



# Advance Program Notes

Shanghai Quartet and Wu Man, pipa  
*A Night in Ancient and New China*  
Friday, November 6, 2015, 7:30 PM

These Advance Program Notes are provided online for our patrons who like to read about performances ahead of time. Printed programs will be provided to patrons at the performances. Programs are subject to change.

## Shanghai Quartet Wu Man, pipa *A Night in Ancient and New China*

Weigang Li, violin  
Yi-Wen Jiang, violin  
Honggang Li, viola  
Nicholas Tzavaras, cello

**Xi Yang Xiao Gu (Flute and Drum Music at Sunset)**  
*Kui: Song of Kazakhstan*  
Wu Man, pipa

Traditional  
arr. Wu Man

**Chinese Folk Song Suite for Pipa and String Quartet**  
*Butterfly Lovers* by He Zhanghao and Chen Gang  
*Yao Dance* by Mao Yuan and Liu Tie-Shan

Traditional  
arr. Yi-Wen Jiang

**Ghost Opera for Pipa and String Quartet**  
*chamber version*

Tan Dun  
b. 1957

### INTERMISSION

**Silent Temple, Quartet no. 4**  
I  
II  
III  
IV

Bright Sheng  
b. 1955

**Red Lantern, Quintet for Pipa and String Quartet**  
Based on Zhao Jiping's film score *Raise the Red Lantern*  
*Prelude—Moonlight*  
*Wandering*  
*Love*  
*Death*  
*Epilogue*

Zhao Lin  
b. 1973

Exclusive Management for Wu Man:  
Opus 3 Artists  
[www.opus3artists.com](http://www.opus3artists.com)

Exclusive Management for the Shanghai Quartet:  
California Artists Management  
[www.calartists.com](http://www.calartists.com)

# Program Notes

## XI YANG XIAO GU (FLUTE AND DRUM MUSIC AT SUNSET)

**Traditional** (arr. Wu Man)

*The Sound of Bells and Drums from a Distant Temple Along the River*

*Moon on the Eastern Mountain*

*Breeze Over the Quiet Water*

*Shadows of Flowers*

*Clouds and Water Far Away Become as One*

*A Fisherman's Song in the Evening*

*Waves Lapping at the Shore*

*The Returning Boat*

A handwritten score for this pipa piece first appeared in 1875 as a piece with seven untitled sections. It was later discovered with subtitles among Chen Zijing's handwritten collection of pipa music in 1898. The present score, having 10 sections with subtitles, is taken from Li Fangyuan's *New Collections*, 1895. This composition is of the "civil" style of pipa music.

## KŪI (KAZAKH TRADITIONAL)

**Traditional** (arr. Wu Man)

Wu Man made this arrangement for pipa of a Kazakh folk tune that she heard performed on the *dombýra*, the two-stringed plucked lute that is widely regarded as a cultural symbol of Kazakhs. Kazakhstan shares a long border with western China, and nomadic Kazakhs have long represented an ethnic minority in China's Xinjiang-Uyghur Autonomous Region. In Xinjiang, Kazakhs speak their own language and maintain their own musical traditions. The pipa is believed to have entered China long ago through contact between Chinese civilization and the peoples that ancient Chinese sources described as "northern barbarians," which is to say, nomads. By performing this virtuosic nomadic melody on the pipa, Wu Man brings her instrument full circle, back to its Central Asian origins.

## BUTTERFLY LOVERS

### HE ZHANGHAO AND CHEN GANG

(arr. Yi-Wen Jiang)

