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OYO History
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Oakland Youth Orchestra

Malonga Casquelourd Arts Center, 1428 Alice Street, Room 202 M, Oakland, CA 94612
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www.oyo.org

cover: Bryan Nies conducts OYO in concert in Melbourne, Australia, June 26, 2004. photo by Jay Levine

Oakland Youth Orchestra 1964-2004

- History -

Oakland Youth Orchestra, founded in 1964 as the educational arm of the Oakland Symphony, is recognized as an important musical organization in Oakland and the San Francisco Bay area. An independent non-profit organization since 1986, the orchestra has a history of commissioning, premiering and recording the works of American composers. Consequently, the orchestra has been the recipient of numerous awards from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers for service to contemporary music.

Today, in our 41st season, the Oakland Youth Orchestra consists of seventy-five talented young music students aged 12-21 years. These young people represent forty-six different schools, and over 30 cities in the San Francisco Bay Area. We rehearse a wide range of serious and challenging works and present several classical and pops concerts each season. The orchestra is coached by professional orchestral musicians and is open by audition to all qualified young people. No young musician is excluded for reasons of financial need. OYO is supported by tuition, corporate, foundation and government grants, and individual contributions.

OYO maintains a commitment to cultural exchange, and has toured extensively in England, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, the Caribbean Islands, Costa Rica, Mexico, Cuba, Italy, Australia and New Zealand. And we host visiting youth orchestras as well.

- Awards -

1976, 1980, 1982, 1995, 1996 ASCAP - for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music

- Tours -

The Orchestra has toured widely, performing across the United States and:

Germany, 1972	Von Karajan Festival, 4 th place
Germany, 1974	Von Karajan Festival, 2 nd place
Scotland, 1976	International Festival, 1 st place
Germany, 1978	Tour with Mainz Youth Orchestra
Italy & Switzerland, 1980	Tour of European Festivals
Caribbean Cruise, 1982	Toured 8 Islands
Scotland/England, 1984	International Festival, 1st place
Amman, Jordan, 1988	Jerash Festival of Culture and Art
Austria/Germany, 1990	Vienna Youth & Music Festival
Europe, 1993	Czech Republic, Poland, Germany, Austria
Asia, 1995	China, Hong Kong, Taiwan
Latin America, 1998	Costa Rica, Mexico, Cuba
Italy, 2001	Montepulciano, Montecatini, Pistoia, Carpi, Crema
Australia/New Zealand, 2004	Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra, Auckland

- Conductors -

Robert Hughes 1964–1970 & 1980: Composer, teacher and lecturer
Denis de Coteau 1971–1979: Music Director of the San Francisco Ballet
Kent Nagano 1981–1985: Music Director of the Berkeley Symphony, Montreal Symphony
Stewart Robertson 1985–1986: Music Director of the Long Beach Symphony
Samuel Cristler 1986–1991: Assistant Conductor at the Metropolitan Opera
Wes Kenney 1991–1996: Associate Conductor of the Virginia Symphony
Michael Morgan 1996–Present: Conductor of Oakland East Bay Symphony

Artistic Director

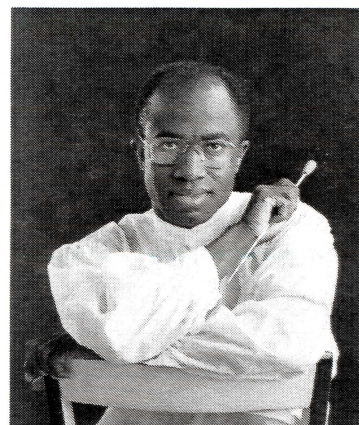
Michael Morgan was born in Washington DC where he attended public schools and began conducting at the age of 12. While a student at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, he spent a summer at the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood. There he was a student of Gunther Schuller and Seiji Ozawa, and it was during that summer that he worked with Leonard Bernstein.

In 1980 he was the 1st prize winner in the Hans Swarowsky International Conductors Competition in Vienna, Austria and became the Assistant Conductor of the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, under Leonard Slatkin. His operatic debut was in 1982 at the Vienna State Opera in Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*.

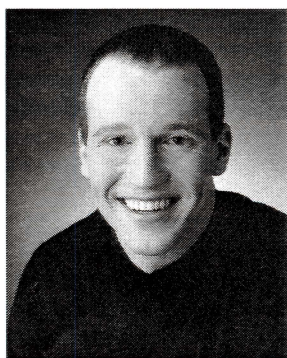
In 1986 Sir Georg Solti chose him to become the Assistant Conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, a position he held for seven years. His Chicago Symphony debut came in 1987 when he replaced the ailing Solti in a program that included Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben* and Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. He stepped into this performance without rehearsal and to critical acclaim. During his tenure in Chicago he was also conductor of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra.

