

Focus! Festival

China Today

A Festival of Chinese Composition

当代中国

一场中国作曲创作的盛典

Juilliard

The Juilliard School

presents

The 34th annual Focus! festival

Focus! 2018

China Today: A Festival of Chinese Composition

Joel Sachs, *Director*

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This performance is supported in part by the Muriel Gluck Production Fund.

Please make certain that all electronic devices are turned off during the performance. The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not permitted in this auditorium.



Introduction to Focus! 2018

By Joel Sachs

Almost a year ago, Juilliard president Joseph W. Polisi and I convened to consider the theme of the coming Focus! festival, a concept we jointly created in his first semester as president in 1984. This time, however, contemplating his final festival as Juilliard's president, Dr. Polisi had a specific request—a focus on China, linked to the milestone project with which his tenure is culminating: the establishment of Juilliard's campus in Tianjin. While China had been in my mind as a Focus! topic for years it always got pushed aside, largely by the thought of what would be involved in trying to survey the composers of such a huge, diverse, and culturally rich nation.

Once we settled on the theme, I proposed that we aim above all to feature composers living and working in China so that they could finally get a hearing in New York. The question was: How to begin investigating this wide-ranging topic? Normally I have done the Focus! research by myself, reaching out to contacts and publishers. Dealing with China would be another matter. Since a country with about 1.5 billion people is bound to have a large number of composers, a lot of research would be required. (Some years ago, Frances Richard, then director of the Concert Music Division of ASCAP, told me that 30,000 Americans identified themselves as composers of classical music. At that time, the population of the U.S. was about 18% of China's current population.) Finding people who composed, therefore, probably would not be too difficult. As is the case everywhere, finding the top talent would be a challenge. The reality is that few Chinese composers who live in China are known here. This lacuna exists through no fault of the composers. In fact, a lack of knowledge of composers in countries beyond their native ones is a worldwide problem. The central point of this Focus! festival is precisely to open our eyes to the riches of today's Chinese music, as the festival has done in previous years for composers of Latin America, Britain, Hungary, Poland, the former Soviet Union, and even the U.S.

Some guidance was necessary. Fortunately, the perfect guides had arrived when Juilliard selected Alex Brose and Wei He as executive director and dean, respectively, of The Tianjin Juilliard School campus. Speaking from long experience, they felt that composer Chen Qigang could be an excellent ally because, as director of several nationwide projects, he has encountered many gifted composers not just from Beijing and Shanghai but from all over China. An email conversation began at once (first in French, then in English, aided by Chen's excellent assistant).

Because Dr. Polisi placed a priority on commissioning younger composers, I needed to act quickly so they would have enough lead time. Chen Qigang supplied starter lists of young composers whom he had encountered in his workshops. I also asked the senior composers I know personally—Ye Xiaogang, Guo Wenjing, and Liu Sola in Beijing and Jia Daqun in Shanghai—for recommendations and suggestions of others with whom I might consult. Alex Brose and Wei He supplied more names; I sought even more from expatriate friends who are still active in China and from knowledgeable European publishers and broadcasters. A list gradually emerged, containing some 30 composers born after 1980 and about 70 born earlier—some of them as many as 95 years ago.



**HAPPY
CHINESE
NEW YEAR**
欢乐春节

The first step was to get biographies and work lists, from which I selected and requested compositions that looked practical, temporarily setting aside any composer who did not live in China. (These names joined my own expatriate list.) Finally, I selected seven young composers of particularly striking talent, whom we then commissioned.

By that point, it was clear that a fascinating festival was possible without including any expatriates. The one exception is 94-year-old Chou Wen-chung, who came to the U.S. as a young man, studied with Edgard Varèse, was educated at Columbia, and served its faculty until retirement. He will occupy a position of honor in gratitude for his tireless advocacy of the young composers of China.

With the commissions arranged, I requested information from composers in their late 30s, 40s, and early 50s; I planned subsequently to proceed to those in their late 50s or very early 60s, some of whom I know and who, I supposed, formed the generation most affected by the Cultural Revolution. Indeed, I knew of only one very elderly and superb composer, Shanghai's Zhu Jian-er—who died in August 2017, just short of 95—but I soon was directed to three others of his generation, who aroused my curiosity because they had been educated before the founding of the People's Republic of China, in 1949. Sang Tong's 1947 piece for violin and piano astounded me because it sounded like Berg or middle-period Schoenberg. Later, I learned that he had studied with two Schoenberg students who were among the European Jews rescued and relocated to Shanghai by the wealthy Sassoon family.

I consider this festival a tribute and personal thank-you to Joseph Polisi for our amazing collaboration of nearly 35 years.

In the course of this research, one major problem quickly surfaced. Many composers are writing for ensembles combining Western and Chinese instruments or Chinese instruments only. Juilliard does not teach those instruments. Since the whole point of the Focus! festivals is to involve our students with new music, performing such pieces would require hiring players of Chinese instruments, defeating the purpose of the festival in addition to adding significantly to its costs. While our students would of course learn a lot from working with traditional players, we needed to define limits. Yet even without using Chinese instruments, the scores submitted displayed an extraordinary variety of styles, which clearly reflected a combination of fine teaching and broad exposure to contemporary repertory, and not just for the composers who have studied abroad. A number of the older composers commented on the artistic expansion that resulted when Chinese cultural life began to open in the early 1980s.

One rather pleasant surprise occurred when the programming of the concluding orchestra concert had to be arranged. Dean Ara Guzelimian pointed out that this Focus! festival lacked an obvious "anchor composer," such as Takemitsu for the Japanese festival, or Ginastera for last year's Latin American festival. He therefore suggested that I recommend some composers and even pieces. We would then see how our conductor, Chen Lin, reacted, for it was crucial that she felt positive about the program. I proposed three composers and wrote Wei He for his reaction. He quickly

replied that when he had chanced to see Chen Lin in Beijing the previous day, she had said she thought three composers were essential, and they were the same three that I had suggested. The concluding orchestral program was thus quickly confirmed. One of the composers, Guo Wenjing, thought his Concerto for Erhu (a very ancient Chinese bowed string instrument) would be ideal. The problem of a soloist was soon solved: it would be Juilliard alumnus Wei-Yang Andy Lin, a superb violist who is also a superb erhu player

When it was time to finalize the programs, we had enough wonderful music to devote this festival to composers who reside in China, and Chou Wen-chung—the exceptions being some young composers who are completing their education in Germany and the U.S. but who plan to settle in China.

I consider this festival a tribute and personal thank-you to Joseph Polisi for our amazing collaboration of nearly 35 years.

Note:
In presenting Chinese names, we use the Chinese conventional order of surname followed by given name, with a few exceptions when requested by the individual.

Events Related to Focus! 2018

Contemporary Chinese Music in Concept and Practice: Intersecting Perspectives from Juilliard and China

Monday, January 22, 2 to 5pm
Tuesday, January 23, 9am to noon
Morse Hall

On days two and three of the 2018 Focus! festival Juilliard hosts a conference on contemporary Chinese music. Distinguished representatives from top conservatories and universities in the U.S. and China will join to share their perspectives on this diverse body of repertoire. Musical examples and short performances will be included. Admission limited to Juilliard faculty, staff, and students.

Beijing Central Conservatory Concert

Saturday, January 27, 7:30pm
Alice Tully Hall

The Beijing Central Conservatory presents an unusual concert of new works combining Chinese and Western instruments composed by faculty members Chen Xinruo, Li Binyang, Guo Wenjing, Jia Guoping, Qin Wenchen, Tang Jianping, and Ye Xiaogang. All performers are students at the Central Conservatory, which has a prominent program teaching traditional instruments. The conductor is Chen Bin. Admission is free.

Acknowledgments

I most warmly acknowledge the following persons who were of invaluable aid in directing me toward composers who would be of interest or otherwise advised me as I prepared this festival. My invaluable guides have been Alex Brose and Wei He, our recently appointed directors of The Tianjin Juilliard School. Within China and the U.S., many composers provided extremely good recommendations of colleagues of all generations and helped me to reach them. Especially helpful were Chen Qigang, Chen Qiangbin, Chen Yi, Du Yun, Guo Wenjing, Jia Daqun, Jia Guoping, Jin Ping, Liu Sola, and Ye Xiaogang. Others who assisted my search were Chinese musicologist Linda Yan Zheng; Juilliard violinist Julia Glenn; Gabriel Teschner (Sikorski Music Publishers in Hamburg); Loretta Zhang (People's Music Publishing House); and Louisa Hungate, Ian Mylett, and their colleagues at Schott Music (London and Mainz). Yu Ronrong (Zoe Yu) and Yin Feng (Max Yin), assistants to Chen Qigang and Ye Xiaogang, respectively, helped speed communication. Thanks too, to Phil Young who aided immeasurably in communications with Liu Zhongrong.

I also extend my thanks to Juilliard Dean and Provost Ara Guzelimian and Associate Dean Adam Meyer, as well as to their administrative assistant Katie Scheuerle, for their assistance at many levels, including negotiating the orchestral program with Chen Lin and administrating the commissions process for the young composers; editors Charles Sheek and Thomas May for their superhuman editing of the program book; designers Sam Larson and Thiago Ferreira Eichner for the beautiful graphics that grace Focus! publicity and the program book; Susan Jackson, Juilliard's editorial director; Alexandra Day, Gloria Gottschalk, and Jessica Epps, for their superb publicity work; Lisa Dempsey-Kane and her staff in the orchestral library; Assistant Dean for Orchestral Studies Joe Soucy; Kate Northfield Lanich, personnel manager of the Juilliard Orchestra; Joanna Trebelhorn, director of orchestral and ensemble operations, and her staff; and Matt Wolford, manager of the New Juilliard Ensemble.

I am especially grateful to Matthew Henao, our production stage manager, all those in the Production Department listed on page 48, and many others on Juilliard's staff without whom this festival would be impossible.

To anyone else whom I have inadvertently forgotten to acknowledge, I offer my apologies.

Joel Sachs

Program I

Focus! 2018

China Today: A Festival of Chinese Composition

New Juilliard Ensemble

Joel Sachs, Founding Director and Conductor

Julia Glenn, Violin

Liu Sola, Virtual Vocalist

Friday, January 19, 2018, 7:30pm

Peter Jay Sharp Theater

WANG SHUCI

(b. 1990)

Bauhaus (2017)

World premiere; composed for the NJE

YE XIAOGANG

(b. 1955)

Lamura Cuo, Op. 69 (2014)

Julia Glenn, Violin

New York premiere of ensemble version

Intermission

CHOU WEN-CHUNG

(b. 1923)

Twilight Colors (2007)

LIU SOLA

(b. 1955)

Goose and Crane Calling (2017)

In four movements

Liu Sola, Virtual Vocalist

World premiere of ensemble version, composed for the NJE

Performance time: approximately 1 hour and 25 minutes, including one intermission

Composer's names are given in Chinese style: surname, given name.

Bauhaus (2017)

WANG SHUCI

Born on March 19, 1990, in Qingdao, China, Wang Shuci received her BM from the Central Conservatory in Beijing as a student of Weiya Hao and attended New York University, where she studied with Justin Dello Joio and worked ferociously to improve her English. She then earned her MM from Juilliard, studying under Christopher Rouse, and received the Dr. Edmond Lipton Memorial Scholarship, the Edward Steuermann Scholarship, and the Marvin Hamlisch Scholarship in Composition. She now lives in Beijing. Her orchestral work *Abyss*, having won Juilliard's 2017 Arthur Friedman Prize for the outstanding score of the year, was premiered by the Juilliard Orchestra at Alice Tully Hall on April 3, 2017.

Wang was selected as one of two winners of the New Juilliard Ensemble's 2017 competition for current composition students. The premiere was originally scheduled for April 2018, in order to give her ample time to write the piece. When she told me that she was returning to China, I thought of premiering the piece tonight. Wang promised to finish it in time, adding that with school behind her, she could spend all her time working on it. With her parents' help, she cut herself off from the world in order to work undisturbed. One result was unanswered emails, no matter who sent them. As something seemed amiss, worries spread until a larger number of Central Conservatory students hunted for her. In the end, somebody located her parents and got the explanation!

Wang named Bauhaus after the amazing early-20th-century locus of creative thinking.