One of the most famous violin pieces in China, *The Butterfly Lovers* was composed in 1959. At that time the two composers, He Zhanghao and Chen Gang, were still students at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. Zhanghao was familiar with the violin and opera music, and Gang with a more comprehensive grasp of compositional techniques. *The Butterfly Lovers* uses a famous love story as a theme, adopting a wealth of our opera music performance practices, combined with the western genre of the concerto. The use of charming melodies, lively music images, strong ethnic style, and distinctive local characteristics made this work deeply rooted in people's hearts. It has been affectionately referred to as our own symphonic music. It has been performed in the Soviet Union, the United States, Britain, France, and other countries, and has been highly appreciated internationally. The arrangement for this formation of pipa and string quartet uses the final section of the concerto and is called *Transformation into the Butterfly*. With the peaceful atmosphere, the pipa again plays the opening cadenza—like an introduction. At this time, muted strings play the lyrical and slow love theme, adding hazy fairyland colors. Here the composers used a romantic expression, showing the good ideal of the people, as if winter were over, the bright spring had come back to earth, and a pair of butterflies were flying as partners, dancing in the millions of flowers. This is the butterfly lovers' incarnation. They can not be married before his death. Only the tragic death could free them to fly together. Finally, the full ensemble joins the love theme, which represents the deep feeling pouring out from the hearts of the people, expressing their deep sympathy and sorrow towards the lovers' tragic fate and praying for a better life in their next lives.

# *Program Notes, continued*

## **YAO DANCE**

### **MAO YUAN AND LIU TIE-SHAN**

(arr. Yi-Wen Jiang)

The use of folk materials of China's minority nationalities was extremely popular among Chinese composers during 1960-1980. *The Yao Dance* was originally written by Mao Yuan and Liu Tie-Shan, based on a folk song of Yao, a mountain village in Guizhou in the southwest region of China. The work has three large sections, and within each section there are two themes. In the opening the viola and cello, playing a soft pizzicato, hint at the arrival of nightfall. Some Yao dancers, dressed in floating, colorful garments, gather in the moonlight. The second violin then plays a simple but expressive melody as a beautiful young girl starts to dance. The rest of the dancers join her soon thereafter. The theme suddenly takes on an ardent and rough character, suggesting a group of young men that cannot refrain from dashing into the group they join the dance. The strong contrast in the music depicts the striking personalities of the Yao people. The middle section is in 3/4 time, and its melody moves back and forth between a singing quality and a rhythmic dancing figure, as if two young lovers are expressing their adoration for each other. In the recapitulation the viola starts the first theme before being joined by the other strings. The second theme is more vivid and passionate, with each voice alternating its entrance until the whole quartet plays together in a loud and fast coda in a culmination of the evening celebration.

## **GHOST OPERA**

### **TAN DUN**

(chamber version)

*Ghost Opera* is a five-movement work for string quartet and pipa. The composer describes this work as a reflection on human spirituality, which is too often buried in the bombardment of urban culture and the rapid advances of technology. It is a cross-temporal, cross-cultural, and cross-media dialogue that touches on the past, present, future, and the eternal; employs elements from Chinese, Tibetan, English, and American cultures; and combines performance traditions of the European classical concert, Chinese shadow puppet theatre, visual art installations, folk music, dramatic theatre, and shamanistic ritual. In composing *Ghost Opera*, Dun was inspired by childhood memories of the shamanistic "ghost operas" of Chinese peasant culture. In this tradition, which is over 4,000 years old, humans and spirits of the future, the past, and nature communicate with each other. Dun's *Ghost Opera* embraces this tradition, calling on the spirits of Bach (in the form of a quotation from the Prelude in C-sharp minor from Book II of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*), Shakespeare (a brief excerpt from *The Tempest*), ancient folk traditions, and earth/nature (represented by the Chinese folk song *Little Cabbage*). The Bach excerpt acts, the composer says, as "a seed from which grows a new counterpoint of different ages, different sound worlds, and different cultures." In the final movement, the gradual transformation of the counterpoint brings the spirits of Bach and Shakespeare, the civilized world, and the rational mind, "this insubstantial pageant," into the eternal earth.

# *Program Notes, continued*

## **SILENT TEMPLE BRIGHT SHENG**

*Silent Temple*, String Quartet no. 4, was jointly commissioned for the Shanghai Quartet by Freer and Sackler Galleries of the Smithsonian Institution and University of Richmond, Virginia. It is dedicated to the Shanghai Quartet. In the early 1970's, Bright Sheng visited an abandoned Buddhist temple in northwest China. As all religious activities were completely forbidden at the time of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), the temple, renowned among the Buddhist community all over the world, was unattended and on the brink of turning into a ruin. The most striking and powerful memory he had of the visit was that, in spite of the appalling condition of the temple, it was still in its grandiose and magnificent structure. The fact that it was located in the snowy mountainous ranges added to its dignity and glory. Standing in the middle of the courtyard he could almost hear the praying and the chanting of the monks, as well as the violence committed to the temple and the monks by the "Red Guards." To this day, the memories of the visit remain vivid. And he uses them almost randomly as the basic images of the composition. As a result, the work has four short and seemingly unrelated movements, which should be performed without pause.

