

China
NOW
MUSIC FESTIVAL
纽约中国当代音乐节

ASIAN
AMERICAN
VOICES

October 12-17, 2021

Fisher Center at Bard • Worldwide Online

CHINA NOW MUSIC FESTIVAL

ASIAN AMERICAN VOICES

October 12-17, 2021

Jindong Cai, Artistic Director

Huang Ruo, Composer in Residence

Del Sol Quartet, Ensemble in Residence

Asian American voices are American voices, and Asian American music is American music. We should always cherish the cultural diversity in American society.

This year, the China Now Music Festival is a platform for composers and musicians to tell stories of America and to reflect on society, culture, and history through the lens of many diverse experiences of Asians in America—their struggles and their aspirations.

The festival's composer in residence, Huang Ruo, exemplifies the artist as social commentator. The three pieces by Huang presented in this festival, *Angel Island*, *A Dust in Time*, and *An American Soldier*, touch on immigration, the pandemic, and anti-Asian discrimination. Huang believes that his music should move society forward, and these pieces exemplify this noble goal.

Many other musical voices fill the festival's concerts. Composer Tan Dun, dean of the Bard College Conservatory of Music, has established an international reputation as a composer who takes inspiration from traditional music, nature, and contemporary arts. His *Prayer and Blessing*, written in the early stages of the pandemic, represents the broad reach of his style. Korean American composer Jin Hi Kim crosses boundaries of genre while drawing on traditional ritual practice in her work *A Ritual for COVID-19*. Bard's own faculty member, Xinyan Li, expresses light emerging out of darkness to represent our journey through these dark times in a new work composed for the festival, *Awakening Light*. Peng-Peng Gong takes inspiration from American musical traditions to describe the experience of a young man coming to America in *A Chinese in New York*. Takuma Itoh honors the memory of women immigrating from Japan early in the 20th century in *Picture Brides*.

The Del Sol Quartet joins us from San Francisco as ensemble in residence, and brings with them a program of works by a diverse group of innovative Asian American composers. New music by Erberk Eryilmaz, Vijay Iyer, Jungyoon Wie, and Erika Oba explore identity and cross-cultural expression with playful experiments in sound.

In these times, we need to learn to listen to every voice with compassion, understanding, and fellowship. The stories of America include the experience of every immigrant who arrived on these shores, along with those who were displaced; those who found opportunity, along with those who did not. **Asian American Voices** presents stories that invite us all to reflect on how, through music, we can come together and truly hear one another.

I want to thank all the artists for their participation in this year's festival, and thanks to all of you, the audience, who are joining us in returning to the wonder and pleasure of live concerts after too long of a pause. We are glad you are here.

Jindong Cai 蔡金冬

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

Professor of Music and Arts, Bard College

October 2021



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

ASIAN AMERICAN VOICES

COMPOSING FOR HISTORY

music of Huang Ruo

Tuesday, October 12 at 8 pm

Sosnoff Theater
Fisher Center at Bard

The Orchestra Now

Jindong Cai, *conductor*

Huang Ruo (b. 1976)

A Dust in Time, passacaglia for strings

Intermission

Del Sol Quartet

Sam Weiser, *violin*

Ben Kreith, *violin*

Charlton Lee, *viola*

Kathryn Bates, *cello*

China Now Festival Chorus

Jindong Cai, *conductor*

Angel Island Oratorio for voices and
string quartet (preview excerpts)

Mvt 2. The Seascape 水景如苔千里曲

Mvt 4. When We Bade Farewell 離別故鄉

Mvt 6. Buried Beneath Clay and Earth 噩耗傳聞實可哀

ASIAN AMERICAN VOICES

UNDERCURRENTS IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN MUSIC

a multimedia chamber concert

Wednesday, October 13 at 8 pm

Sosnoff Theater
Fisher Center at Bard

Del Sol Quartet

Sam Weiser, *violin*
Ben Kreith, *violin*
Charlton Lee, *viola*
Kathryn Bates, *cello*

Takuma Itoh

Picture Brides (Hawai'i 1908-1924) (2017)

Jungyoon Wie

A Popular Tune (2020)

From The Joy Project:

Erika Oba

Akoya (2020)

Vijay Iyer

Spasm (2021)

Erberk Eryilmaz

Ankara Havasi Goes Bananas (2020)

Intermission

Jin Hi Kim (composer and performer)

A Ritual for COVID-19 (world premiere)



Ayako Kikugawa, picture bride. Photo courtesy of the Barbara Kawakami Collection



HONORING THE MEMORY OF PRIVATE DANNY CHEN
MAY 26, 1992 - OCTOBER 3, 2021

ASIAN AMERICAN VOICES

SYMPHONIC PORTRAITS with The Orchestra Now

Saturday, October 16 at 3 pm

Sosnoff Theater
Fisher Center at Bard

The Orchestra Now

Jindong Cai, *conductor*

Tan Dun (b. 1957)

Prayer and Blessing, version for orchestra (2020)

Peng-Peng Gong (b. 1992)

A Chinese in New York (2019)

Xinyan Li (b. 1978)

Awakening Light, concerto for guzheng and orchestra
(world premiere)

Yixin Wang '23, *guzheng*

Intermission

Huang Ruo (b. 1976)

David Henry Hwang (b. 1957), libretto

Episodes from *An American Soldier*, opera (2014)

From Act I:

So, that is the man

It's senior year

Ah Ma, can we talk?

From Act II:

Hey, Danny

I'm sorry *Ah Ma*

I had a dream

David Henry Hwang, *narrator*

Li Yi, *tenor*

Nina Yoshida Nelsen, *mezzo-soprano*

Helen Zhibing Huang VAP '15, *soprano*

ONLINE EVENT

ASIAN AMERICAN VOICES

ARTISTS CONFRONTING SOCIETY a panel discussion and performance

Thursday, October 14, 2021

Zoom Webinar 8 pm Eastern Time Zone

PANELISTS

Huang Ruo, *composer in residence, China Now Music Festival*
David Henry Hwang, *playwright*
Charlton Lee, *violinist and artistic director, Del Sol Quartet*
Jindong Cai, *conductor and artistic director, China Now Music Festival*
Jungyoon Wie, *composer*
Erberk Eryilmaz, *composer*
Vijay Iyer, *composer*
Takuma Itoh, *composer*

YouTube Livestream 9:30 pm EST

PERFORMANCE

Del Sol Quartet
Huang Ruo (b. 1976) *A Dust in Time*, passacaglia for strings (2020)



A Tibetan sand mandala, about to be ritually destroyed. Photo: public domain

ONLINE EVENT

ASIAN AMERICAN VOICES

AMERICAN STORIES, AMERICAN MUSIC a symphonic concert online

Sunday, October 17 at 5 pm

Fisher Center Upstreaming

Del Sol Quartet

Sam Weiser, *violin*

Ben Kreith, *violin*

Charlton Lee, *viola*

Kathryn Bates, *cello*

China Now Festival Chorus

Jindong Cai, *conductor*

Huang Ruo

Angel Island Oratorio for voices and
string quartet (preview excerpts)

The Orchestra Now

Jindong Cai, *conductor*

Huang Ruo

David Henry Hwang, libretto

Episodes from *An American Soldier*, opera (2014)

From Act I:

So, that is the man

It's senior year

Ah Ma, can we talk?

From Act II:

Hey, Danny

I'm sorry *Ah Ma*

I had a dream

David Henry Hwang, *narrator*

Li Yi, *tenor*

Nina Yoshida Nelsen, *mezzo-soprano*

Helen Zhibing Huang VAP '15, *soprano*

Xinyan Li

Awakening Light, concerto for guzheng and orchestra
Yixin Wang, *guzheng*

Peng-Peng Gong

A Chinese in New York (2019)



ANGEL ISLAND ORATORIO FOR VOICES AND STRING QUARTET

I.

水景如苔千里曲

水景如苔千里曲，
陸路無涯路步難。
平風到埠心如是，
安樂誰知住木樓。

The Seascape

The seascape resembles lichen twisting and turning for a
thousand li.
There is no shore to land, and it is difficult to walk.
With a gentle breeze I arrived at the city thinking all would
be so.
At ease, how was one to know he was to live in a wooden
building?

II.

離別故鄉

離別故鄉，
頻洒窮途之淚。
躬到美域，
徒觀海水之汪洋。
船泊碼頭，
轉撥埃崙之孤島。
離埠十里，
托足孤峯。
三層木屋，
堅如萬里長城。
幾座監牢，
長扃北門管鑰。

When We Bade Farewell

When we bade farewell to our village home,
We were in tears because of survival's desperation.
When we arrived in the American territory,
We stared in vain at the vast ocean.
Our ship docked
And we were transferred to a solitary island.
Ten li from the city,
My feet stand on this lonely hill.
The muk uk is three stories high,
Built as firmly as the Great Wall.
Room after room are but jails,
And the North Gate firmly locked.