Wang named the piece *Bauhaus* after Germany's amazing early-20th-century locus of creative thinking, "not only because architecture is concrete music," but also because it was the subject of her first oral presentation in one of my seminars. "The Bauhaus always reminds me of the incredible time when I had some almost impossible goal [her first oral report in English] and never felt better about myself when I achieved it." Having never enjoyed reading English books, she first was tremendously frustrated and wanted to give up. "However, I got obsessed with the idea of reading once I saw my progress through the hard work required for each oral presentation in the seminar. I realized that the more books I read, the faster I got. For me, the way to pick up my confidence is not by getting recognized by others, which always makes me insecure, but by continuing my studies." As her former seminar teacher, I was deeply touched that she concluded this program note saying, "Thank you for giving me the opportunity to see how much better I can be. I could never have gotten here without your trust." I am doubly delighted to conduct the premiere of *Bauhaus*, the ultimate product of Wang's studies at Juilliard.

Lamura Cuo, Op. 69 (2014)

YE XIAOGANG

The son of a composer, Ye Xiaogang was born in 1955 in Shanghai, in southern China, and began studying the piano at the age of 4. During the Cultural Revolution he, like so many people, was sent to work in the

countryside after graduating from high school. Upon finishing six years of benchwork in a factory, he was accepted to the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, where he studied composition with Du Mingxin. He also studied with British composer Alexander Goehr and received a full scholarship from the Eastman School of Music in 1987 to further his education with Samuel Adler, Joseph Schwanter, and Louis Andriessen. Since 1983, Ye has received numerous national and international awards and commissions and has written symphonies, concertos, and chamber music for premieres in Canada, the U.S., Japan, New Zealand, Finland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao. He has also composed for about 30 films. Awards include the 20th-Century Chinese Music Master Prize, the grand prize in the Taiwan Symphony's first orchestral composition competition, the Golden Bell Award for Symphony and Chamber Music, two Chinese prizes for film scores, and various prizes in the U.S. Ye's music has been published by Schott since 1995. He is vice president of the Central Conservatory in Beijing, a member of China's parliament, the National People's Consultative Congress. (We do not know of any composers in the U.S. Congress.)

Lamura Cuo, for violin and ensemble, was commissioned in 2014 by Soundstreams, a Toronto-based contemporary-music presenter. One of a series of works about Tibet's Nine Sacred Lakes, it exists in three versions: the original heard tonight and subsequent scorings for large and medium orchestras. Tonight's performance is the New York premiere of the original scoring.

Ye Xiaogang writes: "A melodious and mystic strain played on the violin depicts the sacredness of Lake Namura, on the highest plateau in the world, as it was felt in the heart of the composer. The chilly but clear air and the quiet lake water in the distance stir up a faint sorrow."

***Twilight Colors* (2007)** CHOU WEN-CHUNG

Tonight we expand our exploration of composers living in China to celebrate the only Chinese composer in this festival who settled abroad, Chou Wen-chung, a man whom I have intensely admired and whose friendship I have enjoyed since my own days at Columbia. Chou (b. Yantai, China, 1923) came to the U.S. in 1946. From 1952 to 1954, he pursued graduate studies at Columbia University under Otto Luening, serving as his assistant and helping establish the historic Electronic Music Center. In 1964 he began teaching composition at Columbia; later, as chair, he developed the program's international renown. Beginning in 1975, as an administrator of Columbia's then-new School of the Arts, he supervised the revision of the MFA programs in film, theater, visual arts, and writing. In 1984 Chou established the Fritz Reiner Center for Contemporary Music at Columbia to foster new music and encourage young composers. He later revitalized the Electronic Music Center, converting it to the present Computer Music Center. Perhaps his most far-reaching project is the Center for U.S.-China Arts Exchange, which he founded in 1978

***Lamura Cuo is
one of a series
of works about
Tibet's Nine
Sacred Lakes.***

at Columbia. It became an enormously important institution through its cultural projects in diverse fields all over East and Southeast Asia. Discovering many young Chinese talents, including Tan Dun, Chen Yi, Zhou Long, and Bright Sheng, Chou brought them to the U.S. to study at Columbia. His own music explores many complex interrelationships between Chinese and Western music, some of which are readily sensed, others of which are more structural. His latest compositions, a series called *Eternal Pine*, began in 2009 with *Eternal Pine* (for Korean traditional instruments), continuing with *Ode to Eternal Pine* (for Western instruments) and *Sizhu Eternal Pine* (for traditional Chinese instruments).

Chou Wen-chung's name is also indelibly associated with Edgard Varèse, whose student and assistant he became before attending Columbia. Varèse was then composing his last works, including *Déserts* (1950–54), the manuscript of which is in Chou's handwriting. His decades-long task of editing and correcting Varèse's scores began under the latter's supervision but was mostly undertaken after his death, in 1965. Chou also completed two of Varèse's unfinished scores.

**"Twilight Colors
is inspired by
the exceptional
colors of the
changing sky
over the Hudson
River Valley."
—Chou
Wen-chung**

Twilight Colors, a double trio for woodwinds and strings, was composed in memory of Olga Koussevitzky and had its premiere in New York in 2007 by Boston Musica Viva. Chou writes:

The work is inspired by the exceptional colors of the changing sky over the Hudson River Valley, which attracted American painters who initiated a school of true landscape painting not dominated by the human figure. In composing the piece I was influenced by the Chinese brush painters of the early 17th century who developed subtle brushstrokes and their sophisticated organization for landscape painting by adopting fundamental brush stroke techniques from Chinese calligraphy. The result was an extremely terse and abstract expression of the subject portrayed, and conceivably anticipated much of the abstract and the expressionist development in Western painting of the 20th century, which presumably evolved out of a different esthetic orientation. The work consists of a series of vignettes, in four movements, with a coda, each with a descriptive title.

***Goose and Crane Calling* (2017)**

LIU SOLA

Liu Sola was born in Beijing in 1955 to an influential political family in decline. Her uncle Liu Zhidan was a general in the Red Army before his mysterious death in 1936; her father, Liu Jingfan, a high-ranking officer, was jailed for eight years during the Cultural Revolution; her mother, political historian Li Jiantong, was denounced by Mao Zedong; Liu Sola herself was banished to a remote rural region. When that chaotic epoch ended, she enrolled in the reopened Central Conservatory's first re-established composition class. Some colleagues became the Chinese composers best-known internationally: Tan Dun, Zhou Long, Chen Yi, Ye Xiaogang, and Guo Wenjing.

Liu Sola, however, made her mark as China's first female rock star and as a celebrated writer. Her first novella, *You Have No Choice*, about her class at the conservatory, is credited with having introduced the notion of "hip" into Chinese writing; it won the 1988 Chinese National Novella Award and remains the unofficial manifesto of culture in the 1980s that successive generations of young Chinese readers continue to rediscover. (Nanjing University Press recently republished it in a parallel Chinese-English edition.) *Chaos and All That* (University of Hawaii Press), a novel that portrays with black humor China in the period leading to the Cultural Revolution, was written shortly after she left China. Other literary works have been translated into Japanese, English, Swedish, Danish, German, and Italian. From 1988 to 2002, Liu Sola lived first in London and then in New York, working as a composer, singer, writer, and painter and collaborating with famous rock, jazz, and blues artists, and with traditional and classical musicians in worldwide performances. Regularly featured at jazz and arts festivals, she was the first Chinese singer who qualified to perform at the New Orleans Jazz Festival. Liu Sola represented China at the Seoul Song Festival for the 1988 Olympics, and in 1989 she collaborated with Memphis-based blues musicians to record what may be the first Chinese blues song, "Reborn." The first of her U.S. albums, *Blues in the East*, held a position among the top 10 on the New World Music Charts in the U.S. and Great Britain.

In 2003, after relocating to China, she founded Liu Sola and Friends, a band that features celebrated Chinese instrumental soloists. It is the first Chinese group to perform music ranging from classical Chinese to contemporary jazz, fusion, and modern and is China's first big band. She has also composed scores for many Chinese and international films, TV and drama productions, theater, modern dance, and commercial use, and she has acted in films. Her opera *Fantasy of the Red Queen*, commissioned by Berlin's House of World Cultures, was premiered in 2006 by Ensemble Modern with Liu Sola and Friends. She was its composer, librettist, lead vocalist, and director. In 2017 Liu had a solo exhibition of her unique music score designs in Beijing, an event whose live telecast drew over a million viewers.

New Juilliard Ensemble audiences first encountered Liu Sola when she was living in New York and, at the composer Guo Wenjing's suggestion, was the vocal soloist for the 1998 NJE performance of his *Inscriptions on Bone*. Shortly thereafter, she composed *In-Corporeal* for the New Juilliard Ensemble, which premiered it at Alice Tully Hall on February 26, 1999. It was played again in January 2006. *Goose and Crane Calling* was composed for tonight's concert. Since it seemed unlikely that she could attend this performance, I suggested she write a piece with herself as soloist, singing on a video played with the live ensemble performance. It was originally composed for her Chinese ensemble; tonight is the world premiere of this version. Liu Sola writes; "Just as the eight natural sceneries of a day are inspired by the eight strokes of the I Ching, so I use unusual vocal techniques to mimic birds and other non-human live sounds."

*"Just as the
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live sounds."
—Liu Sola*

Meet the Artists



Joel Sachs

Joel Sachs, founder and director of the New Juilliard Ensemble, performs a vast range of traditional and contemporary music as conductor and pianist. As co-director of the internationally acclaimed new music ensemble Continuum, he has appeared in hundreds of performances. He has also conducted orchestras and ensembles in Austria, Brazil, Canada, China, El Salvador, Germany, Iceland, Mexico, Mongolia, Switzerland, and Ukraine and has held new-music residencies in Banff (Canada), Berlin, Curitiba (Brazil), Helsinki, Salzburg, Shanghai, and in Birmingham, Brighton, London, and Newcastle-Upon-Tyne (U.K.). In the last two seasons he has given performances of Brahms' Piano Concerto No. 2 in New York and near London. Last June a residency as pianist and conductor at the Brighton (U.K.) Fringe Festival included a recital featuring Ives' Piano Sonata No. 1, which he will repeat in London and Newcastle next fall.

One of the most active presenters of new music in New York, Sachs founded NJE in 1993. He created, produces, and directs Juilliard's annual Focus! festival and has been artistic director of Juilliard's concerts at MoMA Summargarden since 1993. A member of the Juilliard music history faculty, he wrote a biography of the American composer Henry Cowell (Oxford University Press, 2012). Sachs, who often appears on radio as a commentator on recent music, was the studio guest and a prominent performer on BBC Radio 3's *Composer of the Week* series, which devoted five one-hour programs to Cowell. He rejoins the program soon for a week of programming about John Cage and Lou Harrison on BBC Radio 3. A graduate of Harvard College, he received his MA and PhD from Columbia University. He received Columbia's Alice M. Ditson Award for his service to American Music, was made an honorary member of Phi Beta Kappa at Harvard for his support of new music, and was awarded the Gloria Artis Medal for his service to Polish music.



Julia Glenn

Violinist Julia Glenn is in her final semester as a C.V. Starr doctoral fellow at Juilliard, where she is simultaneously teaching. She obtained her MM from the New England Conservatory in 2013 and her BA magna cum laude in linguistics from Harvard University in 2012. Her primary teachers have included James Buswell and Joseph Lin. Glenn has appeared in concert at Alice Tully Hall, Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, Sanders Theatre (Harvard), Jordan Hall (NEC), Beijing Recital Hall, and Shanghai Concert Hall, among others. At the 2016 Focus! festival, she gave the world premiere of Milton Babbitt's *Concerti for Violin, Orchestra, and Synthesized Sounds* with NJE. In addition to her role as performer, Glenn draws upon her backgrounds in linguistics and Chinese—which she speaks fluently—for her research on Chinese contemporary music. She has presented talks and lecture-performances on her work at the Hamburg Hochschule für Musik und Theatre, Juilliard, Harvard, the Shanghai Conservatory, and Beijing Central Conservatory. She plays a Vuillaume on generous loan from Rhonda Rider.

