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JIA DAQUN
Chamber Works

Yemo He, Clarinet • Ran Jia, Piano
Concert Masters Ensemble of the
Shanghai Symphony Orchestra
Chinese Traditional Instrument Soloist Group from the
Shanghai Conservatory of Music
Zhang Jiemin



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JIA DAQUN

Chamber Works • 2

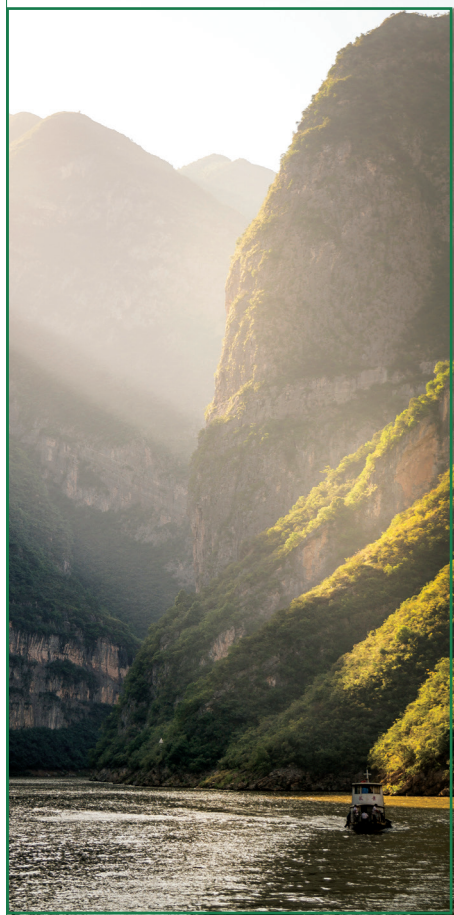
Flavour of Bashu

Counterpoint of Times

String Quartet

The Prospect of Coloured Desert

Ensemble Les Amis Shanghai
Han Quartet



JIA DAQUN

Chamber Works · 2

- Flavour of Bashu (1995)** 17:30
Ensemble Les Amis Shanghai
 WU Shuting, TIAN Junjun (Violin), YU Xiangjun (Piano),
 SONG Yuchen, ZHU Tianyao, MA Li (Percussion)
- ① I High Pitched Tune 5:37
 ② II Veins in Rock 4:19
 ③ III Masks 7:34
- Counterpoint of Times (1989)** 18:38
Ensemble Les Amis Shanghai
 YAO Jing, LIU Lu (Flute), LIU Di (Oboe),
 ZHANG Long, LI Cong (Clarinet), SHI Jieliang (French horn),
 HU Yu (Bassoon)
- ④ I Prelude 4:18
 ⑤ II Intermezzo 3:11
 ⑥ III Scherzo 4:17
 ⑦ IV Postlude 6:52
- String Quartet (1988)** 25:30
Han Quartet
 ZHENG Weimin, WU Shuting (Violin), LIU Nian (Viola)
 PAN Yan (Cello)
- ⑧ I – 9:07
 ⑨ II – III – 16:23
- ⑩ **The Prospect of Coloured Desert (2000)** 8:29
Ensemble Les Amis Shanghai
 TIAN Junjun (Violin), PAN Yan (Cello), ZHAO Zhen (Sheng),
 TANG Xiaofeng (Pipa), GAO Hua (Percussion)

JIA Daqun



JIA Daqun, Senior Professor of Composition and Theory at Shanghai Conservatory of Music, a distinguished Chinese composer and music theorist, enjoys special government allowances of the State Council of China. He was awarded Bachelor's and Master's degrees of literature (majoring in composition) from the Sichuan Conservatory of Music, supervised by Prof. HUANG Wanpin and Prof. GAO Weijie. He has composed numerous works in various musical styles and has published many articles and books concerning composition and music analysis. His *String Quartet* (1988) won the 12th IRINO Prize in Japan (1991) and other compositions, such as *Rondo, for Clarinet and Piano* (1984), *The Dragon and Phoenix Totem, for Pipa and Orchestra* (1985), *Symphony in Two Movements* (1986-87) and *Symphonic Prelude – Bashu Capriccio* (1996) have been awarded prizes in major Chinese national composition competitions. His work *Flavour of Bashu, for two violins, piano and percussion* (1995) was named 'Chinese Classic Musical Composition of the Twentieth Century' by the Chinese government. His article *The Counterpoint of the Structures* won the second prize in the 'Outstanding achievements in humanities and social science for colleges and universities' category issued by the Ministry of Education (2009) and his book of *Poetics of Musical Structure* was the third prize-winner in 2013. His *Instruction of the Structural Analytics* received a silver medal in the Golden Bell Awards for his profound understanding of music theory (2011). Jia Daqun is currently a composition professor and supervisor of doctoral students at Shanghai Conservatory of Music. He is also a vice chairman of the theory council of Chinese Musicians Association, administrative vice chairman of Music Analytics of CMA and member of the Academic Council of the Institute of Musicology at CCOM. His contribution to music theory has been widely recognised and frequently cited in academic researches in recent years.

Since the age of thirteen and for eight years thereafter, Jia Daqun studied painting with Prof. Wang Xingyu of the Sichuan Fine Arts Institute. Based on his preparative studies in visual arts, he was able to connect some musical concepts such as lines, harmony, timbre and structures with visual plastic arts, which are considered by him to be crucial elements of the compositional process. Known for his workmanship and delicate style of works, he is widely recognised as one of the most talented younger composers among those who immersed themselves in structuralism. His works have been played in many cities and at musical festivals including the Yokohama Asian Music Festival, Berlin Music Festival, Hong Kong International Contemporary Music Festival, and have been received to great public and critical acclaim.



