



EASTMAN
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
UNIVERSITY of ROCHESTER

Chen Liang, piano

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts
From the studio of Natalya Antonova

Wednesday, *April 10, 2019*
Kilbourn Hall
1:30 PM

Special guest: Yunhe Liang, Erhu

PROGRAM

Four Seasons (2001, American Premiere)

Spring
Summer
Fall
Winter

Yunjiang Liang
(b.1961)
arr. Chen Liang
17'

Yunhe Liang, *erhu*
Yidi Song, *flute*
Junheng Chen, *violin*
Patrick Baek, *cello*

INTERMISSION

Piano Quintet No.2 Op.81

Allegro, ma non tanto
Dumka: Andante con moto
Scherzo (Furiant): molto vivace
Finale: Allegro

Antonín Dvořák
(1841-1904)
42'

Yuan Tian, *violin*
Junheng Chen, *violin*
Aditi Prakash, *viola*
Zexun Shen, *cello*

Born in Hebei, China, Erhu soloist **Yunhe Liang** gave his debut performance at the age of ten. After winning the National Instrumental Music Competition for Youth in 1979 in China, Mr. Liang has been a frequent Erhu performer on stage and has recorded multiple albums. Majoring in both Erhu and piano, Mr. Liang got his B.M. from Hebei Normal University, and later proceed to further studies in Erhu with Yusong Lan and Hanyang Zhao in Central Conservatory in China. Yunhe came to the United States in 1997 and resides in California since then. His experiences in both Eastern world and Western world have formed his unique performing style and interpretation of the Erhu sound. As an active Erhu artist in California, Mr. Liang has performed in the Hollywood Bowl with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Music Center, San Gabriel Auditorium, Huntington Library, Pasadena City College (with Dr. Phillip Young) and the California Art Institute. Besides performing, Mr. Liang is also an Erhu pedagogue and a film soundtrack recording artist. He has recorded multiple soundtracks for Hollywood movies, Disneyland in Shanghai, and many other video games.

PROGRAM NOTES
(By Chen Liang)

As its name suggests, the **Four Seasons** has described the scenes of different seasons with simple but touching music languages. The moods of the music are all coming from the beauties cultivated by nature.

Spring: The mountain folk tune like Spring has described a vivid picture full of wakening lives from the winter and the delightfulness of welcoming the opening of the year. The movement is in binary form, with a first theme of lively, bright, and free dance feelings, and a second theme that has more layers, more exciting moods as well as more expressive music gestures.

Summer: The whole movement is a play scene with joy and excitement. It describes the images of children chasing each other, playing games and having fun in the sunny summer time. The movement is in ternary form. There is an agitated A section, a brief and expressive B section, as well as a more intensive return of the A section at the end.

Fall: If summer is for the children, then fall is for the old thinking people. It is calm but full of thoughts presented by the continuous conversations and counterpoints among voices. Fall is the season for us to think, to observe, and to express our gratitude to nature.

Winter: The movement is all about the most beautiful and mysterious feature of the season: snow. When the snows fly in the air, it is unpredictable, lively, and can make up the whole sky. Watching the snow dancing in the sky is such a pleasant experience, as it is described through this movement. The piece is in rondo form, in which each of the episode has expressed a different characteristic of the snow.

Composed in 1887 between Dvořák's great Seventh and Eighth symphonies, the **Piano Quintet in A major Op.81** is one of the finest works of its kind. Ironically, this masterpiece is the result of the composer's attempt to revise one of his earlier works: Piano Quintet in A major Op.5. The degree of the revision was so large that Dvořák finally decided to compose a completely new quintet, which is nowadays the more famous Op.81. The most striking quality of this music is its lyricism and the fullness of the texture.

The first movement opens with a cello solo, where it sings the beautiful theme out of a Czech folk tune in A major. The shifting in between major and minor modes occurs throughout this movement, creating this wandering feeling of dream and truth, illusions and realities.

The second movement is called “Dumka”, a type of Ukrainian folk dance with a sense of nostalgic melancholy. The movement is in rondo form, in which there is a dramatic contrast in between the melancholic dumka theme and a happy interlude. Each time the dumka theme recurs, the texture is also enriched.

The third movement is a scherzo titled “Furiant”, meaning unrestrained or with a sense of humor, absolutely nothing to do with “fury”. A new theme is introduced in the middle section of the movement, which again, is spoiled by the massive lyricism of Dvorák.

The last movement has described a joyful celebration scene, with the extended use of syncopated rhythm, contrapuntal texture, and powerful sonorities. The chorale-like coda at the end of the whole piece provides the audience a perfect period of time to recall all the beautiful scenes from the previous movements before the final curtain falls to a closure.

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