同胞數百，難期漏網之魚，
黃種半千，恍若密羅之雀。
有時舉頭而眺，
胡笳互動，益增惆悵之悲。
或者傾耳而聽，
牧馬悲鳴，翻惹淒涼之感。

嗟！嗟！
觸景生情，
荒涼滿目。
愁遣此；
命也何如？
尤有慘者，診脈數回，無病宛然有病；
驗身數次，裹身一若裸身。
借問昊天，使我奚至此極？
哀哉吾輩，然亦無如之何。

Here—
Several hundreds of my countrymen are like fish caught in
a net;
Half a thousand Yellow Race are like birds trapped in a
mesh.
As we lift our heads and look afar,
The barbarian reed pipes add all the more to our anguish
and grief.
As we cock our ears and try to listen,
The horses' neighing further worsens our solitude and
sorrow.

Alas! Heaven!
So desolate is this sight;
It is disheartening indeed.
Sorrow and hardship have led me to this place;
What more can I say about life? Worse yet,
A healthy person would become ill after repeated medical
examinations;
A private inspection would render a clothed person naked.
Let me ask you, the barbarians:
Why are you treating us in such an extreme way?
I grieve for my fellow countrymen;
There is really nothing we can do!



Japanese arrivals being examined by U.S. immigration officials aboard a ship docked at Angel Island Immigration Station, 1931. National Archives, Washington, D.C.



An interrogation at Angel Island. National Archives, Washington D.C.



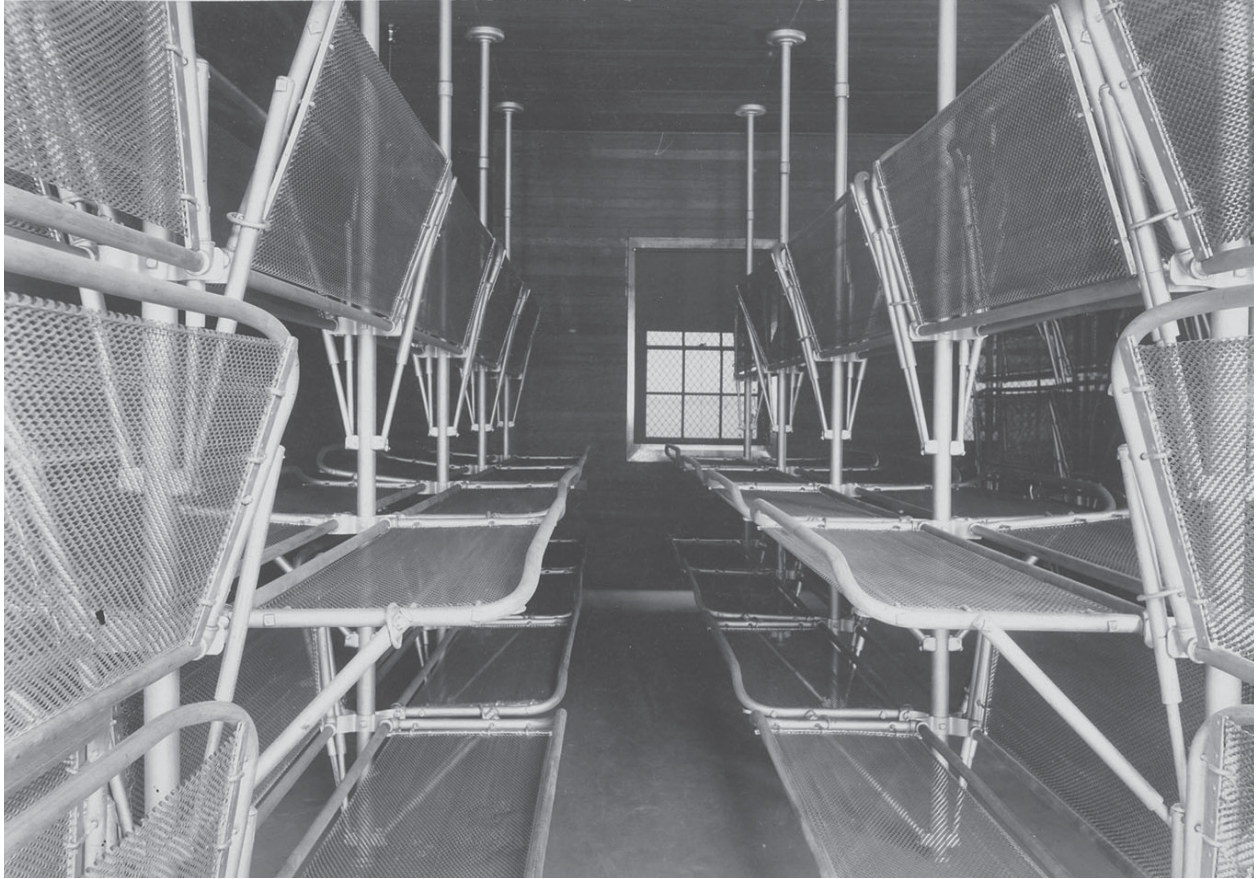
Immigrants detained at Angel Island Immigration Station. Library of Congress

雖削南山之高竹，寫不盡離騷之詞。
 竭東海之波流，洗不淨羞慙之狀。
 然或者，狄庭行酒，晉愍不辭青衣之羞
 漢軍降奴，李陵曾作椎心之訴。
 古人如此，
 今人獨不忍乎？
 夫事窮勢迫，亦復何言？
 藏器待時，徒空想像。

嗚呼！
 白種強權，
 黃魂受慘，
 比喪家之狗，強入牢籠；
 迫入笠之豚，嚴加鎖鑰。
 魂消雪窖，真犬馬之不如。
 淚洒冰天，傷禽鳥之不若也。

All the tall bamboo from Zhongnan Mountain cannot
 bear our words of frustration.
 All the water in the Eastern Sea will not cleanse our sense
 of humiliation.
 Perhaps, we can be—
 Like Emperor Min of Jin, who didn't reject the shame of
 wearing blue garb and serving wine,
 Like Li Ling, who pounded his chest in agony for his Han
 army surrendering to the Huns.
 Our ancestors have encountered such misfortune—
 Why does our present generation endure the same?
 In a moment of desperation,
 What more can one say?
 In waiting with concealed weapons for the right moment
 to arrive—
 It is nothing but pure fantasy.

Alas,
 Such tyranny of the White Race!
 Such tragedy of the Yellow Souls!
 Like a homeless dog forced into a confining cage,
 Like a trapped pig held in a bamboo cage,
 Our spirits are lost in this wintry prison;
 We are worse than horses and cattle.
 Our tears shed on an icy day,
 We are less than the birds and fowl.



A dormitory at the Angel Island Immigration Station. University of California, Berkeley, Bancroft Library

良可慨也
尚忍言哉？

We are filled with grief.
How can we suppress our cries?

III.

噩耗傳聞實可哀

Buried Beneath Clay and Earth

噩耗傳聞實可哀，
弔君何日裹屍回？
無能瞑目憑誰訴？
有識應知悔此來。
千古含愁千古恨，
思鄉空對望鄉臺。
未酬壯志埋壤土，
知爾雄心死不灰。

Shocking news, truly sad, reached my ears.
We mourn you. When will they wrap your corpse for
return?
You cannot close your eyes. On whom are you depending
to voice your complaints?
If you had foresight, you should have regretted coming
here.
Now you will be forever sad and forever resentful.
Thinking of the village, one can only futilely face the
Terrace for Gazing Homeward.
Before you could fulfill your lofty goals, you were buried
beneath clay and earth.
I know that even death could not destroy your ambition.



Cartoon by Frank Leslie. Library of Congress

Chinese poetry found on Angel Island: *Island: Poetry and History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island 1910-1940*, Him Mark Lai, Genny Lim, Judy Yung

AN AMERICAN SOLDIER

Act I, Scene 3

Mother Chen

So that, that, that is the man,
That, that, that, that is his face.
I could walk right over
And spit, spit, spit, spit between his eyes.
What could they do?
Hit me? Slap me?
I would hit him back,
Right where it hurts!
Right where it hurts!
Nothing he could do to me,
Nothing anyone could do,
Would be worse
Than what they have
Already done.
Ah. . . .

Danny

Ah Ma,
What are you doing here? This is Fort
Bragg,
Not Chinatown.
I can take care of this. You should go
home.

Mother Chen

I don't believe
This was a suicide.
My son, my son must have died
Some other way.
I was shocked,
I was shocked,
I was shocked when I learned
That he was gone.
Gone, gone, gone, gone!
Gone, my child, gone, my boy.
We had a good relationship,
He would not have left us,
Not like that.
I was the one who raised him,
The one who knew his heart.

Act I, Scene 2

Josephine

Danny Chen!
It's senior year! And we're all set,
And we're all set.

We're the Chinatown All-American
dream.
Hey, hey,
You got full tuition?
I only got half!
I'm just as smart as you, I'll ask them
for more.
Danny Chen!

Danny

I haven't decided
If college is for me.

Josephine

What? Why not?
I see our future
Bright as that moon.
I'm choosing St. Francis,
You should, too.
"The Small College
of Big Dreams."
I have big dreams.
I have big dreams.
I could be
In dance, fashion,
Inventing killer apps!

Danny

Is that what you'll do?
Follow your dreams?