About the New Juilliard Ensemble

Joel Sachs, *Founding Director and Conductor*

Matthew R. Wolford, *Manager*

The New Juilliard Ensemble, led by founding director Joel Sachs, celebrates the liveliness of today's music, focusing primarily on repertory of the last decade. Now in its 25th season, it presents music by international composers writing in the most diverse styles. Its members, current students at Juilliard, are volunteers admitted by audition. NJE brings to New York compositions from all over the world and American music; it has commissioned and premiered some 200 pieces. Beyond training performers, it offers commissioning opportunities for students in Juilliard's composition program through an annual audition. NJE appears annually at MoMA's Summergarden, has been featured four times at the Lincoln Center Festival, has collaborated with Carnegie Hall in four of its regional festivals, and has performed in France, Germany, Israel, Japan, Poland, Russia, Switzerland, the U.K., and elsewhere in the U.S. While emphasizing very new music, the ensemble has also played rarely heard older works and 20th-century classics, especially in the concerts that open the annual Focus! festival. NJE's recording of Virko Baley's Violin Concerto, with violinist Tom Chiu, can be found on TNC Recordings; a joint project with the Royal Academy of Music was recorded for the Academy's label. NJE's 2010 performance of Henry Cowell's Symphony No. 13 ("Madras") can be heard on SoundCloud.

The season's final NJE concert takes place on April 28 in Alice Tully Hall, with music by Kolbeinn Bjarnason (Iceland), Alejandro Cardona (Costa Rica), Jonathan Dawe (U.S.), and Sunbin Kevin Kim (Korea/U.S.).

Program II

Focus! 2018

China Today: A Festival of Chinese Composition

Monday, January 22, 2018, 7:30pm

Peter Jay Sharp Theater

JIA GUOPING

(b. 1963)

Schweben über grenzenlosem Feld
(*Suspended Over the Limitless Field*) (2001-02)

Giorgio Consolati, Flute

Dror Baitel, Piano

Western Hemisphere premiere

LIANG NAN

(b. 1988)

You Asleep, I Awake (text by Sai Yang) (2015)

Vivian Yau, Soprano

Frankie Carr, Cello

Candace Chien, Piano

Western Hemisphere premiere

Song Feng (2017)

Yujie He, Violin

Frankie Carr, Cello

Candace Chien, Piano

*World premiere; commissioned by The Juilliard School
for Focus! 2018*

LIU YUHUI

(b. 1997)

Song of the Tie-Dyeing (2017)

Phillip Solomon, Clarinet

Markus Lang, Double bass

Joseph Bricker, Percussion

*World premiere; commissioned by The Juilliard School
for Focus! 2018*

Intermission

PAN KAINÉ

(b. 1985)

Semi-Cursive Script (2014)

Julia Glenn, Violin

World premiere

ZHOU JUAN

(b. 1981)

Chaconne Arirang (2013)

Na Yoon Kim, Clarinet

Wei Zhu, Violin

Peng Lin, Piano

Western Hemisphere premiere

YANG LIQING

(1942–2013)

Four Poems From the Tang Dynasty (1981-82)

(Set in German; translator unknown)

Erwartung (Anticipation) (text by Meng Haoran)

Kühler Sommertag (Cool Summer Day) (text by Bai Juyi)

Leuchtkäfer (Firefly) (text by Li Jiayou)

Abschied (Farewell) (text by Li Bai)

Vivian Yau, Soprano

Juliana Han, Piano

Omar El-Abidin and **Leo Simon**, Percussion

Presumed Western Hemisphere premiere

Performance time: approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes, including one intermission

Composer's names are given in Chinese style: surname, given name.

All student performers' names are given, at their request, in the Western style.

Schweben über grenzenlosem Feld
(*Suspended Over the Limitless Field*) (2001-02)
JIA GUOPING

Jia Guoping (b. Lishi, Shanxi Province, 1963) began his music studies at the Shanxi-Jin Opera Academy in Taiyuan. After four years serving as chairman of the music department at the Culture House in Luliang, he studied composition at the Central Conservatory in Beijing, becoming an instructor in harmony and composition in 1991. A grant from the German Academic Exchange Commission (DAAD) brought him to Stuttgart for a four-year course with Helmut Lachenmann at the Hochschule. He also participated in the Darmstadt Summer Course. Since 1998, Jia has been professor of composition and analysis of new music at the Central Conservatory in Beijing. Strongly committed to cultural exchange between China and Germany, he has devoted vast amounts of energy to organizing concerts and scholarly events, initiating the annual Con Tempo Composition Competition in 2007 and the German Contemporary Music Festival in 2009. Many of his students have also gone to Germany for advanced study. In 2011, with the support of the Siemens Foundation and the International Ensemble Modern Academy, Jia founded the Ensemble ConTempo Beijing, the first Chinese ensemble for modern music in which Western and Eastern instruments are combined. His compositions, which are published by Sikorski (Hamburg), include chamber, orchestral, ballet, and film music, some of them using Chinese instruments, and he has received various awards in China and Germany.

Schweben über grenzenlosem Feld (Suspended Over the Limitless Field) was commissioned by the Musica Riservata concert series in Switzerland. Tonight, we present its Western Hemisphere premiere. The composer has provided the following note about his work:

The title refers to the sentence "enter the gate of eternity, to enjoy myself in the fields of infinity" in the article "Zai You" by Zhuangzi, an influential Taoist philosopher in ancient China. In my view, the title connotes the boundless creativity that is indeed a process of self-exploration through searching for all developmental possibilities based on the chosen and defined musical materials. The state described by Zhuangzi would be ideal for reaching the land of absolute freedom in mind. Relying on the characteristics of traditional Chinese instrumental music, such as rich timbres, performing techniques, and poetic breathings, I manipulated multiple musical dimensions throughout the flute and piano, creating new sounds on the two Western instruments under traditional Chinese aesthetics, pursuing a sense of supreme freedom of musical expression.

*"In my view,
the title of
Suspended Over
the Limitless
Field connotes
the boundless
creativity that
is indeed a
process of
self-exploration
through
searching for all
developmental
possibilities
based on the
chosen and
defined musical
materials."
—Jia Guoping*

***You Asleep, I Awake* (2015)**

LIANG NAN

Liang Nan (b. Xi'an, 1988) teaches composition in the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, where he received bachelor's and master's degrees in composition in 2011 and 2014, respectively, as a student of Yin Mingwu. He then went to Germany for advanced studies with Chen Xiaoyong at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Hamburg and continued in the extremely concentrated solo class program under Oliver Schneller at the Hannover Hochschule für Musik, Theater, und Medien. Liang, who has written solo, chamber, symphonic, and electronic music, has been commissioned by many soloists, ensembles, and festivals including the ensemble xx. jahrhundert (Vienna), Shanghai Spring International Music Festival, Pozna (Poland) Musical Spring, and Akkordeonfest Hannover. His compositions have garnered seven awards domestically and internationally, including the top prizes at the fourth East Asian International Composition Competition in 2008 and the 2010 Shanghai Spring International Music Festival.

The music Liang Nan sent during my initial search for younger composers, included several impressive works in an up-to-date style and also the song "You Asleep, I Awake," written in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the defeat of Japan in World War II. I was so struck by the writing and the stylistic gap between this piece and his others that I decided to pair it with one of his current pieces.

***Song Feng* (2017)**

LIANG NAN

The composer has written the following about his piano trio *Song Feng*: "The word *song* is translated 'pines' and the expression *song feng* suggests a kind of lofty and unyielding character. This piece was inspired by an album of painting in the Chinese landscape style named *song feng*." Commissioned by Juilliard for Focus! 2018, the work receives its world premiere tonight.

***Song of the Tie-Dyeing* (2017)**

LIU YUHUI

Liu Yuhui (b. Qingdao, 1997) was admitted in 2015 to the Department of Composition at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, where he has studied with professors Guo Wenjing and Zhang Shuai. His work *Early Spring*, for violin, cello and piano, won second prize in the 2016 FirstNote Spring composition competition. He won the "excellent" prize for *The Rhythm of Lu Opera* in the 2017 composition competition held by the China-ASEAN Music Festival. Also in 2017, Liu's septet *Nan-Lang* was selected for the Beijing International Composition Workshop. *Song of the Tie-Dyeing* was commissioned by Juilliard for this festival and receives its world premiere tonight.

"The word 'song' is translated 'pines' and the expression 'song feng' suggests a kind of lofty and unyielding character."
—Liang Nan

Liu writes:

Tie-dyeing (*Jiaoxie*) is a traditional handicraft that originated in ancient China and adopted diversified approaches to dye various fabrics. My work seeks to portray the serene tie-dyeing life of the Bai (a Chinese ethnic group) in three movements that use the craft of tie-dyeing as impulses. Each of the exquisite patterns on the tie-dyed cloth embodies the Bai people's perception of nature and their yearning for a better life, acting almost as a colorful tune in their lives.

Semi-Cursive Script (2014)

PAN KAINE

**"Chaconne
Arirang is
inspired by the
Korean folksong
'Arirang,' which
is probably the
best-known and
most-beloved
tune among
Korean
communities
worldwide,
including
the Korean
minority living in
northeast China."
—Zhou Juan**

Pan Kaine (b. Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, 1985) received his PhD from the Shanghai Conservatory. His works include chamber, orchestral, choral, and electronic pieces, which have been performed in Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Wuhan, and Germany. His awards include the creativity prize of the first Voice of China Composition Competition for his solo violin piece *The Voice of the Field* and second prize at the 2014 CCTV China Dream piano composition competition for *The Vast Tumo Plateau*. His music has been performed by the Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra and Hangzhou Philharmonic Orchestra.

Semi-Cursive Script was written in 2014 and receives its world premiere tonight. Pan Kaine writes:

Semi-cursive script is a cursive style of Chinese characters that mixes formal script and cursive script. Inspired by semi-cursive script's stroke and lines, I attempted to create a new, unique tone. In this piece, a branch-like feeling that gradually extends is greatly emphasized as I pursue the variation and beauty of calligraphy's strokes and lines. As in semi-cursive script, I wanted the tension in the tone to be as ethereal as clouds and as powerful as mountains.

Chaconne Arirang (2013)

ZHOU JUAN

Zhou Juan (b. 1981) grew up in Karamay, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of China, graduated from the Central Conservatory of Music with a BA and an MA in music composition, and received her DMA from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Returning to China, she joined the faculty of the composition department of the Central Conservatory in 2010 and is currently an associate professor of music composition and theory. Zhou has received commissions from China's National Centre for the Performing Arts, the Korean Traditional Arts Foundation, Beijing People's Art Theatre, Chongqing Peking Opera House, Chengdu Peking Opera Research Center, Alarm Will Sound, the Adorno Ensemble, Nieuw Ensemble, Kansas City Chorale, Kansas City Electronic Music and Arts Alliance, Mizzou New Music Summer Festival, New Dramatists

Composer-Librettist Studio, Virginia Arts Festival John Duffy Composers Institute, California Summer Music, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Arts, Fu Chengxian Commemorate Foundation, and the Edgar Snow Foundation. Kansas City Radio KKFI and Karamay Radio have also featured her music. Major works include pieces for Chinese orchestra, Western orchestra, symphonic band, Uygur soloists and chamber orchestra, music-theater, chorus, jazz combo, and Western chamber ensemble, as well as an opera, theater production, and incidental music for Beijing opera.

Chaconne Arirang receives its Western Hemisphere premiere tonight. Zhou Juan writes:

This piece is inspired by the Korean folksong “Arirang,” which is probably the best-known and most-beloved tune among Korean communities worldwide, including the Korean minority living in northeast China. The melody has gradually rooted in the Chinese culture. What fascinates me about it is its combination of triple meter and irregular accents, neither of which exist in Han Chinese folk music. In the West, however, triple meter is very ancient and extremely important, especially from the Baroque period on. So I thought to construct this Chaconne based on “Arirang,” but very loosely. The harmonic structure, rhythmic pattern, and segments of the tune served as a basis for six variations—some quite obvious, some quite vague. The temperament of this piece is intended to be meditative, bittersweet, graceful, and exquisite, a taste of warm coolness, just as Baroque music is for me. The gentle sigh of the original tune is my reflection on living in noisy yet alluring Beijing, where I witness how traditional culture affects and is treated by modern Chinese.

