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Opening

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# CLASSICAL CONVERGENCE

## Mendelssohn TRIO

ORGAN RECITAL HALL  
UNIVERSITY CENTER  
FOR THE ARTS / CSU

7:30 PM /// 12.02.14

FORT COLLINS SYMPHONY PRESENTS

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7:30PM | LINCOLN CENTER

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# CLASSICAL CONVERGENCE

## Orchid ENSEMBLE

WITH CSU CONCERT CHOIR

ORGAN RECITAL HALL  
UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR THE ARTS / CSU  
7:30 PM /// 10.29.14



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## ORCHID ENSEMBLE



The Juno nominated and Independent Music Award winning Orchid Ensemble blends ancient musical instruments and traditions from China and beyond, creating a beautiful new sound that is both creative and distinct. The ensemble has embraced a variety of musical styles to its repertoire, ranging from the traditional and contemporary music of China, World Music, New Music to Creative Improvisation. The energetic yet endearing performance style of the ensemble consistently intrigues and delights its audiences, consistently receiving standing ovations. Acclaimed as 'One of the brightest blossoms on the world music scene' (Georgia Straight), the Orchid Ensemble has been tirelessly developing an innovative musical genre based on the cultural exchange between Western and Asian musicians.

The Orchid Ensemble regularly collaborates with musicians from a wide variety of world cultures and actively commissions new works by Canadian and US composers for its unique instrumentation. The ensemble has performed in concerts across North America, and at prominent World, Jazz and Folk Music festivals. Recent appearances include The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; the Smithsonian Institution's Freer Gallery; Canada Day Celebrations in Ottawa; Festival Miami, and the Vancouver International Jazz Festival.

*"Orchid Ensemble defines the very essence of Canadian music. It crisscrosses both time and space, spanning over 2000 years of cultural inspiration and influence".*

– Whole Note

*"The trio extends established forms with improvisational ideas, acute listening skills, a flair for understated drama, and a sharing of sonic tones unheard in this kind of ethnic fusion. They achieve a collective style that is beautiful, sensual, deep, and culturally rich without violating any traditional aesthetic".*

– All Music Guide

### Harvest Season

Ming Kao, arr. Lan Tung (1998)

This piece is a modern portrayal of farmers dancing and singing at a harvest celebration in rural China. In Lan Tung's arrangement, an additional percussion section has been added.

### El Ginat Egoz (Into the Walnut Garden)

Moshe Denburg (2007)

The words of the biblical book the Song of Songs have for thousands of years served as a wellspring for musical composition. The texts here were chosen for their very forthright exposition of love as a reflection and inspiration of the natural world. The music attempts to paint a picture of longing, of rapture and of passion expressed, and sometimes even misplaced. The overall material derives from a Middle Eastern context, especially that of the music of Israel.

*I went down into the walnut garden to see the fruits of the valley,  
and to see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded.  
Come my beloved let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.  
Let us get up early to the vineyards;  
let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear,  
and the pomegranates bud forth:  
there I will give you my loves.*

### Ghost Mind

Jin Zhang (2006)

Commissioned with the Canada Council for the Arts' support, was written for voices and the instrumentation of the erhu, zheng and percussion, the lyric of the work has four characters: meng (dream), xu (blur), piao (float), yi (suspect), representing different images of ghosts in Chinese tradition. Starting with the first character, each section adds a new layer with the next character.

We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts, which last year invested \$157 million to bring the arts to Canadians throughout the country.

Nous remercions le Conseil des arts du Canada de son soutien. L'an dernier, le Conseil a investi 157 millions de dollars pour mettre de l'art dans la vie des Canadiennes et des Canadiens de tout le pays.



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## ***In the Very Highest Place* Janet Danielson (2006), lyrics by Wu Li (1632-1718)**

Orchid Ensemble commission, with funding from the British Columbia Arts Council

*“Musical tones have their origins in the human mind, being that which ultimately connects man and the cosmos, just as a shadow derives the plane from a three-dimensional object or an echo answers responsively to an issued sound.”*  
- Shih-Chi (Records of the Grand Historian)

The text for this piece comes from Wu Li’s extended poem *Singing of the Source and Course of the Holy Church*, beautifully translated by Jonathan Chaves and used with his kind permission. Wu Li was one of the Six Orthodox Masters of early Ch’ing Dynasty painting, and an exceptionally skillful poet.