Josephine

You know my parents
Only want me to be
A doctor, or
At least an engineer.

Danny

So you'll do what they say,
Instead of what you want. That's not
for me.
In school, I'm always
Bored out of my skull.

Josephine

Danny Chen,
Hear me out,
You're a fool.
Hey hey ya, hey hey yo.
Who cares if you're bored? You get
good grades!
Hey hey ya, hey hey yo.

What kind of Chinese are you?
What else you gonna do? Where else
you gonna go?
Hey hey ya, hey hey yo!
So why are you standing here?
(Josephine notices Danny focused on a
particular pamphlet.)

What's with that pamphlet?
Nei kei hai dou zou muh?
Nei tai muh yeh tai muh ye hou tai?
"Are you army strong?"
What's that even mean?
Hey hey ya, hey hey yo!
Danny Chen,

Danny

Josephine. . . . Josephine. . . .

Josephine

The army? Really?
Don't tell me. . . .
You've got to be kidding.

Danny

I've been thinking. . . .

Josephine

No, no, no, no,
No, no, no, no,
You haven't, you haven't!

Danny

My parents won't approve.

Josephine

You are not thinking at all!
Hey, they are right!

Danny

So I'll sign up,
Not tell them 'til it's done.

Josephine

No, no, no, no, no,
No, no, no, no, no!
Danny, Danny, are you nuts?
You can do better,
Much better than the army,
You'll get shot,
And blown up far away.
The army's for people
Who got no other choices,

But we got offers.
Come to St. Francis with me!
Be the all-American Chinatown dream.

Danny

Yeah, yeah, yeah,
Yeah, yeah, yeah.
But. I want something different,
A life that's right for me.
Not sitting in some classroom,
Bored out of my skull.

Josephine

Danny, you're all set.

Danny

I want to be
In the middle of the action,
On a team where
We've got each other's backs.

Josephine

Got the Chinatown
All-American dream!

Danny

I'll become a cop
With my army training,
Send my paycheck back home
To my *Ah Ma* and *Ah Pa*.
Dad works so hard,
Always at the restaurant.

Josephine

You are not thinking at all!
You can do better!

Danny

I'll make things better
As a soldier.

Josephine

The army's for people
Who got no other choices,
But you got offers.

Danny

Better for them,
Better for everyone,
Better for me.

(The argument between Danny and Josephine grows heated.)

Josephine

If this is what you want?

Danny

This is what I want!

Josephine

You'd rather be dead?

Danny

I'm gonna sign up.

Josephine

Like that's a better life?

Danny

I'll become a soldier.

Josephine

You'll just end up
Shot up in some war!

Danny

An American soldier
For all the world to see.

Josephine

Enough!

Danny

Why don't you want me
To follow my dreams?

Josephine

I only want you
To choose another dream! Hmmm.

Danny

I thought we were friends!

Josephine

Maybe even more.

Danny

Friends are always
There for each other.

Josephine

But friends always
Tell the truth.

Danny

You've told me what you think.
Will you be here for me?

Josephine

Yes, I guess.
I'll always be here for you.
If you've made up your mind,
What else can I do?

Act I, Scene 4

Danny

Ah Ma, I enlisted yesterday.
Joined the army.
I knew you wouldn't like it,
So I went and did it.
Please don't disown me.

Mother Chen

Disown? Disown?
How could I disown you?
You are my son!
My little *Ah Fai*.
I sang to you in your crib:
"Sleep now, little one,
Do not fear,
Do not cry.
Like the stars above,
I'll watch over you."
Does any of that change
Because you make me mad?
But you make me mad!
How could you enlist?
I don't want you to suffer,
Don't want you to fight,
Don't want you to die
In some far-off land
In a war no one
Thinks we can win.
Of course, I cannot
Ever disown you,
But, *Ah Fai*, can you make me,
Help me, understand?
Can you help me
Understand you?

Danny

Let me try.
Let me try.

I was born here, raised here,
Speak perfect English.
A true American,
One hundred percent.
But people still treat me
Like some foreigner,
Fresh off the boat.
They ask, "Where are you from?"
I say, "NYC."
They say, "No, no, no, no,
Where are you
Where are you
Really, really, really from?"
Sure, I speak Chinese,

But I can't even write it.
After 9/11,
When Chinatown closed down,
We all came together
So we could survive.
Now, everyone's gone back,
Hey, hey,
To living for themselves.
But I can't forget
There's a fight
Still going on.
I want adventure,
And a life of my own,
But most of all
This is my chance
To prove to everyone, I'm an American,
A real American,
An American soldier
For all the world to see!
Do you understand?

Mother Chen

No, not really.

Danny

Ah Ma!

Mother Chen

I understand
That you are determined,
So, my mind will accept
What my heart cannot, hah. . . .

Act II, Scene 1

Josephine

Hey Danny,
I know you don't get
Online much these days.
Hey Danny,
Just finished midterms.
St. Francis isn't hard,
High school was lots worse.

Hey Danny,
Your parents want to know
More about where you are
And if it's hard work.

Hey Danny,
I know you'll do well.
I still see our future
After you come home.

(Josephine crosses to Mother Chen, in her apartment, which features a Christmas tree for the holiday. Josephine brings Mother Chen a wrapped gift, and some take-out food.)

Josephine

Merry Christmas, Mother Chen.

Mother Chen

You are a good girl.
You have been
A good friend to Danny.

Josephine

I got some emails.

Mother Chen

The best gift of all!
What does he say?

(Danny logs on from a terminal at his base.)

Danny

Like hell this is hard work,
But it's what I signed up for,

(As in Act I, Josephine conveys Danny's messages to Mother Chen.)

Tell my mother
I miss her dumplings.
The food is crap here.
We eat MREs.

Josephine

(To Mother Chen)
He misses your dumplings.

Mother Chen

Is he well?

Josephine

I wish you'd tell us
How you really are.

Danny

Tell my mother
To get her eyes checked.
She needs a new prescription.
Her glasses are for shit.

Josephine

(To Mother Chen)
He wants you to see a doctor.

Mother Chen

Is he safe?

Josephine

(To Danny)
We worry about you.
You sound so strange.

Danny

Tell my parents
They should move
Someplace safer
Than Avenue D.

Josephine

He wants you to be careful.

Mother Chen

Is he being careful?

Danny

Tell my parents
Stay warm this winter.

Josephine

He wants you to stay warm.

Mother Chen

Is this what he wants? Ah. . . .

Josephine

I think so,
Far as I can tell.

Danny

One last thing,
Josephine, I miss you.

Josephine

He says, he says, he says . . .
He misses us all.

(Leaving the computer terminal, Danny lies on the ground, falls asleep. In Chinatown, Josephine looks at the moon, which is now just a sliver, almost a new moon.)

Josephine

The moon here
Is so much smaller,
Much less bright
Than the one that shined
When you were in Chinatown.
Wish I could see it,
One more time.
I miss that moon
With you.

Danny

The moon here is so much sadder,
Much more harsh,

Than the one that shined
When you were in Chinatown.
Wish I could see you one more time.
I miss that moon
With you.

Act II, Scene 3

Danny

I'm sorry, *Ah Ma*.
You didn't understand me.
Now I don't know
If I understand myself.

I've got to find it,
Find a way out,
Find my team.
I feel so lost.

I want to be
An American soldier,
But no one can see that now,
Not even me.

"Leave no man behind,"
The warriors say.
Yet I'm left behind
Before the battle begins.

I love my country,
Put my life on the line,
But does my country love me?
Or am I the enemy?

Ah Ma, forgive me,
I won't be defeated.
Got to control
What's left of my life.

When a soldier's hit,
Once he goes down,
Unconscious,
A vegetable,
That's when it's time
To pull the plug.
I'm sorry, *Ah Ma*.
Please forgive me.
I'm sorry, *Ah Ma*.

Act II, Scene 4

Mother Chen

I had a dream,
An American dream,
To work, be happy,

Raise a family,
And leave behind
A life in this new land.
My dream was simple.
I didn't ask too much,
And on the day
My *Ah Fai* was born,
I thought,
"This is enough."
For nineteen years,
I had you in my life,
Then a bullet
Ripped through my heart,
Tore a hole, tore a hole
Where you had been.

(Lights reveal Danny, who has been listening to his mother.)

I keep your room,
Just the way you left it.
All your favorite foods . . .
A pack of Skittles,
A Burger King Whopper . . .
Leave them on your dresser,
Where they wait for you
To walk in the door,
And yell . . .

Danny and Mother Chen

Ah Ma, I'm home!

Danny

I wish I could
Walk through our door,
Plop on my bed,
Pop those Skittles,
Eat that burger,
But most of all,
Sit beside you,
Not saying much.
On my laptop,
Maybe doing my homework,
Feeling safe,
Safe with a feeling
I now know
Was your love.

Mother Chen

What happens now,
My *Ah Fai*?
Everyone is gone,
But so are you.
I've buried you now,
Lost my son.
You'll never come home,

Never eat my dumplings.
What happened to my dream,
To my dream?

(Mother Chen and Danny look at each other for the first time.)