Four Poems From the Tang Dynasty, composed during Yang’s study in Germany, sets German translations of poems by the 8th-century writers Meng Haoran, Bai Juyi, Li Jiao, and Li Bai.

***Four Poems From the Tang Dynasty* (1980-81)**
YANG LIQING

Yang Liqing (b. Shenyang, Sichuan, 1942; d. Shanghai, 2013) was a composer, professor, and former president of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music; director of the board of the China Musicians Association; vice-chairman of the Musicians Association Shanghai; honorary fellow of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts; and adviser to the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music in Singapore. After graduation from the Shenyang Conservatory of Music, Yang entered the master’s program in composition at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, receiving his degree in 1980. After the Cultural Revolution ended, he became the first Chinese composer to be sent abroad officially for study, earning diplomas in composition and piano programs at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Hannover, Germany. Upon completion of those programs in 1983, Yang returned to China to begin teaching composition at the Shanghai Conservatory, becoming its president in 2000. Regarded as an expert in Western contemporary music, Yang made a unique contribution by disseminating that music and its techniques to Chinese composers. His scholarly publications include studies of Messiaen, the orchestra, and European neo-Romanticism.

Yang Liqing's many compositions for Western and Chinese orchestra, ensembles, and film have been performed widely in China, Germany, England, France, Italy, Switzerland, Norway, the U.S., Mexico, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. He gave lectures in more than 20 universities and music colleges in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Australia, and the U.S. and received several grants from foundations in Germany and the U.S.. In 1992, Yang was awarded the title in Middle Age Music Specialist With Outstanding Contribution issued by the Chinese government.

Four Poems From the Tang Dynasty, composed during Yang's study in Germany, is performed in four movements: Erwartung (Anticipation), Kühler Sommertag (Cool Summer Day), Leuchtkäfer (Firefly), and Abschied (Farewell), and sets German translations of poems by the 8th-century writers Meng Haoran, Bai Juyi, Li Jiao, and Li Bai. There is no information about performances, and the name of the translator is unknown. Yang clearly was an excellent student of German music and also attuned to mixing disparate elements, including playing directly on the piano strings, unpitched percussion, a free expansion of traditional harmony, the use of mallet instruments to suggest Chinese percussion, and even asking the instrumentalists to utter short phrases in Chinese. Tonight's performance is presumed to be the first in the Western Hemisphere.

Program III

Focus! 2018

China Today: A Festival of Chinese Composition

Tuesday, January 23, 2018

Peter Jay Sharp Theater

Preconcert Roundtable, 6:30pm

With Chen Yao (Beijing), Qin Wenchen (Beijing), Wang A-Mao (Guangzhou),
Zeng Yan (Shanghai), and Julia Glenn (Juilliard)

Moderated by Joel Sachs

Concert, 7:30pm

EHESUMA
[SONG GE]
(b. 1974)

Yemo's Vertical Pipe (2001)
Noemi Sallai, Clarinet
Western Hemisphere premiere

HE XUNTIAN
(b. 1952)

Whirling Papaver (2014)
Duanduan Hao, Piano
Western Hemisphere premiere

ZHAO XI
(b. 1973)

The Soundscape That I Saw and You Heard (2007)
What I Saw
What He/She Heard
Stella Chen, Violin
Western Hemisphere premiere

LI SHAOSHENG
(b. 1988)

The Streaming World (2017)
The Colorful World
Sensations
Sankhāra
Desire
In Silence
Shen Liu, Clarinet
Tianyang Gao, Violin
Liao Shangwen, Cello
Shuizhi Wang, Piano
World premiere; composed for Focus! 2018

Intermission

WANG DELONG
(b. 1994)

L'Uccisione de Cesare (2017)
Andi Zhang, Violin
Yu-Yu Liu, Cello
Jie Fang, Piano

(Program continues)

QIN WENCHEN
(b. 1966)

The Sun Shadow VIII (2009)
Viola Chan, Piccolo
Mitchell Kuhn, Oboe
Ning Zhang, Clarinet
Evan Saddler, Percussion
Jane Kim, Conductor
Western Hemisphere premiere

DAI BO
(b. 1988)

Differences and Repetition (2017)
Lento. Andantino
Largo
Andante Agitato. Presto
Shen Liu, Clarinet
Connor Kim, Cello
Chuang-Chuang Fang, Piano
*World premiere; commissioned by The Juilliard School
for Focus! 2018*

Performance time: approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes, including one intermission

Composer's names are given in Chinese style: surname, given name.

All student performers' names are given, at their request, in the Western style.

Notes on Program III

By Joel Sachs

Yemo's Vertical Pipe (2001)

EHESUMA [SONG GE]

Ehesuma (b. Changchun, Jilin Province, 1974), whose Chinese name is Song Ge, received her master's degree from the Shanghai Conservatory. She is a composer, a player of he-drum (a heptagonal drum), auditory designer, and a researcher into new ideas and musical language. An expert improviser, she has performed with the Israel Symphony Orchestra and Shanghai ELA Ensemble. She also has performed and lectured at the Shanghai International Art Festival in 2015 and during the 2014-15 season of the Oriental Art Centre and at the Hannover Conservatory and Hamburg Music and Theater Academy. Her music includes many large-scale works—symphonies, concertos for violin and clarinet, a piece for 36-part chorus, and the clarinet solo heard tonight.

In 2008, Ehesuma founded AMRTA, which unites avant-garde musicians playing unique styles and its serial project, AMRTA Time. (Amrta is a Sanskrit term for non-death or immortality.) She says that AMRTA aims at a new music genre through original music scenes of various themes. To date, AMRTA has created a series of works and given many unusual performances. Its major project, AMRTA Time, comprises Series I, *Amrta* (2009); Series II, *The Scene of Circle* (2010); Series III, *Amrta Song* (2011); Series IV, *Dance in Meditation* (2012); Series V, *Amrta on Water* (2013); the Music Scene *Winter Rainbow* (2016); and *Walking Breath* (2017).

Ehesuma's international awards include first prize at the San Marino International Symphony Composition Competition. Her works have been premiered by the Stuttgart Radio Choir (Germany), the San Marino State Symphony Orchestra, the New Ensemble (Holland), and other renowned European and Asian orchestras, and performed at major international festivals such as the ISCM World Music Days, Asia New Music Festival (Japan), Shanghai Spring International Music Festival, Shanghai International Art Festival, Shanghai World Expo, Shanghai World Music Week, and others. She also has produced three CDs, music for the film *Forever Shanghai* for the Shanghai Pavilion at the Shanghai World Expo. For the 2015–16 season, she was composer and art planner for the Shanghai Project of the Shanghai Chinese Orchestra and Ehesuma Music Scene *Winter Rainbow*. *Yemo's Vertical Pipe* is named for Ye Hemo, the clarinetist who premiered it.

He Xuntian has received 15 international composition awards and 13 national composition awards.

Whirling Papaver (2014)

HE XUNTIAN

He Xuntian (b. Suining, Sichuan, 1952) taught himself music theory from the age of 8 and gradually began to compose. Eventually, he enrolled in the composition program of the Sichuan Conservatory, studying with Gao Weijie and graduating in 1982. He had already established the first of his many theories of composing, the Three Periods Theory and Theory of Musical Dimension; then, in 1982, he developed RD Composition (Renyilv duiyingfa Composition), which has been called the first compositional

method of contemporary China; this gradually led to the “Five Nons” (non-Western, non-Eastern, non-academic, non-folk, and non-non).

In 1995 came the release of the album *Sister Drum*, which featured Dadawa, the internationally celebrated Hunanese singer with whom he has worked frequently. *Sister Drum* made He the first Chinese composer to have a worldwide record release. In conjunction with other albums, it soon sold several million copies.

Additional theories and philosophies too numerous to list have followed. Meanwhile, in 1998 He became director of the composition and conducting department at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. He has received 15 international composition awards and 13 national composition awards, including first prize at the third All-China Music Competition. His works have been recorded and published by Warner Music Group and Schott and performed by the BBC Scottish Symphony and the Israel Symphony Orchestra, among others. His extensive study of Tibetan music has heavily influenced his compositions. One of his best-known works is *Tianlai* for seven performers and over 30 instruments designed by the composer. He won the Gold Tripod Award in Taiwan (1995) and is also a poet. His composition *Whirling Papaver* includes a setting of his poem “Flown Away,” a condensed English translation of which follows:

The Soundscape That I Saw and You Heard strives to build a spatial unity formed of two independent spaces, indicated by the work’s two movements.

Pick strawberries / in the grove / strawberries picked / bamboo basket
/ flown away
found the bamboo / found the basket / flown away / strawberries
Saw my lover off / in the grove / lover gone / my soul / flown away
Found my spirit / found my soul / flown away / my lover

***The Soundscape That I Saw and You Heard* (2007)**
ZHAO XI

Zhao Xi (b. Chaling County, Hunan, 1973) is the head of the composition department of the Wuhan Conservatory of Music. After earning a BM in composition and piano there, he completed his studies with K. E. Volkov at Moscow’s Gnessin Academy of Music. His compositions, which include numerous piano, chamber, and orchestral pieces, have received awards and performances in festivals and concerts in China, France, Germany, Ireland, Korea, Macau, Romania, Russia, Taiwan, and the U.S..

In *The Soundscape That I Saw and You Heard*, the composer strives to build a spatial unity formed of two independent spaces, indicated by the work’s two movements: “What I Saw” and “What He/She Heard.” By combining the different information seen or heard by different people into one scene, Zhao wanted to bring back the whole and real feelings and memories of sounds (including folk music and natural sounds) that he experienced when he traveled in the southwest of China.

***The Streaming World* (2017)**

LI SHAOSHENG

Li Shaosheng (b. Beijing, 1988) was the first Central Conservatory student to be admitted to the composition department at Juilliard, where he studied with Robert Beaser, receiving his master's in 2016. While he was here, he founded and was the first president of the Chinese Students and Scholars Association. In 2017 he began his DMA studies at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance as a student of Zhou Long. Along with his busy schedule as a doctoral student, he remains active in both countries as executive director of Shenzhen Belt and Road International Music Festival and the soon-to-open Guangzhou International Music Festival. Currently project director of the Beijing Modern Music Festival, Li will become its executive director in 2019. Once his studies are completed, he will return full-time to China. Li's three symphonic works have been commissioned and played by orchestras including the China National Symphony Orchestra and the Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra. Other musical activities include performances at Carnegie Hall's Ancient Paths, Modern Voices Festival of Chinese Culture, the Australia-China Music Festival, the Dark Days Music Festival, the Thailand International Composition Music Festival, and ISCM World Music Days. Li has also taken part in short-term composition programs at the Arnold Schönberg Center in Vienna and worked with Pierre Boulez.

The Streaming World, composed for this concert, receives its world premiere tonight. Li writes that it reveals the splendor of Buddhist thought in five movements, which evoke:

Buddhism's five psychic realities (*Skandhas*) of self, all of which are elusive and temporary, and will eventually return to the emptiness. This clarinet quartet was composed in accordance with meditation that focuses on the relation among body, language, and mind. It intends to bring forth the theme comprehensively with deep philosophical thinking, poetic images, the characteristic tone of instruments, and diverse techniques. The first four moments feature four different instruments. In the fifth movement, all of the realities flow back to *Sunyata*, the emptiness, just as the stars return to their place in the cosmos, all the streams go back to their origin in ocean, and all the sound and noise in the world unite in the simplicity of hymning.

L' Uccisione di Cesare (2017)

WANG DELONG

Wang Delong (b. Beijing, 1994) entered the Middle School of the Central Conservatory of Music at age 12. Having received his BM from the New England Conservatory, he is currently in the second year of Juilliard's MM program, studying with Robert Beaser. Upon completion of his higher education, he will return to China. He is a winner of numerous competitions, and his compositions have been performed in more than 20 cities globally. Not confined to concert music, Wang is also enthusiastic

"The Streaming World was composed in accordance with a Buddhist way of meditation that focuses on the relation among body, language, and mind."

about composing for multimedia, where he finds he can “create his own voice and explore diverse musical languages.” Since 2013 he has had commissions for several major film scoring projects. A recipient of the New England Conservatory’s Merit Award and Juilliard’s Carter Wright Scholarship, he was also granted the sponsorship of the Chinese Performing Arts Association. Wang is president of Juilliard’s Chinese Students and Scholars Association.

