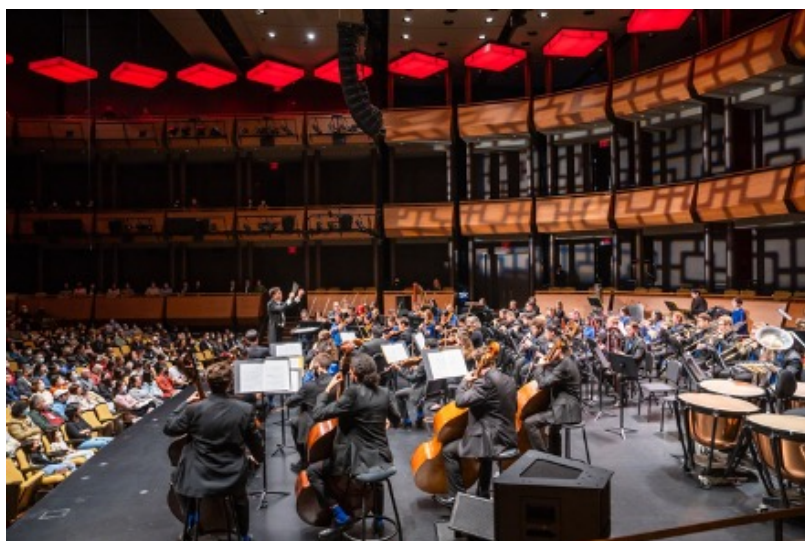


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# Bard Conservatory of Music's US-China Music Institute and the Central Conservatory of Music, China, Present The Sound of Spring: A Chinese New Year Concert with The Orchestra Now (TŌN)

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*Jindong Cai conducts The Orchestra Now at Jazz at Lincoln Center's Rose Theater. Photo by Fadi Kheir.*

The US-China Music Institute of the Bard College Conservatory of Music, in collaboration with the Central Conservatory of Music, China, present the fourth annual *The Sound of Spring: A Chinese New Year Concert with The Orchestra Now* conducted by Director of the US-China Music Institute Jindong Cai. This special annual event,

marking one of the most important holidays in the Chinese lunar calendar, showcases an exciting blend of Chinese American artists, Chinese symphonic music, and traditional instruments.

Performances will take place on **Friday, January 27, 2023 at 7pm in The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College** and on **Saturday, January 28, 2023 at 3pm in the Rose Theater of Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall** in New York City. To purchase tickets for the

January 27 Fisher Center concert, visit [fishercenter.bard.edu](http://fishercenter.bard.edu), call 845-758-7900 (Mon-Fri 10am-5pm), or email [boxoffice@bard.edu](mailto:boxoffice@bard.edu). For tickets to the January 28 Jazz at Lincoln Center concert, please visit [ticketing.jazz.org](http://ticketing.jazz.org), or call 212-721-6500.

This year's concert will celebrate the Chinese Year of the Rabbit. As we have done with great success in our previous concerts, we aim to create the most authentic Chinese New Year musical event to reflect both traditional and contemporary music of China hand selected for our New York audience. Featuring the much-loved ***Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto***, this year's concert promises to be full of enchanting stories and uplifting sounds.

The concert program will create a festive and celebratory atmosphere for music lovers young and old, illustrating the sophistication and dramatic artistry of Chinese symphonic music in our time. ***Butterfly Lovers*** will be the signature piece of the first half of the concert and will feature the virtuosic playing of violinist Na Sun, a member of the New York Philharmonic and a graduate of the prestigious Central Conservatory of Music. Also in the first half, erhu player Beitong Liu will reprise her prize-winning performance of 'The Indominable Spirits of the Snow Mountain' for erhu and orchestra. Beitong is a Concerto Competition winner and a senior in the first class of Chinese instrument performance majors at the Bard Conservatory of music. She is a student of renowned erhu master Yu Hongmei of the Central Conservatory of Music.

The concert's second half will begin with *Prancing Dragons and Jumping Tigers*, a percussive showpiece of Chinese festive drumming. Two renowned living composers end the program, first with Zhou Long's *King Chu Doffs His Armor* for pipa and orchestra, based on the famous love story portrayed in the 1993 film *Farewell My Concubine* and featuring pipa virtuoso Gao Hong. The program will close with Guo Wenjing's rousing and cinematic orchestral work *Riding on the Wind*.

"Music connects cultures and people. It helps us overcome obstacles and leave our differences behind. Please join us to celebrate the Year of the Rabbit and the love of music we all share!" writes Jindong Cai.

The concert features soloists Na Sun (violin), Gao Hong (pipa), Beitong Liu (erhu), and Petra Elek (percussion).

