

**Cosmo Rodewald Concert Hall
Walter Carroll Lunchtime Concert Series
Thursday 20 February 2025, 13.10**

Tangram Collective– “Nature Echo”



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Although Lunchtime Concerts and Recitals are free, you are invited to make a voluntary donation towards their running costs.

If you wish to support our free concerts, we are using JustGiving as an alternative to collecting cash donations at events.

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Photography and/or recording of this performance are strictly prohibited.

- Please ensure that mobile phones are switched off,
- Please stifle coughing as much as possible,
- Please ensure watch alarms, and any audible devices are switched off

We are most grateful to the Confucius Institute for their collaboration on this event, and for their generous contribution.

Today's Performance

<u>Music Piece</u>	<u>Composer</u>
Bamboo Echoes	Zhenyan Li
Vox Balaenae	George Crumb
Qi	Chen Yi

The Performers

Tangram is an artist collective specialising in multidisciplinary and cross-cultural productions. They are Associate Artists with the London Symphony Orchestra at LSO St Luke's, where they have been praised for their "highly imaginative presentations" (I CARE IF YOU LISTEN), "deep-rooted originality" (Morning Star), "powerfully theatrical performance" (TEMPO), and "intoxicating overall mood of poetry, restraint and elegance" (The Stage).

Tangram's work builds on a foundation of contemporary classical music, drawing out its capacity for storytelling by interweaving design, movement, text, film, visual installation and performance art. Nominated for the Royal Philharmonic Society's Young Artist Award 2023 for being "truly innovative", Tangram projects have ranged from collaborations with Chinese sword dance and Chinese opera masters, programmes of music made for stones, ice blocks and plastic bags, and performances with live action painting and audience participation.

Tangram's ethos is marked by openness and risk-taking. Through their projects, they actively invite curiosity and dialogue across cultures, disciplines and communities.

ZHENYAN LI

BAMBOO ECHOES

In 'Bamboo Echoes,' I drew inspiration from the elegant qualities of bamboo. Originating from Chengdu, Sichuan, renowned for its bamboo cultivation, I am intrigued by the organic growth of this plant—a remarkable gift from nature. Notably, the growing process of bamboo produces distinct sounds, especially the creaky sound, adding a unique auditory dimension. The dizi (bamboo flute) plays a crucial role in this composition. Additionally, the incorporation of bamboo-made percussion instruments introduces surprising elements. I aim to invite listeners into a world where the essence of bamboo becomes a compelling artistic expression.

ABOUT



Zhenyan Li (b.1998) is a Chinese composer and Chinese flautist based in London. Her works are inspired by theatrical elements, especially the performing style of traditional oriental theatre. Li's music has been performed worldwide including Switzerland, Germany, Slovakia, Netherland, UK and China. Recent highlights include works for London Philharmonic Orchestra, Beijing International Music Festival, London Symphony Orchestra and Lucerne Festival. Her opera 'Cummings & Goerings' was premiered as part of the 'Tête-à-tête' Festival. Other projects also include works for Ensemble Modern, International Guitar Foundation, Central School of Ballet, Psappah Ensemble and Leeds Lieder Festival. As an active collaborator, she has worked on projects with Architectural Association, London Film School, Leeds Lieder Festival, and SOAS University of London, as well as individuals conductors Martin Rajna, John Warner, and Jessica Cottis.

Li finished her Bachelor of Music degree and Master of Music degree (with distinction) in composition at the Royal Academy of Music with scholarship. Currently, she is a third year Ph.D. composer at the same institution studying with Philip Cashian and David Sawer.

