About the Piano and Erhu Project

Twilight is the fourth in a series of concerts in Nicole Ge Li and Corey Hamm’s piano and erhu project (PEP).

Over forty Canadian and Chinese composers have already agreed to write works for erhu and piano to be premiered, recorded, and toured in both Canada and China. To date, the list of composers includes James Harley, Brian Cherney, Hope Lee, David Eagle, Douglas Finch, Daniel Marshall, Elizabeth Raum, Dai Fujikura, Alexis Renault, Michael Park, John Oliver, Scott Godin, Stephen Chatman, Keith Hamel, Bob Pritchard, Jordan Nobles, Jocelyn Morlock, Gabriel Dharmoo, Paul Steenhuisen, Marc Mellits, Remy Siu, Dorothy Chang, Edward Top, Chris Gainey, Dubravko Pajalic, Jared Miller, Martin Ritter, Alyssa Aska, Alfredo Santa Ana, Francois Houle, Owen Underhill, Vivian Fung, Hope Lee, Jian Qiang Xu, Yuan Qing Li, Ying Jiang, Joshua Chan, Si Ang Chen, I Yu Wang, Laura Pettigrew, Laurie Radford, Chan Kan Nin, Alice Ho, Emily Doolittle.

Thank you!

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Programme

World Premiere

Mei Li de Hua (2013)
Laura Pettigrew

such that I left a dream (2013)
Daniel Marshall

Blue  (2013)
James Harley

Intermission

Twilight (2014)
Alyssa Aska

Interviews

St Ang Chen

Martin Ritter

Roydon Tse

Blues n’Grooves (2014)
Mark Ritter

Blues n’Grooves

Written in 2014 for Nicole and Corey, Blues n’Grooves is a short showpiece piece for erhu and piano. Incorporating the blues scale, the piece is divided between the more lyrical A section, and a jazzy Vivace section. The inspiration for the piece came from listening to Hilary Hahn’s CD 27 pieces, featuring encores from 27 living composers. I liked the idea of writing a ‘short piece with attitude’ that can fit easily into a concert program, thus the piece was born.

Blues n’Grooves

I wanted to write an energetic piece with lots of drive and technical exertion for the performers, but at the same time explore one traditional playing technique of the erhu. I chose to use the “horse” sound – a rapid triplet gesture - as a starting point. Keeping with the idea of the traditional, the pitch material for this piece was derived from the spectral content of a python hiss. Python skin was conventionally used as a building material for the erhu. Combining these elements with my, at the time, newborn daughter’s obsession with heavy metal music and her insistence on listening to the same song continually for hours, the end result is a fast paced, unrelenting assault on the performers as well as the audience.

Twilight 電馬行空

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Martin Ritter

Martin Ritter writes both electroacoustic and acoustic works and develops software tools in different languages. He has worked for theatrical productions, movie productions and has created interactive museum installations. His collaborations include performers such as Eric Wilson, Jesse Read, Corey Hamm, Paolo Bortolussi, Mark McGregor, Ralph Markham and Kenneth Broadway. He has worked with ensembles like the Phoenix Chamber Choir, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Nova Scotia Youth Orchestra, Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Orchestra, Land’s End Chamber Ensemble, and Quatour Bozzini. This June, his orchestral piece Remembrances will be recorded by the Brno Philharmonic Orchestra in the Czech Republic, and will be part of a new-music CD coming out on Naxos this October.

Martin Ritter

Future world’s electric horse. Excited, exciting, space travel.

Martin Ritter

Martin Ritter

Martin Ritter

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Roydon Tse

Hailed by the Vancouver Sun as a composer “glittering with professionalism”, Roydon Tse (b.1991) is an emerging Hong Kong/Canadian composer currently studying at the University of Toronto. He completed his Bachelors in Music Composition at the University of British Columbia, studying with Professors Dorothy Chang and Stephen Chatman, and is now finishing up his Masters with Christos Hatzi and Gary Bakula. His music has been presented by ensembles such as the Toronto, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Edmonton, and Victoria Symphony Orchestras, the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra, Nova Scotia Youth Orchestra, Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Orchestra, Land’s End Chamber Ensemble, and Quatour Bozzini. This June, his orchestral piece Remembrances will be recorded by the Brno Philharmonic Orchestra in the Czech Republic, and will be part of a new-music CD coming out on Naxos this October.

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Nicole Ge Li is currently Concert Master of the B.C. Chinese Orchestra and guest soloist with the BC Chinese Music Ensemble.

Li began learning Erhu at the early age of six, and started training professionally after spending six years (1982-88) composing and studying music in Europe.

Nicole Ge Li holds a Bachelor's degree in Erhu. In 2002, while still a student, Li won second place in the 2002 Daily Art Competition, a national music competition in China. In 2004, she was admitted to the graduate department of the conservatory. Chen has been under the tutelage of renowned composer Tang Junping, and has also attended classes conducted by such great masters as Bachman and Lindberg.