Danny

I'll always be your son,
Your American son.
I was a soldier,
An American soldier
Who all the world now sees

Mother Chen

Sleep now, little one,
Do not fear,
Do not cry.
Like the stars above, I'll watch over you.
So long as I'm here,
Nothing will harm you,
So close your eyes,
Sleep until the dawn.
Sleep now, little one.
You were born
In the land of the free,
The home of the brave.
Where you can be anything
Your heart can dream,
So long as I'm here,
Nothing will harm you,
So close your eyes,
Sleep, little one,
Sleep now, in peace,
Sleep until the dawn.

PROGRAM NOTES

A Dust in Time, passacaglia for strings

Huang Ruo

No matter who you are and where you are, we are all affected by this apparently endless pandemic. Most of us have experienced moments during this global crisis where time and space seem to be slowed or frozen. For some of us, memories, feelings, and lives are forever trapped in that slowly frozen time and space. This ongoing crisis has affected our current lives and maybe even our lives in the future. This special piece is created for the people affected by the pandemic, giving them a piece of music to reflect, to express, to heal, and to find internal peace, strength, and hope.

The full version of *A Dust in Time* runs 60 minutes, timed to symbolize the circle of the hour, and is to be performed without a break. Its structure is like a Tibetan sand mandala, created live, slowly, from the central essence point expanding outward into its colored fullness, and then to be subtracted from it inwards back to the central essence point, fulfilling the spiritual and life cycle and journey of traveling from nothing (emptiness) to something (fullness), and then back to nothing (emptiness). The shortened version for string orchestra performed by The Orchestra Now on October 12 includes the first half and a coda. Del Sol Quartet's recording of the full version for string quartet will be streamed during the online portion of the festival on October 14.

Angel Island Oratorio for voices and string quartet (preview excerpts)

Huang Ruo

Between 1910 and 1940, as new immigrants flowed through the immigration station on Angel Island inside the San Francisco Bay, Chinese immigrants faced massive discrimination because of America's earliest racist immigration legislation: the Chinese Exclusion Act. Held at times for years in brutal conditions at the detention center, many of these immigrants looked for solace by inscribing poetry onto the walls of the center.

*Detained in this wooden house for several tens of days,
It is all because of the (. . .) exclusion law which implicates me.
It's a pity heroes have no way of exercising their prowess.
I can only await the word so that I can snap Zu's whip.
From now on, I am departing far from this building
All of my fellow villagers are rejoicing with me.
Don't say that everything within is Western styled.
Even if it is built of jade, it has turned into a cage.*

—Poem 69, from the walls of Angel Island Immigration Station, author unknown

Angel Island Oratorio weaves a story of immigration and discrimination then and now. Composed for the Del Sol Quartet, the piece will be performed in its entirety in a live world premiere in San Francisco on October 22, 2021. Del Sol presents a selection of movements from the full score in this preview exclusively prepared for the China Now Music Festival.

The *Angel Island Oratorio* project received support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation, Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation, San Francisco Arts Commission, Grants for Arts Projects, and California Humanities, a nonprofit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Picture Brides (Hawai'i 1908-1924)

Takuma Itoh

Picture Brides (Hawai'i 1908-1924) was written as a part of a series of commissions by Invoke called American Postcards, featuring works by composers around the United States. Each of these works is meant to capture a moment in time from different regions of the country and retell the story through music.

In deciding to choose a moment from Hawai'i's history, the story of the Japanese picture brides stuck out as one that resonated with me in particular. Not because I have any personal family ties (I do not) to these brides-to-be who left their entire lives behind to come to Hawai'i with only a picture of their future groom given to them but because seeing their pictures reminded me so much of the photos I've seen when I looked through my grandparents' photo albums in Japan. It made me realize how, under different circumstances, my own relatives could have been on the same boat and faced the harsh realities of immigrating to a foreign land during such difficult times. Never before had I felt the sense of "that could have been my family" in American history as much as when I had learned about this fascinating chapter of Hawai'i's past.

This piece attempts to capture the multitudes of feelings these picture brides must have experienced, from a sense of wonder of being in a new place and a deep melancholy of not being able to return home, to resigned acceptance to their new and difficult lives and the sheer determination to make things better for future generations. These are, to be sure, timeless and universal experiences that all immigrants have experienced and continue to face to this day, in some form or another.

*The quartet members are asked to play the 'ukulele for this piece to showcase the instrument that is so emblematic to Hawai'i. The archival photos are used with permission from Barbara Kawakami from her award-winning 2016 book, *Picture Bride Stories*.*

—Takuma Itoh

A Popular Tune

Jungyoon Wie

A Popular Tune was commissioned by Del Sol Performing Arts for San Francisco's second annual festival of "just intonation" music, the Pacific Pythagorean Music Festival. Because the festival was postponed due to COVID-19, *A Popular Tune* was later given its world premiere online as part of SF Music Day. *A Popular Tune* explores the resonance of 3:2 ratios in its most familiar and universal guise—the pentatonic scale. Wie's quartet luxuriates in melodic grace and ornamental gesture.

It is every composer's dream to write a popular tune at least once in their career, and now I can say with confidence I wrote A Popular Tune!

This piece is my attempt to write simple, beautiful, and intelligent music that can be appreciated by many folks out in the world who love music like myself.

A Popular Tune has an obvious premise to its structure; the melody repeats while the background changes. This musical structure of repeating melodies is often used in popular songs, but I was thinking . . . you may imagine you're the melody while the surroundings change.

Perhaps you like to travel, or your life went through multiple changes, or you're just like me who enjoys the sun, water, and breeze as you go about your day. This was the inspiration of my piece, and I hope you enjoy this musical journey with me!

—Jungyoon Wie

Selections from Del Sol's Joy Project

The Joy Project pieces were all written in response to the devastation of the pandemic and were designed to be shared with folks in order to bring a little joy into their lives.

Akoya

Erika Oba

Like a good bedtime storyteller, Oba delivers. The music is direct, hummable, and visually evocative. Graceful transitions open the curtain on distinct scenes of rambunctious energy or fluid lyricism. Oba's tale delivers many of the thrills and pleasure of a Rimsky-Korsakov tone-poem in a three-minute package. *Akoya* was first performed by the MK Ceramics trailer in Hayes Valley, San Francisco, and remains the most-performed piece from the Joy Project.

The summer of 2020 has been a difficult one. Amidst the anxieties of living through a global pandemic, raging California wildfires, and the cancellation of all events in my artistic life, being asked to write a piece focusing explicitly on "joy" was both a challenge and a welcome respite. A necessary antidote to the overwhelming weight of anxiety has been to stop overthinking everything and to embrace the small, simple joys. It is with that spirit that I wrote this piece of music.

One small source of joy has been revisiting the Japanese folktales of my childhood in order to share them with my two-year-old niece. While perusing an old picture book, I came across the tale of Akoya and the pine tree. Akoya is a young maiden who catches the attention of a tree spirit through her exquisite koto playing. The tree spirit manifests to her as a young man with a flute, and the two of them spend many nights playing music together under the moonlight. They fall in love, but the story has a bittersweet ending in which the tree is eventually felled to make a bridge. Still, Akoya spends the rest of her days by the tree stump protecting it and honoring its spirit.

As the hazy orange skies become a recurring fixture of the annual fire seasons, I thought it apt to draw inspiration from a folktale in which the trees themselves are sacred spirits. The tale reminds us of the importance of protecting and honoring our forests, and, fleeting as it may be, of cherishing the ephemeral joys of live music played under open skies.

—Erika Oba

Ankara Havası Goes Bananas

Erberk Eryılmaz

Ankara Havası Goes Bananas was first performed by the MK Ceramics trailer in Hayes Valley, San Francisco, where cellist Kathryn Bates immediately ripped the C string off her cello. The piece never fails to provide an infusion of boisterous energy, warming up cold fingers and gathering curious listeners. Traded melodies, competing grooves, and exploding bow hairs fly by in two-and-a-half minutes. The Joy Project would not be complete without the wild energy of Eryılmaz's music.

Ankara Havası Goes Bananas was commissioned in 2020 by Del Sol Quartet in honor of the first birthday of Corwyn Bates Lee, the daughter of my friends, musicians Charlton and Kathryn. Ankara Havası is a style of dance air from Ankara, Turkey, known to be one of the happiest and most upbeat dances in Turkey. The character of Ankara Havası sets the tone of the work, but the Ankara Havası style evolves and goes to unexpected places with different dance styles and modes, while staying hopeful. In this hard and unpredictable year, I wanted to create an optimistic work. I hope this upbeat piece can become a fun memory for Corwyn's second year in the world.

—Erberk Eryılmaz

Spasm

Vijay Iyer

Spasm grooves like a musical centipede, where all the legs are ultimately moving in the same direction, but just not quite at the same time. *Spasm* was written for the Del Sol Quartet for the Joy Project.