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### **About the Artists**

Conductor **Jindong Cai** is the founding director of the US-China Music Institute, professor of music and arts at Bard College, and associate conductor of Bard's The Orchestra Now. Before coming to Bard, Cai was a professor of performance at Stanford University. Over the 30 years of his career in the United States, Cai has established himself as an active and dynamic conductor, scholar of Western classical music in China, and leading advocate of music from across Asia. At Bard, Cai founded the annual China Now Music Festival. In its first three seasons, China Now presented new works by some of the most important Chinese composers of our time, with major concerts performed by The Orchestra Now at Bard's Fisher Center for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, and Stanford University. In 2019, the festival premiered a major new work by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Zhou Long, *Men of Iron and the Golden Spike*—a symphonic oratorio, in commemoration of the Chinese railroad workers of North America on the 150th anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad.

Originally from Vásárosdombó, Hungary, percussionist **Petra Elek** graduated from Bard College with dual degrees in Percussion Performance and German Studies in 2018. She joined The Orchestra Now in 2020. During an internship with the US-China Music Institute, Petra studied with Central Conservatory of Music professor and famed Chinese percussionist Wang Jianhua.

Chinese musician and composer **Gao Hong** is a master of the pear-shaped lute, the pipa. She graduated from the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, where she studied with pipa master Lin Shicheng. In 2005 Gao became the first traditional musician to receive the prestigious Bush Artist Fellowship, and she is the only musician in any genre to win five McKnight Artist Fellowships for

musicians. As a composer, she has received commissions from the Minnesota Orchestra, Minnesota Sinfonia, Civic Orchestra of Minneapolis, American Composers Forum, Walker Art Center, and Jerome Foundation, among others. Gao's recording of live compositions/improvisations with oudist Issam Rafea, *From Our World to Yours*, received two Global Music Award gold medals (instrumental and album). As a performer, Gao has appeared on five continents in solo concerts and with symphony orchestras, jazz artists, and musicians from various cultures. She has performed at major festivals and venues worldwide, including the Lincoln Center Festival, San Francisco Jazz Festival, Festival d'Automne à Paris, Perth International Arts Festival, and others. Her performances of pipa concerti include world premieres with the China National Traditional Orchestra, Guangdong National Orchestra, and Hawaii Symphony; and world premiere recordings with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project and Moravian Philharmonic.

Gao is guest professor at the Central Conservatory of Music, China Conservatory of Music, and Tianjin Conservatory of Music. She teaches Chinese instruments and is director of the Chinese Music Ensemble and Global Music Ensemble at Carleton College in Minnesota. She also is the author of the first pipa method book published in English.

**Beitong Liu** is in her final year of the five double-degree program at the Bard College Conservatory of Music, where she is majoring in erhu performance and global and international studies. Beitong is in the first class to graduate from Bard with a degree in Chinese instrument performance offered through the US-China Music Institute. After graduation, Beitong plans to enroll in the Master of Arts in Chinese Music and Culture program at the US-China Music Institute. Through Bard's partnership with the Central Conservatory of Music, she studies erhu with Professor Yu Hongmei. Beitong is originally from Shenyang in Liaoning Province, China. She began studying erhu in 2008, and entered the Shenyang Conservatory middle school in 2012 to study with Li Naiping. In 2017, she began study with Central Conservatory of Music erhu professors Yu Hongmei and Yan Guowei. In 2021, she performed as a soloist in The Sound of Spring Chinese New Year concert with The Orchestra Now (TŌN). Also that year, she won the Bard Conservatory Concerto Competition for her performance of The Indomitable Spirits of the Snow Mountain by Wenjin Liu. Every winner of this annual

competition is given the opportunity to perform their chosen piece with The Orchestra Now, as Liu does in this concert.

Violinist **Na Sun** joined the New York Philharmonic in June 2006 and holds the Gary W. Parr Chair. A native of China, she began playing the violin at age seven, and at nine, was accepted into the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. She received her bachelor of arts degree there with highest honors, studying with Yao Ji Lin, and was winner of the conservatory's violin competition. She received her artist diploma from Boston University's College of Fine Arts in 2005, studying with Roman Totenberg, and was the grand prize winner of the Bach Competition. Sun has performed in numerous recital and chamber music concerts. In 2003, she attended the Kneisel Hall Chamber Music Festival in Blue Hill, Maine, and in 2005 served as concertmaster of Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra, led by James Levine.

Na Sun recently performed with the China National Theater Orchestra and the Qingdao, Shenzhen, and Guangzhou symphony orchestras, conducted by Yu Long and Tan Dun. Previously, she was concertmaster of the China Youth Symphony Orchestra; principal of the second violin section at the Central Conservatory Chamber Orchestra; and soloist in Brahms's Violin Concerto with the Xiamen Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Michael Feldman. She has also performed with the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra and was a member of the orchestra of the Icelandic Opera.

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