## **RED LANTERN, QUINTET FOR PIPA AND STRING QUARTET ZHAO LIN**

I was very honored to be invited by pipa virtuoso Wu Man and the Shanghai Quartet to compose a new work for pipa and string quartet. This piece is a tribute to my father, the composer Zhao Jiping, and to the great tradition of music from China. *Red Lantern* is derived from my father's original music, scored for the great Zhang Yimou film, *Raise the Red Lantern*. Inspired by Chinese traditional Beijing Opera, this work explores its unique musical style and language with the many colors of our traditional music. The quintet is a suite of stories that take place in a traditional Chinese private courtyard through the centuries. It tells an emotional story of Chinese family relationships in older times and the impact of the family's isolation from society.

There are five movements:

1. *Prelude—Moonlight*
2. *Wandering*
3. *Love*
4. *Death*
5. *Epilogue*

—Zhao Lin, October 2015 in Beijing

# Biography

## SHANGHAI QUARTET

Weigang Li, violin

Yi-Wen Jiang, violin

Honggang Li, viola

Nicholas Tzavaras, cello

“A wonderfully ferocious and illuminating performance.”

—The Washington Post

Renowned for its passionate musicality, impressive technique and multicultural innovations, the Shanghai Quartet has become one of the world’s foremost chamber ensembles. Its elegant style melds the delicacy of Eastern music with the emotional breadth of Western repertoire, allowing it to traverse musical genres, including traditional Chinese folk music, masterpieces of Western music, and cutting-edge contemporary works.

Formed at the Shanghai Conservatory in 1983, the Shanghai Quartet has worked with the world’s most distinguished artists and regularly tours the major music centers of Europe, North America, and Asia. Recent festival performances range from the International Music Festivals of Seoul and Beijing to the Festival Pablo Casals in France, Beethoven Festival in Poland, Yerevan Festival in Armenia, and Cartagena International Music Festival in Colombia, as well as numerous concerts in all regions of North America. The quartet has appeared at Carnegie Hall in chamber performances and with orchestra; in 2006 they gave the premiere of Takuma Itoh’s Concerto for Quartet and Orchestra in Carnegie Hall’s Isaac Stern Auditorium. Among innumerable collaborations with noted artists, they have performed with the Tokyo, Juilliard, and Guarneri Quartets; cellists Yo-Yo Ma and Lynn Harrell; pianists Menahem Pressler, Peter Serkin, and Jean-Yves Thibaudet; pipa virtuosa Wu Man; and the male vocal ensemble Chanticleer. The Shanghai Quartet regularly performs at many of North America’s leading music festivals, including the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Chamberfest Ottawa, and Maverick Concerts, where they recently made their 24<sup>th</sup> consecutive annual appearance.