Other guest appearances have included the Berlin State Opera, Saint Louis Opera Theater, Washington Opera, and New York City Opera. He has conducted the National, Baltimore, Houston, Seattle, Vancouver, Detroit, and Oregon Symphony Orchestras as well as the Los Angeles and Warsaw Philharmonics and the Philadelphia Orchestra. He is presently Music Director of the Oakland East Bay Symphony, the Festival Opera in Walnut Creek, and the Sacramento Philharmonic. Next summer Maestro Morgan returns to Tanglewood to teach conducting.

Michael Morgan is a noted advocate for music education in Oakland and around the world. Not long ago he visited the Congo where he worked with a youth orchestra in Kinshasa.



Principal Conductor



Bryan Nies holds the Bruno Walter Assistant Conductor Chair with the Oakland East Bay Symphony and is the Principal Conductor of the Oakland Youth Orchestra, which he lead on a tour of Australia and New Zealand during the orchestra's 40th season. In addition to his work with Festival Opera, as assistant conductor, he conducted the first performance of the Oakland Chamber Ensemble, and was a former assistant conductor with Opera San Jose. Pursuing an avid interest in all musical genres, Bryan has been an associate musical director with the American Musical Theater of San Jose and Theatreworks, in Palo Alto, CA.

During the summer of 2002 Bryan was honored with a Leonard Bernstein fellowship to participate as a conductor at the Tanglewood Music Center. There he conducted performances to rave reviews in the *Boston Globe*. In addition, he received personal instruction with many leading professional conductors, including Michael Morgan, Roberto Abbado, Jeffery Tate, Hans Vonk, Rafael Fruhbeck de Burgos, and Grant Llewellyn.

As one of the conducting class' youngest graduates, Bryan received a M.M. in Orchestral Conducting from the Peabody Conservatory where he studied under the tutelage of Gustav Meier and Markand Thakar. He received a full assistantship in opera coaching and was the assistant conductor of the Peabody Camerata, the contemporary ensemble. While at Peabody, he was asked to be the Assistant Conductor of the National Chamber Orchestra (Washington DC) and a conductor at the National String Institute in Rockville, MD. Bryan also initiated and conducted the Children's Choir as part of the Handel Choir of Baltimore, where he was also the director of the Outreach Program.

A native of Chicago, IL, Mr. Nies also holds a B.M. in Piano Performance and a B.A. in Psychology from Northwestern University in Evanston, IL. He has won numerous piano competitions in the Chicago area including a Gamma Fisher Scholarship to study with the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria. In addition, he has performed with William Warfield for the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and the Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra, as their Assistant Conductor. In addition, Bryan was on the staff of Northwestern University's Theater Department, where he served as vocal coach and piano accompanist.



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Alessandra Aquilanti was born in 1987, daughter of Giancarlo Aquilanti and Betsy London. In 1988 she and her family moved to Italy to live in her father's hometown of Jesi. They remained in Jesi for four years, and as a result, Ale is fluent in Italian. Having grown up in the music world, playing an instrument was inevitable. Her mother is a professional violist in many, if not most, Bay Area orchestras. Her father composes, and is a professor of music at Stanford University. Her uncle Larry London, is a clarinetist, composer, and professor, and her grandmother, Ethel London, was the manager of the Oakland Youth Orchestra (OYO) for almost twenty years.

At age eight, Ale began playing violin and later joined the Youth Orchestra of Southern Alameda County (YOSAC) where she was a member from 1997 to 2001. She studied with Gretchen Sauer from 1998-2001, and now studies with Linda Green. Ale joined OYO as a violist in 2001 and has served as principal since the spring of 2002. Although she barely missed the Italy Tour in 2001, she participated in the tour to Australia and New Zealand in 2004 where she never tired of watching the water go down the drain "the wrong way." She is also a member of the San Leandro High School Orchestra, which rehearses every morning at the crack of dawn (seven o'clock). Aside from music, Ale enjoys acting, telling bad jokes, and generally being a ham. She will graduate from San Leandro High School this June and plans to attend New York University where she will undoubtedly continue her studies in viola

The Viola and Violists by David Dalton

The viola is the middle-range instrument of the violin family. It is sometimes cavalierly referred to as the "big fiddle." Its position in the violin family somewhat parallels the alto voice of the normal SATB (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) arrangement in a choir of voices, the alto being just below the soprano range. In fact, the French word for viola is *l'alto*. As do other members of the violin family (violin, cello, contrabass) the viola has four strings, the lowest of which descends at an interval of a fifth below that of the violin.

The viola is played with a bow and placed on the shoulder, as is the violin, in contrast to the cello, which is placed between the player's legs. In German the viola is the *Bratsche*, which comes from the Italian *braccio*, meaning "arm," or to be played on the arm in contrast with being played on the leg. The etymology of the word viola, or *viola da braccio*, leads some historians to believe that when the violin family emerged as an entity in Italy during the early part of the sixteenth century, the viola may have appeared slightly before the violin, *violino* being a diminutive form of viola. Violists often like to think that they may indeed have been at the head of the family, at least historically. continues online...