L’Uccisione di Cesare was premiered at Juilliard last spring. Wang Delong writes:

In March 2017 I traveled to two of the most renowned cities in southern Italy, Naples, and Rome. When I was visiting the Museo di Capodimonte in Naples, I stood before a thrilling painting by Vincenzo Camuccini called *L’uccisione di Cesare* (*The Assassination of Caesar*) and was mesmerized. At first glance I was struck by its enormous size, extreme color contrast, and vividness. I immediately decided to compose a piece based on this sensational creation. The assassination of Caesar was one of the most significant and well-known historical events in Western history, and this breathtaking story unfolds circularly in my music. My piece divides into five sections, which build an arch form: Caesar’s Soul, Conspiracy and Assassination, The Glorious Life, Intrigue and Murder, and Caesar’s Soul.

***"The name
Sun Shadow is
inspired by a
custom of the
herdsmen in
Inner Mongolia:
they can tell time
by the length of
the shadow of
the object in the
sunlight."
—Qin Wenchen***

***The Sun Shadow VIII* (2009)
QIN WENCHEN**

Qin Wenchen (b. Erdos, Inner Mongolia, 1966) began to learn local folk music as a child. At 21 he was admitted to the Composition Department of the Shanghai Conservatory to study with Zhu Jian-er and Shuya Xu. In 1992, Qin became an instructor of harmony and composition at the Central Conservatory of Music. With a scholarship from the German Academic Exchange Commission (DAAD), he studied with Nicholas A. Huber in Essen, Germany, from 1998 to 2001. Qin is now a professor of composition at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing and a distinguished professor at the China Conservatory of Music. He has been commissioned to write works for the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Warsaw Autumn, Bavarian Radio, Shanghai Spring International Music Festival, Ensemble Intercontemporain, Ensemble Recherche, Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo City Symphony Orchestra, St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Nieuw Ensemble Holland, Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, Contemporary Music Ensemble Korea, Polish Sinfonia Varsovia, and many of China’s top ensembles. Qin has won awards for seven of his works at international composition competitions in Germany, the U.S., Japan, and Taiwan. His music is published by Sikorski, Hamburg.

The Sun Shadow VIII is the last in a series of compositions that began 22 years earlier with *The Sun Shadow I* for piano and proceeded through various combinations of Western and sometimes Chinese instruments.

No. VIII was composed for the Freiburg Ensemble Recherche who premiered it in Graz, Austria, in 2009.

In *The Sun Shadow VIII* the composer reminisces about his childhood, which was spent on the vast Erdos Grassland of Inner Mongolia, where, he says, "The natural and cultural environments embedded in my memory profoundly. The glaring sunshine, the sky full of stars, the clouds on the horizon, the sudden storms, and the Lama trumpet calls lingering in the temples ... all these pastoral scenes are indelible yearnings in my mind. The name *Sun Shadow* is inspired by a custom invented by the herdsmen in Inner Mongolia: they can perceive time by the length of the shadow of the object in the sunlight."

***Differences and Repetition* (2017)**

DAI BO

Dai Bo (b. Changchun, Jilin Province, 1988), received his undergraduate and graduate degrees at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, where he is currently in the PhD program. His teacher throughout has been Ye Xiaogang. Despite having suffered from congenital glaucoma since the age of 5 months and the complete loss of vision a year later, he has created a considerable portfolio and performs extensively as a pianist and harpsichordist. His *Invisible Mountains*, for orchestra, won second prize in the Ludwig van Beethoven Association's 2014 International Competition. *Time-Space Continuum*, for harpsichord and ensemble, was selected for presentation at the huge annual meeting of the Association of Performing Arts Presenters in New York in January 2017. The concert took place at the Asia Society; the performers were members and alumni of the New Juilliard Ensemble, with Dai Bo as the harpsichord soloist and Joel Sachs conducting. *Differences and Repetition*, which receives its world premiere tonight, is subtitled "To celebrate the 50th anniversary of a book's publication and accidents over that year." The composer writes:

In the view of Gilles Deleuze, one of the most outstanding contemporary French philosophers, repetition is a strategy to liberate the internal power of life from the subordination of the external concept, while at the same time, to allow differences to overflow from the determinations of homogenesis (the method of reproduction in which each generation resembles the previous one biologically). It reveals the strength of life and the secret of eternal return. However, external differences can also impact on the internal repetition. This work mirrors deconstruction. On one hand, it tries to create multiple variations through a piece of minor "motivational" material; on the other hand, it connects musical terms from different civilizations and periods and produces a stream out of the differences and repetition. Under tremendous impacts, eternal return can be realized.

"In the view of French philosopher Gilles Deleuze, repetition is a strategy to liberate the internal power of life from the subordination of the external concept, while at the same time, to allow differences to overflow from the determinations of homogenesis."
—Dai Bo

Program IV

Focus! 2018

China Today: A Festival of Chinese Composition

Wednesday, January 24, 2018, 7:30pm

Peter Jay Sharp Theater

SHANG PEILEI

(b. 1990)

Monologue (2017)

Giorgio Consolati, Flute

*World premiere; commissioned by The Juilliard School
for Focus! 2018*

GAO PING

(b. 1970)

Legend (2014)

Joseph Lavarias, Bassoon

Qilin Sun, Piano

Western Hemisphere premiere

MAO ZHU

(b. 1981)

The Island (2017)

In four movements

Sooyeon Kim and **Colin Laursen**, Violins

Chloé Thominet, Viola

Laura Andrade, Cello

*World premiere; commissioned by The Juilliard School
for Focus! 2018*

Intermission

[YU] BAOYU

(b. 1966)

Lost in the Moon, Op. 6 (2003)

Meng Jia Jasmine Lin, Violin

Emily Duncan, Ocarina

Western Hemisphere Premiere

WANG A-MAO

(b. 1986)

The Colloquy of Strings and Air (2017)

Emily Duncan, Flute

Yilan Zhao, Piano

*World premiere; commissioned by The Juilliard School
for Focus! 2018*

CHEN QIANGBIN

(b. 1964)

Recital for Qiuqi (1995)

Grace Takeda, Viola

Jonathan Mamora, Piano

Western Hemisphere premiere

LUO ZHONGRONG
(b. 1924)

Sonata for French Horn and Piano (1987)

Moderato

Allegro vivo

Adagio

Allegro energico

Harry Chin-pong Chiu, French Horn

Chloe Chuyue Zhang, Piano

World premiere

Performance time: approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes, including one intermission

Composer's names are given in Chinese style: surname, given name.

All student performers' names are given, at their request, in the Western style.

Monologue (2017)

SHANG PEILEI

Shang Peilei (b. Harbin, Heilongjiang Province, 1990) received her Master of Fine Arts in 2017 from the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. Currently, she is studying at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Hamburg. Her compositions have been performed at various festivals and as part of projects worldwide and have won many prizes, including first prize at the 2016 Harald Genzmer International Composition Competition in Munich and first prize in the 2014–15 China National Centre for the Performing Arts Young Composers Program. Her works have been published by Schott Music and Shanghai Music Publishing House.

Monologue was commissioned by Juilliard for the 2018 Focus! festival and receives its world premiere tonight. Shang writes: "When we place ourselves in a tranquil scene, still and soundless, as if we retreat from the turmoil of the world, it would be easy to follow the train of thoughts, let all kinds of thoughts float through the mind, and eventually create our own spiritual utopia."

*"The sound of the
bassoon stirred
my imagination,
making me think
of an old tree,
an ancient man,
the poignancy
of the passing
of time, and an
as-yet untold but
extraordinary
tale."*

—Gao Ping

Legend (2014)

GAO PING

Gao Ping (b. Chengdu, Sichuan Province, 1970) began his training as a pianist at the Sichuan Conservatory when China was changing from a collective to a market economy. He regards this transition and the influx of Western ideas to be an important influence on his music. His mother, a singer and teacher, instilled in him a fascination with vocal music, while his father, the composer Gao Weijie, brought him into the Society for Exploration of New Music when it was founded. Gao completed his musical training with a DMA from the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati and won the 2003 Auros Composition Prize (Boston) and a residency at the MacDowell Colony. An active pianist, he has performed worldwide, working with composers including George Crumb, Frederic Rzewski, and Jack Body (New Zealand), among others. Commissions have come from the Ensemble Berlin PianoPercussion, the Ensemble Pyramide (Switzerland), the Gaudeamus International Music Week in Amsterdam, and the Israel Contemporary Players. He premiered *Si Bu Xiang (The Four Not-Alike)*, his composition for piano and Chinese ensemble, at the St. Petersburg Philharmonie. His music has been performed at festivals in Japan, Beijing, Macau, and the U.S. (Aspen). He has been especially active in New Zealand, where he taught at the University of Canterbury University in Christchurch before returning to China to become a professor of composition at the Conservatory of Music at Capital Normal University as well as a guest professor at the China Conservatory of Music in Beijing. In his recent works, he often treats themes from Chinese culture, sometimes in combination using Chinese instruments. Gao Ping has two albums on the Naxos label.

Legend (2014) was commissioned by Jack Richards and written for Long Nguyen, a Sydney-based bassoonist. Gao Ping says: "I have neither had much contact with nor paid much attention to the bassoon. Yet, after some thought, I found that some of my deepest musical memories are intrinsically connected to it. This work is dark and expansive, with several rises and falls, making it strongly narrative in structure. Therefore, I gave it the title *Legend*. Why did I write such a piece for bassoon? Well, the look and the sound of the instrument stirred my imagination, making me think of an old tree, an ancient man, the poignancy of the passing of time, and an as-yet untold but extraordinary tale. Indeed, that is where the ideas for this piece began."

The Island (2017)

MAO ZHU

Mao Zhu (b. Chengdu, 1981), an emerging young composer from Sichuan Province, has been working in the composition department of the Sichuan Conservatory of Music since 2006, when she received her master's degree in composition. As a visiting scholar at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance in 2015–16, she studied with Chen Yi and Zhou Long. Mao is now an associate professor of composition at the Sichuan Conservatory. Her music includes solo, chamber, orchestral, choral, and improvisational compositions, as well as experimental sound art.

The Island was commissioned by Juilliard for this festival and receives its world premiere tonight. Mao Zhu comments:

This string quartet was inspired by the 17th-century Englishman John Donne's famous phrase 'No man is an island,' in which he grasped the relationship between the whole of humanity and the individual; individual lives, he felt, link all living beings on the planet in one way or another. His philosophy made me think of heterophony (a type of music in which individual parts seem to exist with no interrelationship). This kind of musical texture exists widely in Chinese folk music. Furthermore, *The Island* suggested a way of fancy and fabrication for my music, allowing me to describe a kind of life on an isolated island, such as the childhood game scene in the second movement, and the lullaby in the fourth movement.

The Island was inspired by the 17th-century Englishman John Donne's phrase "No man is an island".

Lost in the Moon, Op. 6 (2003)

[Yu] BAOYU

[Yu] Baoyu (b. Irsch, Inner Mongolia, 1966) is a composer, playwright, and independent music critic. His full name is Yu Baoyu, but, as he explains: "Baoyu is a well-known writer of Chinese traditional fiction, so whenever I tell another person I am Yu Baoyu, most of them forget my Yu immediately, just call me Baoyu. ... I have no alternative but to use one name." Currently composer in residence with the Asian International

Philharmonic Orchestra, he has been composer of the China People's Liberation Army Second Artillery Corps and visiting professor at the School of Film and Television Art of the Communication University of China. He founded and was artistic director of the YuYiZuoFang Audio-Visual Art Development Base in Beijing.

Baoyu began learning music, painting, and boxing at a young age and has studied composition with Cao Jiayun at the Shenyang Conservatory, with Luo Zhongrong privately, and with Guo Wenjing at the Central Conservatory, from which he earned his doctorate. His compositions include works for Western, Chinese, and Mongolian instruments and scores for dance and film. His writings include scholarly studies, music criticism, and scripts for operas and a musical. He is a member of the Chinese Musicians Association, the Chinese Musicians Association Music Criticism Society, the Beijing Musicians Association, the Chinese Theatre Literature Association, and the Council of Music Work Committee of the China Radio and Television Association.