The progression of triads in the musical setting is meant to suggest the dynamic interchange of mutual adoration epitomized in the mystery of the Trinity. A pentatonic melody approximating the tones of the Mandarin text weaves its way in and out of the triadic structure.

*.In the very highest place, deep within a mansion  
Dwells a family perfectly united, loving and devoted.  
Beyond past, beyond present, the three Persons are one;  
Penetrating heaven, penetrating earth, the one family is three!*

## ***Bengalila* Prashant J. Michael, R. Raine-Reusch & Orchid Ensemble**

Orchid’s arrangement of this Bengali folk song is a blend of Indian folk and classical elements within a contemporary framework, and embodies the cultural blend symbolized by the Silk Road.

## **INTERMISSION**

## ***The Winged Horses of Heaven* Moshe Denburg (2001)**

Orchid Ensemble commission, with funding from the Canada Council for the Arts

In 138 BC, the emperor Wudi of the Han Dynasty sent his general Zhang Qian to contact a western tribe to solicit help to fight invaders from the north. After 13 years of arduous journeys, adventures and misadventures, Zhang Qian returned with news of a stronger and faster breed of horse to help in the wars. Thought to be of celestial origin, these now extinct horses were the compelling motivation behind the opening of a permanent route to the west of China and beyond. This piece is released on the Orchid Ensemble’s Juno-nominated CD *Road to Kashgar*.

## ***New Year’s Eve* Tian-hua Liu, arr. Lan Tung**

Tian-hua Liu is a renowned contemporary Chinese composer who made great contributions to erhu music in the 20th Century. This piece is one of his ten famous erhu compositions, originally written for solo erhu in 1928 while he celebrated Chinese New Year’s Eve.

## **THE MUSICIANS**



### **Lan Tung – *erhu & vocal***

Lan crosses the lines between classical, contemporary, folk, blues and various ethnic styles, such as Indian, Celtic and Middle Eastern, to expand the horizons of the erhu. Lan has performed with Huun Huur Tu (Tuva), Baka Beyond (UK), Khac Chi Ensemble (Vietnam) and Hossam Shaker (Egypt) and shared the stage with many Vancouver’s innovative improvisers, such as Ron Samworth and Coat Cooke. She is a member of Vancouver world music ensemble Tandava, and she has premiered numerous compositions by Canadian and US composers. Trained at Taiwan’s Chinese Cultural University, Lan went on to study with erhu virtuosos Jiebing Chen in San Francisco and Zhang Funming in Beijing, with Hindustani violinist Kala Ramnath in Bombay and Egyptian violinist Dr. Alfred Gamil in Cairo. The various influences are evident in Lan’s compositions and music arrangements. Lan started classical voice training since she was 12, and she continued at Capilano College and with Joseph Shore in Vancouver. A concert producer and arts administrator, Lan also serves as a board director of the Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra.

### **Geling Jiang – *zheng (Chinese zither)***

Geling Jiang is an award-winning multi-instrumentalist on sanxian (three-string fretless lute), zheng, pipa and ruan. After graduating from Wu Han Conservatory of Music, she joined the Chime Bell Ensemble of Hubei Province for 20 years. With the ensemble, she recorded numerous radio broadcasts, TV programs, and films and toured in the United States, Japan and Singapore. In 2004, Geling immigrated to Canada and started to perform with a number of Vancouver ensembles, including Orchid Ensemble, Red Chamber, and Cloud Bell Ensemble. With the Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra and BC Chinese Orchestra, she gives regular concerts as a core member and soloist. In the past few years, she has collaborated with musicians from different cultures and adapted techniques from other ethnic instruments on her own instruments. On Red Chamber’s second album, she performed her own composition for solo sanxian. Geling has toured across Canada, the United States, Netherlands, Philippines, Malaysia, and China, performing at music festivals, prestigious concert halls, and educational institutions.





**Jonathan Bernard - *marimba & percussion***

Jonathan combines his background in western percussion with a fascination for Asian traditions to create a unique sound palette incorporating a myriad of instruments, techniques and styles. Jonathan’s interests span genres from orchestral music to New Music, and World Music. Having premiered over seventy chamber works, Jonathan regularly performs with Turning Point Ensemble, Vancouver New Music, Fringe Percussion, Ensemble Symposium, Tandava, orchestras including the Vancouver, Victoria, CBC Radio Orchestras, and is principal percussionist with the Vancouver Island Symphony. In 2011, Jonathan performed as soloist in Tan Dun’s Water Concerto. Jonathan’s interest in World Music has led him to perform Chinese, Javanese, Balinese and Korean music and study traditional and contemporary Chinese percussion in Beijing, Arabic percussion in Cairo, Carnatic rhythm in Chennai, and Flamenco compass in Spain.with the support of the Canada Council for the Arts and British Columbia Arts Council. Jonathan has toured throughout North America, Europe, and Japan.

