

LUNAR NEW YEAR

WITH THE MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA

Junping Qian, conductor
Vân-Ánh Vanessa Võ, vocals, đàn bầu and đàn tranh
Zhengang Xie, jing hu | Mei Hu, yue qin
Roz Tsai, host | Fei Xie, artistic advisor

Saturday, February 17, 2024, 7PM | Orchestra Hall

Li Huanzhi	Spring Festival Overture	CA. 5'
Texu Kim	Dub-Sanjo	CA. 8'
Tyzen Hsiao	The Angel from Formosa	CA. 5'
Vân-Ánh Vanessa Võ	Lullaby for a Country for Soprano and Orchestra	CA. 16'
	Love	
	Yearning	
	Sorrow	
	Fire	
	Vân-Ánh Vanessa Võ, vocals, đàn bầu and đàn tranh	

I N T E R M I S S I O N

CA. 20'

Johann Strauss, Jr.	Voices of Spring (Frühlingsstimmen) Waltz, Opus 410	CA. 6'
ZhenQiang Xie/ Guang Han	Flying Dragon and Dancing Phoenix * for Jing Hu, Yue Qin and Orchestra Zhengang Xie, jing hu Mei Hu, yue qin	CA. 15'
Hua Wu	Welcome Spring for Jing Hu and Orchestra Zhengang Xie, jing hu	CA. 3'
Traditional/ arr. Yukikazu Suzuki	Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon	CA. 5'
Jianping Tang	Dance of the Golden Snake	CA. 4'

* World premiere; commissioned by the Minnesota Orchestra

PRE-CONCERT AND INTERMISSION

Music and dance presented in partnership with the Alliance of Chinese Culture & Arts and Carleton College’s Department of Music.
Saturday, February 17, Roberta Mann Grand Foyer, Target Atrium and N. Bud Grossman Mezzanine

This concert will be broadcast live on stations of [YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio](#).



JUNPING QIAN,
CONDUCTOR

Junping Qian, who is now in his third year of leading the Minnesota Orchestra's Lunar New Year celebration, served as assistant conductor of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra from 2018 to 2020 and was a visiting faculty member at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. He won first prize at the 2017 Bucharest International Conducting Competition and was also a prize-winner in the 2019 International Competition of Young Conductors Lovro von Matačić in Zagreb, the 2021 Hans von Bülow International Conducting Competition and the 2022 Princess Astrid Competition in Trondheim. Since making his European debut at the Verbier Festival in 2012, Qian has conducted on four continents with orchestras such as the Konzerthausorchester Berlin, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Hungarian State Opera, Roma Sinfonietta, Minnesota Orchestra, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and Kammerorchester Basel. Qian graduated from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler in Berlin. His teachers and mentors include Daniel Harding, Sir Roger Norrington, Thomas Søndergård, Christoph Eschenbach, Christian Ehwald, Mark Gibson and Otto Werner Mueller. More: junpingqian.com.



VÂN-ÁNH VANESSA VÕ,
VOCALS, ĐÀN BẦU AND ĐÀN TRANH

Vân-Ánh Vanessa Võ is an award-winning performer of the 16-string đàn tranh (zither) and an Emmy Award-winning composer who has collaborated with Kronos Quartet, Alonzo King LINES Ballet and Yo-Yo Ma. She also uses the monochord (đàn bầu), bamboo xylophone (đàn trung), traditional drums (trống) and other instruments to create music that blends Vietnamese instruments and traditions with other genres and structures. Võ co-composed and arranged music for the Oscar-nominated documentary *Daughter from Danang* as well as the Emmy-winning soundtrack for *Bolinas 52*, among other film projects. She graduated with distinction from the Vietnamese Academy of Music, where she later taught, and has since performed in more than 14 countries, including appearances at venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center and Lincoln Center as well as the 2012 London Olympic Games Music Festival. Her recent projects include premiering the first part of the Mekong trilogy production, *Mekong: SOUL*, commissioned by the Kennedy Center, and co-composing an original soundtrack for the PBS documentary *The People vs. Agent Orange* with Blake Leyh. During President Barack Obama's administration, Võ became the first Vietnamese artist to perform at the White House and received the Artist Laureate Award for her community contributions through the arts. More: vananhvo.com.



