



College of Music
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

ARTIST-FACULTY SERIES
Sponsored by WKAR

Lunar New Year Celebration

Nature, Music, and Convergence

Haiqiong Deng, zheng
Young Hyun Cho, piano
MSU Chamber Ensemble

*Generously sponsored by
Jim Forger and Deborah Moriarty*

Sunday, February 22, 2026
Cook Recital Hall, 3:00 p.m.

PROGRAM

Mo Li Fen Fang (The Fragrance of Jasmine)	Zhanhao He (b. 1933)
zheng and MSU Chamber Ensemble	
Liu Shui (Flowing Water)	ancient qin melody trans. Pinghu Guan
qin solo	
Guanglin San (Guangling Melody)	ancient qin melody arr. Haiqiong Deng
zheng solo	
Xiang Yun (Tune from My Hometown)	Yuguo Zhou (b. 1955)
zheng and piano	
Jiao Chuang Ye Yu (Rain at the Plantain Window)	Hakka Traditional
zheng solo	
Memory	Haiqiong Deng (b. 1975)
zheng solo	
Moon Phase	Yue Sun (b. 1984)
zheng and MSU Chamber Ensemble	

PROGRAM NOTES

Introduction of the Instruments

The **zheng**, or **guzheng**, is a traditional Chinese plucked zither with a history of over 2,500 years. It typically has 21 strings and movable bridges, producing a rich, resonant tone capable of both delicate melodies and dramatic expression. Known for its sliding pitches, harmonics, and dynamic range, the zheng is used in solo, ensemble, and operatic music, and remains a central instrument in Chinese musical culture.

The **qin**, or **guqin**, is a seven-stringed Chinese zither with a history of over 3,000 years. Revered as the instrument of scholars and sages, it is prized for its subtle, contemplative sound and expressive depth. Its rich repertoire, preserved through qin tablature (*jinazipu*), includes ancient melodies, philosophical expressions, and poetic imagery. Known for quiet timbres, harmonics, and sliding tones, the guqin is traditionally associated with meditation, poetry, and reflection, making it a symbol of Chinese literati culture.

PROGRAM NOTES (cont.)

Mo Li Fen Fang (“The Fragrance of Jasmine”)

This piece draws on the well-known southern Chinese folk song “*Mo Li Hua*” (“Jasmine Flower”), a melody admired for its gentle lyricism and heard in many regional versions across China. The tune has inspired many generations of composers and performers. In this work, the familiar theme is reinterpreted and developed, keeping its poetic core while offering a new perspective on a cherished tradition.

Liu Shui (*Flowing Water*) is one of the most renowned pieces in the qin repertoire, often paired with *Gao Shan* (“High Mountains”) as a symbol of deep friendship and spiritual connection. The version performed here is linked to the twentieth-century qin master Guan Pinghu (1897–1967), whose recording of *Liu Shui* was included on the 1977 Voyager Golden Record, a cultural message from Earth sent into space. His interpretation is praised for its clarity, restraint, and poetic flow, allowing images of softly rippling and surging water to come alive through subtle changes in tempo, tone color, and gesture.

Guangling San (*Guangling Melody*) is one of the most dramatic and historically significant masterpieces in the qin repertoire. Legend links the piece to the ancient story of Nie Zheng, an assassin-musician who sacrifices his life to avenge his father, giving the music a lasting association with heroism, bravery, and tragic intensity. Characterized by powerful gestures and martial energy, the work moves away from the qin’s more meditative nature to deliver a bold storytelling force. The version performed here is an adaptation for the zheng, transforming the original style while maintaining the piece’s powerful narrative spirit.

Xiang Yun (*Tune from My Hometown*)

This piece is inspired by Shanxi folk music in the *wǎn wǎn qiāng* style, characterized by expressive sliding tones and distinct *fa* and *ti* notes, as well as the poignant *ku yin* (“bitter sound”), which conveys plaintive depth and intensity. Rendered on the zheng, the work highlights these signature melodic motifs, evoking the earthy lyricism, storytelling quality, and dramatic emotion of northern Chinese folk traditions.