GEORGE CRUMB
VOX BALAENAE

for the New York Camera

VOX BALAENAE

FOR THREE MASKED PLAYERS (Electric Flute, Electric Cello, and Electric Piano)

George Crumb

Vocalise (...for the beginning of time)
Wildly fantastic; grotesque (♩ = 64)

The musical score is written for three instruments: Electric Flute (E.Fl.), Electric Cello (E.Cel.), and Electric Piano (E.P.). The piece is titled "Vocalise (...for the beginning of time)" and is described as "Wildly fantastic; grotesque" with a tempo of ♩ = 64. The score is divided into three systems. The first system features the Electric Flute playing a complex, fast-paced melody with various ornaments and trills, while the Electric Cello and Electric Piano provide a rhythmic accompaniment. The second system continues the Electric Flute's melodic line, which includes a section marked "N.B. The pianist should keep the damper pedal depressed throughout the flute solo!". The third system shows the Electric Flute playing a more sustained, lyrical passage, with the Electric Cello and Electric Piano providing a harmonic support. The score includes numerous dynamic markings such as ff, p, f, and sf, as well as articulation marks like accents and slurs. The overall mood is one of intense, almost chaotic energy.

E.Fl.
sing

N.B. The pianist should keep the damper pedal depressed throughout the flute solo!

E.Fl.

E.Fl.

George Crumb's "Vox balaenae for three masked players" (Voice of the Whale) is scored for electric flute, electric piano, and electric cello and four antique cymbals (crotales). Inspired by the singing of the humpbacked whale, the performance requires that each of the three players wear a black half-mask (visor-mask). "The masks, by effacing a sense of human projection, will symbolize the powerful impersonal forces of nature (nature dehumanized)" (Crumb). The stage is lit in a deep blue color.

The various sections of the work are played without pause: The “Vocalise (... for the beginning of time)” features the electric flute with the performer simultaneously playing and singing parallel lines into the flute, and then singing one sustained note into the flute while fingering fast arpeggios. The “Variations on Sea-Time ... Sea Theme”, “Archeozoic (Var. I)” and “Proterozoic (Var. II)” are built from cello harmonics with string glissandos and silently depressed clusters on the keys of the electric piano. “Paleozoic (Var. III)” is built from flute harmonics and cycles on cello and piano. “Mesozoic (Var. IV)” has cello and flute melodies in unison underscored with punctuated patterns on the piano.

“Cenozoic (Var. V)” is played “Dramatic, with a sense of imminent destiny” is constructed from piano tremolos and accents, cello trills with simultaneous glissando shifting, and extremely fast triplet patterns on the flute. The concluding “Sea-Nocturne (...for the end of time)” builds an underwater atmosphere texture which gradually fragments.

Other works which are based on whale song include Alan Hovhaness’s “And God Created Great Whales” (1970) for orchestra and recorded whale voices, and John Cage’s “Litany For The Whale” (1980) for voices. Hovhaness’s work imitates the recorded sounds with low basses and creates a rich orchestral ocean atmosphere, and Cage’s piece breaks up the word “whale” into its phonemes and extends those sounds, in contrast to Crumb’s approach which acoustically imitates aspects of whale sounds and like most of his pieces relates them to a poetic viewpoint.

CHEN YI

QI

Qi was commissioned and premiered by the New Music Consort of New York, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players and Los Angeles Philharmonic Association and dedicated to composer and Columbia University professor Prof. Chou Wen-Chung. In this work, Chen Yi uses a mixed combination of Western instruments in order to create an Eastern sound. In the composer's words, she uses a mixed combination of Western instruments to "create the sound from the East, to express her feelings of the Qi abstractly. . .it's so untouchable, so mysterious, but so strong and powerful. It melts into air and light, it's like the space in Chinese paintings, it's filled into the dancing lines of Chinese calligraphy, it's the spirit in the human mind. In my composition, I translate the feeling of the Qi, the element of nature, into my musical language in a quite free and slow tempo. There are also exaggerated textures with tension, in which I try to sound the inner voices and spirit of human beings, to experience this eternal power.

ECHO MORGAN



Echo Morgan, also known as Xie Rong, is a fearless action artist challenging notions of "Chineseness" and femininity. Through her provocative performance art, she transforms her body into a canvas, utilizing Chinese ink, red lipstick, and chlorophyll to craft emotionally charged action paintings and portraits. Echo draws inspiration from personal experiences and broader themes like the body politic and eco-feminism, deftly merging Eastern philosophy, the Fluxus movement to provoke introspection and meaningful dialogue. With a background from Sichuan Fine Arts Institute High School, Central Saint Martins, and the Royal College of Art, Echo's visually captivating works have earned global recognition through exhibitions in various countries. Recently, she has ventured into immersive site-specific storytelling experiences, collaborating with musicians and movement artists, blurring the lines between theatre and visual art. Echo believes in art's healing power within our community.