The title to Baoyu's Lost in the Moon refers to a girlfriend named Moon, whom the composer says he loved very much.

Lost in the Moon is scored for violin and xun, a quasi-spherical flute originally made of clay or bone and, more recently, of clay or ceramic. One of China's oldest instruments, it may date back as far as 7,000 years. With the composer's permission, we hear it tonight played on the ocarina, a close relative in sound and construction. The piece has been performed previously in China and Poland. Although it has a second movement, Baoyu says he is not yet satisfied with it. The title refers to a girlfriend named Moon, whom the composer says he loved very much in his college years.

***The Colloquy of Strings and Air* (2017)** WANG A-MAO

Wang A-Mao (b. Beijing, 1986) received her BA in composition from the Upper School of Beijing's Central Conservatory of Music as a student of Tang Jianping, and her MM and DMA at the University of Missouri-Kansas City with Chen Yi, Zhou Long, James Mobberley, and Paul Rudy. Other teachers included Steven Stucky, George Tsontakis, John Corigliano, Stephen Hartke, Bright Sheng, and Joel Hoffman in various master classes and summer programs. Wang continues to perform her own music as a pianist.

While in the U.S., Wang received numerous honors, including being named as a finalist in the 2015 ASCAP Foundation Morton Gould Young Composer Awards. Her orchestral work *Characters in Theatre* was selected from more than 400 compositions for presentation in public readings by the American Composers Orchestra in its 23rd annual Underwood New Music Reading Sessions. Other pieces have been played at festivals in China and recorded. Wang A-Mao teaches at the XingHai Conservatory of Music in Guangzhou, China.

The Colloquy of Strings and Air, commissioned by Juilliard for this festival, receives its world premiere tonight. Wang A-Mao writes: "*Sizhu* (translated

literally as ‘silk and bamboo’) generally refers to music performed using Chinese chordophones (silk strings) and aerophones (bamboo tubes). Among those, the guqin (a seven-stringed, zither-like instrument) and xiao (vertical bamboo flute) are the two most-prominent instruments to represent the spirit of Chinese music and culture. Poets and scholars frequently used both for study and entertainment, as an important part of their intellectual and social life. Their musical aesthetics have been appreciated and handed down from one generation to another until today.”

***Recital for Qiuzi* (1995)**

CHEN QIANGBIN

Chen Qiangbin (b. Wuhan City, 1964) attended the Shanghai Conservatory, where his teachers were Deng Erjing, Yang Liqing, and Wang Qiang. Immediately after graduating, in 1987, he joined its faculty, teaching harmony, composition, electronic music, and, more recently, music production and design. The dean of the music engineering department, he holds the title Shu Guang Scholar. An authority on electronic music, Chen served as vice president of the Center for Electro-Acoustic Music; founded and served as artistic director of the Shanghai International Electronic Music Week; was a juror for the International Compendium Prix Ars Electronica in Linz, Austria, in 2008; and chaired the 2017 International Computer Music Conference, held annually at the Shanghai Conservatory. As a producer and artistic director, he has designed and directed concerts on themes such as Harmonization between Tradition and Modernity (2006), Feeling and Moving-New Vision E-concert (2007), Chinese Opera Meets Animation (2009), Lyric, Melody, Tune and Sing (2010), Orchestra Meets Animation (2010), and E-Sonic3—Hyper Sense Space (2015), a cross-media art exhibition. Major works include the string sextet *Hxak* (2002), which won first prize in the 2005 Chinese National Competition for Chamber Music; *Si* (2002) for pipa, zhong ruan, and zheng; *First Page* (2008) for erhu, zheng, and orchestra; and *Line 9* (20011) for dancer, harp, interactive electronic music, and video.

“Sizhu (translated literally as “silk and bamboo”) generally refers to music performed using Chinese chordophones (silk strings) and aerophones (bamboo tubes).”
—Wang A-Mao

Recital for Qiuzi was premiered at the Beijing Concert Hall in 1995 and subsequently released on disc. Tonight’s performance is its Western Hemisphere premiere. The composer says that it was not composed for a particular violist but was a response to a powerful experience while visiting the Qiuzi area of Xinjiang Province where he was deeply moved by the landscape, culture, folklore, and folk instruments of this hidden, ancient region. In *Recital for Qiuzi*, he sought to create an illusion of a timeless conversation between these elements and modern humanism, an echo through time.

***Sonata for French Horn and Piano* (1987)**

LUO ZHONGRONG

Luo Zhongrong (b. Santai County, Sichuan, 1924) started violin lessons in 1942 at the Sichuan Provincial Art Academy, transferring two years later to

the Shanghai Music Academy, where he also began to study composition under Tan Xiaolin, a former Hindemith student, and counterpoint with Ding Shande. Ultimately, he taught himself most of his skills in theory and compositional technique. In 1947 Luo produced his first work, a song "The Land Is Beautiful Beyond the Mountain," which soon became popular across China. That marked the beginning of his shift from violin to composition. Luo has been a resident composer at the Central Philharmonic Society since 1951. His first large-scale success came with his 1958 overture *Inauguration Ceremony of Ming Tombs Reservoir*. A year later, he completed his First Symphony. Luo taught harmony in 1949 at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. In 1985, he became a professor at the China Conservatory of Music in Beijing, lecturing there on composition and harmony. He also taught composition at the Central Conservatory. In 1985, a scholarship from the German Academic Exchange Commission allowed him to spend a year in West Berlin, where a concert of his works attracted attention.

"Sonata for French Horn and Piano is based on a folk song of the Chinese Qiang ethnic people, one of the oldest ethnic minorities living in the western Sichuan Province of China."

—Luo Zhongrong

While his works are mostly symphonic, Luo has composed four string quartets and a substantial number of other chamber works, solo piano music, and art songs. He says that, without exception, his works are characterized by a Chinese national style. While he has a profound knowledge of Chinese music, Luo has also made an extensive study of both classical and modern schools of Western compositional theory and technique, which he feels has contributed to the variety in the style and methods of his creative works. He has translated from English into Chinese Paul Hindemith's *Traditional Harmony* and *The Craft of Musical Composition*; Arnold Schoenberg's *Theory of Harmony*; George Perle's *Serial Composition and Atonality*; Allen Forte's *The Structure of Atonal Music*; and Charles Wuorinen's *Simple Composition*.

Of his Sonata for French Horn and Piano, Luo Zhongrong says: "It is based on a folk song of the Chinese Qiang ethnic people, one of the oldest ethnic minorities living in the western Sichuan Province of China. Thanks to Joel Sachs for making it possible for this music to have its world premiere in the U.S."

Program V

Focus! 2018

China Today: A Festival of Chinese Composition

Thursday, January 25, 2018, 7:30pm

Peter Jay Sharp Theater

SANG TONG
(1923– 2012)

Night Scenery (1947)
Max Tan, Violin; **Rieko Tsuchida**, Piano
Presumed Western Hemisphere premiere

JIN PING
(b. 1964)

Xipi: Themes From Peking Opera (1995)
Hui Sing Fan, Violin; **Jonathan Lien**, Cello;
Hechengzi Li, Piano
New York premiere

YAO CHEN
(b. 1976)

Cinq stades de l'existence (2015)
Childhood is a poem basking in the sunlight
Adolescence is the fleeting scent of summer
Youth is the countless roads and journeys
Middle age is a landscape painting
Old age is an immense tree
Madeline Olson, Harp
Western Hemisphere premiere

Intermission

GAO WEIJIE
(b. 1938)

Si Shu (Longing for Shu) (2017)
Chloe Hong, Cello; **Richard Fu Yu**, Piano
New York premiere

SONG YANG
(b. 1985)

Whale Fall (2017)
Mei Stone, Flute; **Madeline Olson**, Harp;
John McGuire, Double Bass
*World premiere; commissioned by The Juilliard School
for Focus! 2018*

JIA DAQUN
(b. 1955)

String Quartet No. 2, *The Landscape of Cloud* (2016)
Floating Cloud
Voice of the Mountain
Cloud and Stream
Ansonia Quartet
Sumire Hirotsuru and Byungchan Lee, Violin;
Meagan Turner, Viola; Isabel Kwon, Cello
World premiere

Performance time: approximately 1 hour and 35 minutes, including one intermission

Composer's names are given in Chinese style: surname, given name.

All student performers' names are given, at their request, in the Western style.

Night Scenery (1947)

SANG TONG

Sang Tong (b. Songjiang, Jiangsu, 1923; d. Shanghai, 2012) came of age during the last phase of the Chinese Civil War. In the 1940s, he was a Red Army officer and an activist in underground Communist Party circles. In Shanghai he became a music student of Wolfgang Fraenkel and Julius Schloss, two former students of Schoenberg and Berg, who were among the Jews rescued from Nazi Germany, largely with the assistance of the Sassoon family, who struggled to make Shanghai a place of refuge. Fraenkel and Schloss gave Sang a solid technique and abiding interest in the accomplishments of the Second Viennese School. His piano piece *From Far Away* (1947) and *Night Scenery* (1947 or 1948, per different accounts) for violin and piano were the first, and for several decades the only atonal works, and probably the first 12-tone piece, produced by a Chinese composer in the People's Republic, for the tide there subsequently turned decisively away from experimentation. Nevertheless, some touches of innovation remain. Sang's *Mongolian Folk Songs* (1953) are reminiscent of Bartók's piano pieces for children, while *Caprice* (1959) for piano displays a Prokofievian brutality.

*"Sang Tong's
Night Scenery
conveys the inner
sadness of a poet
by describing a
lake under the
moon and night
birds."*

—Chen Qiangbin

In 1955 Sang was fired from his faculty position at the Shanghai Conservatory because of his resistance to the intrusion of politics into musical life. Later, severe beatings by the Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution left Sang partly deaf, and by the 1980s, when artists finally could enjoy freedom of expression, he had lost his creative powers.

Sang Tong was elected president of the Shanghai Conservatory (1984–91) and became an influential writer on harmony and contemporary compositional theory. Among his honors and awards are the Golden Prizes, respectively, from the conservatory on the occasion of its 60th birthday and from the Conservatory Musicians Association (Life Honor Medal, 2003), as well as a prize for his outstanding contributions to education by the American Biography Academy. Sadly, very little of Sang's music seems to have survived. Presumably either he, his family, or his friends destroyed other compositions for his protection.

I am very grateful to composer Chen Qiangbin for sending this score. He wrote: "*Night Scenery* conveys the inner sadness of a poet by describing a lake under the moon and night birds. The first atonal music in China, it was premiered in 1948 by Zhang Guoling."

Xipi: Themes From Peking Opera (1995)

JIN PING

Jin Ping (b. Shenyang, Liaoning Province, 1964) is a professor and the chairman of the composition department at the China Conservatory of Music in Beijing. After receiving his bachelor's at the Central Conservatory of Music as a student of Ye Xiaogang and Du Mingxin, in 1990 he came to the U.S. to complete his education at Syracuse University and the

University of Cincinnati, where he received his doctorate; his teachers were Joel Hoffman and Samuel Adler. Prior to returning to China in 2008, Jin was a tenured professor and director of the theory and composition program at the State University of New York at New Paltz. He is on the board of the Society for New Music, of which he served as president from 1998 to 2002. Since 2008, Jin has been music director for Musicacoustica-Beijing, an international electronic music festival. He has been commissioned and performed by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, China National Centre for the Performing Arts Orchestra, Shanghai Philharmonic, EarPlay, Bang On A Can, the Newstead Trio, and Trio Clavino. His awards include first prize at the National Art Song Composition Contest in China and a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts for his sextet *Yangtze!*. His music for sheng and Chinese instrument ensemble won China's Golden Bell Prize in Composition.

Xipi: Themes From Peking Opera was commissioned by and dedicated to the Newstead Trio, which premiered it in Cincinnati in 1996. It has subsequently been played elsewhere in the U.S., China, and India. Tonight's performance is the New York premiere. The composer writes:

As the subtitle indicates, the musical material of the trio as well as the structure and the relationship among the three instruments relates to Peking opera. Generally speaking, the music of Peking opera is made of pre-existing melodies, which can be divided into two main categories: *xipi* and *erhuang*. The title of this trio, *Xipi*, serves only as a metaphor for the Peking opera and does not mean that the tunes were borrowed exclusively from the *xipi* category. Transformation and juxtaposition play a significant role in the music to create a sense of timing and tension. While each member of the trio is equal, the violin and cello manifest a special affinity, often playing heterophonically and separated from the piano. The linear, melodic, and narrative characteristics of the violin and the cello contrast with the dry, static, and percussive sound of the piano. Thus, the separation of the two string instruments and the piano mirrors the relationship of string and percussion instruments in the Peking opera orchestra.

