CHINESE ORCHESTRAL WORKS

In Memoriam • Xinjiang Dances
Variations on a Chinese Folk Theme
Variations on a Xinjiang Folk Tune
and many others

Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra
Cao Peng
Chinese Orchestral Works

1. Evening Party

*Evening Party* was originally a piano piece composed in 1934 under the title of *New Year Celebration*. In 1940, He Luting arranged it into an orchestral piece, which was broadcast to the Soviet Union and was much appreciated. Then in 1943, the composer revised it. In 1949, he arranged six of his compositions into an orchestral suite, with *Evening Party* as one of its six movements. Just as the title implies, the piece describes people celebrating victory jubilantly at the evening party. The whole piece can be divided into six parts, with the later three parts repeating the former three. In the third part, the composer ingeniously introduces the rhythm of Chinese folk percussion.

2. Senjidma

*Senjidma* was composed in 1945 with a Mongolian folk song of the same theme as the material. *Senjidma* is the name of a legendary Mongolian girl. In 1949 the composer arranged it and five other pieces, including *Evening Party*, into an orchestral suite. In this piece, the composer developed the original folk-tune by means of polyphony and colourful orchestration. The whole piece can be divided into two parts. The first part is slow and tranquil just like the boundless grassland. The second part is a repetition of the same folk-tune. However, by accelerating the tempo and changing the orchestration, the piece creates a joyous festive atmosphere.

3. Rebirth in the Mountains

*Rebirth in the Mountains* was originally a section of the score the composer wrote for the drama, *The Siege of Qinyuan*, during the War of Resistance against Japan. The drama describes the people in the country town of Qinyuan, who, with the help of the Eighth Route Army led by the Communist Party of China, concealed everything the enemy could eat or use and retreated into the remote mountains when faced with the invasion of the invading Japanese. The enemy entered the town, but could find nothing to live on and therefore had to withdraw from the town. Finally, the people
triply triumphantly returned to their homeland. The piece is made up of five parts which are linked into a continuous whole: 1. Mountain Scene; 2. Rebirth in the Mountains; 3. Calm Forest; 4. Guerillas and Civilians; 5. Epilogue.

4) *Flute at Night in a Desolate Village*  
He Luting

*Flute at Night in a Desolate Village* was originally a section of the composer's film score *Spring has Arrived* written in 1937. The passage was composed in the form of a duet for the flute and the English horn. Later, the composer arranged it into an independent orchestral piece.

5) *Great World*  
He Luting

In 1937, at the invitation of the Star Film Company, the composer wrote scores for a number of films such as *Spring has Arrived, Crisscross Streets* and *Street Angels*. Later, he extracted a number of splendid sections from the scores and arranged them into independent orchestral pieces. *Great World* was one of them. It was originally an instrumental episode in the film *Street Angels*.

6) *Overture*  
He Luting

Composed in 1935, *Overture* was originally a prelude to the drama *Wu Zetian*. The overture took the form of a quintet for piano and strings, and was entitled *Buddhist Music*. The composer drew material from Buddhist music, *Mu Lian Rescuing Mother*, for the overture. This is based on the fact that Wu Zetian, the famous empress of the Tang Dynasty, had been a Buddhist nun before she mounted the throne. Later, the quintet was arranged into an orchestral piece with the title of *Overture*.

7) *Variations on a Chinese Folk Theme*  
Ding Shande

*Variations on a Chinese Folk Theme* was originally a piano piece of the same title composed in the spring of 1948, when Ding Shande was studying at the Paris Conservatoire. The theme came from the music score of a Tibetan folk-song his friend had given him as a present before the composer went abroad. The whole composition is made up of the Tibetan theme and its five variations. It is China’s first
set of piano variations on a folk theme. Sometimes the music sounds as graceful as a poem, and sometimes as colourful as a picture. It conveys the composer's nostalgia for his motherland during his stay in France. Later, the composer orchestrated it.

8 Variations on a Xinjiang Folk Tune

Variations on a Xinjiang Folk Tune is variations on a lively folk-song widely popular in Xinjiang as its theme. In the form of free variation, the piece is made up of a theme and its five variations.

9 First Xinjiang Dance

First Xinjiang Dance was originally a piano solo composed in 1950. The musical material was taken from the music of a Xinjiang dance performed by Dai Allin, a renowned dancer. The composition consists of three parts. The first part is a cheerful and lively dance, the middle part sounds a deeper note, while the closing part is a recapitulation of the first part with some modifications. This piece is an excellent example of the combination of the Chinese folk-tune with occidental harmony. It was later orchestrated by the composer.