Chen's works have received critical acclaim and have been performed by many symphony orchestras, including the Chinese National Symphony Orchestra, China Philharmonic Orchestra, Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, and the Shanghai Ethnic Music Orchestra. Chen has also been commissioned by Beijing Modern Music Ensemble and the Shanghai Oriental Music Orchestra. His works are primarily available through the Canadian Music Centre.

Marianne ferry graduated from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music in 2008, after studying with Jeffrey Stoltz, David Crumb, and Robert Pritchard. Her music has been performed at concerts, festivals, and symposiums in the United States and Canada. She is also an active performer, having performed with the Nu:BC Collective, to be released next year. Recently, Hamm

Gioele Venuta, with concerts, masterclasses and lectures across North America and Europe. Alyssa is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Composition at the University of British Columbia, under the supervision of Keith Hamel and Robert Pritchard. Her music has been performed at concerts, festivals, and symposiums in the United States and Canada. She is also an active performer, having performed with the Nu:BC Collective, to be released next year. Recently, Hamm

Dr. Hamm received the 2008/2009 UBC Killam Teaching Award for Excellence in Teaching. He is on the Faculty of the Summer Institute for Contemporary Performance Practice (SICPP, or Sick Puppy) at the New England Conservatory in Boston. His beloved teachers include Lydia Artymiw, Marek Jablonski, Stephane Lemelin, Ernesto Lejano, and Thelma Johannes-O'Neil.
Programme Notes

Mei Li de Hua 美麗的花
The intent of my work is to honour Mr. Jon Lim Chung Yee who graciously shared his life story with me reflecting on the trials and tribulations he endured as an immigrant to Canada in 1956 and subsequently the success he achieved. Mei Li de Hua is the Chinese name bestowed on me by Mr. Yee stating I brought great chi and energy into his home. Ch'i literally means “air” or “breath”. As a concept it refers to the energy flow or life force said to pervade all things. Needless to say I was humbled and honoured.

美麗的花, 美麗的人, 美麗的地方, 中國傳統味十足。

Laura Pettigrew
Laura Pettigrew, an Associate Composer of CMC, member of CLC, SOCAN, IWBC and ACWC has received notable commissions and awards for her works and accomplishments. Her works have been premiered and performed in Canada, United States and Europe by renowned soloists and ensembles including but not limited to Borealis Brass, MASSIVE BRASS ATTACK, directed by infamous tubist Sérgio Carolino, Portugal, RSO Chamber Ensemble, Meineinger Trio, Contrasts Trio Dr. Karen Gustafson, Shawn (Grocott) and the Wolf (Wolfgang Meyer-Johanning), Foothills Brass, Dr. Corey Hamm and Nicole Ge Li. In 2013 her short film “The Sky Came Down” which she produced and wrote the film score garnered Two International Awards, Best Overall Production – Reel Rave International Film Festival; Award of Merit – Best Shorts Competition and nominee at Golden Sheaf Awards.

such that I left a dream 我留下的一個夢
such that I left a dream explores a blissful, yet sometimes disturbing impression left behind by a dream-like state.

在夢裡彷彿是另一個世界，會飛翔也會潛行，不變的是仍然有黑暗也有光明。似乎折騰了很久，然而夢醒了就記不清了。

Daniel Marshall
Daniel Marshall is a composer from Calgary, Alberta. He completed a BMus in composition at the University of Calgary and an MMus in composition from the University of British Columbia. Recently, Daniel has engaged in collaborative projects such as musical direction and sound design for the Vancouver United Players’ 2013 adaptation of Euripides’ Hecuba and the setting of poetry by Vancouver-based Elaine Woo, the latter of which has been awarded a festival prize by the Boston Metro Opera in their 2013 International Composer’s Competition. Daniel hopes to develop a focus on collaborative and interdisciplinary endeavours.

Play 奏
Play is a multimovement work exploring the performative gestures of the erhu and piano and their roles in the ensemble. Both instruments contain strings which physically vibrate to produce sound, but they are interacted with in very different ways by the performers. This work blurs the lines between motions such as hammering, plucking, and bowing, allowing the performers to engage in or emulate these physical ideas on their respective instruments. This convergence of performative gestures speaks to the convergence of cultures present in the ensemble; the work is intended to display the blending capabilities of the instruments in this multicultural ensemble.

Alyssa Aska
Alyssa is a diverse composer who writes both acoustic and electroacoustic works, although she primarily focuses on works that combine live instruments with realtime electronic processing. Alyssa has also participated in music technology education research projects and sensorbased instrument design, and has given presentations on this research in North America and Europe. Her current path focuses on gesture in performance and its relation to sound production. Alyssa received her B.Sc. in Music Technology from the University of Oregon, where