

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 6, 2026

The Philadelphia Orchestra Ushers in the Year of the Horse with Lunar New Year Celebration in Collaboration with China's Central Conservatory of Music

*Lunar New Year concert led by Assistant Conductor Naomi Woo and
featuring soloists Yu Hongmei, erhu, and Zhang Hongyan, pipa,
from China's Central Conservatory of Music
January 28, 2026*

*China's Central Conservatory of Music Chinese Orchestra to perform
FREE Spring Festival concert in Perelman Theater at the
Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts
January 29, 2026*

(Philadelphia, January 6, 2026)—**The Philadelphia Orchestra** is collaborating with China's **Central Conservatory of Music** for two days of people-to-people exchange through music in Philadelphia to celebrate the Lunar New Year and usher in the Year of the Horse.

Assistant Conductor Naomi Woo will lead The Philadelphia Orchestra and soloists from the Central Conservatory of Music (CCOM), erhu virtuoso and CCOM President **Yu Hongmei** and pipa virtuoso **Zhang Hongyan**, in a **Lunar New Year Concert** on **Wednesday, January 28, 2026**, in **Marian Anderson Hall** at the **Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts**. The Philadelphia Orchestra will present the **Central Conservatory of Music Chinese Orchestra** in a free Spring Festival concert on **Thursday, January 29, 2026**, in **Perelman Theater** at the Kimmel Center.

The Lunar New Year program, thoughtfully curated to embody the energetic and perseverant spirit of the Horse in Chinese astrology, will include Li Huanzhi's *Spring Festival Overture*; Chan Ka Nin's *Welcoming Spring*; Selections from Tan Dun's *Crouching Tiger Concerto*, for erhu and chamber orchestra with Yu Hongmei; Lili Boulanger's *Of a Spring Morning*; Zhou Long's *King Chu Doffs His Armor*, for pipa and orchestra with Zhang Hongyan returning to Marian Anderson Hall for her second Lunar New Year concert in a row; Aaron Copland's "Hoe-Down," from Four Dance Episodes from *Rodeo*; Gustav Holst's "Jupiter, the Bringer of Jolity," from *The Planets*; and Gioachino Rossini's Finale, from Overture to *William Tell*.

The Central Conservatory of Music Chinese Orchestra will perform a one-night-only concert in Perelman Theater under the direction of conductor Liu Sha. The ensemble will perform several Chinese pieces featuring soloists on a diverse array of traditional Chinese instruments, including bamboo flutes, sheng, yangqin, guzheng, banhu, pipa, and erhu. The Spring Festival program includes the world premiere of Zhang Zheng's *Feng·Ya·Song* (Ballad, Court Hymn, Eulogy).

The Philadelphia Orchestra's annual Lunar New Year celebration pays tribute to Philadelphia's diverse Asian American community and is part of the ensemble's ongoing relationship with the people of China. In 1973, under the direction of Eugene Ormandy, The Philadelphia Orchestra became the first American orchestra to perform in China. Since that first visit, the full Orchestra has returned 13 times—most recently in 2024—and small ensembles have returned often for residency activities—most recently in October 2025. The Orchestra has developed deep, impactful connections throughout China that serve as a cultural bridge for people-to-people exchange.

With over 60 years of history, the Central Conservatory of Music Chinese Orchestra is one of the most representative traditional orchestras in contemporary China. Affiliated with the nation's premier music institution, the orchestra embodies exceptional artistry, academic rigor, and professionalism. It brings together distinguished faculty and award-winning doctoral and graduate musicians, who uphold a spirit of both preservation and pioneering exploration. Through performances that seamlessly blend ancient and contemporary aesthetics, they continuously advance the heritage and innovation of Chinese traditional music. Renowned for its distinctive interpretations of classical masterpieces and contemporary works, the ensemble has premiered numerous landmark compositions. As a cultural ambassador, it has performed across Asia, Europe, North America, Africa, and Oceania. Through participation in major international music festivals and academic collaborations, the orchestra has become both a model for higher education in Chinese traditional music and an important force in showcasing the unique charm and contemporary vitality of Chinese music, fostering cross-cultural dialogue and artistic exchange worldwide.

The Philadelphia Orchestra's Lunar New Year Concert and the FREE Spring Festival Concert are sponsored by the China National Tourist Office New York.

Lunar New Year

January 28 at 7:30 PM—Wednesday evening—Marian Anderson Hall at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

Naomi Woo Conductor

Yu Hongmei Erhu—PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA DEBUT

Zhang Hongyan Pipa

Li Huanzhi *Spring Festival Overture*

Chan Ka Nin *Welcoming Spring*— FIRST PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA PERFORMANCE

Tan Dun Selections from *Crouching Tiger* Concerto, for erhu and chamber orchestra— FIRST PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA PERFORMANCE

L. Boulanger *Of a Spring Morning*

Zhou Long *King Chu Doffs His Armor*, for pipa and orchestra—FIRST PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA PERFORMANCE

Copland "Hoe Down," from Four Dance Episodes from *Rodeo*

Holst "Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity," from *The Planets*

Rossini Finale, from Overture to *William Tell*

China Central Conservatory of Music Chinese Orchestra

January 29 at 7:00 PM—Thursday evening—Perelman Theater at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

Liu Sha Conductor

Li Bochan *Celebrating Overture*

Traditional/arr. Li Shangqian *A Moonlit Night on the Spring River*

Feng Zicun *Joyful Encounter*, for bamboo flutes and shengs

Fan Linfeng, Feng Tianshi, bamboo flutes

Wang Yi, Liu Yihao, sheng

Yan Shaoyi *arr. Li Heng Huabangzi*, for banhu

Hu Yu, banhu

Sun Jing *Love Song from the Horizon*, for the Plucked Instruments Ensemble

Li Bochan *The Ancient Tea-Horse Road*

Peng Xiuwen & Cai Huiquan *Harvest Gongs and Drums*

Wei Ran, Yin Fei, leading percussion

Li Yuejin *Sheng—Lin Qi Jing* (Sheng—Into a Wonderland)—WORLD PREMIERE OF ORCHESTRATION

Wang Lei, sheng

Zhang Zheng *Feng·Ya·Song* (Ballad, Court Hymn, Eulogy)—WORLD PREMIERE

Wang Danhong *Eternal Red Lilies*

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[About the 2025–26 Season](#)

[Our Commitment to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Strategies \(IDEAS\)](#)

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