Spotlight on the Private Teacher

Violist **Linda Green** is originally from Toledo, Ohio and attended Bowling Green State University, New England Conservatory of Music, and Syracuse University. She started on the viola in the 4th grade at school because she liked the sound and her older sisters played violin (too high) and clarinet (too something).

She has performed in Europe and Macau as a member of the Orchestra Nacional do Porto. In Montreal she played Brandenburg 6 as a soloist with the Syracuse University Symphony. In Iceland she was a tutor/extra with the Icelandic Youth Orchestrashe. In addition to her assistant principal viola duties in Portugal, she taught for three years at ARTAVE, the leading junior high/high school in the country for music. One of her students received the first prize in viola in a national competition called "Premio Jovens Musicos," winning a Capella viola and a concerto performance with the Gulbankian Orchestra in Lisbon. That student later received a full scholarship to The Royal Academy of Music in London. She was also a member of the Quarteto Jacob.

Linda moved to the Bay Area in 2001 and teaches music at Roosevelt Middle School in Oakland. She also plays viola in the Oakland East Bay Symphony and has played with the Toledo Symphony, the Syracuse Symphony, the Binghamton (NY) Symphony, the Tri-Cities Opera Orchestra, the Sarasota Opera Orchestra, and many Bay Area ensembles.

Oakland Youth Orchestra 2004-2005 Season

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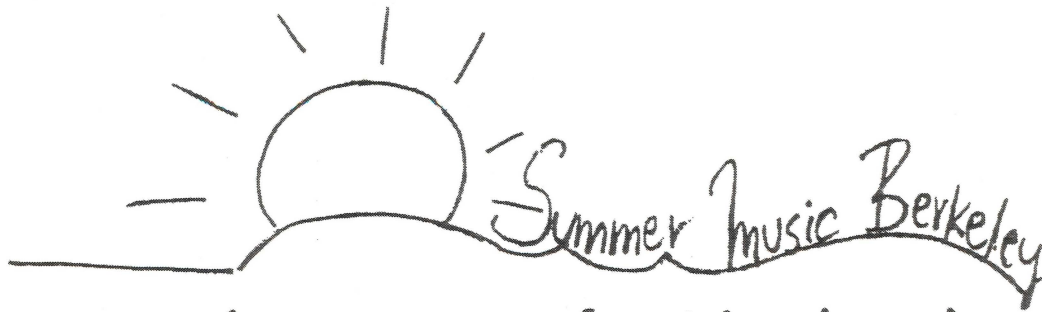
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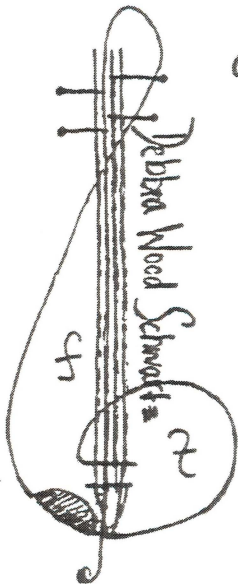
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OYO Personnel

Violins

Danielle Taylor, *concertmaster*
Andrew Wilson§
Alyssa Mathias*
Tania Chen§
Emily Chen
Eboni Garrett-Bluford
Yoon Gul (Jimmy) Hahn
Sarena Hsu
Peter Hung
Joseph Jung
Raymond Kim
Deborah Lee
August Mao
Alia McKean
Jennifer Moriuchi
Vidya Pai
Jennifer Purdy
Caroline Shen
Hannah Song
Alicia Tan
Rachel Taylor
Carol Tsang
Jonathan Tzeng
Charlene Wang
Noah Yaffe
Sophia Zhang

Viola

Alessandra Aquilanti*
Yennie Lee§
Trevor Anderson
Lucy Archer
Alex Augsberger-Blum
Megan Gaebler
Lauren Gerchow
Dennis Lam

'Cello

Bryan West*
Victoria Yoon*
The Liftech Chair
in honor of
Samuel Cristler
Brady Anderson
Matthew Auyoung
Joshua Chen
Andrew Cheng
Emily Gee
Christine Hsia
Timothy Hsu
Stephen Shum

Bass

Hannah Keeshan*
Tim Duff

Flute & Piccolo

Gina Hu
Courtney Nippa
Arturo Rodriguez

Oboe

Jessica Huntsman
Carolyn Kwok
Lisa Sommerauer

English Horn

Jessica Huntsman

Clarinet

Leslie Chiang**
Dan Ferreira
Yongeun Lee

Bassoon

Kyle Chin*
Vanessa Blake
Brian Walsh

Horn

Lacey Waggener**
Victoria Lau
Philiana Ng
Andrew Watson

Trumpet

Jaime Guzman
Christina Jupp
Adam Louie**

Trombone

Emily Joseph*
Daniel Wright

Bass Trombone

Callan Milani

Tuba

Chris McGaw

Percussion

Michael Kizzar
Maneka Puligandla
Brian Walsh
Ted Yuan**

Harp

Michael Steadman**

* *principal*

§ *assistant principal*

** *guest artist*

Subscription Concert II
First Congregational Church, Oakland
7:30 PM, May 22, 2005
Michael Morgan, Artistic Director
Bryan Nies, Principal Conductor

