundation

Xu Fangfang, daughter of Xu Beihong





辛巳八月十日第二次長沙會戰身受心坎  
甚或者仍以前次之結果也  
悲鴻時客栢城

# PROGRAM NOTES

## **Peiping Hutungs Symphonic Poem**

**(“Hutongs of Peking”) (1933)**

**Aaron Avshalomov**

Russian-born Jewish composer Aaron Avshalomov spent nearly three decades living and working in Shanghai after fleeing the Russian pogroms. There, he became a major figure in the development of Chinese classical music before emigrating to the United States in 1947. His 1933 symphonic poem *Peiping Hutungs* paints a vivid portrait of the bustling street life of 1930's Beijing.

“*Hutung* is a North China word which means street. It is used largely in Peiping (Beijing) to refer to certain byways and main thoroughfares near the Forbidden City.

There is a ringing stillness in the hutungs. . . . The early morning Barber, twanging his large tuning fork, announces his presence when he is hutungs away.

Now faintly, from afar, a cry . . . perhaps a cobbler? Then a vendor . . . and another one . . . a florist? But close by, from a hutung by your side . . . here comes a knife grinder . . .

Yet another day in the hutungs, and life is moving kaleidoscopically into being once again. The sound picture is unfolding. . . . You wander into another hutung, pursued by the already hot rays of the sun, and there, under the friendly shade of a tree, which grows from behind a wall, you stand and listen to the curly melody of an unseen flute . . .

The sun, the dust and the flute: peacefulness, quietness. . . . But life is insistent and the sun is rising up higher. The hutungs are growing animated. Into the flute's melody, the “Hu-chin” (a fiddle) breaks in with an operatic air . . .

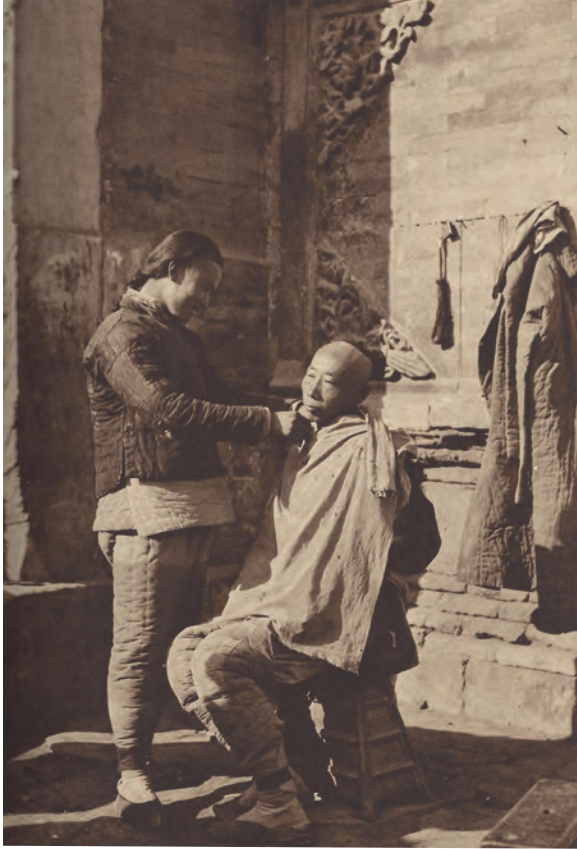
You walk along the now busy and crowded hutung, bewildered with the noises and voices of the crowd. Here are the open shops: they sell wares by singing (and at the same time demonstrating) their qualities in order that passers-by may be attracted. Coats and trousers, robes, silk and cotton, and here a bridal dress, which had once known pristine glory. “Cheap, O, very cheap.” The crowds gather, gaping, buying. But above everything, there is the insistent song of the perspiring salesmen . . .

But you move on, and as the district becomes denser in population so the din increases. Now the wind gets up and weaves its way through the busyness. The sun, the dust and babel . . . anon, as if finally to crown the scene, there come the thunderous blare of trumpets, which tragically announce a funeral procession . . .

The rhythmic crashes of a battery of percussion deafen you, but in a stillness, you are caught by the plaintive song of the clarinets in their ritualistic theme. But not for long, for the clashing and drumming of cymbals and drums rudely interrupt. It is the devils who are being frightened away from entering the soul of the departed. . . . Then for a brief moment, as if in a temple, there is a serene calmness in the air: you forget about the busy street and perhaps you are thinking of the futility of life. . . . But not for long—life catches you up, and on . . . on. Now the voices of the living are threatening to envelope the funeral music, and the scene is swirling upwards to an ecstatic climax. The culmination point is reached in the tensivity of the theme of the death trumpet. But the emotional phrase of the funeral music is again heard: and in gradual diffusion, covers all with the abstract purity of death.

But there is a ringing stillness in the hutungs of Peiping. . . . Life is there: the dust and the sun, the vendors and peacefulness. The gongs of the funeral are far away . . .”

—Aaron Avshalomov, 1933



Clockwise from top left: Barber, Onion Market, Procession, Street Musician, Heinz von Perckhammer, *Peking*, Albertus Verlag, 1928, Berlin

**Selections from the Opera *Rickshaw Boy—Xiangzi and Huniu* (2014)**

歌剧《骆驼祥子》选曲：祥子与虎妞

**Guo Wenjing** 郭文景

**Libretto by Xu Ying** 徐瑛

(US Premiere)

Celebrated throughout the world as a leading composer of the Chinese avant-garde, Guo is a member of the distinguished composition faculty at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. Guo's large body of work includes many operas, ballets, dramatic incidental musical works, concerti, symphonies, large-scale orchestral works, and string quartets. He has composed scores for more than 40 films and TV shows in China.

*Rickshaw Boy* is Guo's 2014 opera in eight acts based on the 1937 novel of the same name by renowned writer Lao She (1899–1966). The libretto is by Xu Ying, a librettist of traditional Beijing style opera. The opera was commissioned by the National Center for the Performing Arts (NCPA) in Beijing, where it premiered in 2014. The fully staged opera later toured Italy as the first Chinese opera to tour Europe, and returned to NCPA for performances in 2017 and 2020.

The tragic story is set in 1920s Beijing and centers around a young rickshaw puller named Xiangzi, who dreams of a better life. Throughout the story, endless difficulties and poor choices seem to interfere with his efforts to better himself, and he eventually succumbs to the weight of his misfortunes.

Guo created Selections from *Rickshaw Boy—Xiangzi and Huniu* for orchestra and voice especially for the 2022 China Now Music Festival. The four scenes excerpted for the festival center around the relationship between the main character, Xiangzi, and his wife, Huniu, who is the daughter of a rickshaw factory owner. Their “love story” is both tragic and cynical, marred by manipulation and deceit. And yet Huniu expresses deep love for Xiangzi, sacrificing her position in society and a life of comfort in order to be with him. Ultimately Huniu dies in poverty, and though Xiangzi did not love her in return, he is nevertheless heartbroken by her death and never recovers from the loss.



## 1. Look at My Rickshaw

(Xiangzi)

Look! Look! Look!

Look at my rickshaw!

Look at my rickshaw!

I bought it!

Brand-new!

A brand new one!

A newly bought one!

Just now I bought one!

A total of 96 silver dollars!

Look at my rickshaw! How awesome!

Three years of dreams,

Three years of desire,

Three years of savings,

Three years of bustle.

I didn't smoke,

I didn't drink,

I didn't whore,

I didn't gamble,

Just for this one.

Without smoking,

Without drinking,

Without whoring,

Without gambling,

I will have a second one.

A third, a fourth, a fifth one.

By then I will also run a rickshaw dealership!

Look at my rickshaw! How awesome!

## 2. Getting Married

(Huniu)

I want to get married and nobody can stop me.

I don't care if I don't have a dowry!

My heartless dad makes me frustrated.

But fortunately I marry the husband I want!

Look at the eyes of those women:

Envious, green-eyed. They are jealous!

I want to burst into laughter.

I want to burst into tears.

I want everyone in the world to know that

Xiangzi is my husband!

(Xiangzi)

Who should I be mad at when I am depressed?

Being at the mercy of others makes me unable to breathe.

Stewing in my own juice is my unspoken suffering.

I was forced to marry a fishwife who I did not want!

Look at the faces of those men:

Sneering, despising, laughing at me as a pig!

I want to curse.