PROGRAM NOTES (cont.)

Jiao Chuang Ye Yu (“Rain at the Plantain Window”)

A representative piece of the southern Hakka zheng school, this piece features intricate **left-hand bends** and stylistic nuances. It develops from the *diao gu* (core melody) and includes traditional *jia hua* (“adding flowers”) and *jian zi* (“subtracting words”) improvisational techniques, creating variations that evoke the gentle rhythm of falling rain. Through these expressive gestures, the piece offers an auditory portrait of solitude and quiet beauty, capturing the serene and contemplative spirit of Hakka musical aesthetics.

Memory - Composed during the pandemic for pipa, zheng, and percussion, this piece is a reflection on life and the quiet moments of introspection it inspired. At the same time, it celebrates **positive** spirit and energy, exploring resilience, renewal, and the enduring vitality of the human spirit through interweaving textures, timbres, and rhythms.

Moon Phase - The Moon represents wisdom, intuition, and strong feminine energy. Its 29.5-day cycle mirrors the journey of a full life, with each phase carrying its own significance. This piece, dedicated to Haiqiong Deng, honors those lunar rhythms and was premiered by the Intersection Contemporary Music Ensemble in Tennessee in 2022.

ARTIST-FACULTY BIOS

Haiqiong Deng leads a multifaceted career as a performer, educator, and researcher. A master of the 21-string zheng (guzheng) and a veteran practitioner of the 7-string qin (guqin), she has performed and lectured extensively across North America, Europe, and Asia, presenting a musical language that transcends genres and traditions. Through her artistry, Deng uses music as a medium to honor cultural heritage while fostering dialogue across diverse traditions worldwide.

Among her many honors, Deng received the 2017 Florida Heritage Award, the 2013 Florida Individual Artist Fellowship, the 2012 Master Artist recognition from the Florida Folklife Apprenticeship Program, and the Outstanding Performance Prize at the 1995 Chinese National Zheng Competition in Shanghai. She is also featured in the Chinese music chapter of *World Music: Traditions and Transformations* (McGraw-Hill), a widely used university textbook by Michael B. Bakan.

Her 26-year collaboration with Taiwanese-American composer Chihchun Chi-sun Lee has produced dozens of innovative contemporary zheng compositions, culminating in their Global Music Award-winning album, *Zheng Tu* (2024). Equally dedicated to intercultural exploration, she has studied classical Indian music for over a decade under the guidance of guru Nalini Vinayak. Their 2014 album, *Stringing Echoes*, marked the first time in history that the Chinese zheng, Indian sitar, and tabla were used together to perform classical Indian music.

As an ethnomusicologist, Deng's research focuses on qin music, wellbeing, and ecomusicology. Her recent two-year fieldwork with Frank Kouwenhoven, Chair of CHIME, in rural Gansu, northwestern China, explores *hua'er* (flower) folksong traditions and ritual festivals.

Haiqiong is the Director of the Chinese Music Ensemble at the Florida State University College of Music. She earned a Bachelor of Music in Guzheng Performance from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, a Master of Arts in Arts Administration and Ethnomusicology, and a Ph.D. in Musicology from Florida State University. She also serves on the Executive Board of the Council of Culture and Arts in Tallahassee, FL.

ARTIST-FACULTY BIOS (cont.)

Young Hyun Cho is an internationally acclaimed pianist who has performed in major concert halls throughout the world. Her appearances include the Vienna Musikverein, Berlin Philharmonic Concert Hall, Smetana Hall in Prague, the Solti Hall of the Liszt Academy in Budapest, and the Seoul Arts Center in her native Korea. As a sought-after soloist, she has collaborated with the Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Euro Sinfonietta Wien, Filarmonica della Calabria of Italy, North Czech Philharmonic Teplice, Budapest Symphony Chamber Orchestra M.A.V., Bohuslav Martinů Philharmonic, Korean Broadcasting System Symphony Orchestra, Korean Symphony Orchestra, Seoul National Symphony Orchestra, and the Eastman Symphony Orchestra.