"The five movements of Cinq stades de l'existence first represent the five stages of a human being, from newborn to old age. Second, they are my responses to and feelings about Debussy's music."

—Yao Chen

Cinq stades de l'existence (2015)

YAO CHEN

Yao Chen (b. Foshan, Shandong Province, 1976) studied composition at the Xinghai Conservatory of Music and the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, and received a PhD in composition from the University of Chicago. He is an associate professor in composition at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, having held professorships at the University of Chicago, the University of Illinois, Illinois State University, and the Soochow University School of Music. While devoting himself mainly to contemporary art music, he also writes for films and theater productions. "Cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary concepts permeate my creative inspiration and compositional output," he says, "presenting

my understanding of the value of new music in enlivening global cultures.”

In recent years, Yao’s music has garnered recognition through performances throughout Europe, Asia, and the U.S., by the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Orchestre National de Lorraine, Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of St. Luke’s, ProMusica Chamber Orchestra, the China Philharmonic, Pacifica String Quartet, Quatuor Diotima, Eighth Blackbird, the Tang Quartet, Civitas Ensemble (of the Chicago Symphony), and the Camerata Woodwind Quintet as well as by many soloists including performers of traditional Chinese music. Commissions have come from institutions and foundations throughout the U.S., China, and Europe.

Yao Chen’s *Cinq stades de l’existence* (2015) for solo harp was commissioned by Radio France for its *Alla Breve* program and was composed for Nicolas Tulliez, (BM Juilliard ‘93 *harp*), the principal harpist of the Radio France Philharmonic Orchestra, which gave the radio premiere in 2015. Tonight marks the Western Hemisphere premiere. Chen Yao writes:

The work consists of five movements bound by two ideas. First, the five movements represent the five stages of a human being, from newborn to old age. Second, they are my responses to and feelings about Debussy’s music. If you know Debussy’s music well, you can identify some of his important motifs in this piece. I used these motifs either as the starting point of an individual movement or as a quotation.

“Le bu si Shu,
a well-known
Chinese idiom
meaning
‘too happy to
remember Shu’
(the ancient
name for
Sichuan) turns
into the nostalgic
Longing for Shu.”
—Gao Weijie

Si Shu (Longing for Shu) (2017)
GAO WEIJIE

Gao Weijie (b. Shanghai, 1938), a 1968 graduate of the Sichuan Conservatory, later joined its faculty and became chairman of its composition department. Since 1989, he has been teaching composition and music analysis in the composition department of the China Conservatory of Music in Beijing.

Gao’s major compositions have received numerous prizes and premieres in China, England, Holland, and France. Deeply involved in musical life, he is president of the Exploratory Union for Musical Composition and has served on juries in China and New Zealand and held appointments as a lecturer at Kingston University (England), the University of Maryland, Cincinnati University, Butler University, the University of Colorado at Boulder, the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, Guanajuato University (Mexico), Canterbury University (New Zealand), and the Composition Workshop of the Taipei Municipal Chinese Classical Orchestra. Also a theorist, Gao has published numerous articles and monographs. He is the father of Gao Ping, whose music is also heard on this program.

Si Shu (Longing for Shu), Gao Weijie’s most recent piece, was composed for cellist Fang Yijia and pianist Li Xinyuan, who performed it in the U.S. in the Midwest; tonight is its New York premiere. Gao writes that when he read an article about the background of his early work for Chinese

orchestra, *Night Banquet of the Shu Palace*, it awoke in him long-past memories of the two colleagues with whom he collaborated for that composition, “the late Mr. Yu Shu and Mr. Zhu Zhou. For this reason, a motive from *Night Banquet of the Shu Palace* became the main idea of *Sì Shu. Le bu sì Shu*, a well-known Chinese idiom meaning ‘too happy to remember Shu’ (the ancient name for Sichuan) turns into the nostalgic *Longing for Shu*.”

***Whale Fall* (2017)**
SONG YANG

Song Yang (b. Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, 1985), a doctoral student of Jia Guoping at the Central Conservatory of Music, is simultaneously pursuing advanced study in German as a student of Johannes Schöllhorn at the Musikhochschule Freiburg and a PhD in systematic/cognitive musicology under Uwe Seifert at the University of Cologne. She was awarded a scholarship from the China Scholarship Council and a Fu Chengxian Memorial Scholarship. In 2015, she received an orchestral commission from the Young Artist Project of the China Art Foundation. The following year, her music was selected to be performed at the Darmstadt Summer Course for New Music. Her music-theater piece *Der Hungerkünstler* (“The Hunger Artist”) was commissioned for and premiered at the 2017 Shanghai International Art Festival. Other pieces have won prizes and performances in Germany, Singapore, and China.

Commissioned by Juilliard for this festival, *Whale Fall* receives its world premiere tonight. Song Yang writes:

When a whale dies in the ocean, its body falls into the thousand-meters-deep sea. Biologists gave this process a special name: whale fall. The dead whale’s body creates complex localized ecosystems that supply sustenance to deep-sea organisms for decades. It is a final gift of generosity left by the whale, as one islet, always surrounded by a beautiful harmonic sound.

“When a whale dies in the ocean, its body falls into the thousand-meters-deep sea. Biologists gave this process a special name: whale fall.”
—Song Yang

***String Quartet No. 2, The Landscape of Cloud* (2016)**
JIA DAQUN

Jia Daqun (b. Chongqing, 1955) received his BA and MA in music composition and theory at the Sichuan Conservatory of Music in Chengdu, where his primary composition teachers were Huang Wanpin and Gao Weijie. He became lecturer in composition at the Sichuan Conservatory in 1989, and in 1993, associate professor in composition, orchestration, and 20th-century music literature. He is now professor of composition and theory and supervisor of doctoral students at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, as well as a vice chairman of the theory council of the Chinese Musicians Association (CMA), administrative vice chairman of music analytics of the CMA, and a member of the Academic Council of the Institute of Musicology at the Central Conservatory of Music (CCOM).

Jia's *Flavor of Bashu*, for two violins, piano, and percussion (1995), was named the Chinese Classic Musical Composition of the 20th century by the Chinese government. His relationship with Juilliard began when the New Juilliard Ensemble gave the world premiere of his *Intonation* in 1996. Nine years later, as a grantee of the Asian Cultural Council and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, he returned to the U.S., composing for NJE a piece for Juilliard's centennial year. He remains an active writer whose contributions to music theory have been widely recognized and frequently honored.

As a youth, Jia began his artistic career as a painter, studying with Wang Xingyu, one of China's best-known artists, at the Sichuan Fine Arts Institution. He says that those studies led to a strong relationship between notions of structure, form, line, and color in the plastic arts and in his music. Many of his works utilize ideas and modes of expression from the Chinese traditional arts of calligraphy, poetry, and opera and use a mixture of Eastern and Western instruments. He feels that drawing upon ideas and expressive concepts from traditional Chinese calligraphy, poetry, and Chinese opera has given his music a richer Chinese flavor and a more diversified temperament. That sense of the visual informs *The Landscape of Cloud*, which receives its world premiere tonight.

The Landscape of Cloud, or the cloud with landscape, is a musical work full of the sounds of clouds and feelings of the landscape.

Jia Daqun has written that a cloud is an aerosol comprising flowing water vapor and dust, which surrounds and protects the tiny earth in the vast cosmic sky. It is dynamic and diversified, not only being reflected as splendid pictures known to humans, but also inspiring our boundless imaginations now and in the future. *The Landscape of Cloud*, or the cloud with landscape, is a musical work full of the sounds of clouds and feelings of the landscape, as well as the composer's own emotional response to the landscape of cloud." Using advanced organizational principles, Jia has sought to express his own feelings by creating an abstraction of nature".

Program VI

Focus! 2018

China Today: A Festival of Chinese Composition

Julliard Orchestra
Chen Lin, Conductor
Wei-Yang Andy Lin, Erhu

Friday, January 26, 2018, 7:30pm
Alice Tully Hall

CHEN QIGANG
(b. 1951)

Luan Tan (2010–15)

GUO WENJING
(b. 1956)

Concerto for Erhu and Orchestra, Op. 44,
“Wild Grass” (2006)

Wei-Yang Andy Lin, Erhu
Western Hemisphere premiere

Intermission

ZHU JIAN-ER
(1922–2017)

Symphony No. 5, Op. 32 (1991; rev. 2001)
In three movements

Harrison Honor, Dagu Drums
First performance outside China

Performance time: approximately 1 hour and 35 minutes, including one intermission

Composer's names are given in Chinese style: surname, given name.

Luan Tan (2010–15)

CHEN QIGANG

The son of an intellectual family in Shanghai, Chen Qigang (b. 1951) began his musical studies as a child, but as a teenager during the Cultural Revolution spent three years locked up in barracks undergoing an “ideological reeducation.” Nonetheless, his passion for music remained unshakable. Despite the social pressure and anti-cultural policy, he pursued his training in composition. In 1977, after the Cultural Revolution had ended and Beijing’s Central Conservatory had finally reopened, Chen was one of the 26 applicants—out of 2000—to be accepted into the inaugural composition class. After five years of studies with Luo Zhongrong, in 1983 he won a national selection process that allowed him to be the only composer to be sent abroad to pursue graduate studies. He became Olivier Messiaen’s last pupil, studying with him from 1984 to 1988. Those years in France allowed Chen to broaden his cultural scope and acquire new knowledge about 20th-century music. Since returning to China in 2007, he has spent most of his time at Gonggeng College, located on the southern part of Zhejiang Province in the isolated mountains of Suichang. He also spends part of each year in France. In China he has devoted himself to the cultivation of the younger generation of composers. With the support of China’s National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) as well as other organizations around the world, his dedication has led to the founding of NCPA’s Young Composer Program in 2011. In 2015, he launched a composition workshop at Gonggeng College as a platform for dialogues with and among young musicians.

Chen Qigang became Olivier Messiaen’s last pupil, studying with him from 1984 to 1988.

Chen Qigang’s compositions have won many awards and prizes. In 2001, his orchestral work *Wu Xing* was selected from over 1,000 entries as one of the five finalists of Masterprize, a competition partly sponsored by the BBC. Two years later, EMI/Virgin Classics released an album devoted to his music. In 2005, Chen won the Grand Prix de la Musique Symphonique by SACEM—the French performing rights organization—in recognition of his career achievement and he was decorated with France’s Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 2013. He worked as music director of the Opening Ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Chen’s new violin concerto, *La Joie de la souffrance*, was premiered by Maxim Vengerov in Beijing in October. He is currently writing a piece for soprano, chorus, and orchestra that will be premiered in March. Next month the Philharmonie de Paris will present a portrait concert of his chamber and orchestra music. Though some theaters have wanted to commission an operatic work, Chen thus far has declined, not yet feeling prepared for such an undertaking. His music is published by Gérard Billaudot Editeur (Paris, from 1985 to 2007) and Boosey and Hawkes (London, starting in 2008). (qigangchen.com)

Chen Qigang writes:

Luan Tan was a musical style in Chinese drama that originated in the 1600s, around the time of the dynastic succession from the Ming to the Qing. In comparison with the established traditions of Kun opera (Kunqu) at the time, the music in the Luan Tan

style was remarkably bolder and blunter and tended to be more virtuosic. Various musical traditions that are now well-known to the Chinese audience, such as Qin Qiang, Hebei Bangzi, Henan Bangzi, or even the earliest forms of the now-prominent Peking opera, could all be categorized under the Luan Tan style. If, for Chinese connoisseurs, Kunqu opera symbolizes elegance and refinement, then Luan Tan would stylistically be its opposite, very much rooted in folk traditions.