A Ritual for COVID-19

Jin Hi Kim

Guggenheim Composition Fellow Jin Hi Kim presents the world premiere of her *A Ritual for COVID-19*, a community purification performance in memory of the more than 600,000 deaths in the United States and the more than 4 million deaths worldwide during the pandemic. The work, inspired by Korean shamanic *ssitkimkut* ritual, purifies the deceased spirit. Kim creates a live interactive performance on the world's only electric *kǒmungo* (Korean zither), as she presents a range of projected images reflective of the coronavirus pandemic. These images will be the visual storytelling that empowers the performance space, where a 25-yard-wide white cloth is symbolically used to release grief. The six sections of Kim's work articulate the enormous tragedy, grieving, praying, and finally purification as a protest against the anti-Asian bias that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic. This performance is presented in the spirit of healing from the apocalyptic years of 2020–21.

"Her unique vision blends science fiction images, state-of-the-art technology, ancient mythology, and timeless music and dance traditions. No other artist is doing work quite like this, and she does it with superb style."—Joseph McLellan, *The Washington Post*

A Ritual for COVID-19 was made possible with funding by the New England Foundation for the Arts New Work New England program, with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, Seedlings Foundation, Fund for the Arts at NEFA, and individual donors. *A Ritual for COVID-19* was developed in CultureHub and La MaMa's Experiments in Digital Storytelling Program.

Conceived by Jin Hi Kim

Music composition and performance: Jin Hi Kim (electric *kǒmungo*, *buk*, and voice)

Stage and lighting design: Joe Levasseur

Projection Design: Sangmin Chae and Jorge Morales Picó

COVID-19 documentary photo collection and organizing: Jin Hi Kim

CultureHub/New York creative team:

Lead Technician: DeAndrea Anthony

Creative Technology: Sangmin Chae

Video Production Coordinator: Jean Garcia

Thank you Bard student community participants

Special thanks to Billy Clark, Yujin Iris Jeong, and Joseph Celli

Prayer and Blessing, version for orchestra

Tan Dun

Prayer and Blessing is Tan Dun's unique response to the COVID-19 crisis and an effort to bring together isolated musicians from around the world. Meant to be performed with varying instrumentation, together or remotely, virtually or live, the power of the music lies not only in its message, but in its flexibility.

The brief and poignant text is attributed to Chinese philosopher Laozi (ca. 600–500 BCE):

Time is everlasting

May peace be a long blessing

Mercy on me, my nature and spirit

May you and I forever be one

This piece captures my love for us all—may our love for each other protect us until eternity and help us endure the ups and downs together. To me, the number 12 is one of the secret cycles of life. There are 12 months, 12 zodiacs, 12 tones, 12 years to Jupiter's orbit around the Earth. . . . That is why I have chosen 12 tamtams (large metal percussion instruments) from Wuhan, a spiritual connection to send prayers and blessings to everyone, all over the world.

Prayer and Blessing is arranged from the text of Laozi, and its wisdom fits our world today in a profound way. Thank you to the musicians who volunteered to help bring this work to life. I am glad we could connect in a different time and space through the power of technology.

—Tan Dun

A Chinese in New York

Peng-Peng Gong

Nearly a century after George Gershwin's evocative masterpiece *An American in Paris*, the city of New York still remains a pinnacle of international and cultural greatness. Peng-Peng Gong was known among the many wunderkinds who came to study at Juilliard at the turn of the 21st century. During his 12 years at Juilliard, he was initially a piano prodigy, but made a sudden turn to composition after the emotional blow from the monstrous 2008 Sichuan earthquake, which killed more than 100,000 people. The event triggered his spiritual ambition to create large-scale symphonic music that defines both his ethnic identity and the world as he sees and hears it. He composed 11 symphonies as of 2019, seven of which were commissioned by the Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra after he became its resident composer, and one co-commissioned by the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Gong continues to adopt an embrace style, merging a late-Romantic, Mahlerian expression with his own Chinese cultural tradition. *A Chinese in New York* is a super-compressed version of his Symphony No. 6, Op. 51 (2017), an autobiographical work that narrates his emotional growth during his years in the United States. After a melancholy introduction representing teenage angst, the middle section enters as a vulgar parade of East-West elements tossed back and forth, where they meet, merge, conflict, clash, and eventually embrace again. This motion describes his early excitement toward the New World, his blending in with the new culture, his later struggles between Eastern obedience and Western liberty, and finally his solution by uniting them under a universal principle of domestic love. The piece was specially arranged as a gift to Juilliard's Pre-College Division's centennial celebration and is dedicated to Gong's longtime mentors and spiritual parents—pianist Yoheved Kaplinsky and composer Andrew Thomas.

Awakening Light

Xinyan Li

Awakening Light, a concerto composed for modulated guzheng and full orchestra, represents humanity's spiritual growth when faced with the long-lasting, unprecedented pandemic. In the first section of this concerto, I use lots of glissandos, grace notes, large vibratos, and free-meter long phrases in guzheng and orchestra to express human sadness, fear, anxiety, and loneliness. The bending tones and freestyles meters are inspired by Chinese traditional music. The second section depicts the intense battles between the honest people and the vicious virus through dissonant harmony, irregular rhythms, frequent meter changes, and contrasted tone colors. The third section starts with expressive and warm music by string orchestra, which sings the praises of human courage, wisdom, optimism, and strength. The brilliant and magnificent ending symbolizes the idea that with awakening light, human beings eventually conquer the enemy and win the battles.

This guzheng concerto is the first guzheng piece to use the modulation bridges invented by suona virtuoso and instrument inventor Yazhi Guo. Guzheng has been modulated in this piece for richer musical expressions.

Awakening Light is commissioned by the China Now Music Festival. It is the first piece I composed after joining the US-China Music Institute at the Bard College Conservatory of Music as a visiting professor of music. The concerto is dedicated to our respected director, Jindong Cai.

—Xinyan Li

Episodes from An American Soldier

Huang Ruo, music

David Henry Hwang, libretto

On October 3, 2011, Private Danny Chen, a Chinese American from New York City's Chinatown who had enlisted in the U.S. Army, was found dead in a guard tower at his base in Kandahār Province, Afghanistan. Based on his story, and drawing from the ensuing courts-martial of Chen's fellow soldiers, *An American Soldier* begins at the trial of the sergeant who had been his superior and chief tormentor. In the midst of this tribunal, Danny suddenly appears to find his mother there, fighting for justice on his behalf. With no one able to see or hear him, Danny tries to tell his side of the story. Though he was born and raised in the United States, and chose to fight for his country, was he ever really accepted as an American, or was he always seen instead as a foreigner, as the enemy?

An American Soldier was commissioned by the Washington National Opera and premiered as an hour-long work, performed in English in 2014, directed by David Paul. The full-length version premiered in 2018 at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, directed by James Robinson. The episodes selected for the China Now Music Festival focus on Danny Chen's relationships with his mother, Suzhen Chen, and his friend Josephine Wong, as well as the young soldier's internal struggles to cope with harassment and racism in the U.S. military.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Huang Ruo, composer in residence. Photo by Wenjun Miakoda Liang

Huang Ruo

Composer Huang Ruo has been lauded by the *New York Times* for having “a distinctive style.” His vibrant and inventive musical voice draws equal inspiration from Chinese ancient and folk music, Western avant-garde, experimental, noise, natural and processed sound, rock, and jazz to create a seamless, organic integration using a compositional technique he calls “dimensionalism.” Huang Ruo’s diverse compositional works span from orchestra, chamber music, opera, theater, and dance, to cross-genre, sound installation, architectural installation, multimedia, experimental improvisation, folk rock, and film. His music has been premiered and performed by the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Asko/Schoenberg, Ensemble Modern, London Sinfonietta, among others, with conductors such as Wolfgang Sawallisch, Marin Alsop, Andrew Davis, Michael Tilson Thomas, and James Conlon. His opera *An American Soldier* (with libretto by David Henry Hwang) recently received its world premiere at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis in June 2018, and was named one of the year’s best classical music events by the *New York Times*. His installation opera *Paradise Interrupted* premiered at Spoleto Festival USA in 2015 and was performed at the Lincoln Center Festival in 2016, with future touring planned for Europe and Asia. Another opera, *Dr. Sun Yat-Sen*, premiered at the Santa Fe Opera in 2014. His new opera *M. Butterfly* will receive its world premiere with the Santa Fe Opera, with other of his new operas to be premiered and presented by the Washington National Opera, Royal Danish Opera, Prototype Festival, and Hong Kong New Vision Festival, among others. He served as the first composer in residence for Het Concertgebouw Amsterdam, and was the visiting composer for the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra in Brazil.

Huang Ruo was born on Hainan Island, China, in 1976—the year the Chinese Cultural Revolution ended. His father, who is also a composer, began teaching him composition and piano when he was six years old. Growing up in the 1980s and 1990s, when China was opening its gate to the Western world, he received both traditional and Western education at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. As a result of the dramatic cultural and economic changes in China, his education expanded from Bach, Mozart, Stravinsky, and Lutosławski to include the Beatles, rock and roll, heavy metal, and jazz. After winning the Henry Mancini Award at the 1995 International Film and Music Festival in Switzerland, he moved to the United States to further his education, earning a bachelor of music from Oberlin Conservatory of Music and master of music and doctor of musical arts in composition degrees from the Juilliard School. Huang Ruo is a member of the composition faculty at Mannes School of Music, and is artistic director and conductor of Ensemble FIRE. His music is published by Ricordi.