ZHENGANG XIE, JING HU
MEI HU, YUE QIN

Jing hu master Mr. Zhengang Xie and yue qin master Ms. Mei Hu, a husband-and-wife team, are listed as members of the elite group among the musicians in the Directory of Current Chinese Artists of 1998, which Hu participated in editing. While in China, as the top "Cheng" style Peking Opera fiddlers, Xie and Hu performed and recorded as solo jing hu and yue qin players with many top Beijing Opera houses, including the Beijing Opera House and National Opera House. In addition to performing traditional Peking Opera repertoire, Xie has participated in many new opera productions, such as the Peking Opera TV show *Cao Xueqin* and the new opera *The Legend of The White Snake*. Xie has also performed in the Great Hall of People in Beijing during a Lunar New Year celebration, and was greeted by the Chairman Jiang Zemin, among other top Chinese government officials. Since moving to the U.S. in 1999, the couple has brought Chinese music, particularly Peking Opera, to their community. While living in Cincinnati from 2000 to 2020, Xie and Hu performed in concert halls, schools and universities around the region. In collaborations with the University of Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, they performed concertos such as *In the Dark Night*, *The Qiao Family Compound* and *The God of Mountain*. Xie and Hu are active in creating performance videos online, as well as performing around

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the Twin Cities area. They were featured soloists with the Minnesota Orchestra at the inaugural Lunar New Year concert in 2022, and this past summer they toured Spain with Carleton College Chinese ensemble on an invitation from pipa master Gao Hong. Xie and Hu currently reside in Plymouth, Minnesota, near their son, Minnesota Orchestra Principal Bassoon Fei Xie, and his family.



FEI XIE, ARTISTIC ADVISOR

Fei Xie joined the Minnesota Orchestra as principal bassoon in 2017 after serving as principal bassoon of the Baltimore Symphony, an ensemble he first joined as second bassoonist in 2008. When he won the principal role in 2012, Xie became the first Chinese-born bassoonist to hold such a position in a major American symphony orchestra. Xie has appeared as soloist with the Minnesota Orchestra—performing Mozart’s Bassoon Concerto in January 2021—Baltimore Symphony, Festival Mozaic Orchestra and the Sichuan Conservatory Symphony Orchestra in China, and he has taught masterclasses and coached orchestral bassoonists throughout the U.S., China and Brazil. He has also appeared in numerous chamber music concerts at Orchestra Hall, most recently in last month’s performance of Samuel Barber’s *Summer Music* and Wynton Marsalis’ *4 Bassoons Talking*. He took on the role of artistic consultant for the Orchestra’s first two Lunar New Year celebrations in February 2022 and January 2023 and continues in that capacity this year. The 2022 concerts also saw Xie joined onstage by his mother and father—the professional Peking Opera musicians Mei Hu and Zhengang Xie, who are yue qin and jing hu masters, respectively—and they reunite for this year’s program as well. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.

ZHENQIANG XIE, COMPOSER

ZhenQiang Xie, president of the Chinese Opera Music Society, national first-class composer and expert of the Ministry of Culture, is currently a professor and director of the music department of the National Academy of Chinese Opera. He has composed more than 50 large-scale plays for the National Peking Opera Theater of China, Beijing Peking Opera Theater and other provincial theaters, and has composed more than 60 music works for national important evening party CCTV and the Spring Festival gala of various provincial TV stations. His *Radiant Snow and Ice* won the award for outstanding works for the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. In 1999 he was compiled into Biography of Contemporary Dramatists, published by China Drama Press.

PROGRAM NOTES

Program notes for tonight’s concert are provided in an insert and are accessible at minnesotaorchestra.org/lunarnewyearnotes or via the QR code below.



ROZ TSAI, HOST

Dr. Benhong Rosaline Tsai, who also hosted the Minnesota Orchestra’s Lunar New Year concerts in 2022 and 2023, is a global talent management executive who has held transformative leadership roles in multiple Fortune 500 organizations such as Ecolab, Honeywell and Xcel Energy. She currently serves as Vice President of Talent, Learning, and Org Effectiveness at Thrivent, a Fortune 500 financial services firm based in Minneapolis. She is a long-time community volunteer for youth development, arts and culture organizations, most recently completing her term as board chair for Minnesota non-profit BestPrep. A native of Tianjin, China, Tsai completed her undergraduate studies at Nankai University and obtained her master of science degree at St. Cloud State University. She holds a doctorate degree from University of Minnesota, where she currently serves as adjunct faculty for the Carlson School of Management. More: carlsonschool.umn.edu.