Program

Lohengrin, Prelude, Act III

Richard Wagner
(1813-1883)

conducted by Michael Morgan

Suite Hebraique

Ernest Bloch
(1880-1959)

I. Rhapsodie

Alessandra Aquilanti, viola
conducted by Michael Morgan

Three Pieces for Two Orchestras

arr. Pei Kun Xi
(1948-)

- I. Tibetan Dance (by Guan Ren Gu)
- II. Happy Women Soldiers (by Ming Xin Du)
- III. Triumph Song (by Min Xiong Li)

Joined by The Great Wall Youth Orchestra
Wei Wang, percussion
conducted by Michael Morgan

—INTERMISSION—

Symphony No. 1

Peter Ilych Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

- I. Dreams of a Winter Journey: Allegro tranquillo
- II. Land of Gloom, Land of Mists: Andante cantabile ma non tanto
- III. Scherzo: Allegro scherzando giocoso
- IV. Finale: Andante lugubre—Allegro moderato—Allegro maestoso—Allegro vivo

conducted by Bryan Nies

The Oakland Youth Orchestra acknowledges the support of the Clorox Company Foundation, the Bernard Osher Foundation, the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation, the Margaret Graupner Living Trust, the Morris Stulsaft Foundation, Robert A.D. and Debra Wood Schwartz Foundation, The Ann and Barney Mizel Family Foundation, and The East Bay Community Foundation's Calvin Simmons Memorial Fund and Ethel London Scholarship Fund. Additional Funding provided by the Oakland City Council and the City of Oakland's Cultural Funding Program and the California Arts Council. Oakland Youth Orchestra's print-media sponsor is The Oakland Tribune.

Please silence all cellular phones and paging devices.

Program Notes

by Charley Samson, copyright 2005

Richard Wagner (1813-1883): *Prelude to Act III Lohengrin*

“The turning point in my life,” Wagner said of *Lohengrin*. The opera had been rejected by the Dresden Court Opera because of Wagner’s revolutionary activities. Franz Liszt finally mounted the first production in Weimar on August 28, 1850.

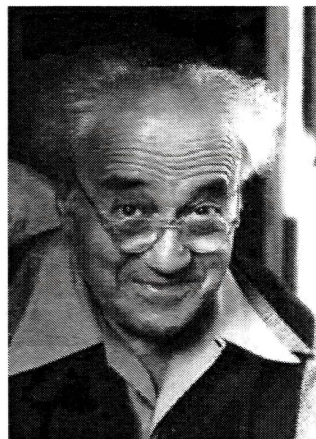
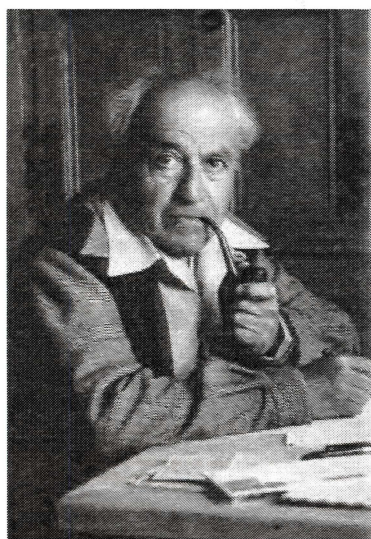
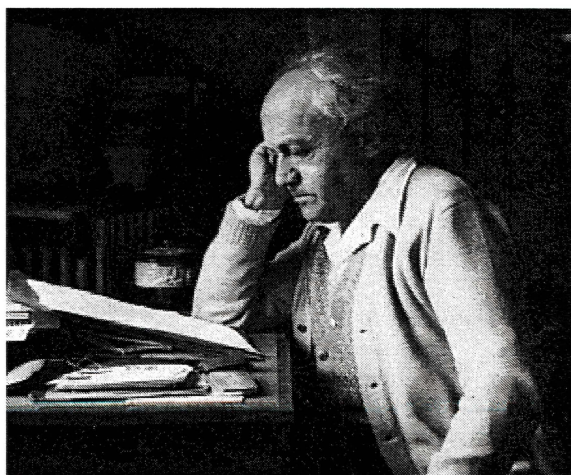
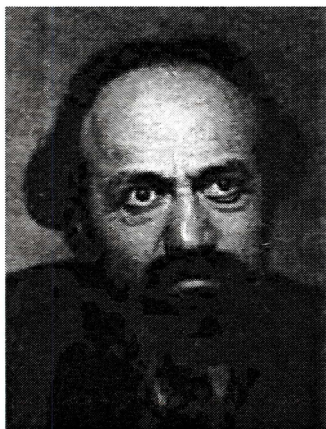
Wagner wrote the third act prelude first. It is meant to set the scene for the festivities surrounding the wedding of Lohengrin, Knight of the Holy Grail, and Elsa of Brabant. It begins with a joyous theme for the full orchestra, then a brass melody with pulsating string accompaniment. A quieter middle section, with solos for oboe, flute and clarinet, leads to the return of the opening theme, with a dramatic swell to the final noisy conclusion.