10 Second Xinjiang Dance

Second Xinjiang Dance was originally a piano piece, composed in 1955. Ding Shande has great interest in Xinjiang folk-songs and has repeatedly drawn materials from them for his various forms of compositions. The music is exquisitely lyrical and unrestrainedly ardent. By combining a variety of chords, modality and tonality, it expresses the Xinjiang people's happy life, full of song and dance. The Soviet conductor, Zhilichyev, who was giving lectures in China from 1957 to 1958, showed such interest in the piece that he orchestrated it.

11 In Memoriam

The single-movement overture In Memoriam, in sonata form, was Huang Zi's graduation piece when he finished his studies at the Music School of Yale University. It is also China's very first grand symphonic orchestral work, winning international
acclaim in the history of Chinese music. The piece was finished on 13th March, 1929, and was successfully premiered at the graduation concert of Yale University on 31st May of the same year. Huang Zi composed *In Memoriam* in commemoration of Hu Yongfu, his friend. The music is imbued with a strong romantic flavour and a touching tragic colour.

**Metropolitan Scene Fantasia**

*Metropolitan Scene Fantasia* was originally composed by Huang Zi as the title score of a progressive film, *Metropolitan Scene*, which was co-scored by Huang Zi, Zhao Yuanren and He Luting in 1935. This fantasia reflected the composer’s democratic spirit and his sense of national justice. In addition, the composer made some exploration of orchestral technique.

**He Luting**

A Chinese composer and teacher, He Luting was born into a farmer’s family in Shaoyang, Hunan, in 1903. Even as a child, he took an interest in folk-songs and regional operas. In primary school, he liked playing the reed-organ and the *shao* (a Chinese vertical flute). After graduation from high school, he began teaching at a primary school. In 1924, he entered the Art Department of Yueyun School, Changsha, to study the piano and the violin, Chinese instruments and musical theory. He took part in the Northern Expedition and the uprising in Guangzhou and Haifeng. In 1930, he took up a post as a teacher of music at a primary school in Shanghai and in 1931 entered the Shanghai School of Music, studying composition with Huang Zi, and the piano with Zakharov. In 1934, his piano pieces, *Buffalo Boy’s Piccolo* and *Lullaby*, won the first prize and the second honorary prize respectively at the Solicitation for Chinese Style Piano Compositions, sponsored by Alexander Tcherepnin. Thereafter, with songs and music, he scored a string of films, including *Crisscross Streets* and *Street Angels*, the songs from which, *In Spring* and *Roving Girl Singer*, won popularity. During the War of Resistance against Japan, He Luting composed songs such as *Song of Guerillas*, *Pleading Spring Earth* and *On the Failing
River, which were widely popular. In 1934, he made preparations for the establishment of the Central Orchestra in Yenan. After the War of Resistance against Japan, he continued with his career in musical education and composition. The chorus Prelude of a New Century, the Yangge Opera Liu Deshun Rejoining his Unit, the orchestral pieces Senjuhui and Evening Party were his compositions during this period. After the foundation of the People’s Republic of China, he became Director of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Vice-chairman of the China Musicians Association and Honorary Chairman of the association, successively. He was mainly engaged in the training of musical specialists. In the meantime, he continued with his compositions. His various vocal compositions include Long Live the People’s Leader, Heroic May, Reservoir by the Ming Tombs and Pastoral. He also scored a number of films. The list of his compositions continues with three cantatas, twenty-four choruses, nearly a hundred songs, six piano pieces, six orchestral pieces, more than ten film-scores and several Yangge Operas and instrumental solos. In addition, he has also published Selected Musical Theses of He Luting.