I want to get into a fight.

I want everyone in the world to know that

I am not to be bullied!

(Huniu)

Married. I just married. I married regardless.

(Xiangzi)

Married. I just married. I married carelessly.

(Huniu)

I can even die in peace 'cause I married the guy I like!

(Xiangzi)

I have no future 'cause I married a tough shrew!

(Huniu)

Xiangzi, touch my belly.

(Xiangzi)

Your belly!

(Huniu)

I tucked a pillow in the waist of my pants.

You really think I'm pregnant!

Ha ha! You silly camel!

(Xiangzi)

You cheat!

(Huniu)

How will you marry me without this?

(Xiangzi)

How dare you cheat me!

(Huniu)

Don't get mad.

(Xiangzi)

How dare you fucking cheat me!

(Huniu)

For you I jumped from the rice bucket into the chaff bucket!

(Xiangzi)

Vixen!

(Huniu)

But I love you!

(Xiangzi)

Bitch!

(Huniu)

I really love you!

(Xiangzi)

You nasty bitch! How dare you cheat me!

(Huniu)

Cheating you is my fault.

But I really like you and want to live with you.

I gave you my body.

I gave you my heart.

I love you and I care for you. So well I treat you.

As for hardship, can you still be compared with me?  
I will go through hell and high water for you.  
Where else can you find a wife like me?  
(Xiangzi)  
Go away!  
(Huniu)  
Xiangzi!  
(Xiangzi)  
Go away!  
(Huniu)  
Xiangzi!

### 3. The Death of Huniu

(Huniu)  
Xiangzi, I'm dying.  
Who will take care of you if I die?  
I can't lose you. I love you so much.  
I love you!

Please forgive me. Forgive me for my unreasonable temper.  
Please forgive me. Forgive me for forcing you to marry me.  
Please forgive me. Forgive me for leaving you behind at the  
end of my life.

After my death, you must take care of yourself.  
Don't catch a cold when it's hot.  
Remember to add clothes when it's cold.  
Every year at the Qingming Festival, burn the paper money  
at my tomb for me.  
Don't let me starve and be bullied in the underworld  
without money.

Xiangzi! Xiangzi!  
I'm dying. Who will take care of you if I die?  
I can't lose you. I love you so much.  
I love you!

Xiangzi, I'm dying.  
I love you...  
I can't lose you...  
I love you...

### 4. Sinking

(Xiangzi)  
I walk well on my way,  
Why is the ground shaking all along?  
I stand well on my feet,  
Why is the wall leaning away?  
The sky is blurry.  
The path is twisted.  
I just want to take a puff at a cigarette.  
Damn, I haven't seen any cigarette butt after searching for  
so long!  
Super great!

Translated from the Chinese by Zhe Wang, MA '24

## **Symphony No. 2, "the Great Wall" (2002)**

### **第二交响曲“长城”**

**Ye Xiaogang 叶小纲**

**Lyrics by Zou Hang 邹航**

(US Premiere)

Symphony No. 2, "the Great Wall" for piano, voices, Chinese instruments, and orchestra, is a large-scale symphony created under the commission of the Publicity Department of the Shenzhen Municipal Party Committee. The lyrics are written by Zou Hang. With the Great Wall—the magnificent tangible and spiritual symbol of the Chinese nation—as the theme, the work integrates the grand northern scenery with our multiethnic spiritual connotation to passionately praise the persevering spirit of the Chinese nation and develop a historical review and outlook of the Great Wall. This, the greatest construction of all human beings and the spiritual backbone of the Chinese nation, thus reflects to a larger degree its humanistic spirit and cultural connotations, inspiring people today to fight bravely in the new age. With profound thoughts, diverse thinking styles and full artistic passion, strong national styles and dazzling music expression techniques, the work expresses the composer's lofty admiration and yearning for the Great Wall that is an ancient and young symbol of the long and splendid culture and the tenacious spirit of China, eulogizes such a great tangible existence of the Chinese spirit, and delivers his wishes for human beings and the future.

"The Great Wall," as a music work basically free of any program, has nine movements, in which the program acts as a prompt for imagination. With respect to musical style, the composer was inspired by the folk music of the Han, Hui, Manchu, Mongolian, and Uyghur nationalities of China, of West Asia and Shaanxi, Shanxi, Gansu, and Hebei provinces, as well as of the Northeast of China. He was further inspired by musical materials from Peking Opera, Shaanxi Opera (Qin Opera), Shanxi Clapper and Hebei Clapper Opera, and rap music to try to form a stereo picture across time and space in depth and width.

#### **I. Prelude**

The ancient Great Wall is solemn and mysterious. Why was it born in the vast land of China?

(Lyrics)

Towering mountains,  
Magnificent rivers,  
I know the thousands of miles of the Great Wall!

#### **II. The Smoke and Flames of Battle**

Flames and smoke of war have never been far from this oriental dragon lying on the northern temperate zone of the Earth. The Great Wall is a monument to indomitable souls.

#### **III. The Glamour of Han and Tang**

As a fort, a defense line, and a link, the Great Wall witnesses development and prosperity, and guards the good times. Defined by its ferocious beauty and majesty, it is also a mark that can never be erased from the heart.

This movement draws its musical materials from the music and dances of the Tang Dynasty.

#### **IV. The Glimpse of Central Plains**

This is a moment serving as a connecting link and reviewing the history.

#### **V. Jiayuguan Pass**

The Great Wall witnesses the long river of history, under which the Silk Road that integrates multiethnic cultures is a historic witness of the thriving Chinese nation. This movement draws folk tones from the Uygur in western China and nations in Western Asia.

(Lyrics)

Qiangdi sound pervades,  
Flames of war reemerge,  
Panlong Mount towers to the east, the moon hangs to the west.  
Such a heyday of peace,  
Was in disorder and chaos!

#### **VI. Brave Man**

This movement learns from the folk tones of the Mongolian and Hui nationalities of China to express the heroic, natural and unrestrained, wise and humorous personalities and features of the people of Northern China.

#### **VII. Lonely Hero**

This movement takes music materials from the folk songs of Gansu, Shaanxi, and Shanxi provinces to portray the modest inner mind of each Chinese hero, constituting an ode praising the sincerity of each ordinary Chinese person.

#### **VIII. Legendary Rivers and Mountains**

(Lyrics)

Flying to the North in spring,  
Looking over to the South in winter,  
Men with great ambition,  
Drink, sing, and brandish a sword,  
As arrogance is worn flat.  
Looking up at the moon under shadow,  
Chirping in slow tone in the autumn breeze,  
A beauty,  
Glances back and smiles,  
Forming a scenery rivaling picturesque rivers and mountains.

Upon the earth, a dragon lays;  
Thousands of miles, with no end being detected.

Strong wind blowing in front of the fortress door, freezing water from Ji River;  
With fast running horse and fully extended bow, chant great songs with power.

East, west, south, and north of the Great Wall,  
Fall the wind, rain, frost, and snow.

Before, behind, on, and off the Great Wall,  
Watch the wind, cloud, thunder, and lightning.

Inside, outside, above, and under the Great Wall,  
There are rivers, streams, ground, and sky.

On the wall, embattlement, tower, and enceinte of the Great Wall,  
There are stars, planets, the sun, and the moon.



Numerous bricks,  
Were soaked with sentiment, righteousness, courage, and boldness.

In each alternating season,  
The brightest sun shines on the piled mountains.

Various music movements,  
Are full of varied sounds and changes.

With the endless alteration between Yin and Yang at different moments,  
Dragons leap to the heavens.

With colorful songs and changeable beats,  
Bells are ringing together across the land of China.

Wage the sword to scribe about the rivers and mountains,  
Play a song containing a-thousand-year poetry.

Talk nothing about ordinary morning and sunset glow,  
But heroes who laugh through thousands of generations!

#### **IX. The Splendid Great Wall**

The Great Wall, as a monument in the mind of Chinese people, the spiritual support of the Chinese nation, and the bond for ethnic harmony, is also like the long river of history flowing towards the future.