Ernest Bloch (1880-1959): *Suite Hebraique*

In 1950 Bloch's 70th birthday was marked by a series of concerts of his music in Chicago. The event was the brainchild of Sam Laderman, the uncle of composer Ezra Laderman. After various chamber and orchestral programs, there was a dinner in Bloch's honor at the Covenant Club. Moved by all this attention, he promised a musical thank-you gift. A year later, he composed the *Suite Hebraique* and dedicated it to the Covenant Club. Originally for viola and piano, Bloch later orchestrated the work. He was also persuaded that the violin could play it too.

In his liner notes to Eric Shumsky's recording of the *Suite*, pianist Jonathan Shames says the opening Rhapsodie "epitomizes the deep questioning of life so typical of the Talmudic Rabbis."



Violinist Ernest Bloch was born in Geneva, Switzerland and studied in Brussels, Paris, and Frankfurt. He worked as a teacher, conductor, and composer and in 1917 he moved to the US, where he became director of the Cleveland Institute of Music and later the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. He also taught at the University of California at Berkeley. Pablo Casals called Ernest Bloch "the best composer of our time."

Barbara Stack

Pei Kun Xi (1948-): *Three Pieces for Two Orchestras*

Conductor and Composer **Pei-Kun Xi** graduated from the Shanghai Music conservatory in 1969. As principal conductor of the Shanghai and Peking Opera companies, he has conducted more than 600 performances of Chinese operas. From 1978 to 1985 he served as the Music director of the Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra and at the same time was the principal conductor of the Shanghai Youth Orchestra. Since coming to the US, he has studied conducting at the San Francisco Institute of Music and Art under Peter Black, and has received an MA from the New England Conservatory of Music. He plays the bassoon, piano, violin and several Chinese instruments. He also served as the music director and conductor for three major Chinese films and several Chinese television productions and has three commercially available recordings. Pei Kun Xi is a faculty member at Laney College in Oakland, CA. He is the composer in residence for the Great Wall Youth Orchestra.

The **Great Wall Youth Orchestra** was formed to accommodate graduates of the Purple Bamboo Orchestra, and welcomes interested students from throughout the Bay Area to audition. Members range from elementary to high school age and play pieces that reflect their high level of skill on their chosen Chinese musical instruments. The orchestra rehearses on Saturdays under tutelage of expert musicians, and plays at many concerts throughout the year.

The **Purple Silk Music Education Foundation** is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to support ongoing Chinese music programs in Oakland. These programs were started by Ms. Sherlyn Chew, in 1995, and now offer children in grades K-12 an opportunity to participate in two orchestras, a chorus and performances of Chinese Opera. The Purple Bamboo Orchestra and the Great Wall Orchestra use traditional Chinese instruments to perform Chinese and adapted Western music.

Sherlyn Chew, Artistic Director

Ms. Chew, a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley, started learning traditional Chinese music from her father, Poon L. Chew, who was a performer, music historian and professor. She studied Chinese Opera and



B. Stack photo 5/8/2005

Chinese folk music in Taiwan and has performed in the Far East, southeast Asia, Europe and the US. She has been an instructor of Chinese music and opera at Laney College since 1973 and a bilingual classroom teacher in Oakland Public Schools since 1975. She is currently music teacher at Lincoln Elementary School in Oakland's Chinatown where she founded the Purple Bamboo Orchestra and Chorus in 1995. She is also the co-founder of the Great Wall Youth Orchestra and Chorus and has been honored with many awards for her dedication.

Great Wall Youth Orchestra Roster

Cello

Genji Lim
Anthony Yee

Dulcimer *Yangqin*

Judy Huang
Lily Ko
Elizabeth Leong
Nancy Li
Jia Xin Wu

Chinese violin *Erhu*

Victoria Chang
Iris Cheung
Monica Hui
Wesley Ko
Marcus Leong
Cicely Li
Michael Li
Brianna Pang

Flute *Dizi*

Joanna Leong
Catherine Leong
Joanna Leong
Alexandra Wong
Michaëlle Yang

Small Lute *Liu Qin*

Nathan Cheung

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Wei Wang - percussion instruments

He Cheng Liu - plucked string instruments

Xiao Feng Zhang - bowed string instruments

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Brenda Liu

Pipa

Gar-Wei Lee

Medium *Zhong Ruan*

Victoria Chen
See's Lam
Linda Lau
Davis Li
Sally Ng
Joseph Zhu

Small *Xiao Ruan*

Winnie Gee
Seles Lam
Amanda Leung
Kai Leung
Michael Ngo
Irene Pan
Anna Wu
Alvin Yang

Pipes *Sheng*

James Guo

Drums *Tanggu*

Wei Wang

Peter Illich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893): *Symphony No. 1*

Freshly graduated from the St. Petersburg Conservatory, the 26-year-old Tchaikovsky set to work, in March of 1866, on “a sin of my sweet youth,” as he later called his First Symphony. He overdid it, laboring far into the night, until hallucinations, insomnia and “little hammers,” as he called the pounding in his head, brought on a nervous breakdown.