The Shanghai Quartet has a long history of championing new music and juxtaposing traditions of Eastern and Western music. The Quartet’s 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season brought five commissions: David Del Tredici’s *Bullycide*, a sextet for piano, string quartet, and bass; *Fantasie*, a piano quintet by Australian composer Carl Vine; a concerto for string quartet and symphony orchestra by Korean composer Jeajoon Ryu; *Verge Quartet* by Lei Liang; and *Scherzo* by Robert Aldridge, commissioned by Yu Long and the Beijing Music Festival. The Shanghai Quartet’s 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season featured premieres from the three continents that comprise its artistic and cultural worlds: Penderecki’s String Quartet no. 3: *Leaves From an Unwritten Diary*, Chen Yi’s *From the Path of Beauty*, String Quartet no. 2 by Vivian Fung, and jazz pianist Dick Hyman’s *String Quartet*. The Penderecki premiered in Poland at a special 75<sup>th</sup> birthday concert honoring the composer. The U.S. premieres were at Peak Performances, Montclair State University, and the Modlin Center, University of Richmond, followed by numerous performances worldwide. String Quartet no. 3 was featured in Poland for the composer’s 80<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration in November 2013. Chen Yi’s *From the Path of Beauty*, commissioned with Chanticleer, was premiered in San Francisco, followed by performances at Tanglewood, Ravinia, Beijing, and Shanghai. Other important commissions and premieres include works by Lowell Lieberman, Sebastian Currier, Marc Neikrug, Lei Liang, Zhou Long, and Bright Sheng. Sheng’s *Dance Capriccio* premiered in spring 2012 with pianist Peter Serkin. Later that year, *Sweet Suite*, a piano quintet by Stephen Prutsman, had its premiere with the composer at the piano. Dan Welcher’s *Museon Polemos* for double quartet premiered in September 2012 with the Miro Quartet at the University of Texas at Austin. The tradition continued in 2014-2015 with Du Yun’s *Tattooed in Snow* and in 2015-16 with the premiere of a quintet for string quartet and pipa by Zhao Ji-Ping, China’s most renowned composer for film (*Raise the Red Lantern*; *Farewell, My Concubine*; and more) with Wu Man.

# *Biography, continued*

The Shanghai Quartet has an extensive discography of more than 30 recordings, ranging from the Schumann and Dvorak piano quintets with Rudolf Buchbinder to Zhou Long's *Poems from Tang* for string quartet and orchestra with the Singapore Symphony (BIS). Delos released the Quartet's most popular disc, *Chinasong*, in 2003, featuring a collection of Chinese folk songs arranged by Yi-Wen Jiang reflecting on his childhood memories of the Cultural Revolution in China. In 2009 Camerata released the Shanghai Quartet's recording of the complete Beethoven String Quartets, a seven-disc project.

A diverse array of media projects include a cameo appearance playing Bartok's String Quartet no. 4 in Woody Allen's film, *Melinda and Melinda*, and PBS's *Great Performances* series. Violinist Weigang Li performed in the documentary, *From Mao to Mozart: Isaac Stern in China*, and the family of cellist Nicholas Tzavaras was the subject of the 1999 film, *Music of the Heart*, starring Meryl Streep.

The Shanghai Quartet is Quartet-in-Residence at the John J. Cali School of Music, Montclair State University in New Jersey; Ensemble-in-Residence with the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra; and visiting guest professors of the Shanghai Conservatory and the Central Conservatory in Beijing. The Shanghai Quartet is proudly sponsored by Thomastik-Infeld Strings.

## **WU MAN, pipa**

Recognized as the world's premier pipa virtuoso and leading ambassador of Chinese music, Grammy Award-nominated musician Wu Man has carved out a career as a soloist, educator, and composer, giving her lute-like instrument—which has a history of over 2,000 years in China—a new role in both traditional and contemporary music. Through numerous concert tours, Man has premiered hundreds of new works for the pipa, while spearheading multimedia projects to both preserve and create awareness of China's ancient musical traditions. Her adventurous spirit and virtuosity have led to collaborations across artistic disciplines, allowing Man to reach wider audiences as she works to break through cultural and musical borders. Her efforts were recognized when she was named Musical America's 2013 Instrumentalist of the Year, marking the first time this prestigious award has been bestowed on a player of a non-Western instrument.

Having been brought up in the Pudong School of pipa playing, one of the most prestigious classical styles of Imperial China, Man is now recognized as an outstanding exponent of the traditional repertoire, as well as a leading interpreter of contemporary pipa music by today's most prominent composers. She was awarded the Bunting Fellowship at Harvard University in 1998 and was the first Chinese traditional musician to receive the United States Artist Fellowship in 2008. She is also the first artist from China to perform at the White House. Man's discography comprises over 40 albums, including the Grammy-nominated recordings *Our World in Song, Traditions and Transformations: Sounds of the Silk Road Chicago*, her recording of Tan Dun's *Pipa Concerto* with Yuri Bashmet and the Moscow Soloists, and *You've Stolen My Heart*, featuring Man and the Kronos Quartet.