—notes written by Ye Xiaogang, 2001



*Painted Skin—a chamber opera* (2018)

歌剧《画皮》

Hao Weiya 郝维亚

Libretto by Wang Yuanfei 王爱飞

(US Premiere)

Directed by Michael Hofmann

### Director's Note

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to rage through communities in the US, racialized scapegoating of Asians and Asian Americans—particularly those of Chinese heritage—and accompanying increases in related hate crimes have followed in its wake. Between 2019 and 2020, the FBI found a 77% increase in reported hate crimes against the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. The group Stop AAPI Hate issued a national report in 2021 covering 9,081 incidents of hate from March 2020 through June 2021, indicating Chinese residents reported more hate incidents (43.5%) in this period than any other Asian ethnic group. Reports to Stop AAPI Hate in this time period were made largely from people who identified as female (63.3%), illustrating the strong intersection of gender-based violence and harassment with racially-motivated hate crimes. While some of these incidents made national news, like the March 2021 Atlanta spa shootings, this pandemic of hatred has largely occurred unacknowledged (and in some cases has been perpetuated) by mainstream media.

It is in this national context of an increasingly violent reality for Asian Americans that we encounter a fundamentally Chinese work of art like Hao Weiya's *Painted Skin*, which breathes new life into a centuries-old Chinese horror story whose title has become synonymous with human duplicity in its native tongue. We meet the scholar Wang and his wife Chen (in this production transported to a college town on the US East Coast where the couple live and work) as Wang encounters a beautiful young woman who very quickly becomes the center of the professor's attention. This woman is eventually revealed to be a demon—an extra-dimensional being, a foreigner—clothed in painted skin, seeking a suitable human heart to complete its transformation into human form, and by extension, assimilation into society.

At their core, horror stories like *Painted Skin* are social critiques and morality tales enveloped in a husk of anxiety, gruesomeness, and terror. The original 18th-century author of *Painted Skin*, Pu Songling, makes this clear with a message directed to his readers after the conclusion of the story:

*"How foolish are the people of this world! That which is clearly bewitching they think beautiful. How deluded are the fools of this world! What is clearly trustworthy they think absurd. . . . The way of heaven is reciprocity, but foolish, deluded people do not wake up. Is this not a pity?!"* (trans. Denis C. and Victor H. Mair)

While *Painted Skin* has seen numerous interpretations in popular media casting the demon character as decidedly evil and antagonistic, Hao Weiya's telling of this story highlights the morally gray aspects of its human characters that Pu himself makes a point to criticize. Wang is quick to forsake his marriage for the affections of an alluring stranger, and both Wang and Chen are even quicker to offer the other as sacrifice to the demon to save their own lives. The demon witnesses this mutual betrayal and judges their love to be only skin-deep, decrying humanity to be evil and foul, and abandoning their quest to become human altogether.

By the end of this tale, and knowing humanity's violent histories and atrocities, it is difficult to disagree with such an assessment. It may benefit us all to examine what kind of evil lies beneath our own painted skins.

—Michael Hofmann, 2022

## Synopsis by Michael Hofmann

### Act I

Professor Wang is on his way home in the rain on a springtime evening after having several drinks at the local bar when he encounters a young woman alone along his path. Immediately enchanted by her, he offers his umbrella as protection from the rain. Though she initially refuses, the mysterious woman eventually accepts the umbrella and runs off without uttering a word.

Later, Wang's wife, Chen, welcomes him home, but notices a strange fragrance hanging around him. He explains his previous encounter. They prepare for bed together, unaware that the woman from earlier is watching from a distance.

### *Interlude I*

The woman is revealed to be a demon from another dimension who wears a suit of painted skin as a disguise to appear human. The demon plots to take Wang's kind heart in order to permanently take human form.

### Act II

The next day, Wang is working on poetry in his garden when he notices the distinctive scent of the young woman. She approaches Wang to return the borrowed umbrella, but scurries off after Chen arrives in the garden. Preoccupied, Wang leaves to work in his study; Chen remains outside, suspecting something is wrong with her husband.

### Act III

In his study, Wang struggles with his attraction to the enigmatic woman. She appears, and Wang, intoxicated by her fragrance, devotes his heart to the woman. They are again interrupted by Chen, who presses Wang on his behavior. He shrugs her off, leaving Chen alone again to grapple with suspicion of Wang's infidelity.

### *Interlude II*

The demon steels itself to finally seize Wang's heart.

### Act IV

The demon, still disguised, returns to Wang's study, and Chen confronts them. The demon explains its goal to Chen, who pleads to the demon to leave the couple alone. Feeling threatened, Chen calls for Wang, who upon seeing both women, hesitates to take either side. The demon reminds Wang of his earlier promise, which Wang dismisses as nothing more than a line of recited poetry.

Infuriated at Wang's fickleness, the demon reveals its true form. A now-terrified Wang pleads with the demon to take his wife's heart instead. Chen spurns her husband, and in turn allows the demon to take Wang's heart. Disgusted at the couple, the demon takes both of their hearts, killing them, but finds the hearts tainted and unsuitable. The demon leaves after tossing the hearts back at the couple, who revive, confused and horrified.



### ***The Moon Reflected on Erquan Pond* (1949/1979)**

#### **二泉映月**

Abing 阿炳

arr. Wu Zuqiang 吴祖强

The blind street performer and composer known as Abing was born Hua Yanjun in 1893 in Wuxi, a city in southern Jiangsu province in eastern China. During his lifetime he was well known in his hometown for his soulful erhu playing, and is now considered to be one of the most influential musicians of Chinese music in the 20th century. His most famous musical work is *Erquan Yingyue*, which can be translated as *Moon Reflected on Erquan Pond* or the more literal translation *Moon Reflected on the Second Spring* (referring to an actual spring in Xihui Park in the city of Wuxi named “The Second Spring under Heaven”). Abing was known to have played his erhu perched by its banks, and shows his fondness for the spot with this beautiful tune. The composition is a fanciful impression of nature, revealing the thoughts and emotions of a poor artist who has suffered from the bitterness and pain of the world. The work shows unique folk performance skills and styles, as well as profound artistry, demonstrating the unique charm of Chinese erhu music.

### ***The Nymph and the Farmer—a chamber opera* (1952)**

Alexander Tcherepnin

Libretto by Siao Yu

*The Nymph and the Farmer* is a lyric opera in one act based on an ancient Chinese fable. Originally planned as a cantata, it was performed as such in Paris, with the title “Pan Keou” (The Shell Cast). All the parts were lost, and Tcherepnin transformed it into an opera, with entirely new orchestration, to fulfill a commission from the Aspen Festival. The world premiere of the opera, now called *The Nymph and the Farmer* was on August 13, 1952, at the Aspen Festival. The first performance in French was given at Hunter College, New York, in 1955. The opera was awarded the David Bispham prize by the American Opera Society in 1960.

Few works of Tcherepnin reflect more deeply his love and fascination with Chinese music and culture. The musical language derives primarily from the Chinese pentatonic scale interspersed with passages that have a distinctly Slavic character. Tcherepnin spent some time in the Far East, encouraging young musicians and composers to discover their own musical heritage, which was being swamped by the music of the West. He himself studied traditional Chinese opera, and learned to play the “pipa,” a traditional Chinese instrument.

#### **Synopsis**

The action takes place in an unidentified country at an undetermined time. Twenty years elapse between the first and second scenes.

#### **Scene I**

The narrator tells of a young handsome farmer who lived a free and happy life in a lonely cottage with his dog and a pigeon. The farmer expresses his love of nature and of his independent life in a song. He has but one complaint and that is that he is without help in his little home when he comes from a long day in the fields. While he is singing, a large shell emerges from the lake, opens wide and reveals a beautiful young girl who is no mere mortal but a nymph. She decides that when the young farmer is away in the field she will help him to clean his cottage and cook his meal. Since the nymph is gone when he returns, the farmer

is both puzzled and joyous at what he finds has been done to his house and he sets out to discover who has helped him. Hiding behind a large boulder, he watches as the nymph emerges from her shell the next day and enters his house. He hides her shell so she cannot leave. After finishing her duties, the nymph is shocked to find her shell missing. The farmer reveals himself and implores her to stay with him forever. She is persuaded and joins him in singing the song of love for nature and freedom.

## Scene II

Twenty years have passed. The farmer and the nymph have two children, a boy and a girl, who helped the father in the fields and made him prosperous. Obeying the call of the law that rules the existence of fairies, it is time for the nymph to return to her real home and leave behind all that she has learned to love—her husband, her children, the dog, and the pigeon. She finds her shell and in order to spare the sorrow of separation for her dear ones, she leaves while they are in the fields. The narrator concludes by telling us that the nymph and the farmer had many descendants who loved the free life of the country and lived working in the fields, happy and independent.