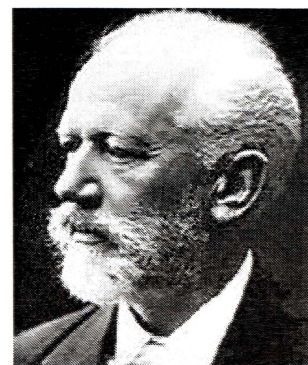
He wrote to his brother: “My nerves are altogether shaken. The causes are the symphony, which does not sound satisfactory, and I cannot shake off the conviction that I shall not live long, and shall leave my symphony unfinished.” His doctor said he was on the “verge of madness,” and prescribed rest. Tchaikovsky did, then finished the symphony and never composed at night again.

Various movements of the new work were performed during 1867 with lukewarm audience reaction but critical acclaim. One review said the symphony had “decided merit. It is melodious in the highest degree and excellently orchestrated.” Rimsky-Korsakov said the music “proved quite to our liking” and Tchaikovsky himself “to be a pleasing and sympathetic man to talk with, one who knew how to be simple of manner, and always speak with evident sincerity and heartiness.”

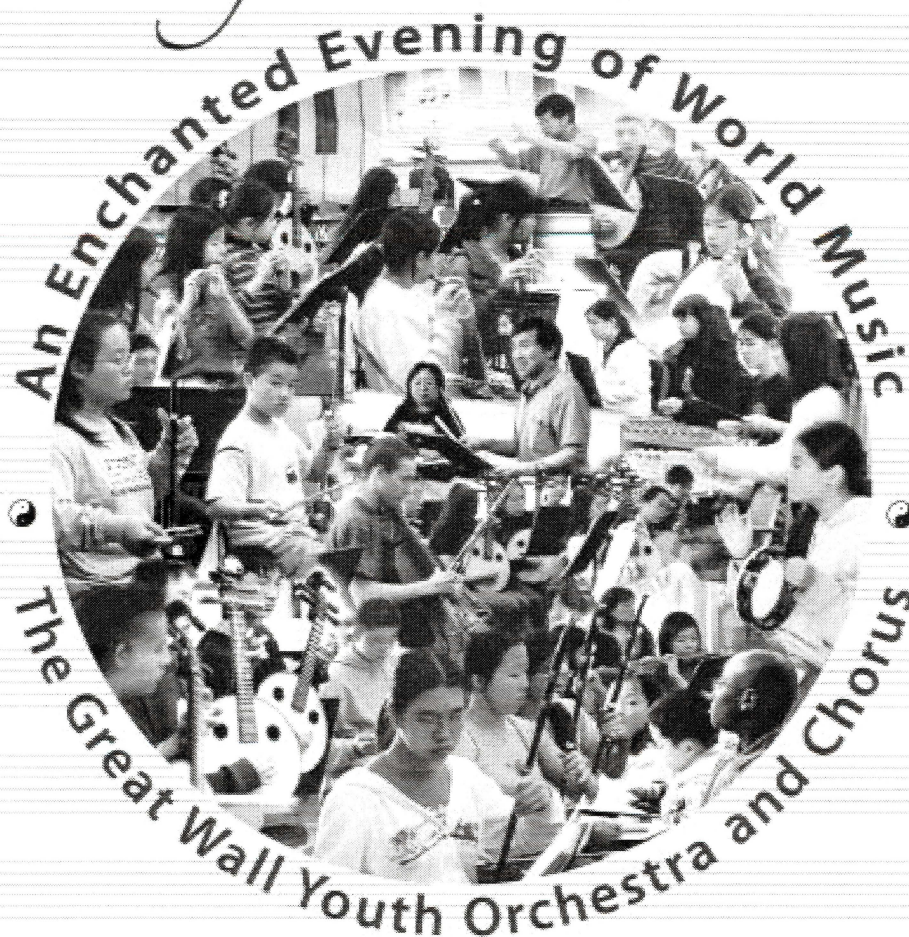
The first complete performance of the First Symphony took place in Moscow on February 15, 1868, with Nikolai Rubinstein conducting. This time the audience was enthusiastic, summoning Tchaikovsky to the stage. An eyewitness described him as “carelessly dressed and carying his hat which he crumpled nervously, and awkwardly retired bowing.”

The work underwent numerous revisions before its publication in 1875. Tchaikovsky maintained a “weakness” for the work. “Although in many respects it is very immature,” he said, “to give it its due there is more in it and it is a better work than many others which are more mature.”