Because, somehow, my music has frequently been described as “melancholic,” “sentimental,” and “refined” over the years, I wanted to challenge myself this time to see if I might enjoy producing a departure from my usual musical territory. In this way, the process of composing *Luan Tan* was almost a battle with myself. Elements that usually appear in my works, such as long melismatic lines, attractive melodic themes, or imposing harmonies, are almost completely absent, replaced by ceaseless rhythmic patterns, leaps of tiny motifs, and repetitions producing gradually accumulating force.

Since the stylistic inspiration arose from the traditional form of Luan Tan, timbres and characters from traditional Chinese musical drama make an inevitable appearance in the work, for instance, in the shape of the important role played by the temple block, with the almost cacophonous counterpoint of the Chinese cymbals.

I started to work on the piece in 2010, but the composing process was interrupted numerous times by major events that have occurred in my personal life in the intervening years, including the passing of my son Yuli, after which I could not write any music for 12 months. The double bar was finally set on paper in January 2015, and I would hereby like to thank the work’s joint commissioners, the Hong Kong Philharmonic, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, for their patience and understanding.

“Luan Tan was a musical style in Chinese drama that originated in the 1600s, around the time of the dynastic succession from the Ming to the Qing.”

—Chen Qigang

Concerto for Erhu and Orchestra, Op. 44, “Wild Grass” (2006)

GUO WENJING

Guo Wenjing was born in 1956 in Chongqing, an ancient city in China’s mountainous Sichuan Province. In 1978 he was one of 100 students admitted out of 17,000 applicants to Beijing’s reopened Central Conservatory of Music. Unlike some colleagues from this acclaimed class (Tan Dun, Chen Yi, Zhou Long), Guo remained in China after graduation, except for a short stay in New York made possible by an Asian Cultural Council grant. Nevertheless, he has hardly been isolated: he quickly achieved an international reputation; while at home, he has been honored as one of China’s 100 outstanding artists. The former head of the composition department of the Central Conservatory, he

remains on its faculty. Guo maintains a busy schedule as composer and educator. His compositions, which include operas and symphonic and chamber works, have been featured at festivals in Amsterdam, Berlin, Glasgow, Paris, Edinburgh, New York, Aspen, London, Turin, Perth, Huddersfield, Hong Kong, and Warsaw, and at venues including the Frankfurt Opera, Berlin Konzerthaus, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and Lincoln Center. He has written for leading ensembles including the Nieuw Ensemble, Atlas Ensemble, Cincinnati Percussion Group, Kronos Quartet, Arditti String Quartet, Ensemble Modern, Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, Göteborg Symphony Orchestra, China Philharmonic Orchestra, Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra. Recent projects include his second ballet, *Dunhuang*, which had its premiere in September, and *The Peach Blossom Fan*, an hour-long work for traditional Chinese instruments. Guo has been commissioned to write a piano concerto for the Beijing Olympic Winter Games in 2022.

*The word **erhu** is composed of two Chinese characters: “Er” (“two”), referring to the instrument’s two strings; and “Hu,” which refers to the nomad tribes in northern China, where the instrument originated.*

It has long been Guo Wenjing's wish to write a concerto for the *erhu*, *zhudi* (bamboo flute), and *pipa* (a lute-like instrument), the three most important Chinese instruments. He explains that the word *erhu* is composed of two Chinese characters: “Er” (“two”), referring to the instrument's two strings; and “Hu,” which refers to the nomad tribes in northern China, where the instrument originated. The earliest written record of the *erhu* dates from the Song dynasty (960–1279 CE), and the instrument still has many relatives in the Middle East and Central Asia today, such as the *morin khuur* (Mongolian “horse fiddle”). The Concerto for *Erhu* was composed to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the death of Lu Xun (1881–1936). It receives its Western Hemisphere premiere tonight. The composer, who subtitled the concerto “Wild Grass,” writes:

Lu Xun, the most profound and acute human spirit in 20th-century China, was electrifying and dazzling, just like a sword high in the sky cutting through the murky part of Chinese souls. I hope he will never be forgotten by us.

Lu Xun was a man of scrawny physique and aloof in personality. His writing speaks in a style sharp with profundity, simple with power. I admire such an image, temperament, and stance. When composing this concerto, I therefore attempted to make my musical language simple in order to convey my thoughts and emotions up front.

Wild Grass was the title of a collection of Lu Xun's essays in which his sophisticated thinking and struggling soul are revealed. In this book he wrote, “once I turn into dust, you will see my smile!”

Symphony No. 5, Op. 32 (1991; rev. 2001)
ZHU JIAN-ER

Zhu Jian-er was born in Tianjin in 1922 and died in August of last year, just short of his 95th birthday, in Shanghai, where he had been brought up. Having taught himself music and having written art songs since the age of 18, he composed for an art troupe beginning in 1945, became conductor of a military band, and commenced writing film music in 1949. In 1955 Zhu enrolled in the Composition Department of the Moscow Conservatory, where he studied with Sergey Balasanian. Following graduation in 1960, he returned to China. In 1975—as the Cultural Revolution was coming to an end—he became permanent composer of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra and professor of composition at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. Zhu composed 10 symphonies—7 of them for large orchestra—12 miscellaneous orchestral pieces (overtures, symphonic poems, sinfoniettas and concertos), the symphony-cantata *Heroic Poems*, piano music, chamber music, ensembles for Chinese traditional instruments, and more. His Tenth Symphony was commissioned by the Fromm Music Foundation at Harvard University, and the sextet *Silk Road Reverie* was commissioned by Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Project, which premiered it at Tanglewood. Symphony No. 6, a remarkable piece for Chinese bamboo flute and string orchestra, was given its first performance outside China by the New Juilliard Ensemble. In recognition of his many achievements, the Shanghai Municipal Government awarded Zhu its prize for outstanding contributions to literature and the arts. During a visit to the U.S. in 1994, he presented lectures about his distinctive approach to composition to audiences at Juilliard.

When I asked about her father's later years, Zhu Jian-er's daughter Weisu Zhu Nugent wrote me: "After the year 2000, my dad composed some chamber music, but he mainly worked on his book, did a lot of proofreading, and revised many of his early works for publication. Around 2005 he stopped teaching but remained a guest professor at the Shanghai Conservatory. His book *Composing Memoir of Zhu Jian-er* was published a year and half ago, along with another book, entitled *The Music of Zhu Jian-er*. In his memoir, he wrote about how he composed each of his symphonies and how he wrote some of his orchestra works. He also wrote about his life." We are delighted to welcome Weisu Zhu Nugent and her family to tonight's concert.

Zhu's 10 symphonies employ ensembles ranging from large orchestra, chorus, and soloists to chamber orchestra, percussion ensemble, and even cello and percussion duo. The Symphony No. 5, Op. 32 (1991) was premiered by the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra conducted by Chen Xie-yang. It contains a major role for a player of dagu, a Chinese drum shaped like a bowl. The revised version of Symphony No. 5 dates from 2001; tonight marks its first performance outside China.

Zhu Jian-er wrote at length about this piece, largely about details of its structure [English translation by Julia Glenn]:

As soon as I completed Symphony No. 4, I set out to plan

Symphony No. 6, a remarkable piece for Chinese bamboo flute and string orchestra, was given its first performance outside China by the New Juilliard Ensemble.

Symphony No. 5. Because it was to be played on the same stage at the next Shanghai Spring Festival, I knew I needed to take a different approach. The new atmosphere brought by the Great Opening and Reform (ca. 1980) initially inspired me to put my faith in the “reborn fire phoenix” (i.e., being made stronger by suffering). Ultimately, however, I was compelled to place my vision and hope instead with the people. The inspiration for Symphony No. 5 thus springs from the people.

I drew inspiration from the song “The 99 Bends in the Yellow River,” sung by Yellow River boatmen, with its phrase “Can you see the 99 bends in the Yellow River?” The main notes, succinct, simple, and powerful, can be summarized as G-C-D-G. This is like the two shores of the Yellow River rising steeply, the tall and vigorous blades of thousands of mountain peaks boring holes and leaving their scars. Another characteristic is the repeated variation, which symbolizes the 1,000 turns and unending bends of the river. Is not the long river of the history of humanity this way? This song’s realism without flights of fancy, its toughness unscathed by 100 fractures, and the grand boldness of the mountains and river imbued me with hope, infected me, and brought me enlightenment.

Meet the Artists

Chen Lin

Chen Lin (b. Harbin, Heilongjiang Province, 1978) is one of China's leading female conductors. Originally trained as a pianist, at the age of 13 she won the grand prize in the young children's category in the Heilongjiang Youth Piano Competition. At 15 she was admitted to the junior high school of the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing and started studying composition. In 1996 she entered the Central Conservatory, where she is currently a member of the faculty, to study conducting under Yu Feng. Following her graduation with a master's degree in 2004, she was appointed assistant field service professor of ensembles and conducting of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and music director of the CCM Concert Orchestra. Three times a finalist in the Besançon International Conductors Competition, she has appeared at the Tanglewood Festival many times since 2000 at the recommendation of Seiji Ozawa. Chen was appointed fellowship conductor of the festival in 2002. She has been very active in Japan, where she has participated in the Ozawa Academy Opera Project as an associate conductor for productions of *Die Fledermaus*, *La bohème*, and *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. In 2006 she appeared at the Saito Kinen Festival in Japan conducting Opera for Young People and a children's concert. The following year, she won second prize at Poland's Fitelberg International Competition. Chen Lin has guest-conducted the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, Beijing Symphony Orchestra, China Youth Symphony Orchestra, Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra, Harbin Symphony Orchestra, Anhui Symphony Orchestra, Hebei Symphony Orchestra, Tanglewood Festival Orchestra, Silesian Philharmonic, and Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.



Wei-Yang Andy Lin

Wie-Yang Andy Lin was born in Taiwan and received his BM and MM from Juilliard. In addition to his accomplishments as a classical musician, he is also a recognized erhu player. He recently appeared at Alice Tully Hall playing an erhu concerto, *Newlywed's Departure*, with the Children's Orchestra Society Young Symphonic Ensemble. He has recorded film music for movies and short films, including *The Blood Brothers* and the award-winning short film *Daughters* (named best original score at the NYU Tisch Film Festival). He performed the erhu solo at the U.S. premiere of Peter Maxwell Davies's *Kommilitonen!* with the Juilliard Opera and in the world premiere of Jeeyoung Kim's *Engraft* for solo erhu and string orchestra with the Solisti Ensemble at Carnegie Hall. Lin premiered Winnie Lan-In Yang's *Fantasy for Erhu and Strings* with the New York Classical Players and has been invited by the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and the Grant Park Symphony Orchestra in Chicago to play solo erhu in *Iris dévoilée* by Chen Qi-Gang. Upcoming concerts include a viola/erhu recital at the Caramoor Center for the Music and the Arts. He is currently on the faculty of the Chinese Cultural Arts Institute in Harrisburg, Pa.



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Juilliard’s largest and most visible student performing ensemble, the Juilliard Orchestra is known for delivering polished and passionate performances of works spanning the repertoire. Comprising more than 350 students in the bachelor’s and master’s degree programs, the orchestra appears throughout the 2017–18 season in more than a dozen performances on the stages of Alice Tully Hall, Carnegie Hall, David Geffen Hall, and Juilliard’s Peter Jay Sharp Theater. The season opened with a collaboration between Juilliard and Finland’s Sibelius Academy members conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen with concerts in Alice Tully Hall, Helsinki, and Stockholm. The orchestra is a strong partner to Juilliard’s other divisions, appearing in opera and dance productions. Under the musical leadership of Alan Gilbert, the director of conducting and orchestral studies, the Juilliard Orchestra welcomes an impressive roster of world-renowned guest conductors this season including Thomas Adès, Joseph Colaneri, Edo de Waart, David Robertson, Speranza Scappucci, Gerard Schwarz, and tonight’s conductor Chen Lin, as well as faculty members Jeffrey Milarsky and Mr. Gilbert. The Juilliard Orchestra has toured across the U.S. and throughout Europe, South America, and Asia, where it was the first Western conservatory ensemble allowed to visit and perform following the opening of the People’s Republic of China in 1987, returning two decades later, in 2008. Other ensembles under the Juilliard Orchestra umbrella include the conductorless Juilliard Chamber Orchestra, the Juilliard Wind Orchestra, and the new-music groups AXIOM and New Juilliard Ensemble.

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