## **Taiwan Dance (1934)**

### 台湾舞曲

Jiang Wenye 江文也

Jiang Wenye was born in Taihoku Prefecture, Taiwan, in 1910. He spent much of his life in Japan where he studied electrical engineering before devoting himself to musical composition. He composed *Taiwan Dance* in 1934. He began with a piano version in April 1934 and orchestrated it in August of the same year. In 1936, the orchestral version of *Taiwan Dance* won a special prize at the International Music Competition of the 11th Summer Olympic Games in Berlin.

Jiang met the Russian-born composer Alexander Tcherepnin in Japan and became his student and friend. Tcherepnin invited Jiang to China, suggesting that he would play an important role there in contributing new compositional ideas to the country's burgeoning classical music scene. Jiang permanently relocated to Beijing in 1938, where he worked as a composer and professor of musical arts. Later on, during the Cultural Revolution, Jiang's past connections to Japan and Europe cast suspicion on him, and some of his compositions were lost or destroyed. Today his reputation has been restored and he is widely considered as a major figure in 20th century Chinese music.

On the title page of the *Taiwan Dance* manuscript, the composer wrote the following poetic passages:

*I saw a magnificent hall there.  
I saw a tower that exudes solemnity.  
I saw a theater and an ancient temple surrounded by a deep forest.  
But these things have come to an end.  
They all turned into spirits and melted into a subtle space,  
gathering the love of gods and children so that illusions would disappear.  
Ah, I saw a landscape with Nimitsu bubbles left in the ebb tide.*

*The scene described in the poem is a reflection of the musical content of this work.*

The composition is not written for dance, nor is it a reflection of the folk music of the indigenous people. It is rather a symphonic poem about the composer's personal feeling and his experimentation with the influence of modern music at that time.

**Piano Concerto Xu Beihong's Color-And-Ink Paintings (1964)**

**钢琴协奏曲“徐悲鸿的彩墨画”**

Mvt III. Rooster Crowing in the Rain—Recalling Past Valor

第三乐章: 风雨鸡鸣—壮烈的回忆

Jiang Wenye 江文也

(World Premiere)

Xu Beihong (1895-1953) is widely known as the father of modern Chinese painting, famous for his iconic paintings of free-running horses. Xu Beihong's animal paintings often express deeper meanings through his use of analogy in a subtle way, which achieves the richest expression found in traditional Chinese painting.

**Piano Concerto Xu Beihong's Color-And-Ink Paintings Third Movement: Rooster Crowing in the Rain—Recalling Past Valor** is based on the two paintings pictured on page 24.

Painted on the eve of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, the ink brush painting *Rooster Crowing in the Rain* portrays a rooster, standing on a tall rock, crowing against the wind and rain. This painting symbolizes Xu Beihong's expectation that the Chinese people would rise up against the Japanese invasion.

*Recalling Past Valor* was painted on January 28, 1937, to commemorate the five-year anniversary of the January 28 incident in 1932, when the Chinese army fought the Japanese invasion in Shanghai. Looking back on the past, the artist expresses his strong emotions about the heroic national struggle. With its head held high, the rooster symbolizes the bravery and perseverance of the Chinese people. The yellow sunflowers taking much of the space in the painting support the optimism expressed there.

Composer Jiang Wenye portrays Xu Beihong's hope for a bright future for China, despite losing the privilege of publishing his works after being branded a rightist in 1957. Jiang wrote this work in 1964 for Xu Fangfang, Xu Beihong's daughter (a teenage piano major in the Preparatory Music High School affiliated to the Central Conservatory of Music), hoping that someday, she would perform this work for him, or even after his passing. To him, that might be the only possibility for this major work composed during the latter part of his life to be known to the world.

The manuscript was lost during the Cultural Revolution in 1966 but resurfaced recently among the belongs of Xu Beihong's late widow Liao Jingwen. Composer Jiang Wenye would be delighted to hear Xu Fangfang performing the world premiere of this work in Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center in New York, finally, in 2022.

Although this concerto does not follow the structure of a classical concerto, its forceful themes depict the Chinese people's determination in their struggle against the Japanese invaders. The animated melodies portray Xu Beihong's optimism for China. The concerto incorporates Chinese harmony and Chinese percussion instruments such as Chinese gong and cymbals, sometimes in a duet with the piano. The piano solo integrates percussive features in its intriguingly varied rhythms and accents. The composer uses different instruments to paint a wonderful soundscape, which brings the paintings to life. Elements of the rooster and rain can be found in the concerto just like the analogy used in traditional Chinese painting.

## A LOST MUSIC MANUSCRIPT

By Xu Fangfang

For half a century, I have mourned the loss of a piano concerto composer Jiang Wenye (1910–1983) wrote for me when I was 16. The manuscript was lost during the Cultural Revolution in 1966 and only the third movement was recovered recently. Mr. Jiang's persistence in creating this work under difficult conditions has inspired me to bring this lost work to music lovers of the world.

I first met Mr. Jiang in my childhood when he came to visit my father, Xu Beihong (1895–1953), the most influential artist and art educator in 20th-century China. Jiang Wenye was an accomplished composer and faculty member of the music department at the National Beijing Arts College, where my father was president. I remember his thick dark hair combed to the back and his kind smile. He sometimes came to massage my father to help him sleep better. Father gave him one of his ink brush horse paintings in appreciation of Jiang's hard work.

In 1950, when the music department was combined with other music institutions to form the prestigious Central Conservatory of Music (CCOM), Jiang Wenye became professor of composition in the newly formed CCOM in Tianjin. However, in 1957, he was branded a rightist during the Anti-Rightist campaign. He lost his professorship and the privilege to have his works published and performed.

In the same year, I was one of the only five third graders from Beijing admitted to the Preparatory Music Elementary School Affiliated to CCOM. I majored in piano performance. After my father passed away in 1953, Jiang Wenye continued to visit my family. He even donated my father's horse painting to the Xu Beihong Memorial Museum after its establishment in 1954 with Premier Zhou Enlai's recommendation.

Although as a child I never talked with Jiang Wenye during his visits, I always admired his music talent, having heard from my mother about a special award that his orchestral piece *Taiwan Dance* had earned at the 1936 Berlin Olympics art competition. It was the first Chinese work to receive a top prize in this international competition. Jiang Wenye was among the earliest to compose Chinese music for Western orchestra. He also pioneered Chinese piano music. During my third year in the Preparatory Music High School Affiliated to CCOM, which had moved to Beijing, I decided to talk to Jiang Wenye in the music school. He had been relegated to the correspondence department. I told him that I wanted to learn from him. He asked me what piano works I was studying. I said, "Beethoven sonatas and *The Well-Tempered Clavier* by Bach." I did keep my communication with Jiang secret for fear of any potential political repercussions.

One day as I walked by Building No. 1 on campus, Jiang Wenye called down from a second-floor balcony, his hands gesturing as if he was playing the piano, "I almost finished the piano concerto I was writing for you." One day in autumn 1964, he delivered to my mother, Liao Jingwen, the three-movement Piano Concerto *Xu Beihong's Color-And-Ink Paintings*. I was happily surprised to see his beautifully hand-written music manuscript. The cover of each movement had an image of a different Xu Beihong ink brush painting.

My mother was eager to hear me play this concerto. Unfortunately, I did not have an opportunity to try this piece at the time when politics abruptly changed our music school curriculum from Western classical music to Chinese music and we were frequently sent to factories and the People's Liberation Army to learn from workers, peasants, and soldiers.

This change culminated in the Cultural Revolution in 1966 when Jiang Wenye and all our music teachers as well as CCOM administrators became the target. I saw Jiang severely attacked and forced to labor on campus. Like many famous artists, my deceased father also became the target of the Cultural Revolution. Our family house was raided by Red Guards, who tore apart many paintings, books, painting

albums, and phonograph records. After the Xu Beihong Memorial Museum was demolished, we were packing any surviving books and music scores before our move in early 1967. I felt sad for not finding the manuscript of the piano concerto Jiang Wenye had composed for me.