The entire Symphony is subtitled *Winter Dreams*, and the first two movements also bear titles. The opening movement, “Dreams on a Wintry Road,” contains a melody reminiscent of a Russian folksong. Parts of the slow movement, “Land of Gloom, Land of Mists,” were adapted from Tchaikovsky’s Overture to Ostrovsky’s play *The Storm*. Likewise, the third movement is a reworking of a movement from his Piano Sonata in C sharp minor. A genuine Russian folksong serves as the theme for the finale.



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Chinese Wind and Percussion Instruments

The history of percussion instruments in China is longer than any other category of traditional instruments. The character of 'drum' was first found in the inscriptions on bones and tortoise shells of the Shang Dynasty. At that time (BC 1562 - 1066) more than 50% of instruments were percussion. Common material used for making percussion instruments in the past were gold, rock, wood and bamboo. The percussion section is the most important section in Chinese opera, particularly in "martial" scenes known as wu-chang. The player of the bangu, directs the rest of the orchestra through his different methods and positions of striking his instrument. He has control over the overall development of the action and creation of atmosphere, and is equivalent to the conductor of a western style orchestra. As the instrument can produce different sound effects, it is frequently used in joyful and exciting occasions such as harvest, marriage and dragon boat as well as more as well as memorial ceremonies.

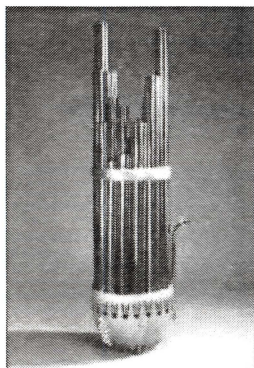
Tanggu (Medium-sized Barrel Drum)

(tang: hall; gu: drum) The drum is listed as "hide" in the traditional bayin classifications. The common type is similar in shape to a barrel. Its wooden shell, entirely painted red with decorative patterns, is covered with two drumheads of cowhide or pig skin. Four lateral iron rings around the shell allow the drum to be vertically suspended in a frame. It is struck with a pair of wooden beaters. Tone quality can be modified by moving the point of striking closer to the centre of the surface, with varying dynamics.



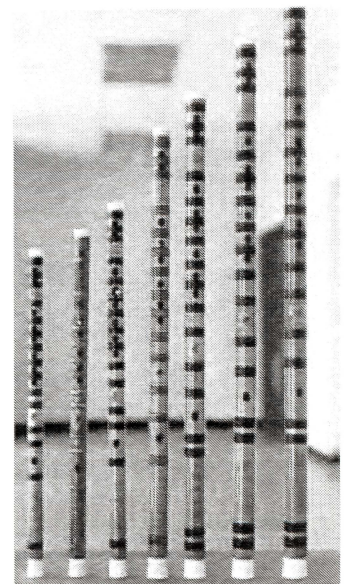
堂鼓

The **dizi** is the most common transverse flute of China, are made from bamboo and have six finger holes and are characterized by an additional hole covered by a piece of very thin rice paper that buzzes when played. This rice paper is held in place by placing a small amount of garlic juice around the hole, and slightly moistening the paper as it is placed into position. The paper must dry to the proper tension to produce the dizi's characteristic loud sound. Modern dizi can be found with additional keys to aid in playing accidentals, but traditionally players had a set of dizi, one for each desired key, and accidentals and slides were accomplished by very subtle adjustments of the fingers to cover only a quarter or half of a hole. Although a relatively easy instrument at first, the standard for good dizi playing is extremely high, and professional dizi players from China are stunning in their virtuosity, although they often lack the emotional depth that is found in flute playing from other cultures.



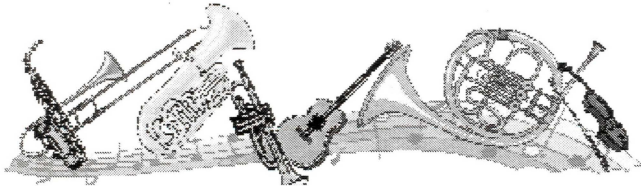
The **Sheng** is an ancient Chinese instrument made up of reeded sounding pipes. The instrument was widely used as early as the Zhou Dynasty (ca. BC1066-BC256). Before the Han Dynasty the two instruments sheng and yu which were of the same family existed alongside with each other, but only the sheng has commonly been used after the Song Dynasty. Structurally, the sheng is made up of three components - the sheng body, sounding pipe and reed. As its shape looks like the phoenix wings, accordingly in ancient times it was also known as fengsheng. In Chinese orchestras the sheng serves to balance and embellish the tone qualities of various instrumental

sections, as well as to tone down the strength of certain instruments.