The Han Quartet was founded by outstanding young faculty members from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. Besides having an extensive repertoire (ranging from classical works to 21st century masterpieces), the members work closely with Chinese composers, and are enthusiastic advocates of contemporary chamber music. The Han Quartet is the only Asian quartet to have been accepted into the European Chamber Music Academy (ECMA), was the first Asian string quartet to perform at the K & K International Music Festival (Malaysia), and was the first Chinese quartet to be featured by Denmark's The Night Men Chamber Music Society. In 2012, the members transcribed J.S. Bach's *Three Part Inventions* into a string trio version for two violins and viola. The transcription was later published by the Shanghai Music Publishing House following their successful recording of the work.

DAQUN JIA: FLAVOUR OF BASHU

Flavour of Bashu (1995)

For Two Violins, Piano and Percussion

Flavour of Bashu derives its musical themes from Sichuan opera; 'Bashu' is another way of saying 'Sichuan', a province in the South West of China. For the most part, the music of Sichuan Opera is full of pitch indeterminacy and rhythmic uncertainty, with astringent harmonies lending a distinctive piquancy. In addition, Daqun Jia has incorporated elements from other traditional Chinese arts: theatre music, costume, masks, movement, and even calligraphy and painting.

Each of the three movements has a subtitle. The most immediately recognisable feature of the first movement, *High Pitched Tune*, is that it has no accompanying instrumental music. Rather, the two violins take the 'solo voice' line and play alongside percussion and sporadic vocal accompaniment from behind a curtain. Occasionally the two violins are used in percussive ways.

The second movement is called *Veins in Rock*. The Sichuan province is hilly, with rocky mountains, particularly around the Three Gorges area where one can find many unusual and mountainous rocky outcrops, ranging in character from the majestic to the delicate. This movement is built around the musical form of a *Scherzo*, and employs piano and metallic percussion instruments to illustrate the strength of the mountains, and the violins to depict the changes in the mountains' structure: from vertical, to horizontal, to slanting.

Masks, the third movement, is based on the different types of facial makeup in Chinese Opera. These differing masks are recognised for their artistic merit the world over. Four different types of facial makeup are depicted: *Sheng* (man), *Dan* (lady), *Jing* (General) and *Chou* (clown).

This work was named Chinese Classical Music Composition of the Twentieth Century by the Chinese government.

Counterpoint of Times (1989)

A chamber concerto composed specifically for two flutes (one doubling piccolo), one oboe (doubling English horn), two clarinets (one doubling bass clarinet), one bassoon and one French horn, *Counterpoint of Times* reveals a highly precise control of both time and rhythm. This temporal precision is evident in both the work's macro-structure (the timings and structure of the whole work, and the structure of each movement) and the micro-structure (the presentation of time sequences within sequences). The work relies on four types of serial sequence: the *Fibonacci* sequence; the two sequences from which the *Fibonacci* sequence derives, the *Lucas* sequence and *Evangelists'* sequence; and a combination of the aforementioned three, the *Generalised* sequence. These four sequences have two main features:

1. From the third number of a serial sequence on, every number is equal to the combination of the preceding two numbers.
2. From the third number on, the percentage values between each number are all very close to the Golden Section Ratio. The Golden Section ratio is a concept found often in both mathematics and art, and can be found when a line is divided into two parts so that the whole length divided by the long part is also equal to the long part divided by the short part. It is a ratio considered particularly pleasing to the eye when used in e.g. architecture, and to the ear when used in music.

Therefore, it appeared logical to construct the work using only the numbers found within these four sequences, and to employ the plus and minus contrasts from the Golden Section Ratio.

String Quartet (1988)

The composer wrote this work as a medium to express the feelings and to communicate a wider understanding of Chinese spirits and culture. The pitch material was drawn from symbolic folk tunes (*Suona Music* comes from the Yellow River, *Boat Chant* depicts the Yangtze River and the *Temple Music* derives from the Wutai Mountains.) In addition to the folk music, three different four-note pitch class sets – each with close interval relationships to the folk themes – are utilised. A unanimity is achieved, therefore, through the medium of tune and sound. The composer also explores various types of performing techniques and the scoring describes in meticulous detail the contours of every musical event as they develop, connect and transform. In this way the expressive capability of the string quartet medium is enriched.

This work was awarded the 12th IRINO Prize for Chamber Music in Tokyo, Japan, in 1991.

The Prospect of Coloured Desert (2000)

For Violin, Cello, Sheng, Pipa and Percussion

Commissioned by the Silk Road Project in 2000, *The Prospect of Coloured Desert* is a work in one movement. It is a musical representation of the following poems:

West of the Desert

Intermittently appearing and then vanishing, the tiny figures of camels are revealed through the constant sand-swirled wind.

Disappearing after an instant, a little footprint is left behind amidst the echoes of the tolling bells from the ship of the desert.

The Silk Road

The commercial intercourse channels of millennia were created through tenacity.

The cultural communications of an aeon comprise a symphony of souls.

Booklet text compiled from material supplied by the composer



Ensemble Les Amis Shanghai (ELA)

Ensemble Les Amis Shanghai (ELA), founded by the violist and pedagogue Professor Jensen Sin-Lam in 2009, is the only professional chamber music ensemble in Shanghai included in the Directory of Chinese Music for External Recommendation by the Ministry of Culture. Made up of young teachers from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music and members of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, the ensemble works for the promotion of chamber music, and its style of playing seeks a synthesis of clarity, exquisiteness and audacity. ELA has a broad repertoire of more than one hundred works spanning more than three hundred years, from the Baroque era to the 21st Century. In addition to works from the traditional canon, it specialises in excellent yet seldom performed pieces from different nations and styles, including many Chinese premières.