In 2016, a year after my mother passed away, while sorting out her books and other belongings, I was surprised to find the Third Movement of the Piano Concerto *Xu Beihong's Color-And-Ink Paintings Rooster Crowing in the Rain—Recalling Past Valor*. I recognized Jiang's beautifully handwritten score of the piano and full orchestra with the image of my father's rooster painting on the cover, the color of which had turned yellow over half a century. Some tears along the edges were running through the notation but the score was readable for the most part.

This resurfaced music manuscript brought me back to 1964. Why did Jiang Wenye choose to write this concerto for the teenage daughter of his artist friend Xu Beihong? Perhaps in his situation as a rightist, my appreciation of his music talent touched his heart. Perhaps Jiang thought that his composition based on Xu Beihong's paintings would be politically secure because Xu Beihong was at the time supported by leaders like Premier Zhou Enlai. More importantly, I thought that as a teenage piano major, I would have a long career ahead and that someday, I would be able to perform this work for him even after his passing. To him, that might be the only possibility for this major work during the latter part of his life to be known to the world.

Composer Jiang Wenye would be delighted to hear me perform the world premiere of this lost work in Alice Tully Hall in New York.





**Capriccio Xu Beihong, Opus 103 (2022)**

**徐悲鸿画境随想**

Huang Anlun 黄安伦

(World Premiere commissioned by the China Now Music Festival and Xu Fangfang.)

Xu Beihong is one of the greatest painters in modern China. His art's appeal sparks people's imagination. If this is described in languages instead of painting, it will never be clear. How to portray Xu Beihong's great paintings musically is a challenge composer Huang Anlun faces.

When Huang Anlun's friend Xu Fangfang, Xu Beihong's daughter, sent the images of two of her father's famous paintings—*Sound of the Flute* and *Galloping Horse*, the music burst into the composer's heart almost immediately. These two paintings have long been known in China, but to musically embody the inspiration requires careful thought. Based on his love for the great painter, the composer devoted much effort to sincerely writing this symphonic poem.

Created in memory of this great painter, the symphonic poem was formed in two parts played consecutively. The first part portrays the painting *Sound of the Flute* (1926), which the artist created during his student years in France. The sound of the *xiao* played by the woman in the painting expresses her reminiscence of her homeland China. Against a background of turbulent times in the motherland, this lyrical melody gradually increased layer by layer in a deep symphonic manner, and after several brutal truncations, finally developed into an intense cry. When the music returns to the quiet sound of the *xiao*, the tranquility becomes even more heartwarming. The inscription about the Battle of Changsha written by the painter in *Galloping Horse* (1941) transformed the latter part of the symphonic poem into a passionate emotion, symbolizing the artist's expectation of victory in China's War of Resistance

against Japan. With thousands of horses galloping, the sound of their approaching hooves pushes the music to a powerful and splendid ending.



Thanks to conductor Jindong Cai for commissioning this work. Through this valuable opportunity, Xu Beihong's great artworks will be appreciated by more people in the form of music at Lincoln Center. May the world premiere of this symphonic poem performed by the orchestra of New Asia CMS under the direction of conductor Cai contribute to this meaningful work.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS



**Anshuman Bhatia, lighting designer, *Painted Skin***

Anshuman Bhatia's designs for opera, theater, and dance have been seen at Santa Fe Opera; Beijing's National Centre for the Performing Arts; Dublin's Civic Theater; Soho Rep; The Public; The Atlantic; Arena Stage in Washington, D.C.; The Park Avenue Armory; Bard Music Festival; WP Theater; The Juilliard School; Madison Opera; Classic Stage Company; HERE Arts Center; LoftOpera; Ma-Yi Theater Company; Keen Company; Pacific Symphony; Puerto Rican Traveling Theater; Virginia Arts Festival; Rattlestick Theater; The Sheen Center; and Troy's Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center. Bhatia received an MFA from New York University.



**Jindong Cai, artistic director and conductor**

Conductor Jindong Cai is director of the US-China Music Institute, professor of music and arts at Bard College, and associate conductor of The Orchestra Now (TŌN). Prior to joining Bard in 2017, he was a professor of performance at Stanford University for 14 years. Over his 30-year career in the United States, Cai has established himself as an active and dynamic conductor, scholar of Western classical music in China, and leading advocate of music from across Asia.

Born in Beijing, Cai received his early musical training in China, where he learned to play violin and piano. He came to the United States for his graduate studies at the New England Conservatory and the College-Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati. He is a three-time recipient of the ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music. Cai started his professional conducting career with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and has worked with numerous orchestras throughout North America and Asia. He maintains strong ties to his homeland and has conducted most of the top orchestras in China.

Together with his wife Sheila Melvin, Cai has coauthored many articles on the performing arts in China, as well as two books, *Rhapsody in Red: How Western Classical Music Became Chinese* and *Beethoven in China: How the Great Composer Became an Icon in the People's Republic*.

At Bard, Cai founded the annual China Now Music Festival. Now in its fifth season, China Now has presented new works by some of the most important Chinese composers of our time, with major concerts performed by The Orchestra Now at Bard's Fisher Center for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, and Stanford University. In 2019, the festival premiered a major new work by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Zhou Long, *Men of Iron and the Golden Spike*—a symphonic oratorio, in commemoration of the Chinese railroad workers of North America on the 150th anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad.



**Manli Deng, soprano**

Manli Deng was born in Chongqing, China. As a young artist she was selected to perform in the Maryland Lyric Opera Institute. Deng received her bachelor of music in voice performance from the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. Recently, she completed her master of music in voice performance at the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, and she will be pursuing the artist diploma at Rutgers University Mason Gross School of the Arts this fall. Recent opera engagements include Helene in *Hin unt Zurück*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas*, Mimi in *La Bohème*, Yuqing Hou in *Enming Deng*, and Dama di Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth*. Future credits include a return to the Maryland Lyric Opera as Gran Sacerdotessa in *Aida* in May 2023. Deng recently won third place in the Sylvia Green Vocal Competition; she was also the finalist in the Upper Midwest Regional Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions; and a finalist in the Atlantic Regional Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. This is her first time performing in the China Now Music Festival.



**Lucy Fitz Gibbon, soprano**

Noted for her “dazzling, virtuoso singing” (*Boston Globe*), Lucy Fitz Gibbon is a dynamic musician whose repertoire spans the Renaissance to the present. She believes that creating new works and recreating those lost in centuries past makes room for the multiplicity and diversity of voices integral to classical music’s future. As such, she has given US premieres of rediscovered works by Baroque composers Francesco Saccati, Barbara Strozzi, and Agostino Agazzari, as well by 20th century composers including Tadeusz Kassern, Roman Palester, and Jean Barraqué.

As a recitalist Fitz Gibbon has appeared with her collaborative partner, pianist Ryan McCullough, in such venues as London’s Wigmore Hall; New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art, Park Avenue Armory, and Merkin Hall; and Toronto’s Koerner Hall. Their discography includes *Descent/Return* (May 2020), featuring works by James Primosch and John Harbison, and *Beauty Intolerable* (February 2021), Sheila Silver’s complete Art Song repertoire alongside performers including Dawn Upshaw and Stephanie Blythe.

A graduate of Yale University, Fitz Gibbon holds an artist diploma from the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory and a master’s degree from Bard College Conservatory’s Graduate Vocal Arts Program. She is currently interim director of vocal programs at Cornell University and on the faculty of Bard College Conservatory’s Graduate Vocal Arts Program, and was on the voice faculty for Kneisel Hall’s 2020 and 2021 seasons.

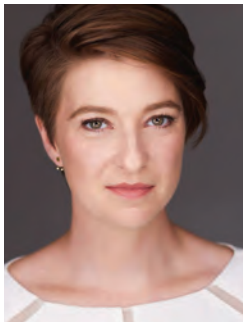


**Holly Flack, soprano**

A coloratura soprano, Holly Flack’s unique range extends beyond an octave above high C. In 2019, she performed the highest note ever sung at Lincoln Center, a B-flat above high C, as a featured soloist in a “Golden Night Concert” celebrating China’s Mid-Autumn Festival at David Geffen Hall in New York City. In 2021, she surpassed this record, singing a B natural above high C in the “East/West: A Symphonic Celebration” concert at David H. Koch Theater.