Cho's live performances and recordings have received enthusiastic international acclaim. The music journal *Textura* praised her Beethoven cycle for its impeccable technique and clarity of expression across Classical, Romantic, and contemporary repertoire. Composer and critic Steven Kennedy highlighted her refined dynamic shading and precision, while *Fanfare* magazine praised each note articulated with absolute clarity and beautifully shaped phrasing. German critics have described her as a gifted interpreter of Beethoven, noting the expressive cantilena, tonal fullness, and emotional depth of her playing.

Young Hyun Cho is Associate Professor of Piano at the Michigan State University College of Music.

PERSONNEL

MSU Chamber Ensemble
Zongheng Zhang, conductor

Flute

Ya Zhuo

Oboe

Emily Quintana

Clarinet

Hourun Qu

Percussion

Catherine Lee

Violin

Arianna Argentieri
Daniella Greene

Viola

Jiajing Fang

Cello

Yu-Chen Lin

Bass

Grace Kovacs

PRIVATE GIFTS play a vital role in our ability to maintain and enhance the quality of the programs we offer. Donations support student scholarships, fellowships, student travel and performance opportunities, instrument acquisitions, guest artists, outreach activities, operations, and other crucial areas that make the College of Music an exemplary place of learning.

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- **Sam and Mary Austin Fund for New Music** (Musique 21 concerts)
- **Ken and Sandy Beall** (Cello Plus Chamber Music Festival Series)
- **James and Susan Bonfiglio** (Symphony Orchestra, Oct. 26; Fall Opera)
- **Jenny Chung and Family for Human Rights Fund** (Rucker, Feb. 15)
- **Joanne and Bill Church** (West Circle Series)
- **April Clobes and Glen Brough** (USA at 250 Years)
- **Trustee Emerita Dee Cook in memory of her husband Byron Cook** (Four Seasons)
- **Susan Davis** (Spring Opera)
- **Dean Transportation** (Celebrating the Spectrum)
- **Alena Fabian, M.D.** (Votapek, Mar. 23; Khristenko, Mar. 30)
- **Jim Forger and Deborah Moriarty** (Lunar New Year Celebration Concert)
- **John and Gretchen Forsyth** (Wagner, Sept. 19)
- **Barbara and Bill Given** (Four Seasons; Alegría Navideña)
- **Anonymous** (Rucker, Feb. 15)
- **Howard and Pam Gourwitz** (Lulloff, Oct. 30)
- **Kevin and Amy Guskiewicz** (Alegría Navideña)
- **Hamilton-Dodson African Diaspora Endowment for the College of Music** (Musekiwa Chingodza, Oct. 2)
- **Lauren Harris** (Symphonic Dialogues; Celebrating the Spectrum)
- **Anne Hiller** (Celebrating the Spectrum)
- **Stanley and Selma Hollander Endowment for Chamber Music** (Gems for Cello)
- **Eileen G. Houston** (Wagner/Johnson/Wang, Sept. 19; Thompkins/Dease/Tang, Oct. 14; Trombone Ensemble, Nov. 8; Kanda, Nov. 18; Tuba/Euphonium, Jan. 28; Huiet, Feb. 24)
- **Taylor Johnston Early Music Series Endowment established by Taylor Johnston** (Taylor Johnston Early Music Series)
- **Mary and Ron Junttonen** (A Celebration of the Beautiful Voice)
- **Hari Kern and the late Ralph R. Edminster, M.D.** (Votapek, Mar. 23)
- **Henry Kopek and Patricia Foreman** (Red Cedar Organ Series)
- **Michael and Paula Koppisch** (Votapek Piano Festival, Aug. 15-17; Spectrum Festival)
- **Lansing Chapter of the American Guild of Organists** (Organist Nicole Keller, Sept. 14; Organist Peter Sykes, Mar. 22)
- **Jill Canny and Robert Last** (MSU Federal Credit Union Jazz Artist in Residence, A. Cohen, April 18; Jazz Spectacular Finale Concert)