During the 2015-16 season, Man embarks on an extensive North American tour with longtime friends and colleagues, the Shanghai Quartet. The tour takes them to 12 cities across the U.S., with a final concert at The Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. Man travels to Brussels and Geneva to collaborate with Uyghur singer Sanubar Tursun for performances presented by the Aga Khan Music Initiative, an interregional music and arts education program. Orchestral highlights of the season include a performance of Zhao Jiping's *Pipa Concerto* no. 2, which was written for her, with the West Michigan Symphony, as well as performances with the New York Philharmonic and San Francisco Symphony.

# *Biography, continued*

Born in Hangzhou, China, Man studied with Lin Shicheng, Kuang Yuzhong, Chen Zemin, and Liu Dehai at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, where she became the first recipient of a master's degree in pipa. Accepted into the conservatory at age 13, her audition was covered by national newspapers, and she was hailed as a child prodigy, becoming a nationally recognized role model for young pipa players. She subsequently received first prize in the First National Music Performance Competition, among many other awards, and she participated in many premieres of works by a new generation of Chinese composers. Man's first exposure to western classical music came in 1979 when she saw Seiji Ozawa and the Boston Symphony Orchestra performing in Beijing. In 1980 she participated in an open master class with violinist Isaac Stern, and in 1985 she made her first visit to the United States as a member of the China Youth Arts Troupe. Man moved to the U.S. in 1990 and currently resides with her husband and son in California.

For more information on Wu Man, please visit [www.wumanpipa.org](http://www.wumanpipa.org) or follow her at [facebook.com/wumanpipa](https://facebook.com/wumanpipa) and [twitter.com/wumanpipa](https://twitter.com/wumanpipa).

# *Engagement Activities*

Friday, November 6, 2015, 10 AM

## **MASTER CLASS**

*Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre, Street and Davis Performance Hall*

Musicians from the Shanghai Quartet and Wu Man will coach students from a chamber music class at Virginia Tech. Free; admission first-come, first served, but to guarantee your seat, register through the box office.

Friday, November 6, 2015, 4 PM

## **LECTURE AND DEMONSTRATION: THE MUSIC OF OLD AND NEW CHINA**

*Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre, Street and Davis Performance Hall*

Prior to the evening concert, learn about a variety of Chinese musical styles from the Shanghai Quartet and Wu Man. Free; admission first-come, first served, but to guarantee your seat, register through the box office.

Friday, November 6, 2015, 7:30 PM

## **TWEET SEATS MASTER CLASS**

*Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre, Street and Davis Performance Hall*

During this evening's performance by Shanghai Quartet and Wu Man, Virginia Tech students will participate in a Twitter-based dialogue, led by Tracy Cowden, faculty chair of the Department of Music and associate professor of voice and piano.

*Special thanks to Tracy Cowden and Alan Weinstein*



# *In the Galleries*

## **BEYOND REAL: STILL LIFE IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

September 3–November 15, 2015, 5–8 PM

*Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery, Sherwood Payne Quillen '71 Reception Gallery*

### **ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: LAURA LETINSKY**

Laura Letinsky (Canadian, based in Chicago) creates large-format, almost elegiac photographic images that portray the aftermaths of meals—deserted dinner tables with stained tablecloths, overturned spoons, cups, plates, and napkins precariously poised at the table's edge. Bathed in expanses of muted white and gray tones, these works suggest the presence of people, with the abandoned scene the only sign of their inhabitation of the space. As such, these expansive photographic works are studies of absence that quietly contemplate what is left behind; the circumstantial evidence of activity—of life—that implies lost or suspended narratives.

In an innovative approach to the photography medium, Letinsky incorporates paper cutouts from lifestyle and food magazines, as well as fragments of her own photographs in collaged compositions that she then re-photographs. With subtle shifts in scale that result in a nuanced and unsettling perceptual experience, these elegant works suggest traces of upheaval while hinting at impermanence, moments ending, remembrance, and time passing.

Also on view:

### **PHILIP TAAFFE**

September 3–November 15, 2015

Ruth C. Horton Gallery

### **GALLERY HOURS**

Tuesday–Friday, 10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.; Saturday–Sunday, 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.; closed for Virginia Tech home football games