Del Sol Quartet. Photo by Lenny Gonzolez

Del Sol Quartet

Del Sol began as a thought on the night shift at Fermilab. Charlton Lee loved the cutting edge of physics research—always looking for the next discovery, pushing boundaries. But he missed the way music connected people, building community by communicating in ways physics never would. What if he could bring that scientific passion for exploration to a string quartet?

Twenty-six years later, Del Sol is still sharing music that brings out the endorphins. Music that asks *why not?*

Fascinated by the feedback loop between social change, technology, and artistic innovation, the San Francisco-based ensemble is a leading force in 21st-century chamber music—whether introducing Ben Johnston’s microtonal Americana at the Library of Congress, taking Aeryn Santillan’s gun-violence memorial to the streets of the Mission District, exploring Andean soundscapes with Gabriela Lena Frank and traditional musicians, or collaborating with Huang Ruo and the anonymous poets who carved their words into the walls of the Angel Island Immigration Station during the years of the Chinese Exclusion Act. The current Del Sol lineup, marked by the arrival of violinist Sam Weiser alongside mainstays Kathryn Bates and Ben Kreith, bring a fresh energy, freedom, and precision to the group.

Recognized as a “vigorous champion of living composers,” Del Sol has premiered hundreds of works by composers including Terry Riley, Gabriela Lena Frank, Frederic Rzewski, Ben Johnston, Chinary Ung, Mason Bates, Tania León, Erberk Eryilmaz, Theresa Wong, Reza Vali, Mohammed Fairouz, and Peter Sculthorpe. Many of these works are included on Del Sol’s nine critically acclaimed albums.

With its deep commitment to education, Del Sol has reached thousands of kindergarten through grade 12 students through inventive school performances, workshops, coaching, and residencies. The quartet members also have worked closely with student composers, musicians, and faculty artists at universities across the country.

Ben Kreith and Sam Weiser, *violins*

Charlton Lee, *viola*

Kathryn Bates, *cello*



Jindong Cai

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 (TÖN). Prior to joining Bard, 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.

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. Cai has served as the principal guest conductor of the China Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra since 2012. He is a three-time recipient of the ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music. Cai has received much critical acclaim for his opera performances. He serves as the principal guest conductor of the Mongolia State Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet in Ulaanbaatar. Cai joined the Stanford University faculty in 2004 as director of orchestral studies and conducted the Stanford Symphony Orchestra for 11 years. He is also the founder of the Stanford Pan-Asian Music Festival.

At Bard, Cai founded the annual China Now Music Festival. In its first two seasons, China Now 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. 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.

Together with his wife Sheila Melvin, Cai has coauthored many articles on the performing arts in China and the book *Rhapsody in Red: How Western Classical Music Became Chinese*. Their latest book, *Beethoven in China: How the Great Composer Became an Icon in the People's Republic*, was published by Penguin.

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 graduate studies at the New England Conservatory and the College-Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati. In 1989, he was selected to study with famed conductor Leonard Bernstein at Tanglewood Music Center, and won the Conducting Fellowship Award at the Aspen Music Festival in 1990 and 1992.



Erberk Eryilmaz

Composer and performer Erberk Eryilmaz is recognized for bringing the energy of Turkish folk music to the concert stage with a creative and dramatic approach. His compositions have been performed at Carnegie Hall, Sydney Opera House, and the National Museum of Fine Arts in Havana, Cuba. His work "Was her face the moon or sunlight?" is expected to be sent to the moon in 2021 as part of the Moon Arts project. He is codirector of Hoppa Project, which aims to promote music from Eastern Europe and the Middle East by performing it with a wide range of styles from folk to newly commissioned contemporary music.



Peng-Peng Gong

Born in 1992, Chinese composer and pianist Peng-Peng Gong has completed 10 symphonies as of 2018 and is resident composer for the Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra. His ninth symphony inaugurated the 19th Shanghai International Arts Festival, while his 10th was co-commissioned and premiered by the Philadelphia Orchestra. Having won national competitions in China, he began his professional path in 2003 while studying at the Juilliard School Pre-College Division with pianist Yoheved Kaplinsky and composer Andrew Thomas. He graduated from the Juilliard School in 2014 and signed with the prestigious Opus 3 Artists agency as a piano soloist, fulfilling solo and orchestral engagements until the age of 15, when the emotional blow from China's 2008 Sichuan earthquake moved him to abandon his early performing career and devote himself completely to composition. His first symphony, a requiem completed three months after the earthquake, was his first work to be issued by Lauren Keiser Music Publishing, with which he has an exclusive contract. He returned to study at Juilliard's composition department with Samuel Adler, won eight consecutive ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards, and was appointed composer in residence for the Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra in 2014. Every season since, he has produced a full concert of new works to popular and critical acclaim.

His oeuvre also includes an oratorio, three piano concerti, viola concerto, chamber music, solo piano music, and other orchestral pieces. He made his film-scoring debut for an adaptation of renowned author Liu Zhenyun's novel, *Someone to Talk To* (2015). In 2018, he was awarded a May-First Labor Medal from the Shanghai Federation of Trade Unions as an official recognition of his contributions to the city's cultural life.



Helen Zhibing Huang VAP '15

Helen Zhibing Huang is a Chinese-born soprano and was described as "impressive" (*New York Times*) after her compelling portrayal of Pamina in *The Magic Flute* for the Glimmerglass Festival.

This season Huang will sing the role of Amour in *Orphée* with Washington Concert Opera, as well as Setsuko in *An American Dream* with Kentucky Opera. Last summer, she was seen at the Glimmerglass Festival as Pamina in *The Magic Flute*, and as La Ciesca in *Gianni Schicchi* with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Her 2019-20 season included the role of Singa Loh in the world premiere of Jorge Sosa's *I Am a Dreamer Who No Longer Dreams* with White Snake Projects, as well as making concert and operatic debuts in Europe at the Deutsche Oper Berlin and in Australia. Previously she performed at Glimmerglass Festival as Almirena in Handel's *Rinaldo*, and Nashville Opera's Mary Ragland Emerging Artist Program as Countess Ceprano and the Page, as well as covering Gilda in *Rigoletto*, and performing Flora in *The Turn of the Screw*.

Huang's other operatic credits include Baby Doe in *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, Clorinda in Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, Amor in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Serpetta in Mozart's *La finta giardiniera*, La fée in Massenet's *Cendrillon*, Poppea in Handel's *Agrippina*, and Carolina in Cimarosa's *Il matrimonio segreto*. A strong advocate for new music, she has participated in workshops for operas including Paola Prestini's *Gilgamesh*, Julian Wachner's *REV. 23*, and Leanna Kirchoff's *Friday after Friday*. Her concert credits include Handel's *Messiah*, Haydn's *Creation*, Mahler's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* and *Symphony No. 4*, and Earl Kim's *Where Grief Slumbers*.

Huang holds degrees from the New England Conservatory, Bard College Conservatory of Music Vocal Arts Program (VAP), and Eastman School of Music, as well as a BA in economics from the University of Rochester. She is a cofounder of Wear Yellow Proudly, an initiative that aims to bring awareness of Asian culture and strengthen the ties within the global community through music, poetry, and culture.



David Henry Hwang

David Henry Hwang's stage works includes the plays *M. Butterfly*, *Yellow Face*, *Chinglish*, *Kung Fu*, *Golden Child*, *The Dance and the Railroad*, and *FOB*, as well as the Broadway musicals *Elton John & Tim Rice's Aida* (coauthor), *Flower Drum Song* (2002 revival), and *Disney's Tarzan*. Hwang is a Tony Award winner and three-time nominee, three-time OBIE Award winner, Grammy Award winner who has been twice nominated, and three-time finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Drama.

Called America's most-produced living opera librettist by *Opera News*, he has written five works with composer Philip Glass and is a 2006 Grammy Award winner for *Ainadamar*, with music by Osvaldo Golijov. Hwang has also worked with composers Bright Sheng, Unsuk Chin, and Howard Shore. His upcoming opera with composer Huang Ruo, *The Rift*, will premiere in spring 2022 at Washington National Opera in Washington, D.C.

Hwang cowrote the gold record "Solo" with the late icon Prince and was a writer/consulting producer for the Golden Globe-winning television series *The Affair* from 2015 to 2019. He is currently creating a TV series for Netflix and penning the live-action musical feature film *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* for Disney Studios as well as a movie that will star actress Gemma Chan.

Hwang is on the theater faculty at the Columbia University School of the Arts and sits on the board of the American Theatre Wing, where he recently completed a term as chair. His latest work, *Soft Power*, written with composer Jeanine Tesori, premiered at Los Angeles' Ahmanson Theatre, where it won six 2018 Ovation Awards. Its subsequent run at the Public Theater in New York City received four 2020 Outer Critics Circle Awards, a 2020 Grammy nomination for best musical theater album, and was a finalist for the 2020 Pulitzer Prize in Drama.