**THE INSTRUMENTS**

**Erhu** - Introduced to China in the Tang Dynasty, the erhu is a two-string stick fiddle that is played resting on the lap. The strings are tuned to a fifth, with the bow placed between them. There are a number of versions of the erhu that vary in the shape of the sound boxes, with hexagon, octagon, and round being the most common. On most versions, the sound box is closed at one end with a snakeskin resonator. A popular instrument in a variety of Chinese folk traditions, the erhu has now become a principle instrument in both instrumental and opera music.

**Zheng** - The zheng is a plucked half-tube wood zither with movable bridges, over which a number of strings are stretched. The parent instrument of the Asian long zither family, the history of the zheng can be traced back to 2500 years ago. While the ancient zheng had 12 or 13 silk strings, modern instruments usually have 16, 21 or 25 strings, constructed of metal, or steel wound with nylon. It is traditionally tuned to an anhemitonic pentatonic scale, but many modern scales range from combinations of different pentatonic scales, to diatonic and semi-chromatic scales.

**Marimba** - The marimba is a wooden keyboard percussion instrument, tuned chromatically. Having roots in the Africa balophone via the Central American marimba, it is now found in ensembles throughout the world, in both folk music and on the concert stage.

Other percussion instruments used include: dumbek, def (frame drum), pai-gu (set of 5 Chinese tuned drums), udu (Nigerian percussion pot), Tibetan bells, zils (Egyptian finger cymbals), Turkish bells, kempul (Javanese gamelan gongs), Buddhist temple bowls, Chinese wind gong, Sichuan opera cymbals, Beijing opera gongs and cymbals, crotales, Chinese temple blocks, ban (Chinese wooden opera clapper), American wood blocks, African log drum.

**REPERTOIRE**

***Meeting in the Yurt*** **Trad., arr. Orchid Ensemble (1999)**  
A folksong from Mongolia describing two lover’s rendezvous at a yurt.

***The Gallop*** **Trad., arr. Lambert Lum, Orchid Ensemble (1999)**  
This piece is commonly believed to be adopted from Cantonese “suona” (double reed wind instrument) music by the famous Cantonese composer Lui Wen Cheng (1898-1981). However, there is no documentation to verify who the composer or original arranger was. The music depicts proud heroes from a recent battle galloping on their horses. Originally as an instrumental interlude in Cantonese opera, it is full of dramatic musical elements of the opera, exemplified in the accelerandos & decelerandos and sudden changes of tempo. The use of the xylophone in Cantonese ensembles is very common since a hundred years ago, as a musical result of cosmopolitan Guangzhou developing its distinctive regional sound with western influences. This would be the type of Chinese music performed in Vancouver during the early part of the 20th century by Cantonese immigrants.

***Xiao He Tang Shui*** **arr. Lan Tung (2010)**  
A new interpretation of the famous folk song from southwest China, it features a dialogue between vocal and zheng, contrasting between lyrical and rhythmic phrasings, with rooms for improvisation.

*The rising moon shines over the river*  
*Seeing the moon reminds me of my love in the deep mountains*  
*He is like the moon walking in the sky*  
*My love, do you hear me singing your name by the river*

***Tune of Mulberry*** **Zhou Yanjia (1979)**  
This piece is an interpretation of a poem, by the same name, of the great poet Li Bai (Li Po) of the Tang Dynasty (618-907 A. D.), describing a woman’s longing for her beloved’s safe return from the western frontier. The music is composed in the wanwan qiang style, a form of regional opera of Shaanxi, the capital region of the Chinese Tang Dynasty.

***Maqam: Prelude and Dance*** **Zhou Ji, Shao Guangchen and Li Mei, arr. Mei Han**  
Maqam is a musical form found throughout the Middle East, Central Asia and the Xinjiang province of northwestern China. It is generally defined as a sequence of notes with rules that define its general melodic development, each maqam having a different character conveying a mood. In Xinjiang, maqams are sometimes considered “suites” defining a specific mood, or moods. Xinjiang maqams can include instrumental, vocal and dance music, often with complex rhythmic patterns and dramatic tempo changes.