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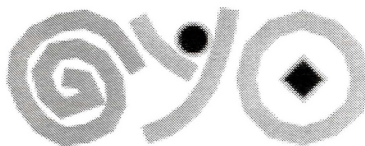
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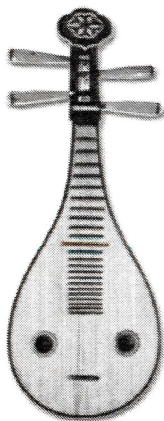
Chinese Stringed Instruments



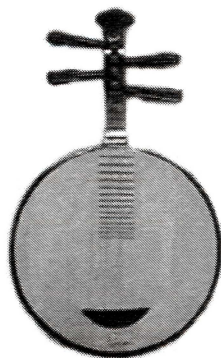
The **Erhu** is an ancient Asian instrument, brought to China during the Han dynasty (~140 B.C.). Bowed instruments became popular in China during the Sung dynasty (A.D. 960-1279). The two-stringed Erhu, a member of the huqin family, is one of the most widely used. The sound box is covered by a serpent skin which gives the instrument its distinctive tone color. Throughout its history, the Erhu has been constantly improved, so that its tone is now mellow and bright, similar to the violin, yet more soulful and expressive. Its lower tones sound forceful and lavish. The mid-tones are gentle and touching, while high tones turn clear and bright. This changeful character makes it possible for the Erhu to perform music with a variety of moods. In classical Chinese music the Erhu is melodic, haunting, ever changing, and alive. The traditional style of playing is rich in ornamentation, giving the music a deep, three-dimensional quality.

Liuqin (Small Lute, Treble Lute) Tuning: g, d1, g1, d2; Range: g-g4

The Liuqin looks like a miniature pipa, but it has the shape of a willow leaf, for which it was named. It also has two sound holes. The Liuqin is also called tu pipa (unrefined pipa). The performer plays it with a pick made traditionally of horn, but more commonly today, plastic. A modern Liuqin's front is made of tung wood and the reverse side, of red sandal. The four strings are steel. The frets, increased from 7 to as many as 24, are arranged in half step intervals. The plectrum is made of horn. The sound of Liuqin is a little like mandolin, high pitched, bright and it can produce an exciting and agitating tune when played loudly, and a sweet and touching tune when played softly.



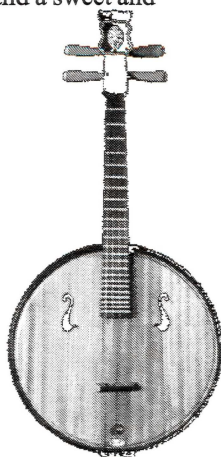
柳琴



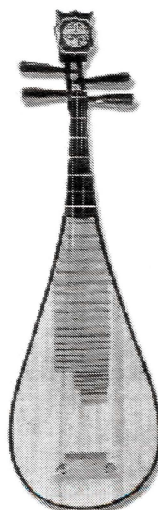
Yue-Qin (small moon guitar)

Tuning: g-d-g1-d2; Range: g-d3

The yueqin, with the name from its moon-shaped soundbox, is similar to the long-necked ruan (moon guitar), from which it was developed. The resonating chamber of the folk type is sometimes octagonal or hexagonal in shape. The four strings are grouped in two courses, each has two strings in unison, and the two courses are tuned a 4th or 5h degree. The instrument is plucked generally with a plectrum. The strings are mostly made of nylon or nyloncoiled wire. The frets are arranged chromatically.



The **ruan** is often called the Chinese "moon guitar" and is one of a family of round body instruments found in both classical and folk music. It is known to have at least two thousand years of history, and is native to China. There are many depictions of the ruan in paintings of court orchestras on the walls of caves in DunHuang, which date from the 7th Century and before. The ruan is found in three sizes: the small xiao-ruan, the middle sized ruan and the bass da-ruan. Common tunings are gdae or adad for the ruan and bfcg, cgda, or cgcg for the da-ruan. The ruan has a beautiful mellow tone that is very similar to that of the guitar.



琵琶

Pipa. Tuning: A-d-e-a; A - c3

The word "Pi" meant "to play forward" and "Pa" meant "to play backward". The pipa has a half pear shaped sound box, a crooked neck, and 4 or 5 strings. The Pipa arrived in China in the 4th century AD from Central Asia. The number of frets (bridges) has gradually been increased over the years, up to 23, 25 even 30. The range is over three and a half octaves. The modern Pipa also uses steel strings with or without nylon wrap instead of silk. The musician tapes picks (fake fingernails) to all fingers except for the thumb, although all five are used. The pipa is clear, bright and mellow in tone and can produce a very expressive sound, from gentle and pleasing music, to dramatic sound effects of horses galloping and battlefield scenes.



The **Yangqin** is a dulcimer played with bamboo mallets the size of a chopsticks, used to hit strings in pairs. This produces a high and tinkling timbre in its top registers, a soft and beautiful tone in the middle and a strong rich sound in the lower registers. The metallic tone resembles the harpsichord. It has the widest range of scale among the Chinese plucked-strings instruments (about 5 octaves). It is rather new instrument by Chinese standards, first appearing in 1368 from the Middle East, during the Ming Dynasty (1368 to 1644).

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