Takuma Itoh

Takuma Itoh's music has been described as "brashly youthful and fresh" (*New York Times*) and has been featured as one of "100 Composers under 40" on WQXR. In 2018, Itoh was instrumental in creating an innovative education program, *Symphony of the Hawaiian Birds*, which has since brought more than 10,000 young students to hear new orchestral compositions alongside original animations that raise awareness of Hawai'i's many endangered bird species. Other recent highlights include a work for Invoke, American Postcards *Picture Brides (Hawaii 1908-1924)* that used photographs collected by historian Barbara Kawakami to tell

the story of the first Japanese women immigrants who came to Hawai'i; "Faded Aura" for Hub New Music and shakuhachi player Kojiro Umezaki, which was performed around Japan on a tour with the Asia/America New Music Institute; a collaboration with the American Wild Ensemble for their tour of Hawai'i, including a performance at the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park; and a work for the Del Sol Quartet as part of The Joy Project intended to be performed outdoors where the audience can enjoy the piece while social distancing.

In addition, he has been the recipient of the Barlow Endowment general commission, Music Alive: New Partnerships grant with the Tucson Symphony, Chamber Music America Classical Commission, ASCAP/CBDNA Frederick Fennell Prize, six ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards, and the Leo Kaplan Award. Upcoming commissions include works for the Albany Symphony and the Hawai'i Symphony.

Itoh is an associate professor of music at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, where he has taught since 2012. He holds degrees from Cornell University, University of Michigan, and Rice University.



Vijay Iyer

Described by the *New York Times* as a “social conscience, multimedia collaborator, system builder, rhapsodist, historical thinker, and multicultural gateway,” Vijay Iyer has carved out a unique path as an influential, prolific, shape-shifting presence in 21st-century music. A composer and pianist active across multiple musical communities, Iyer has created a consistently innovative, emotionally resonant body of work over the last 25 years, earning him a place as one of the leading music makers of his generation.

Iyer’s musical language is grounded in the rhythmic traditions of South Asia and West Africa, the African American creative music movement of the ‘60s and ‘70s, and the lineage of composer/pianists from Duke Ellington and Thelonious Monk to Alice Coltrane and Geri Allen.

A longtime New Yorker, Iyer lives in central Harlem with his wife and daughter. He teaches at Harvard University in the Department of Music and the Department of African and African American Studies. He is a Steinway artist.



Jin Hi Kim

Jin Hi Kim, a Guggenheim Fellow in composition and innovative kōmungo virtuoso, codesigned the world’s only electric kōmungo with custom computer programs. Her work reflects the duality of her ancient Korean roots and contemporary American society with interdisciplinary works merging Asian mythology and advanced Western technology. She is known as a pioneer for introducing kōmungo into the American contemporary music scene and for extensive solo performances on the electric kōmungo with live interactive computer programs in her large-scale, multimedia performance pieces such as *Ghost Kōmungobot*, *Digital Buddha*, and *Touching the Moons*.

Over the past three decades, Kim has developed a series of “living tones” compositions that she performed as a soloist with Kronos Quartet, American Composer Orchestra, and Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. She has performed as a soloist for her own compositions at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Smithsonian Freer Gallery of Art, Asia Society, Metropolitan Museum of Art, and around the world.

Kim has received a Foundation for Contemporary Arts award and won the Wolff Ebermann Prize at the International Theater Institute, Germany. She was a Fulbright Specialist to Vietnam, McKnight Visiting Composer with the American Composers Forum, and recipient of fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and Rockefeller Foundation; Bellagio Center, Italy; Asian Cultural Council; and Freeman Artist Residency at Cornell University. She is adjunct professor of music at Wesleyan University.



Joe Levasseur

Joe Levasseur is a frequent collaborator in the contemporary performing arts. He was the touring lighting director for John Jasperse Company from 2002 until 2010, and is a long-term collaborator of Pavel Zuštiak and his company Palissimo. Levasseur lit both Wendy Whelan's 2013 breakout *Restless Creature*, and her subsequent collaboration with Brian Brooks, *Some of a Thousand Words* (2016). Other collaborators include Sarah Michelson, Jodi Melnick, Jennifer Monson, Neil Greenberg, and Beth Gill. He also enjoys a close relationship with several New York City venues, designing events for organizations such as Baryshnikov Arts Center, La MaMa ETC, and Movement Research.

Levasseur received a 2008 New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Award "for lighting a vast range of work this season and providing deeply integral visual environments, textures, moods, and effects, in projects of every scale, at nearly every venue in the city." In 2010, he won a second "Bessie" for his work on Big Dance Theater's *Comme Toujours Here I Stand*, and he won a Knight of Illumination award for his work on Meredith Monk's *Cellular Songs* in 2018.



Xinyan Li

Xinyan Li is a visiting professor of music at the US-China Music Institute of the Bard College Conservatory of Music. She received her doctoral degree in composition at University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) Conservatory of Music and Dance, and her bachelor's and master's degrees at China Conservatory of Music in composition and music theory. She has conducted field research on Chinese folk songs, folk chorus, and ethnic instrumental music of minorities such as the Dong, Miao, and Mongols. She has also extensively studied the roles, singing styles, and instrumental music of the Beijing Opera.

She has taught a Chinese music styles composition workshop that included undergraduate and graduate students from the Bard College Conservatory of Music, Longy School of Music of Bard College, UMKC Conservatory, Boston Conservatory at Berklee, Bowling Green State University, Royal Northern College of Music (UK), and Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University (Australia).

Rooted in Chinese music and culture, Li's works for Chinese instruments have been performed by virtuosos Zhihou Hu, Zhang Qiang, Zhou Yi, Shenshen Zhang, Guowei Wang, Chen Yue, Huang Mei, Beijing Opera actress Zhu Hong, and actor Qingxian Liu, and have been featured at Aspen Music Festival, Carnegie Hall, Beijing International Chamber Music Festival, Thailand International Composition Festival, Chinese National Center for the Performing Arts, and elsewhere. She was invited twice as a visiting composer by Aspen Music Festival, and her wind quintet *Mo Suo's Burial Ceremony* was released by Albany Records. Her music has been performed by musicians of Eighth Blackbird, PRISM Quartet, American Composers Orchestra, Bergen Woodwind Quintet, and Cassatt String Quartet, as well as principal musicians of the Philadelphia, Baltimore, Detroit, St. Louis, Montreal, and Bergen orchestras and the Danish Chamber Orchestra. Her awards include the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award, American Composers Orchestra New Music Readings, Tsang-Houei Hsu International Music Composition Award, IDRS Conference 2016 Schwob Prize in Composition, and LunArt Festival Call for Scores.



Yi Li

Proving himself a formidable talent and a rising star to watch in the opera world, tenor Yi Li is quickly gaining attention across the globe. Li introduced the role of Cheng Quing in Meredith Monk's *ATLAS* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and moved into the role of Dick Johnson in *La fanciulla del West* in Maryland Lyric Opera's inaugural season. He returned there as Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Turiddu/Luigi in *Il tabarro/Cavalleria rusticana*, as well as performing at the Metropolitan Opera as the Young Lover in *Il tabarro*.

Other operatic engagements include the role of Nadir in *Les pêcheurs de perles* with Toledo Opera; Nicias in *Thaïs* and Cassio in *Otello* with the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing; Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* with the Intermountain Opera Bozeman, Nashville Opera, and Baltimore Symphony Orchestra; and Alfredo in *La traviata* with Finger Lakes Opera. He also performed in Huang Ruo's contemporary opera, *Paradise Interrupted*. A graduate of Washington National Opera's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, his assignments included Rodolfo in *La bohème* and productions of *Die Zauberflöte* and *Dialogues des Carmélites*. At the Merola Opera Program in San Francisco, his work included Belfiore in *La finta giardiniera*, Smith in Bizet's *La jolie fille de Perth*, and Lionel in *Martha*.

Li was a grand final winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, finalist at Operalia: The World Opera Competition and 49th International Singing Competition of Toulouse, winner of the Sullivan Foundation Award, China's representative at the Cardiff Singer of the World Competition, and grand prize winner in the Irma M. Cooper Opera Columbus International Vocal Competition and CCM's Corbett Scholarship Competition. He also received a grant from Giulio Gari Foundation and performed at its annual gala.



Jorge Morales Picó

Jorge Morales Picó is a Puerto Rican video and sound designer currently based in New York City. He has designed in venues such as Signature Theatre and the Brick for *GUAC: My Son, My Hero* with Manuel Oliver, and Shakespeare in the Square's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He has toured with Big Dance Theatre's *17c* and Meredith Monk's *Cellular Songs* and has presented at places such as MASS MoCA, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, BAM's Harvey Theater, the Old Vic in London, and Deutsches Theater Berlin. Most recently, he toured through China with Broadway Asia's production of *An American in Paris*.



Nina Yoshida Nelsen

Nina Yoshida Nelsen made her Portland Opera debut as Suzuki in *M. Butterfly* in the 2019–20 season. She also performed the world premiere of *Blood Moon* at Prototype Festival in New York City. She was Suzuki in *M. Butterfly* again for the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Utah Opera, Manitoba Opera, and Atlanta Opera, and appeared with the Santa Barbara Symphony to perform Beethoven's Mass in C Major. She sang the role of Fricka in Santa Barbara Opera's *Das Rheingold* and reprised the role of Khanh in Huang Ruo's opera *Bound* at Juilliard. In October 2021, she makes a delayed debut with Boston Lyric Opera as Mamma Lucia in *Cavalleria rusticana*.