Her operatic roles include the title role in *Semele*, Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Queen of the Night in *Die Zauberflöte*, Ophélie in *Hamlet*, Morgana in *Alcina*, Elvira in *L'Italiana in Algeri*, and Dinorah in *Dinorah (Le Pardon de Ploërmel)*. She made her international debut at the Trentino Music Festival, singing the role of the Vixen in *The Cunning Little Vixen*. She has traveled multiple times to China with the iSing! International Young Artists Festival for concerts in different cities, and has performed on CCTV, Dragon TV, and Jiangsu Weishi TV for China's National Day Celebration and Chinese New Year. In 2022, she singularly represented the United States, singing in a promotional video for the Beijing Winter Olympics.

Originally from Portland, Oregon, she holds a bachelor's degree in vocal performance from St. Olaf College, and a master's degree in vocal performance from the University of Kentucky, where she studied with renowned soprano Cynthia Lawrence.



**Kristin Gornstein, mezzo-soprano**

Praised as “a fine actress with a deep, spacious sound” (*Parterre*), Kristin Gornstein brings her “rich-voiced mezzo-soprano” and “lines of an uncannily silky legato” (*New York Times*) to her work, ranging from the traditional to the edgy and imaginative. Her recent work includes Piramo in *Piramo e Tisbe* with the little OPERA theatre of ny (LOTNY), Julie in Pulitzer Prize-nominated composer Alex Weiser’s opera *State of the Jews*, and Ramiro in Mozart’s *La finta giardiniera* in a coproduction by On Site Opera and Atlanta Opera, a role she reprised in 2018 at Caramoor. Gornstein performed in the ensemble of the groundbreaking opera *Acquanetta*, both in the 2018 world premiere at the Prototype Festival and in its reprisal at

the Bard SummerScape Festival in 2019. Other roles include Angelina in Rossini’s *La cenerentola* with Salt Marsh Opera, Lady-in-Waiting in Verdi’s *Macbeth* with Opera Company of Middlebury, and Paul in the world premiere of Kurt Vonnegut and Richard Clark’s *Happy Birthday, Wanda June* with Indianapolis Opera. The 2020–2021 season included a return to LOTNY for a digital release of scenes from Mozart’s *Il Re Pastore*.

A frequent performer on the New York opera scene, Gornstein has appeared as Lucretia in Britten’s *The Rape of Lucretia* and Rosina in Rossini’s *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with Loft Opera, as Mrs. Slender in Salieri’s *Falstaff* with Dell’Arte Opera, as Dulcinée in Massenet’s *Don Quichotte* with Utopia Opera, and as Romeo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* with Opera Modo. She is an associate artist with Heartbeat Opera; appearing as Xantippe in *Daphnis and Chloé*, as featured soloist in “Queens of the Night: Mozart in Space” at Brooklyn’s National Sawdust and as part of the first fully staged opera pastiche ever performed on Manhattan’s High Line.

Gornstein was a 2015 Fellow with the Tanglewood Music Center, worked as a young artist with Indianapolis Opera, and was an apprentice with Bel Canto at Caramoor and New Jersey Opera. In 2012, she attended the Opera College of Stockholm and holds a master of music in voice performance from the University of Colorado. In 2021, she established the Vertex Duo with pianist Jeremy Chan; they recently released their first studio collaboration, EP *Still*.



**Yazhi Guo, suona**

Boston-based Yazhi Guo is regarded by many as the finest suona player in the world, and his expressive performances and unique style have created many opportunities in the world of modern music for the instrument. Guo graduated with distinction from the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing in 1990 and for nine years lectured on suona there. In the 1990s, he recorded the original songs for more than 100 films and popular TV series, and drew a huge following of fans. Guo was appointed as principal suona by the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra in 1999. Since then, he has performed with many orchestras around the world. He also

lectured at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts and led the Hong Kong Suona Association as its first executive director. Guo received the Hong Kong Award for Best Artist in 2012 and that same year, at age 46, relocated to Boston to explore jazz at Berklee College of Music. While studying at Berklee, he actively showcased the uniqueness of suona on various occasions and made the traditional suona more fashionable and popular. He is currently a visiting artist and teaches master classes at Philadelphia University of the Arts and Berklee College of Music, as well as at the Bard Conservatory of Music.



**Michael Hofmann, director, *Painted Skin***

Michael Hofmann is an opera stage director, administrator, performer, and artist based in Hudson, New York. His frequent experience with premiere works and devised performances has positioned him as a specialist in contemporary opera direction dedicated to genuine, engaging, and accessible storytelling. His directorial debut, a semistaged performance of Bernstein's *Candide* with The Orchestra Now in February 2017, was noted as "stunning in its brilliance, humor, and overall gestalt . . . an astonishing accomplishment" (*Millbrook Independent*). Hofmann has since directed or stage-managed performances with the Kaufman Music Center's Special Music School, University of Connecticut, Fresh Squeezed Opera, the Bard Music Festival, and the Bard College Music Program. Most recently, he directed Jillian Flexner's world premiere chamber opera *Self-Defined Circuits* at HERE Theater in May 2022, a production praised for being "riveting . . . so artfully done, so sensitive and authentic" (*Observer*) and "particularly inventive in its use of technologies" (*BroadwayWorld*).

As a baritone, he has sung regularly with several New York-based choral ensembles and small opera companies, including the Choir of St. Luke in the Fields, Canticum Scholare, and Opera on Tap. Hofmann holds a BA in music from Vassar College and an MM in voice from Bard College Conservatory. He works as the mayoral aide and ADA coordinator for the City of Hudson, and as development communications associate for the Fisher Center at Bard.



**Xiaofu Ju, piano**

Pianist Xiaofu Ju, recognized by world-renowned pianist Jörg Demus as a "pianist with promising talents and a natural depth in music," started learning piano at the age of 4. He is a graduate of the music middle school affiliated with the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, where he studied with Ting Zhou and is pursuing his bachelor of music at The Juilliard School under the tutelage of Yoheved Kaplinsky.

Since his orchestral debut at age 14 with the Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra, where he performed Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 3, he has performed with numerous orchestras around the world. In recent seasons, Ju has performed with The Orchestra Now, the China Philharmonic, Beijing Symphony, Xi'an Symphony, and Jiangsu Symphony orchestras as a soloist. He has appeared in recitals in New York, Bergen, Beijing, and Shanghai; in 2021 he premiered the Philip Glass Concerto No. 3 at the MISA festival in Shanghai (China premiere). Ju has performed in the Wiener Musikverein, Salzburg Congress, China National Centre for the Performing Arts, Great Hall of the People in Beijing, Shanghai Concert Hall, Shanghai Oriental Art Center, and the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra Hall, in addition to venues in New York, Los Angeles, Norway, Croatia, Guangzhou, Nanjing, Japan, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, and Hong Kong.

Awarded first prizes in the second Hong Kong International Piano Competition, eighth Asian Piano Finals, first Shanghai Himalaya National Youth Piano Competition, and first Youth Piano Competition of Shanghai

Conservatory of Music, Ju was a finalist of the Pearl River Piano Competition in China and recipient of the Juilliard Kenneth M. and Josephine J. Bissell Scholarship, Martin Canin Scholarship, and Adele Marcus Piano Scholarship. In 2019, he published a collection of his poetry, *On the Path Seeking for the Ruins of Spring*.



### **Yi Li, tenor**

Proving himself a formidable talent and a rising star to watch in the opera world, Yi Li is quickly gaining attention across the globe. Most recently, Li debuted the role of Cheng Quing in Meredith Monk's *ATLAS* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and moved into bigger repertoire—debuting the role of Dick Johnson in *La fanciulla del West* in Maryland Lyric Opera's inaugural season. Li subsequently returned there as Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Turridu/Luigi in *Il Tabarro/Cavalleria Rusticana*, as well as the Metropolitan Opera as the Young Lover in *Il tabarro*. Engagements last season included a return to Maryland Lyric Opera for *Turandot*—singing Pang and covering Calaf, Danny in *An American Soldier* at the

China Now Music Festival, his debut at Opera Tampa as Turridu in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, the tenor soloist in Beethoven's 9th Symphony at Jackson Symphony, *Angel Island Oratorio* at the Sante Fe Opera, and a gala concert for the 10th Anniversary of Finger Lakes Opera. Upcoming, Li can be seen performing with the Irish National Opera. This season, Li will take on the role of Macduff in Verdi's *Macbeth*, as well as rejoining the China Now Music Festival.