Huang Zi

A Chinese composer and teacher, Huang Zi was born in Chuansha, Shanghai, in 1904. He started his education in music in childhood and in 1916 was admitted into Qinghua School, Beijing, and came into contact with Western music. He studied the clarinet, the piano and harmony, and was a tenor in the chorus. In 1924, he graduated from Qinghua School and went to the United States at state expense for advanced studies in music. In 1926, he graduated from Oberlin Institute as a psychology major and became a Bachelor of Arts. In 1929, he graduated from the Music School of Yale University with the degree of Bachelor of Music. His graduation composition, In Memoriam, was successfully performed under the baton of D. S. Smith, president of the school. The composition was the first Chinese musical work performed by an American, orchestra. In 1929, after tours around several European countries, Huang Zi took up a teaching post at Hujiang University and a concurrent post at the Shanghai State School of Music. In 1930 he was appointed Professor of Theory and Composition and Dean of Studies. In 1934, he co-edited Music Periodical with Xiao Youmei and Wei Hanzhang in the name of Musical Art
Society. In the winter of 1935, he initiated the establishment of the Shanghai Orchestra. In the autumn of 1937, he resigned as Dean of Studies so as to concentrate on the compilation of professional music teaching materials. Huang Ji died in 1938 in Shanghai. During his nine years of teaching, the composer made great contributions to the introduction of Western musical theory into China and to the training of professional musicians. His compositions covered a considerable range of subjects and forms. His music is elegant and exquisite in style, succinct and smooth in melody, neat and well-knit in structure. His representative works include the orchestral pieces In Memoriam, Metropolitan Scene Fantasia, the oratorio Everlasting Grievance, the art-songs Three Wishes of Rose Blossoms, Nostalgia, Spring Meditation, Flowers Unlike Flowers and The Flags are Fluttering.

Ding Shande

A Chinese composer and teacher, Ding Shande was born in Kunshan, Jiangsu, in 1911. Nurtured on folk music, he began to study the pipa when he was a child. In 1928, he entered the Shanghai School of Music, studying the pipa and the piano. He then went on to major in the piano and, at the same time, studied composition with Huang Ji. After the War of Resistance against Japan, he established the Shanghai Music Society, took charge of its administration and pursued his musical education. In 1947, he entered the Paris Conservatoire, studying composition with Boulanger. After returning to China in 1949, he worked for many years as Deputy Director of the Shanghai Conservatory and Dean of the Composition Department. Many celebrated musicians, such as pianists Zhu Gongyi and Zhou Guangren, harmonica-player Huang Qingbai, composers Zhou Wenzhong, Chen Gang and Wang Ming are his students. Besides, he has often been invited as a member of the jury for various international piano competitions. His representative works include the symphony Long March, the symphony suite New China, the cantata Ode to the Huangpu River, the piano pieces Children Suite, First Xinjiang Dance and Second Xinjiang Dance, Symphony Overture, Piano Trio in C Major, Piano Concerto in B Flat Major, the symphonic poem Spring and the song cycle A Copy of West Yunnan Poetry. He is currently Vice-chairman of the China Musicians Association.
Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra

The Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra is one of the most distinguished musical performance organizations in China. It was established in 1952, then known as the East China Music Troupe. The first Director was He Luting, a famous composer and musical activist, followed by Huang Yijun and Situ Han. The present Artistic Director is the well-known conductor Cao Peng.

In the past forty years, the Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra has given over three thousand concerts, including special concerts for individual composers and musicians, and collaborations with singers and soloists from all over the world. Apart from giving concerts, the Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra often makes recordings for radio stations, television stations, film studios, record factories and audio & video companies. It has, at its disposal, a large chorus, which is able to sing various types of choral works, and a large orchestra, which took the name the Marco Polo Symphony Orchestra in 1993. As the assigned orchestra for recordings for the HNH International Ltd. in China, the orchestra records a considerable number of Chinese orchestral works for world-wide release each year.

Cao Peng

Cao Peng is one of the most distinguished conductors in China. He was born in Jiangyin, Jiangsu in 1925 and in 1946 entered the Arts Department of Shangdong University. In 1950 he was appointed principal conductor of the Shanghai and the Beijing Film Studio Orchestras. He went to the former Soviet Union in 1955 for study at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory under Leo Ginsburg and was appointed resident conductor of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra after his return in 1961. He is now artistic director and principal conductor of the Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra and music adviser and resident conductor of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra. He is also music director and principal conductor of the Shanghai Chamber Orchestra.
CHINESE ORCHESTRAL WORKS

Works by He Luting, Ding Shande * and Huang Zi **

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Cao Peng

1. Evening Party (1:47)
2. Senjidma (2:39)
3. Rebirth in the Mountains (5:02)
4. Flute at Night in a Desolate Village (3:52)
5. Great World (2:53)
6. Overture (3:20)
7. Variations on a Chinese Folk Theme * (6:24)
8. Variations on a Xinjiang Folk Tune * (12:17)
9. First Xinjiang Dance * (5:02)
10. Second Xinjiang Dance (Composed by Ding Shande & Diliciev) (5:44)
11. In Memoriam ** (13:01)
12. Metropolitan Scene Fantasia ** (2:13)

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