She performed at Lyric Opera of Chicago as Mama in Jack Perla's *An American Dream*, reprising the same role at Anchorage Opera. Nelsen returned to Opera Santa Barbara as Tituba in *The Crucible*. She performed Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer* with the Grand Junction and Flagstaff Symphony Orchestras and returned to both the Santa Barbara and Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestras to perform the alto solos in Mozart's Requiem. She was the alto soloist in Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 for the Santa Barbara Symphony and Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra, and the mezzo soloist in Verdi's Requiem with the Guelph Symphony Orchestra.



Erika Oba

Berkeley-based Erika Oba is a composer, pianist/flutist, and educator. She has written works for big band, small jazz ensembles, chamber groups, dance, and theater. She is active as a performer on both piano and flute, and is a member of the Montclair Women's Big Band, Ends Meat' Catastrophe Jazz Ensemble, electro-jazz duo Rice Kings, and The SI(e)ight Ensemble. She has worked as a dance accompanist for Mills College and Berkeley Ballet Theater, and is currently a resident music director with Berkeley Playhouse's Youth Conservatory Program. In addition to running her private teaching studio, she is a private jazz piano instructor for UC Berkeley's Music Department.

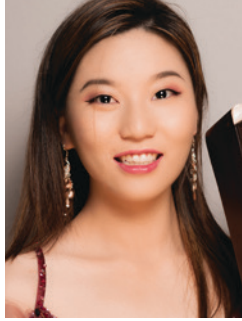


Tan Dun

The world-renowned artist and UNESCO Global Goodwill Ambassador Tan Dun has made an indelible mark on the world's music scene with a creative repertoire that spans the boundaries of classical music, multimedia performance, and Eastern and Western traditions. A winner of prestigious honors including the Grammy Award, Oscar/Academy Award, Grawemeyer Award, Bach Prize, Shostakovich Award, and most recently, Italy's Golden Lion Award for Lifetime Achievement, Tan Dun has had his music played throughout the world by leading orchestras, opera houses, international festivals, and on radio and television. He is

dean of the Bard College Conservatory of Music, where he demonstrates music's extraordinary ability to transform lives and guides the Conservatory in fulfilling its mission of understanding music's connection to history, art, culture, and society.

Tan Dun's first *Internet Symphony*, commissioned by Google/YouTube, has reached over 23 million people online. His *Organic Music Trilogy of Water, Paper, and Ceramic* has frequented major concert halls and festivals. *Paper Concerto* premiered with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the opening of Walt Disney Hall. His multimedia work, *The Map*, premiered by Yo-Yo Ma and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, has toured more than 30 countries. His *Orchestral Theatre IV: The Gate* was premiered by Japan's NHK Symphony Orchestra and crosses the cultural boundaries of Peking opera, Western opera, and puppet theater traditions. Tan Dun recently conducted the premiere of his new oratorio epic, *Buddha Passion*, at the Dresden Festival with the Münchner Philharmoniker; the piece was co-commissioned by the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, and the Dresden Festival and will go on to have performances in Melbourne, Hong Kong, Los Angeles, Rome, Hamburg, Paris, Singapore, and London.



Yixin Wang '23

Yixin Wang, who started playing guzheng at the age of three in Shanghai, China, and won her first competition at the age of seven, has dedicated herself to popularizing Chinese traditional instruments and music in America. After moving to Houston in 2014, she joined the Houston Traditional Chinese Music Group and Texas Philharmonic Folk Orchestra, in 2017 becoming a board member and section leader, respectively. She also held the first traditional Chinese benefit concert in the Katy, Texas, area and has performed at TEDx Sugarland, World Affairs Council of Greater Houston, George Bush International Airport, the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Houston, Texas A&M University, and Rice University, among others. She is a fourth-year student at the Bard College Conservatory of Music and is studying under Professor Zhou Wang in the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, China. In fall 2019, she won the Bard Conservatory concerto competition for her performance of *Fragrance of Jasmine Blossoms* by He Zhanhao, earning her the opportunity to perform with The Orchestra Now and inspiring US-China Music Institute director Jindong Cai to commission the piece *Awakening Light* for her to perform during this year's China Now Music Festival.



Jungyoon Wie

Born in Seoul, South Korea, Jungyoon Wie is a composer, educator, pianist, and producer. Themes of identity have been at the center of her compositional journey, and her current research involves creating a short film in collaboration with filmmaker Toko Shiiki, dancers Rie Kim and Jun Wakabayashi, and Converge Quartet that explores shifting dynamics of identity, otherness, and the marginalized experience of women. The film highlights a string quartet by Wie.

All photos courtesy of the artists except: David Henry Hwang, photo by Lia Chang; Vijay Iyer, photo by Jimmy Katz; Jin Hi Kim, photo by Bleue Liverpool

Cover: Poetry written by Chinese immigrants, carved into the wall of the detention barracks at Angel Island Immigration Station. The Jon B. Lovelace Collection of California Photographs in Carol M. Highsmith's America. Source: Encyclopedia Britannica

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Poem on the walls of the Angel Island Immigration Station, California. Photo by Frank Schulenburg, 2017.

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Violin

Misty Drake
Linda Duan
Sarit Dubin
Aubrey Holmes
Adam Jeffreys
Yi-Ting Kuo
Tin Yan Lee
Xinran Li
Zhengdong Liang
Zhen Liu
Bram Margoles
Yurie Mitsuhashi (on leave)
Nicole Oswald
Yeseul Park
Sabrina Parry
Esther Goldy Roestan
Zongheng Zhang
Yinglin Zhou

Viola

Celia Daggy
Batmyagmar Erdenebat
Sean Flynn
Lucas Goodman
Katelyn Hoag
Hyunjung Song
Leonardo Vásquez Chacón

Cello

Charles Barnard
Cameron Collins
Jordan Gunn
Isaac Kim
Kelly Knox
Sara Page
Eva Roebuck
Pecos Singer

Bass

Joshua DePoint
Kaden Henderson
Tristen Jarvis
Rowan Puig Davis
Luke Stence
Kevin Thompson

Flute

Brendan Dooley
Leanna Ginsburg
Rebecca Tutunick

Oboe

Shawn Hutchison
Jasper Igusa
JJ Silvey

Clarinet

Mackenzie Austin
Matthew Griffith (on leave)
Olivia Hamilton
Juan Martinez

Bassoon

Cheryl Fries
Han-Yi Huang
Philip McNaughton

Horn

Shane Conley
Steven Harmon
Kwong Ho Hin
Ser Konvalin
Zachary Travis

Trumpet

Samuel Exline
Diana Lopez
Maggie Tsan-Jung Wei

Trombone

David Kidd
Ian Striedter

Bass Trombone

Austin Pancner

Tuba

Jarrod Briley

Timpani

Keith Hammer III

Percussion

Petra Elek
Luis Herrera Albertazzi
Felix Ko

Harp

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Acknowledgments

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Picture Brides (Hawai'i 1908-1924) 'ukulele was generously provided by Blackbird Guitars. Images courtesy of the Barbara Kawakami Collection.

Del Sol Quartet clothing for October 17 concert was designed by NOT (designer Jenny Lai).

Special thanks to Huang Ruo, David Henry Hwang, Del Sol Quartet, the family of Danny Chen, China Institute, Japan Society, and all the artists and composers who contributed to this year's festival.

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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. 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 U.S. 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 honoring the Chinese railroad workers of the American West on the 150th anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad. Last season's theme, *China and Beethoven*, explored the many ways that China has embraced, interpreted, and enthusiastically appreciated the man and his work with a series of musical and scholarly online events, coinciding with the anniversary week of Beethoven's birth in 1770.

The **US-China Music Institute** was founded in 2017 by conductor Jindong Cai and Robert Martin, founding director of the 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 U.S. conservatory. barduschinamusic.org

Recognized as one of the finest conservatories in the United States, the **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 degree 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 composer and conductor Tan Dun as its new dean in 2019. bard.edu/conservatory

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 Richard B. 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, the 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

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Founded in 1860, Bard College is a four-year, residential college of the liberal arts and sciences located 90 miles north of New York City. With the addition of the Montgomery Place estate, Bard's campus consists of nearly 1,000 parklike acres in the Hudson River Valley. It offers bachelor of arts, bachelor of science,

and bachelor of music degrees, with majors in nearly 40 academic programs; graduate degrees in 14 programs; eight early colleges; and numerous dual-degree programs nationally and internationally. Building on its 161-year history as a competitive and innovative undergraduate institution, Bard College has expanded its mission as a private institution acting in the public interest across the country and around the world to meet broader student needs and increase access to liberal arts education. The undergraduate program at our main campus in upstate New York has a reputation for scholarly excellence, a focus on the arts, and civic engagement. Bard is committed to enriching culture, public life, and democratic discourse by training tomorrow's thought leaders. For more information about Bard College, visit bard.edu.

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