### **Xu Fangfang, piano**

For the 2022 China Now Music Festival, Xu Fangfang returns to the stage to perform the once-lost third movement of Jiang Wenye's piano concerto, *Xu Beihong's Color-And-Ink-Paintings*, which Jiang composed especially for her in her father's honor.

Born in Beijing, Xu began her piano studies at age five, and at nine she entered the Preparatory Music Elementary School Affiliated to the Central Conservatory of Music, passionately studying Western classical piano performance for nine years. In 1966, she was one year short of graduating into a concert career when the Cultural Revolution broke out. Western classical music was banned and China's colleges and universities closed, and remained so for 10 years. In 1968, with a diploma from the Preparatory Music High School Affiliated to the Central Conservatory of Music, she was assigned to work as a piano accompanist for the China National Peking Opera Company, helping to make *The Red Lantern* into one of Jiang Qing's (Madame Mao's) model operas.

In 1970, she was among the many student artists assigned to the 4701 Army Farm, where she and her classmates grew rice in brackish marshes under harsh conditions. With no piano on the farm, she managed to continue her music studies in limited ways while cautiously learning English on her own. When granted permission to leave the farm in 1972, she was assigned to the Central Philharmonic Orchestra's music research group. She sight-read full ensemble scores and played them swiftly on the piano, bringing out essential features so the group could evaluate the music. In 1972, she participated in preparing descriptions of the Philadelphia Orchestra's repertoire for top leaders' review; in 1973, under the direction of maestro Eugene Ormandy, it became the first American orchestra to travel to the People's Republic of China.

In 1981, she enrolled at the University of California, Berkeley to complete her BA in history and also earned an MBA from Stanford University. She was the piano accompanist for Union Avenue Opera

Theatre's Opera Gala Concert in St. Louis in the 1990s, and also played solo from the Chinese repertoire at the St. Louis Art Museum. In 2000, she became the founding director of the music department at Renmin University of China. Details of her life and education can be found in her memoir, *Galloping Horses: Artist Xu Beihong and His Family in Mao's China*, found at [beihongchinaarts.com](http://beihongchinaarts.com).



**Feifei Yang, erhu**

Feifei Yang is a two-string fiddle (erhu) artist, mezzo-soprano, as well as an actress. Her singles and albums include "Dance of the Strings," "China Caribe," "You Will Never Be Alone," "Heroic China," "Love Gone By," and "Tug of War." She has performed at the United Nations, Abu Dhabi Palace, Times Square New Year's Eve Countdown Stage, Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, Barclays Center, CBS, WNBC, and many other legendary settings. She also appeared in the Emmy Award-winning TV show, *We Speak New York*.



**Qian Yi, Kunqu opera singer**

From the age of 10, Qian Yi studied classical Chinese opera (Kunqu) at the Shanghai Opera School and the Chinese Ministry of Culture has recognized her as one of the country's finest young Kunqu actors. As a member of the Shanghai Opera Company, her leading roles included *The Legend of the White Snake*, *The Water Margin*, and other standards of the classical Chinese opera repertoire. In 1998, she was cast in the lead role of Lincoln Center Festival's epic 19-hour production of *The Peony Pavilion*. The production toured internationally, playing at major international festivals in the United States, Europe, Asia and Australia.

Since coming to the US, she has starred in numerous reworkings of Chinese opera for a Western theater context, including *Ghost Lovers* (Spoleto USA), *The Orphan of Zhao* (Lincoln Center), and *Snow in June* (American Repertory Theater). For her Western opera premiere, she sang a leading role in the San Francisco Opera's new production of Amy Tan's *The Bonesetter's Daughter*. She also starred in the Contemporary Legend Theatre's *The Butterfly Dream*, which premiered at Taiwan's National Theater as part of its 20th anniversary celebration and *The Eternal Palace*, which was performed in venues across the United States including the Smithsonian Freer+Sackler Galleries.

An installation opera, *Paradise Interrupted*, was inspired in part by her life and premiered at Spoleto USA and has subsequently been performed in major venues in America and Asia. She plays the lead and contributed to the libretto. She has starred in several independent films, including Alexander Ku's *Triple 8 Palace*; *Dark Matter*, starring Meryl Streep and Liu Ye; and *The Years Flow Like Water*, which premiered at the 31st Asian American International Film Festival. In a *Chinese Cracker*, a feature length documentary about *The Peony Pavilion*, she appears as herself.

All photos courtesy of the artists

Cover: *Chien Men Street, Peking*, 1921, New York Public Library Digital Collections, The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints, and Photographs

# THE ORCHESTRA NOW

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Nayoung Kim  
Alana Auerbach  
Jonathan Fenwick  
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Samuel Frois  
Sixuan Zhu  
Judith Kim  
Nalin Myoung APS '23

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Yeseul Park  
Yuna Jo  
Julian Andres Rey  
Adam Jeffreys  
Heather Lambert  
Eni Samu  
Angeles Hoyos  
Zhen Liu

### Viola

Shek Wan Li *Principal*  
Kyle Davis  
Batmyagmar Erdenebat  
Sydney Link  
Hyunjung Song  
Leonardo Vásquez Chacón  
Karen Waltuch

### Cello

Isaac Kim *Principal*  
Amelia Smerz  
Eva Roebuck  
Jihyun Hwang  
Emma Churchill  
Sam Boundy

### Bass

Zachary Merkovsky *Principal*  
Rowan Puig Davis  
Kiefer Fuller  
Steven Brija

### Flute

Chase McClung *Principal*<sup>1,2</sup>  
Danielle Maeng *Principal*<sup>3</sup>  
Jordan Arbus *Piccolo*<sup>3</sup>

### Oboe

Shawn Hutchison *Principal*<sup>1,2</sup>  
Jasper Igusa *Principal*<sup>3</sup>  
JJ Silvey *English Horn*<sup>1,3</sup>

### Clarinet

Colby Bond *Principal*<sup>1,2</sup>  
Mackenzie Austin *Principal*<sup>3</sup>  
Olivia Hamilton *E-flat Clarinet*<sup>1</sup>,  
*Bass Clarinet*<sup>3</sup>

### Bassoon

Philip McNaughton *Principal*<sup>1,2</sup>  
Han-Yi Huang *Principal*<sup>3</sup>  
Matthew Boice *Contrabassoon*<sup>1,3</sup>

### Horn

Kenshi Miyatani *Principal*<sup>1,2</sup>  
Tori Boell *Principal*<sup>3</sup>  
Zachary Travis

### Trumpet

Diana Lopez *Principal*<sup>1,2</sup>  
Maggie Tsan-Jung Wei *Principal*<sup>3</sup>  
Forrest Albano

### Trombone

Stephen Whimple *Principal*<sup>3</sup>  
Samuel Boeger *Bass Trombone*  
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### Tuba

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### Timpani

Keith Hammer III

### Percussion

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Taylor Lents  
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### Harp

Ashley Lim

### Piano

Ji Hea Hwang

1 Aaron Avshalomov

2 Guo Wenjing

3 Ye Xiaogang

Members of TŌN can be  
identified by their distinctive  
blue attire.

**The Orchestra Now** (TŌN) is a group of vibrant young musicians from across the globe who are making orchestral music relevant to 21st-century audiences. They are lifting the curtain on the musicians' experience and sharing their unique personal insights in a welcoming environment. Conductor, educator, and music historian Leon Botstein founded TŌN in 2015 as a master's degree program at Bard College, where he also serves as president. The orchestra is in residence at Bard's Fisher Center for the Performing Arts, presenting multiple concerts there each season as well as taking part in the annual Bard Music Festival. It also performs regularly at the finest venues in New York and beyond, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Metropolitan Museum of Art, and elsewhere. The orchestra has performed with many distinguished conductors, including Fabio Luisi, Neeme Järvi, Gerard Schwarz, and JoAnn Falletta. [theorchestranow.org](http://theorchestranow.org)



# BARD CHINESE ENSEMBLE

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Danting Qiao  
Beitong Liu  
Chia-Yu Joy Lu  
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Inna Lu  
Sarina Schwartz (violin)

### **Cello**

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Sarah Martin

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Benjamin Halle

Shutong Li, *assistant conductor*

Comprised of students of the Bard College Conservatory of Music, the **Bard Chinese Ensemble** is an essential part of the US-China Music Institute's curriculum for Chinese instrument majors at Bard, and offers an opportunity for students of Western instruments to play in a mixed ensemble and learn Chinese repertoire. During the 2022 China Now Music Festival the ensemble joins with special guests to form a 24-piece Chinese orchestra for the two performances of Hao Weiya's haunting chamber opera ***Painted Skin*** in Hudson, New York and in New York City.