YI-HSUAN CHEN



Taiwanese flautist Yi-Hsuan Chen has performed extensively throughout Asia, Europe, and the Americas. Her engagements include premiering several new works, notably commissions for the Royal Academy of Music's Bicentenary, the "Marés" project curated by Fabricio Mattos at the Brazilian Embassy in London. Yi-Hsuan enjoys a vibrant career as a chamber and orchestral musician. She has collaborated with renowned conductors such as Semyon Bychkov, Oliver Knussen, and Edward Gardner, and performed with the Czech Philharmonic in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of Czechoslovakia, a performance that was live-streamed on BBC Radio.

In the realm of chamber music, Yi-Hsuan performed regularly with her woodwind quintet, Sylva Winds, and Tangram, with which she curated and recorded "INFUSION," a digital music performance as part of the "Tangram Voices Series." Yi-Hsuan graduated from the Royal Academy of Music with First Class Honours, having received a scholarship to study with William Bennett, Samuel Coles (flute), and Helen Keen (piccolo). She was invited to serve as a teaching assistant at William Bennett's Summer School in 2019, following her guest artist appearance at the 10th Singapore Flute Festival.



ANNIE YIM



Annie Yim is a Hong Kong-born Canadian concert pianist, creative collaborator, and founder of MusicArt based in London. Her performance has been described by The Times as "the most beautiful sounds, radiantly coloured, thoughtfully articulated". Known for her wide-ranging solo and chamber music repertoire that encompasses canonic works and new music, Annie has broadcast live on BBC Radio 3, Classic FM, and national radios in Canada and Portugal, and made her UK concerto debut at LSO St Luke's, London. Annie is founding member of the Minerva Piano Trio. She is a recipient of Art Council England's Developing Your Creative Practice award in 2021 for her current work in making connections between music and nature, and Help Musicians UK's Do It Differently award in 2022. In July 2023 Annie was appointed Lecturer in Music Performance at the London College of Music, University of West London.



GARWYN LINNELL



Born in Vancouver, Canada, Garwyn has also had the opportunity to perform as a soloist, and an orchestral musician in a wide range of venues and countries from small churches in Italy to concert halls in China. While classical music is his primary area of focus, he also has had the pleasure to collaborate and perform with various artists within the fields of dance, contemporary music, improvisation, jazz, and even poetry such as Abel Selaocoe, Max Baillie, Jess Gillam, and Max Richter. After completing his bachelor's degree in at the Folkwang University of the Arts in Germany, Garwyn studied at the Royal Academy of Music under the guidance of John Myerscough, the cellist of the Doric Quartet, and has recently finished his master's degree.



BEIBEI WANG



With her background in both Classical and traditional Chinese percussion, Beibei Wang brings her characteristic “high energy virtuosity” (Wall Street Journal) to performances of diverse repertoire.

As a soloist, she has performed around the world with orchestras such as BBC Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, New Japan Philharmonic, and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and has appeared as soloist on the world’s most prestigious stages.

Her unique background in classical and world music styles brings her to a range of multi-disciplinary projects ranging from performances of contemporary classics and new commissions to international tours with dance productions.

Beibei is a founding member of Tangram.



Coming up at the Martin Harris Centre

For more information about upcoming events and to join our mailing list please visit:

www.arts.manchester.ac.uk/martinharriscentre

MUMS Chamber Orchestra

Date: Saturday 22 February 2025

Venue: Cosmo Rodewald Concert Hall

Time: 18:30

Price: £11.50 / £7.50 / £3.75 (*FREE to MUMS members & UoM Music students*).

WCLC: The Apex Singers

Date: Thursday 27 February 2025

Venue: Cosmo Rodewald Concert Hall

Time: 13:10

Price: FREE

MUMS: Jazz at Lunchtime Concert

Date: Friday 28 February 2025

Venue: Cosmo Rodewald Concert Hall

Time: 13:10

Price: FREE

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