- Eleanor H. and Harold E. Leichenko Opera Endowment established by Lauren Julius Harris (Fall and Spring Opera)
- Ann, John and Abby Lindley (Alegria Navideña)
- Merritt Lutz (Celebrating the Spectrum)
- Joseph and Jeanne Maguire (A Jazzy Little Christmas)
- Marshall Music Co. (Symphonic Dialogues)
- Pat and Mary McPharlin (Jazz Infusion; Jazz: Spirituals Prayer and Protest)
- Friends of Jay D. Meetz (Fall Opera)
- Dr. Roy and Christine Meland (Four Seasons)
- Gordon E. Miracle (Four Seasons; Votapek, Mar. 23)
- MSU Federal Credit Union (Showcase Series; Spartan Spectacular; Celebrating the Spectrum; MSU Music on The Road in Detroit)
- George Orban and Rae Ramsdell (Jang/Moriarty, Feb. 8)
- Liz and Tony Raduazo (Pass a Good Time, Oct. 5; Sensory Friendly Spartan Concerts)
- Charles and Nancy Seebeck (Bagratuni, Mar. 16)
- Leonard and Sharon Tabaka (Jazz Spectacular Finale Concert)
- TechSmith (Celebrating the Spectrum)
- Dr. Robert W. Uphaus and Dr. Lois M. Rosen (Symphonic Dialogues; Four Seasons; Beethoven; Happy Birthday Mozart!; Yehuda/Warren, Jan. 29; Bagratuni, Mar. 16; and Bagratuni, Mar. 31)
- Linn Van Dyne and Mike Knox (Happy Birthday Mozart!)
- Barbara E. Wagner (Wagner Chamber Music Competition)
- Anonymous (Beacon Hill Music Series)
- Richard Witter (A Celebration of the Beautiful Voice)
- Richard and Joan Witter Endowment for MSU Opera Theatre (Fall and Spring Opera)
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UPCOMING EVENTS

LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

2/24 Tuesday

Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series sponsored by WKAR

Chance Huiet, tuba

Fairchild Theatre, 7:30 p.m. \$

2/25 Wednesday

Concert Band & Campus Band

Cobb Great Hall, 7:30 p.m. \$

2/26 Thursday

Concert Orchestra: Spotlight and Spirit

Cobb Great Hall, 7:30 p.m. \$

3/13 Friday

Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series sponsored by WKAR

Fantasies for Strings and Piano – I-Fu Wang, violin

Cook Recital Hall, 7:30 p.m. \$

3/15 Sunday

Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series sponsored by WKAR

Peter Skyes, organ

Alumni Chapel, 3:00 p.m. \$

3/16 Monday

Artist-Faculty and Guest Recital Series sponsored by WKAR

Dialogues for Cello – Suren Bagratuni, cello

Cook Recital Hall, 7:30 p.m. \$

3/17 Tuesday

Symphony Band

Cobb Great Hall, 7:30 p.m. \$

*Please visit our **official, secure ticket website** to purchase tickets:
music.msu.edu/events*

Avoid fraudulent sites by always using this link.

TICKET PRICES

\$ \$14 Adults, \$12 Seniors (age 60 and older), Students with ID and anyone under age 18 are free but require a ticket for admission.

\$\$ \$19 Adults, \$17 Seniors, \$9 Students with ID and anyone under age 18.

\$\$\$ \$24 Adults, \$22 Seniors, \$14 Students and those under age 18.

Please note: *All events scheduled in Murray Hall are general admission seating.*