# ORCHESTRA OF NEW ASIA CMS

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Amelia Dietrich  
Elaine He  
Yejin Han  
Wenting Bian

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Regi Papa  
Kate Arndt  
Martin Noh  
Abigail Hong  
Amos Lee  
John Zhang  
Amos Lee  
Yihan Zhu

### **Viola**

Andy Lin  
Emily Brandenburg  
Daniel Spink  
Mia Chen

### **Cello**

Nan-Cheng Chen  
Rob La Rue  
Jared Blajian  
Wei-An Hung  
Blake Kitayama  
Jane Lee  
Thapelo Masita  
Madeline Fayette

### **Bass**

Kyle Colina  
Josh Marcum

### **Flute**

Eva Ding, *principal*  
Zack Hicks  
Ashley Yip

### **Piccolo**

Ashley Yip

### **Oboe**

Michelle Farah, *principal*  
Hsuan-Fong Chen

### **English Horn**

Hsuan-Fong Chen

### **Clarinet**

Bixby Kennedy, *principal*  
Yu-Ting Cheng

### **Bass Clarinet**

Yu-Ting Cheng

### **Bassoon**

Gili Sharett, *principal*  
Atao Liu

### **Horn**

Kyle Anderson, *principal*  
Cameron West  
Kyra Sims

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Atse Theodros, *principal*  
Alejandro López-Samamé  
Sam Jones

### **Trombone**

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### **Piano**

Kelly Lin

Based in New York City, the **New Asia CMS** (NACMS) is committed to bringing audiences exciting chamber music performances of the highest caliber and innovation. By delving into the giants of traditional chamber music repertoire, cultivating new voices of contemporary composers that meld elements of Western and Eastern cultures, and collaborating with a broad network of art organizations—NACMS is creating a trifecta of innovation to enable new concert-going experiences for the audience. A full orchestra of NACMS members has been formed exclusively for the China Now Music Festival's October 22 concert.

The **China Now Music Festival** is an annual series of events produced by the US-China Music Institute of the Bard College Conservatory of Music in partnership with the Central Conservatory of Music, China. Dedicated to promoting an understanding and appreciation of classical music from contemporary China, each year's festival explores a singular theme. The inaugural festival in 2018, **Facing the Past, Looking to the Future: Chinese Composers in the 21st Century**, presented US and world premieres of orchestral works by 11 living Chinese composers in concerts at Bard College, Carnegie Hall, and Lincoln Center. The following year, the festival presented **China and America: Unity in Music** at Bard College, Carnegie Hall, and Stanford University, and featured the world premiere of the symphonic oratorio *Men of Iron and the Golden Spike*, a major new work by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Zhou Long. In 2020, **China and Beethoven** presented eight days of music and discussion online, including video of live performances from China, celebrating the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth. The 2021 festival at Bard College, **Asian American Voices**, celebrated the work of composer Huang Ruo and featured many prominent contemporary Asian American composers and musicians.

The **US-China Music Institute** was founded in 2017 by conductor Jindong Cai and Robert Martin, founding director of 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 program in Chinese instrument performance in a US conservatory. In the fall of 2022, the Institute will enroll its first students in the new Master of Arts in Chinese Music and Culture, a unique multidisciplinary opportunity for graduate-level academic study and performance of Chinese music outside of China. Planned is the construction of a building that will become the permanent home of the Institute on the Bard campus in upstate New York. Once built, the Chinese Music Pavilion will be a landmark for the study and appreciation of Chinese music in the United States and throughout the West. [barduschinamusic.org](http://barduschinamusic.org)

Recognized as one of the finest conservatories in the United States, **Bard College Conservatory of Music** is guided by the principle that young musicians should be broadly educated in the liberal arts and sciences to achieve their greatest potential. The mission of the Conservatory is to provide the best possible preparation for a person dedicated to a life immersed in the creation and performance of music. The five-year, double-degree program combines rigorous conservatory training with a challenging and comprehensive liberal arts program. All Conservatory students pursue a double degree in a thoroughly integrated program and supportive educational community. Graduating students receive a bachelor of music and a bachelor of arts in a field other than music. At the Bard Conservatory the serious study of music goes hand in hand with the education of the whole person. Founded in 2005 by cellist and philosopher Robert Martin, the Conservatory welcomed the composer Tan Dun as its new dean in the summer of 2019. [bard.edu/conservatory](http://bard.edu/conservatory)

Established in 1949 and merged with the National College of Music and several other music educational institutions in China, the **Central Conservatory of Music (CCOM)** is a specialized Chinese institution of higher education for nurturing high level music professionals. It currently enrolls 1,543 undergraduate students and 633 graduate students. Functioning as a national center of music education, composition, performance, research, and social promotion of music, CCOM is a world-renowned institute of music that represents the highest caliber of music education in China. While carrying on the diverse music heritage of China, CCOM is actively absorbing the essence of various music cultures across the world, embracing different artistic elements with an open mind. Facing a time of increasing opportunities, CCOM will continue its efforts to become a world-leading conservatory with top-notch programs in music education, dedicated to preparing future generations of music professional leaders for the development of art in China, and to bringing China's vibrant music culture to the world.

# THE US-CHINA MUSIC INSTITUTE NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!

## MAKE A GIFT TODAY TO HELP BUILD OUR FUTURE TOGETHER

As we celebrate our fifth anniversary, USCFI is looking into the future to further our educational and cultural mission, and to build a permanent home for Chinese music in the West. The Institute relies on the support of a core group of individuals who share our belief in the power of music to build bridges and connect with one another beyond the strife of politics and current events.

**Please join us with a gift to support our amazing students and impactful programming.**

Contributions of any amount are welcomed and will support the Institute's scholarship fund for students of Chinese instruments as well as the China Now Music Festival and other public programs.

**For more information, visit [barduschinamusic.org/support](http://barduschinamusic.org/support)**

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**Online:** [bardian.bard.edu/register/uscfi](http://bardian.bard.edu/register/uscfi)

**By check:** Make check payable to Bard College and mail to US-China Music Institute, Bard College, PO Box 5000, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY 12504

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Paulina Swierczek VAP '19, *Audience and Member Services Assistant Manager*

Jardena Gertler-Jaffe VAP '21, *Box Office Supervisor*

Erik Long, *Box Office Supervisor*

Sarah Rauch VAP '22, *Box Office Supervisor*

Lea Rodriguez '22, *Box Office Supervisor*

Alexis Seminario VAP '22, *Box Office Supervisor*

Courtney Williams, *Box Office Supervisor*

#### **Facilities**

Mark Crittenden, *Facilities Manager*

Ray Stegner, *Building Operations Manager*

Hazaiah Tompkins '19, *Building Operations Coordinator*

Liam Gomez, *Building Operations Assistant*

Chris Lyons, *Building Operations Assistant*

Robyn Charter, *Fire Panel Monitor*

Bill Cavanaugh, *Environmental Specialist*

Drita Gjokaj, *Environmental Specialist*

Oksana Ryabinkina, *Environmental Specialist*

### **UPCOMING USCMI EVENTS IN 2022-23**

#### **DECEMBER**

## **BARD CHINESE ENSEMBLE WINTER CONCERT**

BARD COLLEGE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

#### **JANUARY**

## **THE SOUND OF SPRING**

4TH ANNUAL CHINESE NEW YEAR CONCERT WITH THE ORCHESTRA NOW FISHER CENTER AT BARD AND ROSE THEATER AT JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER

#### **APRIL**

## **ANNUAL US-CHINA MUSIC INSTITUTE ACADEMIC CONFERENCE**

BARD COLLEGE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

#### **MAY**

## **BARD CHINESE ENSEMBLE SPRING CONCERT**

BARD COLLEGE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

For more information visit [barduschinamusic.org/events](https://barduschinamusic.org/events)



US-CHINA MUSIC INSTITUTE  
Bard College Conservatory of Music  
巴德美中音乐研